

San Diego Man Arrested and Charged With Making False Statements in an International Terrorism Investigation

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<http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/san-diego-man-arrested-and-charged-making-false-statements-international-terrorism>

Mohamad Saeed Kodaimati (Saeed), 24, of San Diego, was arrested and charged in a federal criminal complaint with two counts of making false statements involving international terrorism matters, announced Assistant Attorney General for National Security John P. Carlin, U.S. Attorney Laura E. Duffy of the Southern District of California and Special Agent in Charge Eric S. Birnbaum of the FBI's San Diego Field Office.

A criminal complaint was filed today in the U.S. District Court of the Southern District of California, charging Saeed with two counts of providing false statements involving international terrorism. In summary, the criminal complaint alleges that during interviews with agents from the FBI and the Department of State's Diplomatic Security Service (DSS), that occurred in March 2015 at the U.S. Embassy in Ankara, Turkey, Saeed made material false statements about his recent activities and associations in Syria.

According to the complaint, Saeed falsely claimed that he had never been involved in any fighting, that he had never fired his weapon at anyone, that he did not know anyone who was a member of ISIL, that he had never told anyone else that he was involved with Al-Nusrah and that he had never worked or volunteered at a Sharia court. Evidence gathered during the investigation contradicts these and other statements Saeed made to the interviewing agents.

According to the criminal complaint, Saeed was born in Syria and became a naturalized U.S. citizen in September 2008. In December 2012, Saeed travelled from San Diego to Istanbul and was in Syria and Turkey until his return to the United States.

In March 2015, Saeed returned to the United States and was interviewed by U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents and the FBI. Saeed was arrested by FBI agents and members of the San Diego Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) in Rancho Bernardo, California, without incident on April 22, 2015. Saeed is scheduled to make his initial appearance before U.S. Magistrate Judge Karen Crawford of the Southern District of California at 2 p.m. PDT on Thursday, April 23, 2015. The charges in this matter are the result of an investigation conducted by the FBI's San Diego JTTF, with assistance provided by the FBI's JTTF in Charlotte, North Carolina.

An arrest itself is not evidence that the defendant committed crimes charged. The defendant is presumed innocent until the government meets its burden in court of proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

Kodaimati Criminal Complaint

15-505

National Security Division (NSD)

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