



FISCAL REFORM COMMISSION

PRESS RELEASE

Government meets to prioritise economic diversification programs in Tourism, Agri-Tourism, Livestock, Cross Border Trade and Connectivity

Dili, 29 January, 2019 - Timor-Leste has to continue to invest in the strategic planning for a modern and diversified economy, focusing initially in three key productive sectors: tourism, agriculture and livestock.

The Prime Minister met with Members of the Inter-Ministerial Council for Fiscal Reform to prioritise and adopt an integrated approach to the implementation of economic diversification programs to support sustainable growth and to build a broader economic base to increase domestic revenue. The Prime Minister, Mr. Taur Matan Ruak said:

“the Inter-Ministerial Council serves as a strategic planning body and coordination mechanism to help Ministries holistically and efficiently work together to achieve results quickly for the people; we need to foment sustainable growth, increase productivity and trade, create more jobs, provide legal certainty to land owners and investors as well as increase domestic revenues to 18 % by 2023”.

The Directors briefed the Council Members on the work they have undertaken so far, and highlighted the challenges and opportunities they have faced in the implementation of economic diversification programs.

The ADB Country Director, Mr. Paolo Spantigati and the Economist from ADB Headquarters in Manila presented the Regional Cooperation and Integration (RCI) Study findings and recommendations to compliment and support the priority sectors the government is implementing. The RCI program is designed to help strengthen our legal framework, support our institutions capacity to increase productivity for agri-tourism, and livestock, help address the challenges to movement of people, goods and transport and improve connectivity to increase the number of tourists and trade in livestock with Indonesia. Regional Cooperation Economist, Ms. Anna Fink remarked that:

“We are extremely pleased to have the opportunity to present to the Council as it presents a critical milestone in our partnership with the government on cross-border cooperation with Indonesia. ADB as a regional organization is delighted to support Timor-Leste’s economic growth and integration objectives to ASEAN”.

The Inter-Ministerial Council also heard about the investment Timor-Leste is making to expand its Asycuda World System to electronically exchange and facilitate cross border trade. To this end, the UNCTAD ASYCUDA World Regional Office for Asia and Pacific presented the ASYCUDA World Project document to extend Timor-Leste national single window to 9 Government Agencies and together with the Fiscal Reform Commission briefed the Council on the technical plans to develop two prototypes for a regional and inter-regional single window. UNCTAD Program Coordinator, Ms. Marianne Dumont said that:

“The Timor Leste Single Window should also serve as a gateway for interchanging data with its trading partners, ASEAN (i.e. Indonesia) and CPLP (i.e. Brazil, Portugal) countries. This fully integrated system and gateway facility should be the opportunity to expand market access in global level and to boost business growth and development of entrepreneurship”.

The final and also very important presentation was made by the Sistema Nacional de Cadastro (SNC) Technical Director, Mr. João Loução to update the Government on the progress made to systematically register 234,438 cadastres since September 2014 to 2018. This register will regularize land ownership with considerable socio economic benefits as well as provide legal certainty for investors. The Minister for Justice Mr. Manuel Carceres da Costa said:

“The SNC project will provide to the Government a powerful instrument to define and implement economic and fiscal policies, public works, land use planning and environmental policies”.

The competent Ministries will continue to work together to develop integrated work plans to implement the programs, monitor results and regularly report to the Inter-Ministerial Council.

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