



Statement by

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**to the
Sixth Committee
of the 67th United Nations General Assembly
on
Agenda Item 83: The rule of law at the national
and international levels**

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Check Against Delivery

Mr. Chairman

At the outset, let me congratulate you and your Bureau on your election, and assure you of Timor-Leste's full support and commitment to the work of this important committee.

Timor-Leste aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Timor-Leste is committed to promoting the rule of law at national and international levels, as it is the cornerstone to achieving our goals of development and the enjoyment of all fundamental human rights.

Developments in this regard have included laws on the establishment of the organs of governance, citizenship, political parties, civil service, revenue system, petroleum development, internal security, immigration and asylum, the health system, public prosecution and the presidential and parliamentary elections.

I take this opportunity to highlight the recent Presidential and Parliamentary elections, which were held in a peaceful and calm environment further contributing to the consolidation of peace and democracy. These elections were organized wholly by the national electoral bodies (STAE and CNE), showing the progress made in strengthening the country's electoral system over the past 10 years.

It is also important to note the efforts put towards increasing women's participation in the electoral process and in all levels of government. This resulted in an increase in the representation of women in Parliament, which is now at 38%.

Mr. Chairman,

As a young post-conflict country, Timor-Leste knows the importance of working toward a peaceful solution to problems, while strengthening the rule of law, justice in the broader sense encompasses social, economic, political and legal sectors and can only be achieved in an environment of peace. In this regard, Timor-Leste has prioritized the building of strong Justice Institutions that complement the work being done in policing and security sector reform.

The justice program also took major strides to bring justice to people outside of the capital, by supporting the justice decentralization process and thus providing technical assistance to the 3 district justice institutions (courts, prosecutor office, and public defender office), in line with efforts relating to the Justice Sector Strategic Plan for 2011-2030.

Apart from a focus on institution building, Timor-Leste values and believes strongly in the sharing of experiences and best practices with the international community.

Timor-Leste co-chaired the High-level Side Event entitled The New Deal: g7+ Perspectives and Experiences, which demonstrated the value of experience sharing and the need to ensure national ownership and leadership in building resilient institutions and capacities, with the support of the

international community when requested. This is also highlighted in the Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals, as a foundation for economic growth and sustainable development.

The importance of strong partnerships should also be stressed, and Timor-Leste has benefitted from such partnerships. For example, Australia's Justice Sector Support program is providing assistance in strengthening the interface between the police, judicial and correctional systems, aiming to improve access to and delivery of justice to the population.

The crosscutting nature of the rule of law was also reflected in the high-level debate on the rule of law at national and international levels whereby the links between the rule of law, economic growth, human rights, poverty eradication, and sustainable development were highlighted by many of the participants.

Mr. Chairman,

Timor-Leste reaffirms the mutual benefits between human rights, the rule of law, and the promotion of democracy. Our Constitution enshrines these principles and guarantees that the State will promote the fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens while respecting the principles of a democratic state based on the rule of law.

International treaties have also played a role in this quite soon after independence Timor Leste ratified all core human rights instruments. However, due to capacity constraints reporting to the respective treaty bodies has been a challenge. The Government is continually working to improve upon this and having an expert elected to CEDAW has been a mutually reinforcing opportunity for Timor-Leste, with the knowledge gained influencing domestic policy, and strengthening our reporting capacities.

Timor-Leste supports the role of international courts and tribunals in strengthening the rule of law at the international level, as such the process is already underway to accept the compulsory jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice. Timor-Leste is also a strong supporter of the International Criminal Court and notes the recent court decisions and additional ratifications as a reflection of the importance of the Court's work, and global efforts to combat impunity.

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to conclude by reaffirming Timor-Leste's commitment to strengthening the rule of law at the national and international levels.

Thank you.