



# Department of Justice

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## **SUDBURY MAN CONVICTED ON TERRORISM-RELATED CHARGES**

BOSTON - After 10 hours of deliberation, a federal jury has convicted a Sudbury man of four terrorism-related charges and three charges related to providing false information to the government.

Tarek Mehanna, 29, faces up to life in prison after being convicted of conspiracy to provide material support to al Qaeda, providing material support to terrorists (and conspiracy to do so), conspiracy to commit murder in a foreign country, conspiracy to make false statements to the FBI, and two counts of making false statements.

United States Attorney Carmen M. Ortiz said, "Following weeks of testimony and evidence, a jury of Mr. Mehanna's peers have rendered a just verdict of guilty. I want to commend the investigators and prosecutors who have worked tirelessly on this case, and who also work day after day serving the interests of the public to ensure the integrity of our national security. Preventing a terrorist attack is our number one priority, and as a result of their hard work, a potential threat has been eliminated."

"From his travel to Yemen to receive training to kill American soldiers to his material support for terrorism at home, Mr. Mehanna's efforts to use and support violence followed no pre-defined path and knew no bounds," said Richard DesLauriers, the Special Agent In Charge of the Boston FBI. "The FBI has a clarion mission to investigate all potential threats to the United States in order to protect our community from harm. The FBI fulfilled its most important mission by stopping Mehanna's conspiracy to support terrorism, the goal of which was an unlawful affront to our nation's cherished ideal of peaceful dissent."

"Although each of the various state, local and federal agencies of the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force worked together to thwart Mr. Mehanna's terrorist activities, I'd like to recognize the Lowell Police Department, which played a particularly important role in the investigation. Working together, our community and nation should be proud of the Joint Terrorism Task Force's effort to detect, deter, and prevent homegrown violent extremists like Mr. Mehanna and others who seek to use violence, rather than democratic means, to achieve their political or social goals."

During the course of the nearly eight week trial, the jurors heard testimony that Mehanna and co-conspirators discussed their desire to participate in violent jihad against American interests and talked about fighting jihad and their desire to die on the battlefield. The co-conspirators attempted to radicalize others and inspire each other by, among other things, watching and distributing jihadi videos. Mehanna and two of his associates traveled to the Middle East in February 2004, seeking military-type training at a terrorist training camp that would prepare them for armed jihad against U.S. interests, including U.S. and allied forces in Iraq. One of Mehanna's co-conspirators made two similar trips to Pakistan in 2002.

After returning to the United States, Mehanna continued his efforts to provide material support by, among other things, translating and posting on the internet al Qaeda recruitment videos and other documents.

In December 2006, Mehanna was interviewed by federal authorities regarding a trip by Mehanna, Abousamra and another individual, to Yemen in 2004. During that interview, Mehanna provided false information and made fraudulent and fictitious statements about the purpose of that trip and his relationship with coconspirator Daniel Joseph Maldonado, a.k.a. Daniel Aljughaifi. Mehanna lied to the FBI concerning where Maldonado was living at the time and what Maldonado was doing. Just a few days prior to the FBI interview, Mehanna received a call from Maldonado, who was in Somalia receiving military-type training for jihad. Mehanna admitted in recorded conversations, that he had lied to the FBI about Maldonado's whereabouts and training in Somalia. Mehanna also lied to the FBI concerning his trip to Yemen in 2004. Mehanna did, in fact, go to Yemen with Abousamra and another individual to conduct, and to subsequently engage in, jihad.

In 2007, Maldonado pleaded guilty in the Southern District of Texas, admitting that he had traveled from Houston to Africa in November 2005 and then on to Somalia in December 2006 to join the Islamic Courts Union and elements of al-Qaida to fight "jihad" against the Transitional Federal Government to establish an independent Islamic State in Somalia. Maldonado was sentenced to 10 years in prison, the maximum statutory penalty for receiving military training from a terrorist organization.

Mehanna faces up to life in prison on the charge of conspiracy to kill in a foreign country, up to 15 years in prison on the charges of providing material support and conspiring to do so, up to eight years in prison on each of the charges of making false statement, and up to three years on the charge of conspiracy to make false statements. All counts carry up to three years of supervised release and a \$250,000 fine.

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) members: Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Customs Border Protection, the Massachusetts State Police and the Lowell Police Department, in addition to other members of the FBI's JTTF. The JTTF includes officers and agents from a number of other federal, state and local law enforcement agencies. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Jeffrey Auerhahn and Alope S. Chakravarty of Ortiz's Anti-Terrorism and National Security Unit and Jeffrey Groharing, Trial Attorney with the Department's National Security and Counter Terrorism Section.

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