Contact: Andy Bridges
ALA Washington Office
202-628-8410

For Immediate Release
December 20, 2007

# Senior FBI official, whistleblower to address ALA Meeting

**The Chief of the FBI unit responsible for administering both the FBI's National Security Letter program for warrantless searches of telephone records and the top secret "special program" will speak at librarians' conference** .

WASHINGTON —The Chief of the FBI unit responsible for administering two highly controversial FBI warrantless search programs, will speak at the American Library Association's Midwinter Meeting on Jan. 12 in Philadelphia. The session - "Inside the FBI: A Whistleblower Speaks Out" - will take place at 8 a.m. at the Pennsylvania Convention Center in Room 108-A.

FBI Supervisory Special Agent Bassem Youssef is the Chief of the FBI Counterterrorism Division's Communications Analysis Unit. That unit has responsibility for administering two programs authorized under the USA PATRIOT Act. The first is a still-top secret warrantless search operation known as the "special program." Additionally, Mr. Youssef's unit administers the National Security Letters (NSLs) search program related to the telephone records of American citizens and non-citizens within the United States. Both programs are highly controversial.

Mr. Youssef is expected to discuss a number of critical failures within the FBI's counterterrorism program, which undermine basic Constitutional rights of American citizens and threaten the effectiveness of America's counterterrorism efforts.

Mr. Youssef is the highest ranking Arab-American agent and fluent Arabic speaking agent employed by the FBI. Prior to being appointed to the Unit Chief position, Mr. Youssef served as FBI's first Legal Attaché in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, responsible for coordinating the FBI's programs in the Gulf region. He is the recipient of the prestigious Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) award for his work on the first World Trade Center bombing case.

In 2002, Mr. Youssef "blew the whistle" to the Director of the FBI and Congress that discriminatory practices within the Bureau were undermining the ability of the FBI to legally and effectively combat Middle Eastern terrorism. His case resulted in widespread media attention to the fact that top FBI counterterrorism lacked subject matter expertise in terrorism related matters. For example, the top FBI manager responsible for Middle Eastern terrorism on September 11, 2001, did not know the difference between a Shiite and a Sunni Muslim.

Mr. Youssef will be speaking on his own behalf, and not as a representative of the FBI. He will be accompanied by his attorney, Stephen M. Kohn, the President of the National Whistleblower Center. Mr. Kohn, the author of *Concepts and Procedures in Whistleblower Law*, has represented numerous FBI agents, including Dr. Frederic Whitehurst (crime lab) and Sibel Edmonds (translator).

For additional information on Mr. Youssef, please visit http://www.whistleblowers.org/html/inside_the_fbi.html, or http://www.whistleblowersblog.org.

The American Library Association is the oldest and largest library association in the world, with more than 65,000 members. Its mission is to promote the highest quality library and information services and public access to information.

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