



THE UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT *of* JUSTICE

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## **OHIO MAN ARRESTED AND CHARGED WITH ATTEMPTING TO TRAVEL TO JOIN ISIS**

**Note:** A copy of the criminal complaint can be found [here](#).

WASHINGTON – An Ohio man has been arrested and charged by criminal complaint with attempting to provide material support to ISIS-affiliated foreign terrorist organizations. Naser Almadaoji, 19, an Iraqi-born naturalized U.S. citizen, was arrested yesterday at John Glenn International Airport in Columbus, Ohio. It is alleged Almadaoji intended to travel through Kazakhstan on his way to Afghanistan, where he intended to join with, and fight for, ISIS.

Assistant Attorney General for National Security John C. Demers, United States Attorney Benjamin C. Glassman for the Southern District of Ohio and Assistant Director Michael Garrity of the FBI's Counterterrorism Division made the announcement.

"Naser Almadaoji allegedly attempted to seek terrorist training in weapons and tactics and discussed a willingness to conduct terrorist 'projects' in the United States on behalf of foreign terrorist groups," said Assistant Attorney Demers. "Protecting America from terrorist activity, including conduct like this, remains the highest priority of the Department of Justice."

"This is the third individual arrested by the FBI on terrorism charges in just over a week. As demonstrated by these arrests -- two in Ohio and one in Illinois -- the threat posed by terrorism remains extremely serious," said Assistant Director McGarrity. "The FBI is working with our law enforcement partners day and night through our Joint Terrorism Task Forces across the nation to identify terrorists and those who support them. The American public also has an important role to play, and we urge anyone who sees something suspicious to contact law enforcement. Your tips are vitally important to protecting our country."

"According to the charging document, Almadaoji wanted to make his way to Afghanistan to train with an ISIS organization," U.S. Attorney Glassman said. "He allegedly pledged allegiance to the leader of ISIS in a video in which he wore a head scarf, and had plans to cause conflict in America between the United States

Government and anti-government militias. These are serious allegations, and thwarting terrorist threats remains a top priority for the United States Attorney's Office."

According to an affidavit filed in support of the criminal complaint, Almadaoji purchased a plane ticket for travel on October 24. It is alleged that Almadaoji intended to travel to Astana, Kazakhstan, where he planned to be smuggled into Afghanistan so that he could receive military training from ISIS Wilayat Khorasan and then fight for the Islamic State (or one of its affiliates). Almadaoji explained to an individual whom he believed to be in contact with ISIS that he wanted "weapons experts training, planning, executing, hit and run, capturing high value targets, ways to break into homes and avoid security guards. That type of training."

It is alleged that, between February 16 and 24, 2018, Almadaoji traveled to Egypt and Jordan. Following that travel, in August 2018, Almadaoji allegedly communicated online with an individual he believed was a contact with ISIS organizations. He represented that he tried to join a terrorist organization during his travels to Jordan and Egypt stating, "I don't wanna say here why I was in Egypt but him [an Egyptian associated] and I planned something and it didn't work at [sic] well."

In the same month, it is alleged that Almadaoji told a second individual online – whom he also believed to be associated with ISIS – that he was "always willing" to assist with "projects" in the United States.

According to the affidavit, Almadaoji pledged allegiance to ISIS and discussed with the second contact that he planned to cause the collapse of the United States by starting a conflict between the United States Government and anti-government militias." Almadaoji allegedly recorded and sent a video of himself wearing a headscarf and pledging allegiance to the leader of the Islamic State.

It is further alleged that Almadaoji translated ISIS propaganda from Arabic to English, and told his contact, "Don't thank me . . . it's my duty."

Attempting to provide material support and resources to a foreign terrorist organization is a federal crime punishable by up to 20 years in prison. The maximum potential sentences in this case are prescribed by Congress and are provided here for informational purposes only, as any sentencing of the defendant will be determined by the assigned judge.

Assistant Attorney General Demers and U.S. Attorney Glassman commended the investigation of this case by the FBI.

The case is being prosecuted by Trial Attorney Justin Sher of the National Security Division's Counterterrorism Section and Assistant United States Attorney Dominick S. Gerace. A criminal complaint merely contains allegations, and the

defendant is presumed innocent unless proven guilty in a court of law.

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