

**Short Remarks by H.E. Mr. Yoshitaka Hanada
at the Press Conference for the TL-Okinawa Youth
Exchange Program coordinated
by the "O Rai Timor" Association
on Thursday 8, November 2012**

Ms. Tazuko Miyara, Vice Chairperson of the "O Rai Timor"
Association,

Mr. Lopes Armando, Education Director of Lautem
District

Mr. Caetano Dos Santos, School Teacher of Torenta de
Agosto Primary School,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you very much for coming to the Press Conference
today.

I was very glad when I heard this youth exchange program
from Ms. Miyara. That is because it seems Okinawa
Prefecture and Timor-Leste has had a close
relationship for a long time. For instance,
traditional textiles (Tais) in this country are quite
similar to those of Okinawa. This may show us that the
two archipelagos had cultivated friendship and
people-to-people interactions over the Sea in the
past.

In June this year, approximately 10 Timorese youths
in Comoro Village visited Okinawa under a youth
exchange program. And, they showed a traditional dance

and music to liven up the Inauguration Ceremony of the New Embassy Building with 10 Japanese youths who visited Timor-Leste under a reciprocal youth exchange program. Their cross cultural performances led us to foster and strengthen friendship between the two countries.

I strongly believe that this youth exchange program initiated by the "O Rai Timor" Association will also give the youths of both countries a great opportunity to deepen their understanding of a different culture and life through their first hand experience, leading them to foster and strengthen friendship.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Ms.Miyara, Mr. Armando, and Mrs. Santos for your generous commitment to promote a closer relationship between Timor-Leste and Japan through people-to-people's interactions.

Thank you very much.

[End]