

West Chester Man Sentenced to 20 Years for Plot to Attack U.S. Government Officers

U.S. Attorney's Office, Southern District of Ohio

Wednesday, November 23, 2016

<https://www.justice.gov/usao-sdoh/pr/west-chester-man-sentenced-20-years-plot-attack-us-government-officers>

CINCINNATI – Munir Abdulkader, 22, of West Chester, Ohio, was sentenced to 240 months in prison and lifetime supervised release for plotting to murder a military base employee and attack a Cincinnati area police station in the name of ISIL.

Acting Assistant Attorney General for National Security Mary McCord, U.S. Attorney Benjamin C. Glassman for the Southern District of Ohio, Special Agent in Charge Angela L. Byers of the FBI's Cincinnati Division, West Chester Police Chief Joel Herzog, Ohio State Highway Patrol Superintendent Colonel Paul A. Pride and Cincinnati Police Chief Eliot Isaac announced the sentence handed down today by U.S. District Judge Michael R. Barrett.

Abdulkader previously pleaded guilty to attempting to kill officers and employees of the United States, material support of a foreign terrorist organization and possession of a firearm in furtherance of a crime of violence.

The plan was for Abdulkader to murder a specific employee of a military base at the employee's home. He planned to videotape the murder so that it could be used in an ISIL propaganda video to further ISIL's cause. Following the murder, Abdulkader would then launch a violent attack on a police station in the Cincinnati area.

In preparation for the attacks, Abdulkader conducted surveillance of the police station, received a targeting package about the victim, went to a shooting range, learned how to operate certain firearms, and practiced shooting the firearms. He also bought an AK-47 assault rifle for the attack.

According to the statement of facts admitted by Abdulkader at the plea hearing, beginning in at least July 2014 and continuing into 2015, Abdulkader expressed his support for the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant ("ISIL") on Twitter accounts. 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 as a fighter.

During that same time, Abdulkader made plans and preparations to travel to Syria to join ISIL as a fighter. Namely, he secured a passport, saved money for the trip and researched the logistical details of traveling to Syria and joining ISIL. In late April, though, Abdulkader expressed concerns about the ability to travel and postponed his original departure date of May 2, 2015.

During May 2015, Abdulkader was in electronic communication with one or more individuals located overseas who he understood were members of ISIL. One of those individuals was a member of ISIL identified as Junaid Hussein. Through their communications, Junaid Hussein directed and encouraged Abdulkader to plan and execute a violent attack within the United States.

Abdulkader communicated with Junaid Hussein and the CHS about a plan to kill an identified military employee on account of his position with the United States government. The plan included abducting the employee at the employee's home and filming the execution of the employee.

After killing the employee, Abdulkader planned to execute a violent attack on a police station in the Southern District of Ohio using firearms and Molotov cocktails.

Abdulkader was arrested on May 21, 2015 by the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF), after a controlled purchase and possession of the AK-47 assault rifle.

The defendant was charged by criminal complaint on May 22, 2015 and a bill of information was filed on March 2, 2016. Abdulkader pleaded guilty to the three charges in the information on March 24, 2016, before U.S. District Judge Barrett. The court documents and proceedings were unsealed in July.

“Using social media to communicate with the now-deceased Syria-based ISIL terrorist Junaid Hussain, Abdulkader coordinated and planned violent murders of military members and police officers,” said Acting Assistant Attorney General McCord. “Identifying and stopping such ISIL-directed and inspired plots is and will remain one of our highest priorities.”

“Abdulkader placed himself under the direction and control of an evil foreign terrorist organization and plotted with that organization to conduct multiple murderous attacks in the Cincinnati area,” U.S. Attorney Glassman said. “The sentence of twenty years in prison, followed by a lifetime of federal supervision, is fully warranted by the egregious facts of this case. It will protect the public from this defendant.”

Acting Assistant Attorney General McCord and 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 Michael Dittoe of the Justice Department’s National Security Division Counterterrorism Section.

The JTTF is made up of officers and agents from the Cincinnati Police Department, Colerain Police Department, Dayton Police Department, Ohio State Highway Patrol, University of Cincinnati Police Department, United States Air Force OSI, FBI, United States Immigrations and Customs Enforcement, United States Internal Revenue Service, United States Secret Service, United States Postal Inspection Service, West Chester Police Department and Xenia Police Department.

USAO - Ohio, Southern
Topic: National Security
Updated November 23, 2016