

THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA
IN THE HIGH COURT OF UGANDA SITTING AT ARUA
CRIMINAL CASE No. 0153 OF 2017

UGANDA **PROSECUTOR**

5

VERSUS

OKETA PATRICK alias CHARLES **ACCUSED**

10 **Before: Hon Justice Stephen Mubiru.**

SENTENCE AND REASONS FOR SENTENCE

This case has come up today 23rd November, 2018 in a special session for plea bargaining. The
15 accused is indicted with two counts of Aggravated Defilement c/s 129 (3) and (4) (c) of *The Penal Code Act*. It is alleged in Count I that during the month of December, 2016 at Umm Labora village, in Omoro District, the accused performed an unlawful sexual act with Atimango Emily, a girl aged 12 years; and in Count 2 that during the month of February, 2017 at Umm village, Lapainat East Parish, Koro sub-county in Omoro District, the accused performed an
20 unlawful sexual act with Anena Franka, a girl aged 8 years.

When the case was called, the learned State Resident Attorney, Ms. Catherine Nakaggwa has reported that she successfully negotiated a plea bargain with the accused and his counsel. The court has invited the State Attorney to introduce the plea agreement and obtained confirmation of
25 this fact from defence counsel on state brief, Mr. Okot Edward. The court has ascertained that the accused has full understanding of what a guilty plea means and its consequences, the voluntariness of the accused's consent to the bargain and appreciation of its implication in terms of waiver of the constitutional rights specified in the first section of the plea agreement. The Court being satisfied that there is a factual basis for the plea, and having made the finding that
30 the accused made a knowing, voluntary, and intelligent plea bargain, and after he has executed a confirmation of the agreement, has gone ahead to receive the agreement to form part of the record. The accused has then been allowed to take plea whereupon a plea of guilty has been entered.

The court has invited the learned Resident State Attorney to narrate the factual basis for the guilty plea, whereupon she has narrated the following facts; on 29th April, 2017 at Amoro District, the father of the two victims Ojok Jimmy aged 12 years and the other 8 years respectively got information from Angu that he had had sexual intercourse with the two. The father inquired from them and Atimango revealed that in February 2017 while she had gone with the accused to collect reeds he grabbed her and had sexual intercourse with her. The other said it was repeatedly at the well and in his house. The matter was reported at Omoro Police Station and on examination he was found to be 37 years old, mentally sound and left paralysed leg. The victims were examined and Atimango found to be 12 and her hymen ruptured a week before. Anena was found to be aged 8 and a ruptured hymen of a week and bruises on the left external lip of the vulva. He was charged. The respective medical examination reports too have been admitted as part of the facts.

Upon ascertaining from the accused that the facts as stated are correct, he has been convicted on his own plea of guilty for the offence of Aggravated Defilement c/s 129 (3) and (4) (c) of *The Penal Code Act* on each of the two counts. In justification of the sentence of eleven (11) years' imprisonment on each of the two counts proposed in the plea agreement, the learned Resident State Attorney has stated that; the age difference between the victims and the convicts 29 - 25 respectively, a wide difference. He committed the acts within the same home and a neighbour breached their trust. Learned defence counsel has stated the key mitigating factors considered to have been that; he has admitted the offence and is remorseful. He has spent a year and six months on remand. He has a wife and four children and sole bread winner. The wife deserted the home deserting the four children. By way of *allocutus*, the accused has stated that; he prays for lenience to enable him return and take care of the abandoned children.

I have reviewed the proposed sentences in light of *The Constitution (Sentencing Guidelines for Courts of Judicature) (Practice) Directions, 2013*. I have also reviewed current sentencing practices for offences of this nature. In this regard, I have considered the case of *Agaba Job v. Uganda C.A. Cr. Appeal No. 230 of 2003* where the court of appeal in its judgment of 8th February 2006 upheld a sentence of 10 years' imprisonment in respect of an appellant who was convicted on his own plea of guilty upon an indictment of defilement of a six year old girl. In the

case of *Lubanga v. Uganda C.A. Cr. Appeal No. 124 of 2009*, in its judgment of 1st April 2014, the court of appeal upheld a 15 year term of imprisonment for a convict who had pleaded guilty to an indictment of aggravated defilement of a one year old girl. In another case, *Abot Richard v. Uganda C.A. Crim. Appeal No. 200 of 2004*, in its judgment of 6th February 2006, the Court of
5 Appeal upheld a sentence of 8 years' imprisonment for an appellant who was convicted of the offence defilement of a 13 year old girl but had spent three years on remand before sentence. In *Lukwago v. Uganda C.A. Crim. Appeal No. 36 of 2010* the Court of appeal in its judgment of 6th July 2014 upheld a sentence of 13 years' imprisonment for an appellant convicted on his own plea of guilty for the offence of aggravated defilement of a thirteen year old girl. Lastly, *Ongodia*
10 *Elungat John Michael v. Uganda C.A. Cr. Appeal No. 06 of 2002* where a sentence 5 years' imprisonment was meted out to 29 year old accused, who had spent two years on remand, for defiling and impregnating a fifteen year old school girl. A plea of guilty offered readily before commencement of trial usually results in a discount of anywhere up to a third of the sentence that would otherwise be imposed after a full trial. Having considered the sentencing guidelines and
15 the current sentencing practice in relation to offences of this nature, I consider the sentence proposed in the plea agreement entered into by the accused, his counsel, and the State Attorney to be appropriate.

In accordance with Article 23 (8) of the Constitution and Regulation 15 (2) of The *Constitution*
20 *(Sentencing Guidelines for Courts of Judicature) (Practice) Directions, 2013*, to the effect that the court should deduct the period spent on remand from the sentence considered appropriate, after all factors have been taken into account, I observe that the convict has been in custody since 10th May, 2017 and I hereby take into account and set off one year and six months as the period the convict has already spent on remand. I therefore sentence the convict to a term of
25 imprisonment of nine (9) years and six (6) months on each count, both sentences are to run concurrently and are to be served starting today. Having been convicted and sentenced on his own plea of guilty, the convict is advised that he has a right of appeal against the legality and severity of this sentence, within a period of fourteen days.

Dated at Gulu this 23rd day of November, 2018

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Stephen Mubiru
Judge,
23rd November, 2018.