

Global company fined R10m for Lesotho bribery

February 25, 2004, 03:27 PM

One of the world's leading electrical companies, Schneider Electric, was fined R10 million in the Lesotho High Court today after admitting to bribery.

The global giant avoided a trial by pleading guilty on 16 counts of bribery, all relating to the construction of the now-completed Lesotho Highlands Water Project. The corruption involved around R16 million.

The French-based company pleaded guilty today in terms of an agreement with the prosecuting authorities.

Spie Batignolles, its predecessor in Lesotho, was among several contractors who bribed and are suspected to have bribed Masupha Sole, former head of the Lesotho Highlands Development Authority.

Sole is already serving a 15-year prison sentence for this.

Schneider was the third multinational to be prosecuted by the Lesotho authorities for corruption relating to the water project.

German engineering contractor Lahmeyer International was earlier fined R10.6 million, and Canadian construction and engineering company Acres International R15 million. - Sapa

Ryan Hoover
Africa Program
International Rivers Network
1847 Berkeley Way
Berkeley, CA 94703
USA
Phone: (510) 848-1155 Fax: (510) 848-1008
www.irn.org