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THURSDAY, JULY 7, 2016
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CINCINNATI-AREA MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO PLOT TO ATTACK U.S. GOVERNMENT OFFICERS

Defendant was Directed to Launch Attacks by Deceased ISIL Recruiter Junaid Hussain

WASHINGTON – Munir Abdulkader, 21, of West Chester, Ohio, pleaded guilty to attempting to kill officers and employees of the United States, providing material support to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), a designated foreign terrorist organization, and possession of a firearm in furtherance of a crime of violence. Abdulkader was charged for his plot to kill an employee of a U.S. military installation and then attack a local police station, all in the Southern District of Ohio.

The unsealing today of the charges and plea agreement were announced by Assistant Attorney General for National Security John P. Carlin, Acting U.S. Attorney Benjamin C. Glassman for the Southern District of Ohio and Special Agent in Charge Angela Byers of the FBI's Cincinnati Field Division.

According to the statement of facts admitted by Abdulkader as part of his guilty plea, beginning in at least July 2014 and continuing into 2015, Abdulkader expressed his support for ISIL on Twitter. From approximately March 2015 to mid-April 2015, Abdulkader began speaking with a confidential human source (CHS) about his desire and intention to travel to Syria in order to join ISIL, and then began making plans and preparations to travel overseas. He secured a passport, saved money for the trip and researched the necessary logistical details. However, in approximately late April 2015, Abdulkader expressed concerns about his ability to travel and postponed his original departure date of approximately May 2, 2015.

In May 2015, Abdulkader was in communication with one or more individuals located overseas who he understood were members of ISIL. One of the individuals was a member of ISIL identified as Junaid Hussein. Through these communications, Hussein directed and encouraged Abdulkader to plan and execute a violent attack within the United States. Abdulkader communicated with Hussein and the CHS about a plan to kill an identified military

employee on account of his position with the U.S. government. The plan included abducting the employee at the employee's home and filming the execution. After killing the employee, Abdulkader planned to perpetrate a violent attack on a police station in the Southern District of Ohio using firearms and Molotov cocktails.

In preparation for the attacks, Abdulkader asked the CHS to purchase a vest for holding ammunition. On or about May 18, 2015, Abdulkader conducted surveillance on a police station in the Southern District of Ohio. On or about May 20, 2015, Abdulkader went to a shooting range, learned how to operate certain firearms and practiced shooting the firearms. Abdulkader also negotiated the purchase of a firearm, an AK-47 assault rifle. On May 21, 2015, in a controlled purchase, Abdulkader bought the AK-47 assault rifle and was subsequently arrested.

Abdulkader was charged by complaint on May 22, 2015. An information was filed against Abdulkader on March 2, 2016, and he pleaded guilty to the three charges in the information on March 24, 2016, before U.S. District Judge Michael R. Barrett of the Southern District of Ohio.

Attempted murder of government employees and officials carries a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison. Material support of a foreign terrorist organization carries a maximum sentence of 15 years in prison. Possession of a firearm in furtherance of an attempted crime of violence carries a mandatory sentence of five years in prison.

Assistant Attorney General Carlin and Acting U.S. Attorney Glassman commended the investigation of this case by the JTTF. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Tim Mangan and Trial Attorney Michael Dittoe of the National Security Division's Counterterrorism Section.

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