# Art dealer from Bargain Hunt charged with pioneering terrorism financing offence



## Art Dealer Faces Serious Charges Linked to Terrorist Financing

Oghenochuko Ojiri, a prominent art dealer known for his appearances on BBC’s *Bargain Hunt* and *Antiques Road Trip,* has been charged with multiple offences related to terrorist financing. The Metropolitan Police have confirmed that the 53-year-old, based in west London, faces eight counts of failing to disclose information as required under section 21A of the Terrorism Act 2000. This situation represents a significant legal first, as he is the initial individual to be charged with this specific offence, highlighting an increasing focus on the intersection of the art trade and financial compliance.

Ojiri's charges encompass a timeframe from October 2020 to December 2021 and have been authorised by the Crown Prosecution Service following a thorough investigation led by the National Terrorist Financial Investigation Unit within the Metropolitan Police. This extensive probe also received backing from various institutions, including HMRC and the Treasury, underlining the seriousness of the allegations and the collaborative efforts necessary to address them.

According to the Metropolitan Police, disclosures of financial transactions are crucial in the fight against terrorism financing, especially as art transactions often involve significant sums of money that can potentially be exploited for illegal activities. The increasing scrutiny of the art market mirrors broader global efforts to counteract financial networks associated with terrorism. In Nigeria, for example, over 100 terrorist financiers have been prosecuted and convicted in recent years, showcasing a determined approach to disrupting the economic underpinnings of terrorist organisations like Boko Haram and ISWAP. These strategies include a focus on financial transparency and the prosecution of those who fail to comply with disclosure regulations.

In parallel, a Nigerian court recently froze 24 bank accounts suspected of terrorism financing, further amplifying the country's commitment to countering such activities through rigorous legal action. This commitment includes working with international partners, such as the United States, to safeguard financial systems against exploitation by terrorist actors. The collaboration encompasses a variety of initiatives aimed at securing financial transactions and ensuring compliance with anti-terrorism financing measures.

As Ojiri prepares to make his court appearance at Westminster Magistrates’ Court, the implications of his case extend beyond his personal circumstances. It raises critical questions about the responsibilities of those in the art and antiques sector to actively monitor and report suspicious activities, thereby ensuring that their profession does not inadvertently support illegal financial activities. The Ojiri Gallery has opted not to provide comments on this evolving situation, leaving the public awaiting further developments.

The case of Oghenochuko Ojiri serves as a stark reminder of the interplay between cultural sectors and issues of national security. As the art world becomes increasingly scrutinised, industry professionals may need to adopt more stringent compliance measures, echoing trends observed in other parts of the world aimed at disrupting financial networks that enable terrorism.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/bargain-hunt-art-dealer-charged-with-offences-relating-to-terrorist-financing-NJ4GPYD6XBLJNGDSPMQSWICQR4/), [[2]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/bargain-hunt-art-dealer-charged-with-offences-relating-to-terrorist-financing-NJ4GPYD6XBLJNGDSPMQSWICQR4/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/bargain-hunt-art-dealer-charged-with-offences-relating-to-terrorist-financing-NJ4GPYD6XBLJNGDSPMQSWICQR4/), [[2]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/bargain-hunt-art-dealer-charged-with-offences-relating-to-terrorist-financing-NJ4GPYD6XBLJNGDSPMQSWICQR4/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[3]](https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2025/01/22/akume-we-have-prosecuted-convicted-over-100-terrorist-financiers-in-two-years/), [[4]](https://guardian.ng/news/over-100-terrorist-financiers-convicted-in-two-years-tinubu/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[5]](https://punchng.com/court-freezes-24-bank-accounts-over-alleged-terrorism-financing/), [[6]](https://punchng.com/us-working-with-nigeria-to-counter-terrorism-financing/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/bargain-hunt-art-dealer-charged-with-offences-relating-to-terrorist-financing-NJ4GPYD6XBLJNGDSPMQSWICQR4/)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## 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.irishnews.com/news/uk/bargain-hunt-art-dealer-charged-with-offences-relating-to-terrorist-financing-NJ4GPYD6XBLJNGDSPMQSWICQR4/> - An art expert featured on BBC's 'Bargain Hunt', Oghenochuko Ojiri, 53, has been charged with eight counts under section 21A of the Terrorism Act 2000 for failing to disclose information during business within the regulated sector. This marks the first such charge under this specific offence. Ojiri, described as an 'expert' in contemporary art, has also appeared on 'Antiques Road Trip' since 2021. The charges, covering October 2020 to December 2021, were authorized by the Crown Prosecution Service following an investigation by the Metropolitan Police's National Terrorist Financial Investigation Unit, with involvement from the Treasury, HMRC, and the Met's Arts & Antiques Unit. Ojiri is scheduled to appear at Westminster Magistrates' Court on Friday. The Ojiri Gallery declined to comment.
3. <https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2025/01/22/akume-we-have-prosecuted-convicted-over-100-terrorist-financiers-in-two-years/> - Senator George Akume, Secretary to the Government of the Federation, announced that over 100 terrorist financiers have been prosecuted and convicted in the past two years. This effort is part of Nigeria's strategy to combat terrorism and violent crimes by targeting the financial networks supporting groups like Boko Haram and ISWAP. Akume emphasized the importance of disrupting these financial networks to deny terrorists the resources needed to operate. The approach aligns with global best practices in combating serious crime by focusing on the financial aspects of terrorism.
4. <https://guardian.ng/news/over-100-terrorist-financiers-convicted-in-two-years-tinubu/> - President Bola Ahmed Tinubu revealed that the Nigerian government, through the Office of the National Security Adviser and the Attorney-General of the Federation, has prosecuted and convicted over 100 terrorist financiers in the last two years. This initiative aims to disrupt the financial networks supporting terrorist groups like Boko Haram and ISWAP, thereby reducing their capacity to inflict terror. The strategy is part of Nigeria's broader efforts to combat serious crimes by targeting the financial resources behind them, aligning with global best practices.
5. <https://punchng.com/court-freezes-24-bank-accounts-over-alleged-terrorism-financing/> - A Nigerian court has frozen 24 bank accounts linked to alleged terrorism financing activities. The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) informed the court that the funds in these accounts were covertly exchanged through cryptocurrency platforms to support terrorist activities. The court granted a 90-day freeze on the accounts to allow for further investigation. This action underscores Nigeria's commitment to disrupting financial networks that fund terrorism, aligning with global efforts to combat such activities.
6. <https://punchng.com/us-working-with-nigeria-to-counter-terrorism-financing/> - The United States government is collaborating with Nigeria to counter terrorism financing. Eric Meyer, the US Treasury Deputy Assistant Secretary, emphasized the importance of safeguarding Nigeria's financial system from illicit actors supporting terrorism. The collaboration involves working with Nigerian authorities, including the Central Bank and the Ministry of Finance, to ensure that the financial system is secure and cannot be exploited for terrorist activities. This partnership reflects a shared commitment to combatting terrorism financing.
7. <https://www.channelstv.com/2024/03/20/fg-reportedly-lists-15-persons-bdcs-as-terrorism-financiers/> - The Nigerian government has reportedly identified 15 individuals and Bureau De Change (BDC) operators linked to terrorism financing. The list includes nine individuals and six BDCs, with detailed descriptions of their alleged roles in supporting terrorist activities. The government has mandated institutions and individuals to immediately identify and freeze all funds and assets belonging to the designated persons and entities. This action is part of Nigeria's ongoing efforts to disrupt financial networks supporting terrorism, in line with the Terrorism (Prevention and Prohibition) Act, 2022.