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**AAFIA SIDDIQUI SENTENCED IN MANHATTAN FEDERAL COURT
TO 86 YEARS FOR ATTEMPTING TO MURDER U.S. NATIONALS
IN AFGHANISTAN AND SIX ADDITIONAL CRIMES**

PREET BHARARA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced today that AAFIA SIDDIQUI was sentenced in Manhattan federal court to 86 years in prison for the attempted murder and assault of U.S. nationals and U.S. officers and employees in Afghanistan. SIDDIQUI was found guilty of all charges against her following a 14-day jury trial before U.S. District Judge RICHARD M. BERMAN in Manhattan federal court.

Manhattan U.S. Attorney PREET BHARARA stated: "As a unanimous jury found beyond a reasonable doubt, Aafia Siddiqui attempted to murder Americans serving in Afghanistan, as well as their Afghan colleagues. She now faces the stiff consequences of her violent actions. We commend the New York Joint Terrorism Task Force and other law enforcement and military personnel for their tremendous work investigating this case here and abroad."

According to the Indictment filed in Manhattan federal court, evidence presented at trial, and statements made at the sentencing proceeding:

On July 17, 2008, SIDDIQUI was detained by Afghan authorities, who found a number of items 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 deploying gliders.

The next day, on July 18, 2008, a team of U.S. servicemen and law enforcement officers, and others assisting

them, attempted to interview SIDDIQUI in Ghazni, Afghanistan, where she had been detained by local police the day before. The U.S. interview team included, among others: three officers and employees of the U.S. Army; two officers and employees of the Federal Bureau of Investigation; and two U.S. 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 U.S. interview team, unsecured, behind a curtain -- SIDDIQUI grabbed a U.S. Army officer's M-4 rifle and fired it at another U.S. Army officer and other members of the U.S. interview team. During the shooting, SIDDIQUI exclaimed her intent and desire to kill Americans.

SIDDIQUI then assaulted one of the U.S. 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 U.S. Army officers, as they attempted to subdue her.

The evidence at trial showed that, while a student in Boston, Massachusetts, SIDDIQUI had undertaken training and instruction on the handling and shooting of firearms.

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On August 4, 2008, SIDDIQUI, 38, was brought from Afghanistan to Manhattan federal court to face a criminal indictment obtained by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York. Trial began on January 13, 2010, and concluded on February 3, 2010, with the jury reaching a guilty verdict on all counts. Specifically, the jury convicted SIDDIQUI of the following crimes: (1) one count of attempting to kill U.S. nationals outside the United States; (2) one count of attempting to kill U.S. officers and employees; (3) one count of armed assault of U.S. 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 U.S. officers and employees.

Mr. BHARARA praised the investigative work of the New York Joint Terrorism Task Force -- which principally consists of agents of the FBI and detectives of the New York City Police Department. He also expressed his gratitude to the U.S. Department of Justice's National Security Division and the U.S. Department of State for their assistance in the case.

This case is being handled by the Office's Terrorism and International Narcotics Unit. Assistant U.S. Attorneys CHRISTOPHER L. LAVIGNE, DAVID M. RODY, and JENNA M. DABBS are in charge of the prosecution.

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