

7 July 2016

Media Release

**ART AUCTION TO SUPPORT URGENTLY NEEDED FUNDS FOR TIMOR LESTE'S
JUDICIAL SYSTEM MONITORING PROGRAM**

The NT Bar Association's 2016 Conference, in conjunction with Charles Darwin University and the International Bar Association, will be held for the second time ever, in Dili, Timor L'este over 14 – 16 July 2016. Themed "Common Issues: Common Solutions", the conference seminar topics include issues of importance to both Timor L'este and the Northern Territory, including judicial independence and accountability, domestic violence against women and children, youth justice, the development of independent legal professions, native title and commercial arbitration.

NTBA takes this opportunity to demonstrate our ongoing support for our colleagues from Timor L'este, who are dedicated to building the foundations and institutions for rule of law, judicial independence and human rights, in the aftermath of past conflicts resulting in the country's independence in 2002.

The Judicial System Monitoring Program (JSMP) is a not-for-profit organisation that promotes access to justice, democracy and human rights in Timor-Leste. JSMP is one of the most productive NGOs in Timor L'este. In recent years, JSMP's advocacy has directly influenced important justice sector reforms in the areas of domestic violence services and advocacy, including in reforms for increasing the length of sentences for perpetrators of incest, and for courts awarding compensation to women and child victims in domestic and sexual violence cases.

JSMP is currently suffering a funding crisis as one of their key donors unexpectedly withdrew its support for 2016.

In a spirit of camaraderie and support, the NT Bar Association is holding an art auction, showcasing traditional Aboriginal artworks from local artists, to raise funds for JSMP, to ensure that JSMP's important justice sector gains made in recent years are not jeopardised.

The fundraiser will be held on **8 July 2016 at 5pm at William Forster Chambers, 26 Harry Chan Ave, Darwin, with Susan Cox QC as auctioneer**. Drinks and nibbles will be provided and attendees have a chance to win one of the artworks.

The auction will feature amazing artworks such as 'Tunga' in bark from Bathurst Island, Tiwi, and a Telstra Award winning artist piece, which will be displayed at William Forster Chambers in the lead up to the auction.

By purchasing local artwork, you will support:

- court monitoring of cases on all four district courts, with a focus on gender-based violence

- dissemination of case summaries and analysis through newspapers;
- two radio programs and one television program broadcast nationally;
- training sessions to rural communities on women and children's access to formal justice; and
- advocacy on issues around protection of women's rights and amendment of Penal Code.

Those who cannot attend the auction can make a donation. Donations should be sent to the Northern Territory Bar Association, PO Box 4369 Darwin 0801 or by bank transfer to the NTBA's account BSB 015-901 Account 413 418 114. Please quote JSMP as the reference and send confirmation to clerk@williamforster.com.

For all enquiries, please write to clerk@williamforster.com or call (08) 8982 4700.