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PRESS RELEASE

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Somali Sentenced to 25-Year Prison Term For Armed Piracy In Attack on Merchant Ship - He and Other Pirates Held the Vessel For 71 Days -

WASHINGTON - Jama Idle Ibrahim, a/k/a Jaamac Ciidle, was sentenced today to 25 years in prison for a violent act of piracy in the Gulf of Aden against a merchant vessel, the *M/V CEC Future*, that began in November 2008 and lasted for 71 days, until January 16, 2009.

Ibrahim, 39, of Somalia, pled guilty on September 8, 2010 to conspiracy to commit piracy under the law of nations and conspiracy to use a firearm during and in relation to a crime of violence. He received the maximum penalty of five years in prison for the piracy conspiracy charge and the maximum penalty of 20 years in prison for the firearm conspiracy charge.

U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. and James W. McJunkin, Assistant Director in Charge of the FBI's Washington Field Office, announced the sentence after Ibrahim's appearance before the Honorable Paul L. Friedman in U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia.

This represents the first conviction in the District of Columbia for a piracy related offense.

The act of piracy against the *M/V CEC Future* began on or about November 7, 2008. According to a statement of facts presented to the court, Ibrahim and other Somalis were armed with AK 47s, a rocket-propelled grenade, and handguns when they attacked and seized the vessel. The ship is owned by Clipper Group, a Danish company, and contained cargo belonging to a Texas-based company, McDermott International, Inc.

The pirates approached the merchant ship in high-speed boats, and fired their weapons at the vessel in order to accomplish the takeover. They held the vessel, cargo and 13 crew members for ransom and forced the crew to anchor in waters off the Somalia coast. During the takeover, additional pirates boarded the vessel, and the pirates threatened the crew and controlled their movements with their weapons. The pirates stole money, food and supplies from the ship.

The vessel finally was released on January 16, 2009, after Clipper Group delivered \$1.7 million in ransom to the pirates.

“Modern-day pirates are nothing like the swashbuckling heroes in Hollywood movies,” said U.S. Attorney Machen. “Today’s pirates are ruthless criminals who hold ships and their crews hostage with AK-47s and rocket-propelled grenades. Twenty-five years in prison is a just punishment for this attack that threatened international commerce and human life.”

“The FBI is charged with investigating attacks against U.S. citizens and U.S. interests, wherever in the world they occur,” said Assistant Director McJunkin. “Today’s sentencing demonstrates that the FBI is capable of conducting our investigations around the world through the help of our foreign law enforcement partners. This should serve as a warning to those who seek to attack American interests overseas regardless of your ideology or intent – you will be identified, located and brought to justice.”

The CEO of Clipper Group, Per Gullestrup, attended today’s sentencing. In a letter to Judge Friedman, he told the court of the importance of bringing pirates to justice and said that he was grateful that the case against Ibrahim was pursued in the United States legal system.

In November 2010, Ibrahim was sentenced to 30 years imprisonment in the Eastern District of Virginia following a guilty plea to charges stemming from an April 10, 2010, pirate attack on a U.S. Navy vessel, the USS Ashland, also in the Gulf of Aden. The sentence from the District of Columbia is to run concurrently with the sentence from Virginia.

In announcing today’s sentencing, U.S. Attorney Machen and Assistant Director McJunkin praised the work of the FBI’s Washington Field Office and the Joint Terrorism Task Force. They also commended Assistant U.S. Attorney Brenda J. Johnson from the U.S. Attorney’s Office, National Security Section, and Trial Attorney Jennifer E. Levy from the Counterterrorism Section of the Department of Justice’s National Security Division, who prosecuted the case.