

OIL & GAS

FUEL IMPORT INFRASTRUCTURES LICENSED

By means of Resolution No. 21/2017, of 10 May 2017, the Government of Timor-Leste approved the exceptional and temporary licensing of the Port facilities of Cement Timor Trading SA and Lai-Ara Unipessoal, Limitada, to carry out the activities of importation and storage of fuel, for a 1-year period, commencing 25 April 2017.

COMMERCIAL

NEW COMPANIES' LAW

The new Companies' Law was published by means of Law No. 10/2017, of 17 May 2017, which expressly revokes the prior framework approved by Law No. 4/2004, of 21 April 2004.

The amendments introduced by the new Law include: (i) creation of a new mandatory corporate body, the Legal Representative; (ii) removal of the minimum share capital for limited liability companies by quotas; (iii) abolishment of bearer shares; (iv) the possibility of conducting meetings of the corporate bodies through means of distance communication; (v) a simplified regime for shareholder loan agreements; (vi) rules for affiliated companies; and (vii) abolishment of General Partnership and Limited Partnership Companies.

The new Law will become effective on 17 September 2017.

NEW COMMERCIAL REGISTRY LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The new commercial registry legal framework was approved by means of Decree-Law No. 16/2017, of 17 May 2017.

The commercial registry is aimed at publicizing the legal status of individual entrepreneurs, commercial companies, civil companies in commercial form, State-owned companies and permanent representations.

The registration of acts subject to commercial registration is made with the **Registration and Business Verification Service** (SERVE), at the request of the interested parties.

The new Law will come into force on 17 September 2017.

TAX AND CUSTOMS

ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK OF THE TAX AUTHORITY APPROVED

The Government of Timor-Leste approved the organizational Framework of the Tax Authority, through Decree-Law No. 13/2017, of 5 April 2017. The Tax Authority is responsible for, inter alia, (i) collecting taxes; (ii) preventing and fighting tax evasion and fraud; (iii) developing and managing data systems; and (iv) informing taxpayers and economic operators, including through the issuance of binding opinions on compliance with tax obligations.

NEW CUSTOMS CODE

By means of Decree-Law No. 14/2017, of 5 April 2017, the Government of Timor-Leste approved a new Customs Code, which entered into force on 4 June 2017.

Amongst others, the following matters are covered by the new Code: (i) customs control and supervision; (ii) areas subject to customs control; (iii) powers of the customs' authorities; (iv) customs duties; and (v) customs' offenses.

BANKING AND FINANCE

NEW RULES ON IMPORT AND EXPORT OF CURRENCY

By means of Instruction No. 4/2017, of 21 April of 2017, the Central Bank of Timor-Leste approved new rules on import and export of currency. Instruction No. 4/2017 determines that both the importation and the exportation of currency in an amount exceeding USD 20,000.00, or its equivalent in foreign currency, requires the Central Bank's prior authorization.

This statute also sets forth detailed rules on the authorization procedure and penalties for breach of its provisions.

ENVIRONMENT

URBAN WASTE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM APPROVED

Through Decree-Law No. 2/2017, of 22 March 2017, the Government of Timor-Leste approved the Urban Waste Management System. The new statute sets forth rules on recyclable waste, management principles, right to information, duties of the Municipalities, waste packaging and deposition, waste collection and transportation, urban waste management contracts, applicable fees, and penalties, amongst others.

JUSTICE

NEW ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICE

Decree-Law No. 10/2017, of 29 March 2017, approved the New Organizational Framework of the Public Defender Service.

The new statute aims to update and reform the previous statute, adapting it to the current reality of the justice sector, in particular in respect of the right of access to justice and the courts.

The statute contains rules on the Public Defender Service's organizational structure, career, incompatibilities, duties, rights and guarantees, and discipline.

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

LEGAL FRAMEWORK ON LIMITED DURATION PARKING ZONES

By means of Decree-Law 3/2017, of 22 March 2017, the Government of Timor-Leste approved the rules on time limited parking areas. Under this new statute, parking at time limited parking areas is subject to the payment of a fee, being the parking management entrusted to the Municipal Authorities.

The statute also sets forth, amongst others, the rules on calculation of parking fees, prohibited parking areas, and supervision powers.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK ON TERRITORIAL PLANNING APPROVED

The National Parliament of Timor-Leste approved the territorial planning legal framework, by means of Law No. 6/2017, of 19 April 2017.

In addition to general provisions on the scope and purpose of this Law, the new statute contains rules on the legal status of soil (e.g. spaces and infrastructures for public use and State public domain) and on the territorial planning system (e.g. national plans, municipal plans, coordination and cooperation principles, territorial planning instruments, publicity, amendments, revision and suspension of territorial planning instruments, and interim measures).

EXPROPRIATION FOR PUBLIC INTEREST

By means of Law No. 8/2017, of 26 April 2017, the expropriation legal framework was approved.

This statute defines expropriation as any legally admissible restriction to private property or related rights or interests, irrespective of the persons or entities to which they belong, and clarifies that is only admissible in cases of "public interest" (*utilidade pública*).

Public interest covers *inter alia* national defense and security, public pathways, roads, tunnels, railroads, and ancillary facilities; public transportation systems; ports, airports and terminals; etc.

The new statute also details the expropriation procedure, clarifying the purpose of and rules applicable to each phase thereof.

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