



SPOKESPERSON SIXTH CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT



**MEDIA
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Fiscal Restraint and Quality Spending to guide 2016 Budget Preparation

Last Thursday members of National Parliament, Government Members, Director Generals, National Directors, high-level Public Servants and officers of Public Companies and Autonomous Agencies met at the Great Hall of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation to participate in the “Jornadas Orçamentais”, a workshop to prepare for the 2016 State Budget. The “Jornadas Orçamentais”, formally known as the Yellow Road Workshop, continued in its mission to consider the big questions ahead for Timor-Leste, especially as they relate to the use of public finances: Where are we? Where do we want to go? and What actions do we need to take to get there?

The workshop, organized by the Ministry of Finance and led by the Prime Minister of Timor-Leste, H.E. Dr. Rui Maria de Araújo, focused on the identification of the National Priorities for 2016 and the “fiscal envelope” for 2016.

During the workshop the Government identified education, health, agriculture, and basic infrastructure as the key priorities for 2016. Within the infrastructure priority they noted maintenance, roads, public buildings and water and sanitation. These National Priorities identified for 2016 integrate into the Program of the Sixth Constitutional Government which sets out the Government’s Plan for the next two and a half years and the long-term Strategic Development Plan of Timor-Leste which charts the nation’s course for development through to 2030.

After a robust discussion the “fiscal envelope” for 2016 proposed at the workshop was \$1.3 Billion US which represents a 17% reduction from the current budget amount for 2015. Gradual budget reduction is a Government policy to ensure fiscal sustainability. Detailed presentations were given on the performance and prospects of the Petroleum Fund and on factors impacting the fiscal sustainability of Timor-Leste.

The Prime Minister emphasized during the discussions that “the Government will focus on the quality of every aspect of the budgeting process” including planning, budgeting, execution, evaluation and oversight.

Ministries will now be preparing their own budgets for consideration by 15 June and much of the Budget



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planning for 2016 is to be completed by the end of July 2015.

Spokesperson for the Government, Minister of State Agio Pereira, commended the Ministry of Finance and noted the active contribution of participants during the Jornadas Orçamentais. He said “effective planning and efforts to improve the quality of all aspects of the budgetary process will result in Timorese people getting better value for money, an outcome that ultimately benefits us all.” **ENDS**