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TO: ALL MEDIA

DATE: 17 AUGUST 2015

RE: SPECIALISED COMMERCIAL CRIMES COURT IN PE SENTENCES FRAUDSTERS

On 07 August 2015, the Specialised Commercial Crimes Court sentenced Toni Bacar, Zarco Cugurovic and Adrian Wardle who were members of a syndicate that operated in various SA provinces. The modus operandi of the accused was to attach electronic card readers/ or so called "skimming devices" with miniature video cameras (pinhole cameras) to ABSA ATMs. It is alleged that these devices were capable of reading data on the magnetic strips of bank cards which were inserted into the ATMs by unsuspecting lawful card holders while effecting transactions.

It is also alleged that simultaneously, the pinhole cameras were also capable of recording the pin numbers which the lawful cardholders typed onto the keypads of the ATMs. The accused would then use the data in the form of electronic account information to manufacture forged or cloned bank cards. The accused used the cloned cards to withdraw cash from bank accounts of lawful cardholders in various ATMs.

They were arrested in Port Elizabeth in possession of 13 sophisticated electronic card readers and camera recording devices, as well as components of such devices and 20 cloned bank cards. Accused 1 and 2 were illegal foreigners as defined in the Immigration Act no 13 of 2002. They were charged with fraud, unlawful possession of any device designed primarily to overcome security measures and contravention of Section 86 (4) read with Section 1, 89 (2) and 90 of Electronic and Transaction Act 25 Of 2002.

They were all sentenced to 24 months imprisonment for contravention of Section 86 (4) read with Section 1, 89 (2) and 90 of the Electronic and Transaction Act 25 of 2002. They received 7 years imprisonment for fraud and 12 months for unlawful possession of any device designed primarily to overcome security measures. Effective term of imprisonment is seven years. Accused 1 is of Serbian origin whilst the second one is from Croatia. The third has a dual citizenship (British and SA citizenship).

Advocate Bongo Mvinjelwa of the Specialised Commercial Crimes Unit in Port Elizabeth represented the state. The NPA in the Eastern Cape welcomes the sentence.

Kind Regards,

Tsepo Ndwalaza
Regional Spokesperson
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