



Human Rights Office

Istituto Internazionale Maria Ausiliatrice -IIMA

NGO in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations

Genève, 16 Mars 2012

19TH SESSION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL ITEM 6 UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW TIMOR LESTE

Statement submitted by

IIMA – Istituto Internazionale Maria Ausiliatrice

and cosigned by

Dominicans for justice and peace (Order of preachers), Mouvement International d’Apostolat des Milieux Sociaux Indépendant (MIASMI), Organisation internationale pour le droit à l’éducation et la liberté d’enseignement (OIDEL) and International Voluntarism Organization for Women, Education, Development (VIDES International).

IIMA, on behalf of a coalition of NGOs, welcomes the attitude of the Timor Leste delegation during the full UPR process and the acceptance of a great number of recommendations.

IIMA recognizes the great efforts of the government in promoting and protecting human rights, especially children’s rights and welcomes with satisfaction the National Strategic Plan for Education 2011-2015 that marks a historical shift by placing the child’s physical, psychological, social and academic well-being at the centre of school decision making.

Nevertheless major efforts are required especially in guaranteeing children’s rights, in particular their enjoyment of the Right to Education. In fact, IIMA notes different problems in the **accessibility, availability and acceptability** of education.

IIMA strongly suggests to the Timor Leste government to **fully implement the National Strategic Plan for Education and article 28 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child of which Timor Leste is a part**. Moreover, IIMA encourages the Timor Leste government to **guarantee a free, compulsory and quality education to all, without discrimination of any kind, and to modernize the educational system through infrastructural investments (in building new schools), providing economic subsidies for the poorest families and preparing sufficient number of professionally trained teachers, especially in primary schools**.

Furthermore, IIMA notes the persistence of child labour, sexual exploitation, child trafficking and violence against children in the country. Despite the efforts of the Timor Leste government **more measures should be taken to ensure that every child is protected from all forms of physical, sexual and mental abuse or exploitation and prosecute severely the perpetrators of these crimes**.

Finally IIMA is concerned with some of the provisions of the legislation which seem to infringe upon human rights principles, in particular the *best interest of the child*.

For this reason IIMA encourages the Timor Leste government to **use the principle of the “best interests of the child” as a guide for the development of juvenile justice law and policy and to put in place prevention programs to reduce juvenile delinquency**.

Thank you Madame President,