



**Rede Defensor Direitos Umanus (RDDU)**

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## **Press Release**

**Dili, 23 September 2019**

### **Human Rights Defenders Network: We strongly condemn acts of violence against a disabled person and we urge all people to respect and value disabled persons in this nation**

The Human Rights Defenders Network (RDDU) is comprised of Civil Society organizations that deal with Human Rights issues. This network exists to carry out monitoring and advocacy in relation to cases involving human right violations that occur in Timor-Leste.

The Human Rights Defenders Network urges all people to respect and uphold the principles and values of human rights that are enshrined in the RDTL Constitution and international treaties adhered to by the State of Timor-Leste. These principles and values need to be put in practice so that no person has the right to discriminate, violate or mistreat any other citizens, including disabled persons, in Timor-Leste.

The RDDU strongly condemns the actions committed by some young people against a lady suffering a disability, that were shared on social media (Facebook), whereby a group of young people just stood around and stared when two other young people committed acts of violence against this individual who suffers from a psycho-social disability. The RDDU strongly condemns the violent acts committed by students wearing university uniforms against a disabled citizen.

In response to the immoral and violent acts that have violated the rights of another person, in this case a disabled person, the Human Rights Defenders Network urges:

1. The PNTL, and the criminal investigations unit in particular, to immediately find the perpetrators of the violent acts committed against the disabled person that were shared on social media.
2. The Public Prosecution Service to promptly investigate the perpetrators who committed these acts against the disabled lady.
3. The courts to convict those persons who have committed a crime against a disabled citizen in accordance with the applicable law.

4. The Ombudsman for Human Rights and Justice to support this process to identify the perpetrators who committed the offences against the lady who suffers from a psycho-social disability.
5. The perpetrators who were involved in this act to collaborate and hand themselves in to the PNTL, however if they do not wish to collaborate, then the PNTL is urged to find and arrest the perpetrators to facilitate the investigative process.
6. All persons to collaborate, especially those who witnessed these acts, to provide information to the PNTL or local authorities, so they can find the perpetrators.
7. All persons to respect and value the rights of all citizens, including the disabled, in this nation.
8. The State of Timor-Leste to ratify the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, as a matter of urgency!

Members of the RDDU:

1. Hak Association
2. JSMP (Judicial System Monitoring Program)
3. ALFeLa (Legal Aid for female and minor victims)
4. AJAR (Asia Justice and Rights)
5. Acbit (Asosiasaun *Chega Ba Ita*)
6. Codiva
7. Mahein Foundation (FM)
8. AHMDTL (TL Association of the Disabled)
9. Belun
10. CBRN-TL
11. Lao Hamutuk
12. ADTL (Association of the Disabled in Timor-Leste)

Dili, 23 September 2019

Coordinator of RDDU

Inocencio Xavier