



# Department of Justice

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## **Two Munitions Dealers Arrested and Charged in Conspiracy to Export Military Aircraft Parts to Iran**

Defendants Hassan Saied Keshari and Traian Bujduveanu were arrested on charges of conspiring to export military aircraft parts to Iran, announced R. Alexander Acosta, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Florida, Michael Johnson, Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Department of Commerce, Office of Export Enforcement, Anthony V. Mangione, Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Office of Investigations, and Christopher Amato, Special Agent in Charge of the Pentagon's Defense Criminal Investigative Service, Southeast Field Office. Hassan Saied Keshari and Traian Bujduveanu are charged in a federal Criminal Complaint with conspiring to violate the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, the United States Iran Embargo, and the Arms Export Control Act for their participation in a conspiracy to export U.S.-made military aircraft parts to Iran.

According to the affidavit filed in support of the Criminal Complaint, Keshari owns and operates Kesh Air International, a business located in Novato, California. Bujduveanu owns and operates Orion Aviation Corp., located in Plantation, Florida. The affidavit alleges that since August 2006, Keshari and Bujduveanu have procured U.S.-made military aircraft parts in the United States for buyers in Iran and have illegally shipped the parts to a company in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, for shipment to buyers in Iran. Keshari allegedly received the orders for specific parts by e-mail from buyers in Iran. Keshari then requested quotes, usually by e-mail, from Bujduveanu and made arrangements with Bujduveanu for the sale and shipment of the parts to a company in Dubai. From Dubai, the parts were then shipped on to Iran.

Among the aircraft parts that Keshari and Bujduveanu are alleged to have obtained and illegally shipped to buyers in Iran are parts for the CH-53 military helicopter, the F-14 Tomcat fighter jet, and the AH-1 attack helicopter. Keshari is also alleged to have requested quotes for other parts for other military aircraft, including F-4 Phantom aircraft. All of these aircraft are known to be used primarily, if not exclusively, by the Iranian military. Moreover, all of the parts supplied by

Keshari and Bujduveanu are manufactured in the United States, are designed exclusively for military use, and have been designated by the United States Department of State as "defense articles" on the United States Munitions List, thus requiring registration and licensing with the DDTTC. Neither Keshari nor Bujduveanu are registered or had the required license to ship defense articles to Iran.

Shortly before midnight on Friday, June 20, 2008, federal agents arrested Keshari at Miami International Airport as he walked off a flight from Atlanta. A search warrant was executed on Kesh Air International, in California, on Friday, June 20, 2008. Defendant Bujduveanu was arrested at his Plantation, FL, home on Saturday, June 21, 2008. Federal agents executed a search warrant at Bujduveanu's home and business immediately after his arrest. Agents found boxes of military aircraft parts stored on Bujduveanu's property, including hundreds of parts for the C-130, the F-5, and other military aircraft.

Both defendants made their initial appearances in federal court today before a United States Magistrate Judge. They are scheduled to appear in federal court again on Thursday, June 26, 2008 at 10:00 a.m. for detention hearings.

The Complaint, unsealed today, charges the defendants with conspiring to illegally export "defense articles," in violation of the Arms Export Control Act, Title 22, United States Code, Section 2778(b), and to export U.S. made articles to Iran, in violation of Title 50, United States Code, Sections 1701, et seq. (the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA)); the United States Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) comprehensive trade and investment embargo against Iran under the authority, inter alia, of IEEPA, as amended, Section 505 of the International Security and Development Cooperation Act of 1885, Executive Order 13059 of August 19, 1997, which consolidates the provisions of Executive Orders 12613, 12957, and 12959, and the Iranian Transactions Regulations (ITR) promulgated thereunder, principally, 31 C.F.R. § 560.204. If convicted, the defendants face statutory maximum sentences ranging from five (5) years' imprisonment to twenty (20) years' imprisonment, and face fines of up to \$1 million.

United States Attorney Acosta stated, "Today's defendants are charged with illegally selling U.S. military equipment to Iran, thus helping that country build up its military strength. We owe it to the many service men and women who defend us to vigorously prosecute illegal exports of American military equipment."

"Disrupting illegal procurement networks that attempt to circumvent our sanctions against Iran is a top priority of the Bureau of Industry and Security," said Special Agent in Charge, Michael Johnson. "This case demonstrates the importance of team work in preventing diversion of sensitive U.S. goods," he added.

Special Agent in Charge Christopher Amato, of the Pentagon's Defense Criminal Investigative Service, Southeast Field Office, said, "The illegal diversion of U.S. military technologies through

deception, particularly to countries such as Iran, is treacherous and dangerous to the U.S. and its allies. These arrests are yet another example of the successes that can be achieved by effectively partnering investigative resources from DCIS, ICE, and Commerce."

"Today's federal criminal charges of two aviation corporations and their presidents are the result of a long-term investigation by ICE's Counter Proliferation Investigations (CPI) Unit in Fort Lauderdale and the U.S. Department of Commerce and U.S. Department of Defense," said Anthony Mangione, Special Agent in Charge of the ICE Office of Investigations. "The national security implications of this case cannot be underestimated. This investigation foiled a potentially dangerous scheme to sell and distribute sensitive U.S. military equipment. In the wrong hands, technology like this could be used to inflict harm upon America or its allies. ICE will continue to aggressively pursue those who violate U.S. export laws and ensure the sale and distribution of defense articles is done in a lawful manner."

U.S. Attorney Acosta commended the U.S. Department of Commerce, Office of Export Enforcement, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Office of Investigations, and the U.S. Department of Defense, Defense Criminal Investigative Service, for their work on this investigation. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Melissa Damian.

A copy of this press release may be found on the website of the United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Florida at <http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/fls>. Related court documents and information may be found on the website of the District Court for the Southern District of Florida at <http://www.flsd.uscourts.gov> or on <http://pacer.flsd.uscourts.gov>.

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