Beat: News

HSI ARRESTS FORMER HIGH-RANKING SOMALI LIEUTENANT COLONEL

ACCUSED OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

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ARAC International Strategic Communications - HOMELAND SECURITY INVESTIGATIONS (HSI) ARRESTS FORMER HIGH-RANKING SOMALI LIEUTENANT COLONEL ACCUSED OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS
Press Release
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HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATORS

Man apprehended for human rights abuses which include extrajudicial killing; torture; cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment; and arbitrary detention.

WASHINGTON — Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) arrested a former high-ranking Somali army officer accused of multiple human rights violations against Somali civilians during the 1980s. Special agents arrested Yusuf Abdi Ali, aka Tukeh, Nov. 17 in Springfield, Virginia for those human rights abuses, which include extrajudicial killing; torture; cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment; and arbitrary detention.

Ali, a 69-year-old Springfield resident, served as a lieutenant colonel in the Somali National Army and Commander of the Fifth Brigade in Northwest Somalia from approximately May 1987 to July 1988 under the dictatorship of Siad Barre. During this time, the Somali army committed numerous serious human rights violations against civilians.

“While Yusuf Abdi Ali’s apprehension cannot undo the pain that he allegedly inflicted upon the victims of his purported human rights abuses, it is my sincere hope that by seeing him answer for his apparent role in these heinous crimes, they will be given some form of peace,” said Derek W. Gordon, Acting Special Agent in charge of HSI Washington, D.C. “HSI Washington, D.C. is dedicated to protecting the law-abiding residents of the Washington, D.C. Metro area, while continuing to search out those who intend to benefit from the abuse of others.”

In May 2019, a jury in the Eastern District of Virginia found Ali liable in a civil suit for the torture of a Somali herder and awarded the plaintiff damages.

This case was supported by the Human Rights Violators and War Crimes Center and will be litigated by ICE’s Office of the Principal Legal Advisor.

Established in 2008, the HRVWCC furthers HSI’s efforts to identify, locate and prosecute human rights abusers in the United States, including those who are known or suspected to have participated in persecution, war crimes, genocide, torture, extrajudicial killings, female genital mutilation and the use or recruitment of child soldiers. The HRVWCC leverages the expertise of a select group of agents, lawyers, intelligence and research specialists, historians and analysts who direct the agency’s broader enforcement efforts against these offenders.

Since 2003, HSI has arrested more than 480 individuals for human rights-related violations of the law under various criminal and immigration statutes. During that same period, HSI obtained deportation orders against and physically removed 1,100 known or suspected human rights violators from the United States. Additionally, HSI has facilitated the departure of an additional 186 such individuals from the United States.

Currently, HSI has more than 160 active investigations into suspected human rights violators and is pursuing more than 1,700 leads and removal cases involving suspected human rights violators from 95 different countries. Since 2003, the HRVWCC has issued more than 78,000 lookouts for individuals; it has also stopped over 350 human rights violators and war crime suspects from entering the United States.

HSI is the principal investigative arm of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, responsible for investigating transnational crime and threats, specifically those criminal organizations that exploit the global infrastructure through which international trade, travel and finance move. HSI's workforce of over 10,400 employees consists of more than 6,800 special agents assigned to 225 cities throughout the United States, and 93 overseas locations in 56 countries. HSI's international presence represents DHS' largest investigative law enforcement presence abroad and one of the largest international footprints in U.S. law enforcement.

Members of the public who have information about foreign nationals suspected of engaging in human rights abuses or war crimes are urged to call the HSI tip line at 866-DHS-2423 (866-347-2423). Callers may remain anonymous.

Source: United States Department of Homeland Security
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