



THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT of JUSTICE

United States Attorney
Eastern District of Washington

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Trio Convicted of International Parental Kidnapping and Conspiracy

Spokane, Washington – The United States Attorney’s Office for the Eastern District of Washington announced Aaron Daniel Aung and Jaimes Tin Aung have been found guilty of International Parental Kidnapping and Conspiracy to Commit International Parental Kidnapping. The guilty finding was made following a bench trial in front of Judge Thomas O. Rice. The final defendant, Nadia Erika Cole, pled guilty to International Parental Kidnapping.

As was submitted during the bench trial, from May 29, 2024, until July 7, 2024, all defendants worked together to violate an Idaho court order by removing a young child from her lawful parent and taking the child to Mexico. A custody exchange was made on May 29, 2024. Following that exchange, Aaron Aung retrieved a vehicle belonging to Jaimes Aung and then drove to Tacoma, Washington, where he met his girlfriend Nadia Cole outside of a hotel. Cole had suddenly left the Seattle-Tacoma airport earlier that day while in line for an international flight. She had left her phone and other personal items at the airport and took a taxi the hotel, where she waited for Aaron Aung.

Aaron Aung and Nadia Cole then traveled to Mexico with the minor child, crossing the border on June 1, 2024. Nadia Cole and Aaron Aung remained in Mexico with the minor victim for weeks, in violation of the custody order. They had no contact with the custodial parent and law enforcement was unaware of their whereabouts for several weeks. During that time, Aaron’s father Jaimes Aung communicated with Aaron using coded messaging. They discussed plans, with Jaimes Aung warning Aaron Aung about the ongoing investigation by the FBI and giving advice on how to avoid law enforcement detection.

On July 4, 2024, Aaron Aung and Nadia Cole were contacted by Mexican law enforcement. Cole was deported from the country. A few days later, Aaron Aung was contacted again and was arrested based on an outstanding warrant from Whitman County, Washington. The minor child was reunited with her lawful parent.

First Assistant United States Attorney Pete Serrano stated, “The United States takes very seriously the safety and security of our community’s children. Cases involving a missing child are our top priority. Jaimes Aung, Aaron Aung, and Nadia Cole made the dangerous decision to kidnap a child to Mexico in violation of a custody order, demonstrating the lengths they went to willingly circumvent the court process. Law enforcement worked tirelessly for weeks to locate the child to bring her home to her lawful parent. We are grateful for the coordination and cooperation of all involved agencies. Through their dedicated efforts this case was able resolved with a safe and happy conclusion.”

“These three defendants stole a child from her lawful parent and then tried to hide her beyond the borders of the United States,” said W. Mike Herrington, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI Seattle field office. “Despite their efforts to evade the search, a dozen law enforcement agencies from multiple jurisdictions worked relentlessly to bring the missing child home, which they were able to do after just over a month. We are grateful this child is safe and for the strong law enforcement partnerships that made this rescue possible.”

This case was a multi-jurisdiction investigation involving the Federal Bureau of Investigation; Moscow, Idaho Police Department; Pullman, Washington Police Department; FBI Cryptanalysis and Racketeering Records Unit; Pima County, Arizona Sheriff’s Department; United States Customs and Border Patrol; Nogales, Mexico Municipal Police Department; Nogales, Arizona Police Department; Latah County Idaho Sheriff’s Office; Port of Seattle Police Department; Whitman County, Washington Sheriff’s Office; and the Whitman County Prosecutor’s Office.

Sentencing for Nadia Cole is set for March 25, 2026, at 1:00pm. Sentencing for Aaron Aung and Jaimes Aung is set for March 25, 2026, at 11:30am. This case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Rebecca R. Perez and Michael J. Ellis.

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