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TN ATTORNEY GENERAL CHALLENGES UNLAWFUL, UNPRECEDENTED ORDER

NASHVILLE- The State of Tennessee, through the Attorney General's Office, is appealing a final order from the Davidson County Criminal Court that circumvented established legal procedures.

The order exchanged the death sentence of Tennessee inmate Abu-Ali Abdur'Rahman for life in prison, thus essentially granting clemency through a court and a district attorney that both lack the authority to do so.

James L. Jones, Jr., as he was known at the time of his crimes, was convicted of first-degree murder, attempted first-degree murder, and armed robbery in 1986. The same jury that found him guilty of murder sentenced him to death.

Over the last 30 years Mr. Abdur'Rahman has repeatedly raised the same issues Davidson County District Attorney Glenn Funk relied on in the trial court, all of which were thoroughly litigated and rejected in the state courts and on federal review through the United States Supreme Court.

That leaves no option for reopening Abdur'Rahman's case for post-conviction proceedings or otherwise amending the sentence.

The Office of the Attorney General has the obligation to defend the rule of law and to ensure that the process is fair and transparent, especially when it relates to criminal matters that affect the rights of innocent victims, the accused, and the public.

"The public has put a special trust in this Office to help preserve the integrity of the criminal justice system," said General Slatery. "This order uproots decades of established legal procedure and lacks any legal justification which is why we are appealing."

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