

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE UNITED STATES FOR THE
MIDDLE DISTRICT OF ALABAMA, NORTHERN DIVISION

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|--------------------------|---|---------------------|
| UNITED STATES OF AMERICA |) | |
| |) | CRIMINAL ACTION NO. |
| v. |) | 2:17cr131-MHT |
| |) | (WO) |
| HANNAH SILAS |) | |

OPINION AND ORDER

This cause is now before the court on the question whether defendant Hannah Silas has the mental capacity to stand trial, that is, whether she is currently suffering from a mental disease or defect rendering her mentally incompetent to the extent that she is unable to understand the nature and consequences of the proceedings against her or to assist properly in her defense. See 18 U.S.C. § 4241(a). Based on all the evidence and the parties' representations made at a hearing held on February 9, 2018, the court concludes that Silas has the mental capacity to stand trial.

Pursuant to the government's request, Silas received a psychological evaluation at the Federal Medical Center, Carswell in Fort Worth, Texas. After

conducting the evaluation, a forensic psychologist, Dr. Amor Correa, produced a psychological report to describe Silas's condition.

The report found that, though Silas previously met criteria for Substance-Induced Psychotic Disorder, she is competent to stand trial so long as she avoids abusing controlled substances:

"As detailed in the Course of the Evaluation, Ms. Silas did not present with any major mental health symptoms during the evaluation period that would prevent her from being a competent defendant. She has demonstrated the ability to retain legal and Court concepts and apply these concepts to her own case in a rational manner. In addition, she has displayed no psychological deficits that would prevent her from assisting her attorney in her defense. She was able to communicate without substantial difficulty and discuss her case with this evaluator across multiple interviews. The same ability should generalize to her interactions with her attorney."

Forensic Psychological Evaluation (doc. no. 375, at 11). Both parties agree with this evaluation. And she is not currently abusing drugs.

Based upon the psychological evaluation and pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 4241(a), the court concludes that Silas is not currently suffering from a mental disease or defect such that she is unable to understand the nature and consequences of the proceedings against her or to assist properly in her defense.

Accordingly, it is ORDERED that defendant Hannah Silas is declared mentally competent to stand trial in this cause.

DONE, this the 9th day of February, 2018.

/s/ Myron H. Thompson
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE