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Press Release
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JSMP urges members of parliament to avoid unnecessary and inappropriate discussions when debating the 2021 Rectification Budget

On 21 April 2021 the National Parliament, through a plenary meeting, held a discussion and vote on the specific terms of the Draft Law to approve the first amendment to Law No. 14/2020 on the 2021 State Budget.

When observing the discussion of the rectification budget, JSMP noted that members of parliament said such things as *“turn off the broken radio, you don’t need to say or discuss anything, let’s just vote already, I’m frustrated, this is an assault of power, the Minister and Secretary of State perform no functions etc”* which are inappropriate and provocative.

“JSMP is concerned with members of parliament making inappropriate and provocative statements and JSMP urges them to focus on the discussion of the budget and its contents to provide good solutions to resolve the problems that the people and the nation are facing relating to the public calamities such as natural disasters and the Covid-19 pandemic”, said the Executive Director of JSMP, Ana Paula Marçal.

On many occasions JSMP has questioned these practices and behaviour through its annual reports as well as press releases; however the members of parliament continue to ignore the rules and procedures that apply to the National Parliament.

Based on JSMP’s observations to date, during plenary meetings many MPs don’t fulfill their duties as set out in the provisions of Article 10 of the Parliamentary Rules of Procedure, especially Article 10.2. The provisions of subsection (a) point 2) state that they need to respect the dignity of the National Parliament and of its members, b) to adhere to order and discipline as provided for by the Rules of Procedure and respect the authority of the President of the Parliament and c) point 2) to contribute, with his or her “behaviour”, to efficiency and prestige

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of parliamentary proceedings. JSMP believes that the behaviour of these MPs has not adhered to their duties as set out in the Rules of Procedure.

JSMP suggests for the Chair of the Parliament, particularly the President of the Parliament, to use his competence in accordance with the Parliamentary Rules of Procedure to stop the speeches made by MPs that digress from the issues that MPs have been advised to discuss. Also, any MPs who make a speech that does not adhere to, or violates, the Parliamentary Rules of Procedure, should be called to attention, to prevent MPs from displaying such behaviour in the plenary.

Draft Law No. 34/V/3 First Amendment to Law No. 14/2020 on the 2021 State Budget is based on the need to reinforce efforts to prevent the Covid-19 pandemic. The rectification budget submitted by the Government totals US\$ 223.8 and from this amount US\$ 89 million will be used to adjust the 2021 State Budget with a request for an increase of US\$ 135.3 million.

A general discussion of this proposal was approved with 44 votes in favour, 0 against and 21 abstentions, with 65 members of parliament present.

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