

Press Release

Xanana Gusmão represents the President of the Republic at the European Development Days and at the UN Oceans Conference

H.E. Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão, Chief Negotiator of the Council for the Final Delimitation of Maritime Boundaries and Government's Special Representative for the Blue Economy represented H.E. the President of the Republic, Dr José Ramos-Horta, at the European Union's 2022 European Development Days and at the UN Oceans Conference.

European Development Days

On 21-22 June the European Commission hosted the European Development Days (EDD 2022) in Brussels. It was the 15th edition of this European forum on international partnerships, titled "*Global Gateway: building sustainable partnerships for an interconnected world*".

This international event, chaired by the President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen, displays Europe's commitment to building a sustainable and fairer world, as well as to representing sustainable and reliable liaisons that serve the people and the planet.

Global Gateway is the new European Strategy to boost smart, clean and secure links in digital, energy and transport and strengthen health, education and research systems across the world. It is grounded on the belief that cooperation is the key to achieve real change, by way of global investments and partnerships.

Heads of State and Heads of Government, as well as international organisation leaders, conveyed their vision on the Global Gateway in the international and national arenas.



H.E. Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão took part in the panel dedicated to "Global Gateway in the Indo-Pacific", a session meant for reviewing the way in which these partnerships between EU and the Indo-Pacific are being implemented and to discuss lessons learned and the successful outcomes of EU's Strategy to Connect Europe and Asia (2018).

The European Commissioner for International Partnerships, Jutta Urpilainen, took part in this panel and in the closing ceremony of the European Development Days, which enabled participants to reflect on the outcome of the discussions held over the two-day event. It was a chance to think about the future and the actual steps to be taken as a result of this event.

The Council Conclusions on a EU strategy for cooperation in the Indo-Pacific are available here: <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-7914-2021-INIT/pt/pdf>

In a parallel meeting, H.E. Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão and Jutta Urpilainen had the opportunity to talk about cooperation and strategic development.

Meeting with the Senior Council

The Chief Negotiator met with the Senior Council in London for confidential and strategic meetings. These included an update on the negotiations on land and maritime boundaries.



UN Ocean Conference

The second Ocean Conference, co-chaired by the governments of Portugal and Kenya, took place in Lisbon from 27 June to 1 July. It featured around 160 UN member countries.

The Secretary-General of the United Nations, António Guterres, the President of the Republic of Portugal, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, and the President of Kenya, Uhuru Kenyatta, delivered the opening address. Timor-Leste was represented by H.E. Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão, Head of Delegation.

“Scaling up Ocean Action Based on Science and Innovation for the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Stocktaking, Partnerships and Solutions” was the theme of this year’s conference, which sought to propel much needed science-based innovative solutions aimed at starting a new chapter of global ocean action.

Whereas an approach is required concerning the threats that compromise health, ecology, the economy and ocean governance (acidification; marine debris and pollution; illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing; loss of habitats and of biodiversity), the conference focused on building upon the existing successful partnerships and on boosting new innovative and concrete partnerships, so as to move forward with implementing Goal 14 and to support actions seeking to conserve and sustainably use oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

H.E. Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão spoke during the plenary session on the second day of the event, stressing that Timor-Leste is dedicated to working alongside those who are equally committed to protecting the ocean and realising Goal 14, reminding that the degradation of the seas and the ocean affects each and every one of us.



As for the recent delimitation of final maritime boundaries with Australia and the effort to do likewise with Indonesia, he advocated UNCLOS to enable proper ocean governance.

He further petitioned international agencies to establish a Marine Education Centre and advocated cooperation with neighbouring countries and partnerships with other States, so as to contribute towards a Blue Economy that treats the ocean in a balanced manner contributing to the sustainable development of Timor-Leste.

Read the full speech here: https://www.gfm.tl/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/ENG_UN-Ocean-Conference-Statement-FINAL-F.pdf

Read the Lisbon Declaration on the UN Ocean Conference: https://sdgs.un.org/sites/default/files/2022-06/UNOC_political_declaration_final.pdf

In addition to the plenary session, the Head of the Ocean Conference Delegation took part in the Interactive Dialogue to “Enhance the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea”, which was held on 30 June.



Read the full speech here: https://www.gfm.tl/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/ENG_Interactive-Dialogue_7_30_06_2022-Final.pdf

In parallel to the Ocean Conference, H.E. Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão had the opportunity to meet with the Indonesian Coordinating Minister for Maritime Affairs and Investment, General Luhut Panjaitan. They discussed their perspectives on the benefits of the Blue Economy and the conference, as well as on the importance of negotiating maritime boundaries between Timor-Leste and Indonesia.

During a meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Singapore, Vivian Balakrishnan, the Head of Delegation also spoke about the importance of UNCLOS to strengthen the role of Small Island Developing States.

During a brief meeting with the Australian Minister for the Environment and Water, Tanya Plibersek, H.E. Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão spoke about the possibility of both countries cooperating on areas such as protecting the environment, reef biodiversity, establishing a Marine Education Centre in Timor-Leste, illegal fishing and use of plastics. They also spoke about the resolution of the dispute on maritime boundaries and support to the relationship between Timorese and Australian veterans.



H.E. Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão also made a courtesy call on the President of the Republic of Portugal, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, with whom he spoke of his expectations concerning global commitments, solutions and partnerships to come out of this conference, as well as of the need for unity regarding concrete policies, particularly by maritime countries.



Annual Conference of the Portuguese Institute for the Law of the Sea

The First Annual Conference of the Portuguese Institute for the Law of the Sea, hosted together with the Diplomatic Institute (DI) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Francisco Suárez Research Centre for Advanced Studies in Law (CEAD), was held on 28 June, in Lisbon. H.E. Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão was the keynote speaker.



Under the theme “UNCLOS at 40: A Rules-Based International Order for the Ocean”, the intervention covered subjects including the importance of the international system for managing conflicts and the governance of the international maritime order, which in the case of Timor-Leste enabled the country to achieve its independence and to establish maritime boundaries.

Read the full speech here: https://www.gfm.tl/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/ENG-Speech-CN-at-the-Port-MNEC-UNCLOS-at-40_28_06_2022-Final.pdf