

Media Statement



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TO: ALL MEDIA

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RE: FIFTEEN YEARS FOR PAEDOPHILE FOR POSSESSION OF CHILD PORNOGRAPHY IMAGES

The Thembalethu Regional Court has sentenced a 39 year-old Plettenberg Bay computer engineer to 15 years direct imprisonment after convicting him on 18 644 counts of possession of child pornography. William Beale was also convicted on a count of possession of dagga.

Beale was part of an international syndicate that dealt with child pornography. An international investigation on Online Child Pornography led to the arrest of the accused. With mounting evidence against him, Beale pleaded guilty to the possession of thousands of images of child pornography.

State Advocate, Gerda Marx who prosecuted the matter welcomed the sentence and described the accused as a paedophile with a disorder that cannot be treated. She said the accused acquired the necessary software in order to obtain online anonymity and resisting censorship. He was thus evading justice by keeping his identity a secret.

Advocate Marx said Beale created and contributed to a market where rape, abuse and even murder of children are the order of the day. Without a market these children will not be subjected to the abuse and suffering they had to endure in order for Beale to satisfy his urges, she said.

"This is a good sentence and a way forward for South Africa, in our ongoing fight against the sexual and violent abuse of children and to anyone that benefits from the abuse of children. Possession of child pornography images is very serious in that it creates the market for the abuse of children. Possession of child pornography is not a victimless offence. The abuse of a child is relived with every single image being viewed, distributed

or possessed. We need to stand firm against any form of abused against children," she said.

The state initially asked for a sentence above twelve years. She argued during sentencing procedures, "The State submits that the plea of guilty in the absence of evidence by the accused himself does not justify a conclusion that he has remorse for his actions. The accused did not once asked for help for his "problem" before being arrested. The accused would have never disclosed his heinous criminal activities if he was not arrested. A clear message must be sent out in this country that the abuse and rape of children will not be tolerated. I submit that a period exceeding 12 years imprisonment will serve this purpose."

The court agreed and sentenced him to 15 years direct imprisonment. The NPA welcomes the sentence.

Kind Regards,

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