

Australia and Timor-Leste mark a new chapter in relations

Media release

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The Australian-Timor-Leste relationship is set to embark on a new chapter focused on close bilateral cooperation and working together in the Indo-Pacific.

During my visit, I held productive talks with President Francisco Guterres 'Lu-Olo', Prime Minister Taur Matan Ruak and Foreign Minister Dionisio Babo Soares, in which we agreed to deepen cooperation across regional security, development and strengthen our economic partnership.

We also agreed to hold more regular dialogue through a biennial foreign ministers' meeting and annual senior officials' talks, and committed to greater political exchange. A parliamentary delegation from Australia will visit Dili in November and a new mentoring program will link Timorese women parliamentarians with Australian counterparts.

I'm pleased to announce Australia will boost the Seasonal Workers Program in Timor-Leste, with a target of 1,500 workers in 2018-19. Timorese are filling short-term labour gaps in Australia's horticulture and hospitality sectors, and their new skills and earnings contribute to Timor-Leste's development.

In Dili, I launched \$20 million of support to improve health outcomes for children and families, strengthen health security and work towards ending violence against women.

We agreed to further strengthen our maritime cooperation through training of defence and law-enforcement personnel and the provision of two Guardian-class patrol boats.

2019 marks the 20th anniversary of the International Force East Timor (INTERFET). To commemorate our remarkable shared history, Australia is supporting the digitisation of Timor-Leste's video and audio archives for future generations of Timorese and visitors alike.

Australia supports Timor-Leste as it works with joint venture companies to find a pathway to develop Greater Sunrise that maximises the benefits for our close neighbour.

Australia has an enduring interest in a stable and prosperous Timor-Leste. The communiqué on our new chapter and revitalised partnership is available on the [Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade](#) website.

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