



SPOKESPERSON SIXTH CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT



**MEDIA
RELEASE**

Dili, 11 November, 2016

Government seeks to improve opportunities for exporting goods and services as it formalizes candidacy to the World Trade Organization

The Program of the Sixth Constitutional Government commits to promote trade through activities including “the creation of facilities and conditions, and the definition of programs for supporting the movement of goods inside the country and abroad.” On the 8th of November the Government took another step towards creating these facilities and conditions when the Council of Ministers agreed to formalize Timor-Leste’s candidacy to the World Trade Organization [WTO].

The Minister of State, Coordinator of Economic Affairs and Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, H.E. Estanislau da Silva, noted that joining the WTO was “critical to ensuring that Timor-Leste can diversify its economy in commerce, industry and agriculture for exports and access to markets” and explained “membership will greatly facilitate export of Timorese goods and services as well as trade with other countries”.

The WTO is based in Geneva, Switzerland and currently has 164 members. It is “the only international organization dealing with the global rules of trade between nations” and says its main function is “to ensure that trade flows as smoothly, predictably and freely as possible.” Member states sign onto agreements that are designed to create assurance and mitigate risk in order to “help producers of goods and services, exporters, and importers conduct their business”.

A delegation from the WTO Accession Team visited Timor-Leste on the 8th and 9th of November to discuss Timor-Leste’s application and met with members of the Government including Minister of State H.E. Estanislau da Silva, Minister of Planning and Strategic Investment H.E. Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão, and Minister of Commerce, Industry and Environment, H.E. Constâncio da Conceição Pinto.

The team noted that a lot of work had been done already as a part of the preparations for Timor-Leste’s accession to ASEAN and observed that the Government was demonstrating its commitment to complete the process as soon as possible. Countries are usually granted ‘observer status’ in their transition to full membership.

Government Spokesperson, Minister of State Agio Pereira said that “Timor-Leste’s steps toward membership of the World Trade Organization are the result of Government policy to create an environment conducive to international trade and condition supportive of Timor-Leste’s economic diversification. Such steps are key to setting the nation up for success.” **ENDS**



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