

PRESS RELEASE

Gaza Man Arrested for Alleged Involvement in October 7, 2023 Terrorist Attacks

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Mahmoud Amin Ya'qub Al-Muhtadi, 33, a Gazan native currently residing in Lafayette, Louisiana, was arrested yesterday for his alleged involvement in the Hamas-led terrorist attack against Israel on Oct. 7, 2023.

“After hiding out in the United States, this monster has been found and charged with participating in the atrocities of October 7 — the single deadliest day for Jewish people since the Holocaust,” said Attorney General Pamela Bondi. “While nothing can fully heal the scars left by Hamas’s brutal attack, this Department’s Joint Task Force October 7 is dedicated to finding and prosecuting those responsible for that horrific day, including the murder of dozens of American citizens. We will continue to stand by Jewish Americans and Jewish people around the world against anti-Semitism and terrorism in all its forms.”

“As set forth in documents filed yesterday, on October 7, when Al-Muhtadi learned of the unfolding barbaric attack on Israel and civilians from multiple nations, including the United States, he sprang into action. He armed himself, recruited additional marauders, and then entered Israel, where there is evidence placing him near one of the worst-hit Israeli communities,” said Assistant Attorney General for National Security John A.

Eisenberg. "Subsequently, Al-Muhtadi fraudulently obtained a visa to enter the United States where he hoped to remain undetected. This arrest is the first public step in bringing to justice those responsible for harming Americans on that day."

"October 7 is a day that lives in infamy for so many, Gentile and Jew alike, because of the terrorist attack on Israel that began a wave of antisemitic violence," said U.S. Attorney Zachary A. Keller for the Western District of Louisiana. "Let this arrest serve as a reminder both that those who perpetrate acts of terrorism cannot evade justice by hiding in our communities and that state, local, and federal law enforcement — here, the FBI, U.S. Customs and Border Patrol, Louisiana State Police, Lafayette Police Department, and Lafayette Parish Sheriff's Office — are working tirelessly to bring these people to justice."

According to court documents, Al-Muhtadi is an operative for the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine's (DFLP) military wing, the National Resistance Brigades (NRB, also known as the Martyr Umar al-Qasim Forces), a Gaza-based paramilitary group that participated in the Hamas-led terrorist attack against Israel on Oct. 7, 2023.

As alleged, on the morning of Oct. 7, 2023, Al-Muhtadi learned about the Hamas invasion, armed himself, gathered others, and crossed into Israel with the intention of assisting in Hamas's terrorist attack. According to the complaint, Al-Muhtadi's phone utilized a cell tower located near Kibbutz Kfar Aza in Israel – the location of a horrifying massacre by Hamas and its supporters resulting in the deaths of many civilians, including at least four American citizens.

In addition, Al-Muhtadi allegedly provided false information in his U.S. visa application relating to his involvement with a paramilitary organization, connection to Hamas, participation in a terrorist attack, and military training. Al-Muhtadi swore to the accuracy of numerous materially false statements in his visa application with respect to at least his affiliation with DFLP, the NRB, and Hamas, his training, and his involvement in the Oct. 7, 2023, attacks. According to U.S. Department of Homeland Security Customs and Border Protection records, Al-Muhtadi entered the United States on Sept. 12, 2024.

Joint Task Force October 7 (JTF 10-7) and the FBI New Orleans Field Office are investigating the case, with valuable assistance from Israeli authorities, including the State Attorney's Office of Israel, the Israeli Security Agency, Lahav 433 and the Intelligence and Investigation Department of the Israel National Police, the Israel Defense Forces, and the Israeli National Bureau for Counter Terror Financing, as well as the FBI Law Enforcement Attache Office in Israel. The Louisiana State Police, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Lafayette Police Department and the Lafayette Parish Sheriff's Office also provided significant assistance.

Assistant U.S. Attorney John Nickel for the Western District of Louisiana; Trial Attorneys A.J. Dixon, Andrew Sigler and JTF 10-7 Lead Attorney Alicia Cook of the National Security Division's Counterterrorism Section; and Assistant U.S. Attorney Zoe Bedell for the Eastern District of Virginia are prosecuting the case. Valuable assistance was also provided by Trial Attorney Mark Aziz with the Justice Department's Office of International Affairs.

Al-Muhtadi's presence in the U.S. was discovered by JTF 10-7. Established in February 2025 by Attorney General Pamela Bondi, JTF 10-7 was created to spearhead the Justice Department's ongoing investigations into the perpetrators of the heinous October 7, 2023, terrorist attack on Israel, in which approximately 1,200 people were murdered by Hamas, including 49 U.S. citizens, and approximately 250 additional people were abducted by Hamas, including 8 U.S. citizens. The task force reinforces the Department's commitment to degrading and dismantling Hamas, holding Hamas supporters accountable, achieving justice for victims, and fighting terrorist-led antisemitism.

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