



*United States Attorney
Southern District of New York*

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**AAFIA SIDDIQUI INDICTED FOR ATTEMPTING TO KILL
UNITED STATES NATIONALS IN AFGHANISTAN
AND SIX ADDITIONAL CHARGES**

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced today the indictment of AAFIA SIDDIQUI on charges related to her attempted murder and assault of United States nationals and officers and employees. SIDDIQUI is scheduled to be arraigned on the Indictment on Thursday, September 4, 2008, at 11:30 a.m. by United States District Judge RICHARD M. BERMAN in the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York. According to the Indictment filed in Manhattan federal court:

On July 18, 2008, a team of United States servicemen and law enforcement officers, and others assisting them, attempted to interview AAFIA SIDDIQUI in Ghazni, Afghanistan, where she had been detained by local police the day before. The United States interview team included, among others: three officers and employees of the United States Army; two officers and employees of the Federal Bureau of Investigation; and two United States Army contract interpreters.

The interview of SIDDIQUI was to take place at an Afghan police compound in Ghazni. In a second-floor meeting room at the compound -- where SIDDIQUI was being held, unbeknownst to the United States interview team, unsecured, behind a curtain -- SIDDIQUI obtained one of the United States Army officer's M-4 rifle and attempted to fire it, and did fire it, at another United States Army officer and other members of United States interview team. SIDDIQUI repeatedly stated her intent and desire to kill Americans.

SIDDIQUI then assaulted one of the United States Army interpreters, as he attempted to obtain the M-4 rifle from her. SIDDIQUI subsequently assaulted one of the FBI agents and one of the United States Army officers, as they attempted to subdue her.

On the previous day, July 17, 2008, when SIDDIQUI was detained by Afghan authorities, a number of items were in her possession, including handwritten notes that referred to a "mass casualty attack" and that listed various locations in the United States, including Plum Island, the Empire State Building, the Statue of Liberty, Wall Street, and the Brooklyn Bridge. Other notes in SIDDIQUI's possession referred to the construction of "dirty bombs," and discussed various ways to attack "enemies," including by destroying reconnaissance drones, using underwater bombs, and using gliders. SIDDIQUI also possessed a computer thumb drive that contained correspondence referring to specific "cells," "attacks" by certain "cells," and "enemies." Other documents on the thumb drive discussed recruitment and training.

SIDDIQUI, a 36-year-old Pakistani woman, resided in the United States from in or about 1991 until June 2002, and obtained degrees from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Brandeis University. SIDDIQUI returned to the United States on December 25, 2002, and departed on January 2, 2003.

SIDDIQUI is charged in the Indictment with: (1) one count of attempting to kill United States nationals outside the United States; (2) one count of attempting to kill United States officers and employees; (3) one count of armed assault of United States officers and employees; (4) one count of using and carrying a firearm during and in relation to a crime of violence; and (5) three counts of assault of United States officers and employees. If convicted, SIDDIQUI faces a maximum sentence of: 20 years in prison on each of the attempted murder and armed assault charges; life in prison on the firearm charge; and eight years in prison on each of the remaining assault charges.

Mr. GARCIA praised the investigative work of the Joint Terrorism Task Force, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and New York City Police Department. He also expressed his gratitude to the United States Department of State for their assistance in the case.

Mr. GARCIA said that the investigation is continuing.

Assistant United States Attorney CHRISTOPHER L. LAVIGNE is in charge of the prosecution.

The charges and allegations contained in the Indictment are merely accusations and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

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