

**PRESS RELEASE**

# **Fugitive defendant who fled during trial convicted by federal jury for laundering millions of dollars stolen from fraud victims throughout the U.S.**

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**For Immediate Release**

U.S. Attorney's Office, Northern District of Georgia

ATLANTA – Following a nine-day trial, Ahomefule Aso Odus has been convicted by a federal jury on 12 counts of money laundering stemming from his role in a massive money laundering operation. Odus fled after testifying during his trial and is currently a fugitive.

“Odus and his co-conspirators laundered millions of dollars stolen from companies and individuals throughout the United States and abroad,” said U.S. Attorney Ryan K. Buchanan. “Although Odus is on the run, he cannot and will not evade justice for his crimes. We will continue to devote our office’s time and resources to uncovering these kinds of complex schemes and holding accountable those individuals who perpetrate them.”

“As the only defendant in “Operation Five Fingers” who refused to take a plea and elected to go to trial, this swift jury conviction proves the massive amount of evidence that law enforcement had of Odus and his coconspirators crimes,” said Keri Farley, Special Agent in Charge of FBI Atlanta. “No matter how elaborate or complicated the fraud scheme, the FBI and our federal partners will continue to uncover and unravel them to protect American citizens and businesses.”

“Ahomefule Aso Odus Jr. facilitated the theft of retirement plan assets by knowingly receiving fraudulently obtained funds from an individual’s ERISA covered retirement

account into his business bank account. We will continue to work with our law enforcement partners and the U.S. Department of Labor's, Employee Benefits Security Administration to protect the integrity of employee benefit plans," said Mathew Broadhurst, Special Agent-in-Charge, Southeast Region, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General.

According to U.S. Attorney Buchanan, the charges and other information presented in court: Ahamfule Aso Odus and his co-conspirators acted as money launderers for unknown fraudsters who scammed unsuspecting individuals and companies out of millions of dollars. Members of the conspiracy, including Odus, created sham companies and registered them with the Georgia Secretary of State. Those companies did not maintain a physical place to conduct business, did not earn legitimate income, and did not pay wages to employees. Instead, the conspirators used these sham companies to open bank accounts and then funnel fraud money through the accounts.

Upon receipt of the fraud proceeds, Odus and his co-conspirators quickly converted the money to their own use, and to the use of their criminal associates, through wire transfers, over-the-counter cash withdrawals, and the purchase of cashier's checks. This conduct involved monetary transactions of more than \$10,000 that were designed to conceal and disguise the nature, location, source, ownership, and control of these fraudulent proceeds.

Odus is one of 41 people originally charged in four related fraud and money laundering cases, known collectively as "Operation Five Fingers." Together, members of this criminal organization laundered more than \$30 million in fraud proceeds from victims of computer-enabled scams, including business email compromise schemes, romance fraud schemes, and retirement account takeover schemes.

To date, 39 of the 41 "Operation Five Fingers" defendants have been convicted. Twenty-five of the defendants have been sentenced, with sentences ranging from six months to eight years of incarceration. Charges against one defendant were dismissed after he died while he was a fugitive, and one defendant is scheduled to enter a guilty plea on March 10, 2023.

On January 30, 2023, a jury convicted Odus on one count of conspiracy to commit money laundering and three counts of concealment money laundering. The jury also convicted him of eight counts of transactional money laundering. In a bifurcated proceeding after the verdict, the jury forfeited \$73,896 that had been seized from Odus.

Sentencing for Ahamfule Aso Odus, 30, of Atlanta, Georgia, is scheduled for May 9, 2023, at 9:30 a.m. before U.S. District Judge William M. Ray II.

This case was investigated by the Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the United States Secret Service, and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations under the auspices of the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) program—the keystone drug, money laundering, and transnational organized crime enforcement program of the Department of Justice. The investigating agencies received considerable assistance from numerous federal, state, and local law enforcement authorities throughout the investigation.

Assistant U.S. Attorneys Kelly K. Connors and Russell Phillips are prosecuting the case.

For further information please contact the U.S. Attorney's Public Affairs Office at [USAGAN.PressEmails@usdoj.gov](mailto:USAGAN.PressEmails@usdoj.gov) or (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is <http://www.justice.gov/usao-ndga>.

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