

After that date, Abdin began to seek a handler to get him overseas to Syria or Egypt to make contact with ISIS. Unbeknownst to him, he ended up making contact with an undercover FBI employee. Abdin believed this person was affiliated with ISIS. These communications continued up until he was arrested.

Abdin had extensive communications with the FBI employee. During the course of these on line conversations, Abdin expressed continued loyalty to ISIS. He said he had given a pledge of loyalty to the Caliphate in 2014 and provided a video of a new pledge to Commander Abu Baker al Baghdadi, the self-proclaimed leader of ISIS or the Caliphate, in which he pledged to “wage jihad against the enemy of Allah.”

Abdin also indicated that he wished to join the Caliphate and requested to serve in combat. He stated that he was proficient with various weapons, including AK’s, SKS rifles, and pistols. He also asserted that he was well prepared, knew how to shoot, and had experience with and was reliable in close combat. He not only talked of joining jihad, he also purchased weapons, including an SKS rifle, modifying it to expand its capacity from a 10 round magazine to a 30 round magazine. Abdin practiced with an AK at a local gun store, and with an SKS and a 9mm at a local outdoor shooting range outside of Charleston.

Abdin took a picture of himself carrying the 9mm in his waistband and took a picture of himself practicing shooting at night at the local outdoor range, and sent these to the undercover FBI employee.

Abdin undertook concrete steps to join the Caliphate and travel overseas to fight jihad. He applied for a passport. On March 22, 2017, the FBI was notified Abdin’s passport was delivered to his residence in Ladson. Later on the same date, Abdin sent a message to the undercover FBI employee to tell him to “let the brothers know I am coming very soon”

On March 23, 2017, Abdin made flight reservations aboard a commercial airline departing Charleston with a final destination of Amman, Jordan. The date for travel was set for March 30, 2017 at approximately 7:30 PM. Shortly thereafter on March 23, 2017, Abdin communicated to the undercover FBI employee that he was scheduled to arrive in Amman, Jordan on April 1, 2017, at approximately 2:05 AM.

On March 30, 2017, at approximately 4:17 PM Abdin arrived at the Charleston International Airport with one piece of luggage and a carry-on backpack. Abdin proceeded to a commercial airline ticket counter where he provided the attendant with travel documents and received a boarding pass for international travel to Amman. Abdin then proceeded from the ticketing counter toward the Transportation Security Administration’s security screening area where he was arrested.

Abdin, a U.S. citizen, faces a statutory maximum sentence of 20 years in prison. The maximum statutory sentence is prescribed by Congress and is provided here for informational purposes. Any sentencing of the defendant will be determined by the court based on the advisory Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

The case was investigated by Special Agents of the FBI’s Joint Terrorism Task Force. This case is being prosecuted by Trial Attorney Jennifer Burke of the National Security Division’s

Counterterrorism Section and Assistant U.S. Attorney Sean Kittrell of the District of South Carolina.

A circular logo featuring a blue fingerprint pattern. The letters "IPT" are prominently displayed in the center in a large, bold, white, sans-serif font. The entire logo is enclosed within a thin grey circular border.

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