

**IN THE COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO
STOPPED TRC INVESTIGATIONS AND/OR PROSECUTIONS**

STATEMENT OF EUGENE ALEXANDER DE KOCK

I, the undersigned,

EUGENE ALEXANDER DE KOCK

do hereby make oath and say that:

- 1 I am an adult with full legal capacity residing in Gauteng, South Africa. I wish to keep my exact residential address confidential for privacy and security reasons. I am contactable through my attorneys of record, Deneys Reitz Inc.
- 2 The facts contained in this statement are, save where the context indicates otherwise, within my own personal knowledge. They are to the best of my knowledge and belief true and correct.
- 3 I was born on 29 January 1949.
- 4 I was arrested in May 1994 for offences committed in the course of my employment as a member of the South African Police. I was tried in the Pretoria Supreme Court in 1996. On 30 October 1996 I was found guilty on eighty-nine charges, including six counts of murder.



Judge Willem van der Merwe sentenced me to two life terms plus 212 years' imprisonment. I was granted amnesty by the TRC for certain of my crimes. On 30 January 2015 I was released on parole.

5 I wish to make certain facts available to the Commission, which I believe will be of assistance with regard to its mandate. I request that my evidence be led by my legal representatives.

6 I structure this statement as follows:

6.1 My personal background

6.2 Vlakplaas;

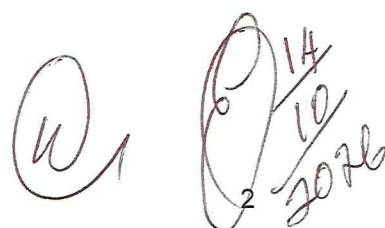
6.3 The Commission's mandate;

6.4 The chain of command.

MY PERSONAL BACKGROUND

7 I completed my mandatory military service at the Army Gymnasium in 1967.

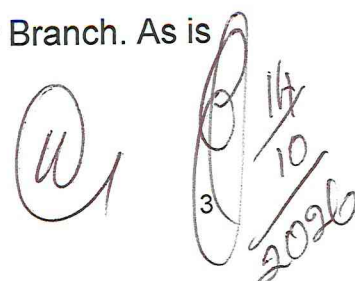
8 I joined the South African Police (**SAP**) in 1968. Following the completion of training at the Police College, in November 1968 I began active service in the counter-terrorism unit in the area then known as Rhodesia.

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- 9 In 1977 I became the Station Commander at Ruacana, in the area then known as South-West Africa. Thereafter I joined the Security Police at Oshakati in 1978. During this time, I was assigned to the Ovambo Home Guard, where I provided specialized counter-terrorism training to members of the Ovambo community and former Angolan nationals. During January 1979, I became one of the founding members of the Koevoet Unit under the command of Colonel Hans Dreyer. To the best of my knowledge, this was the first collaboration between the special forces and the Security Branch.
- 10 In May 1983 I requested to be transferred to the Western Cape Uniform Branch of the South African Police, particularly the West Coast region. This was in order to leave a highly stressful war environment of gunfire, violence and killing. Despite my request, the SAP assigned me to the C-Section of the SAP, particularly the unit known as C1 or C10 unit, stationed at Vlakplaas.

VLAKPLAAS

- 11 Vlakplaas is a farm situated outside of Pretoria, Gauteng. It fell under the C-Section division of the SAP's Security Branch and was responsible for counter-insurgency and anti-terrorism activities. This included the purported rehabilitation of members of the liberation struggle who had been 'turned' to work for the Security Branch. As is

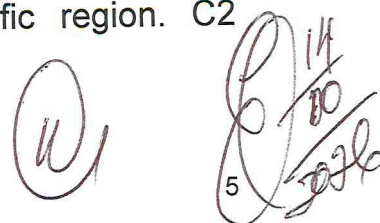
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commonly known, these persons – called ‘Askaris’ – became central to the death squads operated by C-Section, particularly due to their ability to move within the black townships and their ability to win the confidence of members of the liberation struggle without arising suspicion.

- 12 At the time of my involvement, C-Section was headed by Brigadier Willem Schoon. He was ultimately responsible for organising the activities of the C1/C10 unit and Vlakplaas, and reported to the head of the Security Police nationally, then Gen Johan Coetzee. He gave evidence about his activities at a TRC Amnesty hearing on 3 November 1998.
- 13 The Vlakplaas operation itself was established in 1979 by Colonel Johan Victor, a former liaison officer with the Rhodesian Special Branch and Special Forces. He brought in former members of RENAMO, the Selous Scouts, and Rhodesian African Rifles, who had military experience.
- 14 The command of Vlakplaas changed hands several times before I became the commander. The commanders at various times included Colonels Victor and Van Heerden from Pretoria Security Branch, Dirk Coetzee, Captain Jan Coetzee, and Colonel “Jac” Cronje.

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- 15 The command of Vlakplaas was determined annually by the head of the security police, the commissioner of police, the minister of police, and the head of counter terrorism. Vlakplaas fell under the overall command of Brigadier Schoon.
- 16 When I first arrived at Vlakplaas I held the rank of Captain, and served under the command of Brigadier Jac Cronje. On 1 July 1985, I was appointed as the unit's commanding officer. I reported to Brigadier Schoon as the head of C-Section. My second in command was captain Adrian David Baker. He also gave evidence regarding Vlakplaas at the TRC.
- 17 I provided Brigadier Schoon with a daily report between 6:30 AM and 7:00 AM. This meeting took place at the SAP headquarters at Wachthuis, Pretoria.
- 18 The information disclosed during the daily reports was shared among different section heads within C-Section. Requests for C1 operatives from other regions (e.g., Middelburg for Eastern Transvaal) would be sent to Brigadier Schoon.
- 19 He would then involve Section C2, headed by Major Martin Naude. C2 fell within the Security Branch and was broadly responsible for 'terrorism investigations'. Major Naude selected suitable Askaris based on language and customs for the specific region. C2

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maintained a database of these individuals. Brigadier Schoon would then approve the deployment, and I would form the team. Once deployed to a region, the team would report to the commanding officer of that region (e.g., General Steyn in KZN), indicating local command for the operation.

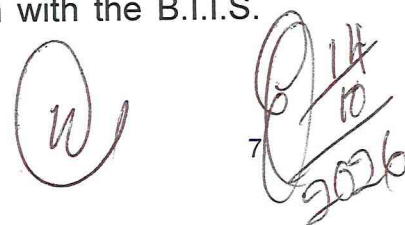
- 20 Financially, Vlakplaas operated with a standing advance, which I managed, of up to R17,000 per month for operational expenses. This money was primarily for the Askaris to buy food and engage with contacts.
- 21 My budget, along with all expenses, was overseen by Colonel Johannes Petrus Koekemoer (later Brigadier Koekemoer), to whom I submitted yearly budgets and receipts. He was the head of the Security Branch national secret fund. Vlakplaas did not have financial autonomy, and accountability measures were in place.
- 22 On many occasions I wrote out receipts, claims and reports which were not genuine, on the instruction of Colonel Koekemoer. This effectively amounted to money laundering, a crime for which I have served time. The purpose of this was to obtain cash which would be used for covert operations, such as the payment of operatives (for example Peter Caselton, who was based in London). It was also used to fund parties at Vlakplaas, attended by generals.

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- 23 Incentives, referred to as "head money," were paid for successful operations such as the arrest or killing of MK/APLA members (R1,000-R2,000) or the recovery of weapons (e.g., R5,000 for a landmine, R7,000 for a SAM-7 missile). This money came from the national office, not directly from the Vlakplaas standing advance. It was cash, which was handled by Brigadier Koekemoer. It had to be motivated for by the submission of reports to Brigadier Koekoemoer
- 24 Brigadier Koekemoer was involved in handling this money. Proper records were not kept.
- 25 The various sections of the SAP had an internal telephone directory which also showed the chain of command and whom to report to.
- 26 There were specific working relationships with other intelligence structures. They included:

26.1 Crime Intelligence: This unit did not exist in its current form during my time at Vlakplaas. The intelligence function was handled by the 'D' section of the Security Branch

26.2 National Intelligence Agency: A working relationship existed, facilitated by Brigadier Loots, particularly for operations in the TBVC territories and through Botswana. The latter involved liaison with the B.I.I.S.

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(Botswana intelligence service) through an external wing of National Intelligence.

26.3 SADF (South African Defence Force): There was no direct working relationship except with the Directorate of Covert Intelligence (DCI). A formal, signed declaration permitted cooperation. Access to Askaris by the DCI was strictly controlled, and required approval from Major General Nick van Rensburg, who was head of the Security Branch of the SAP. Van Rensburg admitted to a number of atrocities, including extra judicial killings (for example Siphiwe Mtimkulu and Topsy Madaka) at the TRC.

27 Initially, Askaris were registered as "Registered Sources" (RS). Later, around 1988-1989, most Askaris underwent a 3-4 week course and were registered as policemen, thus gaining medical and pension benefits. Some, however, did not qualify due to medical reasons or lack of approval from regional generals.

27.1 Vlakplaas did not conduct its own recruitment of Askaris; they were assigned to Vlakplaas from individuals who had been held under Section 29 of the Internal Security Act, sometimes for as long as two and a half years.

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27.2 Vlakplaas maintained a photo album containing thousands of photos of individuals relevant to operations. These albums were continually updated with new information from sources like those I recruited from the United Nations Centre for Refugees in Swaziland. We received a copy of every single refugee applicant who had entered Swaziland from South Africa, and added these persons to the album.

28 Although the publicly stated purpose of Vlakplaas was to rehabilitate the Askaris who had been 'turned' from ANC/APLA-loyalty, it is now well known that Vlakplaas was in reality responsible for carrying out extra-judicial killings, kidnappings, interrogations and bombings.

29 Although the activities of C1 were limited to Vlakplaas, the success of the unit was intended to be replicated in other areas of the country. I was not however directly involved in these initiatives.

Vlakplaas did not operate in isolation

30 The information above demonstrates that Vlakplaas did not operate in isolation. It was part of a larger structure.

31 A matter that requires investigation is the relationship between Vlakplaas and the covert military-intelligence structures known as the

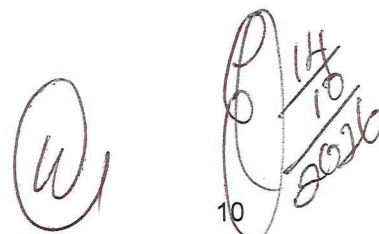
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Directorate of Covert Information (DCI) and the Directorate of Covert Collection (DCC).

- 32 The TRC record contains my evidence concerning a written cooperation document signed by Brigadier Willem Schoon and the relevant covert directorate. It authorised cooperation and liaison between C1/Vlakplaas and Military Intelligence personnel. The record identifies Colonel At Nel as the DCC's second-in-command, and refers to the authority given to relevant commanders to cooperate.
- 33 In separate evidence concerning the Botswana infiltration route, I testified that Tony Oosthuizen headed the PAC desk at DCC and that there was a written cooperation agreement between C1 and DCC
- 34 There were formal relationships through which intelligence, requests, targets and operational assistance moved between police and military structures.

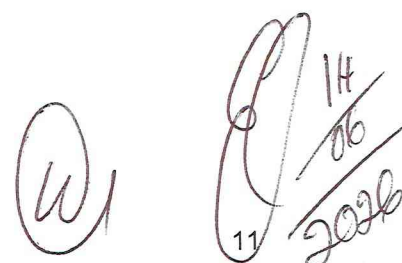
THE COMMISSION'S MANDATE AND MY EVIDENCE

- 35 I understand that the Commission is investigating whether, from 2003 onwards, attempts were made to prevent, delay or suppress the investigation and prosecution of TRC cases. I appreciate that its formal period of enquiry begins in 2003.



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- 36 However, in order to understand what was stopped and why this happened, it is necessary to understand what was available before 2003, who possessed the evidence, and the prosecutorial strategies.
- 37 I was arrested in 1994 and charged with 89 charges, including six counts of murder, conspiracy to murder, attempted murder, assault and kidnapping. These related to the activities of the death squads which were operated out of Vlakplaas during the period when I was stationed there. It would therefore have been obvious to the prosecuting authorities that I would have a great deal of information that would be of relevance to the prosecution of other individuals as well as the generals who were in command, and the politicians who instructed them.
- 38 However, very little attempt was made by Adv Anton Ackermann (who headed the prosecutions Priority Crimes Litigation Unit (the **PCLU**)) or Attorney-General Adv Jan d'Oliveira to interview me regarding my knowledge of apartheid-era crimes.
- 39 I was already in custody, and I was in a position to provide operational details of the involvement of those persons as part of a cooperation agreement. I have never been reluctant to provide information to the prosecuting authorities, however they have simply never approached me to provide this information.

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- 40 I also point out that whilst a formal plea of not guilty was entered on my behalf by the judge presiding over my criminal trial, I disclosed openly and fully my involvement in the crimes for which I had been charged. This would have provided the prosecuting authorities with ample evidence with which to pursue further prosecutions. Inexplicably they did not, save to a very limited extent.
- 41 This is demonstrated by the fact that during 1996, while I was in custody but before I was convicted, I was belatedly called upon to testify in the trial concerning the Motherwell bombing. I gave evidence, and the trial resulted in the successful prosecution of notable Security Branch officials Gideon Nieuwoudt, Wahl du Toit and Martiens Ras.
- 42 Further, on 6 December 1996 I deposed to an affidavit concerning the criminal investigation regarding the kidnappings and murder of the PEBCO 3. I have very recently been approached to give evidence at the inquest in respect of the PEBCO 3 which is currently proceeding (it is postponed at the moment). I have undertaken to do so.
- 43 On 1 October 1997, I made an application to, and gave evidence at, the TRC. I said to the TRC that the state had inexplicably declined to pursue the Generals and politicians despite their involvement, and that I was sickened by this choice.



44 My application to the TRC runs into over 1000 pages. It gives considerable detail, and makes it clear that I was able to provide information and evidence which would assist in prosecutions and in obtaining convictions. I was willing to provide this information and evidence. Inexplicably I was not asked to do so.

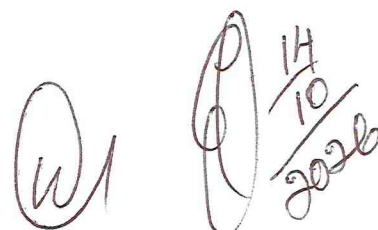
45 I recall that immediately following my sentencing on 30 October 1996 (I recall it was a Friday) I was called to a meeting with Adv Ackermann. My expectation was that I would be asked to cooperate with further prosecutions. I was willing to assist. Despite this I was not asked to do so.

THE CHAIN OF COMMAND

46 I was the central operational figure in respect of the operations which took place through Vlakplaas when I was there. I can explain command structures, operational relationships, requests for assistance, the movement of instructions, and covert liaison arrangements. I can identify where the intelligence or target selection originated outside Vlakplaas. I can explain which senior people approached me and which structures possessed direct knowledge. Decisions and instructions moved through chains of command and liaison. I am able to identify where the instructions came from, and who executed them.

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- 47 Advocate Ackermann explained to me that he intended to use me to move upward through the chain of command. But this did not happen.
- 48 For the most part, my instructions came from very senior police officers – the Generals. There was a chain of command, and I was a key link between the Generals and those who carried out the operations. I was (and I am) able to provide evidence about (for example) the role played by Major-General “Krappies” Engelbrecht, who was in the chain of command above me, and about a number of the other Generals under whom I worked.
- 49 The Generals have not been prosecuted, despite Judge Willem van der Merwe having found at the conclusion of my criminal trial that there was “more than enough evidence to charge General Engelbrecht”.
- 50 As to the senior political office-bearers: It was not part of my function to engage with them. That was principally the function of the Generals. I believe that if the Generals had been prosecuted, they would have disclosed the source of their instructions, and that they would have implicated political office-bearers.

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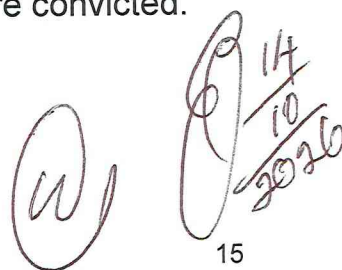
51 My own experience demonstrates that political office-bearers were aware of what was happening, and were involved in it. For example, to my personal knowledge:

51.1 Minister Louis Le Grange signed off on the bombing of the ANC offices in London. He decorated the people who were involved in this, including me.

51.2 Minister Adriaan Vlok visited Vlakplaas on many occasions. On one occasion he came there to congratulate me on the bombing of Khotso House (the offices of the South African Council of Churches) and COSATU House.

51.3 When I was instructed by Brigadier Schoon to bomb COSATU House, he told me that the instruction to do this was "from very high". I asked him how high, and he said that it came directly from President PW Botha.

52 I believe that it has been suggested that I was somehow unavailable to provide evidence in the prosecutions, and that this is why the chain of prosecutions did not happen. That is absolutely not the case. As I have mentioned, I gave evidence, for example, in the case of the Motherwell murders, and the people responsible were convicted.

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53 I was willing and available to give evidence as to where the instructions came from. That would have exposed the chain of command. I was not called as a witness to do so.

54 It is my opinion that one of the reasons the Generals were not prosecuted was that they would or might have further exposed the chain of command. Those who gave the instructions to the Generals would have been at risk of exposure.

55 If one wants to know why prosecutions did not take place, an obvious question is who benefitted from that failure. The answer is that those who benefitted were those who were at the top of the chain of command.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

56 In this affidavit I have mentioned the names of a number of people who were involved in the South African Police death squads, bombings, and related activities, and who gave instructions in that regard.

57 I am also able to provide information and evidence about a large number of other members of the South African Police who were involved in these activities.

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58 I am also able to provide information and evidence about who was involved in the chain of command.

59 To the best of my knowledge:

59.1 Very few of these people applied for and were granted amnesty by the TRC.

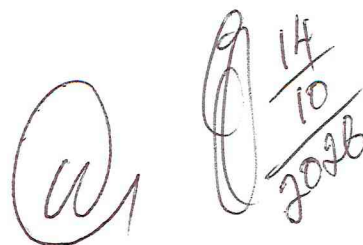
59.2 Of those who did not do so or did not receive amnesty, very few indeed were prosecuted;

59.3 Of those very few who were prosecuted, none served a day in a South African prison – except me.

60 I do not have personal knowledge of whether there has been any agreement between political figures and high-ranking members of the 'security' forces to shut down the prosecution of people who did not receive amnesty through the TRC, or who did not apply for it.

61 However, in my opinion there were political decisions not to prosecute the people at the top of the chain of command.

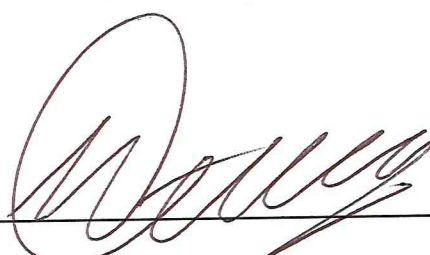
62 I hope that this submission provides the Commission with some assistance in fulfilling its important mandate.

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 DEPONENT

I hereby certify that the deponent has acknowledged that he knows and understands the contents of this affidavit, which he signed and swore to before me at MONTANA on this 14TH day of October 2026, the regulations contained in Government Notice No. R1258 of 21 July 1972, as amended, and Government Notice No. R1648 of 19 August 1977, as amended, having been complied with.



 COMMISSIONER OF OATHS

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