



Press Release
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**“The Celebration of International Women's Day”
JSMP urges all parties to contribute to the eradication of violence
against women**

Each year International Women's Day is commemorated on the 8th March and the global theme for this year's celebration this year is “I am Generation Equality: Realizing Women's Rights.” This theme is important because it reminds leaders of their pledge and commitment to promote and protect the rights of women and girls against any violence, and how to help all of society to reject acts of violence and to avoid all forms of discrimination against women and girls. This is because these acts are considered to be inhumane and criminal acts that are set out in national laws and international conventions.

The commemoration of International Women's Days provides important momentum to value the rights of women and because it recalls a global movement, efforts and commitment to recognise the struggle of women and encourages everyone to participate and promote equality between women and men. These efforts have finally resulted in significant progress, even though there is still a lot of work that needs to be done.

This commemoration aims to achieve gender equality and to end discrimination and violence against women as well as guaranteeing equal opportunity and participation in all aspects of national development.

“The State of Timor-Leste through its relevant institutions has engaged in a range of efforts to develop women and encourage women's participation in all aspects. Even so, many women and girls still continue to struggle to break the chain of violence, including violence that occurs in the home, sexual violence and sexual abuse against women and children, and a wide range of discrimination that they face,” said Casimiro dos Santos, the Acting Executive Director of JSMP.

JSMP's statistics from court monitoring have noted a range of violence against women and girls. The types of violence that continue to be prevalent are domestic violence, rape and sexual abuse against girls, neglect including crimes characterized as incest, and these crimes have the potential to really undermine the normal lives of women as human beings and can limit their capacity to enjoy their rights as human beings in a democratic nation such as Timor-Leste.

In 2019 JSMP monitored and analysed 414 cases involving gender based violence, and 396 cases committed against women and girls and 14 cases committed against men and boys. These statistics show that women and girls continue to be victims in cases of domestic violence and sexual violence. This shows that the State and relevant institutions have failed to protect women and girls against all forms of violence, so women and girls do not feel safe in their own homes.

JSMP appreciates all of the efforts of the State through a number of policies to promote gender equality and legislative policy to protect women and girls from violence. Therefore, JSMP encourages all entities to contribute towards developing and promoting a policy of zero tolerance against women and children in society. JSMP hopes that the commemoration of International Women's Day is not just a ceremonial act, but a collective and institutional commitment in the struggle to end violence against women and children in Timor-Leste.

In relation to the commemoration of this important day, JSMP takes this opportunity to congratulate all women around the world, especially women and entities in Timor-Leste for having the courage to continue the struggle to defend women's rights and to struggle for truth and justice.

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