

Media Statement



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TO: ALL MEDIA

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RE: CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT SENTENCED FOR MURDER OF HIS WIFE

On 12 June 2019, the Western Cape High Court sentenced Robin Packham to 22 years direct imprisonment in another successful prosecution in a femicide case. The court convicted the chartered accountant on a count of murder and a count of defeating the administration of justice.

He was sentenced to 20 years direct imprisonment for the murder and four years direct imprisonment for defeating the administration of justice. The court ordered that two years of the four years direct imprisonment run concurrently with the 20 years direct imprisonment imposed on the murder charge.

Packham, who pleaded not guilty to all the charges, is charged with the murder of his wife, Gill Packham, who is the mother of their two adult daughters. They have been married for 30 years. They had marital problems due to the accused having external affairs. The court heard that the deceased attempted to work on their marriage including attending therapy with the accused in an attempt to address the problems in their marriage but also attended therapy on her own.

Advocate Susan Galloway who successfully prosecuted the matter, submitted during the trial that, the accused viciously attacked his wife with a blunt object that broke both her strongest and second strongest bones in the body.

She emphasised, "The accused attacked his wife in the deceased's own home where she should have been safe. The deceased was attacked and killed by the one person she should have been able to trust – her husband. As the accused did not see fit to play open cards with the court, there is no apparent motive for the killing of his wife. The court has therefore been denied the opportunity of fully answering the question "Why did he do it?" He then bundled her limp body into a sedan vehicle, drove it to Diep River

Railway Station where he set it alight. The accused not only removed the body and personal effects of the deceased from the scene thus tampering with it, he also destroyed physical evidence in setting both the vehicle and the body of the deceased alight," Advocate Galloway argued. She added that the actions of the accused are callous as he shows no regard for the feelings of his own daughters in finding out that their mother was burnt. It also fits with his selfish conduct throughout the events. The accused then added insult to injury by giving a false statement to the SA Police Service in an attempt to mislead them as to the true identity of his wife's killer.

She concluded during arguments that the actions of the accused immediately after the murder were indicative of cold bloodedness of his actions and that he demonstrated a lack of remorse by refusing to testify and instead called his daughter in mitigation of sentence.

Advocate Galloway asked the court to impose life imprisonment and said after sentencing: "We are satisfied with the sentence. It is a balanced sentence between a horrific crime and the rights of the victim of the crime. For that reason, we feel that justice has been done. We have spoken with the family of the deceased particularly her sisters and they indicated that they would be satisfied with whatever sentence the accused receives. They were happy that he was convicted for the murder of their sister."

Kind Regards,

Eric Ntabazalila

Regional Spokesperson: DPP Western Cape

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