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U.S. SECRET SERVICE EXTRADITES ALLEGED ARCHITECT OF MASSIVE GLOBAL CYBERCRIME OPERATION

(Washington, D.C.) A multi-year cyber investigation, led by the U.S. Secret Service, culminated today in Brooklyn federal court with the arraignment of Ercan Findikoglu, (AKA“Segate”). Findikoglu, 33, was arrested by the German BKA (Federal Investigative Police) on 12/18/13 pursuant to an arrest warrant issued by the United States District Court in the Eastern District of New York (“EDNY”) based on an indictment brought by the EDNY U.S. Attorney’s Office. Following an extensive period of appeals, German courts approved the extradition of Findikoglu to the United States. His extradition was conducted on 06/23/15 by members of the U.S. Secret Service New York Electronic Crimes Task Force. The case is being prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Eastern District of New York.

“This case, yet again, demonstrates our commitment to fulfilling an important part of our integrated mission; that of protecting our nation’s critical financial infrastructure. The determination and skill of our cyber investigators, coupled with the partnerships we have created with our international law enforcement colleagues, should send a strong message to cyber criminals around the world. Our investigative reach has, and will continue to expand beyond the borders of the United States,” said Secret Service Director Joseph P. Clancy.

“Cybercriminals, and especially hackers as Findikoglu is alleged to be, wreak havoc and steal millions of dollars by breaching our information systems and networks with clicks and keystrokes from the perceived anonymity of their computers at locations all over the globe. However, in doing so they leave traces in digital space that allow law enforcement to identify, apprehend, and ultimately hold them accountable for their crimes,” stated Acting United States Attorney Kelly T. Currie. Mr. Currie praised the extraordinary efforts of the Secret Service in investigating these complex network intrusions and thanked the authorities in Germany for their assistance in effecting the defendant’s extradition.

Since 2010, it is alleged that an elite team of hackers, led in part by Findikoglu, targeted payment processors and financial institutions involved in processing prepaid debit cards. The group specialized in breaching databases associated with prepaid debit cards; raising the withdrawal limits of accounts; disabling security features; and utilizing the accounts to orchestrate

worldwide cash-out events. The group has allegedly been linked to at least three of these types of cyber intrusions with actual losses in excess of \$55 million.

Findikoglu, the alleged mastermind of this elaborate operation, was allegedly able to remain in the computer networks of the Victim Processors in order to monitor the global ATM withdrawals. Once the funds from the massive cash-out schemes were secured, Findikoglu and other participants would receive the proceeds via electronic currency, wire transfer or personal delivery.

Over the past year, several other high ranking members of this criminal organization have been apprehended locally and abroad by both members of the U.S. Secret Service, and members of foreign law enforcement agencies working in conjunction with the U.S. Secret Service New York Field Office. As a result of forging new, unprecedented relationships with various international law enforcement partners, the Secret Service has been able to expand both its knowledge of this organization, and maintain itself on the forefront of upcoming malicious trends and tactics.

The U.S. Secret Service has taken a lead role in mitigating the threat of financial crimes since the agency's inception in 1865. As technology has evolved, the scope of the U.S. Secret Service's mission has expanded from its original counterfeit currency investigations to also include emerging financial, electronic and cyber-crimes. As a component agency within the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the U.S. Secret Service has established successful partnerships in both the law enforcement and business communities – across the country and around the world – in order to effectively combat financial crimes.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: For questions concerning this release, please contact the U.S. Secret Service Office of Government and Public Affairs at 202-406-5708.