



**JUDICIAL SYSTEM MONITORING PROGRAMME
PROGRAM PEMANTAUAN SISTEM YUDISIAL**

**JSMP Press Release:
Conference on the Future of the Serious Crimes Process for Timor Leste**

On 23 and 24 September JSMP is holding a conference entitled 'Justice for Timor Leste: Civil Society Strategic Planning', on the future of the serious crimes process in Timor Leste. The objective of the conference is to consider future initiatives which might be taken to continue on with the still-incomplete serious crimes process after May 2005 and to ensure that discussion of these initiatives involves as much civil-society participation as possible.

The Serious Crimes Unit has issued approximately 90 indictments since its inception in 2000 and JSMP understands that only a very limited number of new indictments, if any, will be issued between now and the termination of the Special Panels in May 2005. The most important of these indictees and, in JSMP's view, those who allegedly bear most responsibility for crimes committed in 1999, remain in Indonesia shielded behind a wall of impunity. It therefore appears that the Special Panels will conclude their work in May 2005 without having had the opportunity to try the vast majority of those who may be primarily responsible for serious crimes committed prior to and during 1999.

JSMP strongly believes that to date there has been little if any communal involvement in a process whose main function is to bring healing and reconciliation to the people of Timor Leste. The lack of understanding and absence of public information on the serious crimes process has been confirmed by JSMP visits to the districts. For that reason JSMP has made arrangements for representative groups from each of the districts to attend the Conference so that they can make their own contributions to issues which are of national importance for Timor Leste's future.

The conference will consider the five main options for the continuation of the serious crimes process available to the people of Timor Leste, to be presented by leading national and international experts: the international commission of experts (responsible for investigating and making recommendations in response to the quality of the Jakarta trials and Special Panels trials in Dili); the future of the Special Panels for Serious Crimes; an international tribunal; an international truth commission; the extension of the CAVR mandate. The conference will be formally opened by Mr Sukehiro Hasegawa, the Special Representative of the Secretary General, UNMISSET and a representative of the office of the President of the Republic of East Timor.

Participants will form into workshop groups to discuss the most important issues at the end of each presentation. The findings of each group will then form the basis of a conference resolution to be discussed on the second day. It is hoped participants will agree on an action plan as a means of ensuring that the serious crimes process does not die with the departure of the United Nations and that future initiatives taken in the pursuit of justice for Timor Leste are both viable and supported by the people.

The Conference is to be held at Memorial Hall in Farol. Registration commences at 8.15 a.m. on 23 September 2004 with formal presentations scheduled to begin at 8.30 a.m. The press and members of the public are welcome to attend.