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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**DEFENDANT PLEADS GUILTY IN VISA SCAM;**  
**OVER \$90,000 IN RESTITUTION SECURED FOR VICTIMS**

*Defendant Promised Victims U.S. Visas for Their Relatives Abroad In Exchange for Cash;  
Submitted Photocopies of Forged Documents to Support Fraudulent Transaction*

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz, joined by New York City Police Department Commissioner Keechant L. Sewell and Special Agent-in-Charge of the Department of State's Diplomatic Security Service New York Field Office Keith J. Byrne, announced today that Olimzhon Turdialiev, 39, pleaded guilty to criminal possession of stolen property and subsequently made restitution of \$92,000 to four victims. The defendant was indicted by a grand jury in October 2017 for stealing over \$100,000 from members of the Uzbek community by promising U.S. visas for their relatives in exchange for cash. Turdialiev fled the state following his initial arrest and was extradited to face charges in Queens County on August 8, 2022.

District Attorney Katz said, "The victims in this case included members of the immigrant community desperately trying to reunite with their loved ones in America. Scammers and fraudsters who take advantage of fraught situations for their own financial gain will face justice in Queens County, no matter how long it has been since the crime took place. In pleading guilty, the defendant has taken responsibility for scamming four individuals who sought a better life for themselves and their loved ones. The defendant has now made restitution and is on notice that this criminal behavior will not be tolerated."

NYPD Commissioner Sewell said, "Mr. Turdialiev targeted vulnerable people in his own community, betraying their trust for profit. The NYPD and our law enforcement partners will continue to aggressively pursue anyone who seeks to defraud others, holding them fully accountable for their actions. I want to thank and commend the Office of the Queens District Attorney and our NYPD investigators for their tireless dedication to seeing justice served in this case."

Special Agent-in-Charge Byrne said, "The Diplomatic Security Service is firmly committed to working with our law enforcement partners to investigate allegations of crime related to passport and visa fraud, and to bring those who commit these crimes to justice."

Turdialiev, of Bay Parkway in Brooklyn was arrested on September 8, 2017, and subsequently charged with criminal possession of stolen property and other crimes. On October 24, 2017, the defendant was indicted by a grand jury in a 9-count indictment charging him with criminal possession of stolen property in the second degree, two counts of grand larceny in the third degree, criminal possession of a

forged instrument in the second degree and scheme to defraud in the first degree.

Shortly following the indictment, the defendant fled the state. In June 2022, Turdialiev was charged with grand larceny in Clackamas County, Oregon and was subsequently identified as a defendant in Queens County. Upon the resolution of the Oregon case, Turdialiev was extradited back to New York to face charges.

On September 12, 2022, Turdialiev pleaded guilty to criminal possession of stolen property in the fifth degree before Queens Criminal Court Judge Toni Cimino. As part of the agreement, the defendant provided restitution in the amount of \$92,000, accounting for nearly 80% of the stolen funds.

According to the charges, in September through November 2016, the defendant met with four separate Queens residents, all of whom are members of the Uzbek community. At the time, he claimed that he was able to obtain U.S. visas for their relatives who were still living abroad in exchange for cash.

District Attorney Katz said, upon paying the defendant a total of \$32,000 in September and October 2016, the first victim was instructed to have her four relatives mail their Uzbek passports and a provided application to an address in Ukraine. Turdialiev later provided a photocopy of one the visas to the victim. However, the victim's relatives never received either document. It was later discovered that the U.S. Department of State's Diplomatic Security Service (DSS) intercepted the package in Moldova containing Uzbekistan passports belonging to the family of the first victim along with fraudulent U.S. visas.

Continuing, District Attorney Katz said, the second victim paid a total of \$49,000 to the defendant on three separate dates for U.S. visas for her two sons and brother living in Uzbekistan. In October 2016, the defendant sent a photocopy to the second victim that appeared to show the passports now containing a valid U.S. visa. However, upon receiving their passports, the relatives abroad determined that the included visas were fraudulent based upon the physical appearance of the document.

Also in October 2016, a third victim paid a total of \$17,000 to the defendant for a U.S. visa for her brother-in-law living in Uzbekistan. The relative abroad was instructed to provide his passport and an application to the defendant's associate in Uzbekistan. The brother-in-law never received his passport nor the visa.

In November 2016, a fourth victim provided the defendant with \$17,000 in cash for a U.S. visa for her brother living in Uzbekistan. The victim accused the defendant of fraud when her relative never received his passport after mailing the documents as instructed. In February 2017, Turdialiev agreed to return the Uzbek passport back to the victim but never provided the cash paid.

The investigation was conducted by Sergeant Dmitriy Zabrovskiy and Detective Colin Sullivan, of the NYPD's Criminal Intelligence Section in collaboration with DSS and the U.S. Embassy in Moldova.

Assistant District Attorney George J. DeLuca-Farrugia, Deputy Bureau Chief of the Queens District Attorney's Felony Conference Bureau and Director of the Queens District Attorney's Extraditions, Renditions and Property Release Services, handled the extradition with the assistance of law enforcement officials from Oregon.

Assistant District Attorney Sean Murphy of the District Attorney's Major Economic Crimes Bureau prosecuted the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Mary Lowenburg, Bureau Chief, Assistant District Attorney Catherine Kane, Senior Deputy Bureau Chief, Assistant District Attorney Jonathan Scharf, Deputy Bureau Chief, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney of Investigations Gerard Brave.

***SPECIAL NOTICE FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:*** If you are aware of, or have been a victim of, fraud associated with a U.S. passport or U.S. visa application, please contact [PassportVisaFraud@state.gov](mailto:PassportVisaFraud@state.gov).

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