



SPOKESPERSON SIXTH CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT



**MEDIA
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Prime Minister and Delegation return from successful Official Visit to Indonesia

On Friday the Prime Minister of Timor-Leste and a high level delegation of Ministers of the Sixth Constitutional Government returned to Díli after a “positive and constructive” official visit to the Republic of Indonesia.

The three-day visit was the first official visit undertaken by H.E. Dr. Rui Maria de Araújo since his inauguration in February. The Prime Minister met one-on-one with the President of Indonesia, H.E. Joko Widodo, where he said they “exchanged in depth views on bilateral relations” and discussed “a wide range of regional and international issues of common interests.”

Both leaders, giving a press conference after their private meeting and a subsequent bilateral meeting, spoke of two main themes that had featured in their interactions.

Firstly they spoke of the intent of both countries to expeditiously resolve land and maritime borders. With 98% of the land border agreed between Timor-Leste and Indonesia, there remains only two areas to be addressed and both nations aim to resolve these by the end of the year. Regarding the maritime boundary President Widodo said “we will start in the north waters and will move to the south waters”. He added that he believed maritime boundaries could be resolved soon.

Responding Prime Minister Araújo said that the Government of Timor-Leste “is ready to commence the discussion on the maritime boundary delimitation with Indonesia in accordance with UNLCLOS 1982” which both countries are party to, and noted that he had instructed his technical team to prepare for the initiation of the consultation on maritime boundaries before the end of this year. The Indonesian Minister for Foreign Affairs, H.E. Retno L.P. Marsudi indicated that her team was ready to engage in the maritime boundaries discussions.

Secondly the leaders spoke of trade, investment and expanding cooperation. President Widodo said that Indonesia was “committed to participating in infrastructure development, investing in Timor-Leste and increasing trade.” Prime Minister Araújo highlighted the strong business relationship with its “positive trends of enhanced trade and economic cooperation”. He noted that bilateral cooperation is increasing in all areas



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established through more than 50 frameworks of agreement and said that he appreciated Indonesia's "continued commitment to enhance capacity building partnerships and technical assistance, particularly in the fields of agriculture, fisheries, forestry, trade and infrastructure."

Two significant Memorandums of Understanding were signed during the visit that will enhance cooperation in agriculture and forestry. Through training, research and planning the cooperation aims to diversify and increase agricultural production, and contribute to reforestation and forest protection in Timor-Leste.

Cooperation and borders were also themes discussed in the meeting of Prime Minister Araújo and Ministers with the House Speaker of the Indonesian House of Representatives H.E. Setya Novanto, and the Deputy House Speakers H.E. Fadli Zon and H.E. Agus Hermanto. The House Speaker noted the long-standing cooperation in education and defense and flagged a boost in cooperative efforts for the education sector.

During the visit the Prime Minister and delegation also met with the General Secretary of ASEAN, H.E. Le Luong Minh to discuss Timor-Leste's application for ASEAN membership. The Secretary General noted that the application was undergoing internal processes and was being given serious consideration. He confirmed that ASEAN Member States shared in principle agreement on Timor-Leste's membership of ASEAN and that the decision could only come after the completion of the evaluation process. He also expressed his appreciation for the efforts being undertaken by Timor-Leste to prepare for membership.

Spokesperson for the Sixth Constitutional Government, Minister of State Agio Pereira noted "this short trip has clearly been a constructive one, building the relationship with our nearest neighbor, strengthening our bonds of friendship and boosting effective cooperation. Besides the main meetings highlighted in this report, many other meetings and interactions were undertaken by the Prime Minister and various senior Ministers of our Government that will benefit our country and enhance our position within the region. Timor-Leste looks positively to the future of the close relationship between our two countries as we move toward settling our maritime boundaries and continue to strengthen our cross sector cooperation, benefiting both of our Nations."**ENDS**