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MEDIA RELEASE

Justice system continues to fail David Olyne

Since his murder in March 2014, the justice system has continuously failed David Olyne. From the persistently poor investigation of his case to the failure of the SAPS to follow up on valuable leads to the delays in finalisation that have pushed this case to October 2016, more than two-and-a-half years after the original crime.

Thursday May 19th 2016 was the initial date set by Judge Desai to sentence Christo Onkers for the murder of David Olyne, a crime for which he was found guilty several months ago. The court had ordered that Onkers undergo a psychiatric evaluation, a process to provide information essential to understanding the mental state of the perpetrator in order to hand down fair sentence.

Despite Judge Desai's emphasis at the court's prior sitting that the psychiatric evaluation would be concluded by the May 19 sitting, 'systematic flaws' in the justice system has meant that the evaluation is yet to be conducted, leaving no choice but to postpone sentencing further.

Triangle Project has been doggedly outspoken about our dissatisfaction with the investigation and subsequent trial and we further feel that every delay causes unnecessary anguish for the community and continues to place an unfair strain on their resources, both emotional and financial. We reiterate that we think that the psychological evaluation of Christo Onkers is a vital step towards justice, although we continue to be frustrated by the delays in the proceedings and burden this places on all involved.

The systematic flaws mentioned by Judge Desai yesterday underlie a larger problem with the entire South African justice system, which is overburdened and under-resourced. Delays such as those in the David Olyne trial cause concern because of the subsequent effect on other survivors who may decide not to report or pursue their cases because of perceived inefficiencies or deficiencies in the criminal justice system. Whatever the ultimate outcome, a justice system that is not dependable, reliant and efficient, is not a justice system at all.

Our call remains the same, justice must be done and the justice system must be given all the tools it needs to be able to deliver it.