



JUDICIAL SYSTEM MONITORING PROGRAMME
PROGRAMA DE MONITORIZAÇÃO DO SISTEMA JUDICIAL

Press Release

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**ROGERIO TIAGO LOBATO SENTENCED TO 7 YEARS 6 MONTHS
PRISON**

As planned, the proceedings to hear the verdict in the case of the illegal distribution of weapons by the former Interior Minister of Timor-Leste Rogerio Tiago Lobato and associates took place on Wednesday 07/03/2007 at 14:30 hrs Timor-Leste time.

The proceedings were accompanied by very heavy rain but this did not lessen the intentions of members of the public to attend the hearing because they filled the court room, including the former Prime Minister of Timor Leste Dr. Mar'ie Alkatiri as well as his wife listening attentively to the reading out of the decision by the Presiding Judge Dr Ivo Nelson de Caires Rosa Batista. Certainly, the attendance by the former Prime Minister was to give moral support to his accused compatriot Rogerio Tiago Lobato and associates who were sitting in the dock to hear the verdict.

Judge Ivo read the decision out himself, which was more than a hundred pages long, and explained the decision in the case of the illegal distribution of weapons to the civilian population on the basis of assisting the police who were already in a state of disintegration at that time, according to the accused. At the conclusion of the decision, the Judge sentenced Rogerio Tiago Lobato to seven (7) years and six (6) months imprisonment.

Upon hearing the verdict, the lawyers for the accused Rogerio Tiago Lobato, headed by lawyer Dr Paulo dos Remedios, through lawyer Dr Luis, immediately appealed to the court not to put the decision in to effect straight away.

The judge sentenced the accused Francisco Salsinha dan Marcos "Labadie" Piedade to approximately 6 months imprisonment but he was released to serve the sentence outside for 1 (one) year. In relation to Francisco Salsinha and Marcos "Labadaí" Piedade, the judge applied Article 4 paragraph 4.7 of UNTAET Regulation No 5/2001 on illegal possession of weapons. In relation to the accused Francisco Xavier Viegas, the judge imposed no penalty

because he could find no evidence that the accused was in illegal possession of weapons in the same way as were the accused Francisco Salsinha and Marcos “Labada” Piedade so in the end, the judge unconditionally released the accused Francisco Xavier Viegas.

In view of all the decisions that have been made in relation to all of the accused, JSMP very much respects the judges because in making those decisions, the judges acted very professionally and did not pay regard to the social position or strata of the persons accused even though there were some who were dissatisfied with the decision because it was not in accordance with their expectations and, in the opinion of JSMP, this is a very positive step for the future development of the judicial system in Timor- Leste.

JSMP appeals to all layers of the community to respect the court’s decision that has been made by the Panel of Judges in respect of the accused so that the further process can be continued in accordance with the expectations of the community as the process in this case must be continued because the lawyers for the accused Rogerio Tiago Lobato stated to appeal the court’s decision.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

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