



PRESIDENCY OF THE
**COUNCIL OF
MINISTERS**
SIXTH CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT

DILI, JANUARY 17TH, 2017

PRESS RELEASE

Meeting of the Council of Ministers from January 17th, 2017

The Council of Ministers met this Tuesday, at the Government Palace in Dili, and the Minister of State, Coordinator of Economic Affairs and Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries submitted the Decree-Law on the **Services for Registration and Verification of Entrepreneurs (SERVE)**, which was approved. The Government clarified SERVE's legal nature as a public institute, turning it into a real one-stop-shop, exclusively providing commercial registration services and other services necessary to promote an optimal environment for business and investment..

The Council of Ministers also approved a resolution from the Ministry of Education on the **“National Policy of Inclusive Education”**, which aims to promote an “education that is available to everyone in Timor-Leste, without any discrimination”. Although there are real advances in this area, it is still possible to find substantial differences in access to education and the opportunities for school success. These can be mitigated with specific interventions to ensure effective equality in the right to education. This includes encouraging the return of children who dropped out of school, providing remedial classes, respectful and patient dialog with the parents or guardians of students, the appreciation of the individual talents of students, among others. The development of this policy entailed a persistent and truly participatory work, with public meetings in all municipalities. Consultative groups were created, with representation from Ministries and Non-Governmental Organizations, as well as professionals from the field of education.

With the nearing of the election process for the Presidency of the Republic, the Ministry of State Administration submitted and saw approved a Government Resolution on the **acquisition of equipment and electoral materials**, authorizing the Ministry to deal with the procedures necessary for their direct procurement.

The **use of official languages in the justice sector** (Tetun and Portuguese) was also approved, in three key areas: preparation of normative acts, legal procedures and administrative procedure of the justice services.



Palácio do Governo,
Avenida Presidente Nicolau Lobato,
Dili, Timor-Leste

pcm.gov.tl@gmail.com
+670) 33 310 608

Still in this field, the Council of Ministers approved the **new statute of the Public Defender's Office**, almost a decade after the approval of the previous (Decree-Law no. 38/2008). This update expands the duties of Public Defenders, adjusting their intervention to the reality of the Justice sector. There is also a change in the composition of the Superior Council of the Public Defender's office, making it more autonomous, dynamic and functional, and a clearer definition of the nature of the District Defenders' Offices.

The Minister of State, Coordinator of Economic Affairs and Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, together with the Deputy Minister of Finance, presented the **cooperation protocol between the Government and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Timor-Leste (CCI-TL in Portuguese)**. This three-year protocol aims to establish institutional cooperation between the Government and CCI-TL, to facilitate the communication between the public and the private sectors and promote the development of Timor-Leste's business environment through its greater involvement in national development. By signing this protocol, the Government reiterates its commitment to the development and expansion of the private sector economy, as an essential pillar to employment creation, technological modernization and wealth creation outside the structures of the State. CCI-TL is a non-profit civil association, recognized by Government Resolution No. 17/2012 of June 13th, which acts as a social partner and as an interlocutor of the Government with the private sector.

Still in the same ministerial area, the **decree-law to approve the new Commercial Register Regime**, which will replace the current code and Decree-law no. 35/2012, of July 18th, was also presented in the context of the recent revision to the Company Law, under discussion in the National Parliament. The new regime seeks to ensure a registration system that is efficient and thorough and to articulate this regime within SERVE.

In the area of education, the Minister of State Coordinator of Social Affairs and Minister of Education presented the executive summary of the **Pilot Programme of Multilingual Education Based on the Mother Tongue (EMBLI in Portuguese)**. The evaluation contained in the document compares the performance of schools in the EMBLI programme with the normal State schools – those that use Tetum and Portuguese as main languages of communication in education.

In the area of Justice, the Minister presented a draft law on the establishment of the **Asset Recovery Office** to deal with assets from crimes, and creating rules for the management and administration of such assets, which are lost in favour of the State. Answering to the General Prosecutor's Office, the Office aims to implement the criminal rules that determine the seizure and confiscation of the goods and products that were purchased or related to the practice of crimes. When these goods are seized or forfeited to the State, such as buildings, vehicles and other assets with market value, the draft law recognises that it is important to take advantage of those assets, in order to prevent their depreciation or damage, which is neither in the interest of the State nor of the owners.



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After the **accession process to the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank**, in the Council of Ministers meeting of September 6th, 2016, the Deputy Minister of Finance explained the terms and conditions for such membership.



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