

# Media Statement



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**TO: ALL MEDIA**

**DATE: 12 MARCH 2020**

**RE: KILLER RAPISTS SENTENCED 2 LIFE TERMS PLUS 45 YEARS**

Last week Friday, 06 March 2020, the Mthatha High Court, sitting in Ntabankulu, sentenced Mpho Lehula (24) and Olwethu Sokoti (25) to two life imprisonment terms, and an effective additional 45 years.

The court sentenced the two men, from Ramafole village in Mount Fletcher, to life imprisonment on a count of murder, life imprisonment on a count of rape, and 15 years imprisonment for each of 2 other counts of rape. They were also sentenced to 15 years for five counts of robbery with aggravating circumstances, which the court treated as one for the purpose of sentencing. The court imposed a further 5-year sentence for housebreaking with intent to commit an offence, but it ordered that sentence runs concurrently with the 15-year sentence for robberies with aggravating circumstances.

The court heard that just after midnight on 09 August 2016, three women, a mother, her daughter and her niece, were sleeping in one bedroom at their Mathafeni village home in Mount Fletcher. They were woken by a banging sound followed by the opening of the door. Three assailants entered, and at gunpoint, demanded keys for a spaza shop operated by a Somalian national on one of the rooms in the same house. When the women told the intruders they did not have the keys to the spaza shop, they raped both of them. In an attempt to fight the rapists off, the mother took a stick and hit one of them, but they shot her and she died instantly.

One of the men took one of the rape victims to the spaza shop to knock at the door where he demanded money from the shopkeeper, while wielding a firearm. They made off with R2000, airtime vouchers and cell phones, and disappeared in the dark.

Two days later, on 11 August at about 23h00, three high school student-boarders, commonly known as *Amagxamesi*, were sleeping in their rented flat at Qoboshianeng village. They were awoken by two men, armed with a knife and firearm, already inside

their flat. The men robbed them of their cell phones and raped two of the girls, who are sisters, before fleeing the scene.

Police investigations led to the arrest of Lehula and Sokoti, and they were both positively identified by the victims during an identification parade. However, during trial, the duo pleaded not guilty. State Advocate Luvuyo Pomolo managed to convince the court that they were guilty as charged, despite their bare denials.

NPA welcomes the sentences.

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