



The Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste

Deliver by

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Permanent Representative of Timor-Leste to the United Nations in New York

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10:00–13:00 | World Social Summit – ROUND TABLE 2 Theme: " World Social Summit" - ROUND TABLE 2 "Assessing progress and addressing gaps and

challenges in the implementation of the commitments of the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and its Programme of Action , and giving momentum towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" –

Speech – H.E. the Vice Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste

Speaking Role: H.E.VPM, representing the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour to address this Round Table on behalf of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste.

Thirty years after the Copenhagen Declaration, the world faces new and complex realities: the persistence of poverty, widening inequalities, food insecurity, and the devastating impacts of climate change.

However, the spirit of Copenhagen — placing people at the centre of development — remains our compass.

Timor-Leste's journey embodies the vision of social justice and solidarity that the Declaration called for.

Emerging from conflict just over two decades ago, our progress in building peace and national institutions has been anchored in inclusive social protection as a foundation for human development, resilience, and dignity.

Despite progress since independence, the country continues to face one of the highest stunting rates in Asia, with nearly 47 per cent of children under five affected. Around one-third of pregnant and breastfeeding women remain malnourished, and almost 30 per cent of women of reproductive age suffer from anaemia.

Recognising that malnutrition is not only a health concern but also a broader development and equity challenge, the Government of Timor-Leste has made the fight against malnutrition a central focus of its national strategies for social protection and human capital development.

In this regard, Timor-Leste has established the Global Task Force on Social Protection for Nutrition, with the World Food Programme serving as its Secretariat. This initiative, launched under the leadership of our President, José Ramos-Horta, brings together fragile, least developed, and small island countries to ensure that no nation is left behind in achieving the social development goals.

Through the Task Force, we promote nutrition-sensitive social protection as a driver of food security, health, and social cohesion — building on our national experience with the Bolsa da Mãe Kondicionada – Saúde no Nutrisaun programme, which links conditional cash transfers to maternal and child nutrition.

This model, supported by France, the Asian Development Bank, and the WFP, demonstrates how small nations can turn global commitments into tangible results.

Our progress illustrates three lessons from the field:

First, social protection is not a cost; it is an investment in human capital and resilience. The evidence from our SANUTRIO pilot shows improvements in child nutrition and women's health outcomes, strengthening both families and communities.

Second, South–South and triangular cooperation are transforming how we learn and innovate. Our recent exchanges with Pakistan's Benazir Income Support Programme have shown how fragile states can co-develop scalable systems, guided by mutual learning and solidarity.

Third, sustainable financing remains the most significant challenge. We must align national resources with global mechanisms, such as the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection, and ensure that fragile and island states have direct access to these funds.

Excellencies, the Copenhagen vision remains unfinished. To give momentum to the 2030 Agenda, we must bridge the global architecture of financing with the local realities of people living in fragility.

Timor-Leste, through the Global Task Force, stands ready to work with all of you — governments, development partners, and the UN system — to build a world where social protection is universal, inclusive, and nutrition-sensitive.

Let us reaffirm that no human being should live in hunger, and no child should be left without protection or hope.

Thank you.