

Media Statement



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TO: ALL MEDIA

DATE: 10 APRIL 2019

RE: A WOMAN SENTENCED FOR WHITE COLLAR CRIME

On 03 March 2019, the Mankweng Regional Court in Limpopo found Hlengiwe Suzan Dlamini (36) and her company Labisco Investment PTY LTD, of which she was sole director and representative, guilty of theft and contravention of Section 6, read with Section 1, 7A and 8 of the Prevention of Organised Crime Act 121 of 1998, further read with Section 1 of the Financial Intelligence Centre Act 38 of 2001 (Acquisition, Possession or Use of proceeds of Unlawful Activities).

She was sentenced to 8 years imprisonment, three years of which were suspended for three years in respect of both offences, whereas the company was sentenced to a fine of R5000 for theft and a further R3000 for acquisition, possession and use of proceeds of unlawful activities.

According to the evidence, which was admitted as part of a guilty plea, the offences were committed in the following manner. The accused floated the company and acted as its sole director and representative. She then opened an account with one of the leading banks on behalf of her co-accused and boyfriend Mohammed Alabi Bello, before handing the company to him. Armed with the documents, Mohammed started making unauthorised electronic transfers of money from the bank account of the Dutch Reformed Church in Mokopane into Labisco's bank account. A total amount of R385 103, 04 was transferred.

The transactions were discovered by Le Roux, the treasurer of the church who alerted the police after he realized that he has experienced network connectivity problems on his mobile phone during the period of 6 -13 March 2017.

The accused was found guilty based on her plea and sentenced whereas Mohammed remains in custody pending his trial which is scheduled to start in the near future.

In aggravation of sentence, Advocate Manenzhe of the Polokwane Specialised Commercial Crimes Unit said that the offence was complex and required meticulous planning as well as the involvement of other people. He further pointed that the accused committed the offence because of greed as she stood to make a financial gain from its commission. He asked for a stiff sentence to be imposed and reasoned that a suspended sentence was unsuitable.

The court agreed with Manenzhe's submissions and sentenced the accused to an effective term of imprisonment of five years.

The DPP, Advocate Ivy Thenga, welcomes the sentences and expressed hope that the sentence will have the necessary deterrent on the accused and other prospective white-collar criminals.

Kind Regards,

Mashudu Malabi Dzhang
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