



JUDICIAL **SYSTEM** MONITORING PROGRAMME
PROGRAMA MONITORIZASAUN BA **SISTEMA** JUDISIÁRIU

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JSMP organizes meeting with Prime Minister: the justice sector is very complex

On 12 March 2015, staff of the Judicial System Monitoring Programme (JSMP), comprising the Executive Director, Deputy Director, and the Coordinators of the Legal Research, Women's and Children's Justice, and Outreach Units, and JSMP media staff, met with His Excellency the Prime Minister Dr. Rui Maria Araújo, who was accompanied by his Civil Society and Media Affairs Adviser, at his office in Palacio Governo.

The aim of this meeting was to introduce the role of JSMP and present JSMP's views on issues relating to the importance of the principle of judicial independence, the separation of powers, access to justice, security, the welfare of court actors, and the implications of the Parliamentary and Government Resolutions on the expulsion of international court actors for the justice sector.

In addition, JSMP requested the Prime Minister to explore options to restore Timor-Leste's cooperation with Portugal and other Portuguese speaking nations so they can continue to support and invest in the Legal Training Centre.

JSMP used this opportunity to request the Prime Minister to speak with development partners to ensure that priority continues to be given to the development of the justice sector. At the same time, JSMP also informed the Prime Minister that JSMP had prepared a submission to the National Parliament proposing amendments to the Penal Code and the Law Against Domestic Violence to better protect women and children in Timor-Leste.

Before responding to these concerns, the Prime Minister thanked JSMP for playing an important role in observing the justice sector. His Excellency stated that it would be difficult to change or make a new law in a short period because of issues relating to the effectiveness of the National Parliament, which has very limited time.

In relation to judicial independence, the Prime Minister stated that the justice sector needs more support and investment in building the human resource capacity. According to the Prime Minister, to ensure a quality process, there needs to be sufficient resources and capacity to provide quality and effective services. The Prime Minister has formed his own impression that the justice sector is very complex and it is necessary to improve the technical ability of court actors.

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The Prime Minister agreed that it is really important and necessary to organize an open debate and invite State organs to explain and clarify for the public which obstacles they each face in their work.

At the conclusion of this meeting, JSMP handed over a copy of its report “Dismissal of international officials and advisors in the Timor-Leste judicial sector”, its report on the welfare of court actors, and a summary of JSMP's proposed amendments to the Penal Code.

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