



**TO BE DELIVERED BY**

**H.E. MS. MARIA HELENA LOPES DE JESUS PIRES  
AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE**

**ON BEHALF OF**

**H.E. MR. DIONISIO BABO SOARES  
MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND COOPERATION  
OF THE  
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF TIMOR-LESTE**

**AT THE  
SEVENTY THIRD SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**MONDAY, 1 OCTOBER 2018**

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY HALL**

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**Check Against Delivery**

Excellency, Mrs. Maria Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, President of the General Assembly

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

I have the honor to address the 73<sup>rd</sup> United Nations General Assembly on behalf of His Excellency Dionísio Babo Soares, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Timor-Leste.

First of all, allow me to join our voices to the previous speakers and to present on behalf of Timor-Leste, our deepest condolences to the people of Indonesia, particularly to the families of the victims of the earthquake and tsunami in Palu, Sulawesi .

I would like to start by congratulating Her Excellency Mrs. Maria Fernanda Espinosa Garcés on her election as President of the General Assembly, and also wish her the best success in this session under the theme: "Making the United Nations Relevant

for All People: Global Leadership and Shared Responsibility for Peaceful, Equitable and Sustainable Societies. "

Taking in to account that this is only the fourth time in the history of this organization that a woman leads this important body, I believe that the President will also be an important role model for women and girls worldwide. Madam President, I would like to assure you that you can count on Timor-Leste's support.

I would also like to extend our gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Miroslav Lajcak for all his work towards sustaining peace and preventing conflict.

Timor-Leste also commends the manner in which election of the 70<sup>th</sup> President of the General Assembly, took place under the leadership of President Lajcak, which provided an excellent precedent for future elections.

Madam President

Distinguished Delegates

We appreciate the theme chosen for this session, and we believe that it is most appropriate. This theme draws our attention to the need to unite peoples at a time when we are witnessing a gradual, but unquestionable, breakdown of the world order, increasing even more the inequality and insecurity, further undermining faith in national and international institutions.

At a juncture when the solidarity amongst peoples, assumes extreme importance in the global agenda, feeling of helplessness and impotence can be seen which that divides people and provokes hostility.

That is why the theme of this session is so important and appropriate, because of the focus is on inclusiveness, equality and global leadership.

Timor-Leste is undoubtedly the leading example of the importance of an order based on international law. Next year, our Nation celebrates the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the popular consultation organized by the United Nations, in which our people voted courageously for the independence.

We can not forget nor fail to pay tribute to the then Secretary General, our dear friend Kofi Annan.

It was with deep sorrow and sadness that our people received the news of his death. As Secretary General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan played a leading role in conducting the negotiations between Portugal and Indonesia, which culminated in the signing of the agreement of 5 May 1999, giving rise to popular consultation in Timor-Leste.

This is a significant milestone that we will also be comemorated next year.

Recently, the United Nations played again a major role in Timor-Leste's future.

For the first time, a Conciliation Commission, established in 2016 under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, succeeded in the positive resolution of a longstanding dispute between Timor-Leste and Australia about the definition of maritime boundaries.

A process that take about a year and a half, and culminated in a new Maritime Boundary Treaty, signed in this building on March 6 of this year, with the presence of His Excellency the Secretary-General of the United Nations, António Guterres.

This new treaty allowed us to consolidate national sovereignty and establish an important model for the peaceful resolution of international disputes.

In a time of increasing global geopolitical tensions over maritime disputes, the success of the first conciliation process in history assume an unprecedented international significance.

Timor-Leste encourages other State Members to consider this mechanism for the peaceful settlement of maritime disputes. We believe that this mechanism will play an important role in appeasing global tensions on our seas.

Madam President,

Ladies and Gentlemen

Our world faces many challenges, which can be effectively resolved through dialogue, cooperation and based on international law.

One of the main challenges of our times is without doubt climate change. This is an issue that Secretary-General António Guterres has defined as "the determinant issue of our time." Timor-Leste is confident that the international community will act uniformly to respond to this existential threat to our planet.

I take this opportunity to highlight the importance of an active and extensive cooperation to pursuit an urgent and real action that exists among Small Island Developing States, including those in the Pacific region, who are particularly vulnerable to the effects of the climate changes.

Madam President

Ladies and Gentlemen

I also would like to emphasis a fundamental issue, which also requires all the attention of the international community, and that is global migration.

Conflicts, wars, situations of inequality and climate change result in an intense migratory movement throughout the world.

Timor-Leste commends the United Nations for the Global Pact on Migration, promoting international cooperation in order to reap the benefits of migration and to address the risks and challenges faced by many migrants.

Madam President,

Ladies and Gentleman

Unfortunately, many fragile states remain isolated and subject to political and economic forces beyond their control. Our experience shows us that war and social conflict block the sustainable development of nations.

Timor-Leste and the g7 + countries know from experience that sustainable development cannot be achieved without peace. That is why we are aware that the



remaining 17 Sustainable Development Goals will be unattainable if we are not able to combat fragility and building peaceful, just and inclusive societies.

We expect that the assessment of the 2030 Agenda, which will take place in 2019, can bring these concerns to the international agenda and that fragile and vulnerable countries will not be left behind.

Madam President,

Ladies and Gentleman

Timor-Leste welcomes the reforms of the United Nations system under the leadership of the Secretary General Antonio Guterres. Following the implementation of the plan to enhance the role of the United Nations Resident Coordinator, Timor-Leste will contribute a modest amount over the next 5 years.

We also support the reforms, without reservations, under the peace and security pillar. We commend the Secretary-General for his initiative on Action for Peace including the Declaration of Shared Commitments on UN Peacekeeping Operations, which Timor-Leste has signed.

In order to contribute to Peace Operations, Timor-Leste is currently investing in the preparation of its police and military personnel, to increase their capacity and the possibility to contribute in the near future to the United Nations Missions.

However, despite our shared efforts, we continue to see conflicts and war in the world that fill us with concern.

The continuing war in Syria is a tragedy that has been causing irreparable human damage and terrible suffering for the people living in that region. Timor-Leste urges that the international community develops all efforts to put an end to this war and to end the deaths and the destruction of this country.

The people of Western Sahara are still denied their right to self-determination. We welcome the appointment of the Secretary-General's personal envoy, Mr. Horst Kohler, and we appeal to the Kingdom of Morocco and the Polisario Front to seriously dialogue in order to find a mutually benefic political solution to enable the people of Western Sahara to exercise their right to self-determination through a referendum organized by the United Nations.

Timor-Leste encourages the international community to redouble its efforts to finding with the concerned parties, a just, peaceful and lasting solution to the question of Palestine. We reaffirm Timor-Leste's support for the two-state solution and the urgent protection of the civilian population.

Timor-Leste also remains concerned about the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed to the Republic of Cuba, over the last six decades, which has a considerable impact on the lives of the people and the development of the country.

In our region, we felt encouraged by the continued dialogue for peace and reconciliation on the Korean peninsula, and we hope that the dialogue between the parties will bring an end to the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the region.

Excellency Mrs. President

Madam President

Ladies and Gentleman

Allow me to take this opportunity to talk about the situation in Timor-Leste.

On May 12 of this year, we held early legislative elections. The elections were held in a peaceful environment, and resulted in a new Executive led by H.E. Taur Matan Ruak .

After a period of economic stagnation due to the political crisis, the country is resuming its development and economic growth, towards normality. The socio-economic foundations that we need to create for a prosperous and united society were already established. With the recent promulgation of the state budget, we can continue to improve our social, housing and communications infrastructure and thus develop opportunities for investment and economic development.

Another important step for Timor-Leste was the government's decision to acquire 30% of the capital in the consortium that operates the Greater Sunrise field and thus opening the possibility of bringing the pipeline to Timorese territory and the accelerated development of the south coast. Our historic leader, and former President of the Republic and Prime Minister, His Excellency Xanana Gusmão once again, successfully conducted the negotiations.

We continue to have strong relations with our neighbors - Indonesia and Australia, and we deepen our cooperation with the ASEAN countries and await serenely for decision about our request to accede to this organization.

Timor-Leste remains committed to strength ties of friendship and cooperation with the countries of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, and hopes that the Portuguese language, spoken by about 250 million people worldwide, will also be an official language of the United Nations.

Our country has also signed the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and we encourage all State Members to do so.

Madam President

Ladies and Gentleman

We live in a world that is different from the post Second World War, when the United Nations was created. The current times are full of challenges and more than

ever, all of us need to be prepared to meet the challenges, the wishes and aspirations, stressing increasingly the value of multilateralism.

Timor-Leste firmly believes in the United Nations and in the international system.

As such, we are committed to work cooperatively for the international peace, security and prosperity, for the well-being of humanity.

Thank you very much.