



*United States Attorney  
Southern District of New York*

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**MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO FEDERAL CHARGES OF ATTEMPTING TO  
EXPORT MILITARY NIGHT-VISION EQUIPMENT TO HIZBALLAH**

DAVID N. KELLEY, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that NAJI ANTOINE ABI KHALIL pled guilty this afternoon to three criminal charges, namely, attempting to provide material support to Hizballah, a Lebanon-based terrorist organization; attempting to contribute goods in the form of military night-vision equipment and infrared aiming devices to Hizballah; and conspiring to export sensitive military equipment from the United States without first obtaining the necessary licenses from the State Department and the Commerce Department. KHALIL was indicted on these charges in Manhattan federal court on June 16, 2004, and entered his guilty plea to the charges contained in the indictment in the Eastern District of Arkansas, where he has also pled guilty to money laundering charges and where he is presently detained.

According to court documents previously filed in Manhattan federal court, on or about May 17, 2004, KHALIL- a citizen of both Lebanon and Canada, and who was Chairman and

General Manager of New Line Services, an import/export shipping company in Montreal, Canada – flew from Canada to New York to meet with a cooperating witness (the "CW") working with the Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI") regarding a shipment of stolen electronics that needed to be exported out of the country. KHALIL and the CW met several times on May 17 and May 18 at the Marriott Marquis Hotel in Manhattan. Those meetings were monitored from an adjoining hotel room by law enforcement agents on a video and audio monitor. During the meetings, the CW told KHALIL that he had a customer who wanted to ship night-vision goggles to Hizballah in Athens, Greece. KHALIL responded that it was not a problem and that he had "friends." KHALIL also confirmed that he had no problem shipping the items to Hizballah.

According to court documents, during another meeting between KHALIL and the CW at the Marriott, the CW introduced KHALIL to an undercover FBI agent posing as the CW's customer. The undercover agent told KHALIL that he wanted to ship night-vision goggles and infrared aiming devices to Athens, Greece. The undercover agent provided KHALIL with the point of contact and address of individuals who would receive the shipment in Greece. KHALIL agreed to create a fictitious bill of lading so that the items being shipped and the identity of the shipper would not be revealed.

Also according to court documents, on the morning of May 19, 2004, KHALIL and Tomer Grinberg, an Israeli citizen

employed at the Tober Group, a shipping and logistics company based in Brooklyn, New York, met with the undercover agent at Manhattan Mini Storage located at 645 West 44<sup>th</sup> Street in Manhattan to pick up the night-vision equipment. The undercover agent showed KHALIL and Grinberg a crate filled with fourteen pieces of "Generation 3" night-vision equipment, including night-vision goggles and infrared aiming devices. The infrared aiming devices were designed to be mounted on M-16 and other military rifles for target acquisition purposes when using night-vision goggles. Generation 3 is the highest level of night-vision technology and cannot be exported without a license.

As explained in court documents, KHALIL tried on the night-vision goggles; Grinberg told the undercover agent that he did not need to try on the equipment because he had military experience and knew what the items were and that he had access to these types of night-vision goggles. KHALIL and Grinberg then loaded the equipment inside a minivan. KHALIL accepted a down payment of \$2,500 from the undercover agent for the shipment to Greece. KHALIL and Grinberg were then placed under arrest.

On July 28, 2005, Grinberg pled guilty in Manhattan federal court to conspiring to export sensitive military equipment without first obtaining the required licenses and is awaiting sentencing.

For the three charges to which he pled guilty, KHALIL faces a maximum combined penalty of 30 years' imprisonment and a

\$750,000 fine. Sentencing is scheduled for February 2, 2006.

MR. KELLEY praised the investigative efforts of the FBI, the United States Commerce Department, the Department of Homeland Security, and the New York City Police Department.

Assistant United States Attorney W.S. Wilson Leung is presently in charge of the prosecution.

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