

NEWS RELEASE



OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

San Diego, California

*United States Attorney
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For Immediate Release

NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY - February 1, 2008

United States Attorney Karen P. Hewitt announced that Abderahman Ben Khemis Dhaoui was sentenced today in San Diego federal court by the Honorable John A. Houston to serve four months in custody based upon convictions after trial for conspiracy to commit immigration fraud, making false statements on immigration and naturalization applications, and unlawful procurement of naturalization. As a result of his conviction for unlawful procurement of naturalization, the district court revoked his citizenship and ordered him removed from the United States.

According to Assistant U.S. Attorney Alessandra P. Serano, who prosecuted the case, Dhaoui and his former wife and co-defendant, Julie Ann Robicheaux, committed fraud on the former United States Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) when both defendants filed various immigration applications permitting Dhaoui to remain in the United States as a lawful permanent resident as a spouse of a United States citizen. Based upon Dhaoui's marriage to Robicheaux, Dhaoui was able to "fast track" his naturalization application in only three years, instead of the standard five years. Dhaoui made to Robicheaux regular

payments totaling more than \$11,000 over the course of the marriage. However, the payments stopped days before Dhaoui became a United States citizen.

According to court documents, Dhaoui, who was born in Tunisia, married Robicheaux, a United States citizen by birth, in Tunisia in May 1999, after they met over an internet chat line. Within two years of being married, Dhaoui moved out of the marital residence and resided apart from Robicheaux. However, this information was never disclosed to the former INS officials.

Dhaoui initiated divorce proceedings against Robicheaux in August 2003, within two months of Dhaoui's becoming a naturalized citizen. In December 2003, Dhaoui married a Tunisian woman and helped immigrate her to the United States.

United States Attorney Hewitt stated, "That the defendant has lost his U.S. citizenship reflects the seriousness of this case and effectiveness of the agents' efforts who investigated it."

"This case reflects ICE's commitment to maintain integrity in the legal immigration system. For years, people have used sham marriages to illegally immigrate," said Lorraine Concha, Assistant Special Agent in Charge for ICE investigations in San Diego. "As this criminal investigation and verdict demonstrates, sham marriages and other types of immigration benefit fraud pose a serious threat to our national security. ICE agents will unravel these criminal scams to ensure that no one gets away with defrauding one of our nation's most revered and historic institutions - the legal immigration system."

Sentencing for Julie Ann Robicheaux is scheduled for February 11, 2008 at 10:30 a.m.

DEFENDANTS

Case Number: 05cr2167-JAH

ABDERRAHMAN BEN KHEMIS DHAOUI

SUMMARY OF CHARGES

Title 18, United States Code, Section 1546 (False Statements on Immigration Applications)

Title 18, United States Code, Section 1015(a) (False Statements Related to Naturalization)

Title 18, United States Code, Section 1425(a) (Unlawful Procurement of Naturalization)

AGENCIES

Immigration and Customs Enforcement
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Citizenship and Immigration Services