

*Gisèle Pelicot's ex-husband  
found guilty of mass rape,  
sentenced to maximum of 20  
years*

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Paris, December 20 (RHC)-- In a case that has galvanized France, a court has found the ex-husband of a French woman, Gisèle Pelicot, guilty on all charges for repeatedly raping his wife and inviting dozens of other men to rape her after he drugged her unconscious.

A panel of judges sentenced Dominique Pelicot to the maximum 20 years in prison. Fifty other defendants who also raped Gisèle Pelicot with her husband's help were also found guilty.

The shocking case has made headlines around the world, and the three-and-a-half-month trial gripped France, with supporters regularly gathering around the Avignon courthouse to support Gisèle Pelicot, who famously waived anonymity to give a voice to survivors and change the public discourse on sexual violence.

She told the court during the trial: "It's not for us to feel shame — it's for them." She also insisted videos of her rapes be shown in court as part of the trial.

Gisèle Pelicot spoke after the verdict was pronounced. "I'm thinking about the victims, who aren't recognized and whose stories often remain in the shadows. I want you to know we share the same struggle. I wish to express my deepest gratitude to all those who have supported me throughout this ordeal. Your testimonies devastated me, and I was able to pull the strength from them to come back every day to face these long days of the trial."

In other news, the U.S. government will pay a record nearly \$116 million to settle lawsuits brought by 103 women who survived sexual abuse and assault at the now-shuttered Federal Correctional Institution in Dublin, California.

The prison became known as the "Rape Club" due to the systematic assaults perpetrated by staff on detainees.

[ SOURCE: DEMOCRACY NOW ]

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