

Caprivi Treason Trial judge dies

Retired High Court Judge Simpson Victor Mutambanengwe has died in Windhoek at the age of 85. Mutambanengwe was a veteran of the Namibian judiciary and a former chairperson of both the Namibia and Zimbabwe electoral commissions. The [Southern Times](#) reports that he was born in Mutare, Zimbabwe, in 1930 and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts from the University College of Rhodesia in 1959. He became an advocate in 1963 after studying law at the Inner Temple in London and returned to Zimbabwe where he worked as an advocate from 1979 until his appointment to the High Court in 1986. He then served as a judge in Namibia's High Court from 1994 to 2006 and as acting Chief Justice of Namibia in 2003 and 2004. [Legalbrief](#) reports that **Mutambanengwe was on the Bench during the high-profile Caprivi Treason Trial which began in 2003.** Along with Judges of Appeal Gerhard Maritz and Johan Strydom, he ruled in *State vs. Malumo and 24 Others* that confessions from the 25 accused were inadmissible before the High Court in Windhoek due to the occurrence of 'coercive actions' at the hands of the police or military to obtain the testimonies. Following his retirement, he served as the acting judge of Appeal.