



**U.S. Department of Justice
Federal Bureau of Investigation**

2111 W Roosevelt Rd.
Chicago, IL 60608
Phone (312) 421-6700

Chicago FBI Press Office
Phone: (312) 829-1199

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**CHICAGO MAN ARRESTED FOR ATTEMPTING TO PROVIDE
MATERIAL SUPPORT TO A TERRORIST ORGANIZATION**

A 26-year old Chicago man, who authorities believed was planning to travel to Somalia and engage in jihadist fighting with a terrorist group, was arrested last night just hours before he was scheduled to leave Chicago announced Robert D. Grant, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Chicago office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and Patrick J. Fitzgerald, U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois.

SHAKER MASRI, who lived in the Streeterville area of Chicago, was arrested late yesterday in Countryside, Illinois, without incident, by members of the Chicago FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) following an 18-month investigation. MASRI was charged in a criminal complaint filed yesterday in U.S. District Court in Chicago with one count each of attempting to Provide Material Support to a Designated Terrorist Organization and attempting to provide material support through the use of a Weapon of Mass Destruction, both of which are felony offenses.

According to the complaint, MASRI, who is a U.S. citizen, began espousing his increasingly violent views to an individual he befriended in early

2009. During the ensuing months, MASRI began to openly express a desire to participate in a “jihad” and to fight against what he characterized as “infidels”.

In the past month, it is alleged that MASRI began to actively plan a trip to Somalia where he hoped to join the specially designated terrorist groups al Qaeda and al Shabaab and commit a suicide attack targeting “infidels”. He was arrested last night just hours before he was planning to depart Chicago en route to Somalia.

Investigation by the Chicago FBI’s JTTF included the use of undercover operatives and court authorized electronic surveillance of a telephone used by MASRI and resulted in the filing of the charges announced today.

MASRI appeared before Magistrate Judge Geraldine Soat Brown in Chicago, earlier this morning, at which time he was formally charged. MASRI was ordered held without bond pending his next court appearance, which is scheduled for August 9th. Until then, MASRI will be housed at the Metropolitan Correctional Center (MCC) in Chicago. If convicted of the charges filed against him, MASRI faces a possible sentence of up to 15 years incarceration on each count.

This case was investigated by the Chicago FBI’s Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) which is comprised of FBI special agents, officers from the Chicago Police Department and representatives from 20 federal, state and local law enforcement agencies.

The public is reminded that a complaint is not evidence of guilt and that all defendants in a criminal case are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

EDITOR’S NOTE: Copies of the criminal complaint filed in this case are available from the Chicago FBI’s press office at (312) 829-1199.

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