



## PRESS RELEASE

# Justice Department Moves to Denaturalize 12 Individuals for Concealing Terrorist Support, War Crimes, Espionage, Sexual Abuse, and More

Friday, May 8, 2026

**For Immediate Release**

Office of Public Affairs

The Department of Justice announced today that it filed denaturalization actions in various U.S. district courts against 12 individuals accused of serious offenses — including providing material support to a terrorist group, committing war crimes, and sexually abusing a minor.

Under the Immigration and Nationality Act, a naturalized U.S. citizen’s citizenship may be revoked, and certificate of naturalization canceled, if the naturalization was illegally procured or procured by concealment of a material fact or by willful misrepresentation.

“Individuals implicated in committing fraud, heinous crimes such as sexual abuse, or expressing support for terrorism should never have been naturalized as United States citizens,” said Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche. “The Trump administration is taking action to correct these egregious violations of our immigration system. Those who intentionally concealed their criminal histories or misrepresented themselves during the naturalization process will face the fullest extent of the law.”

“This Department of Justice continues to file denaturalization actions at record speeds to restore integrity in our naturalization process,” said Assistant Attorney General Brett A. Shumate of the Justice Department’s Civil Division. “The disturbing criminal histories confirm these individuals should have never received the privilege of U.S. citizenship. We remain committed to leveraging every tool available under the law to pursue those who obtain their U.S. citizenship unlawfully.”

- 1. Ali Yousif Ahmed Al-Nouri (Age 48/Iraq):** On Friday, May 8, 2026, the U.S. Department of Justice and the United States Attorney for the District of Arizona filed a civil denaturalization complaint in the United States District Court in Phoenix, Arizona, against Ali Yousif Ahmed, a native of Iraq. Ahmed entered the United States in 2009 based on a claim that he and his family were attacked by Al-Qaeda terrorists in Iraq. In 2019, the Republic of Iraq requested that the United States extradite Ahmed to Iraq to face criminal charges for the premeditated murder of two Iraqi police officers in 2006. Iraq claims that Ahmed murdered the police officers as a leader in the Al-Qaeda terrorist organization. Upon further investigation, United States learned that, in 2015, Ahmed illegally procured his naturalization, which warrants his denaturalization, because he lied under oath about his criminal and family history when he sought admission to the United States and naturalized as a U.S. citizen.
- 2. Oscar Alberto Pelaez (Age 75/Colombia):** The United States has also brought a denaturalization action against Oscar Alberto Pelaez, a Colombian Roman Catholic priest, who, from 1998 to 2000, sexually abused a child on multiple occasions from the time that child was 14 until he was 17 years old. In 2002, Mr. Pelaez pleaded guilty to and was convicted of thirteen counts of sexual assault against a child, including two counts of oral copulation with a person under eighteen years of age, and two counts of sodomy of a person under eighteen years of age. Mr. Pelaez lied about the commission of these crimes in connection with his naturalization application. The United States has brought four claims against Mr. Pelaez seeking his denaturalization, including claims that he lacked the good moral character to become a U.S. citizen and that he knowingly lied to immigration authorities.
- 3. Khalid Ouazzani (Age 48/Morocco):** When Khalid Ouazzani, a native of Morocco, applied for U.S. citizenship in 2005 and again when he naturalized in 2006, he swore to his attachment to the principles of the Constitution of the United States. Those oaths were false because as early as 2003, Kahlid was planning – with two men later convicted of trying to bomb the New York Stock exchange – ways to support Al-Qaida. By 2007, just one year after he naturalized, he sent Al-Qaida tens of thousands of dollars in financial support with money that he had fraudulently obtained, and in 2008, he took an oath of allegiance to that terrorist organization. In May 2010, Ouazzani pleaded guilty to bank fraud, money laundering, and providing material support to Al-Qaida. The denaturalization complaint filed against Ouazzani alleges that he gave false testimony during his naturalization proceedings about his attachment to the Constitution and because his affiliation and membership with Al-Qaida within five years of his naturalization constitutes prima facie evidence that when he naturalized, he lacked the requisite attachment to the Constitution.
- 4. Salah Osman Ahmed (Age 43/Somalia):** Ahmed was not attached to the principles of the U.S. Constitution when he naturalized in 2007. Just months after he naturalized, Ahmed began providing material support to terrorists. Ahmed traveled to Somalia to fight and kill Ethiopians and joined the terrorist group al-Shabaab. On July 28, 2009, in the United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, he pleaded guilty to providing material support to terrorists, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 2339A(a). Ahmed joined al-Shabaab, and his membership of, or affiliation with al-Shabaab within five years of naturalization would have precluded him from citizenship. Ahmed procured his naturalization by concealment of material facts or willful misrepresentation, for joining al-Shabaab shortly after his naturalization.
- 5. Baboucarr Mboob (Age 58/Gambia):** On November 11, 1994, Baboucarr Mboob, a native of The Gambia, while serving as a military police officer in the Gambian army, participated, along with fifteen other soldiers, in the execution of six officers following the orders from his commanding officer who believed the victims were plotting a counter-coup against then President Yahya Jammeh – all without giving their victims the benefit of a trial. Mboob concealed his involvement in war crimes and acts of persecution throughout his immigration and naturalization proceedings after entering the United States 2002, naturalizing as a U.S. citizen in 2011. But, in testimony before a hearing of The Gambian Truth, Reconciliation, and Reparations Commission (TRRC) held on April 9, 2019, Mr. Mboob admitted

to executing his six fellow officers. The United States is seeking to revoke his certificate of naturalization because he obtained his U.S. citizenship illegally by concealing material fact and willfully misrepresented his military background.

6. **Kevin Robin Suarez (Age 31/Bolivia)**: Beginning in May 2016, and continuing for ten months after his January 2017 naturalization, Kevin Robin Suarez engaged in a conspiracy to purchase firearms through straw purchasers for the eventual exportation of the firearms to Bolivia and other Latin American countries. Working with his sister, Suarez solicited individuals to purchase firearms on their behalf from licensed federal firearms dealers and provided those firearms to Suarez's father. These firearms were part of a larger network of gun trafficking from South Florida to Bolivia by Bolivian nationals in the United States. Once in Bolivia, the guns were often sent to drug trafficking organizations in Brazil, Paraguay, and Peru, fueling drug violence there. Suarez pled guilty to conspiracy to cause false statements to be made to federally-licensed firearms dealers, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 371 and 18 U.S.C. § 924(a)(1)(A), in February 2020. Suarez illegally procured his naturalization as a United States citizen because his crime precluded the required good moral character to naturalize. Also, SUAREZ falsely testified under oath and misrepresented and concealed facts that were material to determining his naturalization eligibility.
7. **Abduvosit Razikov (Age 46/Uzbekistan)**: In 2005, Abduvosit Razikov, a native of Uzbekistan, paid a U.S. citizen to enter into a sham marriage with him so that he could procure permanent residency in the United States. Then, in 2007, Razikov paid another U.S. citizen to enter into a sham marriage with Razikov's actual romantic partner so she could enter the United States from Uzbekistan. In 2010, Razikov divorced his U.S. citizen "wife," and in 2012, he naturalized. Months later, Razikov engaged in a third sham marriage, this time marrying another Uzbekistani woman (not his own romantic partner) so she could obtain immigration benefits. The denaturalization complaint filed against Razikov alleges that he never lawfully acquired the permanent resident status required to naturalize because of his sham marriage and immigration fraud, that his unlawful acts and false testimony about those acts precluded him from establishing the good moral character required for naturalization, and that he obtained his naturalization by concealment or willful misrepresentation of material facts.
8. **Abdallah Osman Sheikh (Age 28/Kenya)**: Abdallah Osman Sheikh, a resident of Fairdale, Kentucky, unlawfully procured his naturalization and obtained his naturalization by concealment of a material fact or by willful misrepresentation. Specifically, in July 2019, before he naturalized, but while he was in the Marines, Sheikh possessed indecent digital images of two minor individuals and posted an indecent digital image of one of them to his social media account. Those crimes and his efforts to hide those crimes from the government throughout his naturalization proceedings warrant Sheikh's denaturalization pursuant to 8 U.S.C. § 1451(a). In addition, Sheikh naturalized based on his military service, but received an other than honorable discharge (for misconduct) from the U.S. Marines after failing to serve honorably for five years, warranting his denaturalization under 8 U.S.C. § 1440(c).
9. **Debashis Ghosh (Age 62/India)**: Before Debashis Ghosh naturalized, he conspired to defraud investors of \$2.5 million intended for the construction of an aircraft maintenance facility. After naturalizing, Ghosh, a native of India, continued the fraudulent scheme, misrepresenting the location and safekeeping of the investor funding. But in his 2012 naturalization application and interview, Ghosh claimed that he had never committed a crime or offense for which he had not been arrested. The denaturalization complaint against Ghosh alleges that he is subject to denaturalization because during the period in which he was statutorily required to demonstrate good moral character, he committed a crime involving moral turpitude, committed unlawful acts that adversely reflected on his moral character, and falsely testified about his crime. Additionally, Ghosh willfully misrepresented the material fact of his crime during his naturalization proceedings.

10. **Pin He (Age 53/China)**: After he was ordered removed under the name Chun Di He in 1992, Pin He applied for an immigration benefit the very next year under a different identity. That application was granted, and in 2007, Mr. He obtained permanent residence. In 2013, Defendant naturalized under the identity and immigration history of Pin He, without ever disclosing his prior removal order under the Chun Di He. Because Mr. He obtained his citizenship after concealing his prior identity and misrepresenting his eligibility for citizenship, the United States is seeking to revoke his certificate of naturalization.
11. **George Oyakhire (Age 66/Nigeria)**: Mr. Oyakhire naturalized under a false identity. Mr. Oyakhire, who was born in Nigeria, first entered the United States on October 18, 1986, using a visa issued in his true name, George Ofuan Oyakhire. Approximately two years later, on September 2, 1988, Mr. Oyakhire obtained temporary resident status using a false name, “Oliver Bennett Oyakhire,” and a false date of birth. On December 1, 1990, Mr. Oyakhire adjusted his status to that of a lawful permanent resident using the false Oliver Bennett Oyakhire identity. On September 12, 1995, again using the false Oliver Bennett Oyakhire identity, Mr. Oyakhire filed an application for naturalization, which was approved on March 22, 1996. On April 22, 1996, Mr. Oyakhire became a naturalized citizen, under the false name Oliver Bennett Oyakhire.
12. **Victor Manuel Rocha (Age 75/Colombia)**: Mr. Rocha is a native of Colombia who was convicted of serving as an unregistered agent for the Republic of Cuba. The U.S. seeks an order revoking Rocha’s naturalization based on his admission in criminal proceedings that he began spying for Cuba in 1973 before he naturalized in 1978. When he applied for naturalization, Rocha represented under penalty of perjury that he had not committed crimes for which he had not been arrested; he was not affiliated with the Communist Party of Cuba; he had not advocated, believed in, or knowingly supported and furthered the interests of Communism; and he believed in the U.S. Constitution and the form of government of the U.S. None of these were true.

These cases were prosecuted by the Justice Department’s Office of Immigration Litigation, Affirmative Litigation Unit, with assistance from USCIS, and the U.S. Attorney’s Offices for the District of Arizona, Southern District of Florida, Eastern District of California, District of Minnesota, Middle District of Florida, Western District of Kentucky, District of Columbia, Eastern District of Pennsylvania, Southern District of Iowa, and Northern District of Illinois.

*The claims made in the complaints are allegations only, and there has been no determination of liability.*

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## Components

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