



JUDICIAL SYSTEM MONITORING PROGRAMME
PROGRAMA DE MONITORIZAÇÃO DO SISTEMA JUDICIAL

Press Release

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Mobile Voting in Prisons and Hospitals for the Parliamentary Election, 30 June 2007

During May 2007, JSMP was very concerned that the amendment to law no 6/2006 did not address the right to vote of hospital in-patients and prisoners despite the stipulation in Art 47 of the RDTL Constitution that all Timorese citizens over the age of 17 have the right to vote. Therefore JSMP submitted a proposal to the National Parliament for an article recognizing the right of in-patients and prisoners to vote and providing for mobile voting procedures. National Parliament discussed and approved the proposal, incorporating it into art.4 on 'Active Electoral Capacity' of Law 6/2006 on the Election of National Parliament. JSMP reiterates its appreciation of this measure.

By the same token, JSMP congratulates the Electoral Administration Bodies, STAE and CNE, for their efforts to implement art. 4 of Law no 6/2006 and the provisions in the STAE regulation on polling and tabulation that deal with mobile voting. During the elections on 30th June mobile voting took place in the three prisons (Baucau, Dili and Gleno) and five hospitals (Dili, Baucau, Maliana, Suai and Oecussi – Los Palos being classified as a clinic) of the country.

JSMP Observation:

JSMP had monitoring teams present in the three prisons and in the hospitals in Dili and Baucau. In general the voting process went well.

Baucau Prison: the voting started at 14 and ended at 14.50 PM with a total of 35 prisoners. Of these only 29 were able to vote as 6 of them had no electoral card or passport. There was 6 polling staff to facilitate the process. The National and International Police were also present although outside the 25m perimeter

Becora Prison – Voting started at 14.00 and went on until 17.20 The voting went well and facilitated by 6 STAE staffs and participated by UN Human Rights Officers, National and International Observers. There are 222 prisoners in total, of whom 190 voted. Nine are juvenile detainees and may therefore not vote and the rest were not able to vote because they did not have electoral card or other ID such as a passport.

Ermera Prison – Voting started at 14 pm went on up to 14.40 pm, total 27 prisoners (4 women and 23 man), all the prisoners voted and the event was facilitated by 3 Polling staff, 1 STAE national staff and UN Electoral Staff.

Hospitals

National Hospital, Dili – The voting started at 11 am and went on until 15.42. Six polling staff facilitated movements from room to room, allowing each voter to cast his ballot from his bed. Cardboard screens were used to guarantee the secrecy of each person's vote.

Baucau Hospital – Six polling Staff facilitated the movement from room to room, the weakness here is that there were no cardboard screens that can guarantee the secrecy of the voter therefore other people around can witnessed what they voted for. JSMP recommend to competent institution such as STAE to pay more attention to logistical setting in the future to guarantee a secret, free and democracy to all citizens to be able to exercise their political right.

Conclusion

Based on JSMP's observations in the three districts of Baucau, Dili and Ermera, the mobile voting worked well and according to the procedure. JSMP believes that this is a very big step towards guaranteeing the right of all citizens to exercise their political rights and to be equal before the law. JSMP hopes that the same measures will be utilized for the next elections, in five years' time and that the franchise might be further extended to patients in clinics and Timorese citizens abroad.

