

**Ir. Helder Lopes, Msc**  
Vice Minister of Finance  
VI Constitutional Government  
Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste

On the 16th February 2015, H.E. Mr. Helder Lopes was officially sworn in as the Vice Minister of Finance under the VI Constitutional Government of Timor-Leste.

Mr. Lopes graduated from the Universidade Nacional Timor Lorosa'e (UNTL) in 2007 with a Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Economics. He then continued to complete his Master of Science in Agricultural Economics from the Michigan State University (MSU) in the USA in 2010.

Mr. Lopes's career is highlighted by his extraordinary professional services to numerous institutions both in the public and private sector.

Until recently Mr. Lopes served as the Resident Economic Advisor and the Chief Economist from 2011 to 2015 in the Economic Policy Directorate of the Ministry of Finance. His main responsibility was to provide economic policy advice to the Government. At the same time Mr. Lopes was trusted to head the Economic Policy Directorate as the Acting Coordinator to lead, manage, coordinate and supervise the day-to-day works of the Directorate. His leadership and managerial skills were noted and recognized with his appointment as the Chief of Staff of the Ministry of Finance. His subsequent appointment as Vice Minister was a natural progression.

Mr. Lopes has worked extensively with international organizations. During 2013 to 2015, Mr. Lopes was the focal point of the Ministry of Finance for the CPLP, the ASEAN, the Special Economic Zones and the UN-ESCAP.

Prior to joining the Ministry of Finance, Mr. Lopes worked as National Economic Advisor for the Asian Development Bank (ADB). His main contribution included the provision of economic analysis on potential economic development in Timor-Leste. From 2006 to 2008, Mr. Lopes worked as Program Development Specialist and Environmental Officer with the Development Alternatives and Education Development Center. In these two institutions, he advised the CEOs on how to effectively manage projects monitored the USAID grants and conducted environmental impact assessments for these grants.

Mr. Lopes' professional career actually started in 2000, while pursuing his bachelor study at the National University. He worked as Researcher and Team Leader for the ARD. He assisted with the development of research methodology and processes, supervised the implementation of the research and drafted the research reports.

Mr. Lopes fully appreciates the opportunities his education has provided and values highly the importance of education in the development of the country. He voluntarily teaches part time at the UNTL, the DIT and the IOB. He has taught numerous subjects ranging from microeconomics, macroeconomics, benefit-cost-analysis, international trade and strategic management. Mr. Lopes has been actively involved in public debate, publishing more than 10 articles on public policies, economic and rural development in Timor-Leste's local newspapers. He has also co-authored more than 25 policies briefs on economics and public finance, some of which were published on the Ministry of Finance website.

Mr. Lopes' favorite sport is football and he is a big fan of the Barcelona football club. His passion for the "beautiful game", as he always refers to football, is shown in his numerous analogies using football to convey his message. In his first meeting with the staff of the Ministry of Finance, he remarked that *"the Ministry of Finance is like the Barcelona football club. The team has the mentality to win every game it plays"*. The Ministry of Finance, he said, can do the same and therefore *"we should aim for the best. The second best is not in our dictionary"*.

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