

Media Statement



Tel: +27 12 845 6000

Email:
media@npa.gov.za

Victoria & Griffiths
Mxenge Building
123 Westlake Avenue
Weavind Park
Silverton
Pretoria

www.npa.gov.za

TO: ALL MEDIA

DATE: 21 MAY 2020

RE: SERIAL RAPIST SENTENCED TO 15 LIFE TERMS AND 30 YEARS DIRECT IMPRISONMENT

Yesterday, the Western Cape High Court sentenced serial rapist, Herman Harker to fifteen life terms and 30 years direct imprisonment following his conviction on a string of charges including abductions, sexual assaults and rapes.

The court convicted Harker on 15 counts of rape, four counts of abduction and two counts of sexual assault. Subsequent to his spree of crimes against women and children, which dates back to 2015. The horrible experiences for the women and children he abducted, sexually assaulted and raped started in Eersterivier, moved to Stellenbosch, Gouda, Wolseley and Ladismith.

His modus operandi varied but included tricking his victims into walking with him, followed by threats and forcing the victims into the bushes where he raped them, threatened them with murder or violence against their family members should they report his actions. One of his victims was a minor who was a friend of his daughter. He sexually assaulted the young girl when she came to visit his daughter. His youngest victim was a nine year-old minor whom he tricked out of her home's yard to go with him with a promise of a financial reward if she showed him the main road. He pulled her into the bushes in Ladismith and raped her twice.

The 66 year-old married man with dependants is no stranger to law as he has served time in prison for several crimes including rapes with one of the victims being a minor. He was released in 2006 on parole and placed on parole supervision in 2007.

During arguments in aggravation of sentence, Senior State Advocate, Mornay Julius, tabled the Victim Impact Reports which showed that the victims are badly affected and

traumatized by the crimes and that they felt that "life is no longer worth living." "All victims suffered shock, fear, grief, stress and embarrassment. They are all to receive mental and psychological treatment, which is also causing financial hardship to them and their families. The victims are struggling academically and fearful of engaging in any relationship with men."

He asked the court to sentence the accused to life imprisonment for each of the rapes and direct imprisonment for the other crimes he committed.

"There are no substantial and compelling circumstances present that permit the court to deviate from the prescribed minimum sentence. The offender should be sentenced to life imprisonment in respect of each rape. Public interest must be properly served in the sentencing of the accused taking into account the nature of the crimes and the effect thereof upon these vulnerable victims," Advocate Mornay argued.

Welcoming the sentence, he said leading the victims during the trial was no easy task as their ordeal with the accused took its toll on them.

Eric Ntabazalila

Regional Communications Manager

Western Cape

Tel: (021) 487 7308 Mobile: 073 062 1222

Email: entabazalila@npa.gov.za