



JUDICIAL SYSTEM MONITORING PROGRAMME
PROGRAMA MONITORIZASAUN BA SISTEMA JUDISIÁRIU

**Press Release
National Parliament
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Elected MPs of the fifth legislature need to develop the National Legislative Program to guarantee the legislative priorities of the National Parliament and immediately approve the Draft Law Against Corruption

JSMP requests for the elected MPs of the fifth legislature, who were sworn in on 13 June 2018, to develop the national legislative program and ensure legislative priorities for the next five years and to immediately approve the Draft Law Against Corruption without unnecessary delay.

JSMP observed that during the previous legislative periods (from the first legislature to the third legislature) the National Parliament has failed to carry out its role effectively because it has not had its own national legislative program to guide and define the legislative priorities of each legislative session.

This situation has meant that for many years the National Parliament has failed to establish and define legislative priorities and has largely depended on draft laws from the government. Therefore many of the draft laws have not been discussed or approved, including the Draft Law Against Corruption, which was one of the electoral promises made by political parties from the time of the second legislature up until the current legislature.

“JSMP congratulates the President of the National Parliament and elected MPs of the fifth legislature who have been sworn in, and hopes that they will improve the quality and productivity of the National Parliament and fulfil their electoral promises to immediately approve the Draft Law Against Corruption as the highest priority amongst all other draft laws that were included in promises made during electoral campaigning”, said the Executive Director of JSMP, Luis de Oliveira Sampaio.

“The National Parliament needs to develop a national legislative program to identify legislative priorities, or promises will end up being just empty political rhetoric and the National Parliament will lose its credibility as the organ of sovereignty that is vested with legislative, supervisory and political decision making powers, as provided for in the Constitution”, he added.

JSMP requests for all citizens, individually and collectively to demand that members of parliament as representatives of the people in the National Parliament fulfil their electoral promises. As citizens we must never again be aware of and tolerate politicians who just rehash old issues such as the Draft Law Against Corruption and/or the Law on Lifelong Pensions in their campaign in five years' time. This needs to end now with this legislature. The people have fulfilled their duty by electing members of the National Parliament and therefore all citizens have the legal and constitutional right to demand for members of parliament to fulfil their duty to

manage the votes of their constituency with accountability and to dignify the National Parliament as an organ of sovereignty of the State by exercising their role effectively and responsibly.

In addition to prioritizing the Draft Law Against Corruption, JSMP also requests for the National Parliament to reschedule the Draft Law on Child Protection and Draft Law on a Bar Association that expired during the third legislature and to reinstate discussions in the National Parliament on the Draft Law on National Reparations and a Public Memory Institute to ensure the rights and interests of victims of past crimes.

MPs of the fifth legislature need to adhere to the Rules of Procedure of the National Parliament to avoid irregularities and inappropriate practices such as failing to start and finish work on time, and to avoid individual discussions during plenary sessions and also to reduce people moving around during plenary discussions and voting, which have been classic problems observed by JSMP in the National Parliament to date.

These practices have had serious negative consequences on the quality and productivity of the second and third legislature due to an inability to establish a quorum. Practices such as this lower the dignity of the National Parliament as the organ of sovereignty of the Democratic Republic of East Timor, that represents all Timorese citizens, and is vested with legislative, supervisory and political decision making powers pursuant to Article 92 of the Timor-Leste Constitution.

The National Parliament opened the fifth legislature and swearing in ceremony for the new MPs and at the same time elected the new President of the National Parliament. This election only included a single candidate, namely Mr. Arão Noe de Jesus Amaral, who was nominated by the AMP coalition comprising CNRT, PLP and KHUNTO. In this election Mr. Arão Noe de Jesus Amaral was elected as the new President of the National Parliament with 36 votes in favour, 29 against and 0 abstain from a total of 65 MPs who were present.

In his speech the president-elect of the National Parliament, Arão Noe, promised to preside over and organise plenary sessions and the work of the parliament and he asked for MPs to put aside the political differences that emerged during electoral campaigning and to uphold the national interest to perform their role in accordance with the Constitution.

He added that the National Parliament will give priority to approving the program of the V Government, the proposed State Budget to ensure sustainable development. The parliament will also approve priority laws, revise relevant laws based on the national interest, and will oversee government programs implemented by the Government which will be aimed at improving the wellbeing of the people and transforming the social-economic life of the people now and in the future.

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