

# Media Statement



Tel: +27 12 845 6000

Email:  
[media@npa.gov.za](mailto:media@npa.gov.za)

Victoria & Griffiths  
Mxenge Building  
123 Westlake Avenue  
Weavind Park  
Silverton  
Pretoria

[www.npa.gov.za](http://www.npa.gov.za)

**TO: ALL MEDIA**

**DATE: 20 AUGUST 2019**

**RE: INDEFINITE LIFE SENTENCES FOR KRUGERSDORP'S ELECTUS PER DEUS CULT**

Judge Jacob Francis imposed hefty sentences against the Krugersdorp killers at the Johannesburg High Court yesterday.

Zak Valentine (34), Cecilia Steyn (38) and Marcel Steyn (22) faced overall 32 counts relating to 11 charges of murder, 5 charges of fraud, racketeering and 5 counts of robbery with aggravating circumstances. The cult intentionally killed 11 people in Krugersdorp between 2012 and 2016 and all were in custody pending trial since their arrests in June and July 2016. Zac Valentine, the first accused, was sentenced to 8 life sentences and 93 years imprisonment, Cecilia Steyn accused two, received 13 life sentences and 155 years imprisonment and Marcel Steyn, accused three, was sentenced to 7 life sentences and 144 years imprisonment. The trio had pleaded not guilty to all the charges and are all first time offenders.

Three other people are also serving lengthy jail terms in connection with the killing spree, including Marcel's mother, Marinda Steyn, who also received 11 life sentences.

From 2012 to 2016, the trio and others joined a church which aimed at delivering people from satanic bondage. Cecilia and her friends split from the church and formed their own cult which they called Electus Per Deus (Chosen by God) The killings started when Cecilia, the mastermind behind the killings, had a fallout with the pastor of the old church.

During their reign of terror, they killed 11 people. They also robbed and defrauded the deceased during the commission of the murders. A number of witnesses testified in aggravation and reports were presented by probation officers before the court. The defence argued that the accused's personal circumstances were such that it should be

Justice in our society, so that people can live in freedom and security

considered as substantial and compelling circumstances, justifying a deviation for the prescribed minimum sentences.

However, state prosecutor, Advocate Gerrit Roberts SC, told the court that 11 people had been killed and because the crimes were so serious, the state recommended life sentences for all the accused despite their personal circumstances. Adv Roberts SC was assisted by Adv Paul Schutte during the proceedings.

The presiding officer pointed out that the group's murder spree was carefully planned and added that all the deceased did not deserve to die the way they did. "There was nothing Godly about the crimes you committed. There are no substantial and compelling circumstances to deviate from the prescribed minimum sentences" he said, before handing down the sentences.

Kind Regards,

**Hurbetin Phindi Mjonondwane**  
**Regional Spokesperson: Gauteng**  
**0112204245/0626906505**  
[hlouw@npa.gov.za](mailto:hlouw@npa.gov.za)