

Timorese majority opposition files censure motion against Government

LUSA, 20 Novembru 2017

The Timorese opposition, majority in the parliament, today presented a motion of censure (no confidence) to the Government in opposition to the fact that the executive has not yet presented, for the second time, the program that was rejected last October 19.

“The Government did not present the Government program for the second time and the MPs of the Parliamentary Majority Alliance (AMP), based on Article 111 of the RDTL Constitution and Article 140 of the National Parliament's rules, presents a motion of censure to the 7th constitutional government,” said Patrocínio dos Reis, MO from the National Congress of Timorese Reconstruction (CNRT), the second-largest Timorese party.

In a political statement on behalf of the three opposition parties - CNRT, People's Liberation Party (PLP) and Kmanek Haburas National Unity Timor Oan (KHUNTO) - the AMP contests the fact that the executive proposed a Rectifying Budget to Parliament before presenting its program for the second time.

It is recalled that on the 19th of last month, the 35 opposition deputies (in the 65-seat parliament) approved a motion to reject the Government's program insisting that by “parallel and analogous interpretation” of the law in force, the executive had 30 days to return to present the program again.

This deadline, the statement said, passed on Sunday, and the government did not comply with bringing its program back to Parliament.

The approval of a second rejection motion would bring the downfall of the Government.

The political statement of the AMP recalls the political background in Timor-Leste and the “political maturity” of the electorate, which gave an absolute majority to Fretilin (Revolutionary Front of Independent Timor-Leste) in the first elections in 2002, but since then has never voted a majority to a single party.

“These facts reflect a clear message to the political parties that they have to manage with care and responsibility. The people demand that the organs of the State, the National Parliament, the President of the Republic and the courts, perform their functions according to those defined in the Constitution,” the text says.

Referring to the “fragility” of the VII minority government and the “constitutional but not prudent” decision of the Timorese President to appoint a government without majority support, AMP said that “political and governmental stability” depends on the National Parliament.

The opposition insists that without an approved program the executive “is a caretaker government, without full powers to govern” and as such could not present a rectifying budget without first presenting the program for the second time.

Therefore, according to the text, AMP's staff consider that it is the “obligation” of the Government to present the program and that “by analogous or parallel interpretation” of the law must be done within 30 days, the same deadline given to the executive to present the program for the first time.

The statement also contests the Government's proposed rectifying budget, pointing out several flaws in the document and contesting the moment it was delivered without time for approval, in the final stretch of 2017.

“In view of the draft Budget Law, Members of the AMP decide that the parliament cannot discuss or debate the proposed law,” said the statement read out at the start of today's session.

Among the flaws pointed out by the opposition is that an organic government law - which justifies the expenses with the alteration of the executive composition - is not yet approved, that there are no budget execution tables for expenses or revenues, nor projections until the end of the year.

The Government did not present information on State assets and liabilities, on loans, does not include a certificate of withdrawals or balance of the petroleum fund and its behavior, information on compliance with departmental autonomy or on direct awards or on contingency reserve funds, among others.

Moreover, given the tight schedule, the opposition believes that it would be impossible for the Government to implement or execute the rectifying budget.