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24 years for ANC man

Mozambique citizen guilty of Witbank sabotage

Argus Correspondent
PRETORIA. — A "self-confessed terrorist", Rogerio Chamusso, 32, has been sentenced to an effective 24-year jail term by the Supreme Court here.

Chamusso, alias Patrick Shange, a Mozambique citizen, was convicted by Mr Justice Myburgh of undergoing military training in an Angolan camp in the use of explosives, sabotaging a sub-station in Witbank and of being in possession of limpet mines. He pleaded guilty to these charges.

He was acquitted on charges of murdering Mr Lukas Abraham Mans and Mr Hendrik Rudolph Gerhardus Booyens on October 23 last year and of the illegal possession of a Makarov pistol.

He was sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment on the charge of undergoing military training, 12 years' imprisonment on the sabotage charge and six years' imprisonment for possessing Russian-made limpet mines. The

court ordered that four years of the six-year jail-term were to run concurrently with the sentence on the sabotage charge.

Mr Justice Myburgh said that sentencing someone was not an easy task. "I do not want to impose a sentence that is too severe — the young man still has a long span of his life before him — but I would be failing in my duty if I passed too light a sentence.

"The interests of the community in this case are of paramount importance in that the South African public should be free from this type of terrorist action."

The court heard that the death of Chamusso's wife and son at the hands of South African soldiers during the Defence Force raid on Matola in January last year prompted him to join the African National Congress (ANC).

He underwent four weeks of training in Angola in the use of explosives and infiltrated South Africa in October last year. On October 23 he sabotaged an Eskom sub-station, causing R20 000 damage.

Mr Justice Myburgh said he took into consideration the fact that no one was killed or injured in this case.

He acquitted Chamusso on the murder charge. Chamusso's story

that the Makarov pistol used in the killing and found in his car belonged to a colleague could be true. However, he described Chamusso as a "shrewd liar".

Mr P G Haasbroek, for the State, asked the court to impose the death sentence. Failing that, he recommended an effective sentence of 40 years.

Mr J N de Vos, for the defence, asked the court to impose a sentence which would not crush Chamusso as a person.

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