

NEWS RELEASE



OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

San Diego, California

*United States Attorney
Karen P. Hewitt*

For Further Information, Contact: Assistant U. S. Attorney Mitch Dembin, 619-557-5558

For Immediate Release

NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY - October 27, 2008

United States Attorney Karen P. Hewitt announced that Mikhail M. Tuknov, Jr. was arraigned today in federal court in San Diego on federal charges including debit card fraud, identity theft, and conspiracy to launder money. Mr. Tuknov, charged in a sealed 44-count indictment returned by a federal grand jury on Thursday, October 22, 2008, was arrested on Friday, October 23, 2008. The indictment was unsealed upon his initial appearance and arraignment before United States Magistrate Judge Jan M. Adler today.

According to Assistant U. S. Attorney Mitch Dembin, who is prosecuting this case, the indictment charges that Mr. Tuknov obtained debit card numbers and associated personal identification numbers (“PINS”) for bank accounts of actual persons from sources in Russia and distributed those numbers to an associate in the Dominican Republic. The associate then used the numbers to encode blank debit card plastics and delivered them, by a variety of means, to other criminal associates in New York City. The New York City associates used the fake debit cards to fraudulently access the bank accounts tied to these cards at Automated Teller Machines and withdraw cash. The proceeds were sent by a variety a means to the Russian

sources who paid Mr. Tuknov his commission and sent new numbers to him to generate more cash. According to the Indictment, between August 2005, and March 2006, Mr. Tuknov moved approximately 1044 fraudulent debit card numbers and 1045 related PINS to his associates, resulting in losses of approximately \$371,000.00. This case was investigated by Special Agents assigned to the Cybercrime Squad of the San Diego Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigations. Mr. Tuknov has been detained without bail pending a hearing on October 30, 2008, at 2:30 p.m. before Magistrate Judge Adler.

DEFENDANT

Case Number: 08cr3663 - JAH

Mikhail M. Tuknov, Jr.

SUMMARY OF CHARGES

Count 1: Title 18, United States Code, Section 1029(a)(2) and (b)(1) - Debit Card Fraud
Maximum Penalties: 10 years of imprisonment and \$250,000 fine

Counts 2 through 23: Possessing 15 or more Unauthorized Debit Card Numbers with Intent to Defraud
Maximum Penalties: 10 years of imprisonment and \$250,000 per count

Counts 24 through 43: Title 18, United States Code, Section 1028A(a)(1) - Aggravated Identity Theft
Maximum Penalties: At least one term of imprisonment of 2 years consecutive to any other sentence

Count 44: Title 18, United States Code, Section 1956(h) - Conspiracy to Launder Money
Maximum Penalties: 20 years of imprisonment and \$500,000 fine

AGENCIES

Federal Bureau of Investigation
Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigations

An indictment itself is not evidence that the defendant committed the crimes charged. The defendant is presumed innocent until the Government meets its burden in court of proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.