

## **U.S. Citizen Arrested for Attempting to Provide Material Support to ISIL and Other Federal Offenses**

June 19, 2015

WASHINGTON—Amir Said Abdul Rahman Al-Ghazi, 38, a U.S. Citizen, was arrested this morning in North Olmstead, Ohio, on charges that he attempted to provide material support to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), possessed a firearm as a convicted felon and trafficked marijuana.

Assistant Attorney General for National Security John P. Carlin, U.S. Attorney Steven D. Dettelbach of the Northern District of Ohio and Special Agent in Charge Stephen D. Anthony of the FBI's Cleveland Division made the announcement.

“According to the allegations in the complaint, Al-Ghazi attempted to provide material support to ISIL and committed other federal weapon and drug offenses,” said Assistant Attorney General Carlin. “Counterterrorism is the National Security Division’s highest priority and we will continue to pursue justice against those who seek to provide material support to designated foreign terrorist organizations.”

“Today’s charges are a stark reminder that the radical and dangerous philosophies espoused by groups such as ISIL can be spread in our community through computers and social media,” said U.S. Attorney Dettelbach. “Law enforcement will remain vigilant in combating violent extremism in all its forms.”

“This arrest demonstrates law enforcement’s number one priority—to keep our communities and our nation safe,” said Special Agent in Charge Anthony. “It is clear that no area is immune from the influence of ISIL and its recruitment machine. We hope this arrest will serve as a strong message to others who may consider providing support to terrorists. The FBI and our Joint Terrorism Task Force partners are committed to identifying and stopping these individuals.”

According to the complaint, Al-Ghazi, who changed his name from Robert McCollum earlier this year, is alleged to have pledged his support to ISIL and Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi via social media in 2014. From July 2014 to June 2015, Al-Ghazi made multiple statements trying to persuade others to join ISIL. He also expressed his own desire to perpetrate an attack on the United States and had attempted to purchase an AK-47 assault rifle. Al-Ghazi has communicated with individuals he believed to be members of ISIL in the Middle East and took steps to create propaganda videos for ISIL.

Al-Ghazi was also charged with distributing a schedule 1 controlled substance—marijuana. From the period of February 2014 through June 2015, Al-Ghazi sold almost two kilograms of marijuana to a confidential informant. He was also charged with possessing a firearm even though he had multiple prior felony convictions. On multiple occasions Al-Ghazi expressed his interest in purchasing an AK-47, eventually purchasing one from an FBI undercover employee on June 19, 2015.

This case is being investigated by the FBI's Cleveland Division's Joint Terrorism Task Force. This case is being prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney's Office of the Northern District of Ohio and the National Security Division's Counterterrorism Section.

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

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