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NEW JERSEY MAN WHO TRAVELLED OVERSEAS TO JOIN ISIS SENTENCED TO 10 YEARS IN PRISON

WASHINGTON – Nader Saadeh, 23, of Rutherford, New Jersey, was sentenced today to 10 years in prison, to be followed by a lifetime of supervised release, for conspiring to provide material support to the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS), a designated foreign terrorist organization.

The announcement was made by Assistant Attorney General for the National Security John C. Demers, U.S. Attorney Craig Carpenito for the District of New Jersey and Special Agent in Charge Gregory W. Ehrle of the FBI's Newark, New Jersey Division. Saadeh previously pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Susan D. Wigenton to an information charging him with one count of conspiring with others to provide material support to ISIS. Judge Wigenton imposed the sentence today in Newark federal court.

"ISIS is a threat to the people of the United States, both here and abroad, and the National Security Division will aggressively investigate and prosecute all who seek aid it," said Assistant Attorney General Demers. "I applaud the dedication of the agents at the FBI and the Newark Joint Terrorism Task Force and the prosecutors here at the Department of Justice, who together thwarted the defendant's attempt to fight for ISIS against the U.S. and its allies."

"Saadeh traveled overseas for the sole purpose of joining and fighting for ISIS, an international terrorist organization that has repeatedly taken and threatened to take the lives of our citizens and allies all over the world," said U.S. Attorney Carpenito.

"Thanks to the intervention of the FBI-Newark Joint Terrorism Task Force and federal prosecutors on this case, Saadeh's criminal aspirations were never realized. Instead of joining ISIS' ranks, he will spend the next several years in prison."

"I want to commend the work of the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force investigators and prosecutors in the U.S. Attorney's office who worked countless hours throughout this investigation to protect the community in their execution of the FBI's Counterterrorism strategy to detect, penetrate and disrupt potential acts of terrorism in the United States and abroad," said Special Agent in Charge Ehrle.

According to documents filed in this and related cases and statements made in court:

Saadeh admitted that prior to his arrest on Aug. 10, 2015, by the FBI-Newark Joint

Terrorism Task Force (JTTF), he planned to travel overseas to join ISIS along with others. Saadeh discussed his plans to join ISIS with his brother, Alaa Saadeh, Samuel Rahamin Topaz, Munther Omar Saleh and Fareed Mumuni, and admitted that at various times each of them indicated that they wanted to join ISIS. Saadeh also admitted that he and these other men watched ISIS-related videos, some of which depicted the execution of individuals – both Muslim and non-Muslim – regarded by ISIS as enemies.

On May 5, 2015, Saadeh departed the United States with plans to travel overseas to join ISIS in furtherance of the conspiracy, according to his statements in court.

Saadeh admitted that once he reached ISIS-controlled territory he intended to fight on behalf of ISIS. Saadeh further admitted that Saleh assisted him by giving him a contact who would facilitate his travel from Turkey to ISIS in Syria.

Saadeh admitted that prior to his departure from the United States, Saleh showed him technical drawings for making homemade bombs. Saadeh admitted that Saleh and Mumuni discussed plans to carry out an attack in ISIS' name using homemade bombs at locations in New York City, including Times Square, the World Trade Center, and Vaughn College of Aeronautics and Technology, in Queens, New York.

Saadeh admitted knowing that ISIS was a designated terrorist organization and was taking over territory overseas, expelling non-Muslims from their homes and executing individuals who did not obey ISIS' commands.

Topaz and Alaa Saadeh have also pleaded guilty to conspiring to provide material support to ISIS. Alaa Saadeh was sentenced to 15 years in prison on May 10, 2016.

Topaz is set to be sentenced on May 1. Saleh and Mumuni have both pleaded guilty to related charges brought by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of New York. Saleh was sentenced to 18 years in prison on Feb. 6. Mumuni was sentenced to 17 years in prison on April 26.

Assistant Attorney General Demers and U.S. Attorney Carpenito credited the special agents of the FBI, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Ehrie in Newark, and the Newark Joint Terrorism Task Force with the successful investigation. The JTTF is comprised of agents and officers from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Homeland Security Investigations, Bergen County Prosecutor's Office, Passaic County Prosecutor's Office, New Jersey State Police, Paterson Police Department, and the NYPD, among other federal, state and local law enforcement agencies.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Dennis C. Carletta and Francisco J. Navarro of the District of New Jersey, with assistance from Trial Attorneys Justin Sher and Robert Sander of the National Security Division's Counterterrorism Section.

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