

## NC Man Pleads Guilty To Helping Foreign Terrorist Group

By Administrator

Tuesday, 28 August 2018 11:43 - Last Updated Tuesday, 28 August 2018 11:49

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Basit Javed Sheikh pled guilty to attempting to provide material support and resources to a foreign terrorist organization in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 2339B. Specifically, Sheikh pled guilty to attempting to provide material support and resources to Jabhat al-Nusrah, which the United States Secretary of State has identified as an alias name for al-Qa'ida in Iraq, a designated Foreign Terrorist Organization. In pleading guilty Sheikh acknowledged that, since he is not a natural born citizen of the United States, he faces possible automatic removal from the United States.

Sheikh was initially charged by criminal complaint, and subsequently by Criminal Indictment filed November 5, 2013. At the time of indictment, SHEIKH was a 34 year-old from Pakistan who had been living for years in the United States as a legal permanent

resident. The affidavit to the complaint describes multiple Facebook postings by Sheikh occurring in 2013 and expressing support for Jahbat al-Nusrah. SHEIKH posted articles acknowledging that Jahbat al-Nusrah had been designated by the United States as a terrorist organization.

As detailed within the affidavit, Sheikh utilized Facebook to propagate the violent ideology of Islamic Extremism. In mid-2013, Sheikh sought out a relationship with an individual online whom he believed could assist him in travelling to Syria in support of violent jihad. This individual informed Sheikh of another person described as a member of Jabhat al-Nusrah able to assist Sheikh. In reality, both of these individuals were working with and for the FBI. Sheikh reached out to the individual he believed to be a Jabhat al-Nusrah member and expressed his desire to travel to Syria in order to "help the mujahideen...in any way I can." When asked how he wanted to help, Sheikh responded "logistics, media, fight too, God willing." Despite the FBI covert employee stating to Sheikh that fighting was not for everyone, Sheikh replied that that he was "serious" and that he was ready to be a martyr.

Believing that the FBI covert employee would be able to assist in smuggling him from Lebanon into Syria, Sheikh purchased a one-way ticket with a final destination of Lebanon and a departure from Raleigh-Durham Airport on November 2, 2013. On that date, he traveled to Raleigh-Durham Airport, obtained a boardingpass, checked in luggage, and proceeded through the security screening en route to his gate of departure. Sheikh was arrested prior to boarding his flight.

The applicable maximum statutory penalty for this crime is 15 years imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, and 3 years supervised release. The actual sentence would be determined by the sentencing court after consideration of the plea agreement, the advisory sentencing guidelines,

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and all appropriate facts and circumstances.

Investigation of this case was conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Charlotte Division, Resident Agency Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF). Assistant United States Attorney Jason Kellhofer is representing the government in this case.