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TRANSMITTED BY EMAIL

Date: 30 September 2022
TO: Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency
ATT: Dorothy Makaringe Dorothy.makaringe@mtpa.co.za
Bheki Malaza Bheki.malaza@mtpa.co.za
FROM: EMS FOUNDATION (Michele Pickover) michele@emsfoundation.org.za

Dear Ms Makaringe and Mr Malaza,

Towards Freedom - Elephants Tswale and Modjadji

The content of this urgent communication refers to two African elephants, namely, a male elephant named Tswale with Microchip Number 456A68615C and a female elephant named Modjadji with the Microchip Number 455754620C.

The elephants were captured on the 28th October 2004 at Selati Private Game Reserve in Gravelotte, Limpopo Province. The Capture Permit Numbers were: CPM – 005 – 00002 the Capture Receipt Number were: FE 29335. These were wild caught elephants, Tswale, a male, was aged 9 and Modjadji, a female, was aged 11. The elephants were translocated to *Elephants For Africa Forever* (EFAF), an elephant training facility situated in Mooketsi in Limpopo.

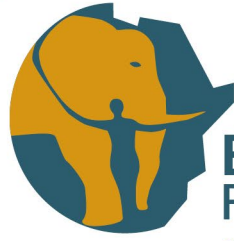
In 2005, whilst undergoing training at EFAF, Modjadji was involved in an incident where a young international student suffered serious head trauma when she flung him against a barrier. Despite the serious nature and consequences of this incident, on the 24th of June 2006, the two elephants were translocated yet again. They were relocated to work at a commercial elephant back safari business at the Kwa Madwala Private Game Reserve in Hectorspruit in Mpumalanga Province. The Capture Permit Number was CPM -004 – 00035 and the Permit Receipt Number was EC 020019. These elephants have been utilised in the elephant back and elephant interaction tourist since their arrival at Kwa Madwala sixteen years ago.

The EMS Foundation enquired about the health and safety of the elephants and offered Modjadji and Tswale the opportunity of retirement and freedom in a secured natural area under the guidance of renowned elephant scientists and experts as recently as the 6th of November 2019.

Our offer was rejected, instead we were assured that the elephants were housed in a 70 hectare fenced-off enclosure. The area secured an electric fence, that the elephants were under constant human supervision twenty-four hours a day.

Instead these elephants were kept in chains with no protection or supervision unless they were being utilised by tourists.

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In August 2022, unsupervised and tethered by chains, Modjadji recently suffered an injury, described by numerous wildlife veterinarians as devastating. There were no witnesses to the incident, it has been suggested that hunters might have spooked the elephants and, in the attempt, to free themselves both elephants were injured. Another suggestion has been that the elephants were spooked by wild elephants. Modjadji's injury proved to be fatal.

Even though Tswale was injured in this incident he is still being advertised and utilised in the industry.

The elephants are owned by Western Breeze Trading 137 Registration Number: 2005/042126/07. The Director of Western Breeze Trading 137 is Jan Hendrik Grobler.

Modjadji is the third elephant, that we know of, in the captive elephant industry to have died unnecessarily this year, the third elephant to have died in the Mpumalanga Province.

Cognisant of:

- the Recommendations of the High-Level Panel which reviewed policies and regulations on hunting, trade, captive keeping, management and handling of elephant, lion, leopard and rhinos;
- Constitutional Court and High Court Judgments;
- Recent amendments to NEM:BA in relation to the well-being of wildlife; and
- The Norms and Standards for the Management of Elephants



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the EMS Foundation is writing this communication to appeal to you to facilitate an ethical solution for Tswale. We urge the MPTA not to renew his permit to the current owners who have quite obviously failed dismally at managing these elephants.

We have requested a full Report regarding the injuries suffered by Modjadji.

We have, with the assistance of our colleagues, at the Aspinall Foundation, established that there is a possibility that there is Community land available, that the leaseholder of this section of land is agreeable to a solution of moving Tswale to this land. The Aspinall Foundation has established that the land is suitable for elephants, that the land is correctly fenced.

We can jointly offer Tswale the immediate protection and security he requires. Where he can live without fear, without chains and not be utilised in the tourist industry.

The EMS Foundation will send a representative to meet with you and carry out a site inspection.

We look forward to hearing from you as soon as possible.

Yours Sincerely,

Executive Director