

NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Abdullahu Sentenced to 20 Months in Prison for Supplying Guns and Ammunition to Illegal Aliens

(More)

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CAMDEN, N.J. – Agron Abdullahu was sentenced to 20 months in federal prison today for conspiring to provide firearms and ammunition to illegal aliens who allegedly plotted to kill U.S. soldiers at various installations, including the Fort Dix Army base in New Jersey, U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Christie announced.

U.S. District Judge Robert B. Kugler also ordered Abdullahu, 25, of Buena Vista Township in Atlantic County, N.J., to serve three years of supervised release upon the completion of his prison term. Judge Kugler continued the defendant's detention and remanded him to the custody of the U.S. Marshal to begin serving his prison sentence.

Abdullahu, who is a U.S. legal permanent resident, has been held in federal custody since his arrested on May 7, 2007, along with five others – three of them brothers – who were charged in an alleged plot to kill as many soldiers as possible. At that time, Abdullahu was charged with aiding and abetting the illegal possession of firearms by illegal aliens.

Abdullahu was never accused of joining the plot to kill U.S. military personnel, as Kugler also noted at sentencing.

On Oct. 31, 2007, Abdullahu pleaded guilty to a one-count Superseding Information which charged him with conspiracy to possess firearms and ammunition by illegal aliens. At his plea hearing, Abdullahu admitted that from Jan. 3, 2006, to May 7, 2007, he and Serdar Tatar, 25, of Philadelphia, provided firearms to brothers Eljvir Duka, 24, Dritan Duka, 29, and Shain Duka, 27, who Abdullahu knew were illegal aliens. (All of the Duka brothers are from Cherry Hill, N.J.)

The trial for the Dukas, Tatar and Mohamad Ibrahim Shnewer, 22, of Cherry Hill, on the five-count Superseding Indictment, is scheduled before Judge Kugler on Sept. 29, 2008.

In determining the actual sentence, Judge Kugler consulted the advisory U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges that take into account the severity and characteristics of the offense, the defendant's criminal history, if any, and other factors. The judge, however, is not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence. In this case, Judge Kugler determined the appropriate sentence to be 20 months; four months above the top of the advisory guideline range.

Parole has been abolished in the federal system. Defendants who are given custodial terms must serve nearly all that time.

Christie credited Special Agents of the FBI's Philadelphia Division and the FBI South Jersey Joint Terrorism Task Force, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Janice K. Fedarck, in Philadelphia, for investigation of the case.

Christie and Fedarck also thanked investigators with member agencies of the FBI South Jersey JTTF, which is comprised of the Camden County Prosecutor's Office, N.J. State Police, the Delaware River Port Authority Police, and the Philadelphia Division of ICE.

The government is represented by Deputy U.S. Attorney William E Fitzpatrick and Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael A. Hammer, Jr.

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Defense Attorney: Richard Coughlin, Esq. Federal Public Defender