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DEFENDANT PLEADS GUILTY TO PROVIDING MATERIAL SUPPORT TO ISLAMIC MOVEMENT OF UZBEKISTAN

WASHINGTON – Irfan Demirtas, 57, a dual Dutch-Turkish citizen, pleaded guilty to providing material support to the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), a designated foreign terrorist organization.

The plea was announced by Assistant Attorney General for National Security John P. Carlin, U.S. Attorney Channing D. Phillips of the District of Columbia and Assistant Director in Charge Paul M. Abbate of the FBI's Washington Field Office.

Demirtas pleaded guilty in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia and is to be sentenced on Nov. 30 by U.S. District Judge Randolph D. Moss of the District of Columbia. The charge carries a statutory maximum of 15 years in prison and potential financial penalties. The plea agreement calls for Demirtas to be removed from the United States upon completion of his prison term.

On Dec. 8, 2011, Demirtas was charged in a sealed four-count indictment for conduct occurring from at least January 2006 through May 2008, when Demirtas was a resident of the Netherlands and acted as an IMU fundraiser and facilitator in Europe. In January 2015, Demirtas was arrested in Germany based on an Interpol red notice that had been issued on these charges. He was detained and then extradited to the United States on July 17, 2015.

According to the government's evidence, the IMU is a militant Islamic group which was formed in 1991 with the stated purpose to overthrow the government of Uzbekistan and to create an Islamic state under Sharia law. Since its inception, the IMU has been conducting military operations in Uzbekistan and Pakistan and participated in combat operations against coalition forces in Afghanistan. The IMU was designated by the U.S. Department of State as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on Sept. 25, 2000.

Between January 2006 and May 2008, according to the government's evidence, Demirtas acted on the IMU's behalf in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Turkey, Jordan, the Netherlands, France and

elsewhere outside the United States. During this period, he provided, attempted to provide and conspired to provide personnel and funding to the IMU, knowing that it is a designated terrorist organization that has engaged and engages in terrorism. Specifically, Demirtas admitted in his plea to providing funds to the leader of the IMU.

The case is being investigated by the FBI's Washington Field Office and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Michael C. DiLorenzo and Ari M. Redbord of the District of Columbia and Trial Attorney Brian K. Morgan of the National Security Division's Counterterrorism Section. Assistance was provided by the Department of Justice's Office of International Affairs.

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