

Department of Justice Press Release

For Immediate Release

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United States Attorney's Office

Western District of Texas

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Somalian Charged with Making False Statements on Application for Asylum *Defendant is Accused of Making False Statements Concerning Participation in Terrorist Organizations*

United States Attorney John E. Murphy announced that in San Antonio, a federal grand jury has indicted 24-year-old Ahmed Muhammed Dhakane, a citizen of Somalia, on two counts of making false statements under penalty of perjury to federal authorities concerning his association with global terrorist organizations.

The indictment, returned yesterday and unsealed this afternoon, alleges that on October 28, 2008, the defendant falsely omitted on an application for asylum that from a time prior to September 11, 2001, until January 2003, he was a member of, or was associated with, al-Barakat and Al-Ittihad Al-Islami (AIAI). Both organizations have been designated by the Department of Treasury pursuant to Executive Order 13224 as Specially Designated Global Terrorists (SDGT).

The indictment also alleges that the defendant provided additional false information concerning his entry into the United States. The defendant allegedly claimed to authorities that he and his wife traveled from Somalia to Mexico via Russia, Cuba, Costa Rica, and Guatemala. While in Mexico, they traveled by bus to the United States/Mexico border, where they were smuggled illegally into the United States. The indictment alleges that defendant failed to disclose to authorities that from June 2006 until March 2008, he resided in Brazil where he participated in, and later ran, a large-scale human smuggling enterprise knowing that such disclosure to authorities would prevent him from receiving asylum in the United States.

On March 28, 2008, Dhakane surrendered to U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents near Brownsville, Texas. He was being held in an Immigration Detention Facility located in Pearsall, Texas, when he allegedly made the false statements to federal authorities.

Upon conviction, Dhakane faces up to 10 years in federal prison per count.

This case was investigated by agents with the Joint Terrorism Task Force, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the U.S. Border Patrol, and the Department of Homeland Security. Assistant United States Attorney Mark Roomberg is prosecuting this case on behalf of the government.

An indictment is merely a charge and should not be considered as evidence of guilt. The defendant is presumed innocent until proven in guilty in a court of law.

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