



SPOKESPERSON SIXTH CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT



**MEDIA
RELEASE**

Dili, 19 October, 2016

Government participates in National Conference on Social Audit

On the 19th of October members of Government, representatives of State Institutions and members of Civil Society Organizations participated in a National Conference on Social Audit held in the Great Hall of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation in Dili. The Sixth Constitutional Government introduced and has pioneered the concept of social audit since its inauguration in February 2015 with a view to promote inclusivity, partnership and accountability in governance and improve the efficiency and efficacy of public services.

In Timor-Leste social auditing provides a space where people are able to have their say about the way public services are delivered and where the government listens and is responsive to those views. The National Conference provided an opportunity to review progress of social auditing thus far and to look toward expanding and improving the approach in the future to optimize results.

In his inauguration speech of 16 February 2015, Prime Minister, H.E. Dr. Rui Maria de Araújo extended an unprecedented invitation to Civil Society, Non Government Organizations and media saying that the “government wants to establish partnerships where you will be able to have a more active participation through what is known as a social audit, where the indicators of government action are thoroughly reviewed with greater exemption and accountability, so that by working together we may be able to provide better services to our people.”

Speaking to the National Conference participants the Prime Minister reaffirmed his confidence in the process saying “as each of us, Government and Civil Society, carry out our duties regarding the social audit, we make a concrete contribution to the well-being of our country and our people.”

Within the first 100 days of Government a Memorandum of Understanding was in place with FONGTIL, Timor-Leste’s independent umbrella organization for national and international Non-Government Organizations. The document signed on the 25th of May 2015 by the Prime Minister and the Executive Director of FONGTIL, Mr. Arsénio Pereira da Silva, set out the pathways for implementation of social audit in Timor-Leste within the four key sectors of Agriculture, Education, Health and Basic Infrastructure. A Social Audit Unit was set up within the Office of the Prime Minister to facilitate this new partnership, coordinated by Mr. Edio José Maria Guterres, the Prime Minister’s Liaison Officer for Civil Society Affairs.



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The National Conference held on the 19th of October brought together a number of national NGOs who have practiced social audit in different parts of Timor-Leste and within different sectors to talk about their cycle of social audit, tools and methodologies, results to date, and to discuss some of the challenges they face. Representatives of State Institutions including the Anti Corruption Commission, the Ombudsman for Human Rights and Justice and the State General Inspectorate also participated, discussing their activities and the way social audit compliments their work. The Coordinator of the Social Audit Unit made a presentation on the cycle of social audit case management on behalf of the Government to explore how the Government and Civil Society's systems can best compliment each other.

Government Spokesperson, Minister of State Agio Pereira noted that "from its outset the Sixth Constitutional Government has sought to promote inclusivity and partnership, understanding that to be truly effective national development must involve us all. The National Conference has highlighted the Government's commitment to this principle and showcased the successful beginning of the implementation of social audit along with a willingness to continue to refining and improving the process to even better serve the people of Timor-Leste." **ENDS**

