

R v OMAR WILSON SENTENCING REMARKS

1. Mussie Imnetu was a devoted father, husband, son, brother and friend who always put his family first. Mussie was murdered on 26 August 2024.
2. In her graceful impact statement, his wife Linda Lukoki describes how Mussie's own upbringing had instilled in him, kindness, respect and perseverance. His frail, elderly parents are, of course, devastated by his murder.
3. The recording made by his son was heartrending.
4. Mussie came to London from Sweden to advance his hugely successful career as a chef. He met Linda, they married and their 6 year old son was born. The family left London to live a better, safer life in Dubai. Mussie's family life and career were thriving here. He was in London on a business trip when he was murdered.
5. Mussie, and those who loved him, are the victims in this case and the impact on them of his murder has been severe.
6. Mussie's brutal death, on the street, was captured on CCTV. That footage was deeply shocking to watch. Mussie was defenceless on the ground when you punched and kicked him to death. There were many members of the public nearby enjoying an evening of carnival. Unfortunately, the day had already been marred by other serious violence.
7. It needs to be clearly understood that unlawful street violence of this sort impacts on the confidence of members of the public to go out and enjoy themselves. The culpability of those involved in such brazen conduct is significantly raised. Reduction of crime by deterrence is a statutory principle of sentencing.

8. The CCTV evidence shows that by the time of the incident, Mussie was obviously intoxicated, but still enjoying himself. Like many others, he was dancing in the street and interacting with strangers. Before the violent incident in which he became involved, there is no evidence that he was intimidating, let alone aggressive to anyone.
9. Three eye-witnesses gave evidence to the jury about Mussie's conduct just before he was murdered. The statements of other witnesses were read to the jury by agreement. As often happens, some of the eye-witness evidence was inconsistent with the CCTV footage. As is also common, the witnesses' accounts are not always consistent with each other.
10. You went to the carnival that day in a group of 4 people, 3 of whom gave evidence to the jury as Prosecution witnesses.
11. One was a woman with whom you were on a second date. The other woman was her friend and the fourth member of the group was a male friend of theirs. They all gave undisputed and credible evidence that the group had spent an enjoyable and trouble free day and that you had been protective of the women all day.
12. Regrettably, when it came to the violence, I am sure that the two females deliberately lied to the jury, in order to discredit Mussie and to try to help you. Maybe that was because they had not seen the CCTV. The conduct of the woman you were dating, after the incident, was disgraceful and came near to an attempt to pervert the course of justice. In my judgment, the male witness from your group gave a much more credible account which, not only conflicted with the women's evidence, but entirely undermined your case of self-defence.

Even he embroidered his evidence to help you. None of this is your fault and none of it adds a day to your sentence.

13. There was telephone messaging evidence that, very shortly after the violence, you admitted you had been in the wrong. By the next day you realised you might have unlawfully killed someone. That evidence suggests that your immediate response was to take responsibility for your crime. For whatever reason, over time you changed your mind and ran with self-defence. You threw away any chance of receiving credit from me for admitting what you had done. The best that can be said is that the initial remorse was probably genuine. If you acted on the advice of friends, you were foolish to do so.
14. The CCTV shows that Mussie was near to the table where you and your group were sitting outside a restaurant. There was verbal interaction between Mussie, a male he appeared to know, and the women at the table. A reasonable inference from the CCTV, and the statements read by agreement, is that the women did not want the attention they were being paid. I accept that some of them may have felt intimidated, although that did not stop physical interaction, on the part of at least one of them, with Mussie as events unfolded. It may be deceptive, but from the CCTV evidence alone, the witnesses did not behave in a way which suggested they were in fear for their own safety. The inference I drew was that they were trying to prevent a fight.
15. The violence started when, without any justification, you stood up, squared up to Mussie and head-butted him. The CCTV clearly shows how angry you were and how others, including the females in your group, tried to intervene and hold you and Mussie apart. In the melee, Mussie smashed a bottle on the floor. That should have been the end of it.

16. Having been briefly moved away from the immediate area, Mussie walked back and you pulled away from the woman holding you, to confront him. At that stage he had nothing in his hands. Even at that point, you could easily have walked away. If he was looking to re-engage with you, it was reciprocal.
17. The male in your group said he could see that Mussie was already bleeding and realised that, if there were more violence, Mussie would come off worse. He told you as much. That did not deter you.
18. I am sure that your evidence that you believed Mussie had a broken bottle was a deliberate lie. That improbable version of events was first suggested to the police after your arrest 2 days later. Immediately following the incident, when you were messaging friends, there was no mention of needing to defend yourself, let alone of seeing any bottle.
19. After the head-butt, I am sure that this was no real provocation by your victim. I am also sure that after the head-butt, that there was no element of genuine self-defence. You could not control your temper.
20. Within a few seconds, after punches were aimed by both of you at each other, you tripped Mussie and he fell to the ground. You could have walked away.
21. As he knelt, you rained further punches down on his head. You could have walked away.
22. However, you stood up, raised your leg and kicked him hard to the head. It was over in moments but the CCTV shows what happened. Some witnesses described seeing it. It is clear who must have seen the kick and who has lied about what they saw. Kicking someone to the head, when they are defenceless on the ground, is abhorrent. A shod foot is a lethal weapon. The kick was entirely gratuitous.

23. From the head-butt onwards, this was sustained violence.
24. The effect of your blows and that vicious kick was to rupture the vertebral arteries in Mussie's neck and he collapsed. Decent members of the public tried to help him. The emergency services did their best. At the hospital the doctors tried to save his life but Mussie died on 30 August 2024.
25. You stormed off, clearly still pumped-up. You and your group avoided the police, left the scene and drove off. You were dropped off at a night club in south London. It may not be fair to say that you went "clubbing" but you stayed away from the police.
26. In one of the messages you sent to others, you referred to yourself as having a monster in you that sometimes comes out. Other messages contain clear admissions of guilt. Probably because you simply couldn't bring yourself to admit it, you never mentioned the kick.
27. You were arrested in the early hours of 28 August 2024. To your credit you immediately asked if Mussie was OK.
28. In a prepared statement, you asserted that you had acted at all times in self-defence or defence of others. As I have said, that assertion does not feature in your messages to friends immediately after the murder.
29. The jury did not hear the full version, but you went on to explain how, after your previous prison sentence, you tried to lead a law abiding life. You did not manage that, and your culpability is seriously aggravated by the fact that, at the time of this incident, you were subject to a community order for a previous offence involving unlawful aggression.
30. When the police showed you the CCTV footage you cried and agreed that your conduct looked disgusting. When you gave evidence about that reaction you

looked uncomfortable and you struggled to explain it in a way that made any sense. The likeliest explanation for that shifting ground is that you simply cannot now bring yourself to acknowledge what you did, knowing that it means your return to prison for a long time.

31. For the offence of murder there is only one sentence that a judge can pass, namely life imprisonment. I must determine the minimum period of time you must remain in prison before you can even apply to the Parole Board for release on licence for the rest of your life. If and when you are released on licence you must abide by the conditions imposed on you and you will be liable to recall to prison.

32. Everyone agrees that the starting point for the minimum term in this case is 15 years.

33. Culpability is significantly increased due to the persistent and gratuitous violence being used in such a public way. In that regard, I will exercise the restraint that Mr Smith KC asks me to.

34. You are now 31 and have had substantial difficulties in your life. You suffer from ADHD but, as Mr Smith KC accepted, that does not mitigate your conduct on this occasion.

35. You have previous convictions, although not for such serious violence. You may not have been an enthusiastic criminal, but the fact is that, at the time of the murder, you were subject to a sentence for aggressive behaviour in May 2023. That raises your culpability.

36. Set against that, I accept that the violence was not planned and it was over quickly. Mussie was a stranger to you and so there was no pre-meditation. You did not go out that day to cause trouble.

37. I also accept that there was no intent to kill.

38. There is abundant and impressive evidence of your efforts to lead a better life, to support the mother of your children and to help others. The continued support you have from those who know you is striking. It is a shame that not one of them expressed any empathy for the man you killed or his family. Of course I do not hold that against you. I give you then credit I can.

39. The appropriate minimum term would be 18 years. From that term must be deducted the time you have spent on remand in custody, namely 182 days. The minimum term is thus 17 years and 183 days.

40. Victim Surcharge applies.

His Honour Judge Philip Katz KC

Old Bailey

28 February 2025