General Assembly

Human Rights Council
Twentieth session
Agenda item 3
Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development

Information presented by the National Human Rights Institution of Timor-Leste[*]

Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat of the Human Rights Council hereby transmits the communication submitted by the National Human Rights Institution of Timor-Leste,[**] reproduced below in accordance with rule 7(b) of the rules of procedures described in the annex to Council resolution 5/1, according to which participation of national human rights institutions is to be based on arrangements and practices agreed upon by the Commission on Human Rights, including resolution 2005/74 of 20 April 2005.

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[*] National human rights institution with "A"-status accreditation from the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights.

[**] Reproduced in the annex as received, in the language of submission only.

Annex

Written statement on behalf of the National Human Rights Institution of Timor-Leste on the Report of the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights on her mission to Timor-Leste

20th Session of the Human Rights Council
(18 June - 06 July 2012)

Distinguished Members of the Human Rights Council,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The National Human Rights Institution of Timor-Leste, the Provedoria for Human Rights and Justice, welcomes the opportunity to once again present its statement by video.

The visits of Special Rapporteurs and the interaction with other UN mechanisms are excellent opportunities for the State and civil society to review and analyse the fulfilment of human rights obligations and discuss in a constructive manner how to improve the realization of human rights in a country.

The Provedoria appreciates the report of the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, describing with concern the serious vulnerability of several segments of the Timorese population, in particular those living in rural areas.

As the report indicates, despite the country's rapid economic growth, most Timorese continue to experience poverty, deprivation and insecure employment. Food insecurity, poor access to adequate water and sanitation facilities, rising income inequality, limited quality and availability of education, are just some of the challenges many Timorese continue to face today.

The Provedoria recognizes the positive initiatives that the State has taken to address these challenges during its few years of independence, and also the progressive nature of the realization of economic, social and cultural rights. However, the Provedoria urges Timor-Leste to make greater efforts in using the maximum of its available resources, in an effective way, to ensure the satisfaction of at least the minimum essential level of enjoyment of those rights for all the citizens.

The Provedoria would like to highlight the urgent need for the State to give adequate support to the many women in Timor-Leste who live in poverty and are subject to different forms of gender-based violence, including domestic violence. More needs to be done to combat discrimination and assure that women have access to and complete education. If educated, women are in a much better position to compete on equal terms with men for employment opportunities, to participate in political life, to access justice and to defend their rights. The Provedoria supports the recommendations of the Special Rapporteur on the need to improve the implementation of the Law against Domestic Violence and the Law on the Protection of Witnesses, and to increase resources for the Vulnerable Persons Unit of the National Police.

Finally, the Provedoria would like to reiterate its commitment, in accordance with our mandate, to assist the Government of Timor-Leste in implementing the recommendations made by the Special Rapporteur.

Thank you.

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