
Liberia Punishes Soldiers Involved in Ebola Quarantine Violence

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One boy was shot dead and others were injured when soldiers and armed police deployed to quell a protest against a decision to quarantine in the West Point neighbourhood in the capital Monrovia following an attack on an Ebola holding centre.

The Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) initially denied responsibility for the violence, but an inquiry board was later set up to investigate the incident.

"The findings from the Disciplinary Board of the AFL concluded that a Platoon Commander and four enlisted men were guilty of indiscretion and exhibited indiscipline on August 20, 2014," the statement issued late on Sunday said.

Lieutenant Aloysius Quaye was found guilty of conduct unbecoming of an officer and dereliction in the performance of duty, with a recommended punishment including demotion in rank and 30 days in correctional custody.

Two soldiers under his command were found guilty of assault and arbitrary use of force, while two others were convicted of making false statements. The disciplinary board recommended they receive sentences including 30 days in custody.

Sirleaf ordered the military justice system to apply the board's recommended punishments, the statement said.

Liberia's human rights commission has called on the government to pay compensation to the

family of Shaki Kamara, the boy killed during the protests, and rejected the assertion by the army and security forces that they fired into the air.

The government's statement said that no evidence had been presented proving that AFL forces were responsible for Kamara's death, but it called upon witnesses to come forward with information that could help identify the shooter.

The government also agreed to pay his family compensation.

"The President will continue to publicly apologise to Shaki Kamara's family and all those who were hurt," the statement read. "We note sadly, however, that for this government, no monetary value will compensate for the life of a human being."

Liberia has been the country hardest-hit by the worst outbreak of Ebola on record, which has killed nearly 5,000 people since it was detected in the remote forest region of neighbouring Guinea in March.
