

FORMAL REPORT OF HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, AND UNLAWFUL SEARCH AT GALTON GATE, ETOSHA NATIONAL PARK

To: Whom it May Concern

From: Yvonne von Holtz

Date of Incident: 16 April 2025

Location: Galton Gate, Etosha National Park

Guests Involved: Mr. Georg Mosdzien, 80 years old | Mrs. Ursula Mosdzien, 73 years old – both German nationals

Nature of Complaint: Abuse of authority, targeted harassment, unlawful search and seizure, verbal intimidation, failure to follow lawful procedure, racial and national discrimination

1. Introduction

I am compelled to submit this formal complaint to register a grave and deeply disturbing incident involving harassment, intimidation, and outright procedural misconduct by officials at Galton Gate, Etosha National Park, on 16 April 2025.

What was meant to be the peaceful end to a once-in-a-lifetime safari became an ordeal of psychological distress, humiliation, and intimidation—inflicted on two elderly guests, aged 80 and 73, who were not only treated as criminals, but as outsiders unworthy of dignity. The abuse they endured was not incidental—it was systemic, targeted, and emblematic of a rot that, if left unchecked, will tarnish Namibia's reputation as a country of warmth, hospitality, and lawful governance.

2. Chronology of Events

A. Lawful Entry at King Nehale Gate – 14 April 2025

Upon arrival at King Nehale Gate, our interaction with park staff was courteous, efficient, and respectful. After declaring we carried no prohibited items, our vehicle was professionally inspected. The process was aligned with expectations of a lawful and tourist-friendly nation. This experience stood in sharp contrast to the ordeal that would follow.

B. Refueling and Re-entry via Ombika Gate – 15 April 2025

Following the inability to purchase fuel due to a cash-only policy, we sought permission to exit the park temporarily. The staff at Ombika Gate responded with empathy and understanding, permitting re-entry without issue—demonstrating a commendable balance between park regulations and practical realities.

C. Attempted Exit via Galton Gate – 16 April 2025

At approximately 14h00, I parked at Galton Gate to allow my elderly guests to access the restroom. What followed was an abrupt and alarming shift. A uniformed female MET official approached not with a greeting or explanation, but with a demand—aggressively insisting on our passports and permits. Our simple request to use the restroom was met with hostility. This marked the beginning of a cascading abuse of power.

3. Escalation, Hostility, and Public Humiliation

Immediately after complying, I was ordered to report to two individuals: a male police officer (not in proper uniform or name badge) and a woman in civilian attire with “Wildlife Officer” on a reflective vest. Their tone was not that of public servants—but of accusers presuming guilt.

Without justification, the police officer began yelling, ordering me to empty our entire vehicle. Despite my pleas—made for the sake of my frightened elderly guests—his aggression only increased. This was not a lawful inspection; this was public shaming. His voice was raised deliberately to draw the attention of other tourists, exposing us to collective humiliation. The message was clear: we were not guests—we were suspects.

4. Unlawful Search, Gender Misconduct, and Violations of Privacy

I was ordered to singlehandedly unload everything from the vehicle. My personal bags were rifled through by a male officer with no consent, gloves, explanation, or warrant—an egregious violation of protocol and gender boundaries. I invoked my legal rights, reminding him that men are not permitted to search women or their belongings.

Instead of acknowledging this, he ordered me to open every bag myself—including intimate items and private belongings—while he hovered over me, inspecting each with a dehumanizing lack of decency. This extended to forcing my elderly guests to open their luggage, which he rummaged through without warning or explanation. The distress on their faces was visible. Their dignity was stripped, not by accident, but by design.

My call to Mr. Karue at MET Head Office finally triggered a promise that a senior warden would be dispatched. But the trauma had already begun taking a toll.

5. Threats, Lies, and Abuse of Power

While awaiting the senior warden, a woman in plain clothes arrived—later identifying herself as Acting Chief Warden Julia Nghiwanwa. Rather than de-escalating the situation, she exacerbated it, issuing cold, threatening instructions: comply or face consequences.

She made the legally baseless claim that park officials are not required to inform visitors of the purpose of a search. I recorded this exchange as evidence. At no point did any official offer legal justification for their behavior.

Even after Mr. Colgar Sikopo, Director of Parks, acknowledged the wrongdoing and assured intervention, the on-site officials grew increasingly belligerent—refusing to communicate, ignoring directives, and continuing our illegal detainment. We were held without justification, our departure blocked, our basic rights suspended.

6. Psychological Abuse and Inhumane Behavior

As rain began to fall, I was left—alone—to repack the vehicle. Soaking wet, exhausted, and emotionally shattered, I did so while the officials stood under shelter, watching and laughing. My guests sat shivering in the car, traumatized and confused.

When I politely challenged the tone of the Acting Chief Warden, I was threatened with arrest. She falsely claimed that my comment—"Are you listening to yourself?"—was verbal assault. She vanished to fetch her ID, promising to keep us there "past midnight" if necessary.

Upon the arrival of the dispatched senior warden (believed to be Mr. Nangolo or Angula), a fabricated story was presented: that I had told the officer to "fuck off"—a blatant lie. My guests immediately denied this. The officer also denied searching our bags, despite witnesses. He further attempted to knock my phone away as I tried to record this unlawful actions.

7. Discrimination: Age, Race, and Nationality

My guests, unable to understand English fluently, relied on me as a translator. This infuriated the officials, who expressed disdain for the language barrier. The Acting Chief Warden at one point barked at my 80-year-old guest, telling him he should learn English if he wanted to visit Namibia.

When I asked whether our treatment was racially or nationally motivated, the Acting Chief Warden's reply was chillingly direct:

"Maybe."

This single word confirmed what had until then been suspected: the aggression was not about security—it was about who we were. White. German. Foreign. Elderly. Vulnerable.

8. Final Humiliation: Confiscation Without Cause

Even after MET Headquarters instructed a lawful search, the harassment continued. I was forced to unpack again. In addition to searching EVERY bag, they searched the engine

compartment, cabin, and even under the fenders. Inside the car were baobab pods, purchased from street vendors in Tsumkwe. With no receipt, these were declared “illegal,” confiscated as if we were trafficking contraband—despite no evidence, no documentation, no formal explanation, and no written charge.

Not once were we told what they were searching for. Not once was an apology offered. Instead, we were met with lies, cover-ups, and further indignity.

Identities of the officials (only confirmed after much pressure):

Warrant Officer Peter James (NAMPOL)

Warden Fransina Amukwanda (MET)

9. Violations of Law, Rights, and Ethics

This appalling incident constitutes multiple and serious violations:

- Illegal search and seizure without cause or consent
 - Failure to present credentials or legal authority
 - Gender-based misconduct during search procedures
 - Verbal and psychological abuse of senior citizens
 - Detention without due process or legal basis
 - Explicit discrimination on racial and national grounds
 - Obstruction of communication with MET headquarters
 - Breach of the constitutional right to dignity and protection
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10. Relief Requested

We demand the following as a matter of urgency:

1. An immediate and thorough investigation into the conduct of all officials involved
 2. Disciplinary action and reassignment away from public-facing roles for all perpetrators
 3. A formal written apology to myself and my guests
 4. Public documentation of search procedures and tourist rights at all park gates
 5. Clarification of legal basis for the seizure of Baobab pods, including a proper review of the enforcement chain-of-custody
 6. A policy barring non-uniformed, unidentified individuals from conducting or supervising vehicle searches
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11. Supporting Evidence

Despite threats and intimidation, we managed to collect the following evidence:

- Photographs of our guests visibly distressed during the illegal detainment
 - Images from the unlawful search itself
 - A partial video recorded by Mrs. Mosdzien capturing a portion of the harassment
 - Audio of the Acting Chief Warden falsely claiming she is legally prohibited from disclosing search details
 - Timestamps proving our compliance throughout, disproving officials' claims
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11. Conclusion

This was not an isolated mishap—it was a systemic abuse of authority, facilitated by a lack of accountability and fueled by prejudice.

Etosha is not just a park. It is the pride of Namibia. And when its gates become sites of abuse, Namibia's global image is tarnished. Tourism is not built on scenery alone—it is built on trust. On safety. On dignity.

My guests were left shaken, humiliated, and traumatized. What was once their favorite country is now a place of pain. This was their 12th visit. It may be their last. If incidents like these are allowed to fester, Namibia risks losing more than tourists—it risks its soul.

Respectfully submitted,
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