



Department of Justice

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BROTHER, SISTER SENTENCED TO PRISON FOR GUN TRAFFICKING

ATLANTA, GA - HASSAN AWALI, 42, of Stone Mountain, Georgia, and his sister, BARBARA CLEVELAND, 52, of Gordon, Georgia, were sentenced today by United States District Judge Timothy C. Batten, Sr., to federal prison on charges of lying to a federally-licensed firearms dealers for the purpose of illegally buying guns.

United States Attorney Sally Quillian Yates said, "Georgia is the source state for far too many illegal guns that wind up at crime scenes in other states. In this case, these defendants illegally bought five pistols. Within just a few weeks, three of those pistols were used in crimes in New Jersey. Gun violence knows no borders or boundaries, and as long as criminals think they can illegally buy guns in Georgia, we will keep putting them in federal prison."

Matthew Horace, Special Agent in Charge, Newark Field Division, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, said, "In The District of New Jersey, we fully grasp the impact of the results of firearms trafficking schemes. We continue to view these criminals as a threat to public safety and the quality of life for New Jersey Residents. ATF will continue to lead the charge and work with law enforcement at every level and investigate, arrest and prosecute criminals who compromise our quality of life by illegally trafficking in arms."

ALWALI was sentenced to 5 years in prison to be followed by 3 years of supervised release. His sister, CLEVELAND, was sentenced to 1 year, 3 months in prison to be followed by 2 years of supervised release, and ordered to perform 100 hours of community service. Both were convicted by a jury after a four-day-long trial.

According to United States Attorney Yates, the charges and other information presented in court: CLEVELAND bought 5 handguns on the same day in August 2008, soon after she moved to Georgia from New Jersey. AWALI, who was also originally from New Jersey, was present when CLEVELAND bought the guns, and helped her pick them out. While CLEVELAND claimed that the guns were for herself, the jury found that she actually bought them on behalf of her brother, AWALI, who was a convicted

felon, not allowed by law to possess firearms. To convince the dealer to sell the guns to her, CLEVELAND lied on federally required paperwork about who the actual buyer of guns was. Three of the guns, including a semi-automatic handgun with a laser sight, were recovered just weeks later at different crime scenes in New Jersey.

This case was investigated by Special Agents of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

Assistant United States Attorney Kim S. Dammers prosecuted the case.

For further information please contact Sally Q. Yates, United States Attorney, or Charlyse L. Alexander, Executive Assistant United States Attorney, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is www.justice.gov/usao/gan.