



EFF STATEMENT ON THE GERHARD ACKERMAN VIOLATING HIS BAIL CONDITIONS WITH 740 CHARGES IN RELATION TO LEADING A CHILD SEX RING

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THE EFF notes with disgust that Gerhard Ackerman, a man with 740 charges in relation to his position as a child sex ring king pin. The charges include rape, attempted murder, child pornography and trafficking, he was released on R6000 bail on 9 July 2021.

Ackerman was then re-arrested over the weekend for violating his July 2021 bail conditions. Fortunately, soberness reigned today in the Johannesburg High Court that revoked Ackerman's bail and he is remanded in custody under 24-hour suicide watch.

The South African Police Service (SAPS), National Prosecuting Agency (NPA) and Magistrate Court has in essence spat in the faces of the children who are victims of Ackerman who was indicted in December 2007 for exposing his penis to brothers aged 9 and 7. Two-years later, Ackerman is accused of sexual assault once again with the same brothers.

In July 2018, Ackerman was accused of recording himself masturbating in front of a 11-year old boy at a Sunninghill (Gauteng) swimming school. Later in 2018, Ackerman was charged for forcing a 11-year old boy to rub his penis at an upmarket country club in Johannesburg. He was then released on bail of R5000 when he was arrested in July 2021 with 740 charges. His co-accused, Advocate Paul Kennedy, has since committed suicide.

The haphazard approach of the SAPS, the NPA and the courts on bail applications for Schedule 6 criminal charges is tragically revolting. The Ackerman case is sadly one of thousands and hardly isolated. It has remained common practice for all these arms of justice to blame each other for allowing accused child rapists, traffickers and abusers bail. And whilst we note that the accused have a right to apply for bail, the state is mandated to investigate, to object the bail application and apply the law to remand such perpetrators in police custody until the completion of the trial.

However, the state's perpetual failure and negligence over sexual crimes is why Ackerman has, since 2007 been free to be a child sex ring king pin. Furthermore, it was the United States of America law enforcement agency that picked up on Ackerman's child sex ring and reported to South African authorities. This validates the assertions that the country's policing and legal system have completely abandoned the duty of protecting vulnerable persons at the hands of sexual predators.

The ANC Government has no interest and neither does it have the capacity to provide direction to the shocking increase in missing children and countless research reports coupled with the cries from civil organisation on child trafficking. Child Welfare South Africa states that "In South Africa, the extent of sexual exploitation of children has increased drastically and its nature has changed over time. On a regular basis, there are reports of cases of children rescued from human traffickers and from the clutches of sex slave rings".

In addition, the ANC Government has made South Africa a lush ground for sexual exploitation of children with the high levels of inequality, unemployment, ill education and dire poverty. 68% of South African children live in poor households and 20% are orphans. Families and child headed households are struggling to survive and as a result, become more vulnerable to commercial exploitation. According to the International Labour Organisation in South Africa, an estimated 1.39 million people are forced into commercial sexual work and about 40-50% of the victims are children.

The EFF calls on the Minister of Justice and Correctional Services, Ronald Lamola to tighten the grip on the mishandling of sexual assault cases. It is unacceptable that on a daily basis, following the apprehension of predators and sexual pests, his department releases them back into our societies without adequate intervention and rehabilitation in instance it is possible. If anything, with such a track record, Minister Ronald Lamola automatically becomes responsible for every act of violence committed by a person released on bail only to repeatedly violate communities, women and children.

The EFF will continue to strengthen its advocacy work in ensuring our laws and protected for the benefit of victims and survivors of sexual violence. The EFF will ensure that the grassroots and community work by civil organisations is amplified. Lastly, the EFF will see to it that every court appearance of Ackerman is attended to and monitored as this is the only way to guarantee that justice is served.

ISSUED BY THE ECONOMIC FREEDOM FIGHTERS

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