



MINISTÉRIO DA
SAÚDE



Gabinete do
Diretora Geral das
Prestação em
Saúde

COUNTRY STATEMENT
73rd World Health Assembly
Geneva, 18 – 19 May 2020

*Honorable Chair,
His Excellency Director-General of the World Health Organization
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

I would like to start by first congratulating the elected President and Vice-President of the 73rd Session of World Health Assembly. The inspiring deliberation of Director-General, Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, is a reminder of the global health challenges that need to be addressed especially during the Covid-19 pandemic.

As of today (18 May 2020) we have had 24 confirmed cases of COVID-19. Apart from a few sporadic cases, all others are linked to well defined clusters within government quarantine facilities. There is currently no evidence of community transmission. We are now approaching the end of the second month of declaration of the 'state of emergency' which has included travel restrictions, managed migration and other social interventions. Following our first confirmed case on 21 March, Timor-Leste has rapidly transformed from a country with no testing capacity, no identified isolation and quarantine facilities and a limited surveillance capacity to one with in-country testing, functional Covid-19 facilities, staff rapidly trained for surveillance and COVID-19 management, a gradual increase in stocks of PPE, capacity for an expanded testing and surveillance strategy over a relatively short period of 5-6 weeks.

I would like to express my deep gratitude for the support we have received from the World Health Organization in strengthening our COVID-19 response. The technical and logistical support from the Country Office and the Regional Office,



Rua de Palácio das
Cinzas, Caicoli
Caixa Postal 374
Dili, Timor-Leste

including the supply of our first batch of PPE and test kits, have been crucial for a rapid and comprehensive response. The Ministry of Health appreciates the continued support from Dr Rajesh Pandav, WHO Representative, Timor-Leste and Dr Poonam Khetrapal Singh, Regional Director, WHO South East Asia Region.

COVID-19 has emphasized the criticality of a strong and resilient health system focused on primary health care as the best response to this and future pandemic. Timor-Leste is firmly committed to providing Universal Health Care to all its people.

We pledge to work in solidarity with the international community and are encouraged by the intense collaboration to develop effective vaccines, medicines and technologies. We appeal to other Member States to treat these as a 'public good' and ensure their equitable distribution. As this pandemic is starkly reminding us – 'No country is safe until every country is safe'!

Dr. Odete da Silva Viegas, Dermatologist
Director General Health Services
Republic Democaratic of Timor-Leste



Rua de Palácio das
Cinzas, Caicoli
Caixa Postal 374
Dili, Timor-Leste