



Department of Justice

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WISCONSIN MAN SENTENCED TO 10 YEARS IN PRISON FOR ATTEMPTING TO PROVIDE MATERIAL SUPPORT TO ISIL

WASHINGTON – Joshua Van Haften, 36, of Madison, Wisconsin, was sentenced today to 10 years in federal prison and lifetime supervised release for attempting to provide material support, namely himself as personnel, to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), a designated foreign terrorist organization.

Acting Assistant Attorney General for National Security Mary B. McCord, U.S. Attorney John W. Vaudreuil of the Western District of Wisconsin and Special Agent in Charge Justin Tolomeo of the FBI's Milwaukee Division made the announcement. U.S. District Judge James D. Peterson handed down the sentence.

“With this sentence, Joshua Van Haften will be held accountable for attempting to travel overseas to join ISIL and to provide material support to the designated terrorist organization,” said Acting Assistant Attorney General McCord. “The National Security Division’s highest priority is countering terrorist threats, and we will continue to work to stem the flow of foreign fighters abroad and bring to justice those who attempt to provide material support to designated foreign terrorist organizations.”

“Today’s sentence reflects the gravity of the defendant’s plan to betray the United States and to join terrorists dedicated to the murder of innocent individuals, both in the U.S. and abroad,” said U.S. Attorney Vaudreuil. “The U.S. Attorney’s Office and the FBI, working with our state and local partners on the Joint Terrorism Task Force, will continue to work to investigate, arrest, and vigorously prosecute all extremists who choose to aid ISIL, or any other terrorist organization, and to stop them before they harm the United States or our allies. We also remain committed to working with dedicated community members to bring this cycle to an end.”

“I commend the efforts of the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force which includes our local and state law enforcement partners who brought the defendant to justice,” said Special Agent in Charge Tolomeo. “Protecting Americans from terrorism remains our top priority.”

Van Haften admitted that in 2014, he attempted to provide material support to ISIL, knowing that the organization was a designated terrorist organization that has engaged and engages in terrorism.

According to the government's evidence, Van Haften traveled to Turkey in 2014 and attempted to cross into Syria. He posted online that he had taken an oath of allegiance to the leader of ISIL, and that "The only thing that matters to me is joining my brothers for the war against America [*sic*] liars."

In addition to traveling to Turkey in an attempt to fight with ISIL, Van Haften tried to assist another American, Leon Davis, in joining ISIL. He attempted to meet Davis in Istanbul upon Davis's arrival – actually waiting for Davis at a bus stop in Istanbul – and planned to travel with Davis to Syria to join and fight with ISIL.

Leon Davis, of Augusta, Georgia, was sentenced to 15 years in federal prison in July 2015, following his conviction in the Southern District of Georgia for attempting to provide material support to a designated foreign terrorist organization, namely ISIL.

Van Haften was arrested at O'Hare Airport in Chicago, Illinois in April 2015, after his arrival in custody on an international flight from Turkey. He has been held in federal custody since his arrest.

The charge against Van Haften is the result of an investigation by members of the FBI-Joint Terrorism Task Force which include the FBI; the Wisconsin Department of Justice, Division of Criminal Investigation; the Dane County Sheriff's Office in Wisconsin; and the University of Wisconsin Police Department. Assistance was also provided by the Department of Homeland Security.

The case was prosecuted by First Assistant U.S. Attorney Jeffrey Anderson for the Western District of Wisconsin and Trial Attorney Lolita Lukose of the National Security Division's Counterterrorism Section.

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