

Three Members of al-Shabaab Plead Guilty to Conspiring to Provide Material Support to the Terrorist Organization

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<http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/three-members-al-shabaab-plead-guilty-conspiring-provide-material-support-terrorist>

Earlier today, Madhi Hashi, 25, of Somalia, Ali Yasin Ahmed, 30, of Sweden, and Mohamed Yusuf, 32, of Sweden, pleaded guilty to conspiring to provide material support to a designated foreign terrorist organization, al-Shabaab.

The guilty plea was announced by Assistant Attorney General for National Security John P. Carlin, Acting U.S. Attorney Kelly T. Currie of the Eastern District of New York and Assistant Director in Charge Diego Rodriguez, of the FBI's New York Field Office.

The guilty plea took place before U.S. District Judge John Gleeson of the Eastern District of New York. At sentencing, each of the defendants faces a maximum of 15 years in prison and automatic removal from the United States.

As stated in court today and according to court documents, between approximately December 2008 and August 2012, the defendants served as members of al-Shabaab in Somalia, where they agreed with others to support al-Shabaab and its extremist agenda. Defendants Mohamed Yusuf and Ali Yasin Ahmed fought in battles in Somalia against African Union forces. Defendant Madhi Hashi was a close associate of American-born jihadist Omar Hammami, with ties to a known al-Shabaab suicide bomber. In addition, defendant Yusuf is featured in an al-Shabaab propaganda video titled "Inspire the Believers."

In early August 2012, the defendants were apprehended together in East Africa by local authorities shortly after leaving Somalia on their way to Yemen. On Nov. 14, 2012, the FBI took custody of the defendants and brought them to the Eastern District of New York for prosecution.

"Hashi, Ahmed and Yusuf all pleaded guilty to conspiring to provide material support to a designated foreign terrorist organization, al-Shabaab," said Assistant Attorney General Carlin. "The National Security Division remains committed to identifying, disrupting and holding accountable all who seek to provide material support to terrorists both at home and abroad. I would like to thank all of the agents, analysts and prosecutors who are responsible for this case."

"The defendants were committed supporters of al-Shabaab, a violent terrorist organization that has demonstrated its capabilities and motives in numerous terrorist attacks overseas, and has publicly called for attacks against the United States," said Acting U.S. Attorney Currie. "We will use every tool at our disposal to combat terrorist groups, deter terrorist activity, and incapacitate individual terrorists around the world. Today's convictions demonstrate that criminal prosecution is an effective tool in our efforts to combat international terrorism."

Assistant Attorney General Carlin joined Acting U.S. Attorney Currie in thanking the federal, state and local law enforcement agencies who participate in the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force in New York.

The government's case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Shreve Ariail, Seth D. DuCharme and Richard M. Tucker of the Eastern District of New York and Trial Attorney Annamartine Salick of the National Security Division's Counterterrorism Section. Trial Attorneys Shanna Batten Aguirre and Dan Stigall of the Justice Department's Office of International Affairs provided valuable assistance.

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