

Media Statement



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TO: ALL MEDIA

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RE: RAPIST SENTENCED TO LIFE

Last week, the Elliotdale Regional Court sentenced Sinethemba Koko (26) to life imprisonment after he was convicted of raping a 22 year-old teacher who was his aunt's tenant last year.

According to evidence presented in court, Koko of KwaGqwetha Locality in Ntlonyana area in the district of Elliotdale, went to the room that was rented by his victim on the night of 07 May 2017. He kicked the door to the room open, threatened the victim with a knife and dragged her to his home where he raped her repeatedly. The following morning he took her back to her place, telling her that she was now her boyfriend.

As soon as the rapist left the victim's home, she went to her landlady who is also the Koko's aunt and reported the rape. The aunt assisted the victim and accompanied her to the police station to open a case. She was taken to Sinawe Thuthuzela Care Centre (TCC) in Mthatha and the rapist was arrested.

During the trial, Koko pleaded not guilty claiming that the victim was his girlfriend but under cross-examination he contradicted his version of events. Advocate Noluvo Msekelwa, for the state, led the evidence of Dr. Ximbi from Sinawe TCC, the rapist's aunt and the victim, who also testified that the rapist consumed liquor and smoked dagga during the rape. Regional Court Magistrate, Sizakele Sihlahla was convinced that Koko was guilty as charged.

For sentencing, a Victim Impact Statement (VIS), prepared by Court Preparation Officer, Nombuyiselo Panda, was submitted. The VIS stated that the victim, who is a Foundation Phase teacher, has developed outburst of anger against boy school children which affects her professional conduct. The state also revealed to the court that Koko had a previous criminal record of attempted rape committed when he was only 15 years-old, for which he was given a suspended sentence.

The state prayed for life sentence and Magistrate Sihlahla concurred.

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.

Kind Regards,

Luxolo Tyali

Regional Spokesperson: DPP Mthatha

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