

New Jersey Man Admits Conspiring to Provide Material Support to ISIL

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<http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/new-jersey-man-admits-conspiring-provide-material-support-isil>

A West New York, New Jersey, man today admitted that he conspired to provide material support to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), a designated foreign terrorist organization. The announcement was made by Assistant Attorney General for National Security John P. Carlin, U.S. Attorney Paul J. Fishman of the District of New Jersey and Special Agent in Charge Richard M. Frankel of the FBI's Newark, New Jersey, Division.

Alaa Saadeh, 24, pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Susan D. Wigenton of the District of New Jersey to an information charging him with one count of conspiring with others to provide material support to ISIL. He remains detained without bail.

"Saadeh conspired with his brother and others to travel overseas to join ISIL," said Assistant Attorney General Carlin. "The National Security Division's highest priority is counterterrorism and we will continue to pursue justice against those who seek to provide material support to designated foreign terrorist organizations."

"Alaa Saadeh is the second defendant in this case who has admitted trying to provide material support to a known terrorist organization," said U.S. Attorney Fishman. "That organization, and others who share its goals, are intent on recruiting people in this country and around the world to join their campaign against our security. The fight against these kinds of groups is going on around the world, but is also being waged here at home. They are intent on threatening the safety of Americans here and abroad, and we and our law enforcement partners are intent on stopping them."

"Today in the U.S. District Court of New Jersey Alaa Saadeh admitted he planned to travel to Syria to join ISIL along with others," said Special Agent in Charge Frankel. "Now, thanks to the efforts of Newark FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force, Saadeh will go to prison rather than take up arms overseas."

According to documents filed in this and related cases and statements made in court:

Saadeh admitted that prior to his arrest on June 29, 2015, he planned to travel overseas to join ISIL along with others. Saadeh discussed the plans to join ISIL with his brother, Nader Saadeh, Samuel Rahamin Topaz and Munther Omar Saleh, and told the judge today that each of them indicated that they wanted to join ISIL at various times. Saadeh also admitted that he watched ISIL-related videos with Nader Saadeh and Topaz, some of which depicted the execution of individuals – both Muslim and non-Muslim – regarded by ISIL as enemies.

On May 5, 2015, Nader Saadeh, departed the United States with plans to travel overseas to join ISIL as part of the conspiracy, according to Saadeh's statements in court today. Saadeh further admitted assisting Nader Saadeh with these plans by letting him purchase airline tickets using Saadeh's credit card, removing the SIM card from Nader's smartphone and resetting the smartphone in an effort to avoid detection. Saadeh admitted that Saleh assisted Nader Saadeh by giving him a contact that would facilitate Nader's travel from Turkey to ISIL in Syria. Saadeh further admitted that after his brother left the United States, Saleh and Topaz intended to travel overseas to join ISIL. After becoming aware that the FBI was investigating this matter, Saadeh instructed an individual who knew of Nader Saadeh's support for ISIL to lie if questioned by the FBI on the subject. Saadeh further admitted telling this individual to "just play stupid," "pretend it never happened" and "keep it honest up to a point."

Saadeh admitted to knowing that ISIL was a designated terrorist organization and was taking over territory overseas, expelling non-Muslims from their homes and executing individuals who did not obey ISIL's commands.

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. Sentencing is scheduled for Feb. 16, 2016.

Saadeh's alleged co-conspirators are being prosecuted and are currently in federal custody. On Sept. 9, 2015, Topaz pleaded guilty before Judge Wigenton to conspiring to provide material support to ISIL.

Nader Saadeh has been charged in a criminal complaint with conspiring to provide material support to ISIL, among other charges. Saleh has been indicted on terrorism-related charges in the Eastern District of New York. The charges and allegations against Nader Saadeh and Saleh are merely accusations, and they are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

Assistant Attorney General Carlin and U.S. Attorney Fishman credited special agents of the FBI's Newark Division, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Frankel, and the Joint Terrorism Task Force with the investigation leading to today's guilty plea.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys L. Judson Welle, Dennis C. Carletta and Francisco J. Navarro of the District of New Jersey, with assistance from Trial Attorney Robert Sander of the National Security Division's Counterterrorism Section.

Alaa Saadeh Information

Alaa Saadeh Plea Agreement

15-1334

National Security Division (NSD)

USAO - New Jersey

Counterterrorism

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