

# Media Statement



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**TO: ALL MEDIA**

**DATE: 10 JUNE 2016**

**RE: FATHER SENTENCED TO 60 YEARS FOR MURDER OF KIDS**

Mkhonzeni Bernard Mdladla (33) from Ladysmith was sentenced to 60 years imprisonment in the Madadeni High Court today after pleading guilty to the murder of his two children aged 4 and 5 years-old. The murders took place last week Monday in the Klipriver area in Ladysmith.

In his plea, the accused told the court that he was in a relationship with the children's mother since 2011 and considered her to be his common law wife. Sometime in 2014 he disclosed to her that he had made another woman pregnant and paid 'damages' for that. She got angry with him and burnt his clothes and their home and left with the children.

He mentioned that he attempted to reconcile with her and while she visited him, she and the children never stayed over. After some other problems between them, he discovered that she had a boyfriend. The accused said that he pleaded with her to come back to him with the children and had on occasion taken his family with him to her house. He said that on these visits he noticed that the children looked uncared for and neglected.

He said that on 30 May 2016 he received a call from the police warning him to stop threatening her. He became enraged and went to her home to discuss this as he had never threatened or intimidated her. She was not there and he told her relatives that he wanted custody of the children. They advised him that he must bring the Induna from his area to discuss the issue of custody.

The accused then decided that killing the children was the solution to his problem – if they were dead then he would have no ties to their mother or her family. He went to his home, fetched a knife and returned later that evening. He found the children asleep with their mother and grandmother. The women fled the house leaving him alone with the children.

He stabbed each child in the stomach and slit their throats. He then ran off into the hills where he slept till the next day. After confessing the murder to his uncle, the accused handed himself over to the police.

The state, represented by Advocate Mziwodumo Miza, asked the court to impose a severe sentence as the accused had acted in a cruel and callous manner. Advocate Miza said that the children were innocent and had nothing to do with the tension between their parents. The accused had in fact disrupted their family by making the other woman pregnant.

The presiding officer sentenced the accused to 30 years imprisonment for each of the murders.

Advocate Moipone Noko said, "whilst justice has been served, it is most unfortunate that two innocent young lives had to be taken especially by the person expected to be their protector who is now the perpetrator".

The National Prosecuting Authority welcomes this sentence.

**Natasha Kara**

**Regional Spokesperson: DPP KZN**

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