



**REPÚBLICA DEMOCRÁTICA DE TIMOR-LESTE**  
**MINISTÉRIO DO TURISMO**

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**PRESS RELEASE – Minister’s Statement – Darwin to Dili Yacht Rally**

Our tourism sector is in its early stages of development with limited, but growing, numbers of international tourists and an emerging tourist infrastructure. The poor condition of the country’s road network, limited accommodation options, and relatively expensive air links provide challenges to the sector’s to growth. These challenges will be addressed as we develop our economy and embark on a major program of infrastructure construction.

The National Strategy Development Plan has clearly described that Tourism is one of the most important sectors in the transformation of Timor-Leste’s economy. The plan is developed to inspire change, as well as to support bold collective action and to plan for a better future. This 20 years vision reflects the aspirations of the Timorese to construct a better, prosperous and strong economic nation. It is also very fortunate for Timor-Leste to be situated in the Asia & Pacific region with its growing international tourist market, which is an indicator of the rising economic fortunes of the region.

The People of Timor-Leste have been blessed with tropical waters rich in marine life, white sand beaches, spectacular mountain ranges, unique Timorese culture, Portuguese colonial heritage and resistance history.

Apart from its natural beauty, Timor-Leste also offers a variety of special events, such as the Tour de Timor mountain bike race, the Dili Marathon International, Caravana Artistica, and the Darwin to Dili Yacht Rally. The Darwin to Dili Yacht Rally initiative has been a unique and very challenging event for decades. After a break of over 35 years it has been re – established as an annual event in the north Australian-South East Asian yachting calendar. Sailing is the perfect package of performance and pushing limits, while demonstrating high levels of determination. The Darwin to Dili Yacht Rally will be a true feat exemplifying human endurance, adventure and courage. It is a sport that strives for environmental responsibility and sustainability through alternative energy development.

All these events aim to establish and enhance the image of Dili as the Capital of Timor-Leste, which is not only beautiful but also the “City of Peace”. Therefore, 2014 is the most exciting year for tourism activities in Timor Leste.

I wish to invite you to participate in the Darwin to Dili Yacht Rally which will start in Darwin on Saturday 12 July 2014.

  
Silvano Sampaio Gonçalves  
General Director of Tourism

