



THE UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT *of* JUSTICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
TUESDAY, AUGUST 14, 2018

## **CALIFORNIA MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO CONSPIRING TO VIOLATE U.S. SANCTIONS AGAINST SYRIA**

WASHINGTON – Rasheed Al Jijakli, 57, a Syrian-born naturalized U.S. citizen of Walnut, California, pleaded guilty yesterday to a charge of conspiring to export U.S.-origin tactical gear to Syria in violation of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act and Syria Sanctions. Jijakli's guilty plea was accepted by United States District Judge James V. Selna of the United States District Court for the Central District of California.

The guilty plea was announced by Assistant Attorney General for National Security John C. Demers, U.S. Attorney Nicola T. Hanna of the Central District of California, Assistant Director in Charge Paul D. Delacourt of the FBI's Los Angeles Division, and Special Agent in Charge Richard Weir of the U.S. Department of Commerce's Office of Export Enforcement Los Angeles Field Office.

In the factual basis filed as part of the plea agreement, Jijakli admitted that from April 2012 through March 2013, he conspired with other individuals to export tactical gear, including U.S.-origin laser boresighters, day and night vision rifle scopes, and other items (Tactical Gear) from the United States to Syria. From June through July 2012, Jijakli and one of the co-conspirators (Co-conspirator 1) purchased the Tactical Gear. On July 17, 2012, Jijakli traveled from Los Angeles, California to Istanbul, Turkey with the Tactical Gear, with the intent that it would be provided to Syrian rebels training in Turkey and fighting in Syria. Jijakli provided some of the Tactical Gear, specifically the laser boresighters, to a second co-conspirator who Jijakli learned was a member of Ahrar Al-Sham. Jijakli also provided the goods to other armed Syrian insurgent groups in Syria and Turkey. In total, Jijakli and co-conspirators knowingly provided at least 43 laser boresighters, 85 day rifle scopes, 30 night vision rifle scopes, tactical flashlights, a digital monocular, 5 radios, and 1 bulletproof vest to Ahrar Al-Sham and other Syrian rebels in Syria, or with knowledge that the Tactical Gear was going to Syria. Also, in August and September 2012, Jijakli directed co-conspirators to withdraw thousands of dollars from Palmyra Corporation, where Jijakli was the Chief

The FBI seal is visible in the background, featuring a circular design with a central shield and the words "FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION" around the perimeter.

Executive Officer, to pay for Tactical Gear for Syrian rebels.

Jijakli was indicted by a federal grand jury on July 14, 2017. He faces a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison when sentenced on December 3, 2018. The maximum statutory sentence is prescribed by Congress and is provided here for informational purposes, as the sentencing of Jijakli will be determined by the court based on the advisory sentencing guidelines and other statutory factors.

The prosecution is the result of an investigation conducted by the FBI, Homeland Security Investigations, the U.S. Department of Commerce's Office of Export Enforcement, and IRS Criminal Investigation.

This is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S Attorney Mark Takla of the Central District of California and Trial Attorney Christian Ford of the National Security Division's Counterintelligence and Export Control Section.

# # #

NSD

18 - 1049

Do not reply to this message. If you have questions, please use the contacts in the message or call the Office of Public Affairs at 202-514-2007.