



Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone (HRCSL) Decides on the Rodney Michael and 2 others vs. Ministry of Sports and SLFA matter

Freetown. 16th April, 2021

The Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone (HRCSL) has delivered the decision of the Commission on a complaint filed before it on 14th February 2020 between the complainants Rodney Michael, Nasiru Deen Othman and Abdul Kanasieu Rollings against the Ministry of Sports and the Sierra Leone Football Association today Friday 16th April 2021.

The complaint against the Respondents alleged violation of their rights to fair hearing and their rights to freedom of assembly and association as football stakeholders following their suspension from all football activities in July 2014.

Representative of the Ministry of Sports in the person of the Permanent Secretary, Mr. Adikali Samura told the Commission that the Minister of Sports had no issues with the complainants. Meanwhile, Chris Kamara, General Secretary of SLFA who represented SLFA denied allegations against them and stated that an Investigation Committee was set up to look into allegations by the complainants but they refused to attend the proceedings on grounds that the Committee was illegal.

In order to reach a decision on the complaint, the Commission examined three key issues for determination; right to fair hearing, right to freedom of association and entitlement to any remedy by the complainants if both rights stated above were found to have been violated. Based on the evidence provided the Commission found that the Ministry of Sport and SLFA breached due processes in suspending the complainants as they failed to inform them of any wrong doing in the press release dated 10th March 2015 that suspended them, nor did they give the complainants the opportunity to be heard for any alleged wrongdoing thereby violating the principle of natural justice and rights to fair hearing contrary to Section 23(2) of the Constitution of Sierra Leone 1991 and Article 20 of the UDHR, article 22 of the ICCPR and article 10 of ACHPR.

The Commission also ruled that the Ministry of Sports failed in its supervisory responsibility to ensure that SLFA lift the suspension imposed on Rodney Michael and the two others as was instructed by the same Ministry in March 2015 and the said suspension prevented the complainants from participating in football activities organised by SLFA. That the SLFA by refusing these football stakeholders to participate in activities and events of SLFA was a violation of their rights to freedom of assembly and association contrary to Section 26(1) of the 1991 Constitution.

Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone therefore ordered the Ministry of Sport and SLFA to apologize to Rodney Michael and the two others, officially lift the suspension, expedite hearing of the allegations on Nasiru Deen Othman, and compensate all three for loss of earnings and psychological hardship suffered from July 2014 to December 2020.



The Commission reserves the right to invoke Section 8(1) (c) of the HRCSL Act of 2004 and Rule 60 of the Complaints, Investigation and Inquiries Rule of 2008 both of which give power to the Commission to refer persons to the High Court for contempt for failure to comply with the Commission's decisions, directives and/or orders.