



*United States Attorney  
Southern District of New York*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**SOMALIAN PIRATE BROUGHT TO U.S. TO FACE CHARGES**  
**FOR HIJACKING THE MAERSK ALABAMA AND**  
**HOLDING THE SHIP'S CAPTAIN HOSTAGE**

LEV L. DASSIN, the Acting United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, JOSEPH M. DEMAREST, JR., the Assistant-Director-in-Charge of the New York Field Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI"), and RAYMOND W. KELLY, the Police Commissioner for the City of New York, announced the arrival late yesterday of ABDUWALI ABDUKHADIR MUSE to face charges stemming from his alleged participation in the April 8, 2009, hijacking of the Maersk Alabama container ship in the Indian Ocean, and the subsequent taking of the captain of the ship as a hostage.

MUSE was taken into custody by the United States Navy on April 12, 2009, while at sea in the Indian Ocean. On the same day, the United States Navy rescued the captain of the Maersk Alabama from a life boat in the Indian Ocean where he had been taken hostage by MUSE and three other men. On April 19, 2009, MUSE was transferred from the custody of the United States Navy to the FBI for transport to the Southern District of New York. According to the criminal Complaint filed today in Manhattan federal court:

On April 8, 2009, in the Indian Ocean off the coast of Somalia, MUSE and three other pirates boarded the Maersk Alabama

container ship, after shooting at the ship from their own boat. Each of the four pirates boarded the Maersk Alabama armed with a gun. The Maersk Alabama is a United States-flagged container ship, and all of the crew members, including the captain, were United States citizens. Once on board the Maersk Alabama, MUSE, who conducted himself as the leader of the pirates, demanded, among other things, that the ship be stopped. Several hours after boarding the Maersk Alabama, the pirates took a life boat from the ship, on which they held the captain of the ship as a hostage.

MUSE and the other three pirates held the captain hostage on the life boat from April 8 to April 12, 2009. During this period, in radio communications between the pirates and the United States Navy, the pirates threatened to kill the captain if they were not provided with safe passage away from the scene. On April 12, 2009, MUSE requested and was permitted to board the USS Bainbridge, a United States Navy missile destroyer that had arrived on the scene. On the USS Bainbridge, MUSE continued to demand for himself and the other pirates safe passage from the scene in exchange for the captain's release. On April 12, 2009, MUSE was taken into custody by the United States Navy.

MUSE, who is over 18 years old, was presented in United States Magistrate Court and ordered detained. MUSE is charged with: (1) piracy under the law of nations; (2) conspiracy to seize a ship by force; (3) discharging a firearm, and aiding and abetting the discharge of a firearm, during and in relation to the conspiracy to seize a ship by force; (4) conspiracy to commit hostage taking; and (5) brandishing a firearm, and aiding and abetting the brandishing of a firearm, during and in relation to the conspiracy to commit hostage taking. The First Count carries a mandatory term of life imprisonment; the Second Count carries a maximum potential penalty of 20 years in prison; the Third Count carries a maximum potential penalty of life imprisonment; the Fourth Count carries a maximum potential penalty of life imprisonment; and the Fifth Count carries a maximum potential penalty of life imprisonment.

Mr. DASSIN praised the New York Joint Terrorism Task Force -- which principally consists of agents of the FBI and detectives of the New York City Police Department -- and the Naval Criminal Investigative Service for their extraordinary efforts in the investigation of this case. Mr. DASSIN also thanked the Counterterrorism Section of the Department of Justice, the Department of State, specifically the United States Embassy in Nairobi, Kenya, the FBI's Legal Attaché Office in

Nairobi, and the Department of Defense for their work in this case. Mr. DASSIN also expressed his gratitude to the Government of Kenya and Maersk Line, Limited, for their cooperation and assistance.

"An act of piracy against one nation is a crime against all nations. Pirates target ships and cargo, but threaten international commerce and human life," said Acting United States Attorney LEV L. DASSIN. "Today's charges demonstrate our commitment to hold pirates accountable for their crimes. Abduwali Abdukhadir Muse and his fellow pirates attacked an American crew and its American captain on a ship flying an American flag. Now, Muse has been brought to face justice in an American courtroom."

"Modern-day pirates bear little resemblance to the swashbuckling anti-heroes of popular fiction. The pirates who boarded the Maersk Alabama were armed hijackers who robbed the ship, threatened the crew and held the captain hostage at gunpoint," said FBI Assistant Director-in-Charge JOSEPH M. DEMAREST, JR. "The FBI joins our international law enforcement partners in our mutual goal of maintaining the rule of law on the high seas."

"The NYPD was proud to play a part with our federal partners in helping combat piracy on the high seas," said New York City Police Commissioner RAYMOND W. KELLY.

Assistant United States Attorneys MICHAEL FARBIARZ and BRENDAN R. McGUIRE are in charge of the prosecution.

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

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