

For Immediate Press Release

Timor-Leste Hosts The ASEAN Regional Forum Workshop on Dispute Resolution and Law of the Sea

Dili, Timor-Leste (26 February, 2020) – Timor-Leste will host an ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Workshop on Dispute Resolution and Law of the Sea from 27-28 February 2020. The Workshop is being facilitated in partnership with co-hosts Australia and Malaysia.

Held at the Ministry of Finance in Dili, the workshop will bring together over 120 participants from ARF participating countries. Timor-Leste's Chief Negotiator for Maritime Boundaries, H.E. Mr. Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão, will welcome participants and deliver the keynote address.

The workshop will provide a focused forum for states to discuss the peaceful resolution of disputes in the region related to the law of the sea. It will draw on regional experience, as well as academic and practitioner expertise, and examine a range of past cases, with a particular focus on Timor-Leste and Australia's successful conclusion of a permanent maritime boundary through the UNCLOS Conciliation Commission.

Timor-Leste and Australia were the first countries to use the Conciliation Commission to settle their maritime boundary. The entry into force of the Maritime Boundary Treaty on 30 August 2019 was a milestone for their bilateral relationship, for UNCLOS and for international law.

The ARF is a regional consultative dialogue comprising 27 members that meet regularly to discuss and address political and security issues of common interest in the Asia-Pacific region. Timor-Leste was invited to join in 2005.

Timor-Leste has since been an active participant and has successfully hosted three ARF Workshops in Dili in the past – in 2011, 2017 and 2019. This record strengthens Timor-Leste's case for ASEAN membership by demonstrating its capacity to engage and facilitate ASEAN-related activities.

Australia and Malaysia are committed supporters of Timor-Leste's ASEAN aspirations.

For more information, please contact:

Sandra Ximenes

Focal Point for ASEAN Political and Security, MFAC

E-mail: asean.psc03.tl@gmail.com, Tel: +670 78161773