



Department of Justice

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TWO ILLINOIS MEN CHARGED WITH CONSPIRING TO PROVIDE MATERIAL SUPPORT TO ISIS

WASHINGTON – Joseph D. Jones, also known as “Yusuf Abdulhaqq,” 35, and Edward Schimenti, also known as “Abdul Wali,” 35, both of Zion, Illinois, were arrested today on a federal complaint charging them with conspiring and attempting to provide material support and resources to the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS). Jones and Schimenti were arrested this morning. They are scheduled to make an initial appearance at on April 12 at 3:00 p.m. CDT (4:00 p.m. EDT) before U.S. Magistrate Judge M. David Weisman in Chicago, Illinois. Authorities also executed a search warrant at Jones’ residence in Zion today.

The complaint and arrests were announced by Acting Assistant Attorney General for National Security Mary B. McCord, Acting U.S. Attorney Joel R. Levin for the Northern District of Illinois and Special Agent in Charge Michael J. Anderson of the FBI’s Chicago Office.

According to a complaint and affidavit filed in U.S. District Court in Chicago, Jones and Schimenti, both U.S. citizens, pledged their allegiance to ISIS and advocated on social media for violent extremism in support of the terrorist group. In the fall of 2015, the pair befriended three individuals whom Jones and Schimenti believed were fellow ISIS devotees. Unbeknownst to Jones and Schimenti, two of the individuals were undercover FBI employees and the third individual was cooperating with law enforcement and was not an ISIS supporter.

Over the next several months, as part of the conspiracy, Jones and Schimenti allegedly took steps to assist the cooperating source with plans to travel overseas to join ISIS. The defendants met the undercover FBI employees and the cooperating source on numerous occasions, during which Jones and Schimenti discussed their devotion and commitment to ISIS, according to the complaint. Some of the meetings took place in Waukegan, Zion, Bridgeview, North Chicago, Highland Park and Chicago, in Illinois.

At one point, Jones and Schimenti shared photographs of themselves holding the ISIS flag at the Illinois Beach State Park in north suburban Zion, according to the complaint. In a recorded conversation with the cooperating source, Schimenti commented that Schimenti would like to see the ISIS flag “on top of the White House,” the complaint states.

Earlier this year, Schimenti engaged in physical training exercises with the cooperating source at a gym in Zion, the complaint states. Understanding that the cooperating source

intended to travel overseas to fight for ISIS, Schimenti commented that the exercises would “make you good, you know, in the battlefield,” according to the complaint.

According to the complaint, last month, the pair furnished several cellular phones to the cooperating source, believing they would be used to detonate explosive devices in ISIS attacks overseas. On April 7, Jones and Schimenti drove the cooperating source to O’Hare International Airport in Chicago with the understanding that the source would be traveling to Syria to join and fight with ISIS. Schimenti told the source to “drench that land with they, they blood.”

A complaint is not evidence of guilt. The defendants are presumed innocent and are entitled to a fair trial at which the government has the burden of proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

The charge in the complaint is punishable by up to 20 years in prison. 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 Chicago Joint Terrorism Task Force, which is comprised of FBI personnel and representatives from numerous federal, state and local law enforcement agencies. The Zion Police Department also provided valuable assistance. The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Barry Jonas and Rajnath Laud of the Northern District of Illinois, and Trial Attorney Lolita Lukose of the National Security Division’s Counterterrorism Section.

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