



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

Sahel and West Africa Team
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
King Charles Street
London SW1A 2AH

Website: www.gov.uk

11 May 2016

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 (FOIA) REQUEST REF: 0296-16

Thank you for your request for information which we received on 11 March 2016. In your request you asked for:

- *I would be grateful for copies of the three telegrams I sent to the FO on the murder on 29 December 1992 by Strasser and co of 26 men who had been imprisoned in Pademba Road Jail. As I remember these telegrams gave respectively the background, the events themselves, and a recommendation that HMG cancel its participation in a nascent IMF balance of payments programme. The telegrams were the basis of Secretary of State Douglas Hurd's public statement in Nigeria on 5 January in which he suspended our part in the programme. I would also be grateful for a copy of this statement please.*

I can confirm that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does hold information relevant to your request. I have not found the telegram with the specific reference to the "recommendation that HMG cancel its participation in a nascent IMF balance of payments programme" but I will continue to search for the relevant telegram. In the meantime, I am pleased to enclose the material which we can release to you.

We were considering whether some information was exempt under section 27 - International relations, of the FOIA but have decided that this exemption does not apply and we have not withheld any information under this exemption.

Some information is being withheld under the following exemption of the (FOIA):

Section 40 (2) and (3) Personal Information

Some information has been withheld under section 40 – personal information. Some of the information you have requested is personal data relating to third parties, the disclosure of which would contravene one of the data protection principles. In such circumstances sections 40(2) and (3) of the Freedom of Information Act apply. In this case, our view is that disclosure would breach the first data protection principle. This states that personal data should be processed fairly and lawfully. It is the fairness aspect of this principle which, in our view, would be breached by disclosure. In such circumstances section 40 confers an absolute exemption on disclosure. There is, therefore, no public interest test to apply.

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Yours sincerely,

Sahel and West Africa Team



We keep and use information in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. We may release this personal information to other UK government departments and public authorities.

300

FM FREETOWN
TO DESKBY 301500Z FCO
TELNO 383
OF 301331Z DECEMBER 92

TOP COPY

1. WE ARE NOW RECEIVING EVIDENCE THAT TWENTY OR MORE PRISONERS
WERE TAKEN FROM PADEMBA ROAD YESTERDAY MORNING, BRUTALLY
EXECUTED AND BURIED IN A SINGLE GRAVE AT KINGTOM CEMETARY.

2. IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT THE VICTIMS INCLUDED BAMBAY-KAMARA,
AND PERHAPS YAYA KANU. THERE IS THE SUSPICION

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

YYYY

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

(pa) SL Internal Political

301

FM FREETOWN
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELNO 384
OF 301349Z DECEMBER 92
INFO PRIORITY ACCRA

TOP COPY
C.D. 10/92

1. WE ARE STILL TRYING TO DISCOVER WHAT HAPPENED ON MONDAY NIGHT.

2. WE DISCOUNT HOWEVER THE CLAIM THAT AN ATTEMPT WAS MADE ON STRASSER AT KABASSA LODGE. THAT STORY HAS ITS ORIGINS IN AN INCIDENT THERE ON BOXING DAY, THUS. A MILITARY POLICEMAN, LT KEITA, TOOK A CONTINGENT OF ABOUT 30 SOLDIERS TO KABASSA LODGE TO PAY A FRATERNAL CALL ON STRASSER AS KEITA'S FORMER PLATOON COMMANDER.

ALL WERE ARMED AND MANAGED TO GET BEYOND THE CHECKPOINT AT THE BOTTOM OF JUBA HILL. SIERRA LEONEAN SOLDIERS REFUSED THEM ENTRY INTO THE LODGE GROUNDS. THE BEHAVIOUR OF THE KEITA CONTINGENT ATTRACTED THE ATTENTION OF THE NIGERIAN SOLDIERS DEFENDING KABASSA LODGE, WHO DISARMED THEM. KEITA WAS BROUGHT TO STRASSER WHO ALLEGEDLY TOOK OUT HIS PISTOL AND REPRIMANDED HIM. KEITA AND HIS ASSOCIATES WERE PUT IN DETENTION.

3. THERE WAS NO GUNFIRE AT KABASSA LODGE ON MONDAY NIGHT. BENJAMIN HAS DENIED TO ME THAT THE BOXING DAY INCIDENT WAS CONNECTED WITH THE ATTEMPT.

4. A GROUP OF DEMONSTRATORS HAS JUST PASSED THE HIGH COMMISSION WITH PLACARDS SAYING 'DOWN WITH THE ACRM' AND 'KILL THEM ALL IN PADEMBA ROAD.'

YYYY

pa SL Internal

303

TOP COPY
Q DIST ?

[REDACTED]
FM FREETOWN
TO PRIORITY FCO
TELNO 389
OF 311410Z DECEMBER 92

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

2. BAMBAY-KAMARA WAS THE FORMER INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF POLICE.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

3. LT COL YAYA KANU WAS THE COMMANDING OFFICER OF COBRA BATTALION. HE PLAYED A MAJOR PART IN THE RECOVERY OF THE SOUTHERN PROVINCE IN 1991. HE OF ALL OFFICERS AT THE FRONT WON THE RESPECT AND ADMIRATION OF HIS MEN. HOWEVER, HE FIRST TRIED TO STOP THE COUP AND THEN TO TAKE IT OVER.

[REDACTED]

4. THE LUMPA 19 ARE THOSE REFERRED TO IN FREETOWN TELNO 331 OF 24 NOVEMBER. OF THE ORIGINAL 19, 3 ARE NOT INCLUDED IN THE LIST OF THOSE TO BE EXECUTED. THERE IS ONE ADDITION. TO MAKE 17.

[REDACTED]

YYYY

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

TRANSCRIPT OF PRESS CONFERENCE

GIVEN BY THE FOREIGN SECRETARY, MR. DOUGLAS HURD,

IN ABUJA

ON TUESDAY, 5 JANUARY 1993

I am concerned about the situation in Sierra Leone and I would like to say a word about that. We are deeply concerned that at least 26 and perhaps many more alleged coup plotters were summarily executed without any process of law of which I know on 29 and 30 December. It looks as if some of those executed may have had no trial at all, that others who appeared before a military tribunal had no right of appeal and that some had been in detention for some time. This is a wholly disproportionate use of violence so I have decided that we will suspend all new aid to Sierra Leone. We will withdraw our existing offer of programme aid which is £4 million sterling in balance of payments support and we will consider what further measures might be taken, for example on the future of existing projects. Those are British decisions. I have begun to discuss the whole situation with our EC partners.