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U.S. Announces Indictment of International Arms Dealer for Conspiracy to Kill Americans and Related Terrorism Charges



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NEW YORK, May 6 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Michael J. Garcia, the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and Michele M. Leonhart, the Acting Administrator of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), announced today the unsealing of an indictment against international arms dealer Viktor Bout, a/k/a Boris, a/k/a Victor Anatoliyevich Bout, a/k/a Victor But, a/k/a Viktor Budd, a/k/a Viktor Butt, a/k/a Viktor Bulakin, a/k/a Vadim Markovich Aminov, for, among other things, conspiring to sell millions of weapons to the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (the FARC), foreign terrorist organization based in Colombia -- to be used to kill Americans



Bout was arrested by Thai authorities on a provisional arrest warrant on April 9 on a complaint filed in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York conspiracy to provide material support or resources to a designated foreign terrorist organization. Bout has been in custody in Thailand since March 6, 2008. Accol indictment unsealed today in Manhattan federal court:

Bout, an international weapons trafficker since the 1990s, has carried out his weapons trafficking business by assembling a fleet of cargo airplanes capable of transporting and military equipment to various parts of the world, including Africa, South America and the Middle East. In 2004, as a result of his weapons trafficking activities in Liberia, the U.S. States Office of Foreign Assets Control within the Department of Treasury placed Bout on the Specially Designated Nationals list, which prohibits any transactions between Bout and U.S. nationals, and freezes any of Bout's assets that are within the jurisdiction of the United States.

Between November 2007 and March 2008, Bout agreed to sell to the FARC more than \$10 million worth of weapons -- including surface-to-air missile systems (SAMs), armor piercing rounds, anti-aircraft launchers, AK-47 firearms, millions of rounds of ammunition, Russian spare parts, anti-personnel land mines, C-4 plastic explosives, night-vision equipment, and unmanned aircraft. Bout agreed to sell the weapons to two confidential sources working with the FBI who represented that they were acquiring these weapons for the FARC, with the understanding that the weapons were to be used to attack United States helicopters in Colombia.

As described in the Indictment, during a covertly recorded meeting in Thailand in May 2008, Bout stated to the CSs that he could arrange to airdrop the arms to the FARC in Colombia, and offered to sell two cargo planes to the FARC that could be used for weapons deliveries. Bout also provided a map of South America, and asked the CSs to identify American radar locations in Colombia. Bout said that he understood that the CSs



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arms for use against American personnel in Colombia, and advised that the U also his enemy, stating that the FARCs fight against the United States was also During the meeting, Bout also offered to provide people to train the FARC in th arms.

The Indictment unsealed today charges Bout with four separate terrorism offer

- Count One: Conspiracy to kill United States natio
- Count Two: Conspiracy to kill United States offic employees;
- Count Three: Conspiracy to acquire and use an ant missile; and
- Count Four: Conspiracy to provide material suppor to a designated foreign terrorist organization.

If convicted, Bout faces a maximum sentence of life imprisonment on each of through Three, including a mandatory minimum sentence of 25 years imprisor Three. Bout faces a maximum sentence of 15 years imprisonment on Count F assigned to United States District Judge Shira A. Scheindlin.

The United States is actively pursuing Bouts extradition from Thailand.

Mr. Garcia praised the investigative work of the DEA and thanked the Royal TI of the Attorney General for Thailand, and the Royal Thai government for their Garcia also thanked the Romanian Border Police, the Romanian Prosecutor's to the High Court of Cassation and Justice, the Korps Politie Curacao of the N Antilles, and the Danish National Police Security Services, for their cooperatio the U.S. Department of Justice Office of International Affairs.

"Viktor Bout has long been considered by the international community as one of most prolific arms traffickers," said U.S. Attorney Michael J. Garcia. "Today, B custody facing extradition to the United States, where he will be prosecuted for arm a terrorist organization, an aim of which was to kill American citizens."

"Viktor Bout no doubt faces some of the most extraordinarily serious conspirac possible for his crimes against Americans," said DEA Acting Administrator Micl Leonhart. "With the unsealing of this indictment, we are one step closer to ens delivered his last load of high-powered weaponry and armed his final terrorist."

Assistant U.S. Attorneys Anjan Sahni and Brendan R. McGuire are in charge of prosecution.

The charges contained in the indictment are merely accusations and the defer presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

SOURCE U.S. Department of Justice

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