

**5TH ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM OF EXPERTS AND
EMMINENT PERSONS MEETING IN DILI, 27-28
JANUARY 2011**

Opening Remarks ARF SOM Leader of Timor-Leste

Your Excellency, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Your Excellency Vice Minister Foreign Affairs, Your Excellency General Boonsrang Nuimpradit, ARF Experts and Eminent Persons, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Good morning and welcome to Timor-Leste.

I am honoured to co-chair the 5th Meeting of the Association of South East Asian Nations Regional Forum of Experts and Eminent Persons, with the Kingdom of Thailand.

As a member of the ASEAN Regional Forum, the people and government of Timor-Leste are privileged to have been afforded the opportunity, to share with you our country, and the great developments we have achieved in recent years. Many of these would not have been possible without the assistance of our friends in the region. To ensure peace and stability within the region, and to address the fundamental objectives of ASEAN, we look forward to offering our full attention to the proceedings, objectives and outcomes of this Forum.

As we commence the 1st ASEAN Regional Forum Meeting for the 2nd decade of the 21st century, it is timely that we reflect on ASEAN's contribution to the region over the past decade. We must continue to build upon what has already been accomplished, in order to strengthen and empower the member nations.

Over the course of this Forum we will discuss opportunities for us, as a regional community with

common aspirations and interests, to further develop the strategic objectives of ASEAN. In developing Preventive Diplomacy for the peace and shared prosperity of the region, it is important that we develop robust forms of communication and dialogue.

During this time, you will be working with ARF Participants who are here to share their views and aspirations for enhancing peace and security in the region. I look forward to hearing the constructive dialogue and contributions of all Participants in developing plans for the future.

I would like to express my appreciation to all the nations that assisted in the preparation of this, the 5th ASEAN Regional Forum of Experts and Eminent Persons Meeting. In particular, I would like to thank the Kingdom of Thailand as co-chair, for their role in the organisation of this meeting.

Thank you and Obrigado Barak.