



# Department of Justice

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## **International Arms Dealer Arrested for Conspiracy to Supply U.S. Fighter Jet Engines to Iran**

Jacques Monsieur, a Belgian national and resident of France suspected of international arms dealing for decades, has been arrested on charges alleging that he conspired to illegally export F-5 fighter jet engines and parts from the United States to Iran. Monsieur is scheduled to have his arraignment today in federal court in Mobile, Alabama.

A six-count indictment returned on Aug. 27, 2009, in the Southern District of Alabama charging Monsieur, 56, and co-defendant Dara Fotouhi, aka Dara Fatouhi, 54, an Iranian national currently living in France, with conspiracy, money laundering, smuggling, as well as violations of the Arms Export Control Act (AECA) and the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA).

Monsieur was arrested by federal agents last Friday upon his arrival in New York. Fotouhi remains at large. The charge of conspiracy carries a potential sentence of five years in prison, while smuggling carries a potential 10-year prison term, AECA carries a potential 10-year prison term, money laundering carries a potential 20-year prison term and IEEPA carries a potential 20-year prison term.

According to the indictment and an affidavit filed in the case, defendants Monsieur and Fotouhi are experienced arms dealers who have been actively working with the Iranian government to procure military items for the Iranian government.

The indictment alleges that in February 2009, Monsieur contacted an undercover agent seeking engines for the F-5 (EIF) fighter jet or the C-130 military transport aircraft for export to Iran. Thereafter, Monsieur began having regular e-mail contact with the undercover agent regarding requested F-5 engines and parts.

These engines, known as J85-21 models, are replacement engines for the F-5 fighter jet that was sold to Iran by the United States before the 1979 Iranian revolution. The engines and parts are designated as defense articles on the U.S. Munitions List and may not be exported from the United States without a license from the U.S. State Department. Additionally, these items may not be exported to Iran without a license from the U.S. Treasury Department due to the U.S. trade embargo on Iran.

According to the indictment, in March 2009, Monsieur met with the undercover agent in Paris, where Monsieur again requested engines and parts for the F-5 fighter jet. In May 2009, an undercover agent met with Monsieur in London, where Monsieur introduced Dara Fotouhi as a business associate, and again discussed the illegal export of F-5 fighter jet engines from the United States to Iran. During this negotiation, the defendants allegedly asked the undercover agent if he could obtain or use U.S. shipping or export authorization documents that falsely indicated that the end user of the items would be located in Colombia.

In June 2009, according to the indictment, Monsieur sent an e-mail to the undercover agent and provided a purchase order for F-5 fighter jet parts from a front company for an organization known as Trast

Aero Space, located in Kyrgyzstan. The order requested that the parts be located by the undercover agent and illegally exported to the United Arab Emirates for transshipment to Iran.

The following month, Monsieur allegedly contacted the undercover agent indicating that approximately \$110,000 had been wired from Dubai to a bank account in Alabama as payment for the parts. He also indicated that a deposit of \$300,000 would be forthcoming as a down payment for two F-5 fighter jet engines. In August 2009, Monsieur requested information from the undercover agent about his contact in Colombia for forwarding the aircraft parts from Colombia to the United Arab Emirates, the indictment alleges.

"The facts alleged in this indictment underscore the global reach of Iranian procurement networks and the international arms traffickers who help supply them. This case also highlights the importance of keeping restricted U.S. weapons technology out of their grasp," said Deputy Attorney General Ogden. "I applaud the many agents, analysts and prosecutors who worked tirelessly to bring about this important arrest."

Acting U.S. Attorney Eugene A. Seidel said, "The investigation and prosecution of cases such as this one will have a significant deterrent impact on illegal arms trafficking and will enhance our national security. Foreign governments and illegal arms dealers should know that there are no 'safe harbors' for this type of commerce. We all owe a debt of gratitude to the dedicated investigators, agency analysts, and prosecutors who helped bring about the arrest and indictment of the defendant."

"Those who seek to illegally send dangerous weapons to Iran will never quite know whether the 'merchant' they're dealing with is actually the long arm of the law," said John Morton, the Department of Homeland Security Assistant Secretary for ICE. "ICE is committed to combating the flow of arms and sensitive technologies abroad and will utilize all of its resources to do so."

"Safeguarding our military equipment and technology is vital to our nation's defense and the protection of our war fighters," said Director Sharon Woods, Director of the Defense Criminal Investigative Service. "We know that foreign governments are actively seeking our equipment for their own military development. Thwarting these efforts is a top priority of the DCIS. I applaud the agents and prosecutors who worked tirelessly to bring about this result."

This investigation was conducted by the Department of Homeland Security's U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the Department of Defense's Defense Criminal Investigative Service (DCIS).

The prosecution is being handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney Gregory A. Bordenkircher of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Alabama, with assistance from the Counterespionage Section of the Justice Department's National Security Division.

An indictment is a formal accusation and is not proof of guilt. Defendants are presumed innocent until and unless they are found guilty.

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