



JUDICIAL SYSTEM MONITORING PROGRAMME

PROGRAMA MONITORIZASAUN SISTEMA JUDISIÁL

## ***Press Release***

**7 August 2013**

### **Mobile court in Manufahi District shows positive step forward in terms of protecting victims of sexual violence**

Between 24 - 26 July 2013 the Suai District Court conducted a mobile court in the District of Same-Manufahi. The mobile court was supposed to try 14 cases, including 7 cases of gender based violence. From the 7 cases of gender based violence, 4 cases involved offences against physical integrity characterized as domestic violence, 1 case of rape, 1 case of sexual coercion and 1 case of attempted rape.

From these 7 cases, 5 cases have been decided by the court, 1 case was adjourned to 6 August 2013 for the announcement of the decision and the other case was adjourned until 26 October 2013 because the defendant did not appear in court and is in Indonesia.

The defendant in the case involving sexual coercion was sentenced to 2 years 2 months imprisonment that was suspended for 4 years, and the defendant in the case of attempted rape was acquitted because the testimony provided by the witness and the victim was contradictory and the defendant chose to remain silent during the trial. In the 3 cases involving domestic violence, the first defendant was sentenced to 6 months imprisonment that was suspended for 1 year, the second defendant was ordered to pay a fine of US\$ 30 together with court costs of US\$ 10, and the third defendant had an agreement validated by the court because the parties had reached an amicable settlement.

Based on JSMP observations, the mobile court has taken a positive step forward in terms of protecting the identity and privacy of victims in cases involving sexual violence and minors. In these hearings the court made a request for all of those present to leave the court room before the hearings commenced.

“This is a very progressive step forward because it is important to ensure that victims of sexual violence and minors are given sufficient protection during proceedings. JSMP believes that the judges handling these cases should be praised for changing their approach towards protecting victims,” said Luis de Oliveira Sampaio, Executive Director of JSMP.

The judges presiding over these hearings were Costâncio Barros Basmery, Pedro Raposo de Fiquiero (international) and Lorencia Freitas. The public prosecution service was represented

by Felisminio Cardoso (international) and Benvinda da Costa Rosario. The Office of the Public Defender was represented by Marçal Mascarinhas and João Henrique.

The court clerks who assisted the mobile court were Samuel Moniz Araújo, Jose Feliciano Mauleto and Augusta Neves.

This publication has only covered the cases involving gender based violence handled by the aforementioned mobile court.

For more information, please contact:

Luis de Oliveira Sampaio

Executive Director of JSMP

Email: [luis@jsmp.minihub.org](mailto:luis@jsmp.minihub.org)

[info@jsmp.minihub.org](mailto:info@jsmp.minihub.org)

Landline/Mobile: 3323883|77295795 Website: [www.jsmp.tl](http://www.jsmp.tl)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/timorleste.jsmp](http://www.facebook.com/timorleste.jsmp)

Twitter: @JSMPTl