



**European Union**

**Press release**

**Consultations with CSOs on the  
European Union Roadmap for Engagement with Civil Society in Timor-Leste  
Tuesday 17 May, 2016 – Dili**

The Delegation of the European Union (DEU) to Timor-Leste and the European Union (EU) Member States represented in the country have launched an extensive and inclusive process of consultation and feedback with Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) on the EU Roadmap for Engagement with Civil Society in Timor-Leste.

The aim of the Roadmap is to strengthen Europe's engagement with Civil Society Organisations in Timor-Leste. For the EU, an empowered civil society is a crucial component of any democratic system and is an asset in itself. It represents and fosters pluralism and can contribute to more effective policies, equitable and sustainable development and inclusive growth.

As one of civil society's most important development partners in Timor-Leste, the EU considers the Roadmap to be a key tool through which its engagement with civil society will be structured. With this Roadmap the EU aims to improve the impact, predictability and visibility of EU actions. It also identifies long-term objectives of cooperation with civil society organisations and encompasses dialogue as well as operational support, taking into account the views and challenges of CSOs in Timor-Leste.

The consultations focused on the priorities of the EU Roadmap in Timor-Leste and its specific actions, emerging from the context assessment of Civil Society in Timor-Leste and in line with the EU and its Member States' political and cooperation objectives in Timor-Leste. Preliminary priority areas for continued collaboration between EU and civil society identified in the Roadmap are: (i) to establish closer partnerships between the EU and CSOs in order to promote an improved environment and space for CSOs in Timor-Leste; (ii) to promote peace building, civic education and awareness raising on fundamental rights; (iii) support civil society's social accountability efforts to improve the quality and effectiveness of public policies and promote good management of public resources iv) foster partnerships between CSOs and the government to enhance the quality of public goods, particularly to reduce food insecurity, improve nutrition and economic opportunities in rural areas. Around forty representatives of all sectors of civil society attended the meeting.

In the words of the Ambassador of the European Union to Timor-Leste, Ms. Sylvie Tabesse, 'this meeting is just the first of what we hope will be a process of continuous consultation and dialogue [with civil society]'.

The EU and CSOs will work together to finalise the Roadmap which will guide EU engagement with CSOs in Timor-Leste for the period 2016-2020.

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