

Media Statement



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TO: ALL MEDIA

DATE: 08 JULY 2016

RE: RAPIST SENTENCED TO LIFE IMPRISONMENT

On Wednesday, 06 July 2016 the Mqanduli Regional Court sentenced Phumlani Makhwenkwana to 22 years to life imprisonment for raping a 19-year old woman four months ago.

According to evidence presented in court, on the night of 17 February 2016, Makhwenkwana of Nenga Locality in the district of Mqanduli, waylaid his victim, who was walking home from a traditional ceremony. He threatened to stab the high school student with a knife and forcefully took her to his home where he raped her three times. At about three o'clock in the morning he released the traumatised woman, who went straight home, woke up her father and reported the matter. Her father took her to the local traditional leader, who summoned Makhwenkwana's family, and the matter was reported to the police on the same day.

During the trial, Makhwenkwana pleaded not guilty, claiming that the victim was his girlfriend. But prosecutor Melikhaya Dyakopu led the evidence of witnesses, including the victim's father whose testimony was consistent to that of the victim, which convinced the court beyond reasonable doubt that Makhwenkwana was guilty. The state argued that the court sentenced the rapist to life because of the prevalence of rapes against students in the Mqanduli area, and he was duly sentenced.

The NPA welcomes the sentence with the hope that it will deter other would-be rapists who prey on defenceless women.

Kind Regards,

Luxolo Tyali

Regional Spokesperson: DPP Mthatha

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