



Department of Justice

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NEW YORK MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO CONSPIRACY TO PROVIDE MATERIAL SUPPORT TO ISIL IN CONNECTION WITH PLANNED NEW YEAR'S EVE ATTACK

WASHINGTON – Emanuel L. Lutchman, 26, of Rochester, New York, pleaded guilty today to conspiracy to provide material support to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

Assistant Attorney General for National Security John P. Carlin, U.S. Attorney William J. Hochul Jr. of the Western District of New York and Special Agent in Charge Adam S. Cohen of the FBI's Buffalo, New York Division made the announcement.

Lutchman pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Frank P. Geraci Jr. of the Western District of New York. He has been detained in federal custody since his arrest by members of the FBI's Rochester Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) on Dec. 30, 2015. Sentencing is scheduled for Nov. 15, 2016, before Judge Geraci, where Lutchman faces a statutory maximum sentence of 20 years in prison, a \$250,000 fine and a lifetime term of supervised release. The maximum statutory sentence is prescribed by Congress and is provided here for informational purposes. The sentencing of the defendant will be determined by the court based on the advisory Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

“Emanuel Lutchman admitted to conspiring with an ISIL member located overseas and planned to kill innocent civilians on U.S. soil in the name of the terrorist organization,” said Assistant Attorney General Carlin. “Countering terrorist threats remains the highest priority of the National Security Division, and we will continue our efforts to bring to justice those who conspire to provide material support to foreign terrorist organizations. I want to thank the many agents, analysts and prosecutors who contributed to the disruption of this deadly plot.”

“Residents of this community can now sleep better knowing that a person who wanted to kill in the name of an infamous terrorist group – right on the streets of our city – will no longer be a threat,” said U.S. Attorney Hochul.

As part of his guilty plea, Lutchman admitted that he conspired with an individual known as Abu Issa Al-Amriki, a now-deceased ISIL member in Syria, and planned to conduct an attack against civilians using knives and a machete on New Year's Eve in 2015. Lutchman admitted that he intended to conduct an attack that could be claimed by ISIL and that could also help him gain membership into ISIL when he thereafter traveled overseas to join the terrorist organization.

According to court documents, Lutchman posted on social media expressions of support for ISIL, including images, videos and documents relating to ISIL and violent jihad. Lutchman also downloaded and watched terrorism-related videos, including videos relating to ISIL and the now-deceased terrorist Anwar al-Awlaki. The defendant also maintained a digital collection of documents relating to terrorism and terrorist groups, including all of the issues of *Inspire* magazine and other documents designed to provide guidance to individuals seeking to travel overseas to engage in violent jihad or engage in "lone wolf" terrorist attacks in the United States and elsewhere.

In December 2015, Lutchman obtained an online document written by an ISIL member in Syria, in which the ISIL member provided guidance to ISIL supporters who were seeking to travel overseas to join ISIL, including advice about preparation for violent jihad; the use of security measures while traveling to avoid apprehension by law enforcement authorities; instructions for killing non-believers and infidels, or "kuffar;" and contact information for the ISIL member and Al-Amriki.

According to the plea agreement, on Dec. 25, 2015, Lutchman initiated online contact with Al-Amriki, who identified himself as an ISIL member in Syria. In a series of subsequent communications, Al-Amriki told Lutchman to plan an attack on New Year's Eve and kill a number of kuffar. Al-Amriki advised the defendant to write something before the attack and give it to the ISIL member so that after the attack the ISIL member could post it online to announce Lutchman's allegiance to ISIL. Al-Amriki told Lutchman that whatever Lutchman sends to ISIL, they would keep it until the attack was complete and then post it and publicize the attack on the Internet. Al-Amriki emphasized that Lutchman is "behind enemy lines," that Lutchman was the closest person to their most hated enemy and that Lutchman has the chance to do things that ISIL wishes it could do. Lutchman ultimately told Al-Amriki that he has a couple of "brothers" that want to make hijra and plan an attack. Al-Amriki encouraged Lutchman to complete an attack and stated that, if the Syrian borders open and the attack does not succeed, he would help Lutchman and his "brothers" make hijra. Al-Amriki told Lutchman to show ISIL how serious he is, stating, "New years is here soon. Do operations and kill some kuffar." Lutchman told Al-Amriki that he hates it in the United States, that he wants to join the ranks of ISIL and that he is ready to "give everything up" to be in Syria with ISIL. Al-Amriki told Lutchman, for the time being, to do what he can in the United States.

In late December 2015, Lutchman was communicating with other individuals (referred to as Individuals A, B, and C in the plea agreement) who, unbeknownst to Lutchman, were cooperating with the FBI. In these communications, Lutchman made statements expressing his strong support of ISIL and his desire to travel overseas to join ISIL, and also discussed in detail his online communications with Al-Amriki and the ISIL member. In subsequent

communications, Lutchman referred at various times to Individuals A, B and C as “brothers” who would be involved in the New Year’s Eve attack.

Lutchman admitted that on Dec. 27, 2015, he and Al-Amriki discussed potential targets, and Al-Amriki told Lutchman to find the most populated area and kill as many people as possible and reiterated that, after the operation was done, he would vouch for Lutchman and the other participants in the attack and he would start sending “brothers” to ISIL in Libya, to which Lutchman agreed.

Lutchman admitted that he met with Individual C on Dec. 28, 2015, and indicated that he wanted to target a club or bar and proposed that they kidnap a couple of people and kill them. Lutchman stated that they would have to wear masks during the operation in order to avoid getting caught by law enforcement authorities.

Lutchman admitted that on the evening of Dec. 29, 2015, Lutchman and Individual C went to a store in Rochester to purchase weapons and supplies for the attack, including two black ski masks, two knives, a machete, zip-ties, duct tape, ammonia and latex gloves. Lutchman told Individual C that “the operation is a go,” and noted that any victims would have to be killed. The defendant and Individual C discussed making a video before the operation, at Al-Amriki’s direction, in which they would explain their rationale for the attack and swear bayah (allegiance) to the leader of ISIL, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. Lutchman said that he planned to release the video after the completion of the attack.

Lutchman admitted that on Dec. 30, 2015, he made a video pledging allegiance to ISIL and al-Baghdadi, and stated that ISIL was going to establish the caliphate in the land of Islam. In reference to the planned New Year’s Eve attack, Lutchman stated, “the blood that you spill of the Muslim overseas we gonna spill the blood of the kuffar,” and asked Allah to “make this a victory.” In the video, Lutchman covered all of his face except for his eyes and he held one index finger in the air, which is a sign commonly used by ISIL members and supporters. Immediately thereafter, law enforcement agents arrested Lutchman and recovered the items purchased by Lutchman and Individual C the previous day from Lutchman’s residence.

The investigation was conducted by the FBI’s Rochester JTTF. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Brett A. Harvey of the Western District of New York, with the assistance of Trial Attorney Larry Schneider of the National Security Division’s Counterterrorism Section.

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