



Press Release

24 January 2019

National Parliament

A Plenary Meeting of the National Parliament was conducted in Portuguese: Members of parliament did not take it serious

On Tuesday 22 January 2019 the National Parliament held a plenary meeting in the Portuguese language. The use of Portuguese during a plenary meeting is provided for in Parliamentary Resolution No. 24/2010, paragraph 8, that states that the National Parliament will use Portuguese during a plenary meeting once a month

During this plenary meeting JSMP noted that many members of parliament were laughing and making a commotion by yelling at the acting president of the Chair, His Excellency Luís Roberto, and telling him to stop talking because of his limited ability to express himself in Portuguese. This made the plenary meeting of the National Parliament seem as if it were a playground. Also, members of parliament walked in and out during the plenary as if they had no respect for the Parliament itself.

“The National Parliament is a sovereign organ and members of parliament are representatives of the people, so they should exercise their role with full responsibility to demonstrate dignity and authority and set a good example when performing their role, especially during the plenary”, said the Executive Director of JSMP, Luis de Oliveira Sampaio.

During the plenary meeting Her Excellency MP Olinda Guterres said that the rule set out in the Parliamentary Resolution regarding the use Portuguese during plenary meetings should be removed.

JSMP believes that Portuguese continues to pose a challenge for most public institutions and civil society, however MPs are representatives of the people and they should be serious in implementing and respecting our Constitution and the rules approved by MPs in the National Parliament.

During the third legislature JSMP raised concerns about the use of Portuguese in the plenary which resulted in the plenary not functioning effectively or productively because many MPs did not contribute to discussions and speeches.

JSMP believes that the use of Portuguese twice every month in plenary meetings is a way of promoting and implementing the practical use of this language, however JSMP requests for guarantees that this practice will not reduce the productivity, efficiency and functioning of the National Parliament as a sovereign organ. In particular, the current situation demands for members of parliament to concentrate and be serious in overcoming the political impasse that the State of Timor-Leste is currently dealing with.

For more information, please contact:

Luis de Oliveira Sampaio
Executive Director of JSMP
Phone: 3323883
www.jsmp.tl