THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA IN THE COURT OF APPEAL OF UGANDA HOLDEN AT MBALE

(Coram: Egonda Ntende, Cheborion Barishaki, Muzamiru Kibeedi, JJA)

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CRIMINAL APPEAL NO. 365 OF 2016

1. KIGOZI LIVINGSTONE

10 VERSUS

[Arising from the decision of the High Court sitting at Mukono (Hon. Lady Justice Mutonyi Margaret) dated 21/11/2016 in Criminal Case No.088 of 2016]

JUDGMENT OF THE COURT

The appellants were indicted with two counts - Manslaughter contrary to Sections 187 and 190 of the Penal Code Act and Aggravated Robbery contrary to Sections 285 and 286(2) of the Penal Code Act.

The particulars of the offence of manslaughter stated that Kigozi Livingstone, Walugendo Sam alias Kajongolo, Ssali Ibrahim alias Bulu and others at large, on the 24th night of March 2013, at Kanjuki Village in Kayunga District unlawfully caused the death of Nakyoni Robinah.

The particulars of the offence of Aggravated Robbery stated that Kigozi Livingstone, Walugendo Sam alias Kajongolo, Ssali Ibrahim alias Bulu and others at large, on the 24th night of March 2013, at Kanjuki Village in Kayunga District robbed a one Nakyoni Robinah of her towels, pillow case, clothes, television remote (Sonia) control, electric cable for T.V, photographs, bible, blankets, mattress, receipt, 30 bags of maize, 3 bags of

soya beans, car battery, television set, weighing scale and other household items and at or immediately before or immediately after the time of the said robbery, caused the death of Nakyoni Robinah.

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The background to this case as established by the trial judge is that the deceased, Robinah Nakyoni, lived alone in Kanjuki village in Kayunga District. On the 24th day of March 2013, the appellants and others still at large went to the home of the deceased, broke into her house, stole her properties and strangled her to death. Her decomposing body was found some days later in her house and taken for post mortem.

After the death of the deceased, some of the stolen items were loaded on a motorcycle UDX 402B that was being ridden by the 1st appellant, Kigozi Livingstone. A one Kayanja Silver saw the 1st appellant carrying the deceased's property on the said motorcycle at an odd hour and when he tried to inform his friends, the appellant sped off. Some properties fell off the motorcycle and Kayanja picked and took them to the L.C.1 Chairman of Kanjuki village. The said properties were exhibited after being identified by Bukirwa Janet as property of the deceased.

After the deceased's death, the 1st appellant fled the village but the police traced for him and was arrested in Najjera while hiding in a friend's house. The appellant confessed and the confession led to the arrest of the 2nd appellant. They were examined and found to be adults with normal mental dispositions.

During the course of the investigations, a search was conducted in the house of the 1st appellant and police recovered several properties belonging to the deceased. A further search was conducted in the house of the 2nd appellant and the police recovered one sleeveless cream blouse, a bible, a

wall clock, a photograph, and a red hand bag all belonging to the deceased that had been stolen on the fateful night.

The appellants were indicted with two counts - Manslaughter contrary to Sections 187 and 190 of the Penal Code Act and Aggravated Robbery contrary to Sections 285 and 286(2) of the Penal Code Act.

The 1st Appellant was convicted on his own plea of guilty to the offence of manslaughter and sentenced to 20 years imprisonment. He denied the offence of Aggravated Robbery and was tried, convicted and sentenced to 50 years' imprisonment for the offence of Aggravated Robbery.

As for the 2nd Appellant, he denied both offences and was tried and convicted only on the count for Aggravated Robbery and sentenced to 50 years' imprisonment.

The appellants were dissatisfied with the decision of trial court and appealed to this court. The 1st appellant's appeal is against the sentence only, while the 2nd appellant appealed against both conviction and sentence.

70 Representations.

At the hearing of the appeal, Ms. Luchivya Faith, appeared for the appellant on State Brief, while Ms. Nyanzi Macrina Gladys, an Assistant Director of Public Prosecutions in the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions appeared for the respondent.

75 Grounds of Appeal.

The Memorandum of Appeal filed by the appellants on 21.07.2020 set out the following grounds:

- That the Learned Trial Judge erred in law and fact when she sentenced
 the 1st Appellant to a harsh and excessive sentence of 20 years for
 manslaughter and 50 years for Aggravated Robbery without taking into
 account the period spent on remand which occasioned a miscarriage of
 justice.
 - 2. The Learned Trial Judge erred in law and fact when she convicted and sentenced the 2nd appellant to a harsh and excessive sentence of 50 years for aggravated robbery when no clear evidence was led by the prosecution pinning him to the offence.

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During the hearing, leave was granted to the Counsel for the appellants to amend the Memorandum of Appeal to separate ground two to read as follows:

- The Learned Trial Judge erred in law and fact when she failed to evaluate the evidence and convicted the 2nd appellant the way she did.
 - The Learned Trial Judge erred in law and in fact when she sentenced the 2nd Appellant to a harsh and excessive sentence of 50 years.

The effect of the above amendment is that there are now three grounds of appeal namely:

 That the Learned Trial Judge erred in law and fact when she sentenced the 1st Appellant to a harsh and excessive sentence of 20 years for manslaughter and 50 years for Aggravated Robbery without taking into account the period spent on remand which occasioned a miscarriage of justice.

- The Learned Trial Judge erred in law and fact when she failed to evaluate the evidence and convicted the 2nd appellant the way she did.
- The Learned Trial Judge erred in law and in fact when she sentenced the 2nd Appellant to a harsh and excessive sentence of 50 years.
- Both parties filed written submissions which they adopted when the appeal came up for hearing.

Appellant's Arguments.

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Counsel first attacked what she saw as flows in the prosecution evidence which would have led to the acquittal of the 2nd appellant if the trial judge had properly evaluated the evidence before her.

She submitted that from the evidence on record no witness linked the 2nd respondent to the death of the deceased by strangulation.

Counsel argued that none of the appellants were present as the search was conducted at their respective homes. That A3 was in prison on a different charge and one wonders how he committed the murder in the instant appeal.

Counsel raised concerns as to how the properties recovered from the 2nd appellant's home were discovered to be there when even the 2nd appellant's wife was not aware of them. Counsel submitted that the 2nd appellant had several homes and that court did not explore the various ways the stolen items could have got into his house, especially without the wife's knowledge.

Counsel also attacked the 1st appellant's Charge and Caution Statement to the effect that it only stated that they used the 2nd appellant's truck but does not expressly state that the 2nd appellant was part of the murder.

With regard to the sentences, Counsel submitted that the law on taking into account the period spent on remand has been considered in a number of cases including the recent one where the Supreme Court in its 30th July 2018 decision in *Ngobya Aloysious Vs Uganda SC. Criminal Appeal No.265 of 2011*, held that a sentence arrived at without taking into account the period spent on remand is illegal for failure to comply with the constitutional provisions.

She argued that in the instant case, the period the appellants spent on remand had not been considered by the learned trial Judge. That the trial judge had only stated that "the period spent on remand inclusive" which is very vague.

Counsel concluded by praying that this court be pleased to allow the appeal and sentence the 1st appellant to an appropriate sentence.

As for the 2nd appellant, Counsel prayed that the conviction be quashed, the sentence set aside and he be acquitted.

Respondent's Arguments.

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140 Counsel for the respondent opposed the appeal and submitted that the learned trial Judge was alive to the Penal Code Act as regards the punishment that was given to the 1st Appellant and that she was lenient in giving the 1st appellant the 20 years' sentence for the offence of Manslaughter. But Counsel conceded that the sentence of 50 years' imprisonment in respect of Aggravated Robbery was a bit harsh and proposed 40 years instead.

Counsel argued that court considered the time spent on remand.

She further submitted that the trial Judge properly evaluated the evidence on record and properly convicted the 2nd appellant of the offence of Aggravated Robbery. But she likewise conceded the term of 50 years' imprisonment handed to the 2nd appellant was on the higher side.

Consideration by the Court.

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As a first appellate Court, our duty is to reconsider all material evidence that was adduced before the trial court and come to our own conclusions of fact and law while making allowance for the fact we neither saw nor heard the witnesses. See Rule 30(1)(a) of the Judicature (Court of Appeal Rules) Directions, <u>Bagumo Fred Vs Uganda SCCA No. 7 of 2004, Kifumante Henry Vs Uganda SCCA No. 10 of 1997, and D.R Pandya Vs R [1957] EA 336.</u>

It is with the above principles in mind that we shall now proceed to consider this appeal. We shall first dispose of ground 2 which deals with evaluation of the evidence leading to the conviction of the 2nd appellant of the offence of Aggravated Robbery by the trial court. Thereafter we shall consider grounds 1 and 3 jointly.

Ground No. 2 - Evaluation of Evidence.

The complaint of the 2nd appellant in respect of the amended ground 2 is that the trial judge failed to evaluate evidence before her which led to the wrongful conviction of the 2nd appellant of the offence of aggravated robbery.

The respondent disagreed to this.

A close look at the Record of Proceedings of the trial court indicates the prosecution evidence which linked the 2nd appellant to participation in the offence of aggravated robbery consisted of the following:

PW1 Kayanja Silver testified that on the 24th of March 2013 after he and his friends had loaded tomatoes onto a vehicle and were making arrangements to take them to Kampala, he went back home to pick his jacket. As he was going home, he met the 1st appellant on a Motor Cycle Reg. No. UDX 402B loaded with property which included a blanket, mattress and a sack of maize. When he tried to get near where the 1st appellant was, he took off towards his home and abandoned some of the property. The time was around Midnight but that he (PW1) was able to recognize the 1st appellant because the moon was bright and he knew him very well. That he screamed calling his friends who were on the vehicle and when they came he moved with some of them to the LC1 Chairman's home. The Chairman told them to take the abandoned properties to his home and they complied. The properties were subsequently identified by the deceased's sister, PW2 Bukirwa Janet as belonging to the deceased.

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PW2 Bukirwa Janet assisted in the location and arrest of the 1st appellant from Najjera after he had disappeared from his usual residence in Kanjuki Village. She stated that during the arrest, the 1st appellant pleaded for forgiveness and informed the witness and the arresting officer that he was not involved in the commission of the crimes alone. That they had made the plan 6 of them including the 2nd appellant. That after killing the deceased and robbing her property, they shared it amongst themselves.

When the police subsequently went to do a search on the home of the 2nd appellant at Kanjuki Trading Centre she was present and able to identify the property of the deceased that had been stolen on the fateful night that was recovered during the search. The property included one Bible with the names of the deceased and a photograph in which appeared the deceased

and Bukirwa (PW2), one sleeveless cream blouse, a wall clock, receipts bearing the deceased's names and a red hand bag.

PW3 Kolyanga Henry stated that he was a Detective Assistant Inspector of 200 Police attached to Kayunga Police Station. That on the instruction of his supervisor and the District CID Officer, ASP Tushime Allan, he had linked up with PW2 Bukirwa and, with the assistance of some informant, been able to locate the residence of the 2nd appellant in Kanjuki Trading Centre. He found it locked and was assisted by the Secretary LC1 of the area. 205 Mr.Ntulume John, to trace the wife of the 2nd appellant, Ms Nandawula Immaculate. He introduced himself to Ms Nandawula, and asked her about the whereabouts of her husband, the 2nd appellant. She informed him that he was in prison. He informed her that he was going to do search her house and she accepted, opened the house for them and the search was 210 conducted in the presence of Ms Nandawula Immaculate, Mr. Ntulume John and Ms Bukirwa among others. During the search properties belonging to the deceased that had been stolen on the fateful night were found at the residence and identified by the deceased's sister, Ms Bukirwa. The details of the properties were set out in the Search Certificate issued by PW3, dated 215 14.08.2013 and signed by, among others, Nandawula Immaculate as "Wife to Bulaim Ssaali", Ntulume John as "Secretary" and Bukirwa Janet. The Search Certificate was tendered into court by the witness as Exhibit "PE3".

PW4 Nsubuga Stanley John testified that he was the Chairperson of Kanjuki Village. He confirmed that he knew the 2nd appellant and his home in Kanjuki Village. He confirmed that he knew the deceased. He confirmed having received from PW1 the stolen property that had been abandoned by the 1st appellant at night and having handed the same over to the police after they had been identified by Ms Bukirwa as property of her deceased sister.

PW5 No. 31958 Detective Sergeant Ongom Samuel Victor testified that he was a Police Officer attached to Kayunga Police Station. That he carried out a search at the house of the 1st appellant on the 22nd April 2013 located in Ntenjeru Village in the presence of among others, the LC1 Chairman, Mr. Semakula Edward, the 1st appellant's Landlady, Ms Nakintu Rosemary and Ms Bukirwa Janet. During the search they recovered several properties which were identified by Ms Bukirwa as property of the deceased that had been stolen on the fateful night. The details of the property were set out in the Search Statement tendered into court by the witness and marked "PE4".

PW6 Ntulume John testified that he was the Secretary of Kanjuki Village. That he had known the 2nd appellant for a long time as a resident of their village and his wife, Nandawula Immaculate. That he had been requested by the Police to accompany them to the home of the 2nd appellant and found it closed. There was no body. He assisted the police look for the 2nd appellant's wife, Nandawula Immaculate. They found her at her mother's shop, went with her to her home and when they reached she opened the door. The search was then carried out by the police in the presence of Nandaula and the witness and they all signed on the Search Certificate, Exhibit PE3.

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PW7 No. 35238 Detective Corporal Okumait Drake testified that at the material time he was a Police Officer at Kayunga Police Station attached to the CID. That after the 1st appellant had been arrested from Najjera, he confessed having participated in the murder and robbery and told the witness that he was with other people; he was not alone. That those mentioned as having participated included the 2nd appellant. That the witness immediately took the 1st appellant to an Officer of the rank of Inspector who took his Charge and Caution Statement. The Statement was written both in

Luganda and English and in it the 1st appellant confirmed that it was true that he had participated in the murder of the deceased and the other participants included the 2nd appellant. The Charge and Caution Statement of the 1st appellant was admitted in evidence and marked "PE5".

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That following the confession, they had to trace for Kajongolo and the 2nd appellant for Statement recording and fortunately at the time they were already in prison on charges of stealing cattle after the commission of the murder.

The witness also stated that he was the one who received the property that had been recovered during the search of the house of the 2nd appellant and exhibited it.

PW8 Detective ASP Allan Twishime testified that at the material time he was the Kayunga District CID Officer. That he received information from an unnamed informant that the 2nd appellant's wife, Immaculate, had told a friend during a conversation that she had been called by her husband and told her that the police was suspecting him of having participated in the murder of the deceased. That there were some items that had been brought by the 2nd appellant which were still in their home and that the 2nd appellant's wife was looking for a way of handling the said items.

He said that upon receipt of this information he directed one of his officers, Detective AIP Kolyanga to proceed and carry out a search at the home of the 2nd appellant and the officer complied.

In his evidence given on oath, the 1st appellant sought to retract his confession and stated that he had committed the offence alone but had mentioned the participation of the 2nd appellant and others because he had

been tortured by the police before making the statement. He sought to defend the 2nd appellant by claiming that Ms Nandawula Immaculate was his mistress and not the wife of the 2nd appellant but failed to name the landlord of the house rented by Nandawula and the father of Nandawula's child.

The 2nd appellant gave unsworn evidence and stated that on the night of 24th March 2013 he was at his home in Nakifuma and denied having committed the offences charged. He denied that Nandawula was his wife and that her home in Kanjuki was his. He however admitted that Nandawula had been her lover and that they have a child called Aisha who was 3 years and 8 months. But that in the year 2013 they had separated. He denied knowledge of the items that had been recovered by the police from the house where Nandawula was staying. He confirmed that it was around 20th – 21st April 2013 that he was arrested on charges of stealing cattle.

DW4 Namatovu Violet stated that she was the wife of the 2nd appellant and had six children with him. She was a housewife and had come to court to testify about the charges against her husband of stealing cattle. She stated that on the fateful night her husband was at their home in Nakifuma. She was neither aware of Nandawula being a wife of the 2nd appellant nor the child Nandawula had with the 2nd appellant.

When dealing with the participation of the 2nd appellant in the commission of the offence of aggravated robbery, the trial judge stated thus:

"... Besides A1's confession, A3 is implicated by the Doctrine of recent possession which is simply evidence that the Accused was in possession of recently stolen property which may be evidence that he was either the thief or receiver of the property in the absence of any reasonable explanation for that possession.

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In deciding whether the stealing was recent, or whether there has been any reasonable possible explanation and whether the inference of guilt should be drawn, the whole defence by the accused should be 305 considered and all the circumstances of the case.

> For the doctrine of recent possession to apply, court must be satisfied that:

- (1) The property the subject matter of the charge was in the possession of the Accused
- (2) That it was stolen recently
- (3) No reasonable explanation has been given by the Accused

I am satisfied beyond reasonable doubt, that the property was recovered from A3's house which was under his constructive possession because he was in prison.

His spouse, the mother of his child was occupying it. It was known by the local Council authorities as his house and the occupant was known as his wife.

I am also satisfied that the property of the late Nakyoni Robina was recently stolen. A3 is not denying the fact of the robbery. He is denying participation. A3 merely denied participation and relied on A1's lies in his defence yet he voluntarily made a confession implicating A3.

A3 therefore failed to offer any reasonable explanation as to how the stolen property reached under his bed.

Section 20 of the Penal code Act provides "that when two or more persons form a common intention to prosecute an unlawful purpose in conjunction with one another and in the Prosecution of that purpose an offence is committed of such a nature that its commission was a probable consequence of the Prosecution of that purpose, each of them is deemed to have committed the offence." The learned state Attorney relied on the case of Ismail Kisengerwa and Another Vs Uganda Criminal Appeal No6/1978 where the court of Appeal stated the doctrine of common intention as follows: "It is now settled that an unlawful common intention does not imply a pre-arranged plan. Common intention can be inferred from the presence of the accused person, their actions and the omission of any of them to disassociate himself from the offence"

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Court is very satisfied that common intention existed as clearly stated in A1's confession and corroborated by recovery of some of the stolen items from A3's home or house. All in all, the circumstances of this case point to the guilty of both A1 and A3. A3 fully participated in the Aggravated Robbery..."

From the above, it is very clear that the trial Judge properly evaluated the evidence before her and convicted the 2nd appellant accordingly. The above ground therefore fails.

Grounds 1 and 3- Sentences

The complaint of the 1st appellant under ground No.1 is that the sentence of 20 years' imprisonment for manslaughter and 50 years' imprisonment for Aggravated Robbery were harsh and excessive and did not take into account the period spent on remand.

As for the 2nd appellant, his complaint under the amended ground no. 3 is that the sentence of 50 years' imprisonment for the offence of aggravated robbery that was imposed on him was harsh and excessive.

The respondent's counsel disagreed.

In sentencing the appellants, the trial judge stated thus:

"...A1 is sentenced to 20 years on first count [Manslaughter] and 50 years imprisonment on the second count [Aggravated Robbery], the sentences to run concurrently. Period spent on remand inclusive. A2 is sentenced to 50 years' imprisonment for Aggravated Robbery period spent on remand inclusive."

Article 23(8) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995 imposes a mandatory obligation on the court to take into account the remand period while sentencing an accused person to a term of imprisonment.

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In the instant case, the words used by the trial Judge to the effect that "the period on remand inclusive" were vague and did not clearly indicate that the period spent on remand had been taken into account.

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In Tatyama Fred V Uganda, Court of Appeal Criminal Appeal No.107 of 2012, the learned trial Judge while sentencing that appellant noted that she had considered all the circumstances of the case and the period spent on remand before sentencing the appellant to twenty years imprisonment. This Court found that the said sentence was vague as the trial Judge was silent on whether the period of 3 years that the appellant had spent on remand had been deducted from the final sentence. This Court reduced the sentence to 17 years and 4 months after taking into account the period that the appellant had spent on remand.

In the same vein, we find that the words used by the trial judge fell short of the standard set out in Article 23 of the constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995. Accordingly the sentences imposed by the trial judge are hereby set aside for being illegal and exercising our powers under section 11 of the Judicature Act, proceed to impose a fresh sentence upon the appellants. It is unnecessary to consider the second aspect of the complaint, whether or not the sentences were harsh and excessive.

At the time of commission of the offence, the 1st appellant was 23 years of age and a first offender. He pleaded guilty to the offence of Manslaughter. All these are mitigating factors. However he had killed an old woman in a very gruesome manner bordering on murder. And there is need for court to send clear signals about the sanctity of life through deterrent sentences.

As for the 2nd appellant, he was about 30 years of age at the time of commission of the offence and a first offender. But life was lost in the course of the robbery under circumstances bordering on a murder.

This Court is likewise bound to follow the principle of "parity" and "Consistency" while sentencing while bearing in mind that the circumstances under which the offences are committed are not necessarily identical. See Sentencing Principle No.6(c) of the Constitution (Sentencing Guidelines for Courts of Judicature) Practice Directions, 2013 – Legal Notice No.8 of 2013 and <u>Aharikundira Yustina Vs Uganda, Supreme Court Criminal Appeal No.</u> 27 of 2015.

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In <u>Baguma Abasi Vs Uganda</u>, <u>Court of Appeal Criminal Appeal No.192 of 2009</u>, the appellant hit the deceased with a big stick on the head and was sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment for manslaughter.

In <u>Mumbere Julius Vs Uganda</u>, <u>Supreme Court Criminal Appeal No.15 of 2014</u>, the appellant who was aged 24 years shot the deceased with a gun and was sentenced by the Supreme Court to 10 years and two months' imprisonment for manslaughter.

In <u>Ainobushobozi Venancio Vs Uganda, Court of Appeal Criminal</u>
<u>Appeal No.242 of 2014</u>, the appellant assaulted the deceased leading to his death and was sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment for the offence of manslaughter.

With regards to Aggravated Robbery, the tendency of this court has been a term of imprisonment ranging from 12 -25 years.

In Kakaire Iguru Ali & Anor Vs Uganda, Criminal Appeal No.784 of2014, the appellant was tried and sentenced to 14 years by the trial court. On appeal this court reduced the sentence to 10 years.

In <u>Ssemiyingo Mark Vs Uganda, Court of Appeal Criminal Appeal No.137 of</u>
2012, the appellant was tried and sentenced by the trial court to 15years imprisonment. The Court of Appeal reduced the sentence to 12 years.

In <u>Abelle Asuman Vs Uganda, Supreme Court Criminal Appeal No.66 of 2016</u>, the appellant was sentenced to 18 years' imprisonment for aggravated robbery.

In light of the above precedents, we find that grounds 1 & 3 succeed.

Decision.

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- 1. The 1st appellant is sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment for the offence of manslaughter. From that sentence, we give credit to the 1st appellant for having pleaded guilty to the offence of manslaughter which we put at 4 years, and this reduces the term to 8 years. We further deduct a period of 3 years and 6 months that the 1st appellant spent on pre-trial detention. We therefore sentence the appellant to a term of 4 years and 6 months to be served from the 21st day of November 2016, the date of conviction.
- 2. The 1st appellant is sentenced to 18 years' imprisonment for the offence of aggravated robbery. From that sentence, we deduct a period of 3 years and 6 months that the 1st appellant spent on pre-trial detention. We therefore sentence the appellant to a term of 14 years and 6 months to be served from the 21st day of November 2016, the date of conviction.
 - Both sentences of the 1st appellant shall run concurrently.

4. As for the 2nd appellant he is likewise sentenced to 18 years' imprisonment for the offence of aggravated robbery. From that sentence, we deduct a period of 2 months that the 2nd appellant spent on pre-trial detention. We therefore sentence the 2nd appellant to a term of 17 years and 10 months to be served from the 21st day of November 2016, the date of conviction.

5. We so order.

Signed, dated and delivered this ... 1.5.... day of September 2020.

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FREDRICK EGONDA-NTENDE

Justice of Appeal

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CHEBORION BARISHAKI
Justice of Appeal

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MUZAMIRU KIBEEDI

Justice of Appeal