

Australian man Robert Trott sentenced to 20 years in prison for child sex abuse after reappraisal

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DILI, 16 January 2026 (TATOLI) – The Dili Court of First Instance on Thursday, 15 January 2026 sentenced Australian national Robert Trott to 20 years in jail for sexual crimes against children in Timor-Leste.

The court also ordered his immediate preventive detention following a reappraisal of a 2024 decision.

The sentence follows an appeal process in which Trott, initially convicted in June 2024 of two counts of aggravated sexual abuse of minors, sought acquittal, while JU,S Jurídico Social, acting as legal representative of the victims, challenged the court's earlier counting of offences in a case involving approximately 100 acts of sexual abuse.



Robert Trott - Photo: ABC News/Zevonia Vieira

The Court of Appeal dismissed the Trott's appeal against conviction and upheld the victims' argument on the incorrect determination of offences, remitting the case to the Dili Court of First Instance for a reassessment limited to the correct counting of crimes under the legal regime governing concurrence of offences.

In a reappraisal decision delivered in open court, the Dili court ruled that the proven facts constituted seven counts of aggravated sexual abuse of a minor, treating each act as a separate offence punishable by seven years' imprisonment.

The court also found the defendant guilty of one count of ill-treatment of minors, covering the remaining 93 acts of abuse that could not be clearly individualised, and imposed a three-year prison sentence for that offence.

Based on these multiple counts and the applicable statutory limits, the court imposed a single aggregate sentence of 20 years' imprisonment, with JU,S noting that any further appeal by the defendant can now only concern the length of the sentence, as the conviction itself has already been upheld.

JU,S Jurídico Social, through its lawyers and trainee lawyers, represented the victims as assistants to the prosecution and described the case as a positive demonstration of Timor-Leste's justice system, highlighting effective cooperation between Australian law enforcement authorities and the National Police of Timor-Leste, particularly the Vulnerable Persons Unit.

The victim has not been identified for legal reasons. JU,S Jurídico Social said that Trott sexually abused the child over several years, starting when the victim was around seven or eight and continuing until the age of 12.

Trott was initially detained in Dili in 2022 after authorities responded to a report made by an Australian national to the Australian Federal Police.

However, he was later released, and the case remained stalled until late last year, when official charges were brought against him and his passport was confiscated during the investigation.

Trott, originally from Adelaide, Australia, is the first foreign national in Timor-Leste to receive the maximum sentence of 20 years in prison for sexual abuse crimes against children.

Another foreigner, American priest Richard Daschbach, was previously sentenced in 2021 to 12 years in prison for abusing four girls at an orphanage.

Tribunal Kondena Robert Trott Tinan 20 Prizaun Ba Krime Abuzu Sexual Hasoru Menor

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Robert Trott akompañha huis Polícia Mai huis Tribunal, bodi Lori ba prizaun Becora. [foto: Neon Metin]

Reportajen Ekipa Neon Metin

Robert Trott sidadaun Australia, hetan kondenasaun ba tinan 20 iha prizaun, tanba akuzasaun 7 kona-ba abuzu seksuál hasoru labarik sira no akuzasaun 1 kona-ba tratamentu aat ba labarik sira.

Iha loron 15 Janeiru, tribunal re-aljuga fila fali kazu ne'ebe komete hos Rober Trott, tanba halo krime hasoru labarik. Iha entrevista ho Advogadu husi JU,S Juridico Social, Olivio Baros hateten Tribunal kondena prizaun preventiva ho tinan 20, tanba ho faktu ne'ebe sasin barak fo, no faktu balun hanesan video no fotografia sira.

“Tribunal deside kondena nia ho krime abuju sexual hitu, depeois ho, krime ida seluk mak krime maustratus entaun konkursu krime hamutuk ualu, husi ida nee hanesan ohin tribunal esplika pena masimu tuir kodigu penal Timor mak tinan 30, sira mos konsidera ba sirkunstansia balu entaun fo pena uniku tuir lei, ho situasaun konkursu krime, entaun tribunal kondena pena uniku mak tinan 20 prizaun”, deha Olivio iha Tribunal.

Olivio mos hateten durante prosesu husi inisiu to’o final, wainhira akompanha vitima sira, no hare desizaun Tribunal halo duni tuir knar ho diak, no fo duni justisa ba lezada sira.

“Lezada neebe mak iha situasaun ida nee, idade kiikoan idade menor (12 anos), desde nia esperensia lubuk ida ba iha hahalok sira hanesan nee, ho desizaun ida ohin klaru, haree katak iha nee iha duni justisa ba nia”

Nia mos hato’o apresiasaun ba instituisaun sira relevante, ne’ebe durante nee halo servisu lubuk ida, oinsa atu prosesu sira ne’e lao, liuliu autoridade polisia, inklui Polisia Federal Australia no PNTL, Prokurador ne’ebe halo investigasaun no inkeritu.

Ba JU,S ida ne’e serbisu boot no la fasil, laes ema hotu iha korajem, hodi bele koalia sai esperensia sira nian.

“Ita mos nafatin liu husi atividade kii’koan sira seluk, JU,S tenta halo esforsu liu husi kazu espesifiku sira, atu introdus katak hahalok sira hanesan nee la devia, sira mos tenki iha korajem, iha brani, atu enkoraja mos maluk sira neebe mak iha esperensia ba iha situasaun sira nee, tenki iha nafatin forti atu bele koalia lia los”, dehan Olivio

Robert Trott hetan kondenasaun inisiál iha Juñu 2024 ba krime rua abuzu seksuál, hasoru menór agravadu, rezulta hosi akuzasaun inisiál ho krime abuzu seksuál, hasoru labarik hamutuk dala 100.

Arguidu halo rekursu ba desizaun, hodi defende nia absolvisaun. Tempu hanesan, JU,S nia advogadu, ne’ebé representa vítima, halo rekursu no argumenta katak Tribunal Primeira Instância halo erru hodi sura numeru krime ne’ebé provadu.

Tribunál Rekursu deside la simu arguidu nia rekursu ba absolvisaun, no mantein kondenasaun, no tempu hanesan konkorda ho JU,S Jurídico Social nia advogadu kona-ba erru determinasaun número krime. Tanba ne’e, Tribunal Rekursu haruka fila-fali ba Tribunal Judicial Primeira Instância hodi halo análise dala ida tan, haree de’it ba kontajen loloos ba número krime.

Iha revizaun foun ne’e ho desizaun halo leitura iha audiência pública iha loron-15 fulan-Janeiru tinan-2026, Tribunál deside no kondena arguidu ba: