

Media Statement



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TO: ALL MEDIA

DATE: 27 OCTOBER 2015

RE: HUMAN TRAFFICKERS SENTENCED

Emmanuel Uche Odii (32), Bonginkosi Shange (46) and William Ojiaku (30) were sentenced in the Durban Regional Court today following their conviction on charges relating to trafficking in persons for sexual exploitation.

The accused used the false promise of employment to exploit the two complainants in this matter. Accused 1 and 3 are Nigerian nationals and accused 1 paid accused 2 (a South African citizen) a sum of R1000 for each female he recruited.

The first complainant was 19 years old when she was offered a job as a domestic worker by accused 3 in June 2010. Travel arrangements were made by the accused and the woman went to Pretoria. On arrival, she was taken to a flat where she was sexually assaulted and raped by accused 1. She was then taken to another flat where she saw females bringing in men to have sex with. Accused 1 advised her that she would have to do the same. She refused and was kept locked-up in the flat.

In August 2010 the second complainant, an 18 year old girl, was offered a job to take care of Accused 1's flat while he was out of town. She accepted the offer, travel arrangements were made and she went to Pretoria. Accused 1 threatened her and forced her to smoke rock cocaine. She was told to conduct prostitution for the financial benefit of accused 1. The drugs had a severe effect on her health and she was later hospitalised.

In aggravation of sentence senior state advocate Val Dafele told the court that trafficking in persons is regarded as the fastest growing criminal activity in the world and it generates billions of dollars in earnings for traffickers. She said that the accused have been convicted of severe offences and asked that the court deliver a sentence that will have a deterrent effect on would be offenders.

Accused 1 was convicted of eight counts, namely: two counts of trafficking in persons, two counts of kidnapping, one count of sexual assault, one count of rape, one count of assault GBH and one count of keeping a brothel. He was sentenced to an effective 30 years imprisonment.

Accused 2 was convicted of two counts of trafficking in persons and sentenced to 5 years imprisonment for each count. The presiding officer ordered that the sentences run concurrently, resulting in an effective sentenced to 5 years imprisonment.

Accused 3 was convicted of one count of kidnapping and was sentenced to 2 years imprisonment, wholly suspended for 5 years on condition that he is not convicted of kidnapping or attempted kidnapping during this time.

The NPA welcomes this sentence. We are pleased that the courts are taking a firm stance against crimes of this nature. Trafficking in persons is a global problem and members of the public need to be cautious and educate themselves. Congratulations to the prosecutor, on a job well done.

Kind Regards,

Natasha Kara

Regional Spokesperson: DPP KZN

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