

Maryland Man Pleads Guilty to Conspiracy to Provide Material Support to Terrorists

U.S. Department of Justice

May 04, 2012

Office of Public Affairs

(202) 514-2007/TDD (202) 514-1888

WASHINGTON—Mohammad Hassan Khalid, 18, a Pakistani citizen and U.S. lawful permanent resident who resided in Maryland, pleaded guilty today to conspiracy to provide material support to terrorists, stemming from his participation in a scheme to support, recruit, and coordinate members of a conspiracy in their plan to wage violent jihad in and around Europe.

The guilty plea before U.S. District Judge Petrese B. Tucker in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania was announced by Lisa Monaco, Assistant Attorney General for National Security; Zane David Memeger, U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania; and George C. Venizelos, Special Agent in Charge of the Philadelphia Division of the FBI.

Khalid, aka “Abdul Ba’aree ‘Abd Al-Rahman Al-Hassan Al-Afghani Al-Junoobi W’at-Emiratee,” was charged with one count of conspiracy to provide material support to terrorists in a superseding indictment returned on October 20, 2011. Khalid faces a potential sentence of 15 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine at sentencing.

Khalid’s co-defendant, Ali Charaf Damache, aka “Theblackflag,” 46, an Algerian man who resided in Ireland, was charged with one count of conspiracy to provide material support to terrorists and one count of attempted identity theft to facilitate an act of international terrorism. Damache is in custody in Ireland and is being prosecuted there on an unrelated criminal charge. “Today’s plea, which involved a radicalized teen in Maryland who connected with like-minded individuals around the globe via the Internet, underscores the evolving nature of violent extremism today,” said Assistant Attorney General Monaco. “I thank the many agents, analysts, and prosecutors who helped bring about this case.”

“This case has demonstrated that age is not a limiter to threats to our nation’s security,” said U.S. Attorney Memeger. “Regardless of a defendant’s age or background, we are committed to keeping our communities and our country safe through the investigation and prosecution of violent extremist activity.”

“This investigation and the guilty plea announced today underscores the continuing threat we face from violent extremism and radicalism, both from within our country and from across the world,” said FBI Special Agent in Charge Venizelos. “These threats can emerge from anywhere and from anyone, from individuals and groups in the farthest reaches of the globe or from those in the United States sitting in the perceived safety of their own homes.”

According to the plea memorandum, indictment and other court documents filed in the case, from about 2008 through July 2011, Khalid and Damache conspired with Colleen R. LaRose, Jamie Paulin Ramirez, and others to provide material support and resources, including logistical support, recruitment services, financial support, identification documents, and personnel, to a conspiracy to kill overseas.

LaRose, aka “Fatima LaRose,” aka “JihadJane,” pleaded guilty in February 2011 in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania to conspiracy to provide material support to terrorists, conspiracy to kill in a foreign country, false statements, and attempted identity theft. Ramirez pleaded guilty in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania in March 2011 to conspiracy to provide material support to terrorists.

Khalid, Damache, and others devised and coordinated a violent jihad organization consisting of men and women from Europe and the United States divided into a planning team, a research team, an action team, a recruitment team and a finance team; some of whom would travel to South Asia for explosives training and return to Europe to wage violent jihad.

As part of the conspiracy, Khalid, Damache, LaRose, and others recruited men online to wage violent jihad in South Asia and Europe. In addition, Khalid, Damache, LaRose, and others allegedly recruited women who had passports and the ability to travel to and around Europe in support of violent jihad. LaRose, Paulin-Ramirez and others traveled to and around Europe to participate in and support violent jihad. In addition, Khalid, LaRose, and others also solicited funds online for terrorists.

For example, in July 2009, Khalid posted or caused to be posted an online solicitation for funds to support terrorism on behalf of LaRose and later sent electronic communications to multiple online forums requesting the deletion of all posts by LaRose after she was questioned by the FBI. In August 2009, Khalid sent a questionnaire to LaRose in which he asked another potential female recruit about her beliefs and intentions with regard to violent jihad. In addition, Khalid received from LaRose and concealed the location of a U.S. passport that she had stolen from another individual.

The Khalid case was investigated by the FBI Field Division in Baltimore, in conjunction with the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force in Philadelphia and the FBI Field Divisions in New York and Washington, D.C. Authorities in Ireland also provided assistance in this matter.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jennifer Arbittier Williams, in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, and Matthew F. Blue, Trial Attorney from the Counterterrorism Section of the Justice Department's National Security Division. The Office of International Affairs in the Justice Department's Criminal Division also provided assistance.

<http://www.fbi.gov/philadelphia/press-releases/2012/maryland-man-pleads-guilty-to-conspiracy-to-provide-material-support-to-terrorists>