

September 'shot for nuke secrets'

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Aziz Pahad, has stated that anti-apartheid activist Dulcie September was assassinated 23 years ago because of her knowledge of nuclear military trade.

South Africa's former deputy minister of foreign affairs, Aziz Pahad, has stated on camera for the first time that anti-apartheid activist Dulcie September was assassinated 23 years ago because of her knowledge of nuclear military trade between South Africa and France.

According to Dutch journalist Evelyn Groenink, Pahad was speaking in a documentary made by Pascal Henry for French television channel Canal Plus. Groenink originally reported the nuclear motive in a 1998 article published in the Mail and Guardian.

Both the South African and French governments maintain that September's assassination in Paris, while she was opening the local ANC offices on the Rue des Petites-Ecuries one morning, was conducted by an

apartheid-era death squad and due solely to her anti-apartheid activities.

The issue of September's knowledge of nuclear trade during apartheid arose in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) hearings in 1998, but was not followed up. "I was always surprised that you can write an article, it gets published by a prestigious newspaper and then nothing happens," said Groenink.

"The TRC continued as if nothing was written and kept on questioning Eugene de Kock [the former Vlakplaas hit squad commander]. Only people in journalism circles talked about it. The TRC has consistently refused to acknowledge what Pahad [originally] said." She said that from Pahad's claims, "everything points to French mercenaries".

"Everything that happened in the late Eighties and early Nineties was about contracts being in danger if blacks came to power. I believe the French were involved in giving the order to have September shot,"

Groenink said.

In 2009 the Jacana publisher and then-Ruth First fellow, Maggie Davie, gave a lecture on the difficulties she faced in trying to publish Groenink's book, *Dulcie September: Murder in Paris*. She mentioned the numerous threats she received and legal action she faced from people who had been sent questions for comment.

"Dulcie's files were notoriously hard to find," said Davie. "You can't get access to them through the department of justice. It says that's because there is an ongoing investigation. But if you speak to the NPA [National Prosecuting Authority], it says there is no such investigation. There has been lots of obfuscation. A few of the files have gone missing, but we don't know which ones are missing."

John Daniel, who worked as a member of the research department

for the truth commission, said that no serious investigation had been conducted into Dulcie September's death.

"There were some TRC people who went to France. They supplied us with considerable documentation, but it was all in French. The only part that was translated was the summary report of the presiding judge. Other than that, no investigation was done. We were never given the files of French intelligence. The September case should have been prioritised, but it wasn't."

September was 52 years old when she was shot five times in the head. She was the ANC's chief representative for France, Luxembourg and Switzerland. On the day of her murder, 60 000 people took to the streets of France in various marches to protest against her killing.