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**Press Release**  
**27 September 2018**

**The Fretilin Bench asks national leaders to establish dialogue to find a solution to the current political impasse and the need for consensus to promote good governance and combat corruption as well as giving urgent consideration to the Law Against Corruption**

On 25 September 2018 the President of the Fretilin Bench, His Excellency MP Francisco Miranda Branco, conveyed a political statement from Fretilin during a plenary session. This political statement placed importance on the political impasse that has not yet been resolved to date and the issue of good governance combatting corruption and the urgent need for a Law Against Corruption. Fretilin stated that to end the political impasse a dialogue is needed between the nation's leaders, as an alternative to just insulting and defaming each other through the media. In regards to the issue of promoting good governance and combatting corruption, Fretilin stated that a consensus is needed from all parties and the Law Against Corruption needs to be given urgent consideration to be able to effectively combat corruption in Timor-Leste. The PD opposition bench made a statement through His Excellency, MP Adriano do Nascimento, who seconded the aforementioned political statement.

“JSMP really appreciates the sense of statesmanship and conscience of the opposition parties to place importance on dialogue to find a solution to the political impasse in our country as well as to give priority to the issue of promoting good governance and combatting corruption to give urgent consideration to the creation of a Law Against Corruption”, said the Acting Director of JSMP, Casimiro dos Santos.

The Fretilin Bench considers dialogue to be the essence of democracy, and if Timor-Leste wants to be a nation that upholds democracy in our lives, then dialogue is a necessity. Dialogue should take place in a climate of good will and mutual understanding to eventually obtain a good understanding between all parties. If there is no good will and mutual understanding then there will be no dialogue, which is what is currently occurring in our country. If there is no dialogue, our development will not move forward.

This MP added that we cannot continue with this situation which is impeding mutual dialogue, and only speaking to each other through the media, in order to insult each other, and to create further confusion, suspicion, and lack of trust in each other.

Current political issues are only based on manipulation, lies, defamation and nurturing a culture of personal hatred and revenge. This is a weapon used in political debates in our country, to

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produce an unhealthy society in terms of human and political relations. It is time for political leaders to put the interests of the people and the nation above personal interests.

This MP said that we might have a difference of opinion, but there are many things that we need to have a consensus about, such as good governance, transparency and the fight against corruption. To obtain a consensus on political issues such as these, we need to have open and constructive dialogue to uphold the national interest, rather than group or personal interests. It is time for our leaders to sit together to initiate dialogue to resolve this political impasse so that we can look forward to better serving our people.

The Fretilin Bench also maintained its demand for a Law Against Corruption. The aforementioned MP said that to guarantee good governance and development, and to ensure dignity and integrity of the State, Timor-Leste urgently requires a strong and effective Law Against Corruption. He added that during this legislature Fretilin will consider a Law Against Corruption as a top priority to prevent and combat corruption. Therefore Fretilin will engage in a range of efforts to quickly obtain the approval of National Parliament for this law.

This representative of the people also reminded all members of parliament in the Fifth Legislature to change practices like this, because the Constitution and law is very clear. Any person who is charged definitively or who commits a crime that carries a prison sentence of more than 2 years shall automatically lose their immunity. However, the National Parliament always takes measures to violate this article.

The Draft Law Against Corruption was first presented in 2014, but until now it has not been deliberated on in the plenary. Fretilin believes that now is an opportune time to quickly pass this law.

The Fretilin Bench also believes that corruption in the public sector continues to impede Timor-Leste's development. However, Timor-Leste does not yet have any adequate measures to respond to this challenge, and therefore the Law Against corruption is a very important step in initiating this struggle against corruption, to ensure good governance and guarantee the welfare of the entire community.

JSMP has also observed that the National Parliament to date has scheduled an election for the Commissioner of the Anti-Corruption Commission (KAK) but it hasn't happened yet.

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