

**IN THE SUPREME COURT  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF VANUATU**  
*(Criminal Jurisdiction)*

**Criminal  
Case No. 23/3205 SC/CRML**

**BETWEEN: Public Prosecutor**

**AND: George Quita**  
*Accused*

**Date of Sentence:** *15th day of December, 2023*  
**Before:** *Justice E.P. Goldsbrough*

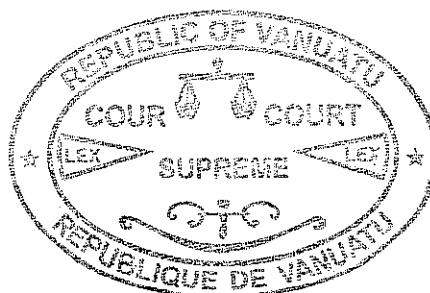
**In Attendance:** *Simeon, G for Public Prosecutor*  
*Taleo, B for the Accused*

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**SENTENCE**

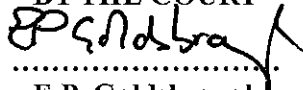
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1. George Quita pleaded guilty to the unlawful killing of Antonette Musiba with premeditation. This offence occurred in Amaldenga Village in South Pentecost on 11 October 2023. The deceased was the grandmother of the defendant, and he was living with her at the time of her death. She had lived a long life. After discussion between counsel the charge was reduced to a charge under section 106 (1) (a) – without premeditation as set out in the statement of facts.
2. George hit his grandmother on the head with a big knife and left her to die in the grass. The dead body was discovered by a child returning from school who alerted her parents. The prosecution's statement of facts gives no reason for the offence.
3. Georg Quita pleaded guilty to the offence at the first opportunity, and his counsel confirmed that the guilty plea was following his instructions. Counsel also agreed that the statement of facts, as far as it goes, is correct. There was no premeditation.



4. The offence now charged carries a maximum penalty of twenty years imprisonment. That maximum penalty, together with factors of aggravation, assists the Court in arriving at a starting point in deciding a correct sentence for this offence.
5. In the pre-sentence report, it is recorded that George Quita was motivated to attack his grandmother due to the spirits of the bushes and the animals. He and his grandmother lived in a bushy area, and his grandmother stuck firmly to her routine. He, on the other hand, was a regular user of cannabis, which perhaps had more influence on his behaviour than the spirits of animals and bushes.
6. Taking a life as was done here will inevitably attract a lengthy custodial sentence. There is no possibility of reconciliation save between the remaining family. There is no suggestion of any underlying mental health condition.
7. A starting point is set in this case of ten years imprisonment.
8. A weapon was used, and the victim was both elderly and defenceless. There appears to be no reason for the attack, no provocation. Thus, it isn't easy to see any mitigation. The early guilty plea deserves credit.
9. From ten years, the sentence is reduced by 30% for the early admission of guilt. That leaves seven years. There is no other mitigation that might serve to reduce the sentence further. For an offence as serious as this, suspension is not appropriate.
10. The sentence is seven years imprisonment, deemed to have commenced on 22 September 2023, the day you were taken into custody for this offence.
11. You have the right to appeal this sentence, but you must begin that process if you wish to use it within the next fourteen days.

**DATED at Luganville this 15th day of December, 2023.**

BY THE COURT  
  
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**E.P. Goldsbrough**  
Judge of the Supreme Court

