



THE UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT *of* JUSTICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**CALIFORNIA MAN SENTENCED TO NEARLY 4 YEARS IN
FEDERAL PRISON FOR SCHEME TO SMUGGLE RIFLE
SCOPES AND TACTICAL EQUIPMENT TO SYRIA**

WASHINGTON – Rasheed Al Jijakli, 57, a Syrian-born naturalized U.S. citizen who resides in Walnut, California, was sentenced today to 46 months in prison for his role in a scheme to smuggle rifle scopes and other tactical gear to Syria in violation of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act and sanctions imposed on Syria by the United States.

The announcement was made by Assistant Attorney General for National Security John C. Demers and U.S. Attorney Nicola T. Hanna for the Central District of California. The sentence was issued by U.S. District Judge James V. Selna.

During today’s sentencing hearing, Judge Selna agreed with prosecutors that the goods Jijakli took to Syria were “instruments of death.”

Jijakli pleaded guilty to the felony offense on Aug. 13 and admitted he conspired with others to export tactical gear from the United States to Syria. That tactical gear included U.S.-origin laser boresighters, and day- and night-vision rifle scopes.

From June through July of 2012, Jijakli and a co-conspirator purchased the tactical gear. On July 17, 2012, Jijakli traveled with the tactical gear from Los Angeles to Istanbul 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 the militant group Ahrar Al-Sham. Jijakli also provided the goods to other armed Syrian insurgent groups in Syria and Turkey.

Jijakli and his co-conspirators knowingly provided at least 43 laser boresighters, 85 day rifle scopes, 30 night-vision rifle scopes, tactical flashlights, a digital monocular, five radios, and one bulletproof vest to Ahrar Al-Sham and other Syrian rebels in Syria, or with knowledge that the tactical gear was going to Syria.

Additionally, in August and September 2012, Jijakli directed co-conspirators to

withdraw thousands of dollars from Palmyra Corporation, where Jijakli was the chief executive officer, to pay for tactical gear that would be provided to Syrian rebels. In his plea agreement, Jijakli specifically admitted directing that \$17,000 from Palmyra be used to purchase tactical gear intended for Syrian rebels.

The case against Jijakli was the result of an investigation conducted by the FBI, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations, the U.S. Department of Commerce's Office of Export Enforcement, and IRS Criminal Investigation.

The case against Jijakli was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Mark Takla of the Central District of California's Terrorism and Export Crimes Section, and Trial Attorney Christian Ford of the National Security Division's Counterintelligence and Export Control Section.

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