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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 11, 2017

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**TRANSCRIPT: MEDIA AVAILABILITY HELD AFTER EXPLOSION AT PORT
AUTHORITY BUS TERMINAL**

Police Commissioner James P. O'Neill: Alright, good morning. Everyone's got sound? Everybody's good? Alright, good morning. At 7:20 am, approximately, 7:20 am this morning, we had terror related incident in the subway, in the passageway between 42nd and Eight, and 42nd and Seventh. The Governor is going to speak. The Mayor is going to speak. I'm going to give you some more details. Dan Nigro is going to talk about some of the minor injuries and then Joe Lhota is going to talk about subway service. Governor?

Governor Andrew Cuomo: Thank you, good morning to everyone. The first news this morning was obviously very frightening and disturbing. When you hear about a bomb in the subway station, which is in many ways one of our worst nightmares, the reality turns out better than the initial expectation and fear.

You had a number of law enforcement agencies that did a fantastic job. The NYPD, the PAPD, the Port Authority Police, the MTA Police, they were all on it. You see behind us representatives of all the agencies coordinated. The Assistant Director of the FBI, Bill Sweeney, is here. So everyone worked together.

There was an explosion. The Police Commissioner will go over the details. It was a minor – it was an effectively low tech device. There were several injuries, we hope minor, and it was handled extraordinarily well. There was a disruption in train service and bus service while a sweep was being done, that's all being restored now, as you will hear from Joh Lhota. The subway station – subway service, except at 42nd Street is being restored. The Port Authority Bus Terminal is re-opened, so buses will be running once again.

This is New York. The reality is that we are a target by many who would like to make a statement against democracy, against freedom. We are the Statue of Liberty in our harbor. And that makes us an international target, we understand that. With the internet now, anyone can go on the internet, and download garbage and vileness on how to put together an amateur level explosive device, and that is a reality that we live with. The counter-reality is that this is New York, and we all pitch together, and we are a savvy people, and we keep our eyes open. And

that's what see something, say something is all about. And we have the best law enforcement on the globe. And we are all working together extraordinarily well.

I want to thank the Mayor and the Mayor's Office for doing a great job this morning and we will go forward, and we will go forward together. All the service will resume. Let's go back to work. We are not going to allow them to disrupt us. That's exactly what they want and that is exactly what they're not going to get. Thank you.

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Thank you very much Governor. Let's be clear, as New Yorkers, our lives revolve around the subways. When we hear of an attack on the subway, it's incredibly unsettling. And let's be also clear, this was attempted terrorist attack. Thank God the perpetrator did not achieve his ultimate goals. Thank God our first responders were there so quickly to address the situation, to make sure people were safe. Thank God the only injuries, that we know at this point, were minor.

But I agree 100 percent with the Governor's point. The choice of New York is always for a reason. Because we're beacons to the world and we actually show that society of many faiths and many backgrounds can work, and we showed that democracy can work. And our enemies want to undermine that, the terrorist want to undermine that, so they yearn to attack New York City. But New York City is blessed with the finest law enforcement, and what our first responders did today was another example the ability to assess a situation quickly, contain it, and make sure people are safe.

Let me just say, it's very important for my fellow New Yorkers to know. There are no additional known instance at this time, there are no additional known activities. We will wait for a fuller investigation, of course, by the NYPD, the MTA police, the Port Authority police, and the FBI, but at this point in time, all we know of is one individual, who thank God was unsuccessful in his aims. There are also no credible and specific threats against New York City at this time. But we will give you more information, of course, as the investigation unfolds.

The first responders responded brilliantly. Now the mission of the NYPD is to secure all major transit hubs and major sites in this city. So you will see expanded NYPD presence today all over the city. New Yorkers have come to understand when you see our specialized forces, when you see those long guns, and those highly trained officers, that's something that should be reassuring to you. That means that the NYPD is on full alert and out in force and that means you are safe.

Finally I want to say, the Governor invoked that phrase, we can't say it enough times, when you see something, say something. This is the difference maker. We've seen it time and again. When an everyday New Yorker sees something that doesn't make sense, hears something, sees a package, gets a feeling that something's wrong. Don't hold it yourself, tell a police officer. They are the ones who can take the information and act on it. It is so important to speak up because you could be saving many lives by doing so.

I'll finish by saying this. This is most resilient place on Earth, we've proven it time and time again. We've proved it just over a month ago. We proved it on 9/11. We are going to prove it

again today. The terrorists will not win, we are going keep being New Yorkers. Let's get back to work. Thank you.

Commissioner O'Neill: Alright these are the preliminary facts. So – just – it just happened a couple hours ago, so you have to understand these are preliminary facts. At approximately 7:20 am, at a below ground walkway, which connects the IND line at 4-2 and Eight Avenue with the IRT line at 4-2 and seven, and that's the shuttle at Time Square and the 1,2,3 train.

Police were called to a reported explosion. Responding units found an injured 27-year-old male. We've identified him as Akayed Ullah, A-K-A-Y-E-D-U-L-L-A-H. He had burns and wounds to his body. Preliminary investigation at the scene indicates this male was wearing an improvised, low-tech explosive device attached to his body. He intentionally detonated that device. Looks like that there were three other people in the immediate area also sustain minor injuries, but Dan Nigro is going to talk about that. The subject was placed in custody and transported to Bellevue Hospital.

Immediate police response to the scene included members of the Transit Bureau, Emergency Service Decision, Bomb Squad, Counter-Terrorism, MTA Police, State Troopers, and the FBI's Joint Terrorist Taskforce. In addition, the NYPD Strategic Response Group and Critical Response Command, were assigned to other key transportation hubs and other locations throughout the city as a precautionary measure.

This incident was captured on transit system video. A further review and interviewing witnesses is under way, a thorough background investigation Akayed Ullah is being conducted by the Joint Terrorist Taskforce. We are asking anyone who may have any information about this individual or incident to call the terror headline, and that's, 8-8-8-NYC-SAFE.

Just as the Governor said, and as the Mayor said, we are New Yorkers, we don't live in fear. If you see something doesn't look right ,you have an obligation to come forward, call 9-1-1, flag down a cop, and give us a chance to investigate it. Dan Nigro is going to talk about the injuries now. Dan?

Fire Commissioner Daniel Nigro: Thank you Jim. As the Police Commissioner mentioned the perpetrator detonated the device, it caused burns to the hands and the abdomen, also lacerations. Our EMS personnel removed the perpetrator to Bellevue Hospital where they're being treated now. Three other people that were in proximity of the explosion removed themselves. Two of them took themselves to Mt. Saini West, one to Mt. Saini Queens. All with minor injuries that are consistent with being in the area of the explosion. That is ringing in the ears and headaches. So we have three minor injuries to people that were in that corridor and serious injuries to the perpetrator. That's it at this time.

MTA Chairman Joe Lhota: Thank you. As the Commissioners have both said, and the Mayor and the Governor have both said, earlier this morning we received an alert of the explosion that happened in the tunnel and immediately the MTA and the transit authority shut down the lines on the Eight Avenue line, the A, the C, the E. Many of them were rerouted. I will tell you right now, they are all back. The only disruption we have right now is that on both the Seventh Avenue line,

as well as the Eighth Avenue line, we're bypassing the Times Square-42nd Street corridor. And also the shuttle between Grand Central and Times Square is currently shut down. We expect it to be back up and normal by – by this evening's rush hour.

I do want to also state that on November 6th, just a month or so ago, we had a tabletop exercise with the NYPD to coordinate our efforts in the event that something like this ever happened. And the result of that was today in less than two hours we are back totally up to speed and getting our passengers around. I want to especially thank, not only the NYPD, but also our passengers and our customers for their patience. Thank you.

Commissioner O'Neill: Alright we're going to take some questions.

Question: [Inaudible] did the suspect utter anything before he [inaudible]

Commissioner O'Neill: The question is is did the subject utter anything before he detonated the device.

Part of the investigation.

Question: Where was the device located?

Question: [Inaudible] potential target for years [inaudible] typically have police run [inaudible] a lot of these corridors connecting lines where you don't see [inaudible] at this point how [inaudible] potential security weakness something that might be addressed?

Commissioner O'Neill: Alright the question is that transit seems to be an apparent target, are there any weak - any weaknesses downstairs. Listen we have almost 3,000 transit cops that work in the subway system every day, we have the strategic response group, we have the critical response command. All parts of this system are patrolled.

Question: Can you describe, is it a belt, a backpack or a vest, a little more about the device. And in the video what does he look like he's doing? Does he look like he's waiting for a big crowd to gather? What is he doing?

Commissioner O'Neill: Alright the question was what does the device look like, and what was the subject doing before he detonated. John Miller can talk about that.

John Miller, Deputy Commissioner of Intelligence and Counterterrorism: Without getting into too many specifics the device is based on a pipe bomb. It was affixed to his person with a combination of Velcro and zip ties. The bomb squad is in the process now, along with the FBI special agent bomb technicians, of processing that crime scene with others. They're going to gather up those pieces and we'll have a better idea of what the device was put together with and what was inside it.

Question: [Inaudible]

Commissioner O'Neill: Hold up. Hold up.

Question: Any history on the perp?

Commissioner O'Neill: Yeah we're not going to go into that right now.

Question: [Inaudible]

Commissioner O'Neill: Hold on, right here. Juliette? Hold on, one at a time. Hold on. Juliette?

Question: Did he detonate it himself and was this done purposely as –

Commissioner O'Neill: That's – Juliette – the question is did he detonate it himself. In the video you see him walking down the corridor, that's part of the investigation. We don't know that to be a fact just yet. Right behind Juliette?

Question: [Inaudible] nationality [inaudible]

Commissioner O'Neill: We're working on that right now.

Question: Commissioner?

Commissioner O'Neill: Yeah right here.

Question: Is there a reason why we're seeing the incident from a few weeks ago, this incident more now and we've gone years, and years, and years in New York since 9/11 with nothing. And now all of a sudden it seems like we are seeing more incidents. Is there a reason why?

Commissioner O'Neill: There have been incidents starting with 9/11 but I'll let John talk about that a little bit more.

Deputy Commissioner John Miller: So as you all know, since the World Trade Center bombing of 1993, and well before that New York City, as the media capital of the world, has been a target of terrorist attacks in the past. There was the World Trade Center bombing of 1993, the 9/11 attacks, and in the course of post-9/11 world, as you're aware, there's also been approximately 26 plots that we can talk about that have been prevented through intelligence investigation and interdiction.

As you know there was the Times Square bombing which failed to detonate, there was the Chelsea bombing from September 17th of 16 and then there's this incident. So clearly do to an immense effort that is put into this by the FBI, the NYPD, our intelligence and counter-terrorism people, and everybody else. It's an all hands effort. We have prevented a significant number of plots. A significant number of attacks. But this is a fact of life, whether you're in New York or London or Paris. The question is can it happen here, and the answer is it can happen anywhere.

Question: Did he claim any connection to ISIS?

Question: [Inaudible]

Commissioner O'Neill: Alright hold on, hold on. Right here in the front row.

Question: Did he claim any connection to ISIS [inaudible]

Commissioner O'Neill: He did make statements but – the question is did he claim connection to ISIS. He did make statements but we're not going to talk about that right now.

Question: Is he from Brooklyn?

Commissioner O'Neill: Right behind you – hold on. Right behind you.

Question: Where exactly did the device go off in the passage way?

Commissioner O'Neill: It's at 4-2 and eight. He's walking eastbound to 4-2 and seven. It's – so it's from this corner to Times Square underneath. If you've taken the subway you know what the passageway I'm talking about.

Question: Commissioner –

Commissioner O'Neill: Alright, hold on. In the back?

Question: [Inaudible] subway system of this size runs 24 hours, seven days a week [inaudible] size and scope?

Commissioner O'Neill: Alright the question is the size of the subway system is massive, how can we have that – how can we have that system covered. Listen, it's going to take – there's six million people that ride the train every day. It's going to take everybody to have their eyes open, pay attention to what's going on, if you don't see – if you see something that makes you uncomfortable, make that phone call or talk to a cop. Give us a chance to investigate. In the back?

Question: [Inaudible]

Commissioner O'Neill: We don't know – the question is was it intentional, this spot where he detonated the explosive device. We don't know that yet. Right here, Miles?

Question: Commissioner, I understand you executed a search warrant in Brooklyn and have you – how far have you been able to track this suspect –

Commissioner O'Neill: Yeah we're not going to – the question is that are we at different locations with the – what was the?

Question: Brooklyn.

Commissioner O'Neill: In Brooklyn. I'm not going to go into that right now. We are – this is part of what we do. We're investigating his background now to see what addresses he has and we'll fully investigate him and the locations where he lives.

Question: Did he act alone?

Commissioner O'Neill: Alright, listen. We're going to come back to you later on with some more – with some more information. Thank you very much. Thanks.

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