



*United States Attorney
Southern District of New York*

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**CONTACT: U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
ELLEN DAVIS,
EDELI RIVERA,
JESSIE ERWIN
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE
(212) 637-2600**

**FBI
JIM MARGOLIN,
ADRIENNE SENATORE
(212) 384-2720, 3123**

**NYPD
PAUL BROWNE
(646) 610-8989**

**SOMALIAN PIRATE SENTENCED IN MANHATTAN FEDERAL COURT
TO 405 MONTHS IN PRISON FOR HIJACKING THREE SHIPS
AND FOR HOSTAGE TAKING**

*Pirate And His Crew Were Responsible For the 2009 Hijacking
Of The Maersk Alabama*

PREET BHARARA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, JANICE K. FEDARCYK, the Assistant Director-In-Charge of the New York Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI"), and RAYMOND W. KELLY, the Police Commissioner of the City of New York ("NYPD"), announced the sentencing today of ABDUWALI MUSE to _____ in prison for his participation in the April 8, 2009, hijacking of the Maersk Alabama container ship in the Indian Ocean and the subsequent taking of the captain of the ship as a hostage. MUSE was also sentenced for his participation in the hijacking of two other vessels in late March and early April of 2009. Those hijackings also involved the taking of hostages. MUSE pled guilty on May 18, 2010, to two felony counts of hijacking maritime vessels, two felony counts of kidnapping, and two felony counts of hostage taking. He was sentenced by U.S. District Judge LORETTA A. PRESKA.

Manhattan U.S. Attorney PREET BHARARA said: "For five days that must have seemed like an eternity to his victims, Abduwali Abukhadir Muse terrorized the captain and crew of the

Maersk Alabama. Now he will pay for those five days and the events leading up to them. Today's sentence makes it clear that piracy on the high seas is a crime against the international community that will not be tolerated. I would like to recognize the extraordinary collective efforts of local, federal, and international law enforcement and pay special thanks to the men and women of the U.S. Navy without whose bravery today's result would not have been possible."

FBI Assistant Director-in-Charge JANICE K. FEDARCYK said: "The stiff sentence handed down today sends a clear message to others who would interfere with American vessels or do harm to Americans on the high seas: Whatever seas you ply, you are not beyond the reach of American justice, and you will be held accountable for your actions."

NYPD Commissioner RAYMOND W. KELLY said: "I want to commend the New York Joint Terrorism Task Force members from the FBI and NYPD who worked together with the U.S. Navy and prosecutors from the United States Attorney's Office to bring Abduwali Muse to justice for his hijacking the Maersk Alabama and putting innocent lives in jeopardy."

According to the Superseding Indictment to which MUSE pled guilty and the criminal Complaint previously filed against him:

In March 2009, MUSE, a native of Somalia, and others armed with firearms boarded a ship ("Ship-1") in the Indian Ocean. After boarding Ship-1, they threatened the captain with a firearm, seized control of the ship, and held the captain and the crew hostage on board Ship-1.

While on board Ship-1, MUSE pointed a gun at one of the hostages and threatened to kill him. In addition, MUSE showed one of the hostages what appeared to be an improvised explosive device ("IED"). He placed the IED near the hostage, and indicated that if the authorities came, the IED would explode, and the hostage would be killed.

In April 2009, MUSE and others left Ship-1 on a small boat ("Skiff"). When the Skiff returned to Ship-1, Ship-1 and the Skiff were made to rendezvous with another ship ("Ship-2") that was also in the Indian Ocean. After Ship-1 and the Skiff arrived in the vicinity of Ship-2, the captain of Ship-1 was ordered to pull Ship-1 up to Ship-2. Ship-1 was then attached to Ship-2. Subsequently, MUSE and others held hostage both the captain and the crew of Ship-1 and the captain and the crew of Ship-2.

In April 2009, MUSE and three other pirates left Ship-2 and boarded the Maersk Alabama after shooting at the ship from their own boat. Each of the four pirates who boarded the Maersk Alabama, including MUSE, was armed with a gun. Once on board, MUSE, who conducted himself as the leader of the pirates, demanded, among other things, that the ship be stopped. Several hours after boarding, the pirates took a life boat from the ship, on which they held hostage the captain of the ship.

MUSE and the other three pirates held the captain hostage on the life boat from April 8 to April 12, 2009. During this period, in radio communications between the pirates and the U.S. Navy, the pirates threatened to kill the captain if they were not provided with safe passage away from the scene. On April 12, 2009, MUSE requested and was permitted to board the USS Bainbridge, a U.S. Navy missile destroyer that had arrived on the scene. On the USS Bainbridge, MUSE continued to demand safe passage from the scene for himself and other pirates in exchange for the captain's release. On April 12, 2009, MUSE was taken into custody by the U.S. Navy.

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In addition to the prison term, Judge PRESKA also imposed five years of supervised release and ordered restitution of \$550,000.

Mr. BHARARA praised the investigative work of the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force, comprised of FBI agents, NYPD detectives, and investigators from more than 50 federal, state and local law enforcement entities, and the Naval Criminal Investigative Service. Mr. BHARARA also thanked the U.S. Navy and specifically the Office of the Judge Advocate General for their vital cooperation.

This case is being handled by the Office's Terrorism and International Narcotics Unit. Assistant U.S. Attorneys BRENDAN R. McGUIRE and JEFFREY A. BROWN are in charge of the prosecution.

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