

Joint Press Release by Japan and the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste

“Advanced Partnership towards Growth and Prosperity”

15th March 2016, Tokyo

1. H.E. Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan, and H.E. Mr. Taur Matan Ruak, President of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, who visited Japan from 13th to 16th March 2016, at the invitation of the Government of Japan, held a summit meeting on 15th March and had a fruitful exchange of views on the relationship between Japan and Timor-Leste.
2. Both leaders welcomed the friendly and unwavering bilateral relations, and reaffirmed the common commitment to strengthen the current cooperation in order to build a future-orientated, favorable and closer relationship. In this regard, they underlined the importance of developing the bilateral relations from “cooperation for post conflict reconstruction” into a new phase of “cooperation for growth and prosperity” given the remarkable reconstruction and development of Timor-Leste.

[Overview]

3. Both leaders reaffirmed that sharing fundamental values such as democracy, freedom, and the rule of law constitutes a significant foundation of their bilateral relations. In this context, they expressed their intention to further promote dialogue at various levels to broaden the range of bilateral relations.
4. Prime Minister Abe commended Timor-Leste’s steady efforts in its nation building since the independence in 2002. President Ruak expressed his appreciation for Japan’s assistance to these efforts, such as in the area of infrastructure, agriculture and peacebuilding, including contribution by Japan Self-Defense Forces (JSDF), civilian police and election observers.

[Peace and Security]

5. Prime Minister Abe expressed his determination to lending the enduring efforts and contributing proactively to maintaining regional and global peace and prosperity as peace-loving nations under Japan’s policy of “*Proactive Contribution to Peace*” based on the principle of international cooperation and its “*Legislation for Peace and Security*.” President Ruak supported Japan’s policy of “*Proactive Contribution to Peace*,” which has enabled Japan to contribute even more actively in promoting prosperity of the region and the world. President Ruak further expressed his appreciation to the role of the JSDF which has contributed to the consolidation of peace, reconstruction and development of Timor-Leste. Prime Minister Abe welcomed Timor-Leste’s efforts and commitment at the g7+ in the context of peacebuilding among fragile and conflict-affected states.
6. Both leaders shared the view that the two countries would advance cooperation in the maritime field including maritime safety and security as an important pillar of bilateral cooperation, and Prime Minister Abe expressed his intention to continue to provide assistance to Timor-Leste to enhance its capacity of maintaining maritime security.
7. President Ruak expressed his appreciation for JSDF’s commitment to assist the capacity building in the area of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, and its

participation in the Exercise HARII HAMUTUK hosted by the Australian Defence Force. President Ruak also appreciated Japan's acceptance of personnel of Timor-Leste Defense Force to its defense educational institutes. Prime Minister Abe expressed his intention to further promote bilateral defense cooperation.

[Economic Development and People to People Relations]

8. Both leaders shared the view that Timor-Leste, as a producer of oil and natural gas, has contributed to Japan's energy security, and has an important potential in this field.
9. In view of the progress in the economic globalization and the regional integration in Asia where remarkable economic growth persists, both leaders also recognized the importance of Timor-Leste's engagement in such process.
10. Both leaders shared the view that the economic development of Timor-Leste will be achieved through improving infrastructure, developing human resources and boosting trade and investment, and they expressed their intention to further collaborate with a view to achieving quality growth of Timor-Leste.
11. Prime Minister Abe expressed his intention to provide assistance to strengthen the foundation of growth through "*Quality Infrastructure Investment*," with a view to achieving self-reliant economic development of Timor-Leste in the long term. President Ruak commended "*Partnership for Quality Infrastructure*," announced by Prime Minister Abe in May 2015.
12. Prime Minister Abe also expressed his intention to provide ODA of approximately JPY 5 billion for Timor-Leste in 2016, aiming to promote self-reliant economic and social development in such areas as infrastructure, education, agriculture, and women empowerment.
13. Both leaders emphasized the importance of connecting Japanese companies with small and medium sized enterprises in Timor-Leste to intensify trade and investment between the two countries. In this regard, President Ruak welcomed JETRO's initiative in fostering industries in Timor-Leste, by means of such as dispatching experts, and recognized the importance of promoting traditional crafts and other commercial goods and products of Timor-Leste which attract Japanese consumers. They also underlined the importance of agriculture and rural development to shift the subsistence agriculture into business agriculture.
14. Prime Minister Abe expressed his intention to continue the assistance in human resource development in Timor-Leste, including through "*Industrial Human Resource Development Cooperation Initiative*" that he announced in November 2015.
15. Both leaders stressed the importance of people-to-people exchange to cement the bilateral relations. In this regard, President Ruak appreciated "JENESYS2015" exchange program through which approximately 80 young people between Timor-Leste and Japan are involved in fiscal year 2015, and expressed the importance of continued youth exchanges.
16. Both leaders stressed the importance of promoting sport exchange, including soccer, especially through the Japanese government's "*Sport for Tomorrow*" initiative. They further stated that they looked forward to the 2020 Olympic and Paralympics Games in Tokyo.
17. Both leaders shared the determination to deepen mutual understanding, and further

enhance friendship by establishing “Next Generation Exchange Program,” through which approximately 1000 visits would be made by the young people of both countries in the next 5 years.

[Regional and International Cooperation]

18. Prime Minister Abe reiterated Japan’s support to Timor-Leste’s accession to ASEAN and expressed his intention to continue to assist the effort of Timor-Leste through human resource development. President Ruak welcomed Japan’s support.
19. Both leaders unreservedly condemned the recent terrorist attacks in Jakarta, Indonesia and many other parts of the world where innocent people were killed and injured, and also shared the view on the imperative need to address the issue of violent extremism.
20. As leaders of maritime countries, both leaders affirmed that free, open, and stable seas are essential for peace, stability and prosperity of the region and the international community. They underscored the importance of the rule of law at sea, including freedom of navigation and over flight on the high seas, unimpeded lawful commerce, as well as resolving maritime disputes by peaceful means, in accordance with universally recognized principles of international law such as the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).
21. Both leaders expressed serious concern over the recent situation in the South China Sea and opposition to any unilateral actions that could change the status quo and increase tensions. They also underlined the imperative necessity to resolve differences and disputes in the South China Sea by peaceful means, exercising self-restraint without resorting to the threat or use of force in accordance with international law. In this context, Prime Minister Abe emphasized the importance of coastal states refraining from unilateral actions that cause permanent physical change to the marine environment in areas pending final delimitation, and President Ruak took note of the importance. They also reaffirmed the importance of the full and effective implementation of the Declaration of the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea and the expeditious establishment of an effective Code of Conduct in the South China Sea. They took note of the ongoing arbitration case under the UNCLOS brought by the Philippines, and took note that decisions of the arbitral tribunal are legally binding to the parties to the dispute.
22. Both leaders condemned North Korea’s fourth nuclear test and recent ballistic missile launches, and shared the view with great concern that these acts constitute direct and grave threats to the international peace and security, and are contrary to the peaceful resolution of the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula. They strongly urged North Korea to refrain from any provocation and to fully comply with the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions and to fulfill the commitments under the 2005 Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks. Furthermore, they also strongly urged North Korea to improve the human rights situation and immediately address the humanitarian concerns of the international community, including the abductions issue.
23. Prime Minister Abe commended the important role of Timor-Leste being a chair of Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa (CPLP) in 2014-2016, and expressed Japan’s intention to advance cooperation with CPLP as an observer. President Ruak welcomed Japan’s engagement in CPLP and expressed his appreciation for the

Japanese active participation in the CPLP.

24. Both leaders emphasized that the United Nations has yet to respond to the aspirations of all peoples in all nations of the world. In this regard, both sides reaffirmed the need of a UN reform that will allow it to respond to the challenges emerging from the new circumstances of the 21st century.
25. Both leaders reiterated the crucial importance of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and their strong commitment to equally strengthening its three pillars, namely nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Bearing in mind that this year marks the 20th anniversary since the opening for signature of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), they shared the need of the early entry into force and universalisation of the CTBT, and welcomed the adoption of the United Nations General Assembly resolution titled “United Action with Renewed Determination towards the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons” in December 2015.