



Press Release
National Parliament
17 March 2015

Public Prosecution Service requests the National Parliament to amend the Penal Code to criminalize incest irrespective of the victim's consent

On 16 March 2015, the Public Prosecution Service submitted its 2014 report and its work plan for 2015 in a plenary session of the National Parliament. This report was submitted by the Prosecutor-General, Jose Ximenes, together with his colleagues.

During the presentation, the Public Prosecution Service reported on its performance, obstacles and challenges faced in 2014 and its work plan for 2015. In this presentation, the Public Prosecution Service also requested the National Parliament to immediately discuss and approve a Law on Judicial Organization, a Law on Juvenile Justice and amendments to the Penal Code to criminalize incest.

This request from the Public Prosecution Service corresponds with JSMP efforts to date, such as its 2012 report on incest in Timor-Leste, a public debate with university students, and other national seminars. JSMP and AFeLA have prepared a submission to the National Parliament titled "Improving the Penal Code to better protect women and children in Timor-Leste". JSMP, ALFeLa and other civil society organizations are trying to meet with the National Parliament and relevant State institutions to discuss this submission.

Many cases of incest are acquitted and victims do not receive justice due to the issue of consent. It also difficult for the court to deal with and make decisions in cases involving minors because there is no Law on Juvenile Justice.

"JSMP hopes that the National Parliament will consider and prioritize the laws proposed by the Public Prosecution Service and table them for immediate discussion and approval, in order to improve the work of the justice sector and to provide justice for victims in case of incest, and so that minors who are involved in crimes can be processed and treated fairly and satisfactorily", said the Executive Director of JSMP, Luis de Oliveira Sampaio.

In its report, the Public Prosecution Service stated that there were 4,037 cases registered in 2014 and from this total, 118 cases had been closed. There are still 3,207 ongoing cases in 2015.

The Public Prosecution Service also appointed a prosecutor to deal specifically with cases involving minors and families, even though it has limited human resources.

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There are 19 prosecutors assigned to the four district courts, with 11 in Dili, 4 in Baucau, 3 in Suai and 1 in Oecusse.

The members of Parliament expressed their sincere appreciation for the work of the Public Prosecution Service and encouraged it to continue administering justice independently and without discrimination against any citizens.

For more information, please contact:

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