

**MESSAGE BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC,
DR. FRANCISCO GUTERRES LU OLO,
TO THE BELOVED PEOPLE OF TIMOR-LESTE
DILI, 10 OCTOBER 2017**

Beloved people of Timor-Leste,

my brothers and sisters, I am addressing you as your Head of State by the *Radio Televisio de Timor-Leste* for the fifth time.

In this way, I again remind you all of the commitment I made to our people on the occasion of my swearing-in on 20 May 2017. During my term in office I will stand firm in the commitments I made, with respect for the Constitution of Timor-Leste.

Our Constitution places the highest value on our most precious asset. This precious asset is you and all of us, men and women, young and old, regardless of beliefs or status, everywhere, across the entire national territory.

Out of respect for the people, the Constitution grants us all, over the age of 17, the right to participate in two great elections every five years - the first to choose the President of the Republic, and the second to choose the party that best represents the people in the National Parliament and to rule the country.

Through fair and free elections on 22 July 2017, and in accordance to the law and regulations applicable to the parliamentary elections, only five from the twenty-one parties now have parliamentary seats.

In the latest legislative election, no party achieved a majority to form a government on his own for the next five years.

Thus, the people ask and expect that the five elected parties join hands. But how? It is up to each party to assess that, and not to the President of the Republic.

As Head of State, I have the duty to hear and support pursuant to on my constitutional duties.

It is my duty to help the parties foster the spirit of tolerance and national unity, consolidate peace and stability, and ensure the respect for our Constitution.

In this spirit, as President of the Republic, I summoned each party after the official announcement of the electoral results. I heard with great satisfaction that all parties wish to contribute to peace and stability. I could see and feel that all parties wish to join hands for the sake of national development and the improvement of the living conditions of our people, now and in the future.

After several individual meetings with the leaders of each party, I asked FRETILIN, as the winning party, to engage with the other parties in order to form a Government. I appointed Dr. Mari Alkatiri as Prime Minister after listening to the parties not included in the government coalition.

In the process of forming a Government for the next five years, there were challenges which prevented the formal inauguration of the 7th Government from occurring in a short time.

After a series of meetings, the FRETILIN-PD coalition moved forward and I, as per our Constitution, have sworn in the members of the 7th Government in two different sessions.

Throughout the whole process, until the inauguration of the 7th Government, the opposition parties showed political maturity and statesmanship in promising to be a constructive opposition.

I believe this constructive opposition will present proposals for improving governance and, therefore, the welfare of our people.

I strongly believe that the 7th Government will stand firm, because all parties put above everything else the principles, values and commitments that sustain government stability and showed statesmanship. While the formation of the Government has taken longer than in previous ones, time is not the most important factor in this particular situation. More important than time is the quality of what we build in due course.

The 7th Government has already submitted a draft version of a program presenting the Government's vision for the development of our country to the National Parliament. We will see members of Parliament debating, sharing their opinions, hearing, changing and, in the end, approve the Government program as a program of us all, the whole nation.

I am convinced that all members will show political maturity, and will make the effort to improve the program of the 7th Government, so that the people have better living conditions, now and in the future.

As President of the Republic, I will continue to engage in dialogue with political parties, whether or not they seat in Parliament, and with organisations and the civil society, fulfilling the commitments I made.

With the contributions and good will of all, in Parliament and state institutions, among others, and through the media, we will be able to improve what is necessary to develop Timor-Leste and achieve better living conditions.

I call on the people, especially the youth, to be patient as the members of Parliament review the government's program which will provide greater welfare.

We want our country to move ahead guided by the wisdom of us all, without exclusion of parties, organisations or anyone.

To serve our people, we must listen to each other, enter into dialogue and make commitments based on principles and values, to find better paths and do better.

I believe we will all do so!

Thank you!

Note: If there is any doubt in English version, the Tetum version prevails.