

# Center for Justice and Accountability

## Torture, Former Combatants, Political Prisoners, Terror Suspects, & Terrorists

**<https://cja.org/former-somali-army-commander-living-in-virginia-found-liable-for-torture-during-countrys-civil-war/>**

## Public Facing Advocacy Writing

For Immediate Release

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*A jury in the Eastern District of Virginia finds Colonel Yusuf Abdi Ali (aka Tukeh) liable for the torture of semi-nomadic Somali herder Farhan Warfaa*

Alexandria, May 21, 2019 Today, a Virginia jury found Col. Yusuf Abdi Ali (aka Tukeh) responsible for the torture of semi-nomadic Somali herder Farhan Warfaa. Col. Tukeh was a high-ranking military commander in Siad Barres decades-long military dictatorship in Somalia. The jury awarded Mr. Warfaa \$500,000 in damages, including \$100,000 in punitive damages. Mr. Warfaa was represented by the Center for Justice and Accountability (CJA) and the law firm of DLA Piper LLP.

Mr. Warfaa said, It has been a long journey seeking justice for what happened to me and to my community. Todays verdict was a vindication not only for me, but also for many others in Somaliland who suffered under Col. Tukehs command. I hope todays outcome contributes to our continued healing.

CJAs lead counsel at trial, Kathy Roberts, said: The evidence we developed through this case has confirmed the truth about crimes perpetrated by the Siad Barre regime against members of the Isaaq community during the Somali civil war. Our client Farhans strength and perseverance is a testament to all those who seek truth, justice and accountability.

Over the course of a three-day trial, the jury heard evidence that early one morning in 1987, Mr. Warfaa was rounded up with other men from his village and taken to the Military Headquarters of the Fifth Brigade of the Somali National Army, where Col. Tukeh held command. Mr. Warfaa testified that Col. Tukehs soldiers tortured and interrogated him, and that Col. Tukeh himself shot Mr. Warfaa multiple times at point blank range, leaving him for dead. Miraculously, he survived. Over thirty years after that ordeal, Mr. Warfaa faced Col. Tukeh in a federal courtroom, and prevailed.

Evidence presented at trial included eyewitness testimony from former officers of the Somali National Army and other survivors of Somali National Army abuses, and expert testimony from former U.S. Special Envoy to Somalia, Ambassador Robert Gosende and medical experts, Dr. Allen S. Keller and Professor Daryn Reicherter.

DLA Piper attorney Louis Ramos said: Perpetrators of human rights crimes should be held to account, no matter how long it takes. We are pleased to have partnered with CJA to help Mr. Warfaa, after 31 years, finally obtain justice.

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### About the Center for Justice and Accountability

CJA is a San Francisco-based international human rights organization. CJAs mission is to deter torture, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other severe human rights abuses around the world through innovative litigation, policy, and transitional justice strategies. CJA partners with victims and survivors in pursuit of truth, justice, and redress. For more information, visit [www.cja.org](http://www.cja.org).

### About DLA Piper LLP ([www.dlapiper.com](http://www.dlapiper.com))

DLA Piper is a global law firm with lawyers located in more than 40 countries throughout the Americas, Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Asia Pacific, positioning us to help clients with their legal needs around the world. In certain jurisdictions, this information may be considered attorney advertising.



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## GERALD GRAY LEGACY CIRCLE

GERALD GRAY FOUNDED CJA IN 1998 AND CONTINUES  
WORKING TO HELP TORTURE SURVIVORS TODAY.

### Join the Gerald Gray Legacy Circle

To join, please let us know that you have included CJA in your estate plans, insurance policy, or planned giving instrument by contacting us at [center4justice@cja.org](mailto:center4justice@cja.org). We will ensure your gift supports CJA's mission and welcome you to the Gerald Gray Legacy Circle.

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***"We will never catch all the torturers—but we will always catch some,  
and none of them will ever know who is next."***