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Former Chief of Somali NSS faces lawsuit for torture

Hiiraan Online

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Columbus, OH (HOL) - The Center for Justice and Accountability (CJA) and Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld, LLP have filed a lawsuit against the former chief of Somali National Security Service (NSS). The lawsuit alleges that Col. Abdi Aden Magan ordered the detention and torture of a professor and human rights lawyer in 1988.

The civil complaint was launched Wednesday in US District court for the southern district of Ohio eastern division.

According to legal documents obtained by Hiiraan Online, Professor Abukar Hassan Ahmed was detained on or about the evening of November 20, 1988 and was taken to the NSS Department of Investigations Prison (NSS Prison) was interrogated and tortured for three months. Professor Abukar alleges that he suffers physical and psychological injuries as a direct result of the detention and torture.

The defendant Mr. Magan held the rank of Colonel and served as the Chief of the NSS Department of Investigations from 1988 to 1990. According to these same documents, Colonel Magan ordered, conspired with, aided and abetted, or exercised command responsibility over subordinates in the NSS to carry out the torture, arbitrary detention and degrading punishment of Professor Abukar.

Defendant Magan is a native of Somalia and a permanent resident of the United States. He currently resides in Columbus, Ohio.

Pamela Merchant, CJA's Executive Director, said, "We are committed to achieving justice for our client who suffered so severely at the hands of the defendant. Human rights violators like the defendant must be held accountable and should not be permitted to live with impunity in the United States."

Tiffany Smith, the filing attorney from Akin Gump, said, "Fortunately there are laws in our country that allow individuals like Mr. Ahmed to pursue legal actions against those responsible for their wrongful imprisonment and torture. We are committed to working with CJA to see this case through to an appropriate resolution."

In 2009, the CJA filed a lawsuit against the former Somali Prime Minister, General Mohamed Ali Samatar for torture and human rights abuses. This case is currently in the U.S Supreme Court.

No one from the former regime of Siad Barre has yet to be held legally responsible for human rights abuses.

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