



## **East Timor: Anti-Chinese fear campaigns just propaganda - Ramos-Horta**

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Former Timorese president José Ramos-Horta said on Thursday that East Timor could benefit from partnerships with China, as well as other partnerships, for its national development, adding that fear campaigns against Chinese investment were just propaganda.

“There is a lot of propaganda suddenly. China has now appeared as a great global economic power and this has upset the economic monopoly of many countries. It is a new global geopolitical phenomenon”, José Ramos-Horta told Lusa.

“It makes no sense to be concerned about east Timor. I can understand the concerns, obviously, but our response is to always be available to explain the implications of Chinese involvement”, he said.

José Ramos-Horta was speaking to Lusa after returning from China where he participated in the meetings of the Global Council for the ‘One Belt One Road’ initiative, with various former heads of states.

Ramos-Horta played down concerns about China’s presence in East Timor, saying it was “no greater than the presence of Indonesia, or Australia”.

The country, he said, has various cooperation agreements in the defence and security area with Australia, Portugal and the U.S. and other cooperation with countries such as Japan, South Korea and Germany, apart from the European Union.

“The Chinese presence in Australia is much larger, much larger in the United States where China owns two trillion dollars of U.S. government debt and investments in the United States”, he added.

This week, he noted, the chairman of the Timorese oil company, Timor Gap, said he was holding talks with China about the funding of the new port of Beaco, part of the Greater Sunrise project in the south of Timor, estimated to cost \$943 million.

Francisco Monteiro confirmed that the project, which is expected to be built by the China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation, is to be part of the One Belt, One Road initiative.