



*United States Attorney
Southern District of New York*

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**CONTACT: U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
YUSILL SCRIBNER,
REBEKAH CARMICHAEL,
JANICE OH
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE
(212) 637-2600**

**DEA
GARRISON COURTNEY
OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
(202) 307-7977**

**INTERNATIONAL ARMS TRAFFICKER MONZER AL KASSAR
AND ASSOCIATE SENTENCED ON TERRORISM CHARGES**

LEV L. DASSIN, the Acting United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and MICHELE M. LEONHART, the Acting Administrator of the United States Drug Enforcement Administration ("DEA"), announced that MONZER AL KASSAR, a/k/a "Abu Munawar," a/k/a "El Taous," the leader of an international arms-trafficking organization, was sentenced today to 30 years in prison for conspiring to sell millions of dollars worth of weapons to be used to kill Americans in Colombia. AL KASSAR's associate and co-defendant, LUIS FELIPE MORENO GODOY, was sentenced to 25 years in prison for his role in the conspiracy. United States District Judge JED S. RAKOFF imposed the sentences today in Manhattan federal court.

AL KASSAR and MORENO GODOY had both been found guilty on November 20, 2008, following a three-week jury trial, of: (1) conspiracy to murder U.S. nationals; (2) conspiracy to murder U.S. officers; (3) conspiracy to acquire and export anti-aircraft missiles; (4) conspiracy to provide material support and resources to the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (the "FARC"), a designated foreign terrorist organization; and (5) money laundering. According to the evidence at trial:

As part of an undercover DEA sting operation, between February 2006 and June 2007, AL KASSAR and MORENO GODOY agreed to sell to the FARC more than 12,000 weapons -- including thousands of machine guns, rocket-propelled grenade launchers, and surface-to-air missile systems, or "SAMs" -- along with 2 million rounds of ammunition. The agreement was discussed and made during a series of recorded telephone calls, email

correspondence, and in-person meetings with two confidential sources working with the DEA, who represented that they were acquiring these weapons for the FARC, with the specific understanding that the weapons were to be used to attack United States helicopters in Colombia.

During their meetings, AL KASSAR provided the DEA sources with, among other things: (1) a schematic of the vessel to be used to transport the weapons; (2) specifications for the SAMs he agreed to sell to the FARC; and (3) bank accounts in Spain and Lebanon which ultimately were used to receive and conceal more than \$400,000 sent from DEA undercover accounts that the DEA sources represented were FARC drug proceeds for the weapons deal. During his meetings with the DEA sources, AL KASSAR reviewed Nicaraguan end-user certificates and accepted them despite knowing that the arms were destined for the FARC in Colombia. AL KASSAR also promised to provide the FARC with ton-level quantities of C-4 explosives, as well as expert trainers to teach the FARC how to effectively use C-4 and other explosive devices against the United States. In addition, AL KASSAR offered to send a thousand men to fight with the FARC against U.S. military officers in Colombia, and to make training camps in AL KASSAR's country available to the FARC.

In addition to the terms of imprisonment, Judge RAKOFF also sentenced both AL KASSAR and MORENO GODOY to 5 years' supervised release. AL KASSAR was also ordered to forfeit all foreign and domestic assets.

This case was the result of cooperation between the DEA, the Spanish National Police, and the Romanian Border Police.

Mr. DASSIN praised the investigative work of the DEA, the Spanish National Police, and the Romanian Border Police. Mr. DASSIN also thanked the United States Department of Justice's Office of International Affairs and the United States Department of State. He further expressed appreciation to the United States Embassies in Spain and Romania.

Assistant United States Attorneys BOYD M. JOHNSON III and BRENDAN R. McGUIRE are in charge of the prosecution.

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