Mr. Patrizio Pagano, Executive Director, and Mr. Nuno Mota Pinto, Alternate Executive Director, visited Timor-Leste at the beginning of March, 2016.

The goal of the visit was to discuss with their Timorese authorities the work of the World Bank in this young nation and get a first-hand impression on the development challenges of the country. Timor-Leste reached independence in 2002 and the impressive experience of institution-building and the positive achievements in economic and social development of the last 15 years carry very important lessons for other countries facing fragile and post-conflict situations.

The delegation met with the Central Bank Governor, the Deputy Prime-Minister, the Deputy-Ministry of Finance and other high-level officials. Timor-Leste has been blessed with natural-resources assets (gas and oil) and it has for the last 15 years manage them in a very transparent and cautious way. The country is investing in upgrading its infrastructure and expanding the provision of public services like Education and Health to the population. The World Bank Group has been a long-standing partner in this effort offering technical advice and financing. The delegation visited the World Bank co-financed Dili-Ainaro road project that includes road expansion and upgrade to become more climate-resilient. The delegation also took the opportunity to visit the site of the future Tibar port that will be financed through an IFC-advised PPP structure.

The delegation also had the opportunity to leave the capital city Dili and visit some of the neighboring rural districts where the development challenges are even more daunting. Finally, the delegation met with other development partners (bilateral and multilateral) present in the country to discuss their view of the World Bank work and exchange ideas on the opportunities and difficulties Timor-Leste faces in the future.

The Executive Director and Alternate Executive Director met with the very impressive and dedicated World Bank Group’s country office staff, whose effort contributed to the success of the visit, and discussed corporate matters as well as their view about the Timor-Leste current situation.