



## Timor-Leste Moves Ahead After Election

**Dili/Washington, D.C.** – After an historic round of presidential and parliamentary elections, Timor-Leste is once again ready to move ahead with its fifth constitutional government.

“We congratulate the people of Timor-Leste on the three sets of free, fair and peaceful elections held this year,” the U.S. State Department said in a released statement. “As Timor-Leste commences its second decade of independence, the

United States looks forward to further strengthening our close partnership with all Timorese and to working with Prime Minister Kay Rala Gusmão government as we pursue our shared goals development and prosperity for all people of Timor-Leste.”

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**More than 70%  
of the Timorese  
population voted  
in the  
parliamentary  
election.**

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The vibrant democracy of Timor-Leste – the youngest nation in Asia – and one of the newest countries in the world – was on display during the election season as candidates from various political parties campaigned passionately through speeches, songs and parades.

Timor-Leste has a unicameral National Parliament with 65 seats. Twenty-one parties fielded candidates for the 65-seat parliament. Candidates’ experience ranged from former independence leaders to teachers to career politicians. Observers watched as polls opened at seven in the morning and voting continued until 3 p.m. for roughly 650,000 registered voters. The excitement of the Timorese was palpable. One Timorese remarked that he had started before dawn and waited in line for hours in order to vote. Women carried their children into the voting booths. At 74 percent in the parliamentary

## **Ambassador Pinto Appointed Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs**



Amb. H.E. Constancio Pinto

Ambassador His Excellency Constâncio Pinto has been appointed Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, the second-highest post within the Ministry. In this role, Pinto will oversee the Ministry and its embassies located around the world.

“I am deeply honored to hold this position and hope to continue to represent Timor-Leste regionally and globally,” Pinto said.

Educated at Brown and Columbia Universities, Pinto is the first Timorese ambassador to the U.S. to reside fulltime in Washington, D.C. During his tenure, he helped established closer ties between Timor-Leste and the United States through the formation of possible trade partnerships and people to people programs.

“I want people to know Timor-Leste as they know their own country.”

**AN E-NEWSLETTER FROM THE EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON D.C.**  
election and 78 percent in the presidential, it was clear these elections mattered symbolically and literally.

## Student Programs Highlight Continuing Shared Interests

Washington, D.C. – As part of an ambitious effort to strengthen ties and develop internally, about a dozen students from Timor-Leste are studying abroad at American universities in a variety of fields.

Some of those students presented their experiences at the Embassy of Timor-Leste in Washington, D.C. The students are in the U.S. to study agriculture, politics, international affairs and language. Some of the placement universities include the University of Hawaii, Northwestern, Ohio State University and the University of Missouri. As part of the program, students study in the U.S. and then return home.

There are various exchange programs between Timor-Leste and the U.S. About 100 students have participated in the program. Administrators from universities say the applicant pool is highly competitive with only the best students selected to participate. English is required to participate in the program.

The **Fulbright Foreign Student Program** will award two scholarships for Timorese citizens to pursue master's degrees at U.S. universities, beginning in August 2013. The grant covers expenses incurred for travel to and from the United States, tuition and books, health insurance, and room and board. The programs to the U.S. complement Timor's efforts to train and educate the next generation of leaders. The National University of Timor-Leste inaugurated its international affairs program that will allow students to incorporate foreign affairs into their studies. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs pledged to maintain a strong relationship with the university.

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## A Historic Visit to Timor-Leste



U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton arrived in Timor-Leste, and it was a historic visit.

Secretary Clinton waved at the students. In a statement put out by the State Department prior to her trip to Cook Islands, Indonesia, China, Timor-Leste, Brunei, and Russia, Secretary Clinton spelled out that the purpose, broadly, of her visit to the Asia Pacific region was to “emphasize the depth and breadth of American engagement across economic, people to people, strategic, environmental, and security interests.”

During her tour in Timor-Leste, she emphasized the shared values of democracy between both countries and encouraged study abroad programs. Clinton is the first U.S. Secretary of State to visit Timor-Leste since its independence in 2002.