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Liberia church massacre survivors file case in US court against suspected mastermind

By **Lorraine Caballero** | 16 February, 2018 4:50 AM |

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Four survivors of a church massacre which happened in Liberia on July 29, 1990 filed a civil lawsuit on Feb. 12 at a court in the United States against the man suspected of ordering the

mass killing which took 600 lives.



(REUTERS / Carlos Jasso)A gavel is seen in a hearing room in Panama City. April 7, 2016.

The four Liberian church massacre survivors filed a lawsuit against Moses Thomas, who had been a colonel in the Armed Forces of Liberia during the civil war in 1990. The latter is currently residing in Philadelphia after coming to the U.S. under an immigration program for the victims of the Liberian civil war, [Reuters](#) detailed.

The lawsuit alleged that Thomas had ordered around 45 soldiers from the army's elite anti-terrorism unit to enter the St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Monrovia, where hundreds of families were taking refuge from the war. The soldiers reportedly fired at the civilians and hacked others using machetes until they died. Some lived through the incident by concealing themselves under the dead bodies of their companions.

Thomas has since told the BBC that the accusations against him were "nonsense." The lawsuit against him can only result in monetary compensation for the victims or other actions against the accused, but lawyers noted that Liberia had never launched an investigation into the human rights violations committed during the civil war.

In October last year, the U.S. trial of former ULIMO-K commander Mohommed Jabateh began. He was accused of perjury and fraud for reportedly lying in his asylum application in

began. He was accused of perjury and fraud for reportedly lying in his asylum application in the U.S. and of committing or supervising war crimes during Liberia's 14-year civil conflict, [Front Page Africa](#) reported.

The Liberia Massacre Survivors Association (LIMASA) was optimistic over Jabateh's trial, with its executive director Peterson Sonyah saying they want to see war criminals prosecuted to pay for what they did to civilians during the civil war.

Liberia has not taken any individual to court for crimes done during its civil war from 1989 to 1990. Jabateh, on the other hand, could be jailed for up to 30 years in the U.S. if proven guilty but will not be deported.

Survivors Of Liberia Massacre Sue Alleged Mastermind



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