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Two Iraqi Nationals Indicted on Federal Terrorism Charges in Kentucky

WASHINGTON -- An Iraqi citizen who allegedly carried out numerous Improvised Explosive Device (IED) attacks against U.S. troops in Iraq and another Iraqi national alleged to have participated in the insurgency in Iraq have been arrested and indicted on federal terrorism charges in the Western District of Kentucky.

The arrests in Bowling Green, Ky., and the criminal complaints and indictment unsealed today were announced by Todd Hinnen, Acting Assistant Attorney General for National Security; David J. Hale, U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Kentucky; Elizabeth A. Fries, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI Louisville Division; and the members of the Louisville Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF).

Waad Ramadan Alwan, 30, and Mohanad Shareef Hammadi, 23, both former residents of Iraq who currently reside in Bowling Green, were charged in a 23-count indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Bowling Green on May 26, 2011. Alwan is charged with conspiracy to kill U.S. nationals abroad; conspiracy to use a weapon of mass destruction (explosives) against U.S. nationals abroad; distributing information on the manufacture and use of IEDs; attempting to provide material support to terrorists and to al-Qaeda in Iraq; as well as conspiracy to transfer, possess and export Stinger missiles. Hammadi is charged with attempting to provide material support to terrorists and to al-Qaeda in Iraq, as well as conspiracy to transfer, possess and export Stinger missiles.

Alwan and Hammadi were arrested on May 25, 2011, on criminal complaints and made their initial appearances today in federal court in Louisville, Ky. Each faces a potential sentence of life in prison if convicted of all the charges in the indictment. Both defendants were closely monitored by federal law enforcement authorities in the months leading up to their arrests. Neither is charged with plotting attacks within the United States.

"Over the course of roughly eight years, Waad Ramadan Alwan allegedly supported efforts to kill U.S. troops in Iraq, first by participating in the construction and placement of improvised explosive devices in Iraq and, more recently, by attempting to ship money and weapons from the United States to insurgents in Iraq. His co-defendant Mohanad Shareef Hammadi is accused of many of the same activities. With these arrests, which are the culmination of extraordinary investigative work by law enforcement and intelligence officials, the support provided by these individuals comes to an end and they will face justice," said Todd Hinnen, Acting Assistant Attorney General for National Security.

"The filing of these charges in Bowling Green, Kentucky, underscores the readiness of federal law enforcement authorities and our partners in the Joint Terrorism Task Forces to effectively pursue and prosecute terrorists wherever in the United States they may be found," said David J. Hale, U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Kentucky. "Whether they seek shelter in a major metropolitan area or in a smaller city in Kentucky, those who would attempt to harm or kill Americans abroad will face a determined and prepared law enforcement effort dedicated to the investigations and prosecutions necessary to bring them to justice. The dismantling of terrorist networks is the first priority of this office and the Department of Justice."

"These arrests were the culmination of extremely well-coordinated, diligent and tireless efforts by the FBI and our law enforcement partners working on the JTTFs. My thanks to all those who assisted in this case," said Elizabeth A. Fries, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI Louisville Division. "I want to remind the public that the FBI is responsible for protecting the civil rights of all persons in our

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communities. Just as we vigorously investigate terrorism cases, the FBI will vigorously pursue anyone who targets Muslims or their places of worship for backlash-related threats or violence in the wake of these arrests.”

According to the charging documents, Alwan entered the United States in April 2009 and has lived in Bowling Green since his arrival. Hammadi entered the United States in July 2009 and, after first residing in Las Vegas, moved to Bowling Green.

Prior Activities in Iraq

In September 2009, the FBI launched an investigation into Alwan. Later, the FBI began using a confidential human source (CHS) who met with and engaged in recorded conversations with Alwan, beginning in August 2010, and with Hammadi, beginning in January 2011. In a number of meetings with the CHS, Alwan allegedly discussed his prior activities as an insurgent in Iraq from 2003 until his capture by Iraqi authorities in May 2006, including his use of IEDs and sniper rifles to target U.S. forces and details about various attacks in which he participated.

For example, in recorded conversations with the CHS, Alwan allegedly stated that he used to procure explosives and missiles while an insurgent in Iraq; that his insurgent group conducted strikes daily; and that he used IEDs in Iraq hundreds of times. At one point, Alwan allegedly drew diagrams of four types of IEDs for the CHS and provided verbal instructions on how to build these devices. He also discussed occasions in which

he had used these types of IEDs against U.S. troops. Asked whether he had achieved results from these devices in Iraq, Alwan allegedly replied, “Oh yes,” mentioning that his attacks had “f--ked up” Hummers and also targeted Bradley fighting vehicles.

According to the charging documents, the FBI has been able to identify two latent fingerprints belonging to Alwan on a component of an unexploded IED that was recovered by U.S. forces near Bayji, Iraq. Alwan had allegedly advised the CHS that he lived in that area of Iraq and worked at the power plant in Bayji. Alwan had also allegedly told the CHS how he had used a particular brand of cordless telephone base station in IEDs. Alwan’s fingerprints were allegedly found on this particular brand of cordless base station in the IED that was recovered in Iraq.

In additional conversations with the CHS, Alwan also described IED attacks on U.S. troops that he participated in with others, including an associate whom Alwan said had lost an eye when an IED exploded prematurely. According to the charging documents, U.S. forces recovered an unexploded IED near Bayji from which a latent fingerprint belonging to this associate was later recovered. The charging documents allege that this associate was detained by U.S. troops in June 2006 and had a false eye.

The charging documents also allege that Hammadi has discussed his prior experience as an insurgent in Iraq and has told the CHS about prior IED attacks in Iraq in which he participated. In one conversation with the CHS, Hammadi allegedly described how he had been arrested in Iraq, explaining that authorities captured him after the car he was driving in got a flat tire shortly after he and others had placed IEDs in the ground.

Activities in the United States

According to the charging documents, beginning in September 2010, Alwan expressed interest in helping the CHS provide support to terrorists in Iraq. The CHS explained that he shipped money and weapons to the mujahidin in Iraq by secreting them in vehicles sent from the United States. Thereafter, Alwan allegedly participated in operations with the CHS to provide money, weapons – including machine guns, rocket-propelled grenade launchers, Stinger missiles and C4 plastic explosives – as well as IED diagrams and advice on the construction of IEDs, to what he believed were the mujahidin attacking U.S. troops in Iraq.

For instance, in November 2010, Alwan allegedly picked up machine guns and rocket-propelled grenade launchers from a storage facility in Kentucky and delivered them to a designated location believing they would be shipped to al-Qaeda in Iraq. In January 2011, the charging documents allege, Alwan recruited Hammadi to assist in the material support activities. Alwan allegedly described Hammadi to the CHS as a relative of his whose work as an insurgent in Iraq was well known.

Later that month, Alwan and Hammadi allegedly delivered money to a tractor-trailer, believing the money would ultimately be shipped to al-Qaeda in Iraq. In February 2011, the pair allegedly assisted in the delivery of additional weapons, including sniper rifles and inert C4 plastic explosives, to a tractor-trailer believing that these items would be shipped to al-Qaeda in Iraq. Finally, in March 2011, Alwan and Hammadi allegedly picked up two inert Stinger missiles from the storage facility and delivered them to a tractor-trailer believing these items would be shipped to al-Qaeda in Iraq.



Neither the Stinger missiles nor any of the other weapons or money delivered by Alwan or Hammadi in connection with the CHS in the United States were provided to al-Qaeda in Iraq, but instead were carefully controlled by law enforcement as part of the undercover operation.

In closing, Mr. Hale noted, "Let me be clear that this is not an indictment against a particular religious community or religion. Instead, this indictment charges two *individuals* with federal terrorism offenses."

Mr. Hale commended the investigative efforts of the Louisville Division of the FBI and the Louisville JTTF, which is comprised of the following full-time member agencies: Louisville Metro Police, Kentucky State Police, Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and U.S. Marshals Service. Also assisting were full-time members of the Lexington JTTF, which includes the University of Kentucky Police and Lexington-Fayette County Police. The U.S. Department of Defense also provided assistance in this investigation, as well as U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and the Bowling Green Police Department.

The prosecution is being handled by Trial Attorney Larry Schneider from the Counterterrorism Section of the Justice Department's National Security Division, and Assistant U.S. Attorneys Bryan Calhoun and Mike Bennett from the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of Kentucky.

The public is reminded that charges contained in an indictment or criminal complaint are merely allegations, and that defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

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National Security Division

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