

Speech
by HE Ambassador Tetsuya KIMURA
on the occasion of Emperor's Birthday Reception
27 February 2025

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I would like to start my speech by expressing my sincere gratitude to His Excellency President Dr. José Ramos-Horta for gracing this occasion tonight, and for continuously extending support to the cooperation between Japan and Timor-Leste.

Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress have always prayed for the well-being of the people of Japan and the people of the world. Their Majesties are especially praying for world peace and concerned about the victims of natural disasters and those working on the front lines to provide relief both at home and abroad. His Majesty is the symbol of the State, and of the unity of the people of Japan.

This is the third time for me to host our National Day Reception here in Timor-Leste. Two years ago, His Excellency Mr. President commented that my speech in Tetun was "clear and understandable but with strong Japanese accent." Last year, Mr President commented my speech in Tetun was "with soft Japanese accent". This year again, I will read the last part of my speech in Tetun, so let's see how Mr President will comment this time. Maybe the third time is the charm.

Now, looking back the last two years, I am pleased to acknowledge many development in our bilateral relationship. In this regard, I would like to highlight H.E. Prime Minister 's visit to Japan in December 2023. Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão attended the "Commemorative Summit for the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation" in Tokyo and held a bilateral summit meeting with then Prime Minister Kishida. After the bilateral meeting, both leaders issued a Joint Press Statement, elevating the relationship to a comprehensive partnership. This document will serve as a foundation for our two governments to further strengthen our friendship and cooperation.

Two years ago, upon my arrival, I made a promise that I would make my utmost efforts to achieve tangible progress in our bilateral relationship in the following three areas.

First, I wanted to further strengthen our cooperation for the major industries of Timor-Leste, namely agriculture and fisheries. Japan and Timor-Lest have a lot in common, one of them being our love for rice, coffee and flowers. Over the past years, the Government of Japan have provided constant support in rice farming in Timor-Leste, and will continue to share our expertise.

Other than rice farming, together with our partners, Japan is supporting Timorese farmers including women groups in the rural areas in cultivating vegetables, flowers, and coffee, in the hope that their lives will be improved through additional income created by these projects. JICA will start the coastal fisheries project this year.

Furthermore, currently more than 20 technical intern trainees from Timor-Leste are working in the agricultural sector in Japan, and more trainees are expected to be dispatched to Japan under the Technical Intern Training Program, to be transformed into the Employment for Skill Development Program. We expect these young Timorese to bring back home agricultural experience and knowledge to contribute to further development of Timor-Leste.

Tonight, we have some Japanese Ikebana flower arrangement using fresh flowers cultivated here in Timor-Leste. I hope you will enjoy this beautiful collaboration between Japan and Timor-Leste.

The second area I am focusing on is Japan's investment to Timor-Leste. I am very pleased to see more Japanese companies are interested in investment opportunities in Timor-Leste, namely in the areas of energy, environment and manufacturing. Since Timor-Leste's restoration of independence, Japan has contributed to the development of infrastructure, social services and human resources, as well as consistently supporting Timor-Leste's accession to the ASEAN.

As Timor-Leste progresses towards this goal, it seems that more private investment is indispensable to achieve sustainable development. For example, Tsuneishi, a Japanese shipbuilding company is closely examining the feasibility of building a shipyard in Timor-Leste. Also, a major Japanese trade and investment company is currently preparing for the construction and operation of a large-scale solar power plant project. Osaka Gas is one of the partners in the Greater Sunrise Joint Venture.

I am ready to take on whatever I can to assist these Japanese companies interested in investing in Timor-Leste and promote further investment in Timor-Leste initiated by the Japanese private sector.

The third area I endeavor to enhance is youth exchanges between the people of Japan and the people of Timor-Leste. I am happy to say that good progress is being made also in this area.

As in the previous years, last year, we again saw many young Timorese taking part in JENESYS, the youth exchange program. Last year under JENESYS, 24 young Timorese visited Japan, and five young Japanese entrepreneurs visited Timor-Leste to interact with their Timorese counterparts and learned from each other.

Furthermore, under different schemes, young Japanese volunteers engaged with Timorese youth through sports and cultural exchange opportunities.

I hope these exchanges among future leaders of our two countries will further enhance our friendship and cooperation. Last October, the Embassy hosted "Japan Festival". Later this year, we will again organize a Japan themed event. Details will be posted in due course, so please follow

our Facebook.

I have listed up some of the progress achieved last year, but this is not the achievement that I, the Embassy of Japan nor JICA attained alone. It is the achievement brought by the collaboration with all partners including the Government of Timor-Leste, International organizations, local, Japanese and international NGOs, as well as the people of Timor-Leste.

(In Tetun)

Hau hakarak hato'o hau nia apresiasaun dala ida tan ba parseiru sira hotu, nebé pronto servisu hamutuk ho Japaun hodi ajuda povu Timor-Leste atinji sira nia objetivu no aspirasaun sira. Hau hakarak mos hato'o hau nia agradesimentu sinseru ba ema simpátikas barak no labarik sira nebe nakonu ho hamnasa, nebé hau hasoru iha fatin barak iha Timor-Leste inklui fatin hirak nebé la fasil atu asesu ba. Sira sempre fo hanoin mai hau importansia husi relasaun ema-ba-ema no potensialidade husi gerasaun foun. Sira nia hamnasa fo mai hau forsa no korajen hodi kontinua hau nia servisu hamutuk ho parseiru sira hotu.

Hau espera katak tinan ida nee sei sai tinan inesquecível relasiona ho Timor-Leste nia adezaun formal ba ASEAN. Japaun sai ona parceiro de confiança ida desde tinan 25 (rua nulu resin lima) liu ba, wainhira primeira konferênsia doadores ba Timor-Leste realiza iha Tóquio. Japaun no Timor-Leste partilha valores báziku sira hanesan democracia, direitus humanus no estado de direito, nebé sei lori forsa adisional ba ASEAN liu husi Timor-Leste nia partisipasaun.

Hau mos hakarak foti oportunidade ida nee hodi mensiona katak tinan ida nee, Japaun sei sai uma-nain ba EXPO Mundial tinan 2025 (rihun rua, rua nulu resin lima) iha Osaka, Kansai. Ami kontenti tebes tamba Timor-Leste sei partisipa, tan ida nee sei sai oportunidade diak ida ba povo Japaun no comunidade internacional hodi kunhese diak liu tan kona ba enkantu sira Timor-Leste nian.

Wainhira deit Timor-Leste presiza ami, Japaun hakarak hamriik hamutuk ho Timor-Leste nudar parseiru “fuan ba fuan” ida. Japaun kompremitidu hodi la'o hamutuk, fo liman ba malu hamutuk ho povu Timor Oan sira hodi hakat hasoru Timor-Leste nia adezaun formal ba ASEAN no depois.

Obrigado wain. Arigato gozaimashita.
