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Defendant to Serve 30 years before eligible for parole

September 26, 2014 – Tamuning, Guam- Emmanuel Cepeda was sentenced to life in prison plus 15 years today for the murder of his estranged wife. As a result of the plea the defendant is not eligible for parole until he has served a minimum of 30 years in the Department of Corrections. The Defendant entered a plea of guilty to Murder and Special Allegation of Deadly weapon.

Although some members of the victim's family expressed disagreement with the possibility that Cepeda might be released in 30 years, the family representatives had made it clear they did not want the 13-year-old child who witnessed the shooting to be called as a witness, nor interview the child. Attorney General Leonardo M. Rapadas stated that it was very important to spare the child from further trauma.

"In all of our cases, we always take into consideration the effects a trial will have on the victim and witnesses," General Rapadas said. "In this case it would have been very traumatic to have a young child testify to watching his mother being shot by his father. Although the family wanted more punishment for the defendant, they also wanted to spare the child of that pain."

Judge Arthur Barcinas also expressed concern over the conflicting positions of the family and took a one hour recess during the hearing. The Judge came back after an hour and explained that he had reviewed the pre-sentence report and attachments from the minor children/witnesses who stated they never wanted to see their father again and that it was his decision to accept the plea in part for the best interest of the children.

This plea agreement is consistent with other plea agreements where the Defendant expressed remorse and agreed to accept responsibility immediately after the crime.

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