



**P R I M E
M I N I S T E R**

**SPEECH BY
HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRIME MINISTER
KAY RALA XANANA GUSMÃO**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE
SUMMIT OF THE FUTURE**

“MULTILATERAL SOLUTIONS FOR A BETTER TOMORROW”

<Long version for distribution>

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Palácio do Governo
Avenida Marginal
Dili, Timor-Leste

Your Excellencies
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to take part in this Summit of the Future.

Last month, Timor-Leste celebrated the 25th anniversary of the Popular Consultation, under the auspices of the United Nations, where our people bravely voted for self-determination and freedom.

The independence of Timor-Leste was an achievement of the Timorese people, but also a triumph of the international system.

It demonstrated that, with commitment, international cooperation can achieve agreed goals and tackle the challenges and opportunities of its time.

And if today Timor-Leste is a stable, peaceful democracy in transition to development, it is due not only to the constant support of the international community but also to national efforts of reconciliation and dialogue for peace, to secure a peaceful future.

We know that without peace, there are no conditions for development. That is why investing in our young people – on educational, social and citizenship skills and behaviours - is an investment in sustainable development and lasting peace.

Your Excellencies,

Peace is an abstract concept for many nations.

Western Sahara has been waiting for its referendum since 1992. It has been waiting for 32 years! International law has yet to reach this last colony in Africa, ignored and forgotten.

The international community has yet to find multilateral solutions for a future of peace for many nations around the world — from Palestine to Ukraine, from Yemen to Sudan, from the Central African Republic to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, from Afghanistan to Myanmar, and from Haiti to many other fragile and conflict-ridden countries.

We all know that the United Nations was created after World War II for the preservation of global peace, human rights, and international development.

However, we now live in an age of disorder, uncertainty, instability, and conflict. We face increasingly complex challenges, including the climate crisis, extreme inequality and rising geopolitical tensions.

The Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) wait patiently for more flexible, inclusive, and responsive solutions.

The means and financing to achieve the SDGs are scarce. They are insufficient to combat extreme poverty, food insecurity, humanitarian crises, and climate change, biodiversity loss and environmental degradation which threaten the existence of some island states, particularly in the Pacific.

Those who have contributed the least to global crises are the ones who suffer first, suffer most, and often suffer in isolation.

They are victims of self-interested international actors and policies that value profit and power more than human dignity.

As crises intensify, more and more people are suffering from hunger. The data from the Global Hunger Index is alarming. This when there are only six years left to fulfil the SDGs!

What kind of world are we living in, where we can fuel wars, but cannot feed children?

We have witnessed thousands of deaths in the Mediterranean, as people flee their homelands to escape conflict and poverty. With this Pact for the Future, we hope the international community, especially world leaders, will approach this crisis with greater concern and sensitivity, beyond the mere discussion of immigration issues.

Your Excellencies,

I advocate for structural reform of the Security Council, which has become obsolete, ineffective, and unrepresentative of today's realities.

An international organisation is only credible if it responds to current needs and does not remain bound to a mechanism created to address problems from almost 80 years ago.

I support the expansion of the permanent members of the Security Council, for greater geographical, cultural, and economic representation and legitimacy.

It is difficult to realise principles of transparency, accountability, and trust, while rich and developed countries continue to make decisions for poor and developing countries. It is a case of a few deciding for us, without us!

I support greater investment in preventive diplomacy that identifies the causes of problems and strengthens national processes, and greater diplomatic efforts to listen and understand, rather than impose decontextualised theoretical solutions.

A ceasefire followed by negotiations, is always preferable to the continuous supply of arms aimed at defeating the adversary - at the very least, such an approach minimises the number of innocent women and children affected by conflict.

I also advocate tackling exploitative economic structures and extreme inequality, and greater financial support and debt relief for developing countries. The international community must fund global development efforts.

A pact for the future is urgent — a reform pact that looks to the future based on the global challenges of the present and renews everyone's confidence, especially the new generation that will accomplish it.

After all, we all live on the same planet, we are all citizens of the world, we are interdependent, and we will share the future we choose today.

Thank you very much.

Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão