

PRESS RELEASE

New Jersey Man Charged With Attempting To Provide Material Support To Al Shabaab

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U.S. Attorney's Office, Southern District of New York

<https://www.justice.gov/usao-sdny/pr/new-jersey-man-charged-attempting-provide-material-support-al-shabaab>

Karrem Nasr, a/k/a "Ghareeb Al-Muhajir," Was Arrested in Kenya After Attempting to Travel to Somalia to Join and Train With al Shabaab

Damian Williams, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, Matthew G. Olsen, the Assistant Attorney General for National Security, James Smith, the Assistant Director in Charge of the New York Field Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI"), and Edward A. Caban, the Commissioner of the New York City Police Department ("NYPD"), announced today the unsealing of a Complaint charging KARREM NASR, a/k/a "Ghareeb Al-Muhajir," with attempting to provide material support to al Shabaab, a designated foreign terrorist organization. NASR, a U.S. citizen, was taken into custody in Nairobi, Kenya, on December 14, 2023, and was transported to the United States yesterday, December 28, 2023. NASR will be presented before U.S. Magistrate Judge Barbara Moses in Manhattan federal court later today.

U.S. Attorney Damian Williams said: "As alleged, Karrem Nasr, motivated by the heinous terrorist attack perpetrated by Hamas on October 7, devoted himself to waging violent jihad against America and its allies. Nasr, a citizen of this country, traveled from Egypt to Kenya bent on joining and training with al Shabaab so that he could execute his jihadist mission of death and destruction. Nasr was prepared to kill and be killed to support the jihadist cause, and in his own words, he described America as 'evil' and the 'head of the snake.' Thanks to the extraordinary efforts of the career prosecutors

in my Office and our law enforcement partners who led the investigation, Nasr's plan to train with a terrorist organization and wage violent jihad has been disrupted. Make no mistake: My Office is committed to investigating, disrupting, and prosecuting anyone who is inspired by Hamas's October 7 attack and seeks to harm Americans, whether here or abroad."

FBI Assistant Director in Charge James Smith said: "Karrem Nasr traveled across the globe in an alleged attempt to join the ranks of a foreign terrorist organization – an organization that has repeatedly expressed its desire to harm Americans around the world. This investigation highlights the ongoing efforts of the FBI's New York Joint Terrorism Task Force and our domestic and international law enforcement partners to protect the U.S. against any form of terrorism and ensuring the safety of our community."

NYPD Commissioner Edward A. Caban said: "Instead of embracing all that the United States had to offer him, Mr. Nasr allegedly moved abroad and committed himself to supporting a foreign terrorist organization. The provision of support to such a group – particularly by an American citizen – is a heinous threat to our entire country and way of life. In the face of this, NYPD investigators and our law enforcement partners on the FBI-led New York Joint Terrorism Task Force will remain relentless in our efforts to identify and investigate anyone who so clearly considers our nation their sworn enemy."

As alleged in the Complaint:[\[1\]](#)

NASR is a 23-year-old U.S. citizen who moved from New Jersey to Egypt in or about July 2023. NASR is a supporter of al Shabaab, a designated foreign terrorist organization that has attacked Americans and American allies. Since at least in or about November 2023, NASR has repeatedly expressed his desire and plans to join al Shabaab and wage jihad, including in communications with an FBI confidential source (the "CS"), who was posing as a facilitator for terrorist organizations.[\[2\]](#)

In communications exchanged with the CS and postings online, NASR stated that he had been thinking about engaging in jihad for a long time, and he was particularly motivated to become a jihadi by the October 7, 2023 Hamas terrorist attack in Israel. For example, in communications with the CS, NASR stated that the number one enemy was "evil America," which he called the "head of the snake." In recent public social media posts, NASR warned that "Jihad" was "coming soon to a US location near you," posting airplane, bomb, and fire emojis:



In further communications with the CS, NASR expressed his intent to join al Shabaab to receive military training and engage in jihad, that he was prepared to kill and be killed, and that he specifically aspired to be a martyr for the jihadist cause. Other examples of NASR's online posts supportive of jihad and terrorist ideology are shown below:



Egyptian Muslim ❤️ reposted

Oct 20

A message from an al-Qaeda mujahid in al-Farooq camp to the world: We are coming!



NASR took specific steps to join and receive military training from al Shabaab, including making flight and lodging reservations for travel to Kenya, where he planned to meet members of al Shabaab for further travel to Somalia to join and train with the group. NASR booked a flight for December 14, 2023, from Egypt to Kenya for purposes of ultimately joining and training with al Shabaab. In addition, approximately three days before his flight, NASR told the CS that he planned to delete data from his cellphone and computer to ensure that if he were detained, law enforcement would not be able to recover evidence of his jihadist activities from those devices. On December 14, 2023, NASR flew from Egypt to Kenya, where he planned to transit into Somalia and join and train with al Shabaab. Later that day, NASR was taken into custody by Kenyan authorities.

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NASR, 23, of Lawrenceville, New Jersey, is charged with attempting to provide material support to a designated foreign terrorist organization, which carries a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison.

The maximum potential sentence in this case is prescribed by Congress and is provided here for informational purposes only, as any sentencing of the defendant will be determined by a judge.

Mr. Williams praised the outstanding efforts of the FBI's New York Joint Terrorism Task Force, which principally consists of agents from the FBI and detectives from the NYPD. Mr. Williams also thanked the FBI's Legal Attaché Office in Nairobi, Kenya, the Counterterrorism Section of the Department of Justice's National Security Division, the Department of Justice's Office of International Affairs, and the Kenyan Directorate of Criminal Investigations, including the Anti-Terrorism Police Unit and the Joint Terrorism Task Force-Kenya, for their assistance.

This case is being handled by the Office's National Security and International Narcotics Unit. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Camille L. Fletcher and Kimberly J. Ravener are in charge of the prosecution, with assistance from Trial Attorneys Jennifer Burke and Lesley Woods of the Counterterrorism Section.

The charges contained in the Complaint are merely accusations, and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.