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## Defendant Convicted Of Providing Material Support To Terrorism

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 4, 2013

Wifredo A. Ferrer, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Florida, Michael B. Steinbach, Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Miami Field Office, and the members of the South Florida Joint Terrorism Task Force ("JTTF"), announced today that a Miami federal jury today convicted **Hafiz Muhammed Sher Ali Khan**, 77, on all counts in the indictment charging him with providing material support to terrorists, including the Pakistani Taliban. According to public records, defendant Hafiz Khan was the Imam at the Miami Masjid in Miami, Florida. The indictment did not allege that the masjid participated in the defendant's scheme.

More specifically, after two months of trial, the jury convicted Khan on charges of conspiring to provide, and providing, material support to a conspiracy to murder, maim and kidnap persons overseas, 18 U.S.C. ' 2339A, and conspiring to provide material support to a foreign terrorist organization, specifically, the Pakistani Taliban, 18 U.S.C. ' 2339B. Sentencing has been scheduled for May 30, 2013. At sentencing, the defendant faces up to 15 years' imprisonment on each count.

U.S. Attorney Wifredo A. Ferrer stated, "Despite being an Imam, or spiritual leader, Hafiz Khan was by no means a man of peace. Instead, he acted with others to support terrorists to further acts of murder, kidnapping and maiming. But for law enforcement intervention, these defendants would have continued to transfer funds to Pakistan to finance the Pakistani Taliban, including its purchase of guns. Dismantling terrorist networks is a top priority for this Office and the Department of Justice."

"Today, terrorists have lost another funding source to use against innocent people and U.S. interests," said Michael B. Steinbach, Special Agent in Charge of FBI Miami. "We will not allow this country to be used as a base for funding terrorists. Individuals such as Hafiz Muhammed Sher Ali Khan, who support terror, represent a threat to our safety and provide an example of why the FBI's number one priority is counterterrorism."

The Pakistani Taliban, also known as Tehrik e Taliban Pakistan, Tehrik I Taliban, Tehrik-e-Taliban, and Tehreek e Taliban, is a Pakistan-based terrorist organization formed in or around December 2007 by an alliance of radical Islamist militants. On September 1, 2010, the United States Department of State formally designated the Pakistani Taliban as a Foreign Terrorist Organization, under Section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act.

According to the evidence at trial, Khan, with the help of persons in South Florida and Pakistan, sent money and other material support to Pakistani Taliban contacts and sympathizers overseas. The Pakistani Taliban's objectives include resistance against the lawful Pakistani government, enforcement of strict Islamic law known as Sharia, and opposition to the United States and coalition armed forces fighting in neighboring Afghanistan. The Pakistani Taliban has committed numerous acts of violence in Pakistan and elsewhere, including suicide bombings which resulted in the death of civilians as well as Pakistani police, army, and government personnel, and also provided financing and training for the attempted bombing of New York City's Times Square in May 2010.

According to the evidence at trial, Khan sought to aid the Pakistani Taliban's fight against the Pakistani government and its perceived allies, including the United States, by supporting acts of murder, kidnapping, and maiming in Pakistan and elsewhere, in order to displace the lawful government of Pakistan and to establish Sharia. Khan transferred money from the United States to Pakistani Taliban supporters in Pakistan, primarily using bank accounts and wire transfer services in the United States and Pakistan. These funds were intended to purchase guns for the Pakistani Taliban, to sustain militants and

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their families, and generally to promote the Pakistani Taliban’s cause. Khan also solicited and collected money in the United States for that purpose, taking great care to conceal his activities. In one recorded conversation introduced as evidence at trial, Khan stated that money cannot be sent openly to the Pakistani Taliban, but must instead be sent covertly through its supporters. Khan also used a madrassa he founded in Pakistan (where he was born) to provide shelter and other support to Pakistani Taliban militants. In another recorded conversation introduced as evidence at trial, Khan claimed that children from his madrassa have gone to train to kill Americans in neighboring Afghanistan.

Mr. Ferrer commended the investigative efforts of the FBI, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, U.S. Department of State, Broward Sheriff’s Office, Miami-Dade Police, City of Miami Police, City of Miramar Police, City of Margate Police, and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and the members of the South Florida Joint Terrorism Task Force. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys John Shipley, Sivashree Sundaram, and Michael Patrick Sullivan, from the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Southern District of Florida, and Trial Attorney Bridget Behling from the Counterterrorism Section of the Justice Department’s National Security Division.

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A copy of this press release may be found on the website of the United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Florida at <http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/fls>. Related court documents and information may be found on the website of the District Court for the Southern District of Florida at <http://www.flsd.uscourts.gov> or on <http://pacer.flsd.uscourts.gov>.

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