

Media Statement



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TO: ALL MEDIA

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RE: FORMER POLICE OFFICER SENTENCED TO LIFE FOR RAPING HIS GRANDDAUGHTER

The Sterkspruit Regional Court has sentenced a 78 year-old former police captain to life imprisonment for raping his then 10 year-old granddaughter 18 years ago. The rapist cannot be named to protect the identity of the victim.

Evidence presented in court is that some time in 2002, the police officer who was 60-years at the time and stationed in the neighbouring Free State province, visited his home at Ntabemhlophe village in the district of Sterkspruit. During the said visit, he drove all his grandchildren, including the victim, in his bakkie to visit his parent's home in the same village.

When they arrived at his parent's homestead, they found no one but the houses were open. He called the unsuspecting victim inside one of the houses, leaving other children playing outside. He then raped the minor and thereafter drove back to his home with all the children.

On arrival back home, the victim reported what had happened to her grandmother, the rapist's wife. When confronted with the allegations by his wife, the man denied he raped the child. As a result, the victim was accused of lying about an elderly person and was punished by the grandmother by way of assault with a wooden stick.

The matter remained unreported to the police until 9 November 2016, when the victim decided to report the case, leading to the arrest of the now retired policeman. During trial, the man pleaded not guilty, claiming he did not even know the victim as she was young and had never met her before or in 2002. He claimed that the child had fabricated evidence against him due to an ongoing family feud.

Advocate Loyiso Methuso, for the state, led the evidence of the victim, now 28 years old, who gave a clear and satisfactory account of the incident despite the 18-year lapse. The court convicted the pensioner and found no substantial and compelling circumstances justifying a deviation from the prescribed term of life imprisonment. The court held that the man broke the relationship of trust and failed in his duty to protect the child as both her grandfather and a police officer. The court took into account the pre-sentence report presented by the probation officer at the defence's request, but found that aggravating factors far out-weighed mitigating circumstances.

The NPA welcomes the sentence with the hope that it will encourage other victims of rape to come forward and report even if they were abused a long time ago.

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