



THE UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT of JUSTICE

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CHELSEA BOMBER AHMAD KHAN RAHIMI CONVICTED FOR EXECUTING SEPTEMBER 2016 BOMBING IN NEW YORK CITY

WASHINGTON – A jury returned a guilty verdict today against Ahmad Khan Rahimi, aka, “Ahmad Rahimi,” 29, of Elizabeth, New Jersey, in Manhattan federal court on all eight counts of the Indictment, which charged him with offenses related to his execution and attempted execution of bombings in New York City on Sept. 17, 2016. Rahimi, who faces mandatory sentence of life in prison, is scheduled to be sentenced on Jan. 18, 2018.

Acting Assistant Attorney General for National Security Dana J. Boente, Acting U.S. Attorney Joon H. Kim for the Southern District of New York, Assistant Director in Charge William F. Sweeney Jr. of the FBI’s New York Office and Commissioner James P. O’Neill of the NYPD made the announcement. U.S. District Judge Richard M. Berman presided over the two-week trial.

“Ahmad Khan Rahimi constructed bombs with high explosives and shrapnel to inflict maximum damage to innocent victims in multiple locations,” said Acting Assistant Attorney General Boente. “The defendant’s bombs caused injuries to numerous people. Thanks to outstanding investigative work, the defendant was identified and arrested before he could do any more harm. This verdict is an important step in holding him accountable for his crimes. Pursuing those who seek to conduct attacks on our homeland will remain the highest priority of the National Security Division. I would like to commend all of the agents, analysts and prosecutors who made this result possible.”

“On September 17, 2016, Ahmad Khan Rahimi attacked our country and our way of life,” said Acting U.S. Attorney Kim. “Inspired by ISIS and al Qaeda, Rahimi planted and detonated bombs on the streets of Chelsea, in the heart of Manhattan, and in New Jersey, hoping to kill and maim as many innocent people as possible. Rahimi’s crimes of hate have been met with swift and resolute justice. Just over a year after his attacks, and following a fair and open trial, Rahimi now stands convicted of his crimes of terror by a unanimous jury of New Yorkers. As a result, he now faces a mandatory sentence of life in prison. Today’s verdict is a victory for New York City, a victory for America in its fight against terror, and a victory for all who believe in the cause of justice.”

“It’s no secret New York City remains a desirable target for those who wish to disrupt our way of life,” said Assistant Director in Charge Sweeney Jr. “Last September,

Rahimi set out to harm innocent people who were simply living their lives one Saturday evening. He underestimated the resilience of New Yorkers as well as the resolution of the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force to see justice served. Today and always, along with our partners, we remain committed to putting terrorists and would-be terrorists behind bars. While the threat posed by Rahimi has been mitigated, I can't overstate the critical role the public continues to play in combating the threats we face. As we welcome this victory today, I ask everyone to remain engaged, stay aware, and immediately report suspicious activity to the authorities."

"Ahmed Rahimi deliberately placed two bombs on the streets of Chelsea in the dark of night with the intention of maiming and killing innocent New Yorkers enjoying a September Saturday night," Commissioner O'Neill. "The fact that victims were not killed when one bomb exploded and another failed to detonate is miraculous. Mr. Rahimi was following to the hateful propaganda of al-Qaida and ISIS that calls for the killing of Americans. The combined efforts of the FBI, NYPD, the New York State Police and the Linden New Jersey Police Department led to the capture of Mr. Rahimi within 50 hours of the bombing. The investigation, as well as this conviction is an example of the work of the nation's best counterterrorism team. I want to commend the detectives, agents and police officers, the prosecutors of the United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York, and the members of the jury for bringing Ahmed Rahimi to justice. Today's verdict is the most forceful deterrent for anyone considering waging terror in our City. We will investigate; we will find those responsible; and justice will prevail."

As set forth in the Complaint, Indictment and the evidence presented at trial:

On Sept. 17, 2016, Rahimi transported two improvised explosive devices from New Jersey to New York, New York. Rahimi placed one of the devices in the vicinity of 135 West 23rd Street in the Chelsea neighborhood of New York (the "23rd Street Bomb") and the other in the vicinity of 131 West 27th Street in the Chelsea neighborhood of New York (the "27th Street Bomb").

At approximately 8:30 p.m., the 23rd Street Bomb – containing a high explosive main charge – detonated, causing injuries to over 30 people and multimillion-dollar property damage across a 650-foot crime scene. The injuries included, among other things, lacerations to the face, abdomen, legs and arms caused by flying glass; metal shrapnel and fragmentation embedded in skin and bone; and various head injuries. The explosive components appear to have been placed inside a pressure cooker and left near a dumpster. The explosion propelled a more-than-one-hundred-pound dumpster – which was introduced as an exhibit at trial – more than 120 feet. The blast shattered windows as far as approximately 400 feet from the blast site and, vertically, more than three stories high.

Shortly after the 23rd Street Bomb detonated, the 27th Street Bomb was identified by a civilian who promptly called 911, which recorded call was introduced in evidence and played at trial. The 27th Street Bomb, which was rendered safe prior to detonation, consisted of, among other things, a pressure cooker connected with wires to a cellular telephone (likely to function as a timer) and packaged with an explosive

main charge, ball bearings and steel nuts.

Earlier that day, at approximately 9:35 a.m. on Sept. 17, 2016, another improvised explosive device, which had been planted by Rahimi in the early morning hours, detonated in the vicinity of Seaside Park, New Jersey, along the route for the Seaside Semper Five Marine Corps Charity 5K race. The start of the race – which was scheduled to begin at 9:00 a.m. – was delayed. Had the race started on time, the bomb would have detonated as runners were passing by where Rahimi had planted it.

On Sept. 18, 2016, at approximately 8:40 p.m., six additional improvised explosive devices that Rahimi also planted were found inside a backpack located at the entrance to the New Jersey Transit station in Elizabeth. One of these devices detonated as law enforcement used a robot to defuse it.

On Sept. 19, 2016, at approximately 9:30 a.m., Rahimi was arrested by police in Linden, New Jersey. Rahimi fired multiple shots at police, striking and injuring multiple police officers before he was himself shot, subdued and placed under arrest. In the course of Rahimi's arrest, a handwritten journal was recovered from Rahimi's person. Written in the journal were, among other things, mentions of explosive devices (including "The sounds of bombs will be heard in the streets" and "Bombs set off in the streets they plan to run a mile"), and laudatory references to Usama Bin Laden, the former leader of al Qaeda, Anwar al-Awlaki, a former senior leader of al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, Mohammed al-Adnani, a former senior leader of the Islamic State in Iraq and al Sham and Nidal Hasan, who shot and killed 13 people in Foot Hood, Texas.

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Rahimi was convicted of one count of using a weapon of mass destruction, which carries a maximum sentence of life in prison; one count of attempting to use a weapon of mass destruction, which carries a maximum sentence of life in prison; one count of bombing a place of public use, which carries a maximum sentence of life in prison; one count of destroying property by means of fire or explosive, which carries a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison; one count of attempting to destroy property by means of fire or explosive, which carries a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison; one count of interstate transportation and receipt of explosives, which carries a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison; and two counts of using of a destructive device in furtherance of a crime of violence, namely, the use and attempted use of weapons of mass destruction, each of which individually carries a mandatory minimum consecutive sentence of 30 years in prison, a potential maximum sentence of life in prison, and, by virtue of his convictions on both counts, a mandatory sentence of life in prison.

The statutory maximum and minimum penalties are prescribed by Congress and are provided here for informational purposes only, as any sentencing of the defendant will be determined by the judge.

In addition to the charges of which he was convicted in Manhattan federal court,

Rahimi also has been charged in the District of New Jersey in a Complaint with offenses in connection with his alleged efforts to detonate explosives in Seaside Park and Elizabeth.

Mr. Boente and Mr. Kim praised the outstanding efforts of the FBI's New York Joint Terrorism Task Force, which principally consists of agents from the FBI and detectives from the NYPD. Mr. Kim also thanked the Counterterrorism Section of the Department of Justice's National Security Division for its assistance.

Assistant U.S. Attorneys Emil J. Bove III, Andrew J. DeFilippis and Shawn G. Crowley of the Southern District of New York are prosecuting this case with assistance from Trial Attorney Brian Morgan of the National Security Division's Counterterrorism Section.

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