



THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT *of* OHIO

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**Department of Justice**

U.S. Attorney's Office

Southern District of Ohio

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Columbus Man Sentenced for Providing Material Support to Terrorists, Making False Statements to Authorities**

COLUMBUS, Ohio – Abdirahman Sheik Mohamud, 26, of Columbus, Ohio, was sentenced in U.S. District Court to 264 months in prison and 10 years of supervised release for training with terrorists overseas and leading a terrorist plot.

A federal grand jury charged Mohamud in April 2015 with one count of attempting to provide and providing material support to terrorists, one count of attempting to provide and providing material support to a designated foreign terrorist organization – namely, al-Nusrah Front – and one count of making false statements to the FBI involving international terrorism. He pleaded guilty to those charges in August 2015. The plea was sealed until June 2017 because of an ongoing investigation.

Acting Assistant Attorney General for National Security Dana J. Boente, Benjamin C. Glassman, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio, Angela L. Byers, Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Cincinnati Division, Franklin County Prosecutor Ron O'Brien and the FBI's Columbus Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) announced the sentence imposed today by U.S. District Judge Michael H. Watson.

According to court documents, Mohamud is a Somali-born naturalized citizen of the United States who, in 2014, obtained a U.S. passport and one-way ticket to Greece. During his travel in April 2014, Mohamud did not board his connecting flight to Athens, Greece; rather, during his layover in Istanbul, Turkey, he completed pre-arranged plans to cross the border into Syria. In Syria, Mohamud received training from al-Nusrah Front, a terrorist organization affiliated with al-Qaeda.

According to a statement of facts supporting Mohamud's guilty plea, while in Syria, Mohamud trained with al-Nusrah Front on fitness, and on the use of weapons and tactics. Mohamud also engaged in a firefight and expressed his desire to die fighting in Syria.

Mohamud returned to the United States after his brother was killed fighting for al-Nusrah Front.

The statement of facts details that after returning to the United States, Mohamud planned to obtain weapons in order to kill military officers, other government employees or people in uniform. Evidence seized by the

FBI indicates that Mohamud researched places in the U.S. to carry out such plans.

“Mohamud traveled to Syria to train and fight with the designated terrorist organization al-Nusrah Front. He then returned to the United States with the intent to conduct an attack here,” said Acting Assistant Attorney General Boente. “Thanks to the tremendous efforts of law enforcement, Mohamud was arrested and his plans were thwarted. One of the National Security Division’s highest priorities remains identifying and neutralizing the threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters who return to the United States.”

“Mohamud engaged in terrorist activity overseas, which included training and fighting with the Al-Nusrah Front, a designated foreign terrorist organization,” U.S. Attorney Glassman said. “He then returned to the United States with a plan to do grievous harm, recruited others to help him in his homeland plot, and then planned and prepared for attacks in the United States. Once caught, he orchestrated a cover-up beginning with his material misstatements to the FBI. The seriousness of his actions cannot be overstated. Protecting our national security requires constant vigilance – every day, regardless of whatever else is happening. I commend the diligence of the national security and law enforcement professionals who have brought this case to conclusion today.”

“Mohamud was originally arrested and indicted in state court by my office and a \$2 million bond was set that maintained him in custody. Those state charges were dismissed when the federal prosecution commenced and an assistant prosecutor was added to the federal team as a Special Assistant U.S. Attorney,” O’Brien said “This case illustrates the effectiveness of the cooperative effort in the Columbus area to combat terrorism.”

“HSI will seek a civil denaturalization of Mohamud and eventual deportation to his country of origin, Somalia,” said the HSI Resident Agent in Charge Nathan Emery.

Acting Assistant Attorney General Boente and U.S. Attorney Glassman commended the cooperative investigation of the FBI’s JTTF with numerous local partners, and Assistant United States Attorneys Douglas Squires, Jessica H. Kim and Salvador Dominguez and Special Assistant United States Attorney Joseph Gibson, as well as Trial Attorneys Bridget Behling and Lolita Lukose of the National Security Division’s Counterterrorism Section, who are prosecuting the case.

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