

## **Toledo man sentenced to five years in prison, the last of four defendants sent to prison for their roles in a plot to provide money to al Qaeda**

U.S. Attorney's Office. Northern District of Ohio

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<https://www.justice.gov/usao-ndoh/pr/toledo-man-sentenced-five-years-prison-last-four-defendants-sent-prison-their-roles>

A Toledo man was sentenced to five years in prison, the final defendant sent to prison for their roles in a conspiracy to provide thousands of dollars to Anwar Al-Alwaki in an effort to support violent jihad against U.S. military personnel in Iraq, Afghanistan and throughout the world.

Ibrahim Zubar Mohammad, 39, was sentenced to five years in prison on Friday, and will be deported upon completion of the sentence. He previously pleaded guilty to concealing the financing of terrorism.

Sultane Room Salim, 43, was sentenced to five years in prison earlier this week. He previously pleaded guilty to concealing the financing of terrorism

Yahya Farooq Mohammad, 40, is currently serving a sentence of more than 27 years in prison. He previously pleaded guilty to conspiracy to provide material support to terrorists and to soliciting the murder of a United States District Judge.

Asif Ahmed Salim, 38, is serving six years in prison. He previously pleaded guilty to concealing the financing of terrorism.

"These defendants sent thousands of dollars abroad to support al Qaeda and attacks on Americans," U.S. Attorney Justin E. Herdman said. "This case demonstrates that we will aggressively pursue leads and evidence around the world to bring to justice those who would strike at our nation and the ideals we hold dear."

"We are pleased these individuals will spend significant time behind bars for providing funds to a known terrorist who called for violent jihad," said Robert Hughes, Acting Special Agent in Charge of the FBI's Cleveland office. "The FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force will continue all collaborative and investigative efforts to root out individuals who provide material support to terrorists and their organizations."

Farooq Mohammad was an Indian citizen who was an engineering student at Ohio State University between 2002 and 2004. He married a U.S. citizen around March 2008. His brother, Ibrahim Mohammad, was also an Indian citizen who studied engineering at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign from 2001 through 2005. In or around 2006, he moved to Toledo, Ohio, and married a U.S. citizen. He became a lawful permanent resident of the United States in or around 2007.

Asif Salim was a U.S. citizen who studied at Ohio State University between 2000 and 2005. He became a resident of Overland Park, Kansas, in 2007. His brother, Sultane Salim, is also a U.S. citizen who resided in the Chicago area from 2006 through 2012, until he moved to the Columbus area.

The four defendants conspired to provide money, equipment and other assistance to Anwar Al-Awlaki. Al-Awlaki, a key leader of Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, was designated a global terrorist in 2010. The defendants' support was to be used in furtherance of violent jihad against the U.S. and U.S. military in Iraq, Afghanistan and throughout the world, according to court documents.

The defendants made various financial transactions in 2008 and 2009, and communicated about raising funds for a trip to the Middle East. Farooq Mohammad and Ibrahim Mohammad obtained money by

opening credit cards and withdrawing money with no intention of repaying the amounts obtained from the financial institutions, according to court documents.

On July 22, 2009, Farooq Mohammad traveled with two other people to Yemen to meet Awlaki. They were unable to meet with Awlaki, so instead travelled to Sana'a, Yemen, to meet with one of his associates. Farooq Mohammad and his two fellow travelers gave the associate approximately \$22,000 to be given to Awlaki, according to court documents.

In addition to pleading guilty to conspiring to provide and conceal material support to terrorists, Yahya Farooq Mohammad also admitted to soliciting an undercover FBI employee (UCE), posing as a "hitman," to kidnap and murder U.S. District Judge Jack Zouhary. In or about April 2016 – after he was arrested on the terrorism charge and while the case was pending and assigned to Judge Zouhary – Mohammad told another inmate in the Lucas County Corrections Center in Toledo, Ohio that he wanted Zouhary kidnapped and murdered and that he was willing to pay \$15,000 to have this carried out. The inmate provided Mohammad with the contact information for the UCE and stated that the UCE would need a \$1,000 down payment before the murder could occur. The inmate also provided Mohammad with an agreed upon code to use when discussing the planned murder over the jail telephone.

On or about April 26, 2016, Mohammad called the UCE from the Lucas County Corrections Center. Using the agreed-upon code, Mohammad told the UCE he wanted to have Judge Zouhary killed. Mohammad agreed to provide the \$1,000 down payment. When asked when he wanted the murder committed, Mohammad stated, "The sooner would be good, you know." Over the ensuing days, Mohammad arranged to have a family member provide the \$1,000 in cash to the UCE. On May 5, 2016, that family member met with the UCE and provided the UCE with \$1,000 in cash. Mohammad later informed the inmate that the rest of the money for the murder was coming, according to court documents.

The case was investigated by the FBI and prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Matthew W. Shepherd and Michael Freeman and Trial Attorney David C. Smith of the Justice Department's Counterterrorism Section.