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NEWS RELEASE

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FOUR MEN INDICTED FOR TRANSMITTING MILLIONS OF DOLLARS OVERSEAS ILLEGALLY

United States Attorney John L. Brownlee announced today that four men have been indicted by a federal grand jury sitting in Charlottesville, Virginia for transmitting millions of dollars overseas illegally.

The grand jury charges that beginning in 1998, four men, Ahmed Haji Abdullah, age 31, Fadhil Noroly, age 39, Rasheed Qadir Qambari, age 37, and Amir Rashid, age 35, all of Harrisonburg, Virginia, operated an unlicensed money transmitting business. Abdullah, Noroly, Qambari, and Rashid would receive checks from people who wanted to transfer money outside the United States to various Middle Eastern and European nations. The money was deposited in various bank accounts controlled by the defendants and then transferred to accounts in other countries. None of the defendants had a license from the Virginia State Corporation Commission or the United States Department of Treasury, as required by law. The four defendants transferred nearly \$3,000,000 overseas over six years.

In addition and in order to facilitate their unlicensed money transmitting business, Ahmed Abdullah and Fadhil Noroly would receive housing assistance payments from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. Abdullah and Noroly would submit inaccurate applications and reauthorization forms, misrepresenting the amount of assets and number of bank accounts they controlled. The grand jury alleges Abdullah stole \$12,767 in housing assistance, and Noroly stole \$7,994 in housing assistance.

"This type of unlicensed money transfer business undercuts the integrity of our banking system, which is regulated to prevent the funding of illegal international organizations and to facilitate reliability and public confidence," said United States Attorney John Brownlee. "We cannot allow anyone to operate this type of unlicensed money supply system."

Ahmed Haji Abdullah and Fadhil Noroly are charged in two separate indictments with operation of an unlicensed money transmitting business, theft of public money, and criminal forfeiture.

Rasheed Qadir Qambari, and Amir Rashid are charged in two separate indictments with operation of an unlicensed money transmitting business and criminal forfeiture.

The investigation was conducted by the Joint Terrorism Task Force, the FBI, the Defense Criminal Investigative Service, the Inspector General for the Department of Agriculture, the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Harrisonburg Police Department, Rockingham County Sheriff's Office, Virginia State Police, Albemarle County Police Department, University of Virginia Police Department, Charlottesville Police Department, and the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. Assistant United States Attorney Tim Heaphy will prosecute the case.

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