

Bairo Pite Clinic, Dili, The Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste is a partner of the Australian Foundation for Peoples of Asia and the Pacific

MEDIA RELEASE – 26 MAY 2009

Australian Funded Healthcare Organisation Receives Highest Timorese Honour

At the Independence Day celebrations held recently in Timor-Leste, Dr Jose Ramos-Horta, President of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, paid tribute to Dr Dan Murphy and the Bairo Pite Clinic by conferring the country's highest honour – the Medalha de Merito (Medal of Merit) de Timor-Leste, for services to Timor-Leste.

“Dr Dan Murphy is a most remarkable man who has dedicated his life to the service of others less fortunate. His profound commitment to building an institution that serves the interest of the sick and needy is an inspiration to all, a great legacy for the people of Timor-Leste and a true reflection of his extraordinary character and spirit,” said Dr Jose Ramos-Horta.

The Bairo Pite Clinic which was founded by Dr Dan Murphy in 1999 is supported by the Australian international aid organisation, The Australian Foundation for the Peoples of Asia and the Pacific (AFAP).

Dr Murphy, director of the Bairo Pite Clinic acknowledged the tremendous support the Clinic has received from Australians saying, “Many Australians have contributed to the success of the Bairo Pite Clinic. AFAP’s years of generous donations and administrative support, AusAid and the many medical students and doctors who have come from all corners of Australia to help, as well as some of Australia’s leading hospitals including St Vincent’s Campus, Sydney and Monash Medical Centre in Melbourne - who provide life-saving cardiac intervention for our seriously ill patients.”

“There are literally thousands of individual Australians who have supported us in various ways including giving practical and monetary support. It is this good world citizenship and decency that is indispensable to the Clinic and people of Timor-Leste,” Dr Murphy said.

Margaret Duckett, Chief Executive Officer of AFAP said, “We are delighted that Dr Dan has received such a well deserved prestigious award. AFAP is very proud of the long-standing partnership we have shared with Dr Dan and the magnificent team at Bairo Pite Clinic since 1999. We know that through his great dedication and determination to provide primary healthcare services to the people of Timor-Leste, the Clinic has been responsible for saving many lives.”

“The support AFAP has been able to provide is only due to the tremendous support we’ve had from the Australian public. It’s this support which has allowed Dr Dan and the Bairo Pite Clinic to care for so many sick people over the years. However, we still have a long way to go to improve services and to continue to offer even basic healthcare in Timor-Leste. We are still very much reliant on the generosity of the Australian people to continue to give,” Ms Duckett said.

In accepting the award, Dr Murphy thanked the government of Timor-Leste for creating the conditions allowing the Clinic to function at a high level. He acknowledged the support of The Ministry of Health for all their cooperation and support, and especially for the general population of this newly independent country who demonstrate daily, an unshakable faith in the Bairo Pite Clinic.

“We humbly accept this recognition and understand it to be a stimulus to redouble our efforts to improve the health of the Timorese people and reduce the immense suffering that is their daily fare,” Dr Murphy said. **ENDS**

We are able to offer both pre-record and live interviews with:

- Dr Dan Murphy – Bairo Pite Clinic – Dili, Timor-Leste
- Margaret Duckett, Chief Executive Officer of AFAP

For more information and to arrange an interview please contact:

Clare Collins - Insight Communications

P: 02 9319 3844

M: 0414 821 957

E: clare@insightcommunications.net.au



JOURNALIST NOTES

The Bairo Pite Clinic

The Bairo Pite Clinic which was founded by Dr Dan Murphy in 1999 is supported by the Australian international aid organisation, The Australian Foundation for the Peoples of Asia and the Pacific (AFAP).

Located in Timor-Leste's capital city of Dili, the Clinic was established to serve the immediate needs of a population affected by the humanitarian crisis. As the violence subsided, Bairo Pite Clinic has adapted and transformed from an emergency medical service to a more comprehensive community healthcare service.

Today, the Bairo Pite Clinic remains one of the most highly visited health clinics in the country, seeing an average of 300 patients per day, cared for by thirty-two Timorese staff and three permanent international volunteers. Dr Murphy and his colleagues at the Bairo Pite Clinic were honoured for having provided a continuous and reliable source of free health support to the population of Timor-Leste during arduous circumstances and often when little other support was available.

Dr Murphy's vision and tireless commitment has resulted in the Bairo Pite Clinic becoming the largest and most successful non-government sponsored clinic in Timor-Leste.

Web: <http://bairopiteclinic.tripod.com>

The Australian Foundation for Peoples of Asia and the Pacific (AFAP)

AFAP's purpose is to make a positive difference to the lives of people throughout Africa, Asia and the Pacific.

AFAP was established in Australia in 1968 and incorporated in the state of NSW in 1983. AFAP works throughout the world, specifically in the Pacific, Asia and Africa. In consultation with the community, they develop innovative models to address health, environment, sustainable agriculture, education and other key development issues. They are known for their professional competence, ethical practice and ability to work effectively with people from diverse cultures which ensures the provision of a high quality of service.

AFAP are recognised in Australia and internationally for their capacity to build sustainable partnerships that result in significant development impacts. AFAP receives funding from corporate and government donors and the Australian public.

Web: www.afap.org