

## **Peacebuilding Commission**

### **Ambassadorial-level meeting on Timor-Leste** *Sharing Experiences, Good Practices and Lessons Learned in the Context of South-South and Triangular Cooperation*

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1. On 26 September 2022, the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), H.E. Mr. Muhammad Abdul Muhith, convened an Ambassadorial-level meeting on Timor-Leste for the first time. The purpose of the meeting was to hear good practices and lessons learned from Timor-Leste's experience in its peacebuilding process, from the Government, civil society and international and regional partners, in the spirit of South-South and triangular cooperation, and to utilize the Commission platform to mobilize international support for the country's efforts to work through its remaining challenges, particularly in the areas of economic development and women and youth empowerment. The Commission was briefed by the President of Timor-Leste, the former President and Prime Minister of Timor-Leste, the Assistant Secretary-General for the Middle East, Asia and the Pacific in the Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations, a representative of the Asian Development Bank, and two civil society representatives from Timor-Leste. The General Secretary of the Group of Seven Plus (g7+), the Resident Coordinator in Timor-Leste and the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support in the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs also made remarks.

2. In his opening remarks, the Chair of the PBC recalled the progress made by Timor-Leste in achieving its peacebuilding priorities, including facilitating reconciliation and institution-building, laying the foundation for civil society participation and prioritizing participation of women and youth. He underscored the important role played by Timor-Leste, particularly through the g7+, in supporting other conflict-affected countries, by sharing its experience and helping international and regional partners to improve their engagements and coordination. Encouraged by the commitment of Timor-Leste to engage with the Peacebuilding Commission and share its experience with the wider international community, he stressed that the meeting offered an opportunity not only to learn from Timor-Leste, but also to identify the areas where further support can be provided.

3. H.E. Mr. José Ramos-Horta, President of Timor-Leste, expressed his deep appreciation to the UN system and the international community for supporting the country's peacebuilding effort. He emphasized the critical role of quality leadership, represented by H.E. Mr. Xanana Gusmão, in Timor-Leste's peacebuilding process, noting that this leadership was based on authority deriving from credibility and legitimacy emanated from the people of Timor Leste. He underlined that, under quality and committed leadership, Timor-Leste took a multi-track approach to reconciliation in which the country did not only focus on national reconciliation, but also on reconciliation at the international level, especially with Indonesia, based on the strong will to heal wounds and extend the hand of friendship to each other. He emphasized the country was able to move forward and go through a peaceful transition through this multi-track reconciliation process. Without quality leadership on the ground, international support would not have succeeded, he emphasized. He recognized the role of United Nations, especially the contributions of the UN peacekeeping operations in fortifying peace and stability in Timor Leste. He also underscored the importance of political will and long-term commitment of the

international community, especially Member States of the United Nations, to provide the necessary support for countries emerging from conflict based on the needs of these countries.

4. H.E. Mr. Xanana Gusmão, former President and Prime Minister of Timor-Leste, also expressed his gratitude for the UN system's support for Timor-Leste's democratic transition. Recalling Timor-Leste's experience in state-building, he noted that addressing injustice and building an effective justice sector were particularly challenging, however, he welcomed the important participation of civil society and the private sector in the country's peacebuilding process. He further emphasized that the g7+ is a well-suited platform for South-South cooperation, which facilitates exchanging of good practices and lessons learned regarding peacebuilding and reconciliation. Based on his experience in engaging with the member countries of the g7+, he identified the lack of political will to engage in dialogue and reconciliation as a common obstacle to sustaining peace. He encouraged the Peacebuilding Commission to further exercise its convening power to bring together different groups and facilitate dialogue in support of conflict-affected countries, especially the member countries of the g7+. He also encouraged more involvement of the PBC in peacekeeping settings. In concluding, stressing the need to take a context-specific approach, he emphasized the importance of national ownership and leadership in peacebuilding.

5. Mr. Khaled Khiari, Assistant Secretary-General for the Middle East, Asia and the Pacific, recalled that the United Nations had accompanied Timor-Leste's path to independence and democratic consolidation, including by deploying four major UN missions with two parallel UN-approved military coalitions from 1999 to 2012. He noted that Timor-Leste has made tremendous progress, with a strong commitment to peace, reconciliation, and inclusion. Whilst welcoming Timor-Leste's commitment to the 2030 Agenda, he stressed the importance of





demonstrated its commitment to supporting peacebuilding in other conflict affected countries through South-South and triangular cooperation.

- They recognized the challenges and opportunities facing Timor-Leste, including reducing poverty and inequality, diversifying the economy, continuing to empower women and youth and addressing the adverse effects of climate change. They welcomed the efforts made by Timor-Leste, including through the adoption and implementation of a Strategic Development Plan, the 2017 SDGs Roadmap and the 2016 National