



PRESS RELEASE

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Three Minnesota Men Sentenced for Providing Material Support to ISIL

The first three of nine defendants expected to be sentenced this week for conspiring to provide material support to the Islamic State of the Levant (ISIL), a designated foreign terrorist organization, were sentenced today in three separate hearings in U.S. District Court in Minneapolis. Abdullahi Yusuf, 20, of Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota, received time served and a sentence of 20 years supervised release. Abdirizak Warsame, 21, of Eagan, Minnesota, was sentenced to 30 months in prison and 20 years supervised release. Zacharia Abdurahman, 21, of Columbia Heights, Minnesota, was sentenced to 120 months in prison and 20 years supervised release.

The announcement was made by Acting Assistant Attorney General for the National Security Division Mary B. McCord, U.S. Attorney Andrew M. Luger for the District of Minnesota and Special Agent in Charge Richard T. Thornton of the FBI's Minneapolis Division.

"The hard work of rehabilitating those who seek to engage in ideological violence must continue," said U.S. Attorney Andrew M. Luger. "Judge Davis recognized that fact today in his considered sentences for those defendants who cooperated with the government and have begun to disengage from ISIL's violent ideology."

According to his guilty plea, in April 2014, Yusuf applied for an expedited U.S. Passport at the Minneapolis Passport Office. The following month, Yusuf attempted to travel from the Minneapolis–St. Paul International Airport in Minneapolis to Istanbul, Turkey, to join ISIL. He was stopped at the airport by federal agents. Yusuf pleaded guilty on Feb. 26, 2015. Yusuf cooperated with the U.S. and testified at the trial of three of his co-conspirators.

According to his guilty plea, Warsame participated in the conspiracy throughout 2014 and early 2015 in various capacities, including serving briefly as "emir" of the co-conspirators, and helping unindicted co-conspirator, Yusuf Jama, obtain contact information to aid his joining ISIL in Syria. Warsame pleaded guilty on Feb. 11. Warsame cooperated with the U.S. and testified at the trial of three of his co-conspirators.

According to his guilty plea, in November 2014, Abdurahman and three co-conspirators traveled by bus from Minneapolis to JFK airport in New York, where they attempted to fly overseas to

join ISIL in Syria. They were stopped from flying and questioned by federal agents before returning to Minnesota. Despite being stopped from traveling in November 2014, Abdurahman and the co-conspirators continued to discuss and plan another attempt to travel to Syria to join ISIL. Abdurahman pleaded guilty on Sept. 17, 2015.

This case is the result of an investigation conducted by members of the FBI-led Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF). The JTTF includes members from the following departments: U.S. Marshals Service, Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, Bloomington Police Department in Minnesota, St. Paul Police Department in Minnesota, Ramsey County Sheriff's Office in Minnesota, Hennepin County Sheriff's Office in Minnesota, Federal Air Marshals Service, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Defense, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Minneapolis Police Department, Burnsville Police Department in Minnesota, Department of State, Airport Police, Criminal Investigation Division of the IRS and the FBI.

This case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Andrew Winter, John Docherty and Julie Allyn of the District of Minnesota with assistance from the National Security Division's Counterterrorism Section.

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