



**WELCOME REMARKS BY  
YBHG. DATO' ZAINOL RAHIM ZAINUDDIN  
DIRECTOR GENERAL, IDFR**

**AT THE  
BOOK LAUNCH OF  
*THE RISING SUN: TIMOR-LESTE'S JOURNEY  
TO PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT*  
AND  
DISTINGUISHED LECTURE BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE DEMOCRATIC  
REPUBLIC OF TIMOR-LESTE, H.E. JOSÉ RAMOS-HORTA:  
*'NAVIGATING TURBULENT TIMES, PURSUING PEACE'***

**16 JUNE 2026**

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

His Excellency José Ramos-Horta, President of the  
Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste

YB Dato Lukanisman Awang Sauni, Deputy Minister of  
Foreign Affairs Malaysia

Yang Amat Mulia Tunku Panglima Besar Tunku Zain Al-  
'Abidin Ibni Tuanku Muhriz, Founding President of the  
Institute for Democracy and Economic Affairs (IDEAS)

Excellencies Ambassadors and High Commissioners

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Tan Sri-Tan Sri / Dato' Seri-Dato Seri / Dato'-Dato'

Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen

Assalamualaikum w.b.t. and a warm welcome to all of you.

1. It is a great honour for the Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations (IDFR) to host today's event, which brings together two important occasions: the launch of our latest publication, *The Rising Sun: Timor-Leste's Journey to Peace and Development*, and the Distinguished Lecture by His Excellency José Ramos-Horta, President of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, titled "*Navigating Turbulent Times, Pursuing Peace.*"

2. As the training and research arm of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia, IDFR is committed to developing diplomatic capacity and contributing to informed discourse on foreign policy and international affairs. Through our publications and dialogues, we seek to provide platforms for the exchange of ideas and perspectives on issues of importance to Malaysia, the region and the wider international community.

3. We are pleased to present *The Rising Sun: Timor-Leste's Journey to Peace and Development*, which traces

Timor-Leste's path from conflict and occupation to independence, reconciliation and nation-building.

4. It also highlights the role of diplomacy, international cooperation and institution-building in supporting post-conflict recovery and development. The publication offers valuable insights for policymakers, scholars and practitioners working in the fields of peacebuilding, development and regional cooperation.

5. This publication is also the outcome of a trilateral collaboration involving Malaysia, Timor-Leste and Australia. The collaboration reflects the value of partnerships, cross-border knowledge-sharing and sustained engagement in addressing shared challenges and aspirations. I would like to acknowledge Australia's support in facilitating the field work for the research that informed this publication.

6. But, at the heart of this publication remain the strength, determination and aspirations of the Timorese people themselves. The book recognises their perseverance in overcoming conflict, and the efforts of its leaders who guided the nation towards reconciliation, peace and development. Among them is His Excellency President José Ramos-Horta, whose longstanding commitment to dialogue and diplomacy has helped shape Timor-Leste's journey to what it is today.

7. It is particularly meaningful that we are joined today by His Excellency President José Ramos-Horta. Respected widely for his lifelong dedication to peace, dialogue and reconciliation, His Excellency has demonstrated how principled leadership and diplomacy can advance understanding even in the most challenging of circumstances. We are indeed honoured to benefit from his wisdom and reflections through today's Distinguished Lecture.

8. It is our hope that this programme will encourage meaningful dialogue, inspire further research and collaboration, and provide all present here today, with perspectives that are relevant and applicable to their respective fields of work.

9. Before I conclude, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all contributors and partners for their support in making this event possible. I would also like to thank the organising team for their dedication and hard work behind the scenes.

10. I trust that today's book launch and Distinguished Lecture will be both meaningful and enriching for all of us.

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11. Once again, welcome to the launch of *The Rising Sun: Timor-Leste's Journey to Peace and Development*, and the Distinguished Lecture by His Excellency José Ramos-Horta, "*Navigating Turbulent Times, Pursuing Peace.*"

Thank you.