

# Media Statement



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**TO: ALL MEDIA**

**DATE: 03 JULY 2015**

**RE: WESTVILLE ROBBERS GET LIFE PLUS 38 YEARS**

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Siyabonga China Khoza, Lungani Tevin Ngidi, Bongani Que Makhathini and Fisto Alimasi were sentenced in the Durban High Court today for a series of robberies they committed in December 2013 in the Westville suburb. Khoza, Ngidi and Makhathini would commit the crimes and then sell the goods to Alimasi. The accused procured the services of a metered taxi driver to drive them to and from the scenes.

On 18 December, the accused entered the property of John Payne and Barbara Payne. They robbed the couple at gunpoint taking jewellery, a TV, money, cell phones and bank cards. Payne was shot in the hip during this altercation. On 29 December, Gail Hamilton was at her home when the accused gained entry by breaking a window. With the threat of a firearm, they robbed her of a TV, cash, cell phones and bank cards before fleeing the scene.

On 31 December, the accused forced their way into the house of Simon Malpas by shooting at a glass door and pulling it open. Here they stole a laptop, cell phones, passports, car keys and a ladies handbag. Malpas and his family were being visited by Clinton John De Menezes (a visiting artist from London) and his wife and daughter. Menezes was shot and killed in this robbery.

In aggravation of sentence, senior state advocate Mahen Naidu called complainants or their families who testified on how the crimes had impacted their lives. They all mentioned that they were now fearful to be alone at home and were also scared to go out at night. Jacqueline Du Randt, the sister of Menezes, told the court that his wife and child were utterly devastated. The two had returned to London and are too scared to come back to South Africa.

Accused 1, 2 and 3 were sentenced to 15 years imprisonment for robbery with aggravating circumstances, 8 years for attempted murder, 15 years for house breaking with an intent to rob and a life sentence for murder; while Accused 4 was sentenced to 6 years imprisonment for receiving stolen property. The presiding officer ruled that these sentences run consecutively. Accused 2 was given an additional 4 years imprisonment for possession of an unlicensed firearm.

The National Prosecuting Authority sees the sentence fitting given the violent manner in which these crimes were committed. The victims were attacked in their homes, the place where they should feel the safest.

Kind Regards,

Issued by:

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