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Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

District of New Jersey

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, June 28, 2022

Sussex County Woman Admits Concealing Terrorist Financing to Syrian Foreign Terrorist Organizations

NEWARK, N.J. – A Sussex County, New Jersey, woman today admitted that she concealed her attempts to provide material support to Syrian foreign terrorist organizations, U.S. Attorney Philip R. Sellinger, Assistant Attorney General Matthew G. Olsen of the U.S. Department of Justice's National Security Division, FBI-Newark Special Agent in Charge Jesse Levine, and FBI Assistant Director for Counterterrorism Timothy Langan announced.

Maria Bell, aka "Maria Sue Bell," 54, of Hopatcong, New Jersey, pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge John Michael Vazquez to an information charging her with one count of concealing attempts to provide material support to designated foreign terrorist organizations.

According to documents previously filed in this case:

Bell admitted that from February 2018 to November 2018 she knowingly concealed and disguised the nature, location, source, ownership and control of the attempted provision of material support and resources to fighters based in Syria who were members Jabhat Fath al-sham, also known as Jabhat Fateh al-Sham (JFS) and Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS). Bell admitted that she knew JFS and HTS were designated foreign terrorist organizations, that JFS and HTS has engaged or engages in terrorist activities. She admitted the offense to which she pleaded guilty involved the concealment of the attempted provision of funds or other material support or resources with the intent, knowledge, or reason to believe they were to be used to commit or assist in the commission of a violent act.

The charge of concealment of terrorist financing to a designated foreign terrorist organization carries a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000, or twice the gross gain or loss from the offense. Sentencing is scheduled for Nov. 21, 2022.

U.S. Attorney Sellinger credited special agents of the FBI and task force officers of the Joint Terrorism Task Force, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Jesse Levine, and special agents of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Homeland Security Investigations, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Jason J. Molina in Newark, with the investigation leading to the charges.

The government is represented by Joyce M. Malliet, Chief of the U.S. Attorney's Office's National Security Unit and Trial Attorneys Brenda Sue Thornton and Kathleen Campbell of the U.S. Department of Justice's Counterterrorism Section of the National Security Division.

Attachment(s):

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Topic(s):

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