



**JSMP Press Release**  
**26 January 2005**

## **ANNOUNCEMENT OF RESULTS OF PREPARATORY PHASE OF TRAINING FOR COURT ACTORS**

On 25 January the Judicial Training Centre (JTC) released the results of the first part of the preparatory phase of the new court actor training program being developed by the JTC.

Forty of the sixty participants in the three month preparatory stage of the program have passed. These forty candidates can now participate in the training, of two years duration. The first part of this stage is a year of full time academic training.

The participants were not given their scores in the preparatory phase of the program (which were apparently decided on the basis of the 40 question multiple choice exam which they completed at the end of the three month course, and on their attendance and participation in the course). The scores will apparently only be made available to participants if they appeal their result.

JSMP is uncertain as to what effect the new two year training program will have on the functioning of the Courts in Timor Leste. The majority of Prosecutors and Public Defenders have passed, and will be involved in the new two year training. As the training is full time they will not be able to work in the courts. Since, according to Decree Law No. 15/2004, participants in the training must have an attendance rate of at least 90%, participation in the training would appear to preclude the continuation of court actors work in the courts.

This could mean that only private lawyers can work in the courts. At present, in criminal cases, private lawyers can only work as defence lawyers. This may mean that many criminal trials may not be able to proceed due to lack of a Prosecutor. There is currently only one international prosecutor (an UNMISSET employee) employed in Timor Leste and his contract will finish on 20 May 2005, at the end of the UNMISSET mandate. It seems unlikely that given the current backlog of cases he will be able to act in all cases.

JSMP notes that the Public Prosecutors and Public Defenders evaluation is not yet complete. Once it is complete, it may reveal that some of the Public Prosecutors and Public Defenders are fully qualified to work in the Courts of Timor Leste and do not have to participate in the two year training program.

JSMP therefore calls on the Commissions of Evaluation for the Public Prosecutors and Defenders to complete the evaluations as soon as possible so that if possible, the courts can continue to function.

