



*Press Release*  
*Oe-Cusse District Court*  
*22 April 2015*

**Panel of judges try cases of gender based violence at the Oecusse District Court**

Between 14-17 April 2015, a Panel of Judges at the Oecusse District Court tried several cases involving gender based violence.

According to the trial schedule a panel of judges heard cases for one week spanning 13-17 April 2015. JSMP observed 6 of the cases tried on the second day of the aforementioned period. According to the trial schedule a second panel of judges will hear cases between 20-24 April 2015.

On the fourth day of the first week the Oecusse District Court tried 3 cases involving the mistreatment of a spouse, 1 case of attempted rape, 1 case of sexual coercion, and adjourned 1 case of abortion.

The three cases involving the mistreatment of a spouse and 1 case of attempted rape will be decided on 27 April 2015 and the case of sexual coercion will be decided on 28 April 2015.

“JSMP welcomes the efforts of the court to set aside time to try cases scheduled at the local courts before a panel of judges. This is important because it can respond to the demands of justice from the parties involved in these cases,” said Luis de Oliveira Sampaio, the Executive Director of JSMP.

During these trials the court decided to adjourn the case of abortion and amended the charge from Article 141 (1) that requires a panel of judges to Article 141 (2) of the Penal Code that will be heard by a single judge on 11 May 2015.

The trial was adjourned because the defendant did not appear in court. The court decided to sentence the defendant to pay a fine of US\$ 20 and will detain the defendant so she will attend the trial.

JSMP observed that 5 of the cases that were tried were registered in 2014 and only the case of abortion was registered in 2010.

JSMP encourages the court to impose additional prison sentences against the defendants to contribute towards the prevention of gender based violence in the community. Based on JSMP monitoring, the number of these types of cases being registered at the Oecusse District Court is high.

This hearing was presided over by the Oecusse Judge Administrator, João Ribeiro. The two judges seconded by the Dili District Court were Zumiaty Freitas and Francisca Cabral. The public prosecution service was represented by Ambrogio Rangel Freitas and the defendants were represented by Calisto Tout and Afonso Gomes Fatima from the Oecusse Office of the Public Defender.

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