

# Media Statement



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**TO: ALL MEDIA**

**DATE: 15 AUGUST 2016**

**RE: 2 MEN CONVICTED FOR POSSESSION OF RHINO HORN**

Senzo Celani Gwala (42) and Makhundu James Mthembu (48) were sentenced to an effective 4 years imprisonment in the Ingwavuma Regional Court last week after pleading guilty to being in possession of rhino horn without a permit.

They were arrested in November last year when authorities were informed that the men possessed a pair of horns belonging to a female black rhino.

In aggravation of sentence, Senior State Advocate, Yuri Gangai told the court that the offence was serious as the accused were in possession of the horn with the intention of selling it.

The accused were sentenced to 8 years imprisonment, half suspended for 5 years on condition that they are not convicted of a similar offence during the period of suspension.

The Director of Public Prosecutions in KZN, Advocate Moipone Noko said the NPA welcomes the sentence and conviction. "Rhinos are on the endangered species list and we have a duty and a mandate to protect and preserve them. I trust the sentence will serve as a deterrent to poachers." She said.

Kind Regards,

**Natasha Kara**

**Regional Spokesperson: DPP KZN**

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