



*United States Attorney
Southern District of New York*

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**ASSOCIATE OF INTERNATIONAL ARMS DEALER
MONZER AL KASSAR FOUND GUILTY OF TERRORISM OFFENSES**

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 TAREQ MOUSA AL GHAZI, 62, an associate of international arms dealer MONZER AL KASSAR, was found guilty late yesterday of charges relating to a conspiracy to sell millions of dollars worth of weapons to the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (the "FARC") -- a designated foreign terrorist organization -- to be used to kill U.S. officers and employees in Colombia. AL GHAZI was found guilty following a two-week jury trial before United States District Judge JED S. RAKOFF in Manhattan federal court. According to the superseding Indictment and the evidence at trial:

Between February 2006 and June 2007, AL GHAZI and AL KASSAR agreed to sell millions of dollars worth of weapons to the FARC, including thousands of machine guns, millions of rounds of ammunition, rocket-propelled grenade launchers ("RPGs"), and surface-to-air missile systems ("SAMs"). During a series of recorded telephone calls, e-mails, and in-person meetings, AL GHAZI and AL KASSAR agreed to sell the weapons to two individuals who were in fact confidential sources working with the DEA. The confidential sources represented that they were acquiring these weapons for the FARC to use in attacks directed at U.S. helicopters in Colombia.

AL GHAZI was found guilty of (1) conspiracy to murder U.S. officers and employees; (2) conspiracy to acquire and export anti-aircraft missiles; and (3) conspiracy to provide material support and resources to the FARC, a designated foreign terrorist

organization; and money laundering. AL GHAZI was found not guilty of conspiracy to murder U.S. nationals.

AL GHAZI is scheduled to be sentenced by Judge RAKOFF on June 16, 2009, at 4 p.m.

The conspiracy to kill United States officers and employees and the conspiracy to acquire and export surface-to-air missiles charges each carry a maximum sentence of life in prison. The conspiracy to acquire and export surface-to-air missiles carries a mandatory minimum sentence of 25 years in prison. In addition, AL GHAZI faces a maximum sentence of 15 years in prison for conspiracy to provide material support to a foreign terrorist organization.

AL GHAZI co-defendants MONZER AL KASSAR and LUIS FELIPE MORENO GODOY were previously sentenced by Judge RAKOFF to 30 and 25 years in prison, respectively, after being found guilty at trial of related charges.

Mr. DASSIN praised the investigative work of the DEA, the Romanian Border Police, and the Spanish National Police. Mr. DASSIN also thanked the United States Department of Justice Criminal Division's Office of International Affairs and the United States Department of State. Mr. DASSIN also expressed gratitude 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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