



**Office of the
Deputy General Prosecutor
for Serious Crimes
Timor Leste**

SERIOUS CRIMES UNIT PRESS RELEASE

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8 CONVICTIONS FOR CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY

On 16 November 2004, the Special Panels for Serious Crimes issued final decisions on two cases convicting eight persons of murder as a crime against humanity. With these verdicts, 63 persons have now been convicted by the Special Panels for Serious Crimes.

The conviction of one former Sakunar militia

On 16th November 2004 a Special Panel for Serious Crimes of Dili District Court, rendered its final decision in the case of the Deputy General Prosecutor against Mateus Lao. Lao was found guilty of murder as a crime against humanity and sentenced to 8 years in prison.

The panel of judges presided over by Judge Brigitte Schmid found that Mateus Lao was a Sakunar militia member from Passabe, Oecussi district and that he was directly involved in the murder of Josef Maknaun. The victim was killed on 9th September 1999, while he was trying to escape to West Timor with his family.

7 Defendants plead guilty

Also on the 16th of November, a Special Panel for Serious Crimes of Dili District Court presided over by Judge Siegfried Blunk, rendered the final decision on the cases of the Deputy General Prosecutor against Agostinho Cloe, Agostinho Cab, Lazarus Fuli, Antonio Lelan, Lino Beno and Domingos Metan, who had each pled guilty to murder as a crime against humanity.

The panel of judges accepted found that the six accused, members of the Sakunar militia, were directly involved in the murder of 3 persons in Netensuan Village on the 16 September 1999. Agostinho Cab, Lazarus Fuli, Antonio Lelan, Lino Beno and Domingos Metan were each sentenced to 5 years in prison while Agostinho Cloe was given a 4 year sentence.

The other defendant involved in this case, being Anton Lelan Sufa, had also pled guilty and was convicted on the 8 November 2004. The Special Panel of judges, presided by Judge Blunk found him guilty of two murders and one count of other inhumane acts. The 7 defendants were ordered to start serving their sentences on the 25 November 2004.

Last week, the United Nations Security Council in Resolution 1573, commended the progress of the serious crimes process towards completing all pending trials by 20 May 2005. This month, for the first time a third panel began hearing a trial of a serious crimes case. In trials before the Special Panels to date, 63 accused

persons have been convicted of at least one charge while 2 accused stand acquitted.