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TO: ALL MEDIA

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**RE: NPA MAKES ANOTHER DENT IN GANGS IN THE WESTERN CAPE
WITH ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL PROSECUTION**

The NPA has struck another severe blow to the gang world as the leader and hitmen of the Young Red Criminals gang were successfully prosecuted and sentenced to life imprisonment at the Western Cape High Court today.

Isadore Links, Henwill Wolhuter and Clayton Swartz were sentenced to life imprisonment after they were convicted on seven counts including two murders, possession of illegal firearm and ammunition, being active members of a gang and dealing in drugs. Their co-accused Jerome Basson was sentenced to twenty years direct imprisonment. This sentence comes just after the successful prosecution and heavy sentences handed down to George Geweld Thomas and his co-accused. Thomas was sentenced to seven life terms and six of his co-accused received life imprisonment.

Clayton Swartz is the leader of the Young Red Criminals, a known active criminal gang in the Worcester area. Henwill Wolhuter, Clayton Swartz and Jerome Basson were hitmen of the gang. Mitchell Lakay and Deswill Coetzee sold drugs on behalf of Swartz. Swartz believed that the duo smoked his drugs and he gave orders that they must be killed. His henchmen first assaulted the deceased and then took them to a farm where they were supposed to be executed. As they were about to be killed, an owner of the farm showed up and chased them away. The henchmen then drove the deceased to another farm between Worcester and Villiersdorp where the two men were shot. Lakay died but Coetzee survived. As the henchmen were driving away from the scene, they saw Coetzee running away and they chased him. They tried to shoot him but they ran out of bullets. They then stoned him to death and went to report to Swartz that they have finished the job. Swartz instructed them to get rid of the bodies.

Advocate Esna Erasmus for the State asked the court to hand the accused life imprisonment considering the severity of the case and the brutality in which they killed the deceased. She further argued that the case was gang related and the murders were premeditated and the only appropriate sentence was murder. The accused did not show any remorse or took responsibility for their actions. Advocate Erasmus asked that the accused be removed from society for a very long time. The court obliged.

The NPA welcomes the sentence. This is not the first gang case where we have managed to secure heavy sentences and making a dent on gang syndicates in the Western Cape. Our hard work has paid off once again today. We hope this sends a message of hope to the residents of the Cape Flats who are held at ransom by gangsters that we as partners within the JCPS Cluster are working towards ensuring that they are and feel safe.

Kind Regards,

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