

Media Statement



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TO: ALL MEDIA

DATE: 31 JULY 2017

RE: TRADITIONAL HEALER SENTENCED TO DOUBLE LIFE FOR RAPE

Last week, the Mount Frere Regional Court sentenced traditional healer, Sikhusele Makambi (32) to two life imprisonment terms after he was convicted on two counts of raping a teenager two years ago.

Evidence presented in court was that Makambi, of Mbodleni village in the district of Mount Frere, had a traditional dancing group, performing the popular *Imfene* dance, and the 15 year-old victim was a member of his group. During one of the group's practice sessions, on the afternoon of 29 June 2015, he told the members of the group that he needed to perform a ritual to strengthen the group for an upcoming competition. He called them one by one into his room and he raped the young girl when it was her turn. A week after the first rape, Makambi raped the teenager again after tricking her into believing that there was a practice session with other girls.

When the mother of the victim discovered that she was pregnant, the young girl confided in her that the traditional healer raped her. After the case was opened, the pregnancy was terminated and a paternity test was performed on the foetus. The results of the test confirmed that Makambi was the father and his claim that he had consensual sexual intercourse with the minor was not accepted by the court.

Prosecutor Chumile Mkentane pleaded with the court to sentence the accused to a minimum of life imprisonment for each of the two counts of rape as prescribed by law, given the fact that the girl was under the age of 16 when she was raped. Magistrate Zaneekhaya Gxarhisa agreed with the state and sentenced the rapist to two life terms and did not order the sentences to run concurrently.

The NPA welcomes the sentence with the hope that it will deter other would-be rapists who prey on defenceless women and children.

Kind Regards,

Luxolo Tyali

Regional Spokesperson: DPP Mthatha

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