



# Department of Justice

United States Attorney Sally Quillian Yates  
Northern District of Georgia

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CONTACT: John Horn

(404)581-6335

FAX (404)581-6160

## COUNTERFEIT CIGARETTES LEAD TO PRISON

ATLANTA, GA - AMADOU BAH, a/k/a MAMAGAM ABDUL BALDE, 39, of New York, New York; KENNETH CLEE, 46, of Jonesboro; and MAMADU DJALO, 49, of New York, New York, were sentenced today by Senior United States District Judge J. Owen Forrester to serve terms in federal prison of up to 21 months on charges of trafficking in counterfeit cigarettes.

“Trafficking in counterfeit goods deceives and defrauds consumers and steals income from legitimate businesses,” said United States Attorney Sally Quillian Yates. “These defendants attempted to profit from selling cigarettes of unknown origin, with unknown contents, that were packaged to appear to be the product of a popular manufacturer.”

“Throughout the years, ATF has seen the development and advancement of this criminal activity due to the potential for enormous profits,” said Special Agent in Charge Gregory Gant of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives’ Atlanta Field Division. “These defendants knew what they were doing and were criminal entrepreneurs on many levels. They sought to profit by avoiding federal excise taxes; they sought to profit by not paying state tobacco taxes and they sought to steal from a legitimate business that would otherwise collect royalties from sale of their product. I applaud all of the local, state and ATF investigators involved, whose contributions have ultimately held these offenders accountable.”

The court imposed the following sentences on the defendants:

1. CLEE was sentenced to 21 months in prison, to be followed by three years of supervised release, and 60 hours of community service.
2. DJALO was sentenced to 15 months in prison, to be followed by three years of supervised release, and 60 hours of community service.
3. BAH was sentenced to six months in prison, to be followed by three years of supervised release. BAH is a citizen of Guinea, West Africa, and will face deportation proceedings upon the completion of his sentence.

BAH, CLEE and DJALO were all convicted upon pleading guilty to the charge of trafficking in counterfeit Newport cigarettes. In addition, BAH also pleaded guilty to the charge of possessing and attempting to distribute contraband cigarettes.

According to United States Attorney Yates, the charges in the indictment, and other information presented in court: on March 4, 2010, a Clayton County police officer discovered that CLEE was driving a car that contained 230 cartons (approximately 46,000 cigarettes) of counterfeit Newport cigarettes. Most of the packages of cigarettes, which are of unknown origin, lacked tax stamps, but the packaging was identical to Newport cigarettes. The next day, Clayton County police officers and Special Agents of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms searched a self-storage rental unit that BAH and DJALO had rented earlier that week. The unit contained 439 cartons (approximately 87,800 cigarettes) of counterfeit Newport cigarettes. Police stopped and arrested BAH and DJALO as they watched the agents search their rental unit.

This case was investigated by Special Agents of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the Georgia Department of Revenue and the Clayton County Police Department.

Assistant United States Attorney William G. Traynor prosecuted the case.

For further information please contact Sally Q. Yates, United States Attorney, through John Horn, First Assistant United States Attorney, at (404) 581-6335. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is [www.justice.gov/usao/gan](http://www.justice.gov/usao/gan).