

Philadelphia Woman Arrested for Attempting to Provide Material Support to ISIL

Department of Justice, Office of Public Affairs
Friday, April 3, 2015

<http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/philadelphia-woman-arrested-attempting-provide-material-support-isil>

Assistant Attorney General for National Security John P. Carlin and U.S. Attorney Zane David Memeger of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania announced that Keonna Thomas, also known as Fatayat Al Khilafah and YoungLioness, 30, of Philadelphia, was charged today by criminal complaint with knowingly attempting to provide material support and resources, including herself as personnel, to a designated foreign terrorist organization. According to the complaint, Thomas attempted to travel overseas in order to join and fight with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

As alleged in the complaint, Thomas posted on Twitter the following statement: "If we truly knew the realities . . . we all would be rushing to join our brothers in the front lines pray ALLAH accept us as shuhada [martyrs]." The complaint further alleges that Thomas applied for a U.S. passport and advised an associate that she had deactivated her Twitter "till i leave for sham [greater Syria]. . . . don't want to draw attention of the kuffar [non-believers]." Thomas then allegedly engaged in electronic communications with an ISIL fighter in Syria, who asked Thomas if she wanted to be a part of a martyrdom operation. Thomas responded by stating, "that would be amazing....a girl can only wish." Thomas also allegedly conducted online research into various indirect travel routes to Turkey, and allegedly purchased an electronic visa to Turkey. The complaint alleges that Turkey is known to be the most common and most direct transit point for individuals traveling from locations in Europe who are seeking to enter Syria and join ISIL. On or about March 26, 2015, Thomas allegedly purchased airline tickets to fly overseas on March 29, 2015.

If convicted, the defendant faces a maximum possible sentence of 15 years' incarceration.

The case was investigated by the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force and the Philadelphia Police Department. It is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jennifer Arbittier Williams of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania and Trial Attorney Paul Casey of the Justice Department's National Security Division.

A criminal complaint is an accusation. A defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

15-418
National Security Division (NSD)
Thomas Complaint
Updated April 3, 2015