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Press Release

Observations from Fundasaun Mahein on the Realisation of the First 120 Days Program of the IX Constitutional Government related to the Security and Defence Sector

With this report, Fundasaun Mahein (FM) shares observations made during the implementation of the First 120 Days Program of the IX Constitutional Government's related to the security and defence sectors. Several commitments were outlined in the IX Government Program, one of which is to consolidate peace and security, necessary for national development, guaranteeing the rights, freedoms and fundamental guarantees of all citizens. From the 120 Days Program during the mandate of the IX Government, FM has identified 10 specific programs or actions related to the security and defence sectors, namely:

1. The Minister of Defence is also functioning as a F-FDTL officer;
2. The Minister of Defence proposed "self-promotion" and was promoted to the rank of Counter-Admiral;
3. Illegal reactivation of retired PNTL members;
4. Forcing PNTL and F-FDTL members to take oaths related to their involvement in martial and ritual arts;
5. Nominee for SNI Director-General involved in illegal arms case;
6. Nominee for Assistant DG of SNI suspected of embezzlement, abuse of power and financial fraud;
7. Publication of classified information by the Prime Minister;
8. Assistant Director of PCIC was dismissed, while the Government has maintained the PCIC Director who should have been dismissed;
9. Political intervention in court decisions;
10. Suspension of martial and ritual arts;

FM has identified ten programs or actions related to security and defence which the IX Government has implemented during the first 120 days of its mandate. Many of these actions have been characterised by controversy, irregularities, impunity, illegality and political interference in the judicial process. We are also reminded of experiences during previous governments which failed to resolve the problem of youth and MAG-related violence.

When the Government includes individuals who are implicated in or suspected of serious crimes, and such individuals continue to be nominated for leadership roles within state institutions, institutions become discredited in the eyes of the public. Furthermore, political interference in the security sector and justice system threatens democratic principles and national security. FM therefore urges the Government to respect court decisions, ensure that legal processes reach their conclusion, and refrain from nominating individuals suspected of serious violations to key state offices.

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