

**Two Japanese Ambulances Handed Over to the Leprosy Mission Timor-Leste**8<sup>th</sup> November, 2024

On 8<sup>th</sup> November, 2024 - The Government of Japan handed over two Japanese ambulances to the Leprosy Mission Timor-Leste (MLTL). The handover ceremony was held at the headquarter of the Leprosy Mission Timor-Leste in Tibar, Liquica Municipality. Mr. Tetsuya KIMURA, Ambassador of Japan to Timor-Leste was joined by Ms. Dulce da Cunha, Senior Adviser of the Minister of Solidarity, Social and Inclusion, Mr. Kazuhiro Morita of the Society for Promotion of Japanese Diplomacy (SPJD), Mr. Shinnosuke Kawabe, Mr. Shintaro Osumi of the Fire Department of Tokai City, NGO staff, and other stakeholders.

The two ambulances had been used in local cities in Japan and donated to Timor-Leste through the Japanese Government's Grant Assistance for Grass-roots Human Security Project (GGP), in cooperation with the Society for Promotion of Japanese Diplomacy. The ambulances will be utilized in the activities of MLTL, and are expected to enhance access to medical care for people in Liquiçá municipality. Prior to the handover ceremony, two Japanese emergency medical technicians from the Society for Promotion of Japanese Diplomacy provided four-day training courses to MLTL staff.

During the ceremony, Ambassador Kimura stated, "The Japanese Government has been promoting initiatives to eliminate discrimination against those affected by leprosy and their family members in the international society, and is actively engaged in enlightenment activities, medical support, and human rights education. The Japanese government is committed to supporting Timor-Leste in its efforts to improve access to medical care in this regard."

He added, "It is also important that they are properly maintained and managed in the future. MLTL staff are receiving training from the Society for Promotion of Japanese Diplomacy. I hope that the MLTL staff will use the ambulances responsibly, drawing on the skills acquired from training. Therefore I wish for the two ambulances will be remembered for a long time as symbols of friendship between Timor-Leste and Japan."

The Government of Japan has implemented 141 GGP projects in all municipalities in Timor-Leste since 2000. This is the second time that Japan provides ambulances to Timor-Leste.