

Press Advisory

November 17, 2009

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Event Title: “The President’s Festival of Peace”

Theme: Lao Ba Dame

Date: 21 November, 2008

Event Time: 6pm

Place: Merkado Lama, Dili

Dili, Timor-Leste – On 21 November Local NGO’s Ba Futuru, Arte Moris, Uma Juventude and Knau Buka Hatene together with Film Maker Thomas Nehrman and the President’s Office will host “The President’s Festival of Peace” – a joint project to provide at-risk youth with opportunities to gain new skills and celebrate peace through mediums including art, peace education, film and drama, followed by Timor-Leste’s first Independent Film Festival.

The Festival will be a full day event at the Merkado Lama, *Caicoli*, with activities for approximately 150 participants. The day-time workshops will be followed by an evening viewing of films entered in Timor-Leste’s first independent film festival. This is only one part of a larger project organized by the Office of the President in conjunction with local groups across the country including activities throughout the nation from Oecusse to Lautem.

In regard to this festival the President of RDTL Jose Ramos-Horta said: “Peace does not simply mean the absence of fighting, but refers to all people living with dignity- respecting, loving, communicating, listening, supporting, working together and trusting one another. With peace we can build and extend the ability of every individual and move forward together as a country. The President’s Festival for Peace is an opportunity for everyone to gather together - children, youth and community members - in order to cooperate with the government leaders to build a positive peace. Let us come together to celebrate each other and create peace in Timor-Leste.”

The festival will actively engage youth, many who have previously been involved in violence or martial arts related activities, providing them with new skills to create a more peaceful future for their country. Workshops during the day will include interactive activities in peace-building, film-production, creative and visual arts and the making of a gigantic mural that will be a permanent peace installation at the Merkado Lama.

NGO Ba Futuru, the main organizer of this event, is a not-for-profit NGO established in Timor-Leste in 2004. Ba Futuru has worked with more than 15,000 conflict affected, vulnerable and at-risk children and youth since 2004 providing them educational and capacity development opportunities.

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