

Department of Justice Press Release

For Immediate Release

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United States Attorney's Office

Eastern District of New York

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Brooklyn Resident Indicted for Conspiracy to Commit Murder Overseas and Conspiracy to Provide Material Support to Terrorists

BROOKLYN—An indictment was unsealed in federal court this morning charging Betim Kaziu, a U.S. citizen and resident of Brooklyn, with conspiracy to commit murder in a foreign country and conspiracy to provide material support to terrorists. Kaziu is scheduled to be arraigned later today before United States Magistrate Judge Joan M. Azrack, at the U.S. Courthouse, 225 Cadman Plaza East, Brooklyn, New York.

The charges were announced by Benton J. Campbell, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York; Joseph M. Demarest, Jr., Assistant Director-in-Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, New York Field Office; and Raymond W. Kelly, Commissioner, New York City Police Department.

According to the indictment and other documents filed by the government, in early January 2009, Kaziu devised a plan to travel abroad for the purpose of joining a radical foreign fighter group and to take up arms against perceived enemies of Islam. Kaziu allegedly boarded a flight at John F. Kennedy Airport on Feb. 19, 2009, and traveled to Cairo, Egypt, where he took steps to continue on to Pakistan to obtain training and other support for violent activities.

Kaziu also attempted to join Al-Shabbab, a radicalized, militant insurgency group, which has supported Al Qaeda and which has been designated as a terrorist organization by the United States Department of State. In addition, Kaziu made efforts to travel to Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Balkans to fight against U.S. armed forces. To that end, Kaziu attempted on multiple occasions to purchase weapons in Egypt. Ultimately, Kaziu traveled to Kosovo, where he was arrested by Kosovar law enforcement authorities in late August 2009.

"This case is a textbook example of a successful international effort to investigate and apprehend those who would engage in terrorist acts and pre-empt their plots," stated United States Attorney Campbell. "We will spare no effort in this pursuit." Mr. Campbell thanked the government of Kosovo, the U.S. State Department, and the Department of Justice Office of International Affairs for their assistance in the investigation.

FBI Assistant Director-in-Charge Demarest stated, "American servicemen and women go in harm's way to protect their country and make the world a safer place. Among our most critical missions is to protect them from those bent on traveling overseas to do them harm. We continue to work with our partners locally and internationally to fulfill that mission."

NYPD Commissioner Kelly stated, "This is just another example of excellent work by FBI agents and NYPD detectives, supported by U.S. Attorney Benton Campbell and his staff, in bringing to justice those who would target Americans both here and abroad."

If convicted of conspiracy to commit murder overseas, Kaziu faces a maximum sentence of life in prison. If convicted of conspiracy to provide material support to terrorists, Kaziu faces a maximum sentence of 15 years in prison.

The government's case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Shreve Ariail and Seth D. DuCharme.