

Media Statement



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TO: ALL MEDIA

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RE: VIGILANTE GROUP RINGLEADER SENTENCED TO SIX LIFE TERMS AND THIRTY YEARS FOR MURDER

The Western Cape High Court has sentenced the ringleader and initiator of a vigilante killing that left six young men dead to six life terms and thirty years.

Bangikhaya Koni has been convicted on six counts of kidnapping and another six counts of murder. The court has sentenced him to five years for each count of kidnapping and to life imprisonment for each count of murder. The court ordered that the sentences imposed on counts 1 to 11 run concurrently with the sentence imposed in respect of count 12. This means the accused will effectively serve life imprisonment.

Koni entered into a plea and sentencing agreement with the state and explained his role as that of a ringleader of 16 men from Engcobo, Eastern Cape, who, on 09 December 2014, rounded up six young men from a house in Wallaceden, Kraaifontein, to Redhill in Joostenberg Vlakte where they stabbed them and crushed them with rocks and bricks.

The trouble started when Zola Gayiya, Emanuel Barnes, Sandile Ngxabela, Sakhele Ngxabela, Lulama Dunga and Mhlanganisi Mljanjeni robbed and killed Tsutsutsu Ntsundu who was on his way home from work. Tsutsutsu from Engcobo, Eastern Cape, was a security guard and the six young men targeted him for his firearm. He was killed and his firearm was taken from him.

Koni and his homeboys from Engcobo, Eastern Cape, were unhappy that their homeboy was murdered. They met, discussed and decided that they will help the family of the deceased by looking for his killers. Koni alleges that immediately after the murder, the brother of the deceased approached him and offered R3000 for information on the identity of his brother's killers. The group set off to look for the killers. They were advised by another young man, Biza, that Gun (Lulama Dunga) was involved in the

killing of Tsutsutsu and the actual killers were Fatty (Sandile Ngxabela) and his brother (Sakhele Ngxabela).

Koni returned to the deceased's brother and informed him that he had information concerning the identity of Tsutsutsu's killers. The brother then told Koni that the killers were gangsters and he offered R10 000 for them to be traced and killed. The group got hold of Gun, gagged and tortured him. He informed them of the names of others who were involved in the killing and where the firearm and ammunition of the deceased were hidden. Four of the deceased young men were captured while waiting for Koni. They were upset and wanted to discuss with Koni allegations that they have stolen one of his shacks. The accused admits that he played along and invited the four suspects to join them at his house to discuss their unhappiness. Upon their arrival at the accused's house, they were overpowered and had their legs and arms tied up and in the same room as Gun and Zola.

The brother of Tsutsutsu was then called. He arrived very angry and instructed that a killer must be found and he would pay the R10 000 the following day for carrying out the killings. A man was approached to do the job, however, the firearm he was given was not working and he left to get another firearm but never returned. The group decided not to take the six suspects to the police as they believed they would be kept for a short period and released.

The group decided that they would kill the suspects. One of them had a firearm but with no bullets. Late that evening, three members of the group decided to go look for a firearm with bullets while the six young men were kept at Koni's house. The group ran impatient, bundled the young men into a bakkie and drove to Redhill, Joostenbergvlakte. Koni alleges that he was informed by members of the group that because the firearm story was not working out, they decided to take the six suspects to Redhill where they then stabbed with a sword and other sharp objects in order to kill them.

Koni says upon, he and other members who went to look for the firearm with bullets, arrival at Redhill, the six suspects were lying on the ground and still tied with ropes. They were still alive. He admits that he also took a stone and hit one of the deceased and thereafter, the group stoned the deceased. They stoned the deceased and stabbed them with swords and other sharp objects to ensure that they were dead before they left Joostenbergvlakte. Koni says, the group consisted of about 25 members which included Nongalwana, Xaba, Kwati, Malbongo, Sizwe, Ceduma, Montile Tyokwe, Michael and Fire and others. They met at his house afterwards and decided to give R5000 to Ceduma for

the role he played and agreed they will use the remaining R5000 either for their bail in the event that anyone of them is arrested and if not they will use the R5000 for a braai.

Koni was arrested and he confessed, naming the other accused persons and pointed out the crime scene. State Advocate, John Reyneveld said the murders were premeditated and caused by the accused acting in furtherance of a common purpose. He further said they amounted what is commonly known as a vigilante killing.

"The deceased were first tortured for hours before they were eventually loaded into a vehicle and driven to another scene where they were brutally stoned and stabbed to death. They were defenceless at the time of their deaths since their legs were tied and their arms tied behind their backs. They were then left naked like animals and were only discovered the following morning."

The NPA welcomes the sentence.

Kind Regards,

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