

## AFFIDAVIT

I, the undersigned,

**Gadija Chothia**

Do hereby make oath and say that:

1. Save where it appears from the context, the facts contained in this affidavit are within my personal knowledge. To the best of my knowledge and belief they are both true and correct.
2. This affidavit sets out important events and facts that in my considered view, were intentionally and deliberately withheld from the first inquest into the death of Ahmed Timol ("Timol"). I am of the firm view that this conduct by the erstwhile South African Police ("SAP") was aimed at covering up various serious crimes committed against Timol.
3. I wish these facts to be presented to a new inquest court for purposes of establishing the real truth as to what happened to the late Timol.
4. In October 1971, I was 33 years old and employed as a book keeper at Cajee's Jewellers in Roodepoort working in the office at the back of the shop.
5. I lived with my family, the Dangors, in our home in Newclare, Johannesburg.
6. I was politically aware and opposed to the policy and injustices of apartheid. I was politically active, and remember, *inter alia*, attending political meetings in Braamfontein.
7. Ahmed Timol (Ahmed) was well known to me. He lived near my work place in Roodepoort. We were friends and socialised together - occasionally going to movies together. We were both involved in politics and this was often a topic we discussed. We shared similar views concerning the oppression of black people in South Africa and the inequality that existed between the different races of our country.



8. In mid-October 1971 Ahmed asked me if I would assist him by typing addresses on envelopes. I agreed to do this work for him, but told him I would have to do it at home and not at work. Though Ahmed never explicitly told me the purpose of the envelopes, I knew that the addressed envelopes would be used to distribute political literature by post. I was keen for this to happen as I believed that people should know that banned political parties were still active in South Africa.
9. Ahmed brought me a box of envelopes soon after I had agreed to do this work. He said he would also provide me with a list of names and addresses so that I could commence the typing.
10. I intended using the typewriter which belonged to my nephew's wife Nazly Dangor who lived in our family home.
11. I last saw Ahmed on 22 October 1971 when he visited me at my workplace, I think he was either on his way to or from Friday Afternoon Jumuah prayers. We chatted for a while, I did not know that this would be the last time that I would see him.
12. Ahmed was fully clothed and as far as I could see he was injury free. He moved easily and freely and did not show that he was in pain of any sort, nor did he mention that he had been involved in an altercation or suffered any injuries of any sort.
13. This was the last time that I saw Ahmed.
14. The following morning, a Saturday, while I was at work two white men arrived. They identified themselves as Security Branch policemen and in a crude and insulting manner arrested me calling me a 'communist bitch' in front of my colleagues. They searched my work place but did not seize anything.
15. They then escorted me to our family home in Newclare, and crudely searched our home in a most humiliating manner. They pulled our belongings and clothes, including our underwear, from the cupboards, rudely scattering everything on the floor. When my mother objected a Security Branch policeman slapped her. Our home was left in a state of complete disarray. This experience traumatised everyone living there, especially the young children.

16. They found the box of new blank envelopes which had been given to me by Ahmed in my cupboard and seized these. They searched for a typewriter but Nazly had hidden it in the oven and they did not find it.
17. At that stage, I had not even started typing the envelopes as I was waiting for Ahmed to provide the name/address list.
18. After they had finished searching our house I was taken to the SB offices at John Vorster Square. I am not sure to which floor we went to, but it was one of the top floors.
19. I was taken into an office, and forced to stand while they took down my details and questioned me about my relationship with Ahmed. I told them that we were friends, and that I had agreed to type envelopes for a mail order business. I explained that I had not yet commenced this typing as he had not yet given me the name/address list. I did not disclose that I knew that he was going to use the envelopes for the posting of political pamphlets.
20. I have no recollection of hearing other activities or nearby noises while standing in the office.
21. After a couple of hours, I was taken down to the cells and locked up in a cell by myself.
22. In the cell, there was a metal framed bed, mattress and a blanket. There was a small barred window and if I stood on the metal railing of the bed I could see the "Malay Camp" settlement below.
23. Within a few days I was again taken up to the SB offices and interrogated again. I was forced to stand for a long time while they questioned me about my relationship with Ahmed and the proposed typing of the envelopes. I became exhausted with the forced standing, and was continually verbally abused with derogatory remarks and threats.
24. I was not physically assaulted.

25. I maintained my position to them, saying that Ahmed and I had a friendly relationship, that he always behaved in a gentlemanly way towards me and that to the best of my knowledge the envelope typing was going to be for business purposes.
26. After several hours, I was taken back to my cell and kept in solitary confinement.
27. Over time I became aware that there were two other women in "women's section" of the cells. They were Dilshad Jetham and Aminia Desai. We were housed in alternative cells (an empty cell between us) to prevent us talking with one another. Communication between us was difficult and very limited. Despite this we managed to smuggle short written messages to one another. At some stage, we were moved to the opposite side of the corridor in the cell block, I suspect because one of the ladies had been shouting in Urdu, a language that I do not understand, to the people in the "Malay Camp".
28. We now overlooked "China Town". I could also observe the construction of the Carlton Centre and observed the progress of the construction closely from my cell window, using this as a means to keep myself occupied.
29. I was allowed out of my cell for exactly 45 minutes a day, but this too was in isolation and did not come into contact with the other detainees.
30. I was completely deprived of contact with the outside world and was not allowed a lawyer, visitors, letters, newspapers or contact with other detainees. This was an extremely frightening and terrible time of my life. I had no idea what my future would be, how my family were or for how long I would be incarcerated.
31. I have no recollection of receiving visits from a Magistrate.
32. At first our food, which was awful, was served onto dirty metal enamel plates from metal garbage cans. I am sure this was done to further degrade and dehumanise me. Initially no attempt was made to accommodate my requirement for Halaal Food. However, after a few days this changed when I was asked if I required Halaal food, and the food improved and was more palatable. It was served onto clean plates from more respectable receptacles. In retrospect, I believe that this change was brought about by Ahmed's death.

33. I am uncertain as to when I learnt about Ahmed's death – it was either during the last days of my detention in the cells or, alternatively immediately upon my release. I do remember my shock and sadness on hearing this news. I rejected the police allegation that Ahmed had committed suicide. Ahmed loved life and was too focussed on important objectives that he wanted to achieve during his lifetime. Suicide was not an option for him.

34. I also reject the Inquest finding that Ahmed may have sustained injuries in a brawl before his detention. Ahmed was a gentleman both in his actions and his outlook of life. He believed that he needed, at all times, to be an example to his pupils. It is inconceivable that he would ever have become involved in a brawl or fight. Furthermore, when I last saw him, a few hours before his arrest and detention, there were no discernible injuries on his person; nor did he tell me that he had been hurt in anyway; or that he had been involved in a brawl.

35. I am not able to remember the names of any of the SB policemen that were involved in my arrest; or detention. Nor will I recognise a photograph of them should I be shown one.

36. I was detained in solitary confinement for 120 days and was then unexpectedly released from detention and allowed home.

37. I confirm that this statement is true to the best of my knowledge. I know and understand the contents of this statement.

Date: 2017-07-23

Time: 14:55

Place: FAIRLAND



SIGNED (SIGNATURE OF DEPONENT)

I certify that the deponent has acknowledged that she knows and understand the contents of this statement which was sworn to before me and the deponents signature was placed thereon in my presence at FAIRLAND SAPS (Place) on 2017-07-23 (Date) at 14:55 (Time)

COMMISSIONER OF OATHS CONSTABLE ZUNGU G.F. (Name & Rank)

SA POLICE SERVICE FAIRLAND SAPS (Station)

SIGNATURE OF COMMISSIONER OF OATHS [Signature] ZUNGU G.F.  
71494405  
CONST.

