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**PAKISTANI MAN CONVICTED OF PROVIDING MATERIAL
SUPPORT TO AL QAEDA SENTENCED TO
30 YEARS IN FEDERAL PRISON**

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that UZAIR PARACHA, a Pakistani national with permanent resident alien status in the United States, was sentenced today in Manhattan federal court to 30 years in prison after being convicted on charges relating to his provision of material support to the al Qaeda terrorist organization.

PARACHA was convicted on November 23, 2005 after a two-week jury trial on all charges in the five-count Indictment. The charges included conspiracy to provide and providing material support to the al Qaeda foreign terrorist organization, conspiracy to provide and providing funds, goods, or services to al Qaeda, and identification document fraud committed to facilitate an act of international terrorism.

"We are committed to the vigorous prosecution of all those who provide support to terrorist organizations, in whatever form," stated Mr. GARCIA. "PARACHA attempted to help an al Qaeda operative enter the United States to carry out terrorist attacks within our borders. The FBI Joint Terrorist Task Force's ability to interdict and prevent that plan from succeeding does not mitigate the seriousness of the offense, and more than justifies the sentence imposed."

MARK J. MERSHON, Assistant Director-in-Charge of the New York Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), stated, "This case demonstrates how we effectively combat terrorism on two critical fronts: proactive investigation and aggressive prosecution. The FBI Joint Terrorist Task Force disrupted an Al-Qaeda plot aimed at targets within our country, and federal prosecutors ensured that Uzair Paracha faced justice and was held

accountable for his crimes."

The evidence at trial proved that PARACHA, 26, agreed with his father, Saifullah Paracha, and two al Qaeda members, Majid Khan and Ammar Al-Baluchi, to provide support to al Qaeda by, among other things, trying to help Khan obtain a travel document that would have allowed Khan to re-enter the United States to commit a terrorist act. Statements from Khan admitted at trial revealed that, once inside the United States, Khan intended to carry out an attack on gasoline stations. In February and March 2003, PARACHA posed as Khan during telephone calls with the Immigration and Naturalization Service (now Immigration and Customs Enforcement), called Khan's bank, and attempted to gather information about Khan's immigration paperwork via the Internet. PARACHA also agreed to use Khan's credit card to make it appear that Khan was in the United States, when in fact Khan was in Pakistan.

PARACHA and his father had discussed with Khan and Al-Baluchi the possibility of the Parachas receiving up to \$200,000 from al Qaeda in connection with the assistance PARACHA was providing to Khan, which the Paracha hoped to invest in their businesses.

On March 28, 2003, agents and detectives of the New York Joint Terrorist Task Force located and extensively interviewed PARACHA regarding his connections to Khan and Al-Baluchi, and his efforts to assist them. Task Force members subsequently found in PARACHA's belongings a number of identification documents belonging to Khan, including Khan's drivers license, Khan's Social Security card, Khan's bank card, and a handwritten list of instructions from Khan directing PARACHA on how to pose as Khan when making inquiries with the INS. Also in PARACHA's possession was a key to a post office box opened in Khan's name by Aafia Siddiqui in Maryland, which PARACHA was to check to see if Khan's immigration documents had been delivered.

United States District Judge SIDNEY H. STEIN also imposed five years supervised release and a \$500 special assessment.

Mr. GARCIA praised the efforts of the FBI Joint Terrorist Task Force, which includes agents of the FBI and detectives of the New York Police Department, in conducting the investigation.

Assistant United States Attorneys KARL METZNER and ERIC B. BRUCE are in charge of the prosecution.

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