



Press Release

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National Parliament

JSMP is concerned with some members of the National Parliament using unethical and inappropriate language during the plenary session of the National Parliament

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During monitoring conducted on 4 February 2019 during a plenary meeting of the National Parliament, JSMP observed that some members spoke up during the plenary session and used language considered to be unethical and inappropriate and yelled at each other before the Chair of the National Parliament, when a supervision report was being presented to the Chair of the National Parliament.

This is not the first time that such practices and attitudes have occurred in the National Parliament and JSMP has many times questioned these attitudes through its annual reports, for example, the use of inappropriate language, moving back and forth during the plenary, as well as individual discussion between MPs, and watching video calls even though the alarm has sounded to start the plenary. However members of parliament ignore the rules and procedures that apply in the National Parliament, including attending and departing work on time.

JSMP recently observed a member of the national parliament who was reading out information and shouted at another MP from the Chair of the National Parliament and used language that ideally should not be used in parliament, a place where the distinguished members of parliament perform their duties as representatives of the people. A female MP shouted out “*You shouldn't interrupt me*” [Tetum = *ó*, informal register for 'you'] when a male MP expressed his thoughts about the time.

Also, this female MP used other inappropriate language to demonstrate her feelings or express her dissatisfaction at other MPs in the plenary of the National Parliament.

This informal register of the word '*ó*' (you) is restricted to greeting or calling out to family members, friends or children instead of mentioning their names.

The word “*ó*” (you) is normally used in informal social communication in the community or public places such as markets/places of commerce or informal places/spaces, and not the National Parliament. “The National Parliament is a sovereign organ and members of parliament are representatives of the people, and they should demonstrate their quality when making any

political speeches and should use language during the plenary session of the National Parliament that upholds the dignity of the parliament as a sovereign organ, and in their capacity as representatives of the people", said the Executive Director of JSMP, Luis de Oliveira Sampaio.

Law No. 15/2009 on the Parliamentary Rules of Procedure also deals with decorum when speaking in the plenary meeting. Decorum when speaking is authorised by the President of the Chair of the National Parliament as set out in Article 63.1 of Law No. 15/2009 and the Rules prohibit members of parliament from using words to offend other MPs or speaking inappropriately or unethically as set out in Article 65 of Law No. 15/2009.

JSMP requests for the Chair of the National Parliament to raise awareness and introduce these procedures to the members of parliament in each plenary session to prevent the members of parliament from using unethical language or language filled with insults in the parliament.

For more information, please contact:

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