

U.S. Department of Justice

United States Attorney
Northern District of Texas

1100 Commerce St., 3rd Fl.
Dallas, Texas 75242-1699

Telephone (214) 659-8600
Fax (214) 767-0978

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DALLAS, TEXAS
CONTACT: 214/659-8600
www.usdoj.gov/usao/txn

OCTOBER 13, 2006

INFOCOM CORPORATION AND ITS OPERATORS SENTENCED IN FEDERAL COURT

ELASHI BROTHERS CONVICTED FOR DOING BUSINESS WITH TERRORIST

In a series of hearings conducted this week in federal court in Dallas by the Honorable Sam A. Lindsay, United States District Judge, Bayan Elashi, Ghassan Elashi, Basman Elashi, and Infocom Corporation were sentenced, announced United States Attorney Richard B. Roper. The three defendants, along with their brothers, Hazim and Ihsan “Sammy” Elashi, operated a family-run, Richardson, Texas, business, Infocom, that sold computers and Internet services mostly to customers in the Middle East.

Today, Basman Elashi, age 50, was sentenced to 80 months imprisonment. Yesterday, Ghassan Elashi, age 52, was also sentenced to 80 months imprisonment. On Wednesday, Bayan Elashi, age 51, was sentenced to 84 months imprisonment and Infocom Corporation was sentenced to two years probation (the corporation is defunct). Bayan and Basman Elashi have been in federal custody on immigration violations since their arrest in December 2002. Ghassan Elashi was ordered to surrender to Bureau of Prison officials on January 16, 2007. He is currently scheduled to go on trial, along with seven co-defendants, again in February 2007, before the Honorable A. Joe Fish, United States Chief District Judge, in a case styled U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development, et al.

U.S. Attorney Roper said, “The sentences in this case demonstrate that the Government’s efforts to restrict the assets and funds of terrorist organizations and those who lead those terrorist organizations must be recognized and adhered to. Those who knowingly violate the laws prohibiting any transactions with such assets can expect to face the prospect of prosecution and a

lengthy incarceration for violating the laws passed by Congress to combat the threat imposed by terrorism. The sentences also demonstrate that the laws and regulations concerning the exporting of technology to foreign countries are a serious matter and must be respected by all who operate in that field.”

In May 2004, the Court granted the defendants’ motion to sever the indictment into two separate trials. In July 2004, during the trial of the export violations portion of the indictment, all five Elashi brothers, and Infocom Corporation, were convicted on charges they conspired to violate the Export Administration Regulations and the Libyan Sanctions Regulations. Each of the five brothers was found guilty of conspiracy to file false Shipper’s Export Declaration forms. All of the brothers were convicted of making false statements and all of the defendants, except Ihsan Elashi, were also convicted on money laundering charges. At that trial, the jury found that from 1997 to 2000, the defendants made illegal computer shipments to Libya and Syria, in violation of U.S. laws that restrict or prohibit the export of technology, goods or software to countries listed as state sponsors of terrorism as designated by Secretary of State in order to protect the national security of the United States.

During the second trial on the remaining charges in the indictment, in April 2005, the jury found that Bayan Elashi, Ghassan Elashi, Basman Elashi and Infocom Corporation conspired together and sent money to co-defendant Mousa Abu Marzook, an investor in Infocom and a self-admitted leader of the Islamic Resistance Movement, a/k/a Hamas. In 1995, the Department of Treasury, Office of Foreign Assets Control, designated Hamas as a Specially Designated Terrorist Organization, making it illegal for any United States person or entity to conduct any business with Hamas or its representatives. Nadia Marzook, also a defendant in the case, is Mousa Abu Marzook’s wife and is the Elashi brothers’ cousin. Bayan Elashi, Ghassan Elashi, Basman Elashi, and Infocom Corporation were each found guilty of conspiracy to deal in the property of a Specially Designated Terrorist and conspiracy to commit money laundering. In addition, Bayan Elashi and Ghassan Elashi were each convicted on 10 counts of dealing in the property of a Specially Designated Terrorist and nine counts of money laundering. Basman Elashi was also convicted on one count of dealing in the property of a Specially Designated Terrorist.

Brothers Hazim and Ihsan Elashi were sentenced in January 2006 to 66 months imprisonment and 72 months imprisonment, respectively. Hazim Elashi will be deported after his sentence is served. Ihsan Elashi’s sentence will run consecutively to the 48-month federal sentence he is presently serving on unrelated charges.

At Infocom, Bayan Elashi was the chief executive officer; Ghassan Elashi was the vice-president of marketing; Basman Elashi was the logistics and credit manager; Hazim Elashi was the manager of personal computer systems; and Ihsan Elashi was a systems consultant and sales representative

United States Attorney Roper praised the collaborative investigative efforts of the United States Department of Commerce; Federal Bureau of Investigation; Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation; United States Secret Service; and Immigration and Customs Enforcement. U.S.

Attorney Roper also thanked the U.S. Marshals Service and the Federal Protective Service for their excellent work in providing security throughout the trials.

The case was prosecuted by First Assistant United States Attorney James T. Jacks, Assistant United States Attorney Nathan Garrett, Trial Attorney Barry Jonas of the Department of Justice Counterterrorism Section, and Trial Attorney Martha Rubio from the Department of Justice.

###