



triangle project

**Media Release**  
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Triangle Project applauds 10-year sentence for rape of lesbian woman

On Tuesday March 15<sup>th</sup>, the Sexual Offences Court in Parow handed down a ten-year sentence for the rape of a woman known to her community to be lesbian. This sentence is the result of tireless and persistent efforts by Triangle Project activists to ensure that this case was given due process and that justice was delivered. In this case, like so many others of this kind, SAPS had taken several months to apprehend the woman's rapist and their poor investigation placed any chance of justice in serious jeopardy. Despite this, it is encouraging and reassuring to know that certain individuals within the NPA remain willing to work hard to put an end to hate crimes against LGBTI people.

In her closing arguments, the prosecutor clearly emphasized that the crime was made more detestable when placed within the context of increasing prevalence of violence and hate crimes against LGBTI people across South Africa.

Although this case is now concluded, Triangle Project is still monitoring six other active cases throughout the province – all marked by poor investigations, endless delays and an unlikely prospect of meaningful justice. While we applaud the NPA for their diligence in this matter, we continue to call on government to strengthen the capacity of SAPS in investigating all crimes, but particularly those against LGBTI people. Furthermore, we

TRIANGLE PROJECT// 2ND FLOOR ELTA HOUSE, 3 CALEDONIAN ROAD, MOWBRAY, CAPE TOWN //

NPO: 003-971//INFO@TRIANGLE.ORG.ZA// 0216861475// TRIANGLE.ORG.ZA

call upon government to speedily submit the Hate Crimes Bill to parliament in order to give LGBTI people, SAPS and the NPA the tools and support they urgently need to begin addressing these crimes which so thoroughly undermine the human dignity of the entire LGBTI community.

The nature of sexual assault often means that the survivor and the attacker live in the same community, giving the attacker the scope and power to intimidate and silence. This case was no different, with threats driving the survivor from her own home and adding another layer to her ordeal. This court victory was made possible by the determination and bravery of the survivor. We stand with her during this time, proud to have played a role in her struggle for justice.

**For comment please contact:**

Sindiswa Thafeni (Community Engagement and Empowerment Manager)  
0216861475 // 0836173636

Matthew Clayton (Research, Advocacy & Policy Manager)  
0216861475 // 0828285275