

## **Press Release**

### **FAMILIES OF AMERICANS KILLED AND INJURED BY AL-QAEDA AND TALIBAN TERRORISTS SUE TEN MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS FOR FINANCING THE ATTACKS**

WASHINGTON (June 5, 2020) – An amended Anti-Terrorism Act lawsuit was filed today on behalf of hundreds of Americans, including members of more than 200 Gold Star families, against ten multinational corporations, that stand accused of supporting a campaign of terrorism in Afghanistan led by al-Qaeda and carried out by the Taliban. The Amended Complaint follows an extensive investigation by the Washington, D.C.-based law firms of Kellogg, Hansen, Todd, Figel & Frederick, PLLC, Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP, and Sparacino PLLC. The firms originally filed suit in December 2019.

In this Amended Complaint, 702 Americans, including dozens of veterans and members of 202 Gold Star families, allege Anti-Terrorism Act claims against ten multinational corporations – most of which are American – that have done business in Afghanistan. This Anti-Terrorism Act case accuses these corporations of knowingly or recklessly supporting a terrorist campaign that attacked, killed, and wounded thousands of Americans in Afghanistan.

The Amended Complaint alleges a longstanding scheme to maximize profits by providing “protection payments” to the very terrorists who were murdering American servicemembers. According to the Amended Complaint, some of the corporate defendants were hired by the U.S. Government to provide security; others were in Afghanistan to provide telecommunications, logistics, or other support services. The Amended Complaint alleges that what all the defendants had in common was the decision to pay off known terrorists so that their business interests would be protected. The allegations in the Amended Complaint show that these payments violated U.S. law and policy, and they fueled violence and corruption in direct opposition to the efforts of thousands of American military and civilian personnel.

The defendants being sued include certain parent companies and/or subsidiaries of Centerra Group, Environmental Chemical Corporation, G4S, DAI Global, Janus Global Operations, Black & Veatch Special Projects Corporation, the Louis Berger Group, MTN Group, Blumont, Inc., and Chemonics International, Inc.

The plaintiffs are Americans who were severely physically injured, or whose loved ones were killed or severely physically injured, in Afghanistan by Taliban terrorist attacks that were planned by, authorized by, and sometimes jointly committed with, al-Qaeda.

“While thousands of Americans were risking their lives to support and rebuild Afghanistan, a group of private corporations were fueling attacks against Americans by offering protection payments and other material support,” said Michael Gottlieb, a partner at Willkie. “The Amended Complaint we have filed today alleges that the defendants have aided and abetted terrorism in Afghanistan by providing the terrorists with critical funding, and in some cases coordination and intelligence.”

“As alleged, the Taliban openly proclaimed that the money was for terrorism, and the U.S. government publicly opposed protection payments and attempted to stop them,” said Josh Branson, a partner at Kellogg Hansen. “Defendants were sophisticated companies with millions of dollars in revenues on the line in Afghanistan. We allege they were aware of this prevailing understanding and exploited a web of local subcontractors to facilitate payments to insurgents without detection.”

“Consider MTN, which, as alleged in the Amended Complaint, is the official telecom partner of Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (“IRGC”). The IRGC is a Foreign Terrorist Organization whose founding principle is ‘Death to America.’ As alleged in the complaint, MTN made millions in protection payments to the IRGC’s ally, the Taliban, while pledging to be ‘neutral’ towards the Taliban and to ‘obey’ the terrorists’ orders to shut down cell towers in order to interfere with American counter-terrorism operations and intelligence gathering. As alleged in the Amended Complaint, that by doing so, MTN deliberately targeted America. Our clients bore the consequences for MTN’s despicable behavior.”

The filing of this Amended Complaint follows an extensive investigation, including thousands of hours working on the matter and analyzing hundreds of transactions in Afghanistan from 2001 through the present. For many of the survivors of these attacks and the families of those killed, much of what the investigation uncovered came as a shock.

“This case is about obtaining justice for my husband’s death and the lives of so many others who were killed and injured by the terrorists in Afghanistan,” said August Cabrera, the widow of U.S. Army LTC David E. Cabrera, who was killed in a suicide bombing in Kabul, Afghanistan on October 29, 2011.

The Amended Complaint is available at <http://afghanistan.terrorismcase.com>

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