

For Immediate Release

Contact: Lisa Cohen
(310) 395-2544 / lisa@lisacohen.org

Former Somali Army Commander LIVING IN VIRGINIA Found Liable for Torture during Country's Civil War

A jury in the Eastern District of Virginia finds Colonel Yusuf Abdi Ali (aka "Tukeh") liable for the torture of semi-nomadic Somali herder Farhan Warfaa

Alexandria, May 21, 2019 — Today, a Virginia jury found Col. Yusuf Abdi Ali (aka "Tukeh") responsible for the torture of semi-nomadic Somali herder Farhan Warfaa. Col. Tukeh was a high-ranking military commander in Siad Barre's decades-long military dictatorship in Somalia. The jury awarded Mr. Warfaa \$500,000 in damages, including \$100,000 in punitive damages. Mr. Warfaa was represented by the Center for Justice and Accountability (CJA) and the law firm of DLA Piper LLP.

Mr. Warfaa said, "It has been a long journey seeking justice for what happened to me and to my community. Today's verdict was a vindication not only for me, but also for many others in Somaliland who suffered under Col. Tukeh's command. I hope today's outcome contributes to our continued healing."

CJA's lead counsel at trial, Kathy Roberts, said: "The evidence we developed through this case has confirmed the truth about crimes perpetrated by the Siad Barre regime against members of the Isaaq community during the Somali civil war. Our client Farhan's strength and perseverance is a testament to all those who seek truth, justice and accountability."

Over the course of a three-day trial, the jury heard evidence that early one morning in 1987, Mr. Warfaa was rounded up with other men from his village and taken to the Military Headquarters of the Fifth Brigade of the Somali National Army, where Col. Tukeh held command. Mr. Warfaa testified that Col. Tukeh's soldiers tortured and interrogated him, and that Col. Tukeh himself shot Mr. Warfaa multiple times at point blank range, leaving him for dead. Miraculously, he survived. Over thirty years after that ordeal, Mr. Warfaa faced Col. Tukeh in a federal courtroom, and prevailed.

Evidence presented at trial included eyewitness testimony from former officers of the Somali National Army and other survivors of Somali National Army abuses, and expert testimony from former U.S. Special Envoy to Somalia, Ambassador Robert Gosende and medical experts, Dr. Allen S. Keller and Professor Daryn Reicherter.

DLA Piper attorney Louis Ramos said: "Perpetrators of human rights crimes should be held to account, no matter how long it takes. We are pleased to have partnered with CJA to help Mr. Warfaa, after 31 years, finally obtain justice."

About the Center for Justice and Accountability

CJA is a San Francisco-based international human rights organization. CJA's mission is to deter torture, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other severe human rights abuses around the world through innovative litigation, policy, and transitional justice strategies. CJA partners with victims and survivors in pursuit of truth, justice, and redress. For more information, visit www.cja.org.

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