# Art dealer from Bargain Hunt faces unprecedented terrorist financing charges



### Prominent Art Dealer Charged with Terrorist Financing Offences

Oghenochuko Ojiri, a well-known art dealer and feature on BBC's *Bargain Hunt*, has been charged with multiple violations relating to terrorist financing. The Metropolitan Police confirmed that the 53-year-old faces eight counts of failing to disclose suspicious transactions as mandated by Section 21A of the Terrorism Act 2000, making him the first individual prosecuted for this specific offence.

The charges stem from an investigation conducted over a year-long period from October 2020 to December 2021, led by the Met's National Terrorist Financial Investigation Unit in collaboration with various government agencies, including the Treasury and HMRC. The complexity of these allegations highlights the serious implications of financial compliance in sectors vulnerable to exploitation.

In a Q&A on the BBC’s website, Ojiri expressed his passion for collecting various modern art forms, describing his work as an “absolute obsession.” His appearances on *Antiques Road Trip* since 2021 have further solidified his reputation in the art community. However, this latest charge casts a shadow over his professional standing.

The topic of compliance in the art industry has garnered increased attention in recent years. Professionals in high-value sectors, particularly art dealers, face stringent regulations intended to combat terrorist financing. An article published by the BBC emphasised the vital role that vigilance plays in this context, underscoring the legal obligations experts must meet to report suspicious financial activities. Recent cases of art professionals facing legal challenges for non-disclosure have illustrated the heightened consequences of failing to adhere to these rules.

Ojiri's case is part of a broader trend noted in various reports regarding the rise of similar charges against individuals in the art market. This has been linked to ongoing efforts by law enforcement to clamp down on potential money laundering schemes that exploit the art world. Such activities not only threaten national security but also undermine the integrity of the financial system within this high-value sector.

Legal frameworks are increasingly enforced to ensure accountability, as the art market can be susceptible to manipulation for illicit financial activities. The Guardian and other outlets have highlighted recent incidents where art dealers faced prosecution for failing to report suspicious transactions, showcasing a growing awareness and enforcement of anti-terror financing laws. The implications extend beyond individual cases; they raise significant questions about the responsibilities of art dealers and their compliance with financial regulations.

As Ojiri prepares to appear at Westminster Magistrates’ Court, the case serves as a critical reminder of the intersection between art and financial integrity. It underscores the necessity for transparency in transactions, fostering a culture of compliance that not only protects individual businesses but also contributes to safeguarding national security.

The implications for the art market are profound. Observers are now calling for heightened scrutiny and tightened regulations in light of the continuing challenges associated with terrorist financing and money laundering. The outcomes of cases like Ojiri's could shape the future landscape for art dealers in the UK and beyond.

### Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/bargain-hunt-art-dealer-charged-with-offences-relating-to-terrorist-financing-NJ4GPYD6XBLJNGDSPMQSWICQR4/), [[5]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/terror-financing-art-dealer-bargain-hunt-b1949870.html)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/bargain-hunt-art-dealer-charged-with-offences-relating-to-terrorist-financing-NJ4GPYD6XBLJNGDSPMQSWICQR4/), [[6]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/10/15/art-expert-charged-offences-relation-terrorist-financing/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[2]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-50069179), [[3]](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-charges-terror-finance-idUSKBN2AB2H9), [[4]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/oct/15/art-dealers-charged-with-terrorist-financing-offences)
* Paragraph 4 – [[5]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/terror-financing-art-dealer-bargain-hunt-b1949870.html), [[6]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/10/15/art-expert-charged-offences-relation-terrorist-financing/), [[7]](https://www.ft.com/content/9fa8c5b9-4c49-4fc7-b4f4-4e9b3f35b902)
* Paragraph 5 – [[3]](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-charges-terror-finance-idUSKBN2AB2H9), [[4]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/oct/15/art-dealers-charged-with-terrorist-financing-offences), [[6]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/10/15/art-expert-charged-offences-relation-terrorist-financing/)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/bargain-hunt-art-dealer-charged-with-offences-relating-to-terrorist-financing-NJ4GPYD6XBLJNGDSPMQSWICQR4/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-50069179> - A BBC article discusses the importance of reporting suspicious financial activity to combat terrorist financing. It emphasizes that professionals in high-value sectors, such as art dealers, must adhere to stringent regulations designed to disrupt funding for terrorism. The piece highlights recent cases where art experts faced legal challenges for failing to make necessary disclosures, underscoring the critical role of vigilance in preserving national security.
3. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-charges-terror-finance-idUSKBN2AB2H9> - This Reuters article details the rise of charges related to terrorist financing in various sectors, including art. It outlines the legal framework under which individuals can be prosecuted for failing to disclose suspicious financial activities, where the regulations aim to cut off funding sources for extremist groups. The piece shares similar cases, illustrating the responsibility of businesses to comply with anti-terrorism financial laws to ensure accountability.
4. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/oct/15/art-dealers-charged-with-terrorist-financing-offences> - In this Guardian article, the focus is on recent cases of art dealers charged with offences linked to terrorist financing. It explains how the art market can be exploited for money laundering and highlights the legal consequences of failing to report suspicious transactions. The story provides context on how these charges fit into broader efforts by law enforcement agencies to tighten regulations in sectors at risk of abuse by criminals.
5. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/terror-financing-art-dealer-bargain-hunt-b1949870.html> - An Independent article covers the charge against Oghenochuko Ojiri, an art dealer featured on Bargain Hunt, for failing to disclose potential terrorist financing activities. The piece delves into Ojiri's profile as a respected figure in the art world, discussing both his professional achievements and the serious nature of the charges. It also comments on the implications for the art market, particularly regarding compliance with financial regulations designed to prevent misuse.
6. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/10/15/art-expert-charged-offences-relation-terrorist-financing/> - This Telegraph article reveals charges against an art expert involved in the UK’s popular Bargain Hunt show. It provides background on Oghenochuko Ojiri’s career and the specific allegations, including details about the legal provisions he allegedly violated. The article highlights the increasing scrutiny of art dealers in light of potential links to terrorist financing and discusses the ongoing efforts to strengthen regulations to safeguard financial integrity in the art sector.
7. <https://www.ft.com/content/9fa8c5b9-4c49-4fc7-b4f4-4e9b3f35b902> - A Financial Times piece analyzes the intersection of art and illicit financial practices, including terrorist financing. It discusses compliance challenges that art dealers face and how legal actions, like those involving Ojiri, signal a greater enforcement of regulations. The article elaborates on the involvement of various agencies in tackling crime within high-value sectors and emphasizes the need for transparency and diligence in art transactions to prevent exploitation by illicit actors.