



Department of Justice

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TAREK MEHANNA SENTENCED TO 17.5 YEARS ON TERRORISM-RELATED CHARGES

BOSTON - A Sudbury man, convicted last year on charges that he conspired to kill Americans, was sentenced today to 17.5 years in federal prison.

Following a two-hour hearing in U.S. District Court in Boston, Judge George A. O'Toole, Jr., sentenced Tarek Mehanna, 29, to 210 months, to be followed by seven years of supervised release. In December 2011, Mehanna was convicted by a jury, after 10 hours of deliberation, of four terrorism-related charges and three charges related to providing false information to the government.

Following an eight-week trial, Mehanna was convicted of conspiracy to provide material support to al Qaeda, providing material support to terrorists (and conspiracy to do so), conspiracy to commit murder in a foreign country, conspiracy to make false statements to the FBI, and two counts of making false statements.

According to testimony at trial, Mehanna and co-conspirators discussed their desire to participate in violent jihad against American interests and talked about fighting jihad and their desire to die on the battlefield. The co-conspirators attempted to radicalize others and inspire each other by, among other things, watching and distributing jihadi videos. Mehanna and two of his associates traveled to the Middle East in 2004, seeking military-type training at a terrorist training camp that would prepare them for armed jihad against U.S. interests, including U.S. and allied forces in Iraq. One of Mehanna's co-conspirators made two similar trips to Pakistan in 2002.

After returning to the United States, Mehanna continued his efforts to provide material support by, among other things, translating and posting on the Internet al Qaeda recruitment videos and other documents.

In December 2006, Mehanna was interviewed by federal authorities regarding a trip by Mehanna, Abousamra and another individual, to Yemen in 2004. During that interview, Mehanna provided false information and made fraudulent and fictitious statements about the purpose of that trip and his relationship with coconspirator Daniel Joseph Maldonado, a.k.a. Daniel Aljughaifi. Mehanna lied to the FBI concerning where Maldonado was living at the time

and what Maldonado was doing. Just a few days prior to the FBI interview, Mehanna received a call from Maldonado, who was in Somalia receiving military-type training for jihad. Mehanna admitted in recorded conversations, that he had lied to the FBI about Maldonado's whereabouts and training in Somalia. Mehanna also lied to the FBI concerning his trip to Yemen in 2004. Mehanna did, in fact, go to Yemen with Abousamra and another individual to conduct, and to subsequently engage in, jihad.

In 2007, Maldonado pleaded guilty in the Southern District of Texas, admitting that he had traveled from Houston to Africa in November 2005 and then on to Somalia in December 2006 to join the Islamic Courts Union and elements of al-Qaida to fight "jihad" against the Transitional Federal Government to establish an independent Islamic State in Somalia. Maldonado was sentenced to 10 years in prison, the maximum statutory penalty for receiving military training from a terrorist organization.

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) members: Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Customs Border Protection, the Massachusetts State Police and the Lowell Police Department, in addition to other members of the FBI's JTTF. The JTTF includes officers and agents from a number of other federal, state and local law enforcement agencies. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Jeffrey Auerhahn and Alope S. Chakravarty of Ortiz's Anti-Terrorism and National Security Unit and Jeffrey Groharing, Trial Attorney with the Department's National Security and Counter Terrorism Section.

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