UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
Eastern District of Virginia

U.S. ATTORNEY NEIL H. MACBRIDE

SOMALI PLEADS GUILTY TO ACTS OF PIRACY AGAINST USS ASHLAND

NORFOLK, Va. – Jama Idle Ibrahim, a/k/a Jaamac Ciidle, of Somalia, pled guilty today to acts of piracy against the USS Ashland, which he believed was a merchant vessel that he intended to seize and hold for ransom.

In addition, Ibrahim was charged today in the District of Columbia through a criminal information with conspiracy to commit piracy under the law of nations and conspiracy to use a firearm during and in relation to a crime of violence. The charges stem from an alleged act of piracy in the Gulf of Aden against a merchant vessel, the *M/V CEC Future*. This matter is being handled by the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia.

Neil H. MacBride, U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia; Shawn Henry, Assistant Director in Charge of the FBI's Washington Field Office; Janice K. Fedarcyk, Assistant Director in Charge of the FBI's New York Field Office; Alex J. Turner, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI's Norfolk Field Office; and Mark Russ, Special Agent in Charge of the Naval Criminal Investigative Service in Norfolk, made the announcement after the plea was accepted by United States District Judge Raymond A. Jackson.

"Today marks the first conviction in Norfolk for acts of piracy in more than 150 years," said U.S. Attorney MacBride. "Modern-day pirates must be held accountable and will face severe consequences. Ibrahim admitted his role in an armed attack on a U.S. Navy ship in the Gulf of Aden, which he attempted to take by force after mistaking it for a merchant vessel."

Today, Ibrahim pled guilty to charges filed in the Eastern District of Virginia for attacking to plunder a vessel, engaging in an act of violence against persons on a vessel and using of a firearm during a crime of violence in regards to an attack against the USS Ashland on April 10, 2010. The charges range from a mandatory minimum of 10 years in prison to a maximum of life in prison, and the plea agreement indicates that both parties agree that a sentence of 30 years in prison is appropriate. Sentencing is scheduled for Nov. 29, 2010.

According to the statement of facts filed with the plea agreement, in and around April 10, 2010, Ibrahim and five other Somalis sailed on the high seas in the Gulf of Aden searching for a merchant ship to attack and seize, intending to plunder the vessel and hold the crew and contents for ransom. The six men sighted a ship they believed to be a merchant vessel – but which was in fact the USS Ashland, a United States Navy vessel – chased it, and, once they were alongside the vessel, began firing at the USS Ashland and the people on board. In the statement of facts, Ibrahim admitted that all six men were willing participants in the planned piracy and that the purpose of firing at the vessel was to cause the vessel to surrender to them,

at which point they would board the vessel, seize the ship, its crew and its contents.

The investigations of the cases in the Eastern District of Virginia and the District of Columbia are being conducted by the FBI, including members of the Joint Terrorism Task Force, and the Naval Criminal Investigative Service.

The prosecution in the Eastern District of Virginia is being handled by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Benjamin L. Hatch, Joseph DePadilla and Raymond E. Patricco Jr., from the U.S. Attorney's Office and Trial Attorney Jerome Teresinski from the Department of Justice's National Security Division.

A copy of this press release may be found on the website of the United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Virginia at http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/vae. Related court documents and information may be found on the website of the District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia at http://www.vaed.uscourts.gov or on http://pacer.uspci.uscourts.gov.

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