

# Media Statement



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**TO: ALL MEDIA**

**DATE: 02 AUGUST 2017**

**RE: RAPIST SENTENCED TO LIFE**

Last week, the Mqanduli Regional Court sentenced a 30 year-old man to life imprisonment after he was convicted of raping his 13 year-old cousin six years ago.

According to evidence presented in court, the rapist and the victim resided at the same homestead with their grandmother and uncle at Lower Tyholo Location in the district of Mqanduli. The identity of the accused is withheld to protect the victim. The victim's father and the rapist's mother are siblings. On 14 September 2011, their grandmother sent them to look for a stone used to grind mealies from a nearby river. When they could not find the stone the perpetrator, who was 26 at the time, advised the little girl that they must go look for the stone in the forest. When they got to the forest, he threatened the girl with an axe and raped her.

When they returned home, the young victim reported the rape to her grandmother and uncle but they both instructed her not to mention the incident to anyone because it will bring shame and disgrace to their family. After two days, the girl's aunt noticed that she was in pain when walking and the girl told her about the rape. The aunt informed the girl's mother telephonically and she returned from her place of work and took the child to the doctor and later opened a case.

During the trial, the rapist pleaded not guilty, claiming that the rape story was fabricated by the mother of the victim. But, under cross-examination by Regional Court Prosecutor, Melikhaya Dyakopu he made numerous material concessions that led to his conviction.

In aggravation of sentence, the state handed the Victim Impact Statement, which was prepared by Social Worker, Busisiwe Jozana, in which it was revealed that the victim's school progress dropped after the rape so much that she has had to repeat every grade. Magistrate Bonginkosi Mene yielded to the state's plea for a life sentence.

The NPA welcomes the sentence with the hope that it will serve as a deterrent to like-minded rapists.

Kind Regards,

**Luxolo Tyali**

**Regional Spokesperson: DPP Mthatha**

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