



# PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

SEVENTH CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT

## PRESS RELEASE

### Council of Ministers Meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> February 2018

The Government met in the Government Palace in Dili, and approved the proposal to amend the Bilateral Development Agreement between the Government of Timor-Leste and USAID, presented by the Minister of Planning and Finance, Rui Augusto Gomes. The original agreement was signed on March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2014, and has been subjected to an annual re-evaluation in order to increase funds received from Washington, by USAID / TL, for national projects. This amendment will increase the budget of the seven projects currently underway in Timor-Leste, since 2015 and extend them up to 2022, in the agricultural development, tourism, water and sanitation, public health, customs, support to electoral processes, Democracy and Good Governance areas, in partnership with the relevant ministries, the RAEOA and the National Parliament.

The Minister of Planning and Finance also presented to the Council of Ministers the GPR and R-Timor budget management and payment processing systems that will allow optimization of the financial management and government information.

The Minister of State and National Security Adviser, José Ramos-Horta, presented the official report on the activities carried out during his travel to Brussels from the 22<sup>nd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> of January. The Timorese delegation, which also included the Deputy Minister of Education and Culture, José Neves, and the Ambassador of Timor-Leste to the Kingdom of Belgium and the European Union, Francisco Cepeda, participated in several meetings with European Union representatives and with the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Portugal, Augusto Santos Silva, where they spoke about the bilateral relations between Timor-Leste and Portugal. José Ramos Horta pointed out that the European Union is the economic bloc with the largest annual GDP per capita in the world, Timor-Leste's second largest development partner, and a permanent ally of the country throughout its history. The Minister of State and Counselor for National Security finalized his intervention recommending the Government to study strategic forms of cooperation between Timor-Leste and the European Union, in particular regarding its role in promoting regional and global balance. Currently, the



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European Union funds forestry and agricultural programs, rural road development, nutrition and good governance in Timor-Leste.

The Council of Ministers analyzed the proposal for the temporary suspension of the validity of Decree-Law no. 9/2010, of 21<sup>st</sup> July, which regulates Medical Care Abroad. During his presentation, the Minister of State and Minister of Health, Rui Maria de Araújo, justified the exceptional measure with the need to implement the duodecimal regime, where Public Administration is prevented from execute certain State functions, namely with regard to its participation in user medical expenses abroad. It was pointed out that the measure would ensure the payment of expenses arising from the continuity of medical care, already underway and ongoing by the user abroad, automatically expiring with the entry into force of the Law that is to approve the General State Budget for 2018. This legislative proposal, however, was not approved, having been decided that it would be rescheduled at a subsequent time.

The Minister for Planning and Finance submitted an amendment to Government Decree No. 1/2018, of January 12<sup>th</sup>, on the budget execution in duodecimal regime, for approval by the Council of Ministers. The proposed legislation aims to amend the rules regarding budgetary changes during the duodecimal scheme, which result from the Law on Budget and Financial Management and the Government Decree on Budgetary Execution for 2017, which are subject to the limit imposed by the duodecimal assigned to each entity. This Decree-Law amendment will continue to be analyzed next Monday, the date for the next extraordinary meeting of the Council of Ministers.

The Council of Ministers approved, with amendments, the Decree-Law proposal that establishes the Timor-Leste Quality Institute, presented by the Minister for Commerce and Industry, António da Conceição. The Timor-Leste Quality Institute will be a body for national qualification, standardization and metrology, with the mission to implement and manage the national quality system and other regulatory qualification systems that are conferred to it by law, betting on quality as a determining factor for productivity and competitiveness of all economic and social actors in Timor-Leste.

Finally, the Prime Minister, Marí Alkatiri, informed the Council of Ministers that, yesterday, he requested the Chamber of Auditors of the Administrative, Fiscal and Auditor High Court, as a higher supervisory and control institution, to carry out the second audit to all financial management operations and accounts of the Oecusse-Ambeno Special Administrative Region Authority, covering the period of 2016 to present, fulfilling the Seventh Constitutional Government Program's culture of rigor, transparency and accountability in the public financial resources management, as outlined in the. The Prime Minister directed the competent bureau members of the Government to also promote the activities and accounts audits of the Ministries of Finance, Tourism and Infrastructures. **ENDS**



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