

JSMP Press Release
Dili, East Timor 20 November 2002

Former East Timorese village chief sentenced to three years for crimes against humanity

On 20 November 2002, the Special Panel of the Dili District Court in East Timor sentenced a former Chief of Guda Village, Lolotoe Sub-District to 3 years imprisonment for three counts of crimes against humanity, including two counts of imprisonment /severe deprivation of physical liberty and one count of inhumane acts intentionally causing great suffering or serious injury to body or to mental or physical health. The panel which delivered the sentence in case 4B/2001 was comprised of Judge Sylver Ntukamazina, Judge Benfeito Ramos and Judge Maria Natercia.

The term of imprisonment will be little more than a year, reduced by the almost two years already spent in pre-trial detention.

Sabino Gouviea Leite had originally been indicted on 6 counts of crimes against humanity, together with two alleged former (Kaer Metin Merah Putih KMMP) militia, in relation to events which occurred in the Lolotoe area of Bobonaro district in the months leading up to the popular consultation in 1999. He is the second person to plead guilty in the Lolotoe case, following the sentencing of Jhoni Franca on 29 October 2002 to five years imprisonment.

The Court will publish its reasons for the decision on 9 December 2002. The court has postponed publishing reasons for the decision in the Jhoni Franca case until 29 November 2002, citing human resource and logistical reasons.

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