

EXH-6

12 January 2013 - Media release

**US fugitive and former Bout associate Chichakli arrest in Australia assisted by INTERPOL**

LYON, France – Richard Ammar Chichakli, an alleged associate of arms dealer Viktor Bout and subject of an INTERPOL Red Notice issued at the request of US authorities for a range of offences including money laundering, fraud and conspiring to violate economic sanctions, has been arrested in Australia.

Chichakli, a US – Syrian citizen, is alleged to have conspired with Bout to violate the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) by attempting to purchase two aircraft from companies located in the US. Chichakli is also subject to United Nations Security Council sanctions and on the Travel ban and Assets freeze list as associated with an entity providing financial or military support to armed rebel groups in Liberia or countries in the region.

Chichakli was arrested after a security checks as part of a job application with an Australian government agency, revealed a positive match with details included in an INTERPOL Red Notice, or international wanted persons alert, issued at the request of US authorities in 2012.

US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Administrator Michele Leonhart said, "The international law enforcement community has long recognized Richard Chichakli as a key criminal facilitator in Viktor Bout's global weapons trafficking regime and his arrest means the world is safer and more secure."

Manhattan US Attorney Preet Bharara praised the outstanding investigative efforts of the DEA and thanked the Australian Federal Police, the Victoria State Police, the Australian Attorney General's Department, the US Department of Justice Office of International Affairs, the US Department of State and INTERPOL for their assistance in this matter.

"As alleged, Richard Ammar Chichakli consorted with the world's most notorious arms trafficker in the purchase of aircraft that would be used to transport weapons to some of the world's bloodiest conflict zones, in violation of international sanctions. Thanks to the cooperative efforts of all of our law enforcement partners, both here and abroad, Chichakli has finally been apprehended and will now face justice," said Mr Bharara.

INTERPOL Secretary General Ronald K. Noble said the case once again underlined the added value brought to countries through the issue of INTERPOL Red Notices.

"INTERPOL Washington's request for a Red Notice to be issued for Chichakli ensure that the global law enforcement community was alerted to Chichakli's wanted status, and the Australian authorities could identify and arrest him, working with their American counterparts and INTERPOL's Fugitive Investigative Support unit at the General Secretariat headquarters," said the INTERPOL Chief.

Head of Australia's INTERPOL National Central Bureau (NCB), Australian Federal Police Commander Fiona Drennan, and head of NCB Washington Shawn Bray commended the significant cooperation between NCBs Canberra and Washington and the FIS unit leading to Thursday's arrest of Richard Chichakli.

"Cooperation between INTERPOL member countries and effective use of the international tools available is essential to ensure the safety of the community and bring criminals to justice," said Commander Drennan.

Chichakli is charged with nine separate offences; conspiracy to violate the IEEPA; money laundering conspiracy; wire fraud conspiracy; and six counts of wire fraud, and if convicted faces a maximum sentence of 20 years on each of the counts.

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