



United States Attorney's Office District of Connecticut Press Release

September 1, 2010 **NIGERIAN CITIZEN SENTENCED TO MORE THAN 12 YEARS IN FEDERAL PRISON FOR ROLE IN "ADVANCE FEE" FRAUD SCHEME**

David B. Fein, United States Attorney for the District of Connecticut, announced that OKPAKO MIKE DIAMREYAN, 31, a citizen of Nigeria who sometimes resided in Accra, Ghana, was sentenced today by United States District Judge Janet C. Hall in Bridgeport to 151 months of imprisonment, followed by three years of supervised release, for engaging in an Internet "advance fee" scam. On February 16, 2010, a jury found DIAMREYAN guilty of three counts of wire fraud stemming from the scheme.

According to the evidence presented during the trial, in an "advance fee" scam, a victim is persuaded to pay money (an "advance fee") in order to obtain a larger sum of money that never materializes. From approximately August 2004 through August 2009, DIAMREYAN and others engaged in advance fee scams against a resident of Connecticut and others around the country. As part of the scheme, DIAMREYAN sent numerous fraudulent email messages in which he claimed to have a "consignment" stored in Ghana containing amounts ranging from \$11.5 million to \$23.4 million. DIAMREYAN offered the victims 20 percent of the money if they would help him transfer the money to the United States, and he provided fraudulent documents to the victims to persuade them that the money existed. In an effort to persuade his victims to pay fees in connection with transferring the money to the U.S., DIAMREYAN used different identities, including Prince Nana Kamokai of Sierra Leone, General Odu Kuffour of Ghana, and the Rev. Dr. Richard Camaro, airport director in Accra, Ghana.

"This defendant and his accomplices preyed on vulnerable victims in Connecticut, the United States and around the world, leaving many individuals and their families in financial ruin," stated U.S. Attorney Fein. "The lengthy prison term imposed today should send a strong message to others who intend to commit similar crimes – we will pursue these cases wherever they lead us and bring you to justice. I want to single out the DCIS and their agents who worked this case tirelessly and thoroughly and helped to achieve justice for victims."

The Government has identified 67 victims of this scheme and conservatively estimates that DIAMREYAN is directly responsible for losses to his victims in a total amount of more than \$1.3 million.

Today, Judge Hall ordered DIAMREYAN to pay restitution in the amount of \$1,021,560.74.

"Although today's sentencing represents the conviction of a single individual, the Defense Criminal Investigative Service will investigate the misrepresentation by others who falsely portray themselves as U.S. Military members and prey upon the more vulnerable in our society for their own financial gain," stated Edward Bradley, Special Agent In Charge of the Defense Criminal Investigative Service's Northeast Field Office.

This matter was investigated by the Defense Criminal Investigative Service of the United States Department of Defense. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Edward Chang.

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