

**Press Advisory**

*Location: Comoro road heading out of Dili, past the round-a-bout  
50 meters on the left. Look for the skate park out the front!*

**Contact**

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**Ba Futuru invites you to celebrate Timor-Leste's independence at the  
Seroja Center Independence Festival!**

**Please join with our festivities  
21<sup>st</sup> of May 3pm- 6pm**

On the 21<sup>st</sup> of May Seroja Center, “the Center for Peace,” will present a selection of their activities and trainings on human rights, awareness on children’s right to protection, conflict resolution, sports, art and drama. This event is being coordinated by local NGO Ba Futuru and the community, and sponsored by UNICEF.

Headlining the celebration will be the debut of the new Seroja Drama Group, presenting “Independensia”, an original play about the concept of independence through regular people’s eyes. This event will also feature various music performances by children and youth and a performance by a traditional dance troupe, as well as skateboarding demonstrations and a friendship volleyball competition.

Seroja Center is beautifully situated in the Comoro community and provides a safe space where hundreds of children and youth from all of Dili engage in activities that give them an opportunity to interact, exchange ideas and learn skills necessary to create a positive future. The Seroja Center is successfully involving the youth in positive activities, keeping them off the street and helping them to process the negative impacts of conflict.

Seroja Center is managed by Ba Futuru – a local NGO established in 2004 with the vision to build a culture of peace and non-violence in Timor-Leste. The Seroja Center was developed with assistance from international and Timorese volunteers as well as Edge-ucate.org and Uma Juventude, and has received funding or in-kind support from American Friends Service Committee, Anteatr Construction, the Austin Community Foundation, the Australian Embassy in Timor-Leste, the British Embassy in Jakarta, ConocoPhillips, CRS, Denver University, Durani Dunia Foundation, Friends of Idlewild Stables, the Government of Timor-Leste, Global Fund for Children, Save the Children Sweden, Silverton Foundation, UNICEF, UNMIT, World Bank, the Office of RDTL’s President Jose Ramos Horta and individuals in the United States and Australia.

Ba Futuru has provided opportunities for more than 15,000 conflict-affected young people to develop their skills through artistic workshops on conflict resolution, human rights and civic education. Ba Futuru has also provided training in child protection, conflict resolution, children’s rights and positive (non-violent) discipline to more than 500 parents, orphanage staff, teachers and community leaders in Timor-Leste.