

DAY XVII OF THE "HIDDEN DEBTS" SCANDAL TRIAL

Mbanda Henning confirms receipt of 12,8 million MT from her sister Angela Leão and says she was paying 2011 debt and another part was a loan

- The trial of the "hidden debts" financial scandal entered its fifth week yesterday, with the hearing of Mbanda Anabela Buque Henning, 46, older sister of defendant Ângela Leão. Businesswoman and owner of ZIMAL Zincos de Maputo, a zinc sheet factory, Mbanda Anabela Henning is indicted for the crime of money laundering, after the Supreme Court dropped two crimes of abuse of trust and association to commit crimes. It is stated in the case that in 2013, Mbanda Henning, in her capacity as owner of HIGHT, a real estate company, contracted Arktek company to draw up a USD 33,000 project of 14 townhouses to be implemented at Costa do Sol area.



Mbanda Anabela Buque Henning

However, in 2014 the project was taken over by her sister Angela Leão, and was scaled down to 10 houses, an estimate budget of 65 million meticaís. The Public Prosecutor believes that the real estate project being carried out by Fabião Mabunda's company, M Moçambique Construções, is part of the investments made by Ângela Leão using the money received from the Privinvest group. Added to this is the fact that M Moçambique Construções transferred, from the money received from the Privinvest group, a total of 12,865,000.00 meticaís to Mbanda Anabela Henning, in two instalments. The first instalment of 4,725,000 meticaís was transferred on 6 September 2013 and the second one (8,140,000 meticaís) on 20 June 2014.

Faced with these facts, Mbanda Anabela Henning denied all the charges against her by the Public Prosecutor. She said she did not know Fabião Mabunda, nor his company M Moçambique Construções Lda. But she later said that she had heard of Fabião Mabunda's name in her family as a contractor for Ângela Leão. When confronted with the fact that she received 12,865,000 meticaís from M Moçambique Construções in her bank accounts, the defendant confirmed receiving the amount and said that part of it resulted from the payment of a debt, plus interest, that Angela Leão had contracted in 2011, amounting to four (4) million meticaís. She added that as she needed more money, she borrowed six (6) million meticaís from her sister Angela Leão, and later returned it in cash and in kind (zinc sheets). Questioned on how she used the amount of 12.865.000 meticaís, the defendant replied: "I refrain from answering because it was a long time ago".

Regarding the Costa do Sol area real estate project, Mbanda Anabela Henning explained that in 2010 she bought a plot with improvements for USD100,000, paid in instalments. She then hired Arktek company for USD33,000 to carry out the real estate project, and for that purpose, a proposal for a seven-storey building was submitted to the Maputo Municipal Council for approval. The municipality failed the project and in 2013 the defendant had it re-dimensioned to 14 houses. As she did not have the money to build the 14 houses, she presented the project to her sisters and Angela Leão expressed interest in being part of it. "We agreed that she would implement the project and they would each get seven (7) flats." When Angela Leão took over the project, she de-

"She asked me to register it in my name to safeguard the interests of her son. I saw fit to help her. I saw no harm in it. I just signed the deed, I don't know about the payment methods for the property."

cidied to reduce it from 14 to 10 houses, claiming they were too small. The defendant can no longer remember from which moment (year) her sister started to implement the project. The formal agreement between the two sisters was only made in May 2015, at a time when the works had already started.

When questioned if she knew the company that was executing the project, the defendant replied in the negative, claiming that it was her sister who was in charge of everything, who she described as being knowledgeable in civil construction matters. She also said that from the time her Ângela Leão took over the project and started the construction work, she never made a single visit to the site. In her plea presented to the Attorney General's Office, Mbanda Henning said that she had the conversation with Ângela Leão about the Costa do Sol flat project in 2014. Since the defendant Fabião Mabunda told the court that his company M Moçambique Construções began executing works on the site in 2013, upon instructions from the defendant Angela Leão, the Public Prosecutor asked Mbanda Henning how she explained the fact that the works began a year before the conversation with her sister. In response, the defendant corrected by

stating that the exact moment she spoke about the project with her sister Angela Leão was in late 2013 and not 2014, as stated in her own plea.

Regarding the property located between Mao Tsé Tung and Tomás Nduda Avenues, in Maputo City, bought by the defendant Ângela Leão at a price of USD 1,600,000, she was asked why it is registered in her name, to which Mbanda Anabela Henning replied that it was at the request of her sister. "She asked me to register it in my name to safeguard the interests of her son. I saw fit to help her. I saw no harm in it. I just signed the deed, I don't know about the payment methods for the property." Asked if she can prove that the property belongs to the defendant Ângela Leão, Mbanda Henning replied that she gave an irrevocable power of attorney to her sister. The Public Prosecutor asked if she could produce the irrevocable power of attorney, and she replied that the document remained with Ângela Leão. Asked what interests of the child her sister wanted to safeguard, the defendant replied that she did not want to explain.

On Friday, defendant Sidónio Siteo confirmed to the court that he had been threatened by Ângela Leão, allegedly for mentioning at the Attorney General Office that he had sold houses to her. And one of the episodes took place at Mbanda Anabela Henning's home, at Malhangalene area, where Sidónio Siteo had been invited to go by Ângela Leão. "I can summarise that we had not a pleasant conversation, we argued that day," he recalled on Friday. When confronted with the facts, Mbanda Anabela Henning confirmed the meeting at her house, but said that from what she could follow, it was a normal conversation and there was no argument. To the question why the meeting had been in her house, the defendant replied that she was only one from her family who lives in Maputo City, so her residence has been used by her sisters as a meeting point.

Today, the Court will hear Khessaujee Ishwards Pulchand, one of the workers of Africâmbios (exchange house) accused of involvement in money laundering of the money resulting from the "hidden debts" scandal. According to the Public Prosecutor's indictment, from the amount received from the Privinvest group, Fabião Mabunda passed on a total of 13,480,000.00 meticaís "to his friend and accomplice Khessaujee Ishwards Pulchand, in the period between 7 May and 31 July 2014". Khessaujee Ishwards Pulchand's lawyer is Alice Mabota, a human rights defender.



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