

NEWS RELEASE



OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

San Diego, California

***United States Attorney
Karen P. Hewitt***

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For Immediate Release

SAN DIEGO MAN SENTENCED IN CONNECTION WITH INTERNATIONAL SCHEME INVOLVING DEBIT CARD FRAUD AND CONSPIRACY TO LAUNDER MONEY

NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY - September 24, 2009

San Diego - United States Attorney Karen P. Hewitt announced that Mikhail M. Tuknov, Jr. was sentenced today by the Honorable John A. Houston, United States District Judge, to serve 28 months in custody and to pay more than \$371,000 in restitution based upon his pleas of guilty to debit card fraud and conspiracy to launder money.

According to Assistant U. S. Attorney Mitch Dembin, who prosecuted this case, Mr. Tuknov pleaded guilty on March 2, 2009, and, in connection with his guilty pleas, admitted that he obtained debit card numbers and associated personal identification numbers ("PINS") for bank accounts of actual persons from sources in Russia and distributed those numbers to an associate in the Dominican Republic. The associate then used the numbers to encode blank debit card plastics and delivered them, by a variety of means, to other criminal associates in New York City. The New York City associates used the fake debit cards to access

fraudulently the bank accounts tied to these cards at Automated Teller Machines and withdraw cash. The proceeds were sent by a variety of means to the Russian sources, who paid Mr. Tuknov his commission and sent new numbers to him to generate more cash. Mr. Tuknov admitted that between August 2005 and March 2006, he moved approximately 1,044 fraudulent debit card numbers and 1,045 related PINS to his associates, resulting in losses to the issuing banks of approximately \$371,000.00.

This case was investigated by Special Agents assigned of the San Diego Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and of the Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation.

DEFENDANT

Case Number: 08cr3663 - JAH

Mikhail M. Tuknov, Jr.

SUMMARY OF CHARGES

Count 1: Title 18, United States Code, Section 1029(a)(2) and (b)(1) - Debit Card Fraud

Count 44: Title 18, United States Code, Section 1956(h) - Conspiracy to Launder Money

AGENCIES

Federal Bureau of Investigation
Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation