

# Media Statement



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**TO: ALL MEDIA**

**DATE: 23 APRIL 2021**

**RE: GANG MEMBERS JAILED FOR ATTEMPTED MURDER OF PROMINENT LAWYER**

The Cape Town Regional Court convicted and sentenced three members of the Terrible West Siders (TWS) criminal gang who conspired and attempted to murder a prominent Cape Town television legal analyst and criminal lawyer, William Booth.

Kauthar Brown, Ebrahim Deare and Riyaad Gesant were charged with a count of wilfully aiding and abetting the activities of a gang, conspiracy to commit murder and attempted murder of Booth. Deare was further charged with illegal possession of a firearm and illegal possession of ammunition.

In their plea and sentencing agreements with the state this morning, the trio confessed to being members of the TWS criminal gang which actively operated in the Woodstock area. The gang is involved in violent crimes including conspiracy to commit murder, attempted murder, assault, possession of firearms, possession of ammunition and dealing in drugs. It has its headquarters and operated from Brown's house in Woodstock.

They further told the court that an imprisoned TWS leader instructed Deare and Gesant via Brown to arrange a 'hit' (murder) on Booth at his residency. The trio then met and planned the hit. Deare was going to be the hitman and Brown provided a getaway car to a state witness in this case who was instructed to drop Deare and Gesant close to Booth's house. He had to pick them up after the hit and take them back to Woodstock. Brown provided Deare and Gesant with the address.

On 06 April 2020, Deare and Gesant were dropped close to Booth's house. They inspected the location in order to obtain more information for the successful execution of the 'hit'. However, the two went to a wrong address and the mission was aborted.

They went back to the vicinity of the house again on 07 April 2020. On the day, Deare smoked mandrax, got high and he fell into a hole injuring his leg. The hitman had to be taken to Groote Schuur Hospital for treatment and this thwarted their plans. They went again on the third day on 08 April 2020 but nothing happened.

That evening, the imprisoned gang leader contacted the two and was impatient with them because they were taking too long to execute the plan. They were instructed that the hit must happen the next day on the morning of 09 April 2020. Gesant instructed the state witness to take them directly to Booth's house. As they drove past, Gesant pointed out the house to the state witness and the state witness dropped the two further up the road. They saw Booth as he entered his garage with his dogs. Deare had a fully loaded revolver. He ran towards Booth and fired five shots with the intention to kill him while he was inside his garage. The next day, 10 April 2020, the state witness, Deare and Gesant went to Brown's house and she paid all of them for the hit on Booth.

Brown was sentenced to five years imprisonment for wilfully aiding and abetting activities of a gang and five years imprisonment for conspiracy to commit murder. Both sentences were wholly suspended for five years on condition that she is not convicted for similar crimes committed during the period of suspension. She was sentenced to three years correctional supervision for the attempted murder. The sentence includes house arrest and 960 hours of community service.

Deare was sentenced to five years imprisonment for wilfully aiding and abetting the activities of a criminal gang and five years imprisonment for conspiracy to commit murder. He was sentenced to 15 years imprisonment for attempted murder with five years suspended for five years on condition he is not convicted for attempted murder committed during the period of suspension. He was further sentenced to six years for illegal possession of a firearm and three years imprisonment for illegal possession of ammunition. The court ordered that all the other sentences imposed must run concurrently with the sentence imposed for the attempted murder. He is effectively sentenced to ten years imprisonment.

Gasant was sentenced to five years imprisonment for wilfully aiding and abetting the activities of a criminal gang, five years imprisonment for conspiracy to commit murder, and eight years imprisonment for attempted murder with three years suspended on condition that he is not convicted of attempted murder during the period of suspension.

The court ordered that sentences imposed for wilfully aiding and abetting the activities of a criminal gang and conspiracy to commit murder must run concurrently with the effective five-year sentence imposed for attempted murder.

Welcoming the sentence, Advocate Nathan Adriaanse, said that gang activities thrive in the Western Cape and is a social pandemic. "The attempt on Booth's life was premediated and well planned. The instruction came from a leader of the TWS gang and aimed at a prominent member of the legal fraternity," he concluded.

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