

Claim No. HQ12D00518

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE

QUEEN'S BENCH DIVISION

BETWEEN:

NICOLA MAXINE TAKIEDDINE

Claimant

-and-

LIBERATION S.A.R.L.

Defendant

STATEMENT IN OPEN COURT

Solicitor for the Claimant

My Lord, I appear on behalf of the Claimant, Nicola Takieddine. My friend appears on behalf of the Defendant.

The Claimant in this action is a British citizen living in London. She and Ziad Takieddine are presently engaged in divorce proceedings in France where they lived together as husband and wife. In addition to her married name, the Claimant is also known by her maiden name, Johnson.

The Defendant is the publisher of the French language daily newspaper, Libération, which has a readership within England and Wales.

In the edition of Libération dated 1 October 2011, and on the Defendant's website from that date, the Defendant published in French a series of articles concerning an ongoing investigation in France into commissions alleged to have been paid under arms

contracts, and the funding of political campaigns. As part of that series of articles, Libération conducted an interview with Ziad Takieddine, who is currently being investigated by French prosecutors in relation to the role he may have played in the matters and events under investigation. One of the articles, entitled "*Les amis, Gaubert, Hortefeux et Copé*", included serious and defamatory allegations about the Claimant, to the effect that she had repeatedly lied in court and as such was not worthy of belief. Further allegations, again deriving from Ziad Takieddine, to the effect that the Claimant had made false allegations against him to the police which her husband said were out of hatred for him, were reported in an article published on Libération's website from 20 November 2011 under the heading "*Copé et Takieddine démentent le versement d'argent liquide*".

The Defendant now accepts that these allegations, the publication of which caused the Claimant considerable distress and embarrassment, are without any basis in truth whatsoever. It has offered an apology to the Claimant for publication of these false allegations, which it accepts were not put to the Claimant by Libération in advance of publication, and has agreed to remove the allegations from its website and not to publish them in future. It has also agreed to pay the Claimant a substantial sum in damages.

Solicitor for the Defendant

My Lord, on behalf of the Defendant I confirm what my friend has said. The views expressed by Mr Takieddine to Libération were his own and not those of Libération. The Defendant is pleased to make this clear and withdraws the allegations in question and offers its sincere apologies to the Claimant for the publication of these allegations. The Defendant is pleased that it has been possible to resolve the matter in this way in full and final settlement of all matters as between the parties.

Solicitor for the Claimant

My Lord, in these circumstances I ask for permission to withdraw the record.