



Press Release

18 September 2020

National Parliament

**JSMP appreciates the plan of the President of the National Parliament
“To construct a new National Parliament building, improve oversight capacity
and to create a Specialised Standing Committee on Citizenship”**

On 15 September 2020 the President of the National Parliament, Aniceto L. Guterres Lopes, during the opening of the third legislative session at the National Parliament stated that during his mandate he will prioritise a plan to construct a new National Parliament building in 2021, and also to strengthen coordination and concentration of the legislative agenda to ensure the quality of the law making process.

Also, priority will be given to improving the quality of oversight provided by members of parliament to guide regular communication between members of parliament and members of the Government relating to issues detected during oversight carried out by members of parliament through the work of the specialised committees.

Another aspect is public participation, to enable the public to access parliament activities. Therefore, the President of the National Parliament also proposed the creation of a Specialised Standing Committee on Citizenship to engage in debate, meetings and provide clarification about interesting issues to citizens, MPs and members of the Government at the National Parliament.

“JSMP believes that the plan presented by the President of the Parliament is very important and relevant to the work of the parliament. Issues such as the construction of an appropriate and adequate National Parliament building and the promotion of public participation in the legislative sector are important issues that JSMP has recommended for many years to improve the quality and productivity of the National Parliament, as stated in JSMP reports.¹ JSMP hopes that these statements can be part of a political commitment that will be upheld by the President of the National Parliament,” said the Executive Director of JSMP, Ana Paula Marçal.

¹ Please refer to page 12 of the JSMP website: https://jsmp.tl/wp-content/uploads/RelatoriuPWP_TETUM.pdf

In addition, the President of the Republic, Francisco Guterres “Lu-Olo”, in his speech then clarified the debate about the constitutionality and legality of the 8th Constitutional Government, as the State Budget was not passed due to the interpretation of Article 112.2, as well as challenges faced by the country in 2019/2020 linked to natural disasters and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Also, the President of the Republic also requested for members of parliament to engage in critical, open and honest debate as a constructive way to strengthen peace, national unity and integrity and to reflect and respond to the needs and interests of the people.

JSMP also noted that during the second legislative session, even though the National Parliament was not politically stable, 8² laws and 16³ resolutions were produced. The most important law produced by the National Parliament at the time was Law No. 7/2020 on Preventative Measures and Combatting Corruption. This shows the public that even though the National Parliament faced problems and challenges, it was still able to function normally during the political impasse and made progress.

JSMP continues to recommend for the National Parliament to establish a National Legislative Program to help it properly identify and plan important relevant laws that are required in each legislative session of its legislature. This is a way to help increase the productivity of members of parliament and can provide guidance to the National Parliament to conduct its work more effectively and efficiently.

Finally, JSMP also requests for the National Parliament to avoid political discussions and practices involving unnecessary insults and racist comments and avoid discussions that are more focused on political party interests that are counterproductive, and avoid political revenge that undermines the national interest.

For more information, please contact:

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² Please refer to the website of the State Gazette, Ministry of Justice: <http://www.mj.gov.tl/jornal/?q=node/12>

³ Please refer to the website of the State Gazette, Ministry of Justice: <http://www.mj.gov.tl/jornal/?q=node/19>