

AFFIDAVIT

Alan Douglas Elsdon

States under oath.

I am an adult male 70 years old (RSA ID: 550428 5068 082) residing in Cambridge, East London, South Africa. My mobile number is 072-588-1090.

After completing my schooling in 1972, I joined the South African Police (SAP) in East London. Over a 20-year career, I served in various units and capacities, including:

- **Uniform Branch:** Charge office duties, patrol operations, Mobile Unit assignments, and deployments along the Rhodesian border.
- **Criminal Investigation Department (CID):** Investigator of criminal activities.
- **South African Narcotics Bureau (SANAB):** Investigations into narcotics syndicates and participation in covert, undercover operations.
- **Security Branch (SB), East London:** Investigated politically motivated crimes against the state. Key witness in Ciskei's first "*Terrorist Trial*" in the Supreme Court.
- **Security Branch, Walvis Bay:** Investigator and cryptographer; played a key role in the 1990 arrest of ANC activist Shirley Gunn, then South Africa's "*most wanted woman*".

In 1993, after transitioning to the private sector in Johannesburg, I became aware of previously undisclosed information regarding the politically motivated 1977 assassination of senior National Party member Dr. Robert Smit and his wife Jean in the town of Springs. This discovery led me to uncover the true meaning of the mysterious acronym "RAUTEM," which had been spray-painted on the wall at the crime scene, a case that remains unsolved to this day.

While investigating the "Smit Murders," I discovered troubling information implicating General Hendrik van den Bergh, then-head of the Bureau of State Security (BOSS). He reportedly led a covert "death squad" operating from an island in the Vaal Dam. This group was allegedly involved in the Smit case as well as numerous other unsolved political assassinations.

During my research in the town of Strand in the Western Cape, I met a retired senior member of the National Party. On learning of my investigation into General van den Bergh's activities, he urged me, under condition of anonymity, to look into the mysterious crash of a South African Airways Vickers Viscount aircraft, the **Rietbok**, which crashed into the sea in 1967 off Kaysers Beach, near East London. At the time of the crash I was 12 years old and living near the site. I remembered clearly the tragedy and that all the crew and passengers perished.

The elderly man in Strand emphasized that this was no ordinary accident and suggested I begin by researching who of significance was aboard. Further research uncovered that Professor Johannes Bruwer, a senior member of the secretive Afrikaner Broederbond and a mysterious American woman named Audrey Rosenthal were among the victims.

SZ *[Handwritten signature]*

As I delved deeper, evidence began to surface suggesting a government-orchestrated cover-up. The circumstances surrounding the Rietbok disaster pointed to political sensitivities at the highest levels, hinting that the apartheid regime may have deliberately concealed the truth. My findings led to the publication in 2009 of my book, *The Tall Assassin*, which exposes many of these dark operations and the inner workings of BOSS.

Following the publication of my book, new evidence emerged when I was contacted by various individuals. Some, who were relatives of the victims, shared their own experiences:

- **Griet le Roux** (Daughter of passenger Prof. Johannes Bruwer)

Shortly after the assassination of Prime Minister Hendrik Verwoerd on 6 September 1966, Professor Bruwer, who was a close friend of the slain Prime Minister, reportedly told his wife of a disturbing premonition: "I will probably be next." Six months later, he perished in the suspicious Rietbok crash. In the aftermath, her mother received a substantial cash payment, either from a government or Broederbond representative and was instructed to remain silent, forget the incident, and focus on raising her children.

- **Mr. Ian Boyd** (Son of SAA investigator Captain James Boyd)

Captain Boyd led the official SAA investigation team at the Kaysers Beach crash site. The night before he was due to return to Johannesburg, he phoned his wife and shared his unease, stating there was something strange about the entire Rietbok event. The next morning, he was found dead in his hotel room, reportedly from a heart attack. No autopsy was conducted, and his body was cremated without the family's knowledge or consent. A member of the airline later visited his widow, cautioning her against pursuing the matter further, warning that doing so might jeopardize her monthly pension, which she relied on to raise their three young sons.

- **Mrs. Robyn Lichter** (Daughter of passenger Paul Blankfield)

Over the past six decades, Robyn has connected with many family members of the 25 victims. Their testimonies strongly suggest there was an orchestrated cover-up by the apartheid government. Contrary to standard policy, no formal investigation or inquest was ever held, despite repeated appeals by the families. To this day, critical questions remain unanswered. The victims' families have been denied not only the truth, but also the closure they have sought for decades.

These testimonies lend weight to the claim I made in *The Tall Assassin*: that the Rietbok disaster was not a tragic accident, but the result of calculated foul play, deliberately obscured by the South African government of the time.

I am committed to supporting the efforts of the **Associated Families of Rietbok Aircraft Tragedy (AFORAT)** in seeking the truth, justice and transparency regarding this tragic event. The recently appointed **Judicial Commission of Inquiry into Allegations Regarding Efforts or Attempts to Stop the Investigation or Prosecution of Truth and Reconciliation Commission Cases (TRC Cases Inquiry)**, has both the authority and the moral obligation to address this long-standing injustice. Almost six decades have passed without accountability or closure. Many families have lost loved ones without answers, and the passage of time has only deepened their grief.

This newly chosen and respected Commission is uniquely positioned to bring truth to light and to provide peace for the surviving families and their descendants. To ignore the voices of AFORAT would be to deny these citizens and generations to come, their constitutional rights to truth, justice, and dignity. I humbly submit this request in the hope that this matter will finally receive the attention it deserves.

I am familiar with and understand the contents of this declaration. I have no objection to taking the prescribed oath which I consider as binding to my conscience.

A. Elsdon
Alan Douglas Elsdon

Date: 10 September 2025
Place: East London.

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