

**WELCOME SPEECH BY NUSS VICE-PRESIDENT II
MR NAKOORSHA ABDUL KADIR
AT THE FIRESIDE CHAT WITH AMBASSADOR OF TIMOR-LESTE
26 NOVEMBER 2025, WEDNESDAY, 7.00PM
KENT RIDGE GUILD HOUSE, FUNCTION ROOMS, LEVEL 2**

Your Excellency Ambassador Alexandre Tilman,
Distinguished guests,
Members and friends of NUSS,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Good evening,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to this evening's talk, *"From Dili to ASEAN: Timor-Leste's Bold Leap into Regional Integration."*

We are honoured to have with us His Excellency Ambassador Alexandre Tilman, whose distinguished career across the United Nations, the World Bank, and the Timor-Leste government reflects a deep commitment to development and international partnership.

The NUSS Meet-the-Ambassador Series, established in August 2009, was created to give our members direct access to global perspectives through intimate, closed-door dialogues with ambassadors and foreign dignitaries. Recent speakers have included His Excellency Allaster Cox, Australian High Commissioner to Singapore, and Ambassador Ashok Mirpuri, former Singapore Ambassador to the United States. These conversations continue to strengthen intellectual discourse and support our mission of contributing positively to Singapore's political and intellectual development.

Timor-Leste's journey toward ASEAN membership is a story of vision, perseverance, and belief in regional cooperation. Its admission on 26 October 2025, just a month ago, as ASEAN's 11th member marks a significant milestone — one that affirms the nation's long-held aspiration to take its place within the Southeast Asian community. The path has demanded reform, resilience, and readiness — qualities that underscore Timor-Leste's commitment to

meaningful engagement and regional cooperation in shaping ASEAN's shared future. For Singapore and the region, Timor-Leste's accession opens fresh avenues for inclusivity, collaboration, and cohesion in a rapidly evolving world.

Looking ahead, NUSS intends to organise a Business Mission to Timor-Leste next year, offering our members first-hand insights into the country's development and emerging opportunities.

Thank you once again for joining us this evening.

Please join me in warmly welcoming His Excellency Ambassador Alexandre Tilman.