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## TALKING POINTS

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COUNCIL FOR THE FINAL DELIMITATION OF MARITIME BOUNDARIES  
MARITIME BOUNDARY OFFICE

**For:** Minister Dionísio Babo Soares - Moderator for Panel Discussion  
**Date:** 10.00am on Thursday, 19 May 2016  
**Session:** **Introduction of ITLOS President**

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- Thank you all for joining us today.
- As His Excellency the Prime Minister has remarked, this inaugural *Dili International Conference* comes at an important time. It coincides with the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary since the establishment of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, one of the key bodies established under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea to arbitrate and peacefully resolve maritime disputes between coastal States, in accordance with international law.
- In a climate of increasing tensions over maritime territory, struggles over scarce resources (both on- and off-shore), and a fragile balance of power between States -- international law brings order to the chaos. It brings an equalising force to the powerplay between large and small States. And it brings a pathway to peace.
- Timor-Leste knows the importance of the rule of law, having emerged from decades of violent conflict and occupation. Our small island nation has become a proud new member of the international community, and a strong supporter of international law.
- In the short time since independence, Timor-Leste has already approached international law courts and tribunals to peacefully resolve disputes with other States. Now we are calling on the United

Nations to assist us with our dispute in the Timor Sea through a structured conciliation process.

- Timor-Leste appreciates the role of international judicial and arbitral bodies in applying and interpreting the Convention, bringing certainty to the governance of the seas, and reducing conflict across the world.
- The leading, specialised body for arbitrating maritime disputes under the Convention is the International Tribunal on the Law of the Sea. Established under the Convention itself, ITLOS is an independent judicial body with 21 members, of the highest reputation for fairness, integrity and competence in the field of the law of the sea. It was specifically established for the purpose of adjudicating disputes relating to the interpretation and application of the Convention.
- We are honoured and humbled to welcome to Timor-Leste and to this stage, the current President of this esteemed Tribunal, Dr. Vladimir Golitsyn.
- Judge Golitsyn is a pre-eminent expert on international law and law of the sea, a world leader in the field. He was a Member of ITLOS for seven years before being appointed as President in 2014.
- During his time on the Tribunal, he has been an arbiter in landmark cases such as the dispute concerning delimitation of the maritime boundary between Bangladesh and Myanmar. He is currently presiding over the case concerning Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire on their maritime boundary in the Atlantic Ocean.
- Before his appointment to the Tribunal, Judge Golitsyn was Head of the Division of Public International Law in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the former USSR and led delegations at various negotiations on fisheries, navigation and maritime boundary matters. He also has a doctorate on the legal regime of the Antarctic.
- He has worked for the United Nations Office of the Legal Counsel and served as Director of the United Nations Division for Ocean Affairs and

the Law of the Sea, the peak UN agency overseeing the implementation of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.

- Judge Golitsyn holds positions as Vice-President of the Russian Association of Maritime Law and Professor of international law at Moscow State University and Moscow State Institute of International Relations. He is the author of three books and numerous articles on international law, Antarctica, the law of the sea and environmental law.
  - It is a privilege to have such a distinguished and brilliant legal mind to open this inaugural Dili International Conference on Maritime Boundaries and Law of the Sea. Judge Golitsyn, thank you and welcome...
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