

PRESS RELEASE

Timor-Leste donates \$500,000 for humanitarian aid to Cyclone Nargis survivors in Myanmar ASEAN Secretariat, 2 February 2009

Timor-Leste last Thursday announced in Dili its donation of US\$500,000 for the ASEAN-led humanitarian operations to aid the survivors of Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar's Ayeyarwady Delta.

Prime Minister Kay Rala Xanana Gusmao made the announcement during a ceremony in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to launch Timor-Leste's "ASEAN National Secretariat", established to organise and coordinate the country's preparations to join ASEAN.

He said that the contribution is Timor-Leste's show of "solidarity" with the people of Myanmar suffering from Cyclone Nargis. "We in Timor-Leste understand the pains and suffering caused by the cyclone. This modest contribution is also Timor-Leste's show of commitment to supporting the ASEAN Community," he added.

He also said the establishment of Timor-Leste's "ASEAN National Secretariat" is yet another special step towards obtaining the ASEAN membership for his country at the earliest possible date.

President Dr Jose Ramos-Horta, National Parliament President Fernando Lasama de Araujo, Foreign Minister Dr Zacarias Albano da Costa, Secretary General Imron Cotan of Indonesia's Department of Foreign Affairs, and Mr Termsak Chalermphanupap, Special Assistant to the Secretary-General of ASEAN, among others, were at the ceremony.