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**MARYLAND MAN SENTENCED TO 15 YEARS FOR PROVIDING
MATERIAL SUPPORT TO TERRORIST ORGANIZATION**

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that MAHMUD FARUQ BRENT, also known as "Mahmud Almutazzim," was sentenced this morning to 15 years' imprisonment, the statutory maximum sentence, on charges that he conspired to provide material support to a foreign terrorist organization, Lashkar-e-Taiba (roughly translated as "Army of the Pure") which is committed to violent jihad against the United States and its allies.

In imposing the statutory maximum sentence, United States District Judge LORETTA A. PRESKA stated that without foot-soldiers willing to offer themselves as fighters, like BRENT, Lashkar-e-Taiba could not carry out violent terrorist acts and that BRENT's willingness to travel and train at Lashkar-e-Taiba's terrorist training camp in Pakistan was a critical component of putting Lashkar-e-Taiba's murderous views into action. Judge PRESKA also noted that after completing his terrorist military training in Pakistan, BRENT returned to the United States to wait for the opportunity to put his training into action.

BRENT had previously pleaded guilty to the charges on April 2, 2007. According to charging and sentencing documents filed in the case and statements made during BRENT's guilty plea proceeding, BRENT, working with others, traveled to Pakistan in 2002 and attended a terrorist training camp operated by the Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorist organization. BRENT thereafter returned to the United States and was living in the Baltimore, Maryland, area at the time of his arrest in August 2005. As part of the conspiracy to provide material support to Lashkar-e-Taiba, BRENT received martial arts training from TARIK SHAH, a co-defendant who pleaded guilty to charges that he conspired to provide material support to al Qaeda. SHAH's address book had contained a telephone number for "Mahmud Almutazzim" that was subscribed to by BRENT's wife at their home in Gwynn Oak, Maryland. SHAH's address book also

contained a telephone number for "Sayfullah" that was used by SEIFULLAH CHAPMAN, who has been convicted in the Eastern District of Virginia of multiple terrorism and firearms charges as part of the Virginia Jihad Network prosecutions. In a recorded conversation with an undercover FBI agent, SHAH mentioned the names of several students, including "Mahmud Almutazzim," whom he had trained in the martial arts and who had gone overseas to training camps in Afghanistan and Yemen. Among other things, SHAH said BRENT had told him how "difficult" it was to be back in the United States and not to be in training. SHAH said that BRENT could be trusted because he was a longtime student of his who, after leaving school, started "seeking the way to become Mujahideen." SHAH also told the undercover agent that he intended to call BRENT to enlist his help in preparing a demonstration video to be used for martial arts training of jihadists. Phone records reveal a subsequent 16-minute telephone call between phones used by SHAH and BRENT.

SHAH was arrested in May 2005. Thereafter, he agreed to meet with BRENT and to allow the FBI to secretly monitor the encounter. SHAH and BRENT met at a hotel in the vicinity of Columbia, Maryland. During that meeting, when SHAH indicated that he wanted to "travel," BRENT replied that his "connections" were "kinda gone," in light of what had been happening in the community and that his only connection was "doing time now." BRENT explained that he never really "knew names" since that was the "way that they had it set up" over there and that, at the time he went to the camps, everything was "really organized." BRENT described the difficulties he encountered in reaching the "camps" and the process by which he was able to find a connection to get into the camps, although he told SHAH that he would not "mention" his connection's name to SHAH. BRENT encouraged SHAH to travel overseas to the camps and told SHAH that it was a question of "how much" SHAH was willing to "sacrifice" and whether SHAH was willing to "take a risk." BRENT explained how difficult it was to make the trip since it was difficult to "trust" people in the current climate and noted that "we don't know who is who," and that "we were not in a position to make new friends." When BRENT indicated that he had traveled to Pakistan, SHAH inquired whether or not BRENT had stayed in the city. BRENT responded that he had not been in the cities but had been up in the "mountains" training "and stuff" with "the mujahideen, the fighters." BRENT stated that because of "treaties with Bush," it became dangerous for "foreigners," like BRENT, to stay in the camps, and so they moved him around from place to place. BRENT stated that he had agreed to provide whatever "assistance" he could over there and expressed his hope that Allah would bless him for his efforts. BRENT stated that he would never "go back" on his decision to go to the camps and that it was "one of the better decisions in [his] life."

At the time of BRENT's arrest in August 2005, the FBI conducted a court-authorized search of his residence. The agents recovered, among other things, a jihadist recruiting video called "The Martyrs of Bosnia," and multiple recordings by radical clerics. In addition, agents also recovered BRENT's computer, which was subsequently analyzed at the FBI's computer laboratory. This analysis revealed some of the websites that BRENT visited during the relevant time frame in the months leading up to BRENT's travel to the Lashkar-e-Taiba camp. One such website for "Jihad Training Camps" listed the address, e-mail address, and telephone number for Lashkar-e-Taiba's office in Lahore, Pakistan. This web page also told its visitors that "If you have exhausted the above resources to no avail and you still desire to fight the enemies of Allah, please e-mail us and we will make arrangements for you at a training camp, insha-allah." BRENT also visited Lashkar-e-Taiba's website on multiple occasions. After visiting the Lashkar-e-Taiba website, BRENT visited websites advertising Navy SEALs conditioning training and made inquiries about accommodations in Lahore, Pakistan, the location of the Lashkar-e-Taiba office.

SHAH is scheduled to be sentenced by Judge PRESKA on September 7, 2007, at 10:00 a.m. BRENT's co-defendant, RAFIQ SABIR, a medical doctor who was found guilty by a jury in May 2007 of conspiring to provide, and attempting to provide, material support to al Qaeda, is scheduled to be sentenced by Judge PRESKA on September 10, 2007. The fourth defendant ABDULRAHMAN FARHANE, who was charged along with BRENT, SHAH, and SABIR, pleaded guilty to related charges and was sentenced by Judge PRESKA in April 2007, to 13 years' imprisonment.

Mr. GARCIA also praised the work of the New York Joint Terrorism Task Force, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the New York City Police Department, in this investigation.

Assistant United States Attorneys JENNIFER G. RODGERS, KARL METZNER, and VICTOR L. HOU are in charge of the prosecution.

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