



Press Release

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Three members of Besi Merah Putih militia sentenced to 6, 9 and 16 years imprisonment respectively

On 11 December 2012 the Dili District Court read out its final decision in a serious crimes case involving crimes against humanity committed by three members of the Besih Merah Putih militia, who were sentenced to 6, 9, and 16 years imprisonment respectively. The incidents occurred in 1999 in Ulmera Village, Bazartete, Liquiça District.

“JSMP applauds the steps taken by the public prosecutor who requested for the court to apply measures of temporary detention against the convicted persons while the appeal process is taking place, to avoid a repeat of the mishap whereby the convicted person Lavio was sentenced to 9 years imprisonment, however the decision could not be enforced because the convicted person had absconded to Indonesia”, said Luis de Oliveira Sampaio, the Executive Director of JSMP.

In 1999 the defendant Faustino Filipe de Carvalho was the Village Chief of Ulmera as well as the BMP Militia Commander. He was declared guilty by the court for committing the crime of forcefully removing the civilian population from Ulmera Village to the West Timor (Kupang), and committing the crime of illegally detaining women and children. In relation to the aforementioned actions, the court decided to sentence the defendant to 6 years imprisonment.

The defendant Miguel Soares (who was an active member of the militia in the area around Besiten), was sentenced to 9 years imprisonment after being found guilty of being involved in the crime of murdering the victim Fransisco Brás. The defendant Salvador de Jesus (Kasait BMP Commander) was sentenced to 16 years imprisonment after being found guilty of committing the murder of the two victims Felix Barreto and Francisco Brás.

The hearing to announce the final decision was conducted by judges Ana Paula Fonseca, António Gomes and António Quantes. The public prosecution service was represented by prosecutor JÓse Landim and the convicted person was represented by public defender JÓse da Silva.

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