



# UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

## *Southern District of New York*

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### **INTERNATIONAL ARMS DEALER VIKTOR BOUT CONVICTED IN MANHATTAN FEDERAL COURT OF TERRORISM CRIMES**

*Bout Convicted on All Four Counts, Including Conspiring to Kill Americans and Conspiring to Provide Material Aid to Terrorists*

PREET BHARARA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that international arms dealer VIKTOR BOUT was found guilty today of conspiring to sell millions of dollars worth of weapons to the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (the "FARC") – a designated foreign terrorist organization based in Colombia – to be used to kill Americans in Colombia. BOUT was arrested in Thailand in March 2008 based on a Complaint filed in Manhattan federal court. He was subsequently charged in a four-count Indictment in May 2008 and extradited to the Southern District of New York in November 2010. BOUT was convicted today of (1) conspiring to kill U.S. nationals; (2) conspiring to kill U.S. officers and employees; (3) conspiring to acquire and use anti-aircraft missiles; and (4) conspiring to provide material support to a designated foreign terrorist organization. The three-week jury trial was presided over by U.S. District Judge SHIRA A. SCHEINDLIN.

Attorney General ERIC HOLDER said: "Today, one of the world's most prolific arms dealers is being held accountable for his sordid past. Viktor Bout's arms trafficking activity and support of armed conflicts have been a source of concern around the globe for decades. Today, he faces the prospect of life in prison for his efforts to sell millions of dollars worth of weapons to terrorists for use in killing Americans."

Manhattan U.S. Attorney PREET BHARARA said: "As the evidence at trial showed, Viktor Bout was ready to sell a weapons arsenal that would be the envy of some small countries. He aimed to sell those weapons to terrorists for the purpose of killing Americans. With today's swift verdict, justice has been done and a very dangerous man will be behind bars. I would like to acknowledge the extraordinary efforts of the Drug Enforcement Administration agents who investigated this case on three different continents and helped to bring Viktor Bout to justice."

According to the Indictment and evidence presented at the trial:

Since the 1990s, BOUT has been an international weapons trafficker. As a result of his weapons trafficking activities in Liberia, the U.S. Office of Foreign Assets Control within the Department of Treasury placed him on the Specially Designated Nationals list in 2004. The

designation prohibits any transactions between BOUT and U.S. nationals, and freezes any of his assets that are within the jurisdiction of the United States.

Between November 2007 and March 2008, BOUT agreed to sell to the FARC millions of dollars' worth of weapons – including 800 surface-to-air missiles (“SAMs”), 30,000 AK-47 firearms, 10 million rounds of ammunition, five tons of C-4 plastic explosives, “ultralight” airplanes outfitted with grenade launchers, and unmanned aerial vehicles. BOUT agreed to sell the weapons to two confidential sources working with the DEA (the “CSs”), who represented that they were acquiring them for the FARC, with the specific understanding that the weapons were to be used to attack U.S. helicopters in Colombia.

During a covertly recorded meeting in Thailand on March 6, 2008, BOUT stated to the CSs that he could arrange to airdrop the arms to the FARC in Colombia, and offered to sell two cargo planes to the FARC that could be used for arms deliveries. He also provided a map of South America and asked the CSs to show him American radar locations in Colombia. BOUT said that he understood that the CSs wanted the arms to use against American personnel in Colombia, and advised that, “we have the same enemy,” referring to the United States. He also stated that the FARC’s fight against the United States was also his fight and that he had been “fighting the United States...for ten to fifteen years.” During the meeting, he also offered to provide people to train the FARC in the use of the arms.

The evidence presented at trial included a recording of the March 6, 2008 meeting between BOUT, the CSs, his former associate ANDREW SMULIAN, and others. SMULIAN was charged along with BOUT in the Government’s March 2008 Complaint and pled guilty in May 2008 to the four conspiracy counts of which BOUT was just convicted. SMULIAN cooperated with the Government and, along with the two CSs, provided testimony at the trial.

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BOUT faces a maximum sentence of life in prison on Counts One through Three, including a mandatory minimum sentence of 25 years in prison for Count Three. He faces a maximum sentence of 15 years in prison on Count Four.

BOUT is scheduled to be sentenced by Judge SCHEINDLIN on February 8, 2012.

Mr. BHARARA praised the investigative work of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration and thanked the Royal Thai Police. He also thanked the Romanian National Police, the Romanian Prosecutor’s Office Attached to the High Court of Cassation and Justice, the Korps Politie Curaçao of the Netherlands Antilles, and the Danish National Police Security Services for their cooperation, and thanked the U.S. Department of Justice’s Office of International Affairs.

This case is being handled by the Office’s Terrorism and International Narcotics Unit. Assistant U.S. Attorney’s ANJAN SAHNI and BRENDAN R. McGUIRE are in charge of the prosecution.