

# Media Statement



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**TO: ALL MEDIA**

**DATE: 13 JULY 2017**

**RE: TWO GANG MEMBERS REMOVED FROM SOCIETY**

The Port Elizabeth High Court convicted and sentenced Dewi Walton (27) and Trenton Ambraal (33) on charges of murder, attempted murder, possession of unlicensed firearm and possession of ammunition without a licence.

Both accused gunned down Rushay Irwin Cross and Pregathan Booth in broad daylight on 19 September 2016, in Highfield Road, Korsten. Pregathan Booth escaped narrowly with his life but sustained a gunshot wound to the foot whilst the deceased Rushay Cross sustained several wounds to his body and cervical spinal cord. There were 15 cartridges picked up from the scene of the crime. Whilst at the hospital, Pregathan Booth identified the shooters to the police who then proceeded to 270 Highfield Road which is the hangout and drug spot for the Fat Cats to arrest the accused. They tested positive for primer residue but despite this pleaded not guilty. Throughout the trial they proclaimed their innocence protesting that they shot earlier on in the day which explains the presence of gunpowder residue on their hands.

Evidence was based on a single witness, Pregathan Booth, who was previously on the Witness Protection Programme. He then left the programme and returned to the area. After the shooting he was admitted back onto the Witness Protection Programme. The accused made several attempts to influence Pregathan Booth not to testify. The accused made several calls from prison to Pregathan and arranged for him to meet with attorney Roelofse and to make a withdrawal statement that indicates neither of the accused were involved in the murder. Eventually Pregathan did and he was paid Pregathan R 3000 to make the withdrawal statement. He accepted the money in an attempt to get the pressure off him and lead the Fat Cats to believe that he will not testify thus alleviating the pressure on him. During all these interactions, Pregathan kept the investigating officer, constable Erasmus informed of the attempts made by the accused to influence and intimidate him.

On 12 July 2017, the accused were each sentenced to life imprisonment on murder, 8 years imprisonment on attempted murder, 15 years imprisonment on possession of unlicensed firearm and 18 months imprisonment on possession of ammunition without a licence. All sentences were ordered to run concurrently on the sentence of life. They were also declared unfit to possess a firearm.

Advocate Garth Baartman and Constable Erasmus are commended for their efforts in securing conviction in this case. The NPA welcomes the sentence.

Kind Regards,

**Tsepo Ndwalaza**

**NPA Regional Spokesperson**

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