



Press Release

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Celebration of International Human Rights Day: JSMP urges the National Parliament to discuss, enact and promulgate the draft law on Reparations and the draft law on a Public Memory Institute

On the 10 December 2012 the State of Timor-Leste celebrated International Human Rights Day through an official session at the National Parliament and handed out ‘Dr. Sergio Viera de Mello Human Rights Awards’ to recipients.

The recipients of these human rights awards included the Belun NGO, which received an award relating to Civil and Political Rights and the *Fraternidade Franciscana* Institute and the Bairo Pite Clinic who were given awards relating to Civil, Economic and Cultural Rights. These awards were in the form of USD 10,000 that was given to each of the aforementioned institutions.

The celebration was attended by the President, members of the National Parliament, the Prime Minister and his ministers, the former President of Timor Leste Mr. Jose Ramos Horta, representatives from other government institutions, the diplomatic corps and other members of civil society.

The President in his welcome address stated that *“These awards provide encouragement for those who have dedicated themselves to helping others to achieve better lives”*.

“JSMP recognizes that this is a good practice to show that Timor-Leste upholds human rights values, however the State should be obliged to ensure that each citizen is able to enjoy his or her basic rights as provided for in the Constitution. Therefore, JSMP urges the State to do everything possible to guarantee these rights” said the Executive Director of JSMP, Luis de Oliveira Sampaio.

The right to justice for victims of past human rights abuses is a fundamental human right. Therefore, JSMP urges the State, through the National Parliament, to discuss, enact and promulgate the Draft Law on Reparations and the Draft Law on a Public Memory Institute which are still pending.

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