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**FOREIGN NATIONAL SENTENCED TO ALMOST FOUR YEARS IN FEDERAL PRISON  
FOR \$1.5 MILLION FRAUD SCHEME**

*Conspirators Opened Fraudulent Bank Accounts to Receive Money Obtained from Victims of  
Business Email Compromise Scheme and Romance Fraud Schemes*

**Baltimore**, Maryland – U.S. District Judge Stephanie A. Gallagher sentenced Nigerian citizen, Akolade Ojo, age 31, of Owings Mills, Maryland, yesterday to 46 months in federal prison, followed by three years of supervised release, for conspiracy to commit wire fraud. Judge Gallagher also ordered Ojo to pay \$1,320,186.19 in restitution. The charges stemmed from fraud schemes in which Ojo communicated with his co-conspirators about the receipt of money from victims into bank accounts controlled by the conspirators and instructed conspirators about withdrawals, transfers, and purchases of cashier’s checks using the fraudulently obtained funds.

The sentence was announced by United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Erek L. Barron; Special Agent in Charge James C. Harris of Homeland Security Investigations (“HSI”) Baltimore; Special Agent in Charge Karen L. Brown Cleveland of the U.S. Department of State, Diplomatic Security Service (“DSS”), Washington Field Office; Acting Special Agent in Charge Troy W. Springer, of the National Capital Region of the U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Inspector General (“DOL-OIG”); and Postal Inspector in Charge Damon E. Wood of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service – Washington Division.

According to Ojo’s plea agreement and other court documents, from August 2018 to November 2020, Ojo and his co-conspirators, some of whom were located outside the United States, defrauded multiple businesses, individuals, and financial institutions. As part of the fraud schemes, Ojo’s co-conspirators obtained fake passports and other identification documents, in multiple aliases, created and used limited liability companies to further hide their identities, and opened bank accounts in the names on the identification documents or the limited liability companies. Other conspirators made false representations to companies and individuals to induce them to fraudulently send money to the bank accounts controlled by the conspirators. These false representations included hacking into email accounts to impersonate individuals and redirect legitimate payments for services and products; deceiving victims about how to pay a vendor’s legitimate invoice through look-alike email addresses; and romance frauds.

Ojo and other co-conspirators used an encrypted messaging app to communicate the timing of financial transactions, including directing members of the conspiracy regarding the deposit, withdrawal, transfer, and conversion of fraudulently obtained funds. Ojo admitted that he was

involved in numerous financial transactions in which money was directed to aliases that were being used by his co-conspirators and that he personally benefitted from the money obtained by the fraud. Ojo knew that the fraud schemes involved more than 15 business and individual victims with losses of at least \$1.5 million.

Ojo is the final defendant charged in the conspiracy to be sentenced. In May 2022, co-defendant Idowu Raji, age 40, of Baltimore County, Maryland, was sentenced to 94 months in federal prison for this and a related case. Hameed Adesokan, age 35, of New Jersey, and Damilola Lawal, a/k/a DML, D Baba, and Dami, age 32, of Windsor Mill, Maryland, were each sentenced to 46 months in federal prison, for their roles in the fraud scheme. Adewumi Abioye, age 35, of Randallstown, Maryland; and Lukman Salam, age 37, of Bear, Delaware were sentenced to 27 months and 30 months in federal prison, respectively. Olatunde Vincent, age 35, of Pikesville, Maryland was sentenced to 50 months in prison for a related case.

United States Attorney Erik L. Barron commended HSI, the DSS, the DOL-OIG, and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service for their work in the investigation. Mr. Barron thanked Assistant U.S. Attorney Harry M. Gruber, who prosecuted the case and Paralegal Joanna B.N. Huber, who assisted on the case.

For more information on the Maryland U.S. Attorney's Office, its priorities, and resources available to help the community, please visit <https://www.justice.gov/usao-md/report-fraud>.

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