

UNPUBLISHED

**UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE FOURTH CIRCUIT**

No. 18-6710

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff - Appellee,

v.

VIRGIL LAMONTE JOHNSON, a/k/a Ghetto,

Defendant - Appellant.

Appeal from the United States District Court for the District of South Carolina, at Columbia. Cameron McGowan Currie, Senior District Judge. (3:12-cr-00850-CMC-3; 3:16-cv-02226-CMC)

Submitted: October 18, 2018

Decided: October 23, 2018

Before GREGORY, Chief Judge, KEENAN, Circuit Judge, and HAMILTON, Senior Circuit Judge.

Dismissed by unpublished per curiam opinion.

Virgil Lamonte Johnson, Appellant Pro Se.

Unpublished opinions are not binding precedent in this circuit.

PER CURIAM:

Virgil Lamonte Johnson seeks to appeal the district court's order denying relief on his 28 U.S.C. § 2255 (2012) motion. The order is not appealable unless a circuit justice or judge issues a certificate of appealability. 28 U.S.C. § 2253(c)(1)(B) (2012). A certificate of appealability will not issue absent "a substantial showing of the denial of a constitutional right." 28 U.S.C. § 2253(c)(2) (2012). When the district court denies relief on the merits, a prisoner satisfies this standard by demonstrating that reasonable jurists would find that the district court's assessment of the constitutional claims is debatable or wrong. *Slack v. McDaniel*, 529 U.S. 473, 484 (2000); see *Miller-El v. Cockrell*, 537 U.S. 322, 336-38 (2003). When the district court denies relief on procedural grounds, the prisoner must demonstrate both that the dispositive procedural ruling is debatable, and that the motion states a debatable claim of the denial of a constitutional right. *Slack*, 529 U.S. at 484-85.

We have independently reviewed the record and conclude that Johnson has not made the requisite showing. Accordingly, we deny a certificate of appealability and dismiss the appeal. We dispense with oral argument because the facts and legal contentions are adequately presented in the materials before this court and argument would not aid the decisional process.

DISMISSED