



**JUDICIAL SYSTEM MONITORING PROGRAMME
PROGRAMA DE MONITORIZAÇÃO DO SISTEMA JUDICIAL**

Press Release
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**JSMP: THE APPOINTMENT OF THE SECOND GROUP OF COURT
ACTORS IS A POSITIVE STEP FORWARD FOR THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM
OF TIMOR LESTE**

After the restoration of independence in 2002 we had to start again because the Indonesians who had been occupying Timor Leste for 24 years had all left, which also impacted on the judicial system. However, this was not stop the people of Timor Leste from establishing their independence. This is evidenced by the fact that a number of legal graduates were recently appointed by the Court of Appeal as new actors in the judicial system, even though they had experienced a number of difficulties during their legal training, such as issues with language that they have managed to overcome.

These Timorese judicial actors were the second group of graduates to be appointed, following the appointment of the first group on 21 June 2007. The group of judicial actors appointed on 14 March 2008 included two judges, namely: Alfonso Carmona and João Liborio, four prosecutors, namely: Remigia de Fatima da Silva, Afonso Lopes, Bemvinda da Costa do Rosario and Hipolito Exposto Martins, and four public defenders, namely: Sergio Paulo Diaz Pinto, Marchal Mascarenhas, Laura Valente Lay and Rui Manuel Guterres. Currently Timor Leste has 13 national judges, 13 national prosecutors and 11 public defenders.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by all sovereign organs such as the Acting President of the Republic Fernando Lasama de Araujo, Acting President of the Parliament Vicente Guterres, Prime Minister Jose Alexandre Xanana Gusmão, SRSG Atul Khare, Minister of Justice Lucia Lobato, Prosecutor General Longuinhos Monteiro, President of the Court of Appeal Claudio de Jesus Ximenes, and all diplomatic representatives who support the development of this nation, especially its judicial system.

Prime Minister Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão stated in his welcoming speech that the nation is currently faced with the difficult task of improving the judicial system. All courts require competent and adequate human resources. Judges, prosecutors and public defenders need to serve the community and uphold the

rule of law as prescribed in the Constitution, as this is crucial for the future to ensure that fundamental rights are guaranteed.

The Acting President of the Republic Fernando Lasama de Araujo also used this opportunity to state that Timor Leste was proud to witness the appointment of this second group of judges, prosecutors and public defenders by the court of appeal. Timor Leste is full of hope that the newly appointed court actors can uphold the rule of law. Mention was also made of the fact that Timor Leste needs to make improvements and to enhance the capacity of police officers who work in the field of investigations so they can support and guarantee the rule of law because they are the ones who accompany all victims and suspects before the prosecution to be thoroughly investigated in relation to criminal cases occurring within the community.

As an independent organization that conducts monitoring of the judicial system in Timor Leste, JSMP is proud to see the appointment of these new judicial actors who will work together with the first group appointed on 21 June 2007 to strengthen the judicial system in Timor Leste.

JSMP hopes that the newly appointed judicial actors will accept a pledge to serve the entire community to promote justice, guarantees for human rights and the legal needs of all citizens, as stated by the Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão. JSMP hopes that the newly appointed and existing judicial actors will provide a good example to the community on how to uphold the rule of law with respect for the Constitution, the law and their conscience. Thus, everyone will abide by the law as set out in Article 2.2 of the RDTL Constitution.

JSMP also believes that the appointment of the second group of judicial actors is a positive step forward for the judicial system of Timor Leste.

For further information please contact:
Timotio de Deus
Director JSMP
E-mail: timotio@jsmp.minihub.org

Landline: +670 3323883