

Bergen County, New Jersey, Man Charged With Conspiracy To Provide Material Support To ISIL

Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office, District of New Jersey

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<http://www.justice.gov/usao-nj/pr/bergen-county-new-jersey-man-charged-conspiracy-provide-material-support-isil>

NEWARK, N.J. – A Bergen County, New Jersey, man was charged today with conspiracy to provide material support to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), a designated foreign terrorist organization, U.S. Attorney Paul J. Fishman, Assistant Attorney General for National Security John P. Carlin, and Special Agent in Charge Richard M. Frankel of the FBI's Newark Division announced.

Samuel Rahamin Topaz, 21, of Fort Lee, New Jersey, was arrested at his home on June 17, 2015, and is charged by complaint with one count of conspiring with others in New Jersey and New York to provide services and personnel to ISIL. He made his initial appearance this afternoon before U.S. Magistrate Judge Cathy L. Waldor in Newark federal court and was remanded without bail.

“Providing fighters and resources to a terrorist organization like ISIL is a threat to our country and its citizens,” U.S. Attorney Fishman said. “We will continue to use all the tools at our disposal to disrupt the efforts of those who are trying to do harm at home and abroad.”

“Samuel Topaz is alleged to have conspired with others to travel abroad to provide material support to ISIL,” Assistant Attorney General Carlin said. “Counterterrorism is the National Security Division's highest priority. Stemming the flow of foreign fighters abroad and prosecuting those who attempt to provide material support to designated foreign terrorist organizations is key to our national security and public safety.”

"Material support of a terrorist organization is a violation of federal law," FBI Newark Special Agent in Charge Richard M. Frankel said. "Topaz conspired to provide services and personnel to ISIL.

Topaz discussed his desire to travel to Syria to join ISIL. Fortunately, this threat did not materialize due to the indefatigable efforts of the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force. Prevention of terrorism is the FBI's top priority and I ask the citizens of New Jersey to assist us in this task by remaining vigilant and contacting the FBI or the police if they see or hear anything suspicious.”

According to documents filed in this case and statements made in court:

The FBI and the Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) have been investigating a group of individuals from New York and New Jersey who have allegedly conspired to provide material support to ISIL. Conspirator 1 (CC-1) was a resident of Rutherford, New Jersey, until departing the United States on May 5, 2015, to allegedly join ISIL. Conspirator 2 (CC-2) was a resident of Queens, New York, until

he was arrested June 13, 2015, in New York on terrorism charges. Conspirator 3 (CC-3) is a resident of New Jersey.

On May 1, 2015, Topaz discussed CC-1's plan to travel overseas to join ISIL. CC-1 sent Topaz a message stating that he would be leaving in a few days and asked, "[d]id you do what i [sic] advised you to do." Topaz responded, "I'm saving my money for it bro trust me I got it." On May 4, 2015, Topaz stated that he had his passport but needed cash to purchase his ticket. CC-2 replied, "My trip is looking months away[.] if u can take a loan out for 5k or even 2.5k then ur [sic] good, they take US dollars in dawla so u can eat and buy stuff, and they provide u with housing when u reach the land of Islam." Topaz and CC-2 then discussed that they would be reuniting with CC-1 in Turkey before going to the dawla. CC-2 stated that CC-1 would go first, and then they would join him soon thereafter.

On May 21, 2015, Topaz and CC-3 discussed that they needed to "lay low" and refrain from taking action in furtherance of the conspiracy to provide material support to ISIL that might be detected by law enforcement. Topaz also told CC-3 that they need to discuss "hijra" in person. Topaz later told members of the JTTF that he and his conspirators used the term "hijra" (often spelled "hijrah") to refer to traveling overseas to join ISIL.

On June 13, 2015, CC-2 was arrested by the FBI and charged in a criminal complaint filed with the U.S. District Court of the Eastern District of New York with conspiring to provide material support to ISIL. On June 15, 2015, Topaz wrote to an unidentified individual that CC-2 had not been answering his phone and added, "We gotta leave ASAP."

The count of conspiracy to provide material support to a designated foreign terrorist organization carries a maximum potential penalty of 15 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000.

U.S. Attorney Fishman credited special agents of the FBI, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Richard M. Frankel in Newark, and the JTTF, with the investigation leading to the arrest. The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorneys L. Judson Welle, Dennis C. Carletta, and Francisco J. Navarro of the U.S. Attorney's Office National Security Unit in Newark, with assistance from the Department of Justice's National Security Division, Counterterrorism Section.

The charge and allegations contained in the complaint are merely accusations, and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.