



Department of Justice

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Nigerian National Extradited for Defrauding Elderly Victims and Money Laundering

LEXINGTON, Ky. - A Nigerian national, Adedunmola Gbadegesin, has been extradited to the United States, on charges of conspiracy to commit wire fraud and conspiring to commit money laundering, stemming from the financial exploitation of elderly victims in the United States.

According to a recently unsealed Court documents, a federal grand jury in Lexington returned an indictment charging Adedunmola Gbadegesin, 33, of Lagos, Nigeria, alongside two others, Olatunbosun Oluwakayode Ajayi, 34, of Atlanta Georgia, and Otunuya Ineh Eqwem Livingstone, 45, of Houston Texas, with conspiracy to commit money laundering.

The indictment alleges that Gbadegesin and his co-conspirators collaborated to create fake online dating profiles, to post to online dating websites. As part of the alleged conspiracy, the co-conspirators would engage in online chats, emails, and telephone calls with unwitting victims, who were located in the United States, including one in Lexington. The indictment alleges that as part of the conspiracy, the co-conspirators would convince the victims to send money to the nonexistent romantic partners or give them access to their financial accounts, so the co-conspirators could initiate money transfers themselves.

The indictment also alleges that Gbadegesin hired others in the U.S. to receive funds from victims and to launder those funds, so the funds could be returned back to Gbadegesin in Nigeria. Those United States-based money launderers included Ineh Eqwem, Ajayi, and Ismaila Fafunmi.

Fafunmi pleaded guilty to his role in the money laundering scheme; and in August 2021, he received 51 months in prison. Ineh Eqwem and Ajayi have also pleaded guilty for their roles in the money laundering scheme; they were sentenced to 24 months and 12 months, respectively.

Gbadegesin was arrested by Nigerian authorities on Sept. 22, 2021, in Lagos, Nigeria at the request of the United States. At the time of his arrest, Gbadegesein had been residing in Lagos, Nigeria. Nigeria approved his extradition on March 21, 2021, and he was transferred into U.S. custody on April 26, 2022.

Carlton S. Shier, IV, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky, and Jodi

Cohen, Special Agent in Charge, FBI, Louisville Field Office, jointly announced the indictment.

The investigation preceding the indictment was conducted by the FBI. The indictment was presented to the grand jury by Assistant U.S. Attorney Kate Dieruf. The U.S. Department of Justice's Office of International Affairs, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission of Nigeria, the Nigerian Attorney General's Office, the Central Authority Unity, and the FBI Louisville Field Office assisted with the extradition of Gbadgesin.

Gbadegesin has his first appearance in Court on May 2, 2022 at 11:30 a.m. He faces up to 20 years in prison and a maximum fine of \$500,000. However, any sentence following a conviction would be imposed by the Court, after its consideration of the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and the federal sentencing statutes.

This case is being prosecuted as part of the Department of Justice's efforts to identify and prosecute those persons who facilitate elder financial exploitation.

The Department of Justice's Elder Justice Mission, being carried out through the Kentucky Elder Justice Task Force, is to seek justice for victims of elder financial exploitation. Anyone that knows someone, who may be a victim of an elder financial exploitation, is encouraged to contact law enforcement.

Any indictment is an accusation only. A defendant is presumed innocent and is entitled to a fair trial at which government must prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

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