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**BRONX MARTIAL ARTS INSTRUCTOR PLEADS GUILTY TO
CONSPIRING TO SUPPORT AL QAEDA**

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that TARIK SHAH, a martial arts instructor from the Bronx, pleaded guilty earlier today to a charge of conspiring to provide material support or resources to the al Qaeda terrorist organization. During his guilty plea, SHAH admitted that he conspired to aid al Qaeda by agreeing to train al Qaeda terrorists in martial arts and hand-to-hand combat with weapons. SHAH pleaded guilty today before United States Magistrate Judge GABRIEL W. GORENSTEIN. According to the charging documents filed in Manhattan federal court and statements made at SHAH's guilty plea:

On May 20, 2005, SHAH met with a person whom he believed to be a recruiter for al Qaeda, but who was actually an undercover FBI agent. During that meeting, SHAH pledged "bayat," or allegiance, to Usama bin Laden and al Qaeda, and agreed to provide his martial arts expertise to train al Qaeda fighters.

From 2003 through May 2005, SHAH engaged in multiple meetings and conversations, first with a confidential source (the "CS") and later with the FBI undercover agent (the "UC"). In these conversations, the vast majority of which were recorded, SHAH discussed his desire and intent to aid al Qaeda. For example, SHAH repeatedly indicated his desire to train Muslim "brothers" in the martial arts to help them wage jihad, and also regularly discussed his desire to find people who were willing to press the fight. SHAH also took steps to find locations where jihad training could be conducted and weapons could be machined.

SHAH told the UC and the CS of his attempt to enter Afghanistan in approximately 1998 and of his intention to attend terrorist training camps there. Materials recovered from SHAH included the names and telephone numbers of other individuals who

had gone overseas to attend such training camps, including Seifullah Chapman -- a member of the Virginia Jihad Network who was convicted in the Eastern District of Virginia in 2004 for providing material support to the Lashkar-e-Taiba foreign terrorist organization.

At the meeting on May 20, 2005, in the presence of the UC and under the impression that the UC had the authority of al Qaeda, SHAH allegedly took "bayat" -- pledging an oath of loyalty to al Qaeda, and committing himself to the path of Holy War, to the oath of secrecy, and to abide by the directives of al Qaeda and its leaders, including Usama bin Laden and Ayman al Zawahiri. In his conversation with UC, SHAH stated that he had been "preparing this for a long time."

SHAH faces a maximum sentence of 15 years' imprisonment, a maximum fine of \$250,000, and a maximum term of supervised release of three years. SHAH will be sentenced by United States District Judge LORETTA A. PRESKA on July 10, 2007, at 4:30 p.m.

Mr. GARCIA praised the efforts of the New York Joint Terrorism Task Force, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the New York City Police Department, for their extraordinary efforts in the investigation of this case.

Assistant United States Attorneys JENNIFER G. RODGERS, VICTOR L. HOU, and KARL METZNER are in charge of the prosecution.

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