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Timor-Leste

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I. Methodology

1. The preparation of the report benefited from broad participation, and involved an inter-ministerial working group made up of human rights focal points, coordinated by the Ministry of Justice. In addition to an initial phase based around the collection of data, sessions of the working group were held with members of the government and civil society.
2. Public consultation played a key role in the preparation of the Universal Periodic Review in order for data to be collected in seven of Timor-Leste's thirteen districts, chosen randomly. This public consultation involved the participation of community representatives, including women and children. The public consultation process culminated in the conducting of a national consultation in Dili.
3. In order to supplement the information collected during the consultations the inter-ministerial team conducted an analysis of relevant documents, including legislation, policies, ministerial programmes and reports.
4. The final draft of the report was approved by the Council of Ministers before being submitted to the Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review process.

II. General description

5. The Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste (Timor-Leste) is a democratic, sovereign and independent State based on the rule of law, constituted in 2002. The country occupies the Eastern part of the island of Timor, as well as the enclave of Oe-Cusse Ambeno, the island of Ataúro and the islet of Jaco. Timor-Leste covers a land area of 14,919 square kilometres and has a population of 1,066,582 inhabitants. Tetum and Portuguese are the official languages, and around 16 other languages are recognized as national languages. A number of different religions are practiced in Timor-Leste, the largest of these being Catholicism, all being practised in an atmosphere of tolerance, without inter-religious violence.
6. Administratively, the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste is divided into 13 districts, 65 sub-districts, 442 *sucos*¹ and 2225 villages. A process to create municipalities is in progress and will provide them with administrative and financial autonomy.
7. A large part of the population is composed of children and young people under the age of 24, representing almost 60% of its total. The population resides predominantly in rural areas, with one third of the population living in urban areas. Timor-Leste was ranked 122 in the 2010 Human Development Index (HDI), with an average life expectancy at birth of 62 years. Soon after independence, Timor-Leste was among the lowest ranked countries in the HDI.
8. After over four hundred years of Portuguese rule, Timor-Leste unilaterally declared its independence on 28 November 1975. Even before receiving international recognition for its independence, the country was invaded by Indonesia, which considered the territory of Timor-Leste as its twenty-seventh province. In August 1999, as a result of the popular consultation carried out by the United Nations, the majority of the population, expressed their desire for independence from the occupying country. On 20 May 2002, after two years of United Nations transitional administration (UNTAET), Timor-Leste became independent and, as a Sovereign State, became a member of the United Nations (UN) in September of that same year.

III. Legal and institutional framework

A. Organization of powers

9. Timor-Leste is a democratic State based on the rule of law. The Constitution of 2002² adopted a semi-presidential system, observing the principle of separation and interdependence of powers between the sovereign bodies: the President of the Republic, the National Parliament, the Government and the courts (Art. 69 CRDTL). The functions of the State are shared by the sovereign bodies, with the President of the Republic, the National Parliament and the Government being responsible for the political function, the National Parliament and the Government for the legislative function, the Government for the executive function and the courts for the judicial function.

10. The President of the Republic is the Head of State and Supreme Commander of the armed forces (Art. 74 CRDTL) and is elected by universal and direct suffrage (Art. 76 CRDTL). The President may, under certain conditions, dissolve the National Parliament, dismiss the Government and remove the Prime Minister. The President has also the power to request the Supreme Court of Justice to undertake anticipatory and abstract review of the constitutionality of norms, and to verify unconstitutionality by omission (Art. 85(e) CRDTL).

11. The National Parliament is the body representing all Timorese citizens and is vested with legislative, supervisory and political decision-making powers (Art. 92 CRDTL). Its members, who may range in number from a minimum of 55 to a maximum of 65, are elected by universal and direct suffrage (Art. 93 CRDTL).

12. The Government is the body responsible for directing and implementing the general policy of the country and is the supreme body of the Public Administration (Art. 103 CRDTL). The Prime Minister is appointed by the President of the Republic, in accordance with the results of the elections for the National Parliament, and the remaining members of the Government are proposed by the Prime Minister (Art. 106 CRDTL). The Government is, therefore, accountable to the President of the Republic and to the National Parliament (Art. 107 CRDTL).

13. The courts are responsible for administering justice, and are independent and subject only to the Constitution and the law. The courts are prohibited from applying rules which contravene the Constitution or the principles enshrined within it (Art. 120 CRDTL). The Supreme Court of Justice is the highest body in the courts hierarchy and has powers regarding legal, constitutional and electoral issues (Art. 124 CRDTL). These powers are provisionally assumed by the Court of Appeal. The Constitution also provides for the creation of special courts, one example being the Audit Court (Art. 123 (1)(b) CRDTL), which is currently being established.

B. Constitutional guarantees of rights and freedoms

14. The value and dignity of the human being are guiding principles of the Constitution. Based on these, every individual is guaranteed civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. The international system of human rights occupies a privileged position in the national legal order, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 guides the interpretation of the fundamental rights enshrined in the Constitution, with international law taking precedence over ordinary national law.

15. International human rights law has played a prominent role in the history of Timor-Leste. Furthermore, the international standards of human rights coincide with the country's

vision regarding the dignity of the human being. In this sense, in 2003, Timor-Leste ratified seven conventions on human rights, incorporating these instruments into the national legal order: the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhumane or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (CRMW). The country has also ratified several optional protocols, including the protocols of the ICCPR, the CEDAW and the CRC. Timor-Leste is also a State party to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and the International Labour Organization Conventions on Forced Labour (Convention 29), freedom of association and protection of the right to organize (Convention 87), the right to organize and collective bargaining (Convention 98) and on the worst forms of child labour and immediate action with a view to their elimination (Convention 182) and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, specially women and children.

16. Timor-Leste is defining a national policy to implement rights for persons with disabilities, in order to assume the commitments by which it will soon be bound, when the country ratifies the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The National Policy for Mental Health and Community-Based Rehabilitation Strategy has already been adopted.

17. The system of human rights protection in Timor-Leste has also an independent national body for the defence of human rights, the Human Rights and Justice Ombudsman, which is in conformity with the Paris Principles. In 2008 the International Coordinating Committee of National Human Rights Institutions recognized the Timor-Leste Ombudsman as an "A" status institution.

18. Under the supervision of the Ministry of Justice, the National Directorate of Human Rights and Citizenship (DNDHC) is the body responsible for disseminating information to the population about their rights and duties and assessing new statutes in the light of human rights, in addition to their dissemination and socialization.

19. The Secretary of State for the Promotion of Equality (SEPI) focuses on the issues of promoting gender equality, while the Ministry of Social Solidarity is responsible for the protection and promotion of the rights of risk groups, including children, persons with disabilities, the elderly and widows and widowers.

20. Within the Ministry of Justice, Timor-Leste also has a National Commission for the Rights of the Child (CNDC), dedicated to implementing children's rights. With the approval of the Children's Code, it is intended that this body will gain institutional and functional autonomy, making it an independent administrative institution.

21. Timor-Leste has also created an institution which specializes in fighting corruption, the Anti-Corruption Commission (CAC). This body seeks to respond to the aspirations for transparency and accountability which are demanded by most of the civil society, which regards this crime as an attack on human rights.

C. Legal System

22. As a result of its historical circumstances, Timor-Leste's legal order is complex in character. Alongside the national legislation, the Indonesia legislation in force in 1999 and UNTAET regulations are also applicable, until such time as it is revoked and unless it does

not contravene with the Constitution. The laws adopted from the organs with legislative powers have been progressively replacing this legislation, guaranteeing a harmonized legal order which reflects the socio-cultural and political situation of the country and which is in line with international law.

23. In relation to the legislation directly relevant for human rights, the following elements of the current legal order may be highlighted: the Special Regime within Criminal Procedure for Cases of Terrorism and Violent or Highly Organized Crime (2006), the Basic Law on Education (2008), the Law against Domestic Violence (2010), the disciplinary rules of the national police force (PNTL) and of the defence forces (F-FDTL) (2004 and 2006), the Law on Freedom of Assembly and Demonstration (2006), the Criminal Code (2009), the Code of Criminal Procedure (2005), the Witness Protection Law (2009), and the Elderly and Disabled Persons Allowance (2008), amongst others. Some legislation are currently in draft form or awaiting approval: the Special Regime for the Definition of Real Estate Ownership (Land Law), the Children's Code, the Legal Regime for Adoption, the Labour Code, the Civil Code, the Law on Human Trafficking, the Law on the Guardianship of Minors and the Law on Access to the Courts, amongst others.

IV. Achievements and challenges in the protection and promotion of human rights

A. Right to life, liberty, prohibition of torture and ill treatment and freedom from slavery

24. The State values and protects the right to human life. The right to life may not be suspended under any circumstance, and the death penalty does not exist in Timor-Leste.

25. The arbitrary use of lethal force by security and defence forces is prohibited and represents a criminal act punishable by law. Internal regulations, in line with international standards, regulate the use of force, and the mechanisms for supervising and ensuring the accountability of the police and the defence forces are being strengthened.

26. No person may be illegally detained and detention, in accordance with the Code of Criminal Procedure, may only be used as a last resort. In Timor-Leste the institution of *habeas corpus* is provided for in the Constitution and in the law. Legal rules have also been adopted setting out specific time limits for remand in custody, the capacity of the courts has been increased, and coordination between the different authorities that make up the criminal system has been improved.

27. Torture is strictly prohibited and is a criminal offence punishable under the terms of the Criminal Code. Any evidence obtained in this way is inadmissible in the courts. There are no recent reports of allegations of torture committed by the security forces, although cases of ill treatment by the police, F-FDTL and prison guards have been reported. Any ill treatment by law enforcement officials is heavily censured by the Timorese society. Greater awareness of the society and the strengthening of institutional mechanisms for accountability have resulted in an increase in the number of reports of alleged ill treatment. With the increased capacity of the inspection and disciplinary bodies, more cases have been investigated. Among the disciplinary measures applied we may highlight suspension, dismissal and the payment of fines, and, in some cases, criminal proceedings are instigated.

28. Limited preparation and training is one of the factors which contribute to the existence of reprehensible behaviour by members of the security and defence forces, and for this reason Timor-Leste is making efforts to rectify this situation and improve the quality of the operating capability of its forces. Besides preparation and training carried out

by the United Nations police (UNPOL), cooperation programmes have been established with Australia and Portugal which seek to enhance the capacities of the national police in several areas of activity. Some members of the police forces have also participated in specialized training programmes in other countries.

29. The Timorese State recognizes that ill treatment occurs in schools in the form of corporal punishment and verbal abuse. The Ministry of Education has established a policy of “zero tolerance” for teachers who display this type of behaviour. The Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Social Solidarity, the PNTL’s Vulnerable Persons Unit, and organizations of the civil society have made efforts to increase teachers’ awareness regarding the banning of the use of corporal punishment and other ill treatment of students, and also the advantage of using other educational methods in order to guarantee discipline in schools. This joint programme also aims to support students so that they may report potential situations of ill treatment in schools.

30. It is recognized that, in recent years, Timor-Leste has been a destination of human trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation. Timor-Leste combats human trafficking by criminal means, also guaranteeing assistance to the victims of this crime, via concerted actions between the Ministry of Social Solidarity and the Ministry of Health, namely by providing medical assistance, psychological support and counselling. The Government has also established partnerships with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to provide temporary shelter for these victims. Repatriation is the solution that has been found for most victims of human trafficking, although permission to remain in Timor-Leste is granted whenever repatriation does not prove appropriate.³

B. Freedom of expression, association, assembly and demonstration

31. The Constitution of Timor-Leste sets out freedom of expression, association, assembly and demonstration as fundamental rights, and several statutes have been approved which constitute a coherent legal framework ensuring the effectiveness of these rights, including the laws on political parties and their funding (2004 and 2008), on freedom of assembly and demonstration (2006), the practice of martial arts (2008) and on the registration of non-profit organizations (2005).

32. All persons are entitled to express their ideas directly or via the media, with no barrier but for their own conscience, with defamation not being a criminal offence. Freedom of the press and independence of the media from political power are assured. In 2010, a national policy on the media was adopted, having as one of its objective the strengthening of the media in order to guarantee its freedom, independence and pluralism. Freedom of the press is a reality in Timor-Leste, and there is no type of censorship or coercion.

33. The State guarantees the existence of a public radio and television service with the *Rádio de Timor-Leste* and *Televisão de Timor-Leste* (RTL and TVTL respectively), which are currently the means of communication with greatest coverage in the country. As organs of state communication, TVTL and RTL are bound by the legal duties of professionalism, objectivity, impartiality and inclusivity. Both promote plural spaces of debate on critical aspects of Timorese society and politics, which involve the participation of representatives from the Government, the opposition and civil society. RTL and TVTL dedicate time in their schedules to the broadcasting of programmes produced by the civil society, a radio and television service which is free of charge. Besides the public radio station, Timor-Leste has numerous private stations, including community radios, which are greatly supported by the Government. Radio assumes a highly important social function as the means of communication most used by the population, and all districts have at least one community radio.

34. Timor-Leste has four daily newspapers and four weekly newspapers, all of which are based in the capital. The newspapers are published in Tetum, Portuguese, English and Bahasa Indonesia, thus guaranteeing access to information to a diversified audience. In order to ensure access to information, the Government of Timor-Leste has established a partnership with the Timor-Leste Press Club to facilitate the free distribution of the main newspapers in the *Sucos*. The written press is also distributed to the community radios in the districts, thus supporting the broadcasting of information to the country rural areas.

35. All the universities in Timor-Leste, including the state university, have academic freedom for teaching, research and the publication of studies and analyses.

36. In Timor-Leste there is a rich sense of association, of a political, social and cultural nature. This situation is evidenced, for example, by the large number of political parties, with fifteen parties competing in the 2007 legislative elections. In 2010, over 400 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were registered with the Timor-Leste NGO Forum. In addition to the NGOs there are other associations in Timor-Leste, including numerous social movements and community-based organizations.

37. Civil society is a critical partner in the political process. Non-governmental organisations are involved in a wide variety of programmes in different areas, at the level of advocacy and also the provision of services. The Timorese State provides substantial support to organizations of the civil society, with a particular emphasis on religious groups, namely via exemption from the payment of rent on state property and taxes, in addition to providing financial support for the implementation of their activities. In 2007 the Office of the Adviser on Civil Society was set up within the Office of the Prime Minister to facilitate communication and strengthen the partnership between the Government and civil society

38. The right to demonstrate is guaranteed by the Constitution and regulated by law. All persons are entitled to demonstrate without the need for pre-authorization from the public authorities. The police have a legal duty to guarantee that demonstrations occur without interference and to ensure public order. The right to present petitions and complaints to the public authorities, either individually or as a group, is also provided in the Constitution (Art. 42 CRDTL).

C. Elections and political participation

39. Democratic participation of citizens in the political process is rooted in the principles and guarantees of the Constitution and prescribed by law. The electoral process in Timor-Leste is composed of three types of electoral acts: presidential elections, legislative elections and local elections. All three processes are based on direct, secret and universal vote.

40. Elections within the *Sucos*, the local elections, are held in order to choose community leaders, the head of the *Suco* and the *Suco* Council. To date two elections have been held for community leaders (2004 and 2009). The community leadership structure plays an important role in bringing the people together, guaranteeing decentralization of the procedure for identifying and implementing priority activities which are fundamental to ensure that rights are enjoyed at community level.

41. The National Elections Committee (CNE) is an independent body, provided for in the Constitution, which is responsible for supervising electoral acts, from the registration of voters to the process of vote-counting (Art. 65(6) CRDTL). This institution has also powers to decide on complaints regarding alleged electoral irregularities, with appeals on these decisions being made to the Supreme Court of Justice. The latter, in turn, also has powers to validate the election results, this being an important guarantee of supervision of the electoral process.

42. Elections held after restoration of independence were considered by national and international independent observers to be free and fair, and in line with applicable international standards.

43. Citizens are also able to participate in the governance process by means of the Open Government programme, which has been implemented for over 5 years. Ministers and their representatives meet regularly with the people in the districts and sub-districts with the purpose of disseminating information and, at the same time, collecting public opinion on relevant issues. The Timorese public institutions take this consultation procedure seriously by guaranteeing that the opinion expressed by the community is able to influence the development and implementation of public programmes.

D. Access to justice

44. Timor-Leste is aware that an independent, transparent, effective and fair system of justice, which is able to gain the confidence of the community and provide timely responses to its justice needs, is important for the promotion and protection of human rights and consolidation of the rule of law. However, following the popular consultation, which was carried out in 1999, the State's infrastructures, including the courts, were destroyed and professionals in the justice sector left the country. Since that time, Timor-Leste has faced massive challenges regarding the development of its system of justice. Amongst these are limited infrastructure of the courts and other institutions of the justice sector, lack of an adequate number of trained professionals with experience and a national legal order, which is still under construction due to different influences rooted in its historical context.

45. During the UNTAET administration, four courts of first instance were set up in four districts, exercising jurisdiction over the whole of the national territory⁴. A court of second instance, the Court of Appeal, was also established, which temporarily exercises the powers of the Supreme Court of Justice as laid down in the Constitution. This same judicial structure has continued until the present day. Timor-Leste is currently undertaking a study on the options for strengthening the system, including with the approval of the new Organic Law of the Courts and the establishment of two new district courts.

46. Of the four district courts, only the District Court of Dili was fully operational immediately after it was established. Until 2007, the other district courts lacked the necessary conditions to hold court hearings. In some situations, as a consequence of a limited number of judges, inadequate infrastructure and other factors, the hearings of cases within the jurisdiction of the district courts were, and continue to be, held at the premises of the District Court of Dili. This situation is far from ideal, since it perpetuates the distance that exists between the formal justice system and the community. In order to rectify this situation, a local initiative of mobile justice has been launched and is based on courts travelling to hold trials across Suai and Maliana districts.

47. When the justice system was first established, it counted with the participation of legal professionals with no specific experience, although all of them held a degree in Law. In 2004, the 23 judges, 13 public prosecutors and the 9 public defenders held provisional appointment.

48. In 2004, following an assessment of the justice system, it was concluded that this represented one of the areas of greatest vulnerability in Timor-Leste. This situation was expressed, in particular, in the large number of cases pending in the courts and the large number of people remanded in custody illegally. Delays were found both at the level of the courts and at the level of the Prosecutor General's Office during the investigation phase. Since that time the situation has improved considerably, proof of this being the increase use of the formal justice system by the population.

49. In 2005, Timor-Leste created the Legal Training Centre (CFJ) with the aim of holding intensive training programmes for legal professionals. Those who successfully completed the courses would be able to receive permanent appointment for judges, public prosecutors and public defenders. In 2011, Timor-Leste now has 17 judges, 17 public prosecutors and 16 public defenders⁵, all of whom hold permanent appointment. Besides the basic training, all legal professionals have the opportunity to participate in specialized training initiatives in Timor-Leste and Portugal.

50. In order to guarantee the proper functioning of the justice institutions and impose on legal professionals respect for deontological standards, Timor-Leste has created three independent supervisory institutions for judges, prosecutors and public defenders, respectively the Supreme Council of the Judiciary, the Supreme Council of the Public Prosecutor's Office and the Supreme Council of the Public Defender's Office.

51. The Public Defender's Office is a fundamental mechanism for ensuring representation in court of those most disadvantaged, guaranteeing access to law, without costs or discrimination. Parallel to this, Timor-Leste has launched a training programme for private lawyers, at the CFJ, which seeks to develop a category of quality lawyers, guaranteeing high levels of excellence which correspond to the legitimate expectations of the Timorese people regarding their legal representation.

52. Until June 2011 the number of pending cases in the courts was around 1,829. During 2010, the courts were able to decide 703 cases. Most of the pending cases are extremely complex civil cases that entered the courts during the first years following the restoration of Independence. However new cases, especially criminal cases, are being solved at appreciable rate. In the same period, the Public Prosecutor's Office processed over 8,751 cases, 3,712 of which it concluded. The current delay in the Public Prosecutor's Office is approximately 5,039 cases, due mainly to limitations experienced in the investigation process.⁶ It is predicted that, with improvement in the work of the Public Prosecutor's Office and an increase in the number of prosecutors and support staff, the delay could be reduced to more manageable numbers in the near future. Strengthening of investigation skills is also a priority, with the establishment of a special criminal investigation body, framed within a national strategy to combat complex and organized crime, which is often connected with serious human rights violations.

53. The strategy to strengthen the legal system and the fight against corruption includes the creation of an Audit Court, in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution. The training of professionals to perform functions in this institution is under development, focusing specifically in areas related to law, finance and accounting.

E. Past violations of human rights

54. After Independence was restored, Timor-Leste was faced with the need to address issues resulting from human rights violations which took place between 1975 and 1999. In 1999, UNTAET established the Serious Crimes Unit, answerable to the Prosecutor General, with the specific mandate of investigating alleged crimes against humanity, genocide and war crimes which occurred during the period from January to October 1999. Parallel to this, UNTAET created the Special Panel for Serious Crimes as part of the District Court of Dili, which was composed of a mix of national and international judges.

55. Between 2000 and 2005, this panel held 55 trials, which resulted in the conviction of 84 individuals and the acquittal of 3. Despite the fact that this process was concluded in 2005, Timor-Leste, with the support of the United Nations, is continuing the work to conclude investigations which were still pending. In accordance with the Criminal Code, crimes against humanity, genocide and war crimes are non-prescriptible.

56. In addition to these investigations, there was the need to clarify the events that occurred during the 24 years of Indonesian occupation. The Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation (CAVR) was established in 2000. The main objectives of this Commission were the investigation of human rights violations which took place in this period, the discovery of the truth regarding these violations, the identification of the factors which led to them, the identification of the policies and practices which gave rise to them as an instrument for preventing future re-occurrence, the promotion of respect for human rights, the promotion of reconciliation and the support for the process of restoring the dignity of the victims.

57. During the CAVR hearings witness statements were collected which, for the most part, revealed serious human rights violations, making the truth of the facts known, and thus contributing to the process of national reconciliation. In its report entitled *Chega!*, published in 2005 after the conclusion of its work, CAVR produced a series of recommendations addressed to the State of Timor-Leste and members of the international community. This included recommendations on the steps needed to restore the dignity of the victims, to strengthen human rights and to prevent similar events in the future.

58. At the same time, it is essential that the relationship between Timor-Leste and Indonesia is established on a basis of trust and mutual respect, a spirit of solidarity and a position of equality. In 2006, the Commission of Truth and Friendship was created, comprising commissioners from both countries, with the aim of revealing the truth about the events which preceded and followed the popular consultation of 1999. In its report, entitled '*Per Memoriam Ad Spem*' published in 2008, this Commission concluded that there had been serious violations of human rights and that institutional responsibility for these violations was present. This body produced several recommendations on a range of issues, including the need to guarantee cooperation between the two countries, with a view to promoting mechanisms for the resolution of conflicts via cultural and educational exchange. Victim support actions were also recommended, as well as the creation of a joint commission to determine the whereabouts of missing persons.

59. Timor-Leste is committed to provide support to the victims of past human rights violations. A law is presently under debate in the National Parliament on awarding compensation to the victims and the establishment of an institution to preserve the memory of historical events in Timor-Leste.

F. Right of access to health

60. Currently, Timor-Leste has one of the lowest health indicators in Asia, although significant progress has been made. Timor-Leste's national health system includes hospital services and community-level primary health care services. There is one national hospital in Dili and five referral hospitals covering secondary health care needs spread over regional health centres throughout the territory, 187 health centres and 65 community health centres, as well as 507 SISCa outposts deployed in villages and *sucos* where access is difficult.

61. Timor-Leste does not yet have the basic conditions for ensuring specialized assistance and medical treatment in its healthcare facilities for all types of illnesses. In order to improve this situation, it has entered into agreements with hospitals in Australia, Indonesia and Singapore, establishing a system of patient referral. The costs of this assistance, to which every citizen have access to, are borne by Timor-Leste.

62. In 2002, Timor-Leste had a handful of doctors and a limited number of midwives and nurses with adequate training. Access to equipment and medicines was truly limited. In order to respond to health care needs, agreements were signed with Cuba, China, Indonesia and the Philippines for the provision of medical doctors to work in Timor-Leste. The

agreement with Cuba included the training of Timorese doctors and, to date, Cuba has received over 700 Timorese medical students. In 2010, over half of those students had returned to Timor-Leste to complete their medical training. There are plans to increase, by 2015, the rate of health care professionals to one doctor for every 1,200 inhabitants, bringing to 1,000 the total of Timorese doctors.

63. Timor-Leste established the National Health Institute with the aim of increasing the quality of nurses, midwives, pharmacists and laboratory professions via training activities. The National University of Timor-Leste (*Universidade Nacional Timor Lorosa'e* – UNTL) opened a Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences with a view to strengthening the development plan for new human resources in the health area.

64. The most prevalent illnesses in Timor-Leste are tuberculosis, malaria, and respiratory and diarrheal diseases. Tuberculosis is one of the main health problems and serious concerted action is needed to combat it. Besides medical intervention, the Government conducts awareness-raising campaigns about this illness. Timor-Leste is fully aware of the relationship between nutrition and the different illnesses, including tuberculosis and, in this context, is making a specific effort to improve family diets, which, in turn, is directly dependent on improving the economic situation of the Timorese family. The internationally recommended Directly Observed Treatment Short-Course for Tuberculosis (DOTS) is being applied, and all those diagnosed with tuberculosis have access to this system of treatment.

65. The malaria incidence rate in 2010 was 104.2/1,000 inhabitants. The Government is making a serious effort in the fight against malaria, namely through improvements in the system for the diagnosis and treatment of the disease, the increase on the distribution of insecticide-treated mosquito nets, as well as the intensification of information campaigns.

66. With the support of the World Health Organization (WHO), Timor-Leste has taken measures to eradicate leprosy. In 2004, the leprosy incidence rate was 5.18 for every 10,000 persons. The implementation of a concerted effort led to this rate being reduced to 0.73/10,000 in December 2010, meaning that leprosy no longer represents a public health issue.

67. Around 220 cases of HIV/AIDS have been identified in Timor-Leste, thus indicating that this is still a small-scale health problem. However, the existence of several vulnerability factors in relation to HIV/AIDS creates a real risk of increase in the incidence of this disease. As such, the Government of Timor-Leste has produced an action plan focusing on prevention and education, counselling, voluntary consultations and medical treatment within a multi-sectoral approach.

68. Since the restoration of Independence, the infant mortality rate has been decreasing. According to the 2004 census, the infant mortality rate was 83 deaths of infants under the age of one for every 1,000 live births. Between 2004 and 2010, the infant mortality rate fell substantially, and is currently at 45 per 1,000. A similar reduction has been achieved in relation to the mortality rate for children under the age of 5. The under-5 mortality rate in 2001 was 115 for every 1,000 births, by end of 2010 this figure had fallen drastically and it is current at 64 per 1,000. The considerable reduction in these two indicators demonstrates the positive effect of the decisive efforts made to improve health service conditions, the increased number of health related professionals and the success of the partnership with civil society in information campaigns.

69. Timor-Leste has already a quality strategy for the immunization of children, mainly with a view to reducing the mortality rate of children under 5. Indicators reveal an optimistic situation with substantial, although not ideal, cover for various types of immunization for infants who are less than a year old, in addition to immunization against tetanus for pregnant women. In 2010, the national immunization cover for prevention of

measles reached 66.2%, for tuberculosis it was 72.4%, the triple vaccine against diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough cover was 73.2% and immunization against polio was 72.3%. In the same period, immunization against tetanus was provided to 32.5% of all pregnant mothers.

70. Antenatal care in Timor-Leste increased from 61% in 2003 to 86% in 2010. The number of deliveries assisted by health care professionals rose substantially, from 18% in 2003 to 30% in 2010. While the current fertility rate in Timor-Leste remains high, when compared with other countries, it has, however, fallen from 7 children per woman in 2003 to 5.7 in 2010. In general, improvements in health care, the increase in access to information about sexual and reproductive health, as well as greater access to family planning services, have brought positive results to maternal health. Timor-Leste is committed to making progress in this area until the ideal level of protection is achieved. The maternal mortality rate has been decreasing, which is partially due to the availability of caesarean operations in the five referral hospitals spread across the territory.

J. Right to education

71. Education is a fundamental right enshrined in the Constitution (Art. 59 CRDTL), which guarantees all citizens the right to and equality of opportunities in education and vocational training, and access to the highest levels of education, scientific research and artistic creation. It also establishes the role of the State in the creation of a public system of universal basic education which is compulsory and, whenever possible, free of charge.

72. In 1999, most of the educational infrastructures were in ruins. There was a small body of teaching staff and they lacked scientific or pedagogical training. There was a need for a deep restructuring of the school curriculum and the consequent production and dissemination of the respective didactic materials. Parallel to this, the demographic structure of Timor-Leste and the high percentage of illiteracy (57%) demonstrated the sheer inadequacy of the educational system in meeting the needs of the population.

73. Despite the current investment in the construction and rehabilitation of school buildings, a significant number of schools are still found in temporary premises and face serious limitations for teaching. By the end of 2010, only 576 buildings had been constructed or rehabilitated. In order to guarantee access to every child of school age, it is estimated that a total of 1,523 school buildings are necessary.

74. Within this context, the Basic Law on Education, promulgated in October 2008, represents a decisive step in the direction of establishing a legal framework of reference for the organization, regulation and development of the entire education system. In general terms, the educational system in Timor-Leste is divided in pre-school, basic education, secondary education, higher education and recurrent education.

75. Basic education, which is universal, compulsory and free of charge, is divided into 3 learning cycles: the first is of four years, the second two years and the third three years. In 2001, the real rate of school enrolments in the 1st and 2nd cycles of basic education was 17%, with a total of approximately 212,000 students and 3,925 teachers. In 2010, this figure had increased to 90%⁷, with 289,455 students and 9,995 teachers. The progress recorded in access to basic education reveals the urgent need to strengthen the resources in terms of the quality of education. In this context, in 2006 Timor-Leste began implementing the restructured national curriculum for the 1st and 2nd cycles of basic education. In 2010, the process of designing the curriculum for the 3rd cycle was concluded, and its full implementation is planned from January 2012. The new basic education curriculum complies with strict international scientific and pedagogical requirements and was developed taking into account the Timorese reality

76. With the aim of facilitating access to students from economically vulnerable families, the Government provides “school snack” throughout the basic education. Timor-Leste also has a system of granting scholarships for basic and secondary education provided by the Ministry of Social Solidarity, based on criteria of economic vulnerability and educational achievement. Aware of the difficulties faced by the different teaching establishments, a programme of school concessions was drawn up, with the aim of providing adequate financial resources to all the country’s schools.

77. Secondary education lasts for 3 years and is divided into general secondary education and technical-vocational secondary education. In 2010 there were 40,780 students and 2,070 teachers at this level of education. The recent results achieved in terms of basic education schooling demonstrate that in the short term there will be a heavy demand for secondary level, and it is urgent that the current infrastructures and human resources are adapted to meet this impending situation.

78. Higher education includes university education and higher technical education. Prior to 2006, there were 17 unaccredited higher education institutions, including the only state university. Currently 11 higher education institutions are registered, 9 of which have academic accreditation, as a result of a process which begun in 2008 and which has proved essential in order to guarantee the quality of higher education. At the level of higher education, Timor-Leste is in need for cooperation with internationally accredited institutions. In this context different initiatives are being implemented to increase the qualifications of Timorese university lecturers, by means of several training and academic exchange programmes. An extensive scholarships programme promoted by the Ministry of Education is in place, allowing large numbers of Timorese students to enrol in recognized international academic institutions.

79. The development of a technical programme of higher education is a direct response to the needs for specialized technical competences to meet employment demands for the development of the country. By June 2012, the foundations will be laid for the creation of Public Polytechnic Institutions which will be divided into three centres of excellence: tourism and the hospitality industry, engineering and agriculture.

80. Recurrent education includes literacy programmes for adults and specific programmes awarding degrees corresponding to basic and secondary education. In order to overcome the accentuated illiteracy level, in 2003 the Government began a literacy programme for young people and adults. In 2007 the Government of Timor-Leste signed an agreement with the Government of Cuba for the production and implementation, in partnership with the Timorese authorities, of a national literacy programme. Over 116 thousand individuals have already completed the programme. To date this project has been responsible for eradicating illiteracy in the districts of Lautém, Manufahi, Manatuto, Oecusse, and the sub-district of Ataúro. The Government aims to eliminate illiteracy in Timor-Leste by the end of 2015.

81. One of the essential factors in improving the education system is the qualification of teachers. In order to respond to the training and qualification needs of teachers, the Ministry of Education established the National Institute for the Training of Teachers and Education Professionals (INFORDOPE). The institute is currently developing a range of bachelors and masters programmes, and initial and continuing training programmes. Parallel to this, the UNTL provides university courses for teachers, namely undergraduate, graduate and post-graduate degrees.

K. Right to work and employment rights

82. In accordance with the Constitution, every individual has the right to work and to freely choose his profession (Art. 50 CRDTL). The Constitution also guarantees the worker the right to health and safety at work, to receive remuneration, and also, the enjoyment of rest days and holidays. It further prohibits the dismissal without just cause or based on the worker's political, religious or ideological opinions. All workers have the right to strike, and lock-out is prohibited (Art. 51 CRDTL).

83. The Constitution also guarantees the worker's right to establish and participate in trade unions or professional associations which are independent of the State and employers (Art. 52 CRDTL).

84. The draft Labour Code, which is being discussed in the National Parliament, is the legal framework for labour or contractual relations and sets out the different labour guarantees, such as the maximum number of working hours, the different types of holidays, the right to take part in collective bargaining processes and the resolution of labour disputes.

85. The population of working age in Timor-Leste is composed of the 15 to 60 years age group, which represents 58% of the population. Of this group, approximately 40% are economically active. Among the economically active population, 96% are employed and 4% are unemployed. However, within the employed active population, only 29% receive a regular salary. Approximately 70% of the employed are considered to be in a situation of labour vulnerability. Most people in this category work in the subsistence agriculture sector.

86. In relation to those employed with a regular salary, 55% work for the public sector, 12% work in private homes and 7% are employed by NGOs. Given the high rate of illiteracy and substantial number of individuals with low levels of schooling, most of Timor-Leste's workforce is classified as non-specialized.

87. In order to provide a response to the lack of formal work and the limited quality of the workforce, the Government has developed a policy focused on three main aspects: development of capacities by means of training initiatives, creation of employment opportunities and promotion of access to work. To promote workforce capacity, 29 vocational training centres have been established, this initiative being a partnership with the International Labour Organization (ILO) and civil society. These centres provide training in several areas, including civil construction, mechanics, tourism and the hospitality industry, welding, processing of local foodstuffs, foreign languages, information technologies, administration and finance, communication and management of companies and small businesses. Currently, these centres accommodate over 1,200 individuals on their different courses. The Government has also implemented a policy of overseas training with the aim of creating a team of quality Timorese trainers for the vocational training centres.

88. The Government promotes long and short-term strategies for the creation of formal jobs for Timorese citizens. Regarding short-term initiatives, the Government carries out small-scale infrastructure projects implemented by public agencies or national companies at the local level to create employment opportunities for young people. In 2010, projects of this type were able to create over 45,000 new employment opportunities. Focusing on the creation of long-term employment, the Government is currently implementing a capacity building programme to support the development of national companies. It also facilitates the access of national companies to financial credit, in order to allow them to increase their strength and expand, therefore increasing their capacity to absorb more workers.

89. In order to support the sustainable implementation of this programme, Timor-Leste will have a National Development Bank, which should be operational by the end of 2011.

The Government also envisages direct support to local cooperatives as a step towards contributing to the strengthening of the national economy. It is also estimated that the development of large-scale infrastructure projects, such as roads and ports, as well as other infrastructures related to the oil industry, will create a substantial number of jobs.

90. In order to facilitate access to the labour market, Timor-Leste has six regional Employment Centres. These centres register those seeking employment according to their area of specialization, the type and area of work sought and, at the same time, they distribute information on job opportunities. Timor-Leste has signed agreements with South Korea and Australia to send workers to these countries.

L. Right to an adequate standard of living

91. All persons are entitled to an adequate standard of living, which includes, in particular, guarantees of access to adequate housing, access to the necessary mechanisms for survival, and access to water and sanitation. The right to adequate standard of living also means to be free from hunger. The full implementation of this right is one of the major challenges facing Timor-Leste.

92. In accordance with the Constitution, the right to housing implies access to housing of an adequate size for the individual and his family with conditions of hygiene and comfort and that preserves personal intimacy and family privacy (Art. 58 CRDTL). It is estimated that in 1999 over 68,000 houses had been destroyed or were in uninhabitable conditions. This number corresponds to approximately 40% of the total housing, and 70% of housing in the capital. With the support of the UN agencies and the international community immediately after the popular consultation, most of the population was able to reconstruct their own houses, even if they were only of a temporary nature.

93. Most of the housing in Dili is of a superior quality to that in the rest of the country. Nevertheless, there are small areas of low quality housing, which arose as a consequence of migration from the country's rural regions. Between 18,000 and 20,000 houses were built without urban planning, raising health and safety issues. In addition to urban planning in order to improve the low quality housing, the Government established a system for supervising new constructions, via the issuing of permits. At the same time, the Government, in conjunction with national and international partners, created a community support programme in the area of construction.

94. In order to guarantee enjoyment of the right to adequate housing, the Government began programmes for the construction of social and community housing. In 2010, 450 social housing units were given to some of the most vulnerable families. In 2011, there is also a plan to build around five social housing units for each village, totalling 11,140 houses. The National Housing Plan includes the construction of community houses as a medium-term action, to be implemented between 2011 and 2020. These houses will support the creation of a system of purchasing and renting in order to facilitate access to adequate housing for those families who do not possess sufficient economic capacity. Special assistance is being given through the provision of houses to veterans of the national liberation movement who are now in a situation of great vulnerability. In the long-term perspective, Timor-Leste intends to implement initiatives which will help to reduce migration from the rural areas to urban areas of the country in search of employment opportunities.

95. Timor-Leste has funds, which are allocated annually, to provide support to the population in cases of natural disasters. Between 2008 and 2010, the Timorese State provided assistance to over 30,000 families, providing support with materials to restore houses, food, clothing and agricultural tools.

96. One of the consequences of the destruction that struck Timor-Leste in 1999 is that a large number of families who lost their homes are still living in public property⁸, and the State is aware of the need to recover the use of most of these, to support the operation of the public institutions. Timor-Leste is committed to providing the necessary resources to guarantee that no family which is forced to leave a public property will see their right to adequate housing violated. Decree-Law no. 6/2011 was approved with this objective, in order, where it is justifiable on humanitarian grounds, to aid in rehousing families.

97. In 2004, 29% of the population living in urban areas and 30% of the population in rural areas had access to drinking water, via water piped into houses or public taps. In 2007, this figure rose to 43% and 41% respectively. Despite this increase, most of the population still depends on access to water from wells or boreholes, with or without the aid of a manual pump, or water from streams, in order to meet their domestic consumption needs. The Government has significantly increased investment in supplying water to rural areas, with a budget of 8.1 million USD being approved in 2010 for the construction and restoration of clean water infrastructures. This figure was increased to 8.1 million USD in 2011. Development partners and NGOs have greatly contributed to improving access to clean water for Timor-Leste's rural population.

98. In order to facilitate community involvement, the Government has developed Guidelines for the Supply of Water in Rural Areas and guarantees supervision of this community activity by means of its public water and sanitation services. Despite the existence since 2004 of a legal decision regarding payment for water consumption, the service for private individuals remains free of charge to date.

99. The access of the population to electricity represents a major challenge for Timor-Leste. Dili already enjoys a continuous supply of electricity, but in the districts this is only guaranteed for 12-hour periods. Electricity, for the most part, is obtained by the use of oil-fuelled generators. In rural areas the supply of energy is complemented by solar energy. In order to guarantee the continuous supply of energy to the whole of the territory, two electric power stations are being built, which will be in full operation by 2012.

100. The situation of conflict experienced in Timor-Leste meant that records of property ownership were destroyed, so that it was not possible to identify the owners of properties. This uncertainty not only gives rise to social conflicts, but also acts as a powerful brake on the economy and limits the actions of the State. In order to solve this problem a plan of action has been drawn up which combines the carrying out of a national cadastral survey with the passing of legislation which will make it effective and allow for ownership of real estate in Timor-Leste to be regularized. The cadastral survey began in 2008 and, up to the present, over 40,000 plots of land have been identified, of which only 9% are disputed by more than one claimant.

101. In terms of legislation, a Land Law Bill was presented to the National Parliament in March 2010, which is still under discussion. The aim is to define the ownership of real estate, recognizing the right of ownership in undisputed cases and setting up mechanisms for the resolution of disputed cases. The Bill also recognizes the ownership of community land.

102. Food vulnerability has a particular impact on the nutritional status of Timorese children, especially those who are under 5 years of age. The results of the 2010 Demographic and Health Survey show that 44.7% of children under the age of 5 are underweight and 17% are chronically underweight. With regard to this nutrition indicator, there is a significant difference between rural and urban areas, although there is no negative gender difference.

103. Most of the national agricultural production is used for internal consumption. Despite this fact, there is still a need to import a considerable amount of food to meet the

country's needs, and in the long run it is desirable that imports should only be a complement to internal production. Given this situation, the Government has invested heavily in developing agricultural production with the main aim of improving food security. The programmes developed include enabling farmers to improve the methods they use, introducing technology to intensify agriculture and promoting food processing technology and storage methods.

104. In order to improve agricultural methods, all of the *sucos* have the support of Government-sponsored agrarian technicians (*extensionistas*). Agricultural tools and machines have been distributed since 2008, including medium-size and manual tractors. In order to increase access to local agricultural products in the internal market, the Government has developed a programme called *O Povo produz, o Governo compra* [The People produce, the Government buys], in which the Government acquires agricultural products and distributes them to the different markets based on the needs of the community. In 2007 a committee on food security was set up, composed of representatives from the Ministries of Agriculture; Tourism, Trade and Industry; Social Solidarity; Health and Education.

M. Children's rights

105. The Constitution of Timor-Leste provides that children shall enjoy all rights which are universally recognized and enshrined in international treaties (Art. 18 CRDTL). The effective protection of the rights of children is a priority for Timor-Leste, and legislative measures have been approved which provide more favourable conditions for children's development. Reflecting the State's duties in relation to children, in 2009 the Government created the National Commission for the Rights of the Child as the government agency responsible for promoting and protecting children's rights, under the aegis of the Ministry of Justice.

106. Currently, in Timor-Leste, there is a perception of the existence of a high number of cases of violence, abuse, exploitation and negligence of children, although there is no systematic reporting of these cases. Poverty is one of the factors which contribute to the current level of difficulties faced by Timorese children. Despite the increase in schooling, there are still a large number of children who do not go to school or who are forced to abandon their studies before they complete the nine years of compulsory basic education in order to support their family's subsistence.

107. Several initiatives have been carried out to enhance the protection of children, involving different public entities and the civil society. The Government has set up child protection networks, which benefit from the participation of community leaders, NGOs, the Ministry of Social Solidarity, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Education and the police, represented by the Vulnerable Persons Unit. These networks ensure the implementation of concerted multidisciplinary protective actions, including support for the provision of social assistance in specific cases. In order to provide the necessary support to children who are victims of violence and other abuse, the Ministry of Social Solidarity has drawn up a manual on the mechanisms for referral of these cases to relevant services. Guidelines have also been produced on how to deal with child victims of violence, including sexual violence. In Timor-Leste most orphanages and protective homes are run by NGOs or religious groups. The Government provides different types of support, including financial support, materials, equipment and training, and also plays a supervisory role to ensure that these institutions meet the necessary conditions to guarantee real protection to the children. The legal and social aspects of child protection are part of the training course for candidates for the positions of judges, public prosecutors and public defenders.

108. A legal regime is being prepared to regulate national and international adoption, which is already subject to a system of strict control, including judicial supervision. The Ministry of Social Solidarity also serves as an important point of reference for the courts, and carries out assessments to determine the suitability of the adopting family in order to guarantee the child's full development.

109. The Ministry of Justice, in conjunction with national and international partners, has been making significant efforts to facilitate the process of registering births, namely by enacting the Code of Civil Registration, providing civil registration services in the thirteen districts, implementing registration outposts in hospitals and launching periodic campaigns for the registration of births, with the aim of achieving universal registration in Timor-Leste. Nevertheless, despite these efforts, most children are still not registered, or are registered late, when they reach school age or adulthood. A National Campaign for the Registration of Children up to five years of age, involving all the *suco* and village heads, was launched in 2011, with the aim of achieving 100% registration of children in this age group.

N. Gender equality

110. Equality between men and women is fundamental in the process of development of the Timorese nation. In 2007, the status of the government agency responsible for gender issues was raised to the category of Secretary of State for the Promotion of Equality (SEPI), answering directly to the Prime Minister. One of SEPI's main roles is to define and monitor the implementation of the integration of gender issues in Timor-Leste's policies and action plans. Civil society plays a pivotal role in promoting gender equality.

111. Domestic violence is a serious problem in Timor-Leste. As a result of the work of SEPI, with contributions from civil society, in June 2010 the National Parliament passed the Law against Domestic Violence, which guarantees non-judicial protection to victims of domestic violence, such as counselling, temporary protection in shelters, medical treatment and social and legal assistance.

112. Timor-Leste considers that true participation of women in the private sphere and in political issues which are decisive for the life of the nation is an important indicator of gender equality. In addition to initiatives promoting women's education and capacities, gender equality is achieved by legislative measures, in particular the duty of including women in the lists of the political parties for the parliamentary elections, promoting the participation of women within the political parties, especially in positions of leadership, and reserving positions for women on the *suco* councils. Currently 29% of the members of the National Parliament are female. Women also hold ministerial positions such as Finance Minister, Justice Minister and Social Solidarity Minister, and the position of Prosecutor General is also held by a woman.

O. Protection in situations of vulnerability

113. Since 2008 the State has been granting subsidies to citizens with disabilities or those over the age of 60. While the number of beneficiaries in the first year of the programme was 71,703, in 2011 this figure had reached 89,215. The initial amount of the subsidy was 20 USD, increasing to 30 USD. Although the amount of the pension is relatively small, the economic and social impact is significant for the beneficiaries. Indirectly, the pensions lead to an increase in the circulation of currency in the community, and represent a significant additional resource for the local economy, having therefore a multiplying effect.

114. Besides awarding direct assistance in the form of regular subsidies, food and sporting equipment to Timorese with disabilities, the State also guarantees indirect assistance via financial support to the 10 NGOs (350,000 USD) that provide a range of assistance to individuals with disabilities, including physical therapy, prostheses, schools for the deaf-mute, the manufacture of wheelchairs and special bicycles, social housing, sports and training in different professions. The Government also supports the Paralympic Committee in order to guarantee the participation of Timorese athletes in international competitions.

115. The State guarantees support to combatants and martyrs of the national liberation movement (Art. 11(3) CRDTL). A total of 76,063 combatants and martyrs were registered, 12,540 of whom were entitled to a pension. Between 2008 and 2010, 9,644 received pensions. Elderly combatants, disabled persons, and also surviving spouses, orphans and family of the martyrs, are entitled to various contributions.

V. Main national priorities

116. Timor-Leste intends to be bound by several additional international conventions related to human rights protection, as soon as the human resources and institutional conditions are in place to ensure compliance with the commitments to be assumed through these instruments. With regard to the legal order, several statutes are to be concluded which will guarantee a coherent and quality framework for the protection of human rights. Out of those, it can be highlighted the Children's Code, the Land Law, the Law on Access to the Courts, the Law on the Guardianship of Minors, the Law on Religious Freedom, the Law on Human Trafficking, the special Criminal Regime for Young Adults and the Law on the Execution of Penalties⁹.

117. Timor-Leste is committed to strengthening its judicial and judiciary institutions, as set out in the Strategic Plan for the Justice Sector (2011–2030), within a framework of independence and technical rigour, ensuring the increased access to justice. This commitment will take the form of a clear focus on the training of legal professionals, consolidation of the activity of private lawyers and investment in infrastructures.

118. Having identified the constraints in the areas of health, education, housing, nutrition and others related to human rights, Timor-Leste intends to intensify the different programmes already in progress to eradicate poverty and ensure universal access to public services. The support from international community, NGOs and United Nations agencies are fundamental in this pursuit.

119. It is intended to ensure excellence in the discharge of security and defence forces responsibilities, to ensure their absolute respect for human rights, with an expectation that Timor-Leste may become international example of good practice in this area.

120. By means of rights awareness-raising campaigns and integration of human rights in the educational curricula, Timor-Leste seeks to create a more egalitarian society, without discrimination, with a particular emphasis on the inclusion of persons with disabilities.

121. In order that women can fully exercise their rights and participate in the country development on the basis of equality with men, Timor-Leste aims at intensifying multi-sectoral strategies to strengthen women empowerment and eliminate gender based violence.

VI. Conclusion

122. The Timorese people's struggle to gain their Independence is, in its essence and in all dimensions, a struggle for human rights. In this sense, the State and the Timorese society are determined that the dream that all people can live with dignity can become a reality.

123. The challenges that Timor-Leste faces in its quest to ensure the respect, protection and promotion of human rights are living witness to the indivisibility, interdependence and inter-relation of the different fundamental guarantees.

124. Timor-Leste is open to interacting with the international community, in a frank dialogue based on a spirit of mutual respect and cooperation, in order to identify the best ways to comply with its human rights obligations, in accordance with the objective conditions of the country.

Notes

¹ Suco is the traditional administrative district, whose leaders are currently elected democratically by universal and direct suffrage.

² Constitution of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, CRDTL.

³ In accordance with data from the International Organization for Migration, between 2008 and 2010, 32 victims of human trafficking were detected, with two of them remaining in Timor-Leste and the others repatriated to their countries of origin.

⁴ The four district courts of first instance are located in Baucau, Dili, Oe-Cusse and Suai.

⁵ There are also international court actors supporting the judicial system. By mid 2011, there were 6 international judges, 4 international prosecutors and 2 international public defenders.

⁶ From these 5,039 around 2,000 can be considered pending since the investigation deadline has expired.

⁷ With a total of 289,455 students and 9,995 teachers.

⁸ Including both Buildings and State Land.

⁹ This law will regulate the rights of prisoners and the regime for granting pardons.