



Press Release

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Dili District Court hands down sentence of 21 years imprisonment against defendant in case of aggravated homicide characterized as domestic violence

On 5 July 2013 the Dili District Court read out its decision and handed down a sentence of 21 years imprisonment against the defendant Augustinho Soares Lay who was found guilty of committing aggravated homicide characterized as domestic violence against the deceased RS (his wife) in Tasi Tolu, Dili.

"JSMP welcomes this decision and encourages the court to consider homicide in the domestic sphere as a serious crime that must be punished with a punishment proportionate to the act committed," said the Executive Director of JSMP, Luis de Oliveira Sampaio.

The court concluded this case based on the confession of the defendant, namely that on 29 January 2013 he killed his wife. The defendant committed the act by strangling the victim and stabbing the victim in the chest causing the victim to die at the scene of the crime. Then the defendant took some black rubber and tied up the body of the victim and placed it in some black plastic and then disposed of the body in Metiaut.

Previously, in his final allegations, the public prosecutor requested for the court to hand down a sentence of 20 years imprisonment against the defendant. However, the court handed down a sentence of 21 years imprisonment. This sentence was one year longer than the allegations of the public prosecutor.

The public defender requested for the court to reduce the sentence recommended by the public prosecutor because he considered that the defendant committed the crime due to provocation from the victim, and also the defendant was suspicious that the victim was having an amorous relationship with another man.

JSMP believes that although the defendant claimed that there was provocation from the victim, these circumstances could not be used as a reason to justify the act, as was intended by the public defender. The Penal Code clearly states that any person who takes the life of another person must be punished severely, including when there is provocation. In addition, the RDTL Constitution states that the State also guarantees and protects the life of every person. Therefore, taking the life of another person is not the way to solve a problem.

JSMP hopes that this decision can be an important lesson for the community to handle every problem/conflict in a peaceful manner to avoid impacting on the life of another.

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