

### Overview

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of May 2002, Timor-Leste (East Timor) gained independence. The official name of the country is *Republica Democratica De Timor Leste* (RDTL). On 27 September 2002, it became the 191<sup>st</sup> Member State of the United Nations. It is also a member of the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, UNESCO and the Community of Portuguese speaking countries. It has established diplomatic relations with nearly all Member State of ASEAN. To allow a smooth transition of administrative power from the UN to the newly-elected government, the UN Security Council has endorsed the formation of the UN Mission Support to East Timor (UNMISSET) whose mandate will end on 20 May 2004. The downsizing of UNMISSET operations is currently underway.

The country has a land area of about 24,000 square kilometres and has a population of approximately 800,000. Because of its limited internal revenue generation capacity, the country relies heavily on external funds for both development aid and budgetary support. The First donors Conference held in Dili in May 2002 pledged US \$ 360 for the next three year period of which \$ 82 million was for budgetary support and \$ 278 million as bilateral aid programmes. The next meeting of the development partners is scheduled on 3-5 June 2003 in Dili. Three areas are likely to be highlighted by the Government in the meeting as future priorities. These are (i) economic growth and job creation; (ii) security and stability; and (iii) transition in terms of capacity development.

### ILO Constituents

**Government** - The Secretariat of Labour and Solidarity (SLS) is ILO's focal point for labour and social issues. Mr. Arsenio P. Bano, Secretary of State of Labour and Solidarity, is currently in charge of SLS. It is responsible for vocational training, employment promotion, labour relations, formulation and enforcement of the labour laws, and promoting social dialogue.

**Employers** - There are several employers organizations in the country. The important ones include: Chambers of Commerce and Industry, East Timor; Asset Loro Sae (East Timor National Business Association), East Timor Business Association (ETBA) and National Coffee Association.

**Workers** - There are several workers organizations in the country. The biggest of these is the Timor Lorosae Trade Union Confederation (TLTUC) or KSTL. Mr. Jose C. da Costa is the President and Ms. Ana Mota, General Secretary of TLTUC. Others include Serikat Buruh Socialis Timor (SBST), Oxfam Workers' Union. Unions are established based on industry-sector, and enterprise for example, nurses, teachers, journalists, agricultural workers, construction workers, hotel and restaurant workers, port workers, medical doctors. Many of these are affiliated to TLTUC making it the largest trade union. The ICFTU-APRO and Australian trade union movement working together with ILO have helped trade union development in TL.

### Technical Cooperation

ILO technical cooperation focuses on employment creation, skills development, enterprise development, promotion of sound labour relations, and strengthening the capacity of the constituents to contribute to the process of social dialogue and labour and social policy making.

### International Labour Standards and Tripartism

Since the country is not as yet a member of ILO, the ratification of ILO Conventions does not apply at this stage.