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Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Eastern District of New York

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, October 18, 2021

Defendant Pleads Guilty to Attempting to Provide Material Support to ISIS and Al-Nusra Front

Dilshod Khusanov Provided Money to Fund Travel of a Brooklyn Resident to Wage Jihad in Syria

Dilshod Khusanov pleaded guilty today to attempting to provide material support to a designated foreign terrorist organization, the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) and Al-Nusra Front (ANF). The proceeding was held before United States District Court Judge William F. Kuntz, II. When sentenced, Khusanov faces 11 years' imprisonment pursuant to the terms of his plea agreement with the government. As part of his plea agreement, the defendant agrees to the entry of an order of removal so he will be removed from the country after completing his sentence.

Breon Peace, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York; Mark J. Lesko, Acting Assistant Attorney General for the Justice Department's National Security Division; Michael J. Driscoll, Assistant Director-in-Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, New York Field Office (FBI); and Dermot F. Shea, Commissioner, New York City Police Department (NYPD), announced the guilty plea.

"With today's plea, Khusanov admits to providing financial support to individuals seeking to travel to Syria to join a violent foreign terrorist organization that seeks to wage war on the United States and other countries," stated United States Attorney Peace. "This Office will continue to work tirelessly with its local, national and international law enforcement partners to eliminate the threat of terrorist violence posed by ISIS and ANF."

"Khusanov's guilty plea is the final step toward wrapping up this years-long case in which the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force worked tirelessly—as they always do—to keep the citizens of our city and our country safe from potential terrorist acts," stated FBI Assistant Director-in-Charge Driscoll. "Khusanov now awaits his fate for his willingness to provide support to ISIS and the Al-Nusra Front. This is not the end, however, of the FBI's continued efforts—along with those of our partners—to diminish the threats posed by terrorists and would-be terrorists worldwide."

"Money is the oxygen that feeds the flame of any organized terrorist activity. This case makes it clear that whether you are a terrorist bomber, a planner, or simply the facilitator who raises the money to pay for their travel, you will be a target of the New York Joint Terrorism Task Force. They are the most experienced detectives and agents in the country in these cases," stated NYPD Commissioner Shea.

As set forth in court filings, Khusanov encouraged individuals to travel to Syria to wage violent jihad, or holy war in 2014 and 2015. For example, on September 28, 2014, Khusanov urged co-conspirator Akmal Zakirov to engage in jihad: “I hope that the only [reason] that is preventing you from jihad is some mistakes and flaws that are occurring among” the other fighters. Khusanov explained that it would be better to help those fighters, rather than criticize them.

Later in 2014, two Brooklyn residents, Abdurasul Juraboev and Akhror Saidakhmetov, began planning to travel to Syria to fight for ISIS. A group of individuals in a domestic network based in New York and elsewhere, including Khusanov, worked together to raise and contribute money to help fund that trip to Syria. In February 2015, Abror Habibov, Zakirov, Azizjon Rakhmatov, and Dilkhayot Kasimov discussed providing money to support Saidakhmetov’s travel and expenses in Syria. Rakhmatov and Zakirov also agreed to solicit money from others to fund Saidakhmetov’s travel. Zakirov contacted Khusanov, then-based in Illinois, and asked him to contribute money for Saidakhmetov’s travel and to ask another individual to contribute money as well. Khusanov agreed and arranged for money to be deposited in Zakirov’s bank account before Saidakhmetov’s scheduled departure. Saidakhmetov was arrested in February 2015 at John F. Kennedy International Airport, as he boarded a plane bound for Istanbul, Turkey, a transit point for foreign fighters bound for Syria.

Khusanov is the last charged defendant in this plot to be convicted. Juraboev, Saidakhmetov, Habibov, Zakirov and Rakhmatov previously pleaded guilty, and Kasimov was convicted at trial. Juraboev and Saidakhmetov each were sentenced to 15 years’ imprisonment, and Rakhmatov was sentenced to 12 ½ year’s imprisonment. Habibov, Kasimov and Zakirov are awaiting sentencing.

The government’s case is being handled by the Office’s National Security & Cybercrime Section. Assistant United States Attorneys David K. Kessler, J. Matthew Haggans, and Jonathan E. Algor are in charge of the prosecution, with assistance provided by Trial Attorney Steven Ward of the National Security Division’s Counterterrorism Section.

The Defendant:

DILSHOD KHUSANOV

Age: 36

Chicago, Illinois

E.D.N.Y. Docket No. 17-CR-475 (WFK)

Topic(s):

Counterterrorism

National Security

Component(s):

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