

Remarks by H.E. Mr. Yoshitaka Hanada, Ambassador of Japan to
Timor-Leste,
On the occasion of the Exchange of Notes (E/N) Signing Ceremony for the
“Project of River Training for the Protection of Mola Bridge”
Thursday, August 15, 2013

H.E. Dr. Jose Luis Guterres, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation,

Members of the Government,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning.

It is my utmost pleasure to address to all of you today on this auspicious occasion of the signing ceremony for the Exchange of Notes for the “Project of River Training for the Protection of Mola Bridge”.

As you all are well aware, one of the biggest obstacles to the development of Timor-Leste is such poor conditions of infrastructure as roads and bridges. The Mola Bridge that spans in Zumalai Sub-District in Covalima District is in the middle of the main road coming from Suai up to Capital Dili. The bridge, first constructed during the Indonesian time, was rehabilitated in 2011 by the Japanese assistance after sustaining severe damage to it. Even after the rehabilitation, the bridge has been exposed to the risk by seasonal flash floods.

In order to consolidate the safety of the bridge and make the livelihood of the community people even better, the Government of Japan has decided to make yet another intervention for this important bridge, which has broader implications for national development and prosperity.

By signing the E/N today, the Government of Japan commits approximately 11 million US Dollars to providing reliable protection to the bridge. At the completion of the project, the community people will have better access to education, healthcare and marketplaces across the river. The bridge will also be able to hold heavier traffic carrying goods to support

people's lives and materials for national development.

It has always been central to the Japanese assistance to Timor-Leste to ensure sustainable management of our projects. I am especially happy in this regard to be able to announce the launch of this project today that will no doubt increase sustainability of the bridge, hence economic resilience against adverse natural conditions.

The Government of Japan is fully committed to completing this project in a timely and appropriate manner through close coordination and cooperation with the Timorese counterparts and stakeholders.

It is hoped that the people of Timor-Leste will enjoy the benefits of a stronger bridge system in the near future and move their steady steps toward a more prosperous Timor-Leste while maintaining the bridge on their own to fully realize the bridge's potentiality.

Thank you very much for your attention.
