

LXXII DAY OF THE "HIDDEN DEBTS" SCANDAL TRIAL

Mahomed Fekih said that his company received three million dollars to build a house and two hotels of Antonio Carlos do Rosario

- Penultimate declarant, Mahomed Fekih was heard by videoconference from Algeria, where he has lived since 2018. He denies that he left Mozambique for alleged involvement in the "hidden debts," all the more so since the Public Prosecutor's Office refrained from charging him in an autonomous case related to the biggest financial scandal in the country's history.



- Thursday is the last day of declarants' hearings, and to close, the Court will hear the former President of the Republic, Armando Guebuza. Because he has a family relationship with one of the defendants, namely his son Armando Ndambi Guebuza, the former President has the faculty to ask the Court to make a statement. But everything indicates that Armando Gubeuza will go to the B.O. tent to speak.

Mahomed Fekih is a partner in Walid Construções, a company he owns together with his wife Judite dos Santos. Speaking by videoconference from Algeria, the declarant told the Court that Walid Construções started operations in Mozambique in 1998 and has been suspended since late 2017. The company paid taxes through Odisseia, an accounting and auditing firm.

Walid Construções received USD 3,025,000 for construction services provided to defendant António Carlos do Rosário, having sent two pro forma invoices to Logistics International Sal, one of the companies in the Privinvest group. The invoices were issued at the request of the defendant Antonio Carlos do Rosario, and the amount was also paid in two installments.

Walid Construções provided three jobs to the defendant Antonio Carlos do Rosario, the first was a technical analysis aimed at the rehabilitation of a house in Belo Horizonte area, Boane municipality, Maputo province. The work began in 2009 and ended in 2014.

Mahomed Fekih's construction company was involved in the construction of two hotels described as being owned by António Carlos do Rosário. The first hotel was built in the city of Tete and the second one in Belo Horizonte. The declarant explained that the Belo Horizonte hotel only had construction work relating to the first phase of the development.

Mahomed Fekih further confirmed that he had received another payment of 15 million meticais relating to the Belo Horizonte house. The declarant said he received other payments through transfers, checks and in cash, but even so, defendant Antonio Carlos de Rosario was owed just over USD 350,000. "For me money is not the most important thing, but rather the image or the reputation we have. The money we can work and earn, as we still have the strength to do so," said Mahomed Fekih, adding that he has no hard feelings with the defendant, but demands that he speak the truth.

This is because defendant Antonio Carlos do Rosario said in Court that the emails shared by the declarant were fabricated and that the developments built by Walid Construções were owned by Txopela Investments.

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Mahomed Fekih said he was indignant with the press that has been saying that he fled Mozambique because of the “hidden debts”

case, having clarified that it was for a personal reason that he took such a decision, and that he was willing to share with the Public Prosecutor's Office if it was indispensable. But the Public Prosecutor representative, Ana Sheila Marrengula, told him that he should not share his reason for leaving Mozambique for Algeria if he did not feel comfortable.

In one of the autonomous cases about the “hidden debts” financial scandal opened by the Attorney General's office, Mahomed Fekih had been made a defendant, but the Public Prosecutor's Office refrained from charging him.

Also on Monday, the representative of the Public Prosecutor's Office requested the reading of four (4) statements made during the pre-trial phase of the case at the Attorney General's Office by declarants who were not heard at this stage of the trial because they had lost their lives and others because they had left the country.

The statements were read by Judge Efigénio Baptista and then recorded in the minutes.

Prosecutor Ana Sheila Merrengula also requested that the judge grant 15 days for the procedural parties to prepare their closing arguments, and asked for a minimum of 10 hours to present their oral arguments, given the complexity of the case involving 19 defendants. Judge Efigénio Baptista promised to react on Thursday, February 17, the day scheduled for the hearing of former President of the Republic, Armando Guebuza, incidentally the last declarant.



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