

STANDARD VACANCY FORMAT

Post Title: LEGAL ADVISER TO THE STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE NATIONAL PARLIAMENT OF TIMOR-LESTE (1)

Post Level: A-3 at equivalent level of P3 (6-months probationary contract on SSA will be converted, subject to performance evaluation, to a one year ALD contract with possibility of extension)

Post Number:

Duty Station: DILI, EAST TIMOR

Bureau/Office: RBAP

Focal Point: Diana Lina Bernardo (diana.bernardo@undp.org)

Advertised on:

Application Deadline : April 27, 2006

Expected start date : May 22, 2006

Background

Timor-Leste became independent in 2002. A democratic semi-presidential governance system based upon the separation of powers and mutual cooperation of the institutions of state was developed.

The National Parliament is the cornerstone of the democratic system and good governance. It is currently comprised of 88 members. It is headed by the President of the National Parliament. 12 political parties are constituted in party benches. Detailed parliamentary scrutiny of legislation and government actions is delegated to 7 standing committees of multi-party composition. The parliamentarians are supported in their work by a Secretariat of approximately 40 staff which is headed by a Director (Secretary General). The Secretariat is divided into several functional departments, which assume responsibility for work in the general areas of Finance and Administration, Plenary support, Committee support, and Communications functions.

The National Parliament was established from scratch in a setting of inexperienced parliamentarians; an acute shortage of skilled personnel and significant language barriers. Achievements are not yet consolidated and many challenges can only be defeated with long-term assistance. UNDP has supported the growth of the legislature since 2003. A revised Parliament Project 2006-09 has been approved. A new set of comprehensive capacity-development interventions will be implemented in five strategic areas: oversight capacity; legislative support; democratic representation; gender mainstreaming and; Secretariat capacity building. The overall objective of the project is to develop the institutional capacities that allow the parliament to fully and effectively perform its constitutional mandate.

Job Summary

The Legal Adviser to Standing Committees will provide technical support to the work of the standing committees, and assure the upgrading of the skills of the Secretariat staff assigned to

the committees to prepare them to assume full responsibility for functions. The Legal Adviser to Standing Committees will also provide professional advice, as required, to individual deputies and the party benches as required.

Specific duties include:

Under the supervision of the Chief Technical Adviser, the Legal Adviser will undertake the following duties:

A. Legislative Capacity-Building Responsibilities

- Provide bill drafting/amendment and legal analytical and research expertise to the National Parliament, with primary assignment to assist one standing committee (Commission)
- Provide legal advice and assistance to standing committees other than committee of primary assignment, as work schedule permits and in collaboration with that committee's specialist international Adviser.
- Advise committee presidents/mesas on the management of committee workloads and revise committee systems and procedures as required.
- Assist committees with the preparation and implementation of committee annual work plans.
- Conduct legislative research for committees, individual deputies and party benches, as work schedule permits it.
- Provide legal advice and consultation to other project staff as requested.
- Assist in skills development training of the staff of the Secretariat's Committee Support Unit in bill drafting, legal analysis and committee record-keeping, filing and archiving.
- Participate in negotiations, as requested by Parliament Project management, with education providers concerning the possibility of offering tailored training courses to Deputies and staff in the techniques of legal drafting and legal analysis.
- Prepare, in collaboration with the other committee Advisers, committee, legal drafting and procedures manuals as necessary.
- Assist and advise the UNDP Chief Technical Adviser in the design and development of a comprehensive parliamentary orientation program following the 2007 parliamentary election.
- Continually work to strengthen the institutional capacity of the Parliament by focusing on fostering a culture of transparency and on the transfer of technical knowledge and skills to national parliamentary staff through mentoring and coaching.

B. Parliamentary Oversight Responsibilities

- Provide program implementation oversight expertise to the National Parliament and in particular to the Adviser's allotted standing committee (Commission), in conjunction with the budget experts.
- Provide technical Advisory services to the allotted standing committee in conducting oversight of government ministries and programs within its jurisdictional areas.
- Provide assistance and guidance in the development of standards and mechanisms to enable the Parliament and in particular the Adviser's allotted standing committee to measure policy performance against national goals (National Development Plan, Millennium Development Goals and poverty reduction).
- Provide support for the development of mechanisms and processes to hold public hearings and secure public input from the Timorese people in the work of committees.
- Assist deputies, committees and Secretariat staff in the understanding and effective utilization of the various oversight tools and mechanisms available to the Parliament.

Competencies (Essential knowledge and experience):

1. Demonstrated exposure to legislation or policies in any of the following areas is an advantage: education, health, agriculture or transparency/integrity
2. Demonstrated knowledge of constitutional and/or public law is also an asset
3. Proficiency in writing clear and easy-to-understand rigorous legal documents
4. Exceptional interpersonal and communication skills and ability to motivate people
5. Successful experience in staff development preferably in a developing country environment
6. Cross-cultural management experience and sensitivity
7. Ability to work effectively under pressure and in a highly political environment
8. Results-oriented and team player
9. Good organizational skills
10. Experience working in developing country environment highly desirable
11. Successful completion of an intensive Tetum course upon arrival is required to continue holding the position.

Qualifications:

1. Master's degree in law (civil law system)
2. Minimum five years of relevant experience: either parliamentary experience in committee technical support, or other clearly relevant activities which demonstrate a deep understanding of the nature of parliamentary legislative and oversight responsibilities and committee systems and procedures
3. Fluent in Portuguese and working knowledge of English both spoken and written
4. Tetum desirable, preparedness to learn Tetum essential