

October 10, 2012

**Remarks by H.E. Mr. Yoshitaka Hanada,
Ambassador of Japan to Timor-Leste
on the occasion of the Press Conference on Japan's Assistance for
Timor-Leste's Accession to ASEAN**

Mr. Sarmiento de Oliveira Soares, Secretary of State for ASEAN Affairs,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning.

Thank you very much for coming to the Embassy of Japan to attend this press conference on Japan's assistance for Timor-Leste's accession to ASEAN.

Under the "*Japan-Singapore Partnership Program for the 21st Century (JSPP21)*", which was signed in 1997 between the Governments of Japan and Singapore to provide joint technical assistance to developing countries in diverse fields, 19 Timor-Leste's government officials who are here with us today will participate in the training courses on trade and commerce in Singapore, from October 15th to 19th.

I am very pleased to see off the second dispatch of Timor-Leste's government officials participating in the JSPP21. This training course on trade and commerce was also held in February this year and 13 participants, including officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Agriculture and Fishery, the Ministry of Tourism, Commerce and Industry and the Ministry of Justice participated.

Based on the Joint Press Statement by Japan and Timor-Leste on March 9, 2009, Japan has been supporting Timor-Leste's smooth accession to ASEAN, especially in the human resources development.

As part of our support, Japan dispatched a trade and commerce expert to the ASEAN National Secretariat, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, from October to December 2010 and from June to August 2011, to advise and support the Secretariat in the fields of trade and commerce, especially with a view to strengthening policy execution capacity in trade and

commerce.

Japan also organized a study visit for the ASEAN National Secretariat officials to Jakarta in October 2011. Five officials participated in this visit to enhance knowledge of ASEAN and to establish networks with the ASEAN related institutions and partners.

I would like to reiterate that Japan will continue to cooperate with Timor-Leste in order to realize its accession to ASEAN at the earliest possible stage.

I believe that joining ASEAN will "give Timor-Leste access to an established regional forum where important issues such as security, economic development and integration, and socio-cultural matters can be pursued".

Taking this opportunity, I would like to introduce Japan's cooperation for human resources development in Timor-Leste. Currently, 15 Timorese are studying in Japan and 7 more Timorese will enter university by the end of next March. Also, the Government of Japan is going to invite 160 Timorese youths to Japan under youth exchange programs by the end of next March. In addition, approximately 110 Timorese are expected to participate in the JICA training programs by the end of next March.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.

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