

Beat: News

KC Man Pleads Guilty to \$10 Million Conspiracy to Distribute 1,000 Kilos of Meth

Faces at Least 25 Years in Prison

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USPA NEWS - A Kansas City, Mo., man pleaded guilty in federal court today to being the leader of a nearly \$10 million conspiracy to distribute almost 1,000 kilograms of methamphetamine.

Mirza Alihodzic, 36, pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Greg Kays to participating in a conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine.

By pleading guilty today, Alihodzic acknowledged that he was responsible for the distribution of at least 45 kilograms of methamphetamine during the conspiracy, which lasted from Sept. 1, 2018, to Nov. 5, 2019.

On Feb. 19, 2019, law enforcement officers executed a search warrant at Alihodzic's residence. Officers seized 5.5 grams of methamphetamine, two firearms, and \$1,620 in cash from the residence. Officers also seized 18 firearms from Alihodzic's BMW, including a Sten 9mm machine gun, two short-barreled shotguns (a Mossberg 20-gauge and a Revelation 16-gauge) and a stolen Sig Sauer 9mm handgun.

Alihodzic sold large amounts of methamphetamine to two separate confidential law enforcement sources in March and April 2019. In October 2019, Alihodzic contacted another confidential law enforcement source to make arrangements to travel by plane to California to pick up 40 kilograms of methamphetamine. The methamphetamine would later be sold in the Kansas City area.

On Nov. 4, 2019, Alihodzic met at his residence with the confidential source to discuss details of the plan for the source to pilot an aircraft from the Kansas City area to an unknown location in southern California. While inside Alihodzic's residence, the source observed multiple firearms, including a gold-plated AK47, an M16-style rifle and several pistols. Alihodzic said he would be taking the firearms with them to the people they were meeting in California.

The next day, the confidential source arrived at Alihodzic's residence to pick him up and take him to the Lee's Summit Municipal Airport. Alihodzic placed a large red bag into the back of the black Dodge Ram 1500 4x4 pick-up truck. They drove to a Denny's parking lot, where they met co-conspirator Michael B. Becher, 40, of Raytown, Mo., then returned to the residence. While they were sitting in the pick-up truck, Alihodzic talked to the confidential source about trust. Alihodzic had a device the source described as a "debugger." Alihodzic was using the debugger to see if the source was being truthful. Alihodzic casually took a pistol from the area of his waist and displayed it on his lap in a threatening manner. Alihodzic got out of the vehicle, and when he returned a few minutes later, he handed a pistol to the source and told him/her to come inside the residence. Officers then entered the residence and arrested Alihodzic, Becher, and others.

Officers searched the red bag Alihodzic had placed in the back of the pick-up truck, and found a Springfield 9mm semi-automatic handgun, a Smith & Wesson .40-caliber semi-automatic handgun, a Bushmaster 5.56 semi-automatic rifle with an obliterated serial number, and a gold-painted Norinco 7.62x39mm semi-automatic rifle, which had been reported as stolen during a burglary in Independence, Mo.

Alihodzic is among 17 defendants who have pleaded guilty in two separate indictments that resulted from this investigation. Becher pleaded guilty to his role in the drug-trafficking conspiracy on April 13, 2022.

Under the terms of today's plea agreement, the government and Alihodzic agree to a sentence of at least 25 years in federal prison without parole, up to a sentence of 35 years in federal prison without parole. Alihodzic must also pay a money judgment not to exceed \$9,961,839, representing all of the proceeds obtained as a result of the drug-trafficking conspiracy. The forfeiture is based on a conservative street price of \$2,300 for 226 grams (a half-pound) of methamphetamine and the total conspiracy distribution of nearly 979 kilograms (978,859 grams) of methamphetamine. The sentencing of the defendant will be determined by the court based on the advisory sentencing guidelines and other statutory factors. A sentencing hearing will be scheduled after the completion of a presentence investigation by the United States Probation Office.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Bradley K. Kavanaugh and Sean T. Foley, and Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Stephanie Bradshaw. It was investigated by the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department, the FBI, the Missouri State Highway Patrol, and the Mid-Missouri Drug Task Force.

Project Safe Neighborhoods

The U.S. Attorney's Office is partnering with federal, state, and local law enforcement to specifically identify criminals responsible for significant violent crime in the Western District of Missouri. A centerpiece of this effort is Project Safe Neighborhoods, a program that brings together all levels of law enforcement to reduce violent crime and make neighborhoods safer for everyone. Project Safe Neighborhoods is an evidence-based program that identifies the most pressing violent crime problems in the community and develops comprehensive solutions to address them. As part of this strategy, Project Safe Neighborhoods focuses enforcement efforts on the most violent offenders and partners with locally based prevention and reentry programs for lasting reductions in crime.

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Wendy writes for the United States Press Agency and is a former columnist with the Fulton County Expositor, Wauseon, Ohio.

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