

# KHASHO

NEWS

15<sup>th</sup> Edition



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- > Courage & resilience win in the fight against GBV
- > The hands meant to protect, became the hands that kill
- > NPA SMS Conference: Consolidating and future-proofing the NPA's contribution to building a capable, ethical and developmental state 2025-2030



National Prosecuting Authority  
South Africa

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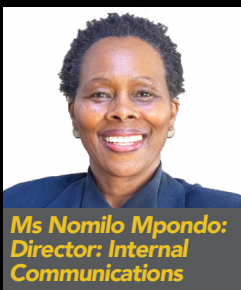
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# Letter from the Managing Editor

Welcome to this latest edition of our newsletter. This issue is filled with stories that reflect the resilience, dedication, and impact of our work in pursuing justice for all.

We open with an inspiring account of young matric learners who displayed extraordinary courage and resilience by helping bring a dangerous offender to justice. Their bravery is a reminder that the fight against crime is a collective responsibility and that our young people play a crucial role in shaping a safer society.

In this edition, we also highlight the NPA's unwavering commitment to tackling gender-based violence and femicide through a significant case that reaffirms our stance against such heinous crimes. Equally uplifting is the story of one of our own — an administrator, who rose through the ranks to become a prosecutor. This journey illustrates the opportunities within the NPA for growth, excellence, and service.

On the courtroom front, we reflect on several notable outcomes: the life imprisonment handed down to a man who robbed and killed a patient in a surgery, as well as the

dismissal of the application for leave to appeal the conviction and sentence in the Joshlin Smith case. These outcomes reaffirm the NPA's dedication to ensuring justice is not only pursued but upheld.

We also bid farewell to a distinguished legal mind whose contributions to justice will continue to resonate within the organisation. Their legacy will inspire us as we step forward into the future.

Finally, we cover the recent Senior Management Conference held under the theme: "Consolidating and future-proofing the NPA as part of building a capable, ethical and developmental state." This conference provided space for reflection and strategy, reminding us of the responsibility we carry in strengthening the rule of law in our democracy.

As always, this edition reflects our collective mission, to prosecute without fear, favour, or prejudice, and to serve South Africa with integrity. May the stories within inspire you as much as they affirm the central role of the NPA in the pursuit of justice.



**Ms Salome Baloyi:**  
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# Leadership Corner

The National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) recently held its Senior Management Conference, a pivotal gathering that brought together leaders from across the institution to reflect, strategise, and recommit to the NPA's mandate of delivering justice and serving the people of South Africa with integrity.

The conference provided an invaluable platform for robust discussions on our organisational priorities, challenges, and opportunities. Senior leaders acknowledged the progress made in recent years, while also candidly addressing the areas requiring sustained focus. Emphasis was placed on cultivating ethical leadership, investing in staff development, leveraging technology to modernise prosecutorial work and embracing innovation to meet the evolving demands of justice.

Through shared learning and honest reflection, the NPA leadership reaffirmed its collective responsibility to lead with accountability, transparency, and courage. There was a renewed sense of unity and purpose among participants. As the conference closed, one thing was clear: the NPA is moving forward with stronger leadership, a united vision, and a deeper sense of purpose. "Together, we are building an institution that South Africans can trust and be proud of".

Update on Audit and Feedback on Interventions and Action Plans Implementation

The NPA continues to make steady progress in strengthening its governance, performance management, and accountability systems. While the recent audit opinion on performance information highlighted certain challenges, the leadership of the NPA extends heartfelt appreciation to prosecutors and officials from across the country who went above and beyond their call of duty to ensure that performance data remained accurate and up to date. Their commitment and diligence played a vital role in mitigating what could have been a more adverse audit outcome.

One of the key areas of concern in recent years has been the Electronic Case Management System (ECMS). Although challenges remain, the Auditor-General acknowledged notable improvements, particularly the reduction in discrepancies between manual registers and ECMS records. This progress is both encouraging and commendable, reflecting the impact of sustained efforts to enhance data integrity and reliability.

The audit outcomes serve as both recognition of the progress made and a reminder of the work still required. The NPA leadership remains committed to building a stronger, more accountable institution that not only upholds compliance, but also creates an enabling environment for prosecutors to focus on their core mission - delivering justice and serving the people of South Africa.

# BRAVERY IN THE FACE OF DARKNESS: YOUNG SURVIVORS INSPIRE JUSTICE

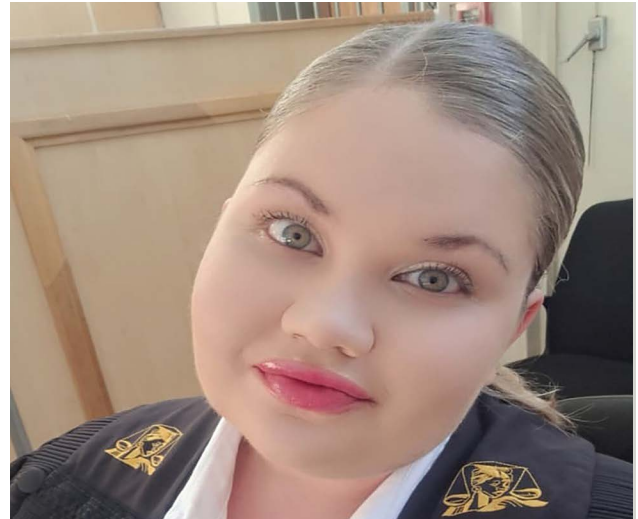
Mojalefa Senokoatsane  
RCM: Northern Cape Division

*In the face of unimaginable violence, two young matric learners displayed extraordinary courage and resilience that ultimately brought a dangerous offender to justice. On 23 February 2022, the 17 and 18-year-old girls were attacked in their rented home in Dithakong village. Blindfolded, kidnapped, raped, and brutally stabbed by Thabo Gift Magwatane (33) and his accomplices. Their lives were threatened in a horrifying act of Gender-Based Violence, a crime that destroys families, shatters communities, and leaves long-lasting emotional scars.*

Despite the severity of the attack, the girls found the strength to escape and seek help. Their bravery in confronting their trauma and assisting law enforcement made it possible for justice to be served. After evading arrest for nearly two years, Magwatane was apprehended in Rustenburg in early 2024 and brought to trial at the Mothibistad Regional Court.

Magwatane was convicted on seven serious charges, including rape, kidnapping, housebreaking, and attempted murder. He was sentenced to two life terms plus an additional 45 years imprisonment. The court also deemed him unfit to possess a firearm and ordered his inclusion on the National Register for Sex Offenders.

The court heard compelling Victim Impact Statements, prepared by Regional Court Prosecutor, Bernice Bronkhorst-Oor, with support from Court Preparation Officer, Beauty



**Regional Court Prosecutor, Bernice Bronkhorst Oor**

Moreeng, which detailed the profound emotional trauma endured by the survivors. Throughout the proceedings, the National Prosecuting Authority's (NPA) Thuthuzela Care Centre (TCC) at Kuruman Hospital provided vital psychosocial support, ensuring the victims were prepared for court while receiving care for their emotional and psychological well-being.

The presiding magistrate described Magwatane as a "very dangerous individual who must be permanently removed from society," while noting the remarkable courage of the survivors.

"The strength and resilience demonstrated by these young women remind us why the work of the NPA is so critical," said the Authority. "Gender-Based Violence not only harms individuals but undermines the safety and stability of communities. By prosecuting violent offenders and removing them from society, we protect potential victims, uphold justice, and provide a measure of closure for those affected."

The NPA applauds the bravery of the survivors and remains unwavering in its commitment to eradicating Gender-Based Violence. This conviction sends a strong message that violent crimes will not go unpunished, and those who commit them will face the full weight of the law.

Through diligent investigation, prosecution, and survivor support, the NPA continues to build a safer, stronger South Africa, one where courage is honored, justice is served, and communities can heal.

# EX-BOYFRIEND SENTENCED TO TWO LIFE TERMS PLUS 22 YEARS FOR GBV RELATED CRIMES

Nokuthula Makupula  
Communications Officer: Eastern Cape Division

*The Gqeberha Regional Court sentenced Cheslyn Matroos (41) to two life sentences and 22 additional years of imprisonment after his conviction on multiple charges including rape, attempted rape, assault, and kidnapping. These offenses were committed against his former partner, with whom he had a domestic relationship.*

On 13 April 2024, Matroos forcibly took the complainant, aged 25 from her friend's house in Windvogel and drove her to his home in Jacksonville, Gqeberha. Once there, Matroos assaulted her and raped her twice. He also attempted to rape her further.

The complainant managed to escape the following morning and ran to a friend's house, where she asked to use a cell phone. However, she did not immediately tell her friend what had happened. The complainant contacted the police and reported the incident. Forensic examination conducted at the Thuthuzela Care Centre confirmed her injuries.

Matroos was arrested a few days later at his home. He claimed the sexual acts were consensual, asserting that they were still in a relationship and that the complainant had willingly accompanied him to his house. However, the court rejected this defence.



Advocate Kenny Van Biljon

Arguing for an appropriate sentence, the State Prosecutor, Advocate Kenny Van Biljon stated that the crimes were premeditated and inflicted severe trauma on the complainant. He emphasised the need for a strong sentence to reflect the seriousness of the offences and to send a clear message against Gender-Based Violence.

Matroos was sentenced to life imprisonment for the two counts of rape, 15 years for attempted rape, two years for assault, and five years for kidnapping. He was also entered into the Sexual Offenders Register and prohibited from possessing a firearm.

The Eastern Cape Director of Public Prosecutions, Mr Barry Madolo welcomed the sentence, commending the complainant for her bravery in coming forward. The NPA continues to urge all victims of abuse to come forward and assures the public that it will vigorously prosecute perpetrators of gender-based violence.

## CHARTING A PROSECUTORIAL PATH: THE CAREER JOURNEY OF THEMBALETHU KHOZA

Natasha Kara  
RCM: KZN Division

*Previously an Aspirant Prosecutor, Phumlani Thembaletu Khoza is now a District Court Prosecutor, acting as a Regional Court Prosecutor. Khasho spoke to him about his journey of growth through the NPA and his experience thus far.*

### **Tell us more about yourself**

I have been based at the Mtubatuba Magistrates' Court since March 2025. Prior to that, I was at the Vryheid Magistrates' Court as a District Court Prosecutor (since May 2022). I graduated with a Bachelor of Law (LLB) degree from the University of KwaZulu-Natal in 2018.

### **Your journey thus far?**

I joined the NPA in 2021 through the Aspirant Prosecutor Programme and was stationed at the Durban Magistrates' Court where I successfully completed the programme. In 2022, I was appointed as a District Court Prosecutor at Vryheid Magistrates' Court. In March 2023, my supervisor Mrs Zulu applied for my delegation to prosecute in the Regional Court, and I was given a delegation to act as a Regional Court Prosecutor at Vryheid Regional Court. Since then, I have been acting in the regional court. At the beginning of March 2025, I was given the opportunity to act as a regional court prosecutor at Mtubatuba Magistrates' Court and that is where I am at present.

### **Why did you choose a career in prosecutions?**

I believe it is my love for the rule of law and my passion for justice that drew me to the mighty NPA. I am where I am supposed to be. It is my purpose. It is what I was born to do – to change lives. I wake up every morning and prepare for the job that I love. Not many people are able to find their true purpose in life. I have always wanted to make a difference in my community, and I am lucky enough that my job allows me to do that every single day.



**District Court Prosecutor, Thembaletu Khoza**

### **What kind of matters do you deal with?**

The Mtubatuba Magistrates' Court is a very diverse court with different cases. I deal with sexual offences, murder cases, trio crimes, environmental cases and fraud cases. It is quite a packed court with so much to learn from, and I am grateful for the opportunity to be able to grow, to learn and sharpen my prosecutorial skills.

### **Tell us about some of your recent successes**

I have finalised the following cases. They are a true reflection of the hard work I have put in, the dedication, and the result of very late nights and early mornings.

March 2025 - Thulani Mkhumbuzi – convicted of murder and sentenced to 22 years imprisonment

April 2025 - Siqiniseko Ndlovu – convicted of two counts of attempted murder and sentenced to life and 15 Years imprisonment

Mandla Msweli – convicted of Attempted murder and Possession of firearm and sentenced to life and 10 years imprisonment

Sanele Msomi – sentenced to life imprisonment for rape

May 2025 - Ntokozo Mveli – sentenced to 15 years imprisonment for robbery with aggravating circumstances

Moses Jebo Khumalo – sentenced to 20 years imprisonment for attempted murder and kidnapping

June 2025 - Sabelo Mavundla sentenced to life imprisonment for rape

that I made a difference to my society and my country - that alone is fulfilling.

### **What are your future aspirations?**

There is always a plan to grow, and the sky is the limit. My dream is to become a Senior State Advocate at the DPP's office. I see myself expanding my prosecutorial skills and learning more about commercial crimes, thus finding my niche in money laundering cases. The next stop is the DPP's office!

# COURAGE AND RESILIENCE WIN IN THE FIGHT AGAINST GBV

Mojalefa Senokoatsane  
Acting RCM: Free State Division

*The bravery of the young survivor at the center of this case is a powerful reminder that courage can prevail even in the darkest circumstances. By speaking out against the abuse she endured, this child has transformed from a silent victim into a strong and determined survivor, inspiring all of us to continue the fight against Gender-Based Violence (GBV).*

The Ladybrand Regional Court recently handed down a life sentence to a father convicted of raping his 8-year-old daughter, a crime that began on the child's sixth birthday. What should have been a day of joy instead marked the start of unimaginable trauma. The accused assaulted his daughter on two separate occasions and attempted to cover up his crimes, even fabricating false charges against her late stepfather. Despite these efforts to evade justice, the courage of the victim and the tireless work of the prosecution team ensured the accused was held accountable.



**Regional Court Prosecutor, Marie Yzel**

Regional Court Prosecutor, Marie Yzel, underscored the malicious and premeditated nature of the father's actions, highlighting his complete lack of remorse. She emphasised the betrayal of trust inherent in such abuse and argued that life imprisonment was the only sentence commensurate with the gravity of the crime. The court condemned the acts as a gross violation of parental duty and a stark example of the gender-based violence that continues to devastate families and communities.

This conviction also reflects the exceptional efforts of the prosecution team and the South African Police Service, whose dedicated investigators worked relentlessly to secure justice. It demonstrates that achieving justice for survivors requires collaboration, persistence, and unwavering commitment from all sectors involved in combating gender-based violence.

The fight against GBV is far from over. It requires a coordinated effort involving the justice system, law enforcement, social services, community organisations, and society as a whole. Every survivor's voice matters, and every action taken to support them strengthens our collective capacity to end the scourge of GBV.

Through the courage of survivors and the dedication of those committed to justice, South Africa continues to send a clear message that perpetrators of GBV will be held accountable, and together, we can create a safer, more just society for all children and women.

# FROM ADMIN STAFF TO PROSECUTOR: LINDIWE GUMEDE'S JOURNEY COMES FULL CIRCLE

Abram Mohlatlole

Communications Officer: Gauteng Local Division

*"There's nothing special about anything, it's just the will to achieve".*

*Those are the words of Lindiwe Gumede, a woman whose journey in the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) started in 2008. From being overlooked as administrative support to now standing tall as a Regional Court Prosecutor at the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, Gauteng Local Division in Johannesburg. Lindiwe's path reflects both the personal and professional transformation of a woman who refused to accept invisibility.*

## *Humble beginnings in KwaThema, Springs*

Born in KwaThema and raised in Gauteng, Springs, Lindiwe comes from a humble background as the third of four children. Her upbringing was grounded in faith as her father is a pastor and a chaplain in her community. Lindiwe is a mother of one and a proud Christian, her journey has never strayed far from the values that shaped her early life.

## *2008: The NPA chapter began*

Lindiwe joined the NPA in 2008 as a Senior Administrative Officer in the Asset Forfeiture Unit (AFU) Johannesburg. At the time, she held a degree in Business Administration from Tshwane University of Technology and a National Diploma in Public Management from the then Technikon Northern Gauteng, and though she was not in a legal role, she considered herself as professional, the same as her colleagues in law. Unfortunately, not everyone agreed. "I didn't take kindly to being sidelined," she recalls. "There was this sense that if you weren't legally trained, you were invisible."

That feeling of exclusion, subtle but persistent, planted a seed of transformation in Lindiwe. While others may be driven by dreams, she was driven by a challenge to turn lemons into lemonade.



**Regional Court Prosecutor, Lindiwe Gumede**

In 2012, she was promoted as a Personal Assistant. The same year, she decided to pursue her LLB degree part-time with the University of South Africa (UNISA). For her, it was not about the passion for law, rather, it was about proving a point. "I wanted to show the people around me that I could also do this. I didn't choose law at first, but it chose me through experience", she said.

After many years of balancing work and her studies, Lindiwe completed her LLB in 2017, officially graduating in 2018. In 2019, she became part of the Aspirant Prosecutor Programme, which had been on hold for several years. This opportunity marked her official entry into the prosecutorial world. "I was placed in court as an aspirant prosecutor, handling real cases every day. That's where the love for prosecution really began".

In 2021, she became a District Court Prosecutor, a role she embraced despite the salary downgrade that came with it. For her, it was not about the money, "it was about the purpose," she added. "I was still living at home, so I accepted it. I knew what I wanted and I was willing to take the necessary steps to get there."

Lindiwe's hard work paid off in 2023 when she was appointed as an Acting Regional Court Prosecutor. Later that year, she saw the post advertised through the NPA's internal communication and applied. Despite being offered two positions, one in Johannesburg and another in the Vaal Rand Cluster, she chose the office in Johannesburg, where she now serves full-time as a Regional Court Prosecutor.

"I've learned that we often hold ourselves back, not because we aren't capable, but because we fear the unknown. We think, 'What if I fail?' But what if you succeed?"

For anyone feeling stuck, overlooked or uncertain about their potential, here is a piece of advice from Lindiwe, "If you're determined, if you believe in yourself, and if you invite God into your journey, then everything is possible. Don't let fear keep you in a place you've outgrown."

# LIFE IMPRISONMENT PLUS 50 YEARS FOR MAN WHO ROBBED AND KILLED PATIENT IN A SURGERY

Sivenathi Gunya

Communications Officer: North West Division

*The National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) welcomes the hefty sentence handed down to Shakandinnyi Ndivhoswami Tshiovhe (34), by the North West High Court. Tshiovhe was convicted on several serious charges, including murder, two counts of attempted murder, robbery with aggravating circumstances, unlawful possession of a firearm, and unlawful possession of ammunition.*

The convictions relate to a violent incident that occurred on 07 April 2021 at Dr Steenkamp's surgery in Block A, Mabopane. Tshiovhe, along with a group of men, stormed the surgery in broad daylight and robbed the doctor and patients of their valuables. During the robbery, one of the patients was fatally shot and died at the scene.

As the situation escalated, Dr Steenkamp, acting in self-defence, used his licensed firearm and shot Tshiovhe, who sustained a gunshot wound to the chest. Witnesses reported seeing Tshiovhe bleeding as he fled the scene with his accomplices in a white Toyota Quantum parked outside.

The next day, police followed up on information obtained from a witness and visited Odi Hospital to investigate the Quantum. Surveillance footage led to the identification and arrest of Tshiovhe and another suspect. On 05 May 2021, an identification parade was conducted, during which some victims positively identified both individuals. Furthermore, blood samples collected from the scene were forensically linked to Tshiovhe through buccal sample analysis. The case against the co-accused was later withdrawn due to insufficient evidence.

Tshiovhe pleaded not guilty to all charges. However, in aggravation of sentence, State Advocate, Ferdinand Tlatsana argued that the gravity of the offences and the lack of substantial and compelling circumstances



**State Advocate, Ferdinand Tlatsana**

warranted the prescribed minimum sentence. The court concurred and imposed the following: Life imprisonment for murder, 15 years imprisonment for two counts of robbery, 10 years imprisonment for attempted murder, 5 years imprisonment for unlawful possession of a firearm and 5 years imprisonment for unlawful possession of ammunition. All sentences are to run concurrently with the life sentence. Tshiovhe was also declared unfit to possess a firearm.

Welcoming the judgment, the Director of Public Prosecutions in the North West, Dr Rachel Makhari, commended State Advocate, Ferdinand Tlatsana, the Investigating Officer, and all stakeholders involved in securing the conviction. "These sentences underscore the NPA's unwavering commitment to fighting crime, upholding the rule of law, and ensuring justice for victims of violent crime," she said.

**Advocate Tlatsana had this to say about the case:**

**1. What challenges did you encounter when prosecuting in this case?**

Challenges were that witnesses were emotional and feared the accused because he terrorised the community.

**2. What makes this case different from other cases you have prosecuted?**

What makes it different is that the accused went around robbing surgeries, but what is ironic about this case is that after being shot during the robbery he had to be assisted by the doctor at the hospital. In this case, the accused and his friends were robbing surgeries around Mabopane using a Toyota Quantum.

**3. How do you feel about the sentence?**

I am happy because he was removed from the community and family members of the deceased appreciated the sentence.

## NPA WELCOMES THE DISMISSAL OF THE APPLICATION FOR LEAVE TO APPEAL CONVICTION AND SENTENCE IN THE JOSH LIN SMITH CASE

Eric Ntabazalila

RCM: Western Cape Division

*The National Prosecuting Authority welcomes the decision of the High Court to dismiss the application for leave to appeal the conviction and sentence of Rowhan Appollis, Steveno Dumaizio van Rhyn and Racquel Chantel Smith. The prosecuting authority also welcomed the decision of the court to grant Lourentia Lombaard indemnity from prosecution following her testimony in the ground-breaking prosecution case of trafficking in persons for exploitation and kidnapping of a child victim who has been sold but has still not been found.*

Appollis, Van Rhyn and Smith are serving life imprisonment following their conviction for trafficking in persons for exploitation and kidnapping of Joshlin Smith. During the two-day application for leave to appeal both their conviction and sentence, Appollis, Van Rhyn and Smith argued various points, which included that the court erred in convicting them. At the same time, the state failed to prove its case beyond a reasonable doubt; there were two versions of what happened to Joshlin Smith on the day of her disappearance, and the sentences were inappropriate. They argued that a different court may come to a different conclusion and urged Judge Nathan Erasmus, to grant them an application for leave to appeal.

The state successfully countered these points, arguing that the applicants had not provided compelling reasons in their application and that there were no reasonable prospects of success. It further argued that no other court could come to a different conclusion for both the convictions and the sentences. The court agreed with the state's arguments and denied the application for leave to appeal.

On the Section 204 witness enquiry, legal representatives of the accused argued that Lombaard did not testify truthfully



Western Cape Division DPP with the prosecutors who prosecuted the case, Adv Zelda Swanepoel, Adv Aradhana Heeramun, Ms Deonett Boltney

and had misled the court. They argued that there were contradictions and inconsistencies in her evidence, and that her testimony was of such inferior quality the court should reject it. Again, the state successfully countered that by arguing that Lombaard answered frankly and honestly to all questions posed by the court and all parties as is required for indemnity from prosecution according to Section 204 of the Criminal Procedure Act 51 of 1977.

The state agreed with the court that she did not actively participate in the execution of the crimes for which Appollis, Van Rhyn and Smith were convicted and sentenced. At most, she made herself an accessory after the fact as she became aware of the planned crime, kept quiet as she had agreed with all of them and covered up the crime in expectation of the financial benefit. It was emphasised that there was a need to offer her indemnity from prosecution to secure evidence for the prosecution, especially against accused three who was the mastermind behind it all.

The three accused were convicted following an eight-week-long trial and two days of evidence and arguments in mitigation and aggravation of sentence. As part of their sentences, the court ordered their names to be entered into the National Child Protection Register, which will prohibit them from ever working with children. It further ordered the Minister of Social Development to report to the Office of the Chief Justice on progress made to ensure the department adheres to the court order.

Adv Zelda Swanepoel, Adv Aradhana Heeramun and Ms Deonett Boltney received a Top Achiever's Award during the SMS Conference Top Performers Awards Ceremony for successfully prosecuting the Joshlin Smith case

# THE HANDS MEANT TO PROTECT, BECAME THE HANDS THAT KILL

Tshegofatso Makhudu

Communications Officer: Gauteng Division Pretoria

*Regional Court Prosecutor, Hanlie Du Preez, who has been a prosecutor for 24 years, successfully prosecuted a case of parents, whose hands were meant to become those that care and protect their child became the hands that in the end, killed their 1-year-old girl by strangling her. The parents, Joseph Molwana (25), father of the child who is a Mozambican national was sentenced to life imprisonment for the murder of his daughter and 2 years imprisonment for being illegal in the country. However, the mother, Zanele Jobe (20), was sentenced to 15 years direct imprisonment because at the time of commission of the offence in 2022, she was still a minor. Both parents were further sentenced to 5 years direct imprisonment for child abuse.*

Du Preez who is based at the Pretoria North Magistrates' Court, said when she first went through the docket, she saw the pictures of the bruised baby which was disturbing and that the fact that those bruises were caused by her own parents brought nothing but disbelief, and propelled her to want to work hard and provide justice for the innocent one year old baby. I have prosecuted a number of cases similar to this one, especially because I have been a regional court prosecutor for 21 years, but in this particular case, I felt sympathy for the maternal uncle of the baby, who seemed to have loved the baby, as he would help both parents care for the baby, whereas the maternal grandmother of the baby was emotionless throughout the court proceedings. She said, what was also aggravating in this case was that both the mother and the father of the baby kept on blaming each other, and each refused to take responsibility for their actions. That showed me that neither one of them was remorseful for their actions and reaffirmed to me that people are capable of doing anything in this world", she added.



When asked what challenges she faced while prosecuting this case, she said the fact that there were no eyewitnesses forced her to rely only on circumstantial and medical evidence. "Had the neighbours agreed to take the stand during the trial, to explain what they saw when called into the house, it would have helped me to overcome my challenges, but they flatly refused, and I had to rely on the doctor's evidence to prove my case beyond a reasonable doubt." She added that, since the mother of the deceased baby had another child, she asked the Investigating Officer to remove the child from the care of her mother and grandmother, as she believed that both were not competent to raise the child, as the child was not properly taken care of.

When asked how she felt when the sentences were handed down to the parents, she said that she felt that justice was served for the baby, and the sentences handed down were fitting the offense they committed. "I believe that the message this sentence sends to society is that children are important. Even if they cannot speak up for themselves, we as prosecutors will speak up for them, and we will always fight for our victims. Furthermore, such cases make a person view the world differently; they make you more suspicious and less trusting of others. However, we also need to remember that bad things can happen to good people", she said.

The Acting Director of Public Prosecutions, Adv Marika Jansen Van Vuuren, applauds the work of the prosecutor and said, "This case serves as demonstration that the division is privileged to have dedicated prosecutors like Hanlie Du Preez who ensured that the hands that killed the child, received the deserved punishment.

# THREE LIFE TERMS FOR CHILD RAPIST

Monica Nyuswa

RCM: Mpumalanga Division

*Prosecution of child rapists continues to be a top priority for the National Prosecuting Authority, as it seeks to ensure justice for victims and their families while removing dangerous offenders from society.*

This follows the sentencing of Elphas Elias Shabangu (38), by the Volksrust Regional Court to three life terms for the rape of three minor girls in the Gert Sibande district, Mpumalanga.

Two of the offences occurred in Piet Retief and one in Wakkerstroom between October 2023 and October 2024. The accused preyed on vulnerable girls between the ages of eight and eleven, luring them to secluded areas before raping them. The victims did not know the assailant, however reported their ordeal to the police. In the first incident which occurred in Piet Retief on 11 October 2023, Shabangu approached an 8-year-old victim while standing near her home and asked her to buy a box of matches from a local shop. He gave her R5 and told her to keep the R2 change. When she returned, Shabangu convinced her to follow him to a nearby sports ground where he raped her and fled.

A week later, on 18 October 2023, also in Piet Retief, Shabangu targeted a 9-year-old girl who was playing with her younger brother at her home. He followed her to an abandoned house near a local church and raped her. He gave her R2 and instructed her not to tell anyone.

The third incident occurred on 17 August 2024 in Wakkerstroom, where a 11-year-old female victim was playing with her younger siblings when Shabangu approached her. He followed the victim, dragged her into the nearby bushes, where he raped her and brutally assaulted her before fleeing the scene. The victim reported the assault to the police and successfully identified the perpetrator. Further investigations linked him to Piet Retief cases.

Shabangu was arrested, abandoned his bail application and remained in custody. During sentencing, the state highlighted the gravity of the crimes and presented victim impact statements detailing emotional testimonies urging the court to impose a prescribed ordained sentence.

The court sentenced Shabangu to life imprisonment on each count of rape and further ruled that he is unfit to possess a firearm, unsuitable to work with children and ordered his name to be entered into the National Register for Sexual Offenders.

***This is what Prosecutor Thomo Mmabatho, who dealt with the matter had to say:***

***What are the highlights of this case and what did you learn from it?***

This case highlights the urgent need to educate our children about the dangers of interacting with strangers. They must understand the risks of accepting money, gifts or requests for help from people they do not know. Creating awareness is also vital to keeping them safe.

***Do you believe the criminal justice system is making progress in addressing Gender-Based Violence?***

I believe that in cases where Gender-Based Violence is reported, the justice system is doing its best to respond decisively. While there is still a long way to go, the successful prosecution of cases like this sends a strong message to society. The fight is ongoing, and the courts are working hard to show that such crimes will not go unpunished.

***Are you satisfied with the sentence imposed on the accused?***

Yes, the court imposed the prescribed minimum sentence for the offences committed. Justice has been served, and I believe this reflects the seriousness of the crimes and the trauma inflicted on the victims. It also sends a clear warning to would be rapists.



## S v FABIAN MERTENTON

*Prosecutor: Adv. B Smith – (OCC: Southern Cape)*

*The Accused was a sub-contractor with the complainant (a construction company). His contract was terminated for non-delivery.*

Aggrieved, he demanded R2000 000 in cash in exchange for not closing down their construction sites as a representative of "Mkhonto Wesizwe". He was arrested following a 252A operation and his attempt to extort the complainant did not succeed. He was charged for extortion and pleaded guilty.

*The accused was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment, half suspended for 5 years.*

This outcome shows the impact it can have if victims are prepared to cooperate with law enforcement.

## S v FARIED WILLIAMS, CHARLES WILLIAMS & JASON ARENDSE

*Prosecutor: Adv. D Rudolph*

*This matter was investigated as part of the initiative to look at crimes committed from inside prison.*

*Although the information was that the leader of the gang gave the instruction whilst in custody the investigation failed to prove that. The information was that the gang wanted to take over the house of the elderly resident as part of their turf and deal drugs from her house.*

On 10 July 2024 approximately 20h45 the deceased was forcibly removed from her residence in Lavender Hill, placed into a vehicle and the assailants drove off with her against her will. As a result, a case of kidnapping was opened.

While investigating the kidnapping the police received information that accused 1 and 2 were involved. The police then approached accused 1 who refused to provide the police with a statement. Accused 2, however made a confession in which he implicated himself along with accused 1 and 3. Accused 2 alleged that accused 3 while incarcerated at Pollsmoor, instructed him to go to the house with more men and kidnap the deceased, murder her and dump her body. He alleges that accused 1 was at the residence with him.

Accused 2 further alleged that while driving from the residence of the deceased, they stabbed her multiple times until she died and went to Vrygond, Muizenberg where they dug a hole and dumped her body inside. Accused 2 also stated that he threw away the phone on which accused 1 called him from.

On the same day of his confession, accused 2 also pointed out to the police where he had buried the body of the deceased. Save for the confession of accused 2, there was no evidence in the docket which could link accused 1 and 3 to any offences. The accused concluded a plea and sentence agreement with the State.

He was sentenced as follows:

Kidnapping - 5 years imprisonment; Murder - 15 years imprisonment; and Defeating the administration of justice - 3 years imprisonment.

## S v LIAM PHILANDER

*Prosecutor: Adv. L Williams*

*This matter forms part of a Provincial Organised Crime project in which the focus is on the criminal operations of one of the top crime generating street gang in the Western Cape, "The Terrible Josters". The focus is on the extortion- drug- and serious violent crimes committed by the gang in the Delft Area which has one of the highest murder rates in the province and nationally. As a result of the extortions, many doctors' surgeries left the area and community initiatives by the City such as the building of parks for the kids in the area were stopped.*

One of the members of the gang and criminal network under the leadership of Leroy Adams decided to plead guilty. The accused confirmed that he actively participated in the operations of the gang, The Terrible Josters. Between 12 February 2021 and 8 August 2022 in Delft the accused pleaded that he unlawfully and intentionally performed acts aimed at causing, bringing about, or promoting or contributing towards a pattern of criminal gang activity as set out in counts 2 to 21. The accused sold drugs, possessed firearms and ammunition that was for the benefit of the gang.

The accused also committed the murders and attempted murders with firearms on instruction of the gang leader that benefited the Terrible Josters Criminal gang.

The accused faced 21 charges. He concluded a plea and sentence agreement with the State. He was sentenced to: gang charges: 5 years; Contravening sec. 5(b) of Act 140 of 1992: 5 years; Murder: 20 years; Possession of a firearm without a license: 15 years; Unlawful possession of ammunition: 2 years; Possession of a firearm without a license: 15 years; Unlawful possession of ammunition: 2 years; Murder: 20 years; Attempted Murder: 10 years; Possession of a firearm without a license: 15 years; Unlawful possession of ammunition: 2 years; Murder: 20 years; 7 counts of Attempted Murder: 5 years on each count; Possession of a firearm without a license: 15 years; Unlawful possession of ammunition: 2 years.

## S v MIKEAL KEYS, SHADLEY BRITS, WESLEY KRUGER

*Prosecutor: Adv. R Stone*

*The “Flakka gang” is operational in Lavender Hill, a gang ridden area in the Western Cape where the community also suffers under dire socio-economic circumstances.*

The suspect and the deceased are all members of the Flakka gang. The deceased was smuggling drugs and a portion of the drug proceeds had to go for the benefit of the gang.

On 7 January 2021 the witnesses saw the three suspects belonging to the Flakka gang in the area of Wight Court Lavender Hill where they requested one of the witnesses to call the deceased and asked him to give them the drug proceeds. The deceased joined the accused and a few minutes thereafter on the same day the deceased was shot and killed by Accused two.



# ICC CONCLUDES CONFIRMATION OF CHARGES HEARING IN KONY CASE

*On 10 September 2025, the confirmation of charges hearing in the case *The Prosecutor v. Joseph Kony* concluded before Pre-Trial Chamber III of the International Criminal Court (ICC), composed of Judge Althea Violet Alexis-Windsor (Presiding Judge), Judge Iulia Motoc and Judge Haykel Ben Mahfoudh. The hearing was held in the absence of the suspect who was represented by Defence Counsel Peter Haynes, KC.*

The purpose of the confirmation of charges hearing is for the judges to determine whether or not there is sufficient evidence to establish substantial grounds to believe that the suspect committed each of the crimes charged. If the charges are confirmed, in full or in part, the case will be transferred to a Trial Chamber, which will conduct the subsequent phase of the proceedings: the trial.

After hearing the opening statements, submissions on the merits and final observations of the Prosecution, the Legal Representatives of the Victims and the Defence from 9 to 10 September 2025, the judges will now start their deliberations.

In accordance with Regulation 53 of the Regulations of the Court, the Pre-Trial Chamber shall deliver its written decision within 60 days of the date on which the confirmation hearing ends. The Pre-Trial Chamber may then:

- confirm those charges for which the Chamber has determined that there is sufficient evidence, and commit the suspect to trial before a Trial Chamber. In this case a trial would still require Mr Kony to be present before the ICC as there is no trial in absentia according to the ICC Rome Statute;
- decline to confirm those charges for which it has determined that there is insufficient evidence and stop the proceedings against Mr Kony;
- adjourn the hearing and request the Prosecutor to provide further evidence, to conduct further investigations or to amend any charge for which the evidence submitted appears to establish a crime other than the one charged was committed.

The Defence and the Prosecutor cannot directly appeal this decision. However they can request authorisation from the Pre-Trial Chamber to appeal it.

Background: **The Warrant of Arrest for Joseph Kony** was issued under seal on 8 July 2005, amended on 27 September 2005 and unsealed on 13 October 2005. He is suspected of crimes against humanity (murder, attempted murder, enslavement, forced marriage, rape, torture, severe abuse and mistreatment, forced pregnancy, and persecution) and war crimes (murder, attempted murder, torture, cruel treatment of civilians, intentionally directing an attack against a civilian population, pillaging, destroying the enemy's property, rape, sexual slavery, forced pregnancy, conscription of children and the use children to participate actively in hostilities) allegedly committed in 2003 and 2004 in northern Uganda.

On 12 December 2024, ICC Pre-Trial Chamber III scheduled the confirmation of charges hearing to commence on 9 September 2025, in the absence of the suspect. On 3 June 2025, the Appeals Chamber confirmed the decision on the criteria for holding confirmation of charges proceedings in absentia.



# FAREWELL TO AN ACTIVIST AND A LEGAL MIND

Knowledge Management Team: Strategy Management Unit

**Adv Pierre Smith officially retired from the NPA on 30 May 2025 after serving over 30 years in the Criminal Justice Sector (CJS).**

## Career Trajectory

Adv Pierre Smith completed his law degree at the University of Pretoria in 1986 when South Africa was in the initial phases of going through a massive transition politically as well as in its legal systems. With an interest in prosecution and a will to become part of a team that could make a difference at that time, he declined the offer to work for a private company in London, England. Instead, he opted to join the Department of Justice as there was no National Prosecuting Authority at that time. He started in the Northern Cape in 1987 and progressed quite extensively. He started as a District Court prosecutor and was subsequently promoted to Regional Court Prosecutor and eventually Senior Public Prosecutor. In 1990, he was appointed as a State Advocate at the Northern Cape DPP office in Kimberly, which at that stage was the Attorney General's Office. Throughout his career in prosecution, he dealt with the most serious offences where he predominantly prosecuted Schedule 1 offences in the Criminal Procedure Act, relating to murder, rape matters and armed robbery. This led to him developing an interest in Gender-Based Violence and at that stage the legislation was different from what it is today.

In 1993 he was appointed as a Senior State Advocate at the same office. He went further to study children's law at the University of Pretoria, and his education at the University of Cape Town was in relation to social context awareness in the prosecutorial decision-making process. This course was also revolutionary because he later became part of a team that managed to have it included as compulsory curriculum in specific training on specific pieces of legislation, for instance, the Sexual Offences Act and Trafficking Act.

## Career Trajectory

In 2000, he was appointed as Deputy Director of Public Prosecutions for the Sexual Offences Community Affairs (SOCA) Unit at the NPA head office. That is when his journey in the specialist field of Gender-Based Violence began. Since 2012, he has intermittently acted as a



Special Director Public Prosecutions for SOCA for an extensive period until the position was permanently filled in February 2021. Thereafter he returned to his position as Deputy Director Public Prosecutions which he held until his retirement.

- In 2000, he was part of the Interdepartmental Management Team (IDMT) which consisted of stakeholders from different departments that developed the anti-rape strategy which became the forerunner for the Thuthuzela Care Centre (TCC) model, which was developed by SOCA in the NPA. The model was developed in the year 2000 and implemented in 2001 in two sites. At that stage, this type of service did not exist in a model in the Criminal Justice Sector (CJS). There are now 66 TCC sites nationally. The TCC model is currently regarded as a base practice model in dealing with Gender-Based Violence management worldwide.
- He was part of a team that lead the move away from common law offences to statutory law offences, specifically on Act 32 of 2007 which came into operation on 16 December 2007. Moreover, as part of the team, they made social context awareness a compulsory module for the training of prosecutors, and that is evident in that piece of legislation. Furthermore, he was part of the development of training material for prosecutors on sexual offences based on that piece of legislation and had to go through a vigorous process to achieve that. Adv Smith also played a role in the amendment of the Domestic Violence Act, development of the Child Justice Act and the Trafficking in Persons Act. For the first time, trafficking was identified as an offence in the Sexual Offences Act 32 of 2007 in Section 71 for sexual purposes.

- In 2020, Adv Smith was requested by the late Adv Rodney De Kock, to revive community prosecution in the country. This is an initiative that was put in place by NDPP Adv. Shamila Batohi, when she was DPP in KZN in 2006. Currently the NPA has 50 community prosecution sites implemented nationally in all divisions, and 26 of them are specifically focusing on Gender-Based Violence orientated matters.
- He also takes pride in having spearheaded the DNA project. He formed an excellent relationship with the SAPS forensic science laboratories to streamline and fast-track DNA forensic reports which are crucial in corroboration of evidence in rape offences. To date, over 60 000 DNA reports were channelled through him. The reports are captured on the system, analysed and distributed to the DPP offices and nodal points. The Research Management unit at the NPA assisted with the capturing and consolidation of the reports.
- He prides the SOCA unit in having appealed a matter that was decided in the Eastern Cape Regional Court on the interpretation of consent in relation to rape. The accused in that matter had appealed to the provincial High Court, which was then decided in his favour and his conviction was overturned. They, as the NPA took it to the Supreme Court of Appeal (SCA). The Supreme Court of Appeal agreed with the State and gave a unanimous decision on 24 April 2024 (Director of Public Prosecutions, Eastern Cape, Makhanda v Coko). SCA fully agreed with the State that the provincial appeal was incorrectly decided, and they overruled it. That accused went back to prison and his conviction on rape was reinstated.

### Challenges

Adv Smith opines that the most challenging part for him within the GBV environment has been the lack of understanding and lack of social context awareness by crucial role players in the criminal justice sector. This includes Investigating Officers, Prosecutors and some in the Judiciary.

### Reflections on the fight against GBV

Adv Smith says the most fulfilling part in his career has been working with his colleagues at SOCA. "It takes guts, perseverance, decisiveness and a high level of integrity and service excellence to work in a unit like this. For 25 years, it has not been an easy environment. With all the criticism against the NPA and in many instances against how we deal with cases, we need to stand strong as a united front in dealing with GBV matters efficiently and effectively", he added. Adv Smith states that there should be specific emphasis on the importance of constant skills development for prosecutors when they deal with GBV. He argues that the law is a constant

developing science. Either on legislation or case law, prosecutors need to be up to date with all the latest developments to effectively deal with GBV matters. "For prosecutors to adequately understand the law and to apply it, ongoing skills development is essential.", he added. For those wishing to venture into the field of prosecuting GBV matters, Adv Smith shares six guiding principles:

- As a prosecutor in-depth knowledge of the law and trial advocacy is paramount.
- In dealing with GBV cases, prosecutors must have a victim-centric approach which they can only adequately apply if they had inter alia, substantial training in social context awareness.
- One needs to know the case that was assigned to him/her to prosecute and be able to apply the legislation and case law adequately. GBV cases are less technical, but far more emotional and draining. Therefore, the victim-centric approach is needed to adequately deal with the case.
- The effective consultation of GBV witnesses is essential when a prosecutor is assigned dockets on GBV to prosecute. "As a prosecutor you need to build a rapport with your victims and your complainants. They need to feel comfortable to share what their experiences are when they were the unfortunate victims of these horrific offences. You need to have sufficient time to consult with your witnesses", he added.
- Prosecutors need to understand the corroboration that is required for their case to have a successful prosecution in court that will lead to a conviction beyond a reasonable doubt.
- Lastly, Court Preparation Officers also play a crucial role in Sexual Offence and GBV matters by giving the victim insight into the court procedures.

### Words of wisdom for aspirant prosecutors

As words of wisdom for aspirant prosecutors, Adv. Smith says prosecutors must have absolute passion and commitment in dealing with GBV matters. "It should be imperative for them to have a sharpened knowledge of the legislation and case law, not only in relation to GBV but specifically on trial advocacy skills", he added.

As a parting shot, he says even though there may be challenges in the work environment, they build character, and they build one to see where they can improve themselves. The law profession demands constant focus and absolute determination to succeed. It requires one to constantly improve their skills to ultimately be part of a system that works far better than it did previously.

# NDPP'S VISITS TO DPP OFFICES

Abram Mohlatlole

Communications Officer: Gauteng Local Division

*As her term approaches its conclusion in early 2026, the National Director of Public Prosecutions (NDPP), Advocate Shamila Batohi, has embarked on a series of regional oversight visits aimed at engaging with staff from the courts and the Offices of the Directors of Public Prosecutions (DPP). These visits have provided an opportunity for robust and constructive discussions on operational and prosecutorial matters. To date, the NDPP has visited the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, and the Gauteng Local Division in Johannesburg, with further regions scheduled to be visited.*

Accompanied by the Acting Deputy National Director of Public Prosecutions: National Prosecutions Service (DNDPP: NPS), Advocate Sibongile Mzinyathi, as well as the Heads of Human Resources, Security, and Communications, Advocate Batohi engaged staff on pressing matters, including case backlogs, staff development, and the imperative of safeguarding the integrity of the NPA amid intense public scrutiny. These visits underscore her steadfast commitment to transparent leadership, accountability, and the reinforcement of the NPA's institutional values.

The visits also featured candid Q&A sessions, during which staff raise concerns about prosecutorial delays, vacancies, security, and broader systemic challenges.

Advocate Batohi's tenure has not been without challenges, yet her leadership has consistently reflected courage, clarity, and unwavering accountability. From advancing transparency and strengthening engagement with civil society, to driving progress in complex corruption, tax, robbery, and money-laundering cases, she has laid a solid foundation for a stronger institution. As the NPA prepares to bid her farewell, it acknowledges her resilience, vision, and deep commitment to justice. Hers has been a voice of integrity during a difficult period, and her efforts have undeniably helped reposition the NPA for a more credible and effective future.

The meetings also underscore the importance of employee safety, particularly in the wake of the recent tragic losses of Mr Elona Sambulula and Ms Tracy Brown. During the Eastern Cape leg of the visits, Advocate Batohi paid a visit to the home of the late Regional Court Prosecutor, Tracy Brown, in Gqeberha. This gesture served as a poignant reminder of the NPA's solidarity with its colleagues and its enduring commitment to justice and compassion.

The NDPP's engagements not only highlight the NPA's commitment to supporting its employees but also reaffirm the critical role prosecutors play in upholding justice.



**Eastern Cape Division leadership and staff meeting with the NDPP during her regional visit programme**



**KZN Division leadership and staff meeting with the NDPP during her regional visit programme**



**Gauteng Local Division leadership and staff meeting with the NDPP during her regional visit programme**

# THE NATIONAL PROSECUTING AUTHORITY (NPA) SENIOR MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

*The NPA Senior Management Conference took place from 19–21 August 2025 in Gauteng under the theme “Consolidating and Future-Proofing the NPA as Part of Building a Capable, Ethical and Developmental State (2025–2030).” The gathering brought together NPA leadership to reflect on progress, confront key challenges, and chart a path toward building a more resilient, ethical, and future-ready institution.*

Outlining the purpose and overview of the three-day session, Deputy National Director of Public Prosecutions (DNDPP): Strategy, Operations and Compliance (SOC), Adv Anton du Plessis, described the conference as an opportunity for reflection, realignment, and co-creation of a roadmap for the NPA’s future. “The outcome of this conference will not only guide our internal processes and strategies but will also serve as a blueprint for the incoming



**DNDPP: SOC, Adv Anton du Plessis at the conference**

NDPP. We gather here at a defining moment for the NPA and for our country. The rule of law is under attack globally, and the headwinds we are fighting are getting stronger by the day. In recent months, our institution has come under immense public attack. Many of you feel the weight of this; some even fear it. But let me say clearly: we are not defined by our critics; we are defined by our integrity, courage, and service to justice. Together, we have rebuilt our organisation from the devastation of state capture. We are not yet where we want to be, but we are stronger, more resilient, and more united than ever before. We must now take the next step forward,” he said.

Looking ahead, Adv du Plessis reaffirmed the NPA’s commitment to a new five-year strategy aimed at future-proofing the institution. He stressed that the strategy is anchored in two pillars: innovation and integrity. “Integrity is our shield — it protects us when we are attacked. But integrity alone is not enough. Crime has become more complex, technology is advancing faster than ever, and public expectations of us are rising. If we stand still, we will fall behind. We will not stand still. We will innovate, modernise our systems, embrace new technology, and build the new skills and capacities that are required. We will give our prosecutors the tools they need to deliver justice with speed, precision, and impact, always underpinned by integrity,” he emphasised.

He concluded by urging delegates to embrace this new chapter with courage. “Let integrity be the compass of the NPA, and innovation be the engine that drives us forward,” he said.



**Minister of DoJ & CD, Mmamoloko Kubayi, delivering the keynote address during the conference**

*Delivering the keynote address, Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development, Hon. Mmamoloko Kubayi, reflected on the theme of repositioning the NPA as the heartbeat of the justice system. She stressed that to effectively reposition an institution such as the NPA, it is essential to understand both the domestic and global environments in which it operates, as well as the increasingly sophisticated tools used by criminals. "The kind of changes that have happened in the world require institutions that are flexible, innovative, and adaptive to remain effective and resilient. We need to ask ourselves: what is it that we are going to do to ensure that the NPA is a flexible, innovative, and adaptive organisation?" she said.*

Minister Kubayi highlighted the rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI) as one of the most pressing challenges. She noted that rapid technological change has not only transformed how people live and work but has also altered the way crimes are committed. Drawing attention to the Internet Watch Foundation's 2024 report, she cautioned against the emergence of AI-generated Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM), which no longer requires human victims and presents new legal, ethical, and detection challenges. "We must ask ourselves: are we ready to tackle this type of crime? Will we be able to detect it before it destroys the fabric of our society? In a repositioned NPA, justice must not only be done but also be seen and felt," she emphasised.

Marking the significance of the conference taking place during Women's Month, the Minister paid tribute to women across society, acknowledging their resilience and contribution. "Against all odds, women have demonstrated that, given half a chance, they can tilt the scales towards gender equality, and, in many cases, they outperform their male counterparts," she concluded.

### **Day One Highlights**

Day one of the conference featured a number of distinguished guest speakers who shared critical insights into strengthening the criminal justice system and tackling key challenges facing the country.

Mr Ismail Momoniat, co-lead of the Global Solidarity Levies Task Force, delivered a presentation on the challenges and prospects for South Africa as it works towards exiting the FATF Greylist.

Lieutenant General Mbotho of the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (DPCI) addressed delegates on the importance of strategic and coordinated collaborations to fast-track corruption and commercial crime cases.

Judge C. Mocumie, provided valuable judicial perspectives on innovation within the criminal justice value chain, highlighting reforms necessary to enhance both system efficiency and public confidence.

*Day two of the conference was officially opened by the National Director of Public Prosecutions (NDPP), Adv Shamila Batohi. In her address, she highlighted the rare opportunity of having NPA senior managers gathered in one room and urged delegates to engage in frank and honest discussions about systemic issues to enhance efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability. "You are the ones on the ground, with a valuable perspective on what needs to be enhanced or changed," she said.*

Adv Batohi noted that the NPA has developed innovative partnerships to strengthen the work of the Investigating Directorate Against Corruption (IDAC) and its impact, including the establishment of the Digital Evidence Unit (DEU), a five-year project currently funded by business and expected to be taken over by government to serve a broader scope. "We have focused on institutional reform and capacity building. We need to look at the systems we have in place to build a strong institution. A strong democracy needs ethical institutions," she emphasised.

### **Breakaway Sessions and Key Discussion Topics**

On the second and final day of the conference, delegates participated in breakaway group sessions to deliberate on critical focus areas for strengthening the NPA. Each group presented its findings and proposals to the plenary, which allowed for a robust, solution-driven discussion meant to inform the conference's final key resolutions.

### **Discussion groups were structured as follows:**

**Group 1:** Sharpening the NPA's anti-corruption arsenal (with a focus on high-profile matters, including corruption);

**Group 2:** Turbocharging the SOCA Unit as the sharp edge of the NPA's response to Gender-Based Violence;



**NDPP, Adv Shamila Batohi, delivering the opening address during the conference**

**Group 3:** Communicating for impact;

**Group 4:** Skills, capacity, and specialised training;

**Group 5:** Elevating the role of the Asset Forfeiture Unit (AFU) in the fight against crime and complex corruption.

### **Way Forward and Key Takeaways**

In outlining the way forward, Ms Salome Baloyi, Chief Director: Strategy Management Unit, highlighted key resolutions including the interrogation and refinement of the Chief Prosecutor's Report for conversion into an actionable project plan, regular monitoring of its implementation, the preparation of infrastructure reports for escalation to national channels, and proposals to strengthen the operational relationship between DPPs and SDPPs.

She further emphasised the need for enhanced in-service training for junior prosecutors, improvements to the Aspirant Prosecutors Programme, readiness for emerging AI-driven crimes, and repositioning the NPA as an employer of choice. Additional proposals focused on regular assessments of lower court workloads, strengthening media engagement, and reinforcing the NPA's operational and financial independence through competitive salaries, prosecutor safety, lifestyle audits to promote ethical culture, and improved digital systems, particularly in rural areas.







**Delegates During the NPA Senior Management Conference**

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