

# Media Statement



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**TO: ALL MEDIA**

**DATE: 12 DECEMBER 2017**

**RE: RAPIST SENTENCED TO LIFE**

Last week, the Mqanduli Regional Court sentenced Velile Mendwana (32) to life imprisonment after he was convicted of raping a 22 year-old woman three years ago.

According to evidence presented in court, Mendwana of Bonga Locality in Nenga area in the district of Mqanduli followed his victim from a tavern where she had been consuming alcohol with friends on the night of 21 December 2014. The woman had left her friends behind because she wanted to go home and sleep, but the rapist forcefully dragged her to his home, in the same village, and raped her on numerous occasions until the following morning.

When the victim arrived at her home, she reported the rape to her mother, who was called by the state as a report witness during trial. Mendwana pleaded not guilty claiming the sexual intercourse was consensual and even called three witnesses in his defence. Under cross-examination by Regional Court Prosecutor, Melikaya Dyakopu all the defence witnesses conceded that they were not there during the rapes.

In aggravation of sentence, the state led the evidence of the victim who told the court that she was pregnant when she was raped and the father of her then unborn child dumped her when he was told about the rape.

Regional Court Magistrate, Bonginkosi Mene concurred with the state's submission that the only fitting sentence for the crime, which is very prevalent during the festive season, was life imprisonment.

The NPA welcomes the sentence with the hope that it will serve as a deterrent to like-minded rapists who intend targeting defenceless women and children, especially during this time of the year.

Kind Regards,

**Luxolo Tyali**

**Regional Spokesperson: DPP Mthatha**

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