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Department of Justice

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Western District of Michigan

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Mohamed Haji Sentenced To 130 Months In Prison For Conspiring To Provide Material Support To Isis

GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN — United States Attorney Andrew Birge announced today that Chief United States District Judge Robert J. Jonker sentenced Mohamed Salat Haji, age 28, of Lansing, Michigan to serve 130 months in federal prison for conspiring to provide material support to the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham ("ISIS"), a designated foreign terrorist organization. Mohamud Muse was also ordered to serve 12 years of supervision by the court, following his release from prison. The government sought a sentence of 240 months in prison consistent with the sentence recommended by the United States Sentencing Guidelines.

On January 21, 2019, special agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and members of its Joint Terrorism Task Force arrested Haji at the Gerald R. Ford International Airport in Grand Rapids, Michigan, after Haji had helped his cousin, Muse Muse, check in for a flight to the first of a series of destinations on his way to Mogadishu, Somalia, with the goal of joining ISIS. Their relative, Mohamud Muse, also was arrested for conspiring to provide material support to ISIS.

According to court documents, between December 2018 and January 2019, Muse Muse coordinated with an individual he believed to be a Somali ISIS fighter to wire funds to be used to purchase airline tickets for travel to Mogadishu, Somalia, where he believed he would meet an ISIS representative. All three defendants picked up money to provide Muse Muse the funds to travel to join ISIS, all three defendants pledged allegiance to ISIS in recorded videos, and all three submitted their videos to individuals they believed were associated with ISIS. Additionally, records provided to the Court at sentencing demonstrated that throughout the conspiracy, which began in January 2017, all three defendants participated in numerous conversations during which they discussed traveling overseas to join ISIS and even adopted fighter aliases by which they would be known when fighting for ISIS.

In June 2021, Haji pled guilty to the charge, admitting that he: (1) agreed with one or more individuals to provide material support or resources (which includes personnel) to ISIS, a foreign terrorist organization; (2) knew that ISIS was a designated foreign terrorist organization or had engaged or engages in terrorist activity or terrorism; and (3) is a U.S. national and that part of the offense occurred in the United States. He further admitted that the individuals he conspired with were his relatives and co-defendants, Muse Muse and Mohamud Muse.

In August 2021, Muse Muse was sentenced to serve 78 months in prison and Mohamud Muse was sentenced to serve 98 months in prison for their respective roles in the offense. This is the third and final defendant to be sentenced in the case.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) led the investigation and was assisted by the Michigan State Police, Kent County Sheriff's Office, Eaton County Sheriff's Office, Michigan State University Police Department, Lansing Police Department, Grand Rapids Police Department, Gerald R. Ford Airport Police, the U.S. Marshals Service, and the Department of Homeland Security Transportation Security Administration, Federal Air Marshals, and Customs and Border Protection.

Assistant United States Attorneys Clay M. West and Christopher O'Connor prosecuted the case with assistance from the National Security Division Counterterrorism Section.

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Topic(s):

Counterterrorism

Component(s):

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