



The King

v.

Lorik LUPQI

Jason FURTADO

Abel CHUNDA

Xavier POPONNE

Eden CLARK

Sentencing Remarks 26 September 2025

HHJ Dhir KC

Central Criminal Court

1. Lorik Lupqi, Jason Furtado, Abel Chunda, Xavier Poponne and Eden Clark, you have been convicted by a jury of the murder of Leonardo Reid, the murder of Klevi Shekaj and the attempted murder Abdulla Abdullahia. Those three offences took place on the 29 June 2023, when you, Abel Chunda, Xavier Poponne and Eden Clark, were brought together by Jason Furtado. You were dressed to hide your identity and armed with large machetes and your faces were covered. The three of you travelled in the taxi ordered by Lorig Lupqi and, when it arrived at the destination, all three of you got out of the taxi in order to attack and kill. You were out of the taxi for about 5 minutes and such

was your intent that in those few minutes you stabbed three young men. Two of them died and one of them sustained life-changing injuries. When Mr Abdullahia came to court he was terrified and reluctant to give evidence, such was the impact of your violent crimes upon him.

2. This was a planned, brutal, murderous, group attack in a residential area where you knew a large number of people had gathered. It was carried out quickly and brutally.
3. In addition, you, Xavier Poponne, have pleaded guilty to additional offences, including the supply of class A drugs and the carrying of knives. Those offences were committed on 29 September and on 7 and 27 November 2023.
4. The moving impact statements from the mothers of Leonardo Reid and Klevi Shekaj have been read to the court.
5. Locci Valentin, the mother of Leonardo Reid, who was a child of only 15 when you killed him, said:

“I will forever carry a sense of desperate loss that I will never accept or understand. The trauma, the scars, the sense of horror that will never go away. There will never be closure for me or my family. These unfortunately are the things that stay with you for life. I lost a son, my children lost a brother, while everyone goes about their normal day to day life, me and my family will never be able to live a normal life.

My past, present and future has been crashed and taken, not only from me but my family but his siblings and all of our loved ones and friends, ...”

6. Shekaj Valbona, the mother of Klevi Shakaj, who was 23 when you killed him, also made a moving statement, in which she spoke of her “*profound grief*”. She lost her only child. She said:

‘This journey through the uncharted territory of sorrow feels isolating and bewildering. Every day since his death, I have wept. I remain devastated, unable to process how my son, who was so full of life just hours before, could be gone forever. The simple daily rhythms of our life together, conversations over dinner, quiet evenings at home, shared dreams for the future have been silenced.

Our family will forever be affected.

*Klevi, was very much adored .The grief has ripped through our entire family.
There are moments when we wonder if we will ever feel whole again.”*

7. On 29 June 2023 you, Lorik Lupqi, learned that a music video was being filmed on the Elthorne Estate. That is clear from an exchange of messages with your girlfriend, in which you said that there were “ops” present, by which you meant members of a rival gang. This led to a call being made to you, Jason Furtado, who assisted in making the arrangements for what then happened. The telephone evidence shows the extent of the assistance which you provided, including being present when the taxi arrived to pick up Abel Chunda, Xavier Poponne and Eden Clark and take them to the Elthorne estate, where there were a large number of young men present.
8. You, Abel Chunda, Xavier Poponne and Eden Clark, set about these young men with your machetes. The wounds which you inflicted were so serious that two of your victims died and the third victim required urgent medical assistance. You then quickly left the scene in the taxi which had been kept waiting for you. On the return journey you were joined by Lorig Lupqi.
9. As for your other offences, Xavier Poponne:
 - (1) On 29 September 2023 you committed offences of possessing cocaine and heroin with intent to supply, possessing cannabis and having a bladed article in public place. You were selling drugs in the area of Essex Road, in Islington. You were found to have 76 packages of cocaine (7.391g), 25 packages of heroin (2.881g) and a small bag of cannabis. You also had a large, black-handled knife.
 - (2) The police searched your home on 7 November 2023 and found a total of 14.73 grams of crack cocaine, in 175 individual wraps, a total of 1.52 grams of diamorphine, in 24 individual packages, and items associated with drug dealing, including an electronic weighing scale. I have to sentence you for two offences of possessing a class A drug with intent to supply.
 - (3) On 27 November 2023 you committed further offences of possession of a bladed article and possession of cannabis,

10. For each of the two murders, I have to impose on each of you a sentence of life imprisonment. I also have to decide the minimum term which you will serve before you are eligible to be considered for release by the Parole Board. It is important that you, and everyone concerned with this case, should understand what a minimum term means. A minimum term is not a fixed term after which you will automatically be released. It is the minimum time which you will spend in custody before your case can be considered by the Parole Board. It will then be for the Parole Board to say whether or not you will be released. If they do not, you will remain in custody.
11. If and when you are released, you will still be subject to licence. This will remain the case for the rest of your life. If for any reason your licence were to be revoked, you would be recalled to prison to continue to serve your life sentence in custody.
12. I am also required to impose the statutory surcharge, if it applies. The order can be drawn up in the appropriate amount.
13. The law says that the starting point in a case like this is a minimum term of 30 years, because you murdered two people.
14. I do not consider that this is a case which calls for a whole life order, because I do not consider that the degree of premeditation or planning was properly to be described as substantial, since the planning only commenced about 2 hours before the murders, but I do consider that the planning was significant, which is an aggravating factor.
15. In addition, you, Lorig Lupqi and Xavier Poponne, were under 21 at the time of the murders, so a whole life order is not available in your cases. In a case of this nature, it would not be appropriate to impose whole life orders on some defendants, but not others.
16. I have to consider whether I should adjust the figure of 30 years up or down, so I have to consider all of the aggravating and mitigating factors.
17. As for aggravating factors, I have already mentioned that there was a significant degree of premeditation or planning, which involved assembling a group of three men armed with machetes and arranging for them to travel to and from the Elthorne estate.
18. There are also aggravating factors in that:

- (1) Leonardo Reid was a child of 15.
 - (2) You committed the murders in a residential street, in front of a number of witnesses, including young people.
 - (3) Some of you disposed of evidence after the murders, namely the machetes, telephones and clothing. This was captured on CCTV
 - (4) After the murders, you, Lorik Lupqi, tried to escape by leaving the country and you, Eden Clark, changed your appearance and left London. Both of you took steps to avoid being arrested.
19. I also have to consider the different roles which you played. I draw no distinction between the three of you who used your machetes. You, Lorik Lupqi, were no less culpable, and indeed more culpable, than those three, since you were the instigator and organiser of this violence. You, Jason Furtado, were a little less culpable, since your role was to assist in organising the operation.
20. Each of you, with the exception of Mr Poponne, has previous convictions.
 - (1) Mr Lupqi, you have 18 previous convictions for 33 offences. These include offences of dishonesty, drug offences, possession of weapons and knives in a public place and offences of violence.
 - (2) Mr Furtado, you have 9 previous convictions for 27 offences, these include offences involving of dishonesty and drug related offending.
 - (3) Mr Chunda, you have 46 previous convictions for 97 offences. These include offences of dishonest, drug offense, offences of violence and robbery, possession of weapons and knives in a public place and one offences of unauthorised possession of a knife/ offensive weapon in prison, a conviction on the 23.1.2024.
 - (4) Mr Poponne, you have no previous convictions.
21. Moreover, you, Lorik Lupqi, committed this offence whilst subject to a suspended sentence order and whilst on bail in other proceedings and you left the jurisdiction

shortly afterwards. I have taken the suspended sentence into account when fixing the minimum term.

22. As for mitigating factors, none of the factors listed in the Sentencing Act was present, except that you, Lorik Lupqi, were only 19 and you, Xavier Poponne, were only 20 when you committed these offences. The rest of you were over 25. I have taken account of everything which has been said on your behalf.
23. You, Lorik Lupqi, did not wish to say anything in mitigation of sentence. I was told that you, Jason Furtado, have a young child and strong family bonds and your sentence will have an impact on your family. You, Abel Chunda, have never before committed an offence as serious as this and I have considered the report by Dr Halsey on your cognitive abilities. I was told that your behaviour, Xavier Poponne, was out of character and that you were naïve. I have also read the letter from your mother who says you have been her carer and essential part of her life. You Eden Clark, I have read the letters from your father in law and Ms Wilson, they describe you as a caring man and you too have a young daughter who will grow up without you.
24. I cannot leave this case without noting that, with the exception of you, Xavier Poponne, your behaviour during the trial has been appalling, with constant outbursts in court, fights in the dock, destructive behaviour in the cells in this building and difficult behaviour coming to and leaving this court. Your behaviour, Lorik Lupqi, has been by far the worst, but you, Jason Furtado, Abel Chunda and Eden Clark, have also behaved violently and aggressively and have shown a complete lack of respect for the court process and the families of your victim. However, I am sentencing you for your offences and not for your conduct in court.
25. I also have to impose a sentence of imprisonment on each of you for the offence of attempted murder. The relevant sentencing guideline says that the starting point is 25 years' imprisonment. Again, I have to consider the aggravating and mitigating factors.
26. In addition, I have to impose sentences on you, Xavier Poponne, for the other offences. I have considered the appropriate sentencing guidelines. Your offences of possessing drugs with intent to supply fall within significant role and harm category 3. The starting point is 4 years 6 months' custody. I will reduce these sentence by one quarter by reason

of your guilty pleas. For the bladed article offences I am obliged to give you a minimum of 6 months' imprisonment.

27. For each of you, I have to impose a total sentence which reflects all of your offending behaviour. I will do that by taking account of the attempted murder and, in your case, Xavier Poponne, the other offences in fixing the minimum terms for your life sentences.
28. For each of the two murders I impose on each of you a sentence of life imprisonment.
29. For the attempted murder I impose on each of you a concurrent sentence of 25 years' imprisonment. In your case, Xavier Poponne, I also impose concurrent sentences of:
 - (1) 3 years and 4 months' imprisonment for each of the offences of possession of class A drugs with intent to supply;
 - (2) 6 months' imprisonment for each of the bladed article offences; and
 - (3) no separate penalty for the offences of possession of cannabis
30. The time which each of you has spent in custody on remand will count towards these sentences. However, you will have served these sentences before the expiry of the minimum term for your life sentences.
31. Lorik Lupqi, I fix the minimum term which you will serve in custody on each life sentence at 39 years, less the time which you have spent in custody on remand but not the time which you spent in custody awaiting extradition. I am told that you have spent 317 days in custody on remand, including 29 February 2024, and 86 days in custody awaiting extradition, so the minimum term will be 38 years and 49 days.
32. Jason Furtado, I fix the minimum term which you will serve in custody on each life sentence at 37 years, less the time which you have spent in custody on remand. I am told that you have spent 812 days in custody on remand, including 29 February 2024, so the minimum term will be 34 years and 284 days.
33. Abel Chunda, I fix the minimum term which you will serve in custody on each life sentence at 38 years, less the time which you have spent in custody on remand. I am told that you have spent 568 days in custody on remand, including 29 February 2024, so the minimum term will be 36 years and 163 days.

34. Xavier Poponne, I fix the minimum term which you will serve in custody on each life sentence at 37 years, less the time which you have spent in custody on remand. I am told that you have spent days in custody on remand, including 29 February 2024, so the minimum term will be 35 years and 219 days.
35. Eden Clark, I fix the minimum term which you will serve in custody on each life sentence at 38 years, less the 733 days which you have spent in custody on remand. I am told that you have spent days in custody on remand, including 29 February 2024, so the minimum term will be 35 years and 363 days.