



The United States Department of Justice

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2019

AMERICAN CITIZEN, AN ALLEGED ISIS SNIPER AND WEAPONS INSTRUCTOR, INDICTED FOR PROVIDING MATERIAL SUPPORT TO ISIS

WASHINGTON – A five-count indictment was filed yesterday in federal court in Brooklyn charging Ruslan Maratovich Asainov, 43, also known as “Suleiman Al-Amriki” and “Suleiman Al-Kazakhi,” with conspiracy to provide material support to ISIS; providing material support to ISIS in the form of personnel, training, expert advice and assistance and weapons; receipt of military-type training from ISIS; and obstruction of justice. If convicted, Asainov faces a maximum sentence of life in prison. Asainov will be arraigned at a later date.

John C. Demers, Assistant Attorney General for National Security; Richard P. Donoghue, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York; Michael McGarrity, Assistant Director of the Counterterrorism Division, FBI; William F. Sweeney Jr., Assistant Director-in-Charge, FBI, New York Field Office; and James P. O’Neill, Commissioner, New York City Police Department (NYPD), announced the charges.

As detailed in court filings, Asainov is a naturalized U.S. citizen born in Kazakhstan, who resided in Brooklyn. As alleged, in December 2013, Asainov traveled on a one-way ticket to Istanbul, Turkey, a common transit point to obtain entry into Syria. He subsequently entered Syria, joined ISIS and became a sniper for the terrorist organization. Over time, Asainov rose through the ranks to become an ISIS “emir” in charge of training other ISIS members in the use of weapons. He also attempted to recruit another individual to travel from the United States to Syria to fight for ISIS.

As further alleged, in March 2015, Asainov asked a confidential informant to send him approximately \$2,800 so that he could purchase a scope for his rifle. Asainov subsequently sent the confidential informant two photographs of himself holding an assault rifle fitted with a scope. Asainov messaged one individual, exclaiming in

reference to ISIS, “we are the worst terrorist organization in the world that has ever existed,” and added that he wished to die on the battlefield.

The charges in the indictment are allegations and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

The government’s case is being handled by the Office’s National Security and Cybercrime Section. Assistant United States Attorneys Douglas M. Pravda, Saritha Komatireddy and J. Matthew Haggans are in charge of the prosecution, with assistance provided by Trial Attorney Jacqueline L. Barkett of the Counterterrorism Section of the National Security Division of the Department of Justice.

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