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Our Ref.: Media Statement: Centlec Welcomes the Conviction and Sentence Handed Down by the Bethulie Magistrate Court Upon the Copper Cable Thief	Your Ref.:

MEDIA STATEMENT: CENTLEC WELCOMES THE CONVICTION AND SENTENCE HANDED DOWN BY THE BETHULIE MAGISTRATE COURT UPON THE COPPER CABLE THIEF.

CENTLEC (SOC) Ltd welcomes the conviction and the sentencing of the Bethulie man who was arrested and faced the charges relating to theft, destruction and vandalism of valuable infrastructure on the 24th of October 2023.

In count one (1) the accused had stolen a copper cable from one of the private residences, linking the main property with the rooms outside. In count two (2), the accused was found in possession of a 5 meters long copper cable in the Jagersfontein area, which was positively identified as CENTLEC property. Upon arrest, the case Cas 33/9/2022 was opened against the accused at Bethulie Police station.

The accused was found guilty on two counts, one being theft and the other one, vandalism of valuable infrastructure and sentenced to 15 years imprisonment for each count. Both sentences will not be served concurrently, thus the accused sentenced to 30 years effectively.

As CENTLEC(SOC) Ltd, we are pleased with the successful conviction and sentencing of the accused. We hope that the hefty sentence meted out by the Bethulie Magistrate court will send a strong message to those who continue to damage essential infrastructure. The ongoing collaboration between Centlec and various community fighting organizations continue to bear positive results, however, cable theft still poses a significant challenge to the entity and our customers at large.

Members of the public are advised that tampering, electricity theft and vandalism of valuable infrastructure remain a serious crime in South Africa and carries a harsh sentence upon those found guilty. In terms of section 3 of the Criminal Matters Amendment Act, any person found guilty of essential infrastructure crime such as cable theft shall be liable on conviction to a period of imprisonment up to 30 years.

We would like to thank the public, including the community crime fighting organizations in all our area of supply for the work well done and giving us tip-offs whenever these kinds of incidents are to happen. Fighting crime is a collaborative effort between the community, police and CENTLEC.

Illegal connections, theft and vandalism of electricity infrastructure can be reported to the nearest police station or to the CENTLEC fraud hot line at (051) 409 2218/ 2245 or WhatsApp: 064 616 5574 or email fraudandcorruption@centlec.co.za.

Issued by Communications and Marketing.

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