

Department of Justice

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PENNSYLVANIA MAN PLEADED GUILTY TO CONSPIRACY TO PROVIDE MATERIAL SUPPORT TO ISIL AND TRANSMITTING A COMMUNICATION CONTAINING A THREAT TO INJURE

WASHINGTON – Jalil Ibn Ameer Aziz, 20, of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, pleaded guilty today to conspiracy to provide material support and resources to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), a designated foreign terrorist organization, and transmitting a communication containing a threat to injure.

The announcement was made by Acting Assistant Attorney General for National Security Mary B. McCord, U.S. Attorney Bruce D. Brandler for the Middle District of Pennsylvania and Special Agent in Charge Michael Harpster of the FBI's Philadelphia Division. The plea was entered before Chief U.S. District Court Judge Christopher C. Conner.

“Jalil Ibn Ameer Aziz conspired to provide material support to ISIL by aiding individuals in their pursuit of traveling overseas to join the designated foreign terrorist organization and by using social media to propagate ISIL’s threats to injure U.S. service members,” said Acting Assistant Attorney General McCord. “The National Security Division’s highest priority is counterterrorism, and we will remain vigilant in our efforts to hold accountable those who seek to provide material support to foreign terrorist organizations and threaten members of our military.”

“The security of the American People is the highest priority for our office and the Department of Justice,” said U.S. Attorney Brandler. “While we cannot eliminate terrorism completely, we can bring to justice those responsible for providing material support and resources to terrorist groups and for spreading hate and destruction in our communities and abroad. Thankfully, the defendant’s activities were disrupted by the FBI and the Joint Terrorism Task Force and justice will be served in this case.”

"As evidenced here, ISIL loyalists need not travel to the field of battle to threaten lives and do harm," said Special Agent in Charge Harpster. "An American citizen provided material support to terrorists from American soil, while enjoying all the rights and privileges scorned by ISIL. We are gratified that Mr. Aziz is being brought to justice for these acts."

According to the filed court documents, on Dec. 22, 2015, Aziz was charged in an indictment with conspiring and attempting to provide material support to ISIL (Counts 1 and 2). A superseding indictment was returned on May 18, 2016, which added Solicitation to Commit a

crime of violence (Count 3) and transmitting a communication containing a threat to injure (Count 4).

According to the superseding indictment, from July 2014 to Dec. 17, 2015, Aziz knowingly conspired to provide, provided and attempted to provide material support, including personnel and services, to ISIL. The superseding indictment also alleges that during the same time period, Aziz solicited, commanded, induced and endeavored to persuade others to kill and attempt to kill officers and employees of the United States. The superseding indictment further alleges that he knowingly tweeted the names, addresses, photographs and military branches of approximately 100 U.S. service members to followers and viewers of his Twitter account. The communication also contained threats to injure the service members, stating “kill them in their own lands, behead them in their own homes, stab them to death as they walk their street thinking that they are safe.”

Aziz pledged his allegiance to the leader of ISIL and used at least 71 different Twitter accounts to advocate violence against the U.S. and its citizens, to disseminate ISIL propaganda and to espouse pro-ISIL views. On at least three occasions, Aziz allegedly used his Twitter accounts and other electronic communication services to assist persons seeking to travel to and fight for ISIL. In one instance, Aziz allegedly acted as an intermediary between a person in Turkey and several well-known members of ISIL.

Aziz passed location information, including maps and a telephone number, between these ISIL supporters. A search of a tactical/military style backpack located in Aziz’s closet identified five loaded M4-style high-capacity magazines, a modified straight edge knife, a thumb drive, medication, flashlights, a toothbrush, sunflower seeds, a lighter, nail clippers, fingerless gloves, a pocket watch and a black balaclava, which is like a ski mask and similar to those worn by ISIL supporters.

The maximum penalty provided in the statute for Count 1, Conspiracy to Provide Material Support and Resources to a Designated Foreign Terrorist Organization, is 20 years’ imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, a term of supervised release of up to life and a \$100 special assessment. The maximum penalty for Count 4, Transmitting a Communication Containing a Threat to Injure, is five years’ imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, a term of supervised release of three years and a \$100 special assessment.

The maximum statutory sentence is prescribed by Congress and is provided here for informational purposes. If convicted of any offense, the 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 the FBI’s Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF), which includes the Pentagon Force Protection Agency and the Pennsylvania State Police, with assistance from the Harrisburg Bureau of Police. Assistant U.S. Attorney Daryl F. Bloom and Trial Attorneys Robert Sander and Adam L. Small of the National Security Division’s Counterterrorism Section prosecuted the case.

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