



Press Release

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Court hands down suspended prison sentences in five cases of domestic violence and sentences defendant to 18 years imprisonment in case of incest

On 31 July 2013 the Baucau District Court conducted hearings to announce its decision in four cases of domestic violence, 1 case of serious maltreatment against a spouse and 1 case aggravated of sexual abuse (incest).

In the four cases involving simple offences against physical integrity the court handed down sentences of three month's imprisonment that were suspended for 1 year, in the case involving the serious maltreatment of a spouse the defendant was sentenced to 1 year and six month's imprisonment, which was suspended for one year and 6 months, and in the case involving sexual abuse (incest) the defendant was sentenced to 18 month's imprisonment.

“JSMP encourages all of the courts to review the effectiveness of applying suspended sentences in case of domestic violence, because JSMP has observed that domestic violence has continued to increase in all locations. This gives the impression that the application of suspended sentences has almost no ability to deter domestic violence in Timor-Leste”, said the Executive Director of JSMP, Luis de Oliveira Sampaio.

Everyone should understand that domestic violence is a serious crime according to the Penal Code of Timor-Leste. Therefore, everyone has the personal responsibility and duty to eradicate all forms of violence against women.

In addition to voicing its concern about the application of suspended sentences in cases of domestic violence, JSMP also wishes to congratulate the court on its decision to sentence the defendant in a case of incest to 18 year's imprisonment. This decision is a step forward in eradicating the crime of incest in Timor-Leste.

These cases were registered respectively as Case No. 57/Crm.S/203/TDB, 24/Crm.S/2012/TDB, 60/Crm.S/2013/TDB, 41/Crm.S/2013/TDB, 21/Crm.C/2013/TDB, and 97/Crm.C/2013/TDB.

The cases involving simple offences against physical integrity were presided over by judge José Gonçalves. The Public Prosecution service was represented by Baltazar Ramos and the defendants were represented by Rui Manuel Guterres. The case involving the serious maltreatment of a spouse and the case involving incest were presided over by judge Ângela Faria Belo.

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