



PRESIDENCY OF THE  
**COUNCIL OF  
MINISTERS**

EIGHT CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT



Office of the  
Spokesperson

## Press Release

### Extraordinary Meeting of the Council of Ministers of 20 April 2020

The Council of Ministers met at the Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão Auditorium, at the Ministry of Finance, in Dili and decided to ask the President of the Republic to extend the State of Emergency, which ends on April 26. The need to extend the state of emergency is due to the worrying evolution of the epidemiological situation and the proliferation of recorded cases of transmission of COVID-19 in the national territory and globally, which require the maintenance of the application of extraordinary and urgent measures to stop the pandemic.

The Council of Ministers approved the socio-economic plan to respond to the expected negative effects of coronavirus on the national economy, submitted by the Interministerial Commission to Combat COVID-19. The approved economic stimulus is essentially designed with the aim of protecting people, saving jobs, maintaining consumption and supporting private sector activity. The Plan includes a set of strategic measures, including the implementation of a universal money transfer system, which will ensure a basic monthly income for more than 214 000 households, the subsidy of up to 60% of the wage cost of formal sector employees who have to be quarantined or stay at home during the pandemic, the purchase of an emergency rice stock for three months to compensate for possible shortages during the pandemic, the allocation of subsidies to ensure national connectivity, the guarantee of air connection three times a week, ensuring crucial medical and emergency connections to Darwin, the subsidy for maritime freight transport to Ataúro and Oecússi and the extension of Port operations to 24 hours of the day, the partial exemption from the payment of electricity bills (\$USD 15 per month) and exemption from the payment of water bills, social security contributions and state property rents. It also includes a credit program with reduced rates, credit guarantees for importers of essential goods and emergency loans, the implementation of a program to increase food supply on the south coast and measures to ensure the availability of



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



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agricultural, livestock and fishing inputs, the provision of scholarships to more than 4,200 Timorese students abroad and internet subsidies for students in Timor-Leste. The total cost of these measures will be proportionate to the impacts of the health emergency and economic measures will be dynamic and calibrated for the duration of the economic impact. **ENDS**



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