

# Media Statement



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**TO: ALL MEDIA**

**DATE: 09 APRIL 2019**

**RE: MUNICIPAL OFFICIAL, CO-ACCUSED SENTENCED FOR FRAUD**

A municipal official from Mangaung Local Municipality and his co-accused were on Thursday sentenced to 10 years imprisonment each after they were convicted of fraud and money laundering by the Bloemfontein Specialised Commercial Crime Court. Magistrate Mahindra Daya sentenced Bonang Leaba (40) and Lebohlang Mothibi (35) for fraudulently selling a site that belongs to Christopher Chikalunda without his person.

In January 2014, accused number one, Leaba arranged a meeting with the complainant, Sylvia Mohlakoana to see a site which was apparently being sold by Mangaung Local Municipality. The site was in Caleb Motshabi Township in Bloemfontein. The complainant was interested in buying the site and she was taken to the municipal offices by Leaba to meet accused number two, Mothibi who pretended to be responsible for selling site for the municipality.

Mothibi, who was employed as an administrative clerk, told the complainant, who was with her husband at the municipal offices, that he will transfer the site to the complainant once she has paid the money into a Capitec Bank account belonging to Leaba. Mothibi typed some information in the computer and showed the complainant that her particulars were punched on the system and the site belongs to him. Allocation of sites was not part of Mothibi's job description.

The complainant deposited R20 000 into the account of Leaba who withdrew all the money within two days and shared it with Mothibi and the other unknown person. The complainant's husband went to the site to erect a shack and he was surprised when he was approached by Chikalunda, who told him that the site belongs to him. The municipal records confirmed that the site indeed belongs to Chikalunda. As a result, the complainant was defrauded of R20 000.

Leaba and Mothibi were arrested and charged for fraud and money laundering. They were found guilty of all counts and sentenced to 10 years imprisonment each. Magistrate Daya suspended five years of their sentence for a period of five years on condition that they are not found guilty of a similar offence during the period of suspension. They will effectively serve five years each. They were also declared unfit to possess firearm.

State Prosecutor, Advocate Mvuseni Ponye requested the court to sentence the accused to a direct term of imprisonment because they betrayed a trust of Sylvia Mohlakoana whose only mistake was to seek a shelter for his family. He further stated that Mothibi should have known that his criminal action will have an impact on the reputation of the municipality because he committed these offences whilst he was employed by the municipality.

The case was investigated by Captain Michael Kortman from the Hawks.

Kind Regards,

**Phaladi Shuping**

**Regional Spokesperson: DPP Free State**

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