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PRESS RELEASE

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Singapore Man Sentenced to 40 Months in Prison For Plot Involving Exports to Iran of U.S. Components Some Were Later Found in Bombs in Iraq

WASHINGTON – Lim Yong Nam, aka Steven Lim, 43, a citizen of Singapore, was sentenced today to 40 months in prison for his role in a conspiracy that caused thousands of radio frequency modules to be illegally exported from the U.S. to Iran, at least 14 of which were later found in unexploded improvised explosive devices (IEDs) in Iraq.

The announcement was made by Acting Assistant Attorney General for National Security Mary B. McCord, U.S. Attorney Channing D. Phillips of the District of Columbia, Acting Assistant Secretary of Export Enforcement Richard Majauskas of the U.S. Department of Commerce, Acting Director Thomas D. Homan of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and Assistant Director Bill Priestap of the FBI's Counterintelligence Division. The sentence was issued by the Honorable Emmet G. Sullivan.

Lim was extradited in 2016 from Indonesia, where he had been detained since October 2014 in connection with the U.S. request for extradition. He pleaded guilty on Dec. 15, 2016, to a charge of conspiracy to defraud the U.S. by dishonest means. Lim will be deported upon completion of his sentence.

Lim and others were indicted in the District of Columbia in June of 2010 on charges involving the shipment of radio frequency modules made by a Minnesota-based company. The modules have several commercial applications, including in wireless local area networks connecting printers and computers in office settings. These modules include encryption capabilities and have a range allowing them to transmit data wirelessly as far as 40 miles when configured with a high-gain antenna. These same modules also have potentially lethal applications. Notably, during 2008 and 2009, coalition forces in Iraq recovered numerous modules made by the Minnesota firm that had been utilized as part of the remote detonation

system for IEDs. According to the plea documents filed in the case, between 2001 and 2007, IEDs were the major source of American combat casualties in Iraq.

In a statement of offense submitted at the time of the guilty plea, Lim admitted that between August 2007 and February 2008, he and others caused 6,000 modules to be purchased and illegally exported from the Minnesota-based company through Singapore, and later to Iran, in five shipments, knowing that the export of U.S.-origin goods to Iran was a violation of U.S. law. In each transaction, Lim and others made misrepresentations and false statements to the Minnesota firm that Singapore was the final destination of the goods; at no point in the series of transactions did Lim or any of his co-conspirators inform the company that the modules were destined for Iran. Similarly, according to the statement of offense, Lim and others caused false documents to be filed with the U.S. government, in which they claimed that Singapore was the ultimate destination of the modules. Lim and his co-conspirators were directly aware of the restrictions on sending U.S.-origin goods to Iran.

Shortly after the modules arrived in Singapore, they were kept in storage at a freight forwarding company until being aggregated with other electronic components and shipped to Iran. There is no indication that Lim or any of his co-conspirators ever took physical possession of these modules before they reached Iran or that they were incorporated into another product before being re-exported to Iran.

According to the statement of offense, 14 of the 6,000 modules the defendants routed from Minnesota to Iran were later recovered in Iraq, where the modules were being used as part of IED remote detonation systems.

This investigation was jointly conducted by ICE Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) special agents in Boston and Los Angeles; FBI agents in Minneapolis; and Department of Commerce, Bureau of Industry and Security agents in Chicago and Boston. Substantial assistance was provided by the U.S. Department of Defense, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the State Department's Directorate of Defense Trade Controls, the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control, and the Office of International Affairs in the Justice Department's Criminal Division, particularly the Justice Department Attaché in the Philippines, as well as the FBI and HSI Attachés in Singapore and Jakarta.

U.S. law enforcement authorities thanked the governments of Singapore and Indonesia for the substantial assistance that was provided in the investigation of this matter.

The prosecution was handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney Ari Redbord of the District of Columbia and Trial Attorney Julie Edelstein of the National Security Division's Counterintelligence and Export Control Section.