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Former Regional Director of ITXC Corp Pleads Guilty in Foreign Bribery Scheme

WASHINGTON – A former regional manager of ITXC Corporation pleaded guilty to a one-count criminal information in U.S. District Court in Trenton, N.J., Assistant Attorney General Alice S. Fisher of the Criminal Division announced today.

Yaw Osei Amoako, 55, of Hillsborough, N.J., pleaded guilty to conspiring to violate the anti-bribery provisions of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA) and to violate the Travel Act in connection with the payment of approximately \$266,000 in bribes in the form of illegal “commissions” to employees of foreign state-owned telecommunications carriers and employees of foreign-owned carriers in various African countries. The Honorable Garrett E. Brown scheduled a sentencing date for Dec. 11, 2006 at 1 p.m. Amoako faces up to five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

From 1999 through 2004, Amoako was employed as a regional manager for Africa by former ITXC Corporation, which was a publicly-traded corporation that provided telecommunication services, primarily Voice Over Internet Protocol services, to carriers across the globe. Amoako was responsible for negotiating and obtaining contracts with foreign telecommunications companies in Africa on ITXC’s behalf. Amoako was also responsible for hiring third-party sales agents in African countries to assist ITXC in negotiating its contracts.

According to the information, Amoako conspired with other former ITXC employees and officers to make payments to employees of foreign-state owned telecommunications carriers and employees of foreign-owned carriers so that those employees would use their influence to assist ITXC in obtaining and retaining contracts with the foreign carriers. Amoako and his co-conspirators offered to pay the employees commissions based on the amount of traffic that ITXC received from the contract the employee helped award to ITXC. The employees of the state-owned telecommunications companies were foreign officials as defined by the FCPA. The commissions totaled approximately \$266,000 from 2001 until May 2004.

Specifically, the information charges that Amoako and his co-conspirators caused ITXC to pay approximately \$166,000 in commissions to a foreign official at Nitel, which was a telecommunications company wholly-owned by the Nigerian government; approximately \$26,000 in commissions to a foreign official at Rwandatel, which was wholly-owned by the Rwandan government; and approximately \$74,000 in commissions to an employee of Sonatel, which was partly-owned by the Senegalese government.

The case is being prosecuted by Deputy Chiefs James McMahon and Mark F. Mendelsohn, and Trial Attorney Mary K. Dimke of the Criminal Division’s Fraud Section. The case is being investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

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