



MINISTÉRIO DO
PETRÓLEO
E MINERAIS

Gabinete do Ministro

EITI: Timor-Leste

EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES TRANSPARENCY INITIATIVE (EITI) Dili, Virtual Conference, 15th April 2021

REPUBLICA DEMOCRÁTICA DE TIMOR-LESTE

GABINETE DO MINISTRO DO PETRÓLEO E MINERAIS

Statement by H.E. Minister, Victor da Conceição Soares

Mark Robinson, Executive Director of International Secretariat EITI

**Opening Remarks of H. E. Minister of Petroleum and Minerals
Virtual Meeting with EITI International Secretariat**

Good afternoon from Timor-Leste to everyone participating in this meeting,

Firstly, I would to apologize for have re-scheduled this meeting for several times. I am glad that the meeting can finally take place today.

As you probably aware that in 4th of April, Timor-Leste was hit with the worst flooding the country has ever witnessed in recent years. Therefore, in the last several days the government has been busy undertaking recovery efforts to provide emergency responds to victims affected by the flooding. Our internet connection was also affected after the disaster, and therefore we had to reschedule the meeting.

I took the office of Ministry of Petroleum and Minerals in less than a year ago, despite all of the briefing from our EITI secretariat, I admit there are still many elements of EITI implementation and activities that I need to fully comprehend. However, our government is committed to maintain implementing the EITI in the country for the reasons that it is an important platform for extractive companies to connect with the community, to promote open discussion about the industry's transparency, to inform the communities on the revenue system governance in contributing towards economic diversification, and to fight against corruption in the country. This would be the priority of my leadership.

Structurally, the EITI Timor-Leste is under the responsibility or management of Ministry of Petroleum and Minerals, and as the minister, I have the authority to make necessary decisions and policies to improve the implementation of EITI. We are trying our best to continually improve the quality of our national secretariat, therefore we have already planned this year to recruit a national secretariat and indicate a delegation for the Champion for EITI. Perhaps the

international EITI secretariat could provide some suggestions or - advices on the specific criteria or knowledge that the national secretariat or champions must have and on the essential policies to further strengthen EITI implementation.

I acknowledge that Timor-Leste has been a role models in satisfactorily implemented the EITI in the past. But how our collaborators (the government and the MSG) achieved this, I must confess that I need to learn more about this. Hence, I would like you to explain the outcomes or objectives of these implementations. Perhaps you could also exemplify with some successful implementations from other countries.

I would like to praise all the efforts and successful implementation of extractive industry transparency in the country. As you can notice that we have only observed the minimum discrepancies from the reconciliation of revenue information reported by the government entities, the National Authority of Petroleum and Minerals (ANPM) and Minister of Finance, and from oil companies.

Despite all the achievements we have obtained so far, I understand how important it is for the implementing country to be validated because I believe these assessments would strengthen our performance within EITI.

Therefore, I would like to welcome the validation team to assess our performance and I will ensure our stakeholders and national secretariat to cooperate with you.

Unfortunately, the rising of local transmission of Covid-19 cases in the country have affected the Multi-stake holder Group (MSG) participations in the validation preparation due to restrictions imposed by the government. The recent flooding event that caused infrastructures damages also further affected the validation process to be done according to predetermined schedule.

Before I conclude my remarks, I would like to bring to your attention to consider postponing the implementation of the validation to a later date in line with the needs or concerns presented by our stakeholders.

I wish that the EITI international would continue to provide necessary assistances in the future to achieve a successful validation process, and most importantly the overall implementation of EITI in the country.

Yours sincerely,



Dr. Victor Da Conceição Soares
Minister of Petroleum and Minerals

Cc:

Elda Guterres da Silva
National Coordinator, TL-EITI

Edifício Fomento, 2º Andar,
Rua Dom Boa Ventura, Mandarin N.º 16
Dili, Timor-Leste
+670 – 333 9178