



**JUDICIAL SYSTEM MONITORING PROGRAMME  
PROGRAM PEMANTAUAN SISTEM YUDISIAL**

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Press Release

The Special Panel for Serious Crimes sentences BMP militia commander

On 1 December 2004, the Special Panel for Serious Crimes sentenced the BMP militia leader to 15 years in prison. The accused, Marculino Soares, was found guilty of Crimes Against Humanity, murder and inhumane acts. The guilty verdict related to violence which occurred at the house of Manuel Carrascalao in Dili in April 1999.

According to the court, the accused ordered and lead the action which occurred at the Carrascalao house at which 12 people were killed and 9 seriously injured. The court held the Soares was the commander of the Besi Merah Putih militia which consisted of about 260 members, and in this role the accused ordered the purchasing of ammunition for the weapons that were used at the Carrascalao house. Other important evidence included that he ordered his subordinates, members of the militia, to travel from Maubara to Dili to attend the demonstration together and while the acts of violence were carried out the militia members were under his control.

On this basis the court found the accused guilty and sentenced him to 15 years in prison which is to include the time he has spent in prison since his arrest on 20 January 2003. JMSP attended the hearing at which the proven facts and sentence were explained and it is noted that the written decision is yet to be handed down.

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