

# Media Statement



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**TO: ALL MEDIA**

**DATE: 15 February 2016**

**RE: CHILD RAPISTS SENTENCED TO LIFE**

Bizana Regional Court sentenced two child rapists to life imprisonment in two separate cases in one day last week. On Friday, 12 February 2016, Regional Court Magistrate Zaneekhaya Gxarhisa sentenced Sifiso Chutshela (22) and Mandlenkosi Dlungele (43) to life imprisonment. Both men were convicted of raping nine year-old girls in their neighbourhoods.

According to evidence that was presented in court, on the night of 22 March 2015, Chutshela of Mamcakhani village in Bizana, gained entrance into a room in which three children were sleeping on the floor. Using his cellular phone's torch to light up the room, he removed the blanket from his young victim and threatened to kill her if she screamed and then proceeded to rape her. He fled the scene but on his way back to his home he met the victim's older sister who was returning from visiting her boyfriend. When the older sister got home, the victim told her what had happened and the following morning the matter was reported to the police.

Chutshela pleaded not guilty and claimed that he was with his girlfriend when the incident occurred. His girlfriend even testified in his defence but evidence from both the victim and her sister, who are also the rapist's neighbours, was accepted as the truth by the court and he was convicted.

In the second case, Dlungele who worked as a gardener at a local shop in Bizana raped his victim twice during the month of May 2014. On both occasions the victim had gone to buy at the shop and Dlungele lured her to a secluded area within the shop yard where he showed her a knife, threatened her not to tell anyone what was to happen and raped her. After raping the young girl, he gave her a R1 coin and R2 coin after the second rape. His victim did not immediately report the rapes at her home. It is when Dlungele attempted to rape the victim's friend, who told her mother what had happened, that the

victim told her mother. She was taken to a doctor who confirmed that she had been violated.

Dlungele also pleaded not guilty but the evidence of the victim and the doctor convinced the court that he was guilty. On Tuesday, 09 February, the same court sentenced another rapist, Viwe Kecu to life for raping his neighbour. All these cases were prosecuted by Regional Court Prosecutor Thamsanqa Vinindwa.

The NPA welcomes these sentences with the hope that they will serve as a deterrent to would-be rapists who prey on vulnerable women and children.

Kind Regards,

**Luxolo Tyali**

**Regional Spokesperson: DPP Mthatha**

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