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**CÂMARA DO COMÉRCIO E INDÚSTRIA DE TIMOR LESTE
(CCI-TL)**

**Statement on human trafficking, modern slavery and forced labour at the Bali
Process Government and Business Forum**

24th – 25th August 2017, Perth, Australia

The issues of human trafficking, modern slavery and forced labour concerns us a lot. As a new post-conflict country, Timor-Leste is still in the process of nation-building, with high levels of unemployment and poverty. These factors can be incentives for organized crime agencies and syndicates to enter into our vulnerable society.

Timor-Leste needs to strengthen its institutions by building the capacity of our human resources and endow them with the necessary tools to combat these crimes effectively.

We already have a legal framework in place, but we need to be able to implement it.

In the meantime, we should cooperate with our neighbour countries through information sharing, the preparation of joint strategies and operational programs, including joint patrolling the seas within our Special Economic Zones. A joint effort from all of us will be necessary if we are to combat these crimes effectively.

As a woman, I'm concerned that the number of women victims of these crimes is increasing significantly. Governments should address this issue by putting in place the necessary policies and regulations to protect women.

As a businesswoman, I always try to take care and protect the interest of my fellow Timorese businesswomen. Conscious that only once united could we make our voices heard, I led a group of Timorese businesswomen to found The Businesswomen Association of Timor-Leste and later join the Organizing Committee that founded The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Timor-Leste. In 2016, I was selected to represent my country as the Women Entrepreneurship Day Organisation (WEDO) Ambassador. A week of activities leading to the celebration of WEDO focused on the empowerment of



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women, including those living in rural areas. As recognition for my work and commitment to the cause, I was recently appointed by WEDO in New York as the Regional Ambassador for ASIA.

I strongly believe that all these efforts towards the emancipation and empowerment of women in Timor-Leste will help reduce unemployment and poverty which, in turn, will also reduce the likelihood of women falling victim to the crimes of human trafficking, modern slavery and forced labour.

Thank you for your attention

Fon Ha Tchong (known as Kathleen Goncalves)

Vice President of CCI-TL