



PRESIDENCY OF THE
**COUNCIL OF
MINISTERS**

EIGHT CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT



Office of the
Spokesperson

Press Release

Meeting of the Council of Ministers of 18 March 2020

The Council of Ministers met at the Government Palace in Dili and approved a draft law, presented by the Acting Minister of Finance, Sara Lobo Brites, for the request to the National Parliament for Authorization to Carry out a Extraordinary Transfer from the Petroleum Fund in the amount of two hundred and fifty million U.S. dollars, during the duration of the duodecimal regime of budget execution, in order to ensure financial conditions for the functioning of the Public Administration.

The Minister of Legislative Reform and Parliamentary Affairs, Fidelis Manuel Leite Magalhães, replacing the Minister of State of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, presented the draft Decree-Law, approved by the Council of Ministers, on the assignment of contractual position between public entities. This Decree-Law regulates the transfer of a contractual position from a legal person under public law to another legal person under public law in the context of a contract with reciprocal benefits. This law applies to all public contracts concluded by public entities in Timor-Leste with a view to the supply of goods, execution of works or provision of services for public purposes.

The Acting Coordinating Minister for Economic Affairs, Fidelis Manuel Leite Magalhães, gave a presentation on the situation of the economy and food reserves in the country. The data presented on essential items, such as rice, wheat and fuel, indicate that there are sufficient reserves in the national territory for several months, with no risk of stock breakage. Measures are also being put in place to combat price speculation and product hoarding. The Government is also buying more 3,800 tons of rice to increase the national reserve.



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

The Council of Ministers heard a presentation of the Technical Working Group to respond to the impacts of the floods of 13 March 2020 on the extraordinary measures necessary for the rehabilitation of the affected areas, presented by the Minister Of Public Works, Salvador Soares dos Reis Pires, together with the Ministry of Planning and Strategic Investment and with the Board of Directors of the Infrastructure Fund. The floods in various parts of the city of Dili caused extensive material damage, leaving hundreds of families displaced. Data on all damage and intervention needs was presented so as to restore road mobility, continuing to provide electricity safely and ensuring the repair of water supply systems damaged, and, above all, carry out urgent work of cleaning drainages, normalization and sad removal of streams and construction of retaining walls that prevent the events of last Friday from repeating during this rainy season. The Working Group is composed of the General Directorate of Public Works that leads it through its Director General, and also includes the National Development Agency, the General Directorate of Water and Sanitation, the Institute of Equipment Management, I.P. and the National Procurement Commission.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Dionísio Babo Soares, presented to the Council of Ministers the state of play of the national preparedness for the Coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19). The various ongoing measures for the prevention and control of Coronavirus were presented, including the training of health professionals from all over the country, activities to raise awareness of the population, purchase of ventilators, preparation of isolation sites and hospital centers, health screening at border posts, among others. Several extraordinary measures were also discussed to be implemented in order to contain the outbreak, depending on the declaration of the State of Emergency. So far there is no confirmed case of COVID-19 in Timor-Leste. The World Health Organization has so far counted 184,976 confirmed cases of Coronavirus in 159 countries and territories, killing 7,529 people. The clinical signs and symptoms of COVID-19 are mainly respiratory, such as fever, cough and breathing difficulties. In patients in a more serious condition, the infection can cause pneumonia and even fatal complications. **ENDS**