



JUDICIAL SYSTEM MONITORING PROGRAMME
PROGRAMA MONITORIZASAUN BA SISTEMA JUDISIÁRIU

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Timor-Leste commemorates International Women's Day with the national theme of 'The time has come to promote and appreciate the work of East Timorese women'

On the 8th March each year International Women's Day is commemorated and celebrated around the world. International Women's Day is commemorated with the global theme of: "The Time is Now: Rural and urban activists transforming women's lives". Whereas the national theme is "The time has come to promote and appreciate the work of East Timorese women".

International Women's Days is an important moment 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 gained significant progress for the status of women around the world and especially in Timor-Leste, even though there is still a lot of work to do.

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 domestic violence, sexual violence and sexual abuse against women and children, and the various types of discrimination they face," said Luis de Oliveira Sampaio, Executive Director of JSMP.

Whilst commemorating this important day, JSMP believes that it is also a timely opportunity to reflect on the change that women have achieved. In reality, women continue to face challenges due to various forms of violence. JSMP's statistics gathered from court interpreting show that women and girls face a wide range of violence. These trends of violence most commonly take the form of domestic violence, rape, sexual abuse against girls, neglect and crimes of incest. These crimes have the potential to really harm the daily lives as women and human beings and undermine their opportunities to enjoy their rights as human beings in a democratic nation like Timor-Leste.

In 2017 JSMP monitored 537 cases involving gender based violence, which represented 65% of 829 criminal cases. 72 percent (72%) of these cases involved domestic violence, and 5 percent (5%) involved sexual violence. These percentages were similar to cases monitored by JSMP in 2016, with 62 percent (62%) of cases involving gender based violence from a total of 941 criminal cases, of which 65 percent (65%) involved domestic violence and approximately 9 percent (9%) involved rape. This data shows that cases involving gender based violence continue to be prevalent in the courts.

JSMP appreciates the efforts of the State for implementing a range of policies that promote gender equality and legislative policy to protect women and girls from violence. However, JSMP continues to encourage all entities to contribute to the development and promotion of a policy of zero tolerance towards violence against women and children in society. JSMP hopes that the commemoration of International Women's Day will not just be 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.

For more information, please contact:

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