

Massachusetts man sentenced for assaulting officers with firearm during Boston's George Floyd riots

A Boston man was sentenced yesterday to five years in prison for assaulting officers with a firearm during the civil disorder in Boston early in the morning of June 1, 2020.

John Boampong, 37, was sentenced by U.S. District Court Judge William G. Young to five years in prison and three years of supervised release. On Feb. 4, 2021, Boampong pleaded guilty to one count each of interfering with a law enforcement officer during the commission of a civil disorder, receipt of a firearm by a person under indictment for a felony offense, and assaulting, resisting, or impeding certain officers or employees.

"On May 31, a peaceful demonstration in Boston devolved into lawless attacks on property and people – including police officers. Mr. Boampong saw this as the right time to fire 11 rounds in the direction of police officers working a chaotic and dangerous scene. It is only by chance no one was killed," said Acting United States Attorney Nathaniel R. Mendell. "Violence leads to no good outcome, and for Mr. Boampong it led to federal charges and prison."

"Shooting in the direction of police officers in the middle of a crowded public street, endangering their lives and those of innocent bystanders, is utterly reprehensible. For the duration of his sentence, John Boampong will not be able to put others in harm's way with his reckless actions," said Joseph R. Bonavolonta, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Boston Division. "This case should

serve as a reminder of the FBI's commitment to take violent criminals who pose a threat to public safety and our law enforcement partners, off the street."

"In Suffolk County, when people violently disrupt peaceful protesters and put the lives of protesters and the police in danger, they will be held accountable. That is exactly what happened here," said Suffolk County District Attorney Rachael Rollins. "We are grateful to have the partnership of the U.S. Attorney's Office and fully support its prosecution of this matter.'"

On the evening of May 31, 2020 and continuing through the morning of June 1, 2020, what began as a peaceful demonstration in Boston's Back Bay neighborhood devolved into widespread acts of violence, vandalism, looting and destruction of police property, including the burning of at least one police vehicle on Tremont Street. Some protestors threw rocks, bricks and commercially available explosives at police officers. Numerous police officers were injured.

On June 1, 2020 at approximately 3:00 am, Boampong was driving his car near the Arlington Street and Boylston Street intersection in front of a store that had been victimized by looting that evening. Police officers instructed Boampong and his passengers to leave the area. The occupants of Boampong's car initially became verbally combative towards the officers and failed to leave the area as instructed. When Boampong reversed the car, officers told him to stop, as officers and another vehicle were in the way. However, Boampong continued driving in reverse and then drove away. Shortly thereafter, he returned to the area, parked on Providence Street, and shot at least 11 times in the direction of officers, including a deputized federal officer. The officers took cover by bracing or ducking behind cars and other objects. Bullets broke through the windows of two apartments above ground level in a building behind some of the officers.

When officers eventually stopped Boampong's car, they saw a Sig Sauer P230 9mm firearm lying on the floor of the front passenger-side floor mat, and a black holster underneath the driver's seat, where Boampong had been sitting. The firearm was later examined and found to have Boampong's fingerprint on it.

At the time, Boampong was prohibited from possessing a firearm or ammunition because he faced pending state charges carrying potential sentences exceeding one year.

Acting U.S. Attorney Mendell, FBI SAC Bonavolonta, Suffolk County DA Rollins and Boston Police Acting Commissioner Gregory Long made the announcement. Assistant U.S. Attorney John Dawley of Mendell's Organized Crime and Gang Unit and Assistant U.S. Attorney Scott L. Garland, Deputy Chief of Mendell's National Security Unit, prosecuted the case.