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United States Attorney's Office
District of Oregon

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Belgian National Faces Federal Charges for Illegally Procuring Critical U.S. Technology for End Users in China and Russia

PORTLAND, Ore.—A federal indictment was unsealed Tuesday in the District of Oregon charging a Belgian national in connection with the export of sensitive, military-grade technology from the United States to end users in the People's Republic of China.

Hans Maria De Geetere, 61, of Knokke-Heist, Belgium, has been charged with one count of obtaining goods intended for China in violation of the Export Control Reform Act (ECRA) and four counts of making false statements.

“Export control laws and regulations serve an important role in protecting our national security. This case demonstrates our commitment to holding individuals accountable wherever they reside,” said Natalie Wight, U.S. Attorney for the District of Oregon. “We urge anyone with information about violations of export control laws to contact OEE and the FBI immediately.”

“The Office of Export Enforcement (OEE) is focused on aggressive enforcement of violations of U.S. export controls. Today's indictment of De Geetere for seeking to export controlled items with military and aerospace applications to China demonstrates OEE's commitment to focusing our investigative efforts on transactions of the highest national security significance,” said John D. Masters, Special Agent in Charge, Office of Export Enforcement, San Jose Field Office, Bureau of Industry and Security, US Department of Commerce.

“According to this indictment, Hans De Geetere was breaking laws and risking national security to benefit himself, the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation,” said Kieran L. Ramsey, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI Portland Field Office. “This investigation was a well-coordinated effort between the FBI and our federal and international partners, and it demonstrates how far we will go to prevent the illegal transfer of military-use technology to our adversaries.”

According to court documents, between April 2021 and August 2023, De Geetere, who owned and operated a Belgium-based supply chain management and procurement services company called Knokke Heist Support Corporation Management (KHSCM), attempted to illegally procure for export to China controlled accelerometers valued at more than \$930,000.

On or about April 9, 2021, a company in the United States shipped approximately \$13,249 worth of accelerometers to a German reseller to fulfill an order for KHSCM. On or about April 14, 2021, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and the Department of Commerce, Bureau of

Industry and Security (BIS), Office of Export Enforcement detained the shipment for inspection to confirm its end user and avoid potential diversion and improper military use.

OEE contacted the German reseller to request that its customer, KHSCM, complete a required BIS form identifying its end user for the accelerometers and how the devices would be used. On or about April 15, 2021, De Geetere is alleged to have completed the form and in it falsely claim the accelerometers were for use by Agentschap Wegen en Verkeer, a government agency in the Flemish region of Belgium. Later, on a phone call with an OEE special agent and in an email to the agent written by De Geetere falsely claiming to be a Flemish export control official, De Geetere again falsely stated the accelerometers were for use in Belgium when, in truth, he intended to divert the items to China.

Accelerometers are electronic devices that measure the vibration, tilt, and acceleration of structures in industrial, aerospace, and military systems. In aerospace and military applications, accelerometers play a critical role in structural testing and monitoring, impact survival tests, flight control systems, weapons and craft navigation systems, active vibration dampening, stabilization, and other systems. The export of these accelerometers to certain countries, including China and Russia, is restricted under U.S. law.

In a separate [indictment](#) unsealed Tuesday in the Eastern District of Texas, De Geetere and a co-defendant are alleged to have conspired with one another to illegally smuggle from the United States export-controlled field programmable gate array circuits to Russia and short-wave infrared surveillance cameras to China.

De Geetere was arrested Tuesday in Belgium by Belgian authorities.

Obtaining goods in violation of ECRA and making false statements in connection with or during an export enforcement investigation are each punishable by up to 20 years in federal prison and a \$1 million fine, per count of conviction.

This case was investigated by OEE with assistance from the FBI and Homeland Security Investigations (HSI). It is being prosecuted by Greg Nyhus, Assistant U.S. Attorney for the District of Oregon.

An indictment is only an accusation of a crime, and a defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

Today's actions were coordinated through the Disruptive Technology Strike Force, an interagency law enforcement strike force co-led by the Departments of Justice and Commerce designed to target illicit actors, protect supply chains, and prevent critical technology from being acquired by authoritarian regimes and hostile nation-states. Under the leadership of the Assistant Attorney General for National Security and the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Export Enforcement, the Strike Force leverages tools and authorities across the U.S. Government to enhance the criminal and administrative enforcement of export control laws.

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