

Media Statement



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TO: ALL MEDIA

DATE: 12 MAY 2017

RE: TWO POACHERS SENTENCED TO AN EFFECTIVE 18 YEARS IMPRISONMENT

The Modimolle Regional Court sentenced Sakkie Marutle Malaza (36) and Manabeng Michael Makua (64) to an effective 18 years imprisonment for the unlawful possession of a firearm without licence, unlawful possession of ammunition and for illegal hunting of protected animals.

On 27 February 2013, the SAPS members reacted to information of a possible rhino poaching incident at Mabalingwe Game Farm in the Bela Bela district. Police officers spotted Malaza and two others when entering Mabalingwe property through a fence. They approached him and later to be arrested, while the other two escaped leaving behind an axe and a 300 rifle. Makua, who was a driver of a getaway vehicle was later arrested in Modimolle following the police investigations. Police also recovered 62x7.62mm rounds of ammunition in Makua's Boschkop house near Pretoria.

Makua alleged during trial that he had kept the ammunition on behalf of Malaza. He denied being part of the group of poachers who attacked the farm, further alleging that he was framed by the police. The court rejected this version of being framed by the police. Based on the principle of common purpose. They were both convicted.

During sentencing, the State Prosecutor, Liezzel del Frate asked the court to disqualify both accused from obtaining any permits or authorizations in terms of LEMA and also from possessing firearms. The court sentenced them to an effective term of 18 years imprisonment. The court ordered that the sentence imposed in respect of illegal possession of firearm without licence run concurrently with the sentence on the count of illegal hunting.

Both accused were barred for five years from obtaining any permits or authorizations in terms of LEMA and were also declared unfit to possess firearms.

The NPA welcomes the sentence and the DPP Limpopo, Advocate Ivy Thenga applauds the SAPS Tactical Response, Stock Theft Unit and the prosecutor for the good work.

Kind Regards,

Mashudu Malabi-Dzhang

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