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**SCARLETT A. WILSON**

*Solicitor, Ninth Judicial Circuit*

## **North Charleston Man Convicted in Playground Murder of Sixteen-Year-Old Victim**

*Charleston, S.C.* – Solicitor Scarlett A. Wilson announced that last week, a Charleston County jury convicted Defendant Israel Malachi Robinson of Murder, Attempted Murder, and Possession of a Weapon During Commission of a Violent Crime. Judge Patrick C. Fant, III, sentenced the Defendant to 55 years in prison. The case was prosecuted by Assistant Solicitors Lemuel Zeigler and Daniel Cooper. Solicitor Scarlett Wilson stated, “Everyone lost in this sad case of vigilantism. North Charleston detectives did excellent legwork in solving this nonsensical crime.”

On June 22, 2021, victims Jaquez Butler and E.J. Morgan were walking through the playground at Pinecrest Apartments, headed to the pool area. Butler and Morgan were ambushed by two shooters using AR-style rifles. Twenty-eight cartridge cases were found in two separate areas of the playground, along with Jaquez Butler’s dead body. Morgan escaped. Sixteen-year-old Butler was shot 15 times, mostly in the back.

North Charleston Police Department’s investigation led detectives to Defendant Robinson, who lived at Pinecrest. Detectives discovered that Robinson had an ongoing dispute with a group of people who were hunting him. It is unclear whether the dispute was over debts or jealousy or rivalry.

At trial, the evidence proved that Robinson and his co-Defendant, Framon Frasier, Jr., armed themselves with .22 caliber AR-style rifles. Robinson believed that his “hunters” were back in Pinecrest. He and Frasier went toward the playground and shot a total of 28 times at Butler and Morgan erroneously believing they were “the hunters.” After Robinson’s arrest, officers found 3 boxes of the same brand and caliber of ammunition in his car that were found on scene.

“Robinson was being hunted, but he became the hunter,” said Assistant Solicitor Zeigler. “This was a team effort to deliver justice for Jaquez Butler and his family. Investigator Jennifer Butler and Shamika Smith played vital roles in the success of this trial.”

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