

## **Press Release**

### **Upstate New York Woman Arrested, Charged with Attempting to Provide Material Support to the Palestine Islamic Jihad**

Tuesday, June 30, 2026

#### **For Immediate Release**

Office of Public Affairs

The Justice Department announced today that Catherine Beth Washburn, 37, of Irondequoit, New York, was arrested and charged by criminal complaint with attempting to provide material support and resources, namely currency, to designated Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) the Palestine Islamic Jihad (PIJ) also known as Al-Quds Brigades. The charge carries a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

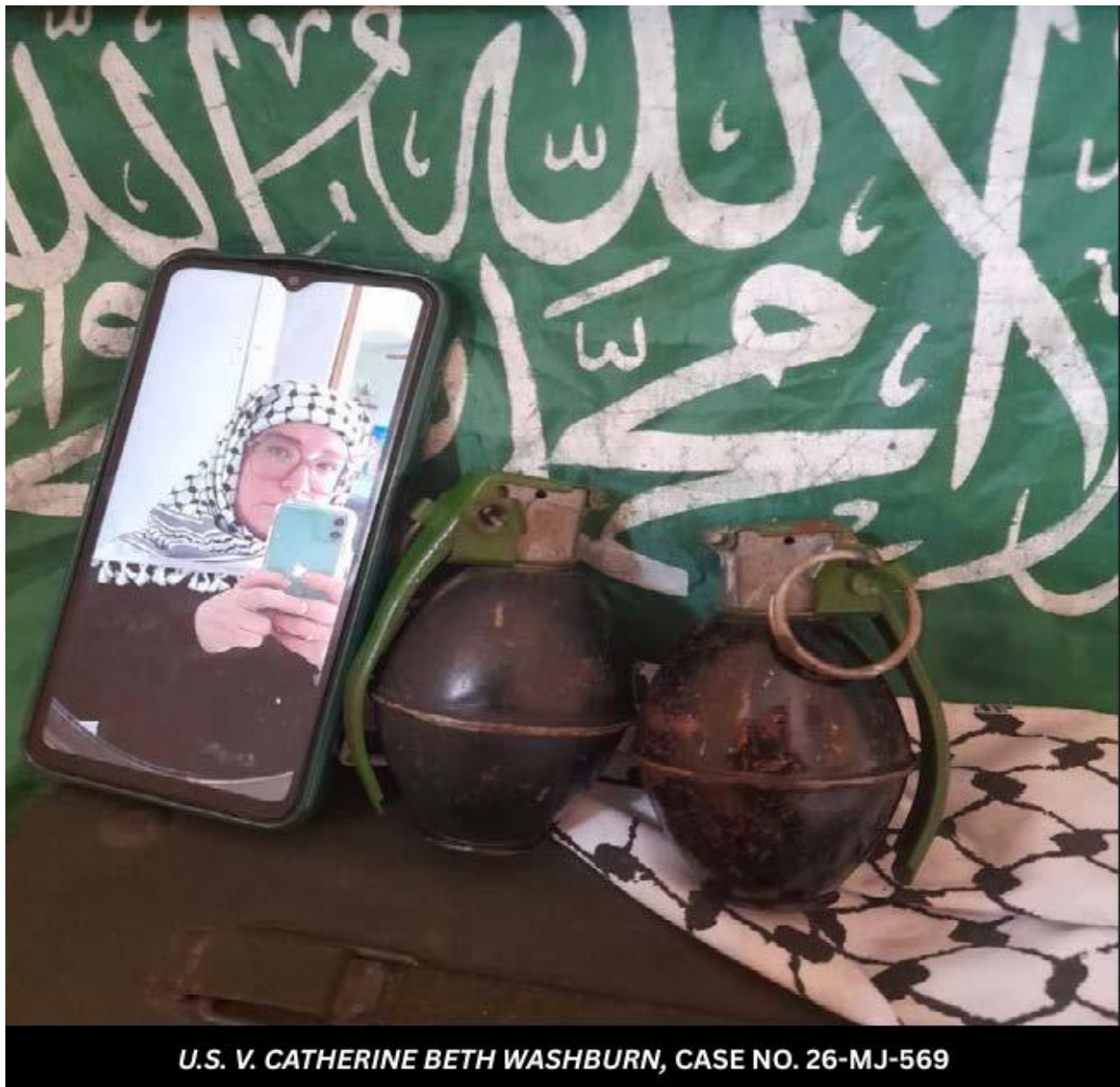
According to the criminal complaint, Washburn is a leader of the Direct Action Movement for Palestinian Liberation (DAMPL), an extremist organization formed in the aftermath of the terrorist attack on Israel by Hamas on October 7, 2023. DAMPL rejects the idea of peaceful protests and engages in “direct action” — including acts of sabotage and property destruction — in support of the Palestinian cause and against entities that it associates with Israel.

“As alleged, Washburn repeatedly voiced support for violence against Israeli civilians and attempted to provide material support to the Palestine Islamic Jihad by sending cryptocurrency to an individual who claimed to participate in its attacks,” said Assistant Attorney General for National Security John A. Eisenberg. “Those who aid foreign terrorist groups will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.”

“As alleged in the complaint, this defendant, fueled by her self-described hate of Israel and Jewish people, went to great lengths to attempt to provide financial support to terrorist organizations that use violence to further their agendas, including the Palestine Islamic Jihad,” said U.S. Attorney Michael DiGiacomo for the Western District of New York. “Despite her alleged attempts, including cryptic communications with a fighter involved in violent attacks in an area thousands of miles away, Catherine Washburn was stopped and so too were her efforts to support violent extremism.”

“This individual, as alleged in the criminal complaint, provided money to a foreign terrorist organization engaged in acts of violence,” said Acting Assistant Director Coult Markovsky of the FBI’s Counterterrorism Division. “The FBI is committed to cutting off funding to terrorist groups and will continue to work side-by-side with our Justice Department partners to make sure anyone who engages in terrorism or provides assistance to such organizations is held fully accountable in our justice system.”

In February and March 2026, the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) executed search warrants and recovered electronic messages between Washburn and an individual who identified as a PIJ fighter in Gaza and claimed to have engaged in attacks with PIJ against Israel. In one of the messages, Washburn stated, "[i]f I lived in Gaza, I would fight alongside the resistance." Washburn praised his bravery and stated, "I wish every day were October 7th." Washburn further stated in that message that the individual was not the first fighter she had met, that she hated Jews "very much," and that she wished Israel "would disappear." In other messages, Washburn and the individual discussed purported PIJ attacks on Israel, weapons, and ammunition. In one message, Washburn stated, "I feel excited every time I see news of the killing of an occupation soldier."



*Washburn pictured with two hand grenades in front of Hamas flag.*

An analysis of financial records determined that Washburn was sending cryptocurrency to this individual, making approximately 80 transfers of cryptocurrency totaling approximately 30,116 USDC, which is the equivalent of \$30,116, to an account he used. In a November 2025 message, Washburn stated, “[b]ased on my passed [sic] fundraising and posting Im [sic] gonna get put away for a few life times,” and included what appears to be a laughing emoji.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Brett A. Harvey for the Western District of New York and Trial Attorney Patrick Cashman of the Department of Justice’s National Security Division, Counterterrorism Section. The complaint is the result of an investigation by the FBI’s Joint Terrorism Task Force, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Allen D. Davis II.

*A complaint is merely an allegation. All defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.*

*Updated June 30, 2026*