



**EMBASSY OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF TIMOR-LESTE
BANGKOK**

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Agenda Item 3

Special Body on Least Developed, Landlocked Developing and Small Island Developing States.

Madam Chair

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and gentlemen,

In the past two decades Timor-Leste have made significant achievement on its institutional reforms, political stability and social reforms through improving legislations in various sectors and economic recovery following the Covid 19 pandemic. The main key development areas are in the public infrastructure namely national roads, electricity, main international port, airport and regional airports. Other infrastructure developments such as water and sanitation, and health facilities are still under way. Despite all these infrastructures improvement, Timor-Leste continues to share similar challenges with many other Least Developed country (LDC) and the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in terms of its human resources development.

As an island state, Timor-Leste is populated with majority of youth and therefore the country is facing many challenges in meeting the competing priorities on creating jobs for the youth, while ensuring the development of quality infrastructure, education and health.

The Government is working on finalizing its accession process into becoming the WTO and the ASEAN member to open its market to regional and global trading system. For this purpose, there are many policies that need to be reformed and adapt in order to promote economic growth, foreign direct investment and meeting the UN SDG as well as Timor-Leste national development agenda of 2011 - 2030.

One example of how Government progress with its policy is evident on its implementation of transport sector development. This policy was implemented with the technical assistance from the Asian Development Bank in bringing new diversification of economy through institutional reform that can provide efficient services to Timorese people. The support was also extended to open up land transport cross border services to boost the country's tourism industry. Today,



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Timor-Leste and Indonesia is implementing the cross border bus and coach service from Dili-Kupang-Dili, that could easy tourists to plan their package of visit to Timor-Leste and Indonesia at the same time.

Aside from land transport, the country have also signed many Air Services Agreements with countries namely, Australia, Indonesia, Singapore, United Arab Emirates, Cambodia, Brunei Darussalam and Qatar. Philippines, New Zealand, People's Republic of China and many others in wait to be concluded. The maritime transport sector is also progressing with ratification of the IMO conventions that facilitates the operation of Tibar Port into complying with the international best practice standards. The Transport sector reform continues to progress in a rapid speed to facilitate economic diversification efforts.

In the energy sector, Timor-Leste has concluded bilateral agreement with Australia to develop one of the country's major oil and gas field.

As a new country, the current parliamentary election will determine the destiny of our nation, in defining how the country is moving forward.

A well-connected Timorese people today, have many task ahead to complete in order to graduate from an LDC to a developing state. With a productive youth and new digital mobile connectivity throughout the island, due to policy on Communication that was introduced in 2011 to liberalize this market.

Today, mobile accessibility of technology is a day to day life of many Timorese backed by the communication operators namely Timor Telecom, Telkomcel of Indonesia and Viettel of Vietnam among others.

The above two sectors of Transports and Communication have improved significantly despite continued challenges of infrastructure and limited qualified human resources to synchronize with the domestic legislations to facilitate trade and align with the rules and the country's commitment to adhere the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the ASEAN regional market.

The country's development of market access is progressing with the improvement of its electricity that have supported a smooth technology connectivity of internet usages that reaches 96.1% of Timorese population. The World Bank reported that over 85% of population today have access to electricity and the improved roads are expanded to nearly 500 km of national and 950 km of municipal roads been constructed and rehabilitated. In terms of telecommunication signal coverage, the link has also been expanded to 97% of the country's island territory. Timor-Leste has also reached agreement with Australia to build the undersea cable for high speed internet which is expected to be operational by the end of 2024.



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There is also a modern and fully automated new Tibar Bay Port that have open for service recently in the late 2022. It is the most critical sea transportation infrastructure ever built in Timor-Leste through the PPP regime between the Government and the private sector investment.

Despite these progress on development of key infrastructure, there are still numerous challenges that continue to persist due to limited qualified human resources to respond to the work demands from various sectors of development in the country.

This is the reason, why Timor-Leste still need to stay with the LDC group for another 5 or 10 years in order to ensure that more qualified Timorese are in place and ready to enter the job market to support the public administration in meeting the Government's work force demand.

The Government is working on a timetable in its accession to the WTO to design a smooth transition from LDC status, to prepare for synchronization of domestic regulations to WTO rules. On this effort, the Government continue to explore collaborative solutions with all its development partners to address existing domestic regulations challenges and preparing a personnel mapping through the Foreign Affairs Ministry to adopt professional recruitment in meeting the WTO and ASEAN accession commitments.

In this process, Timor-Leste as LDC continues to improve its bilateral and multilateral participation and attending capacity buildings through various assistances provided by its development partners. As an LDC, it is important that Timor-Leste gained from technology transfer from most developing states through implementation of its concessional finance and other opportunities available for many other LDC's in order to close the existing professional human capacity gaps in meeting key SDG goals in order to also facilitate the low-carbon transition once it graduates from LDC in order to envision for a future new energy policy in line with many other developing states.

I would like to thank, the UN specialized agencies for continuing to extend their support and guidance for Timor-Leste to move towards graduation from LDC status. We continue to expect your strong support for our government in formulating a smooth transition strategy that can be integrated into our existing development plan especially in post accession to WTO.

We appreciate your support in strengthening our government institutional capacities to facilitate a structural transformation and productive capacities that will remove this plethora of Challenges towards achieving all UN SDG goals.

Thank you very much.