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Attorney General Merrick Garland Delivers Remarks

Washington, DC ~ Thursday, August 11, 2022

Remarks as Delivered

Good afternoon. Since I became Attorney General, I have made clear that the Department of Justice will speak through its court filings and its work.

Just now, the Justice Department has filed a motion in the Southern District of Florida to unseal a search warrant and property receipt relating to a court-approved search that the FBI conducted earlier this week.

That search was of premises located in Florida belonging to the former President. The Department did not make any public statements on the day of the search. The former President publicly confirmed the search that evening, as is his right.

Copies of both the warrant and the FBI property receipt were provided on the day of the search to the former President's counsel, who was on site during the search.

The search warrant was authorized by a federal court upon the required finding of probable cause.

The "property receipt" is a document that federal law requires law enforcement agents to leave with the property owner.

The Department filed the motion to make public the warrant and receipt in light of the former President's public confirmation of the search, the surrounding circumstances, and the substantial public interest in this matter.

Faithful adherence to the rule of law is the bedrock principle of the Justice Department and of our democracy.

Upholding the rule of law means applying the law evenly, without fear or favor. Under my watch, that is precisely what the Justice Department is doing.

All Americans are entitled to the evenhanded application of the law, to due process of the law, and to the presumption of innocence.

Much of our work is by necessity conducted out of the public eye. We do that to protect the constitutional rights of all Americans and to protect the integrity of our investigations.

Federal law, longstanding Department rules, and our ethical obligations prevent me from providing further details as to the basis of the search at this time. There are, however, certain points I want you to know.

First, I personally approved the decision to seek a search warrant in this matter.

Second, the Department does not take such a decision lightly. Where possible, it is standard practice to seek less intrusive means as an alternative to a search, and to narrowly scope any search that is undertaken.

Third, let me address recent unfounded attacks on the professionalism of the FBI and Justice Department agents and prosecutors. I will not stand by silently when their integrity is unfairly attacked.

The men and women of the FBI and the Justice Department are dedicated, patriotic public servants.

Every day, they protect the American people from violent crime, terrorism, and other threats to their safety, while safeguarding our civil rights. They do so at great personal sacrifice and risk to themselves.

I am honored to work alongside them.

This is all I can say right now. More information will be made available in the appropriate way and at the appropriate time. Thank you.

Speaker:

Attorney General Merrick B. Garland

Component(s):

Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

Office of the Attorney General

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