



steve biko
foundation

"They just killed somebody in jail - a friend of mine - about ten days before I was arrested. Now it would have been bloody useful evidence for them to assault me."

- **Bantu Stephen Biko**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Steve Biko Foundation Welcomes South Gauteng High Court Ruling on the Ahmed Timol Murder Case

The Steve Biko Foundation welcomes yesterday's historic South Gauteng High Court unanimous ruling that gave the go ahead to the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) to prosecute former apartheid cop, Joao Rodrigues, for his allegedly involvement in the brutal murder of anti-apartheid activist, Ahmed Timol.

The Steve Biko Foundation commends the Timol family for their unyielding quest for justice for Ahmed Timol, who, like many others, was brutally murdered while detained in police custody for daring to challenge the status quo under apartheid.

Ahmed Timol was thrown out of a 10th-story window of the notorious John Vorster police station, now known as Johannesburg Central police station, in October 1971.

In his main arguments for a stay of prosecution, Rodrigues had said the length of time since Timol's death, his age (80) and his memory loss would preclude the interest of justice should he be tried for the murder.

However yesterday, Judge Moshidi, reading from a full-bench judgement comprised of honourable Judges J. Kollapen and J. Opperman, dismissed those arguments, saying that "the interest of justice and society's need for accountability... mitigated against granting a permanent stay of prosecution".

Significantly taking place in this 41st anniversary year of Steve Biko's assassination in detention, this ruling is a victory, not only for the Timol family, but for the entire nation, including the families of many others who were ruthlessly murdered while detained in police custody.

"Ahmed Timol represents a category of many other people who went through a similar horrendous experience and died in custody under state security laws. This ruling is important in that it begins a process to restore his dignity, and we are grateful to the Timol family for moving the nation to this stage", said the Executive Trustee of the Steve Biko Foundation, Nkosinathi Biko.

"This case shows that justice will not be compromised," concluded Judge Seun Moshidi.

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