

# Long Island Man Pleads Guilty to Attempting to Provide Material Support to Terrorists

 [justice.gov/usao-edny/pr/long-island-man-pleads-guilty-attempting-provide-material-support-terrorists](https://justice.gov/usao-edny/pr/long-island-man-pleads-guilty-attempting-provide-material-support-terrorists)

April 23, 2021

Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Eastern District of New York

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, April 23, 2021

## Defendant Planned to Travel to Syria to Wage Violent Jihad

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Earlier today, in federal court in Central Islip, Elvis Redzepagic pleaded guilty to attempting to provide material support and resources to the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) and the al-Nusra Front, both having been designated by the U.S. Secretary of State as foreign terrorist organizations. When sentenced, Redzepagic faces up to 20 years in prison. The guilty plea was entered before United States Magistrate Judge A. Kathleen Tomlinson.

Mark J. Lesko, Acting United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York, John C. Demers, Assistant Attorney General for National Security, and William F. Sweeney, Jr., Assistant Director-in-Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, New York Field Office (FBI), announced the guilty plea.

“Redzepagic, a Long Island resident, admitted that he attempted to travel to Syria on several occasions to wage jihad on behalf of ISIS and other organizations dedicated to violence and mass destruction,” stated Acting United States Attorney Lesko. “This Office is committed to preventing the spread of terrorism by stopping individuals like the defendant in their tracks and prosecuting them before they are able to harm the United States and its allies.” Mr. Lesko praised the outstanding efforts of the FBI’s New York Joint Terrorism Task Force, which consists of investigators and analysts from the FBI, the NYPD, and over 50 other federal, state, and local agencies.

Mr. Lesko also thanked the Justice Department’s Office of International Affairs, the FBI Legal Attaché Office for Serbia, and the Government of Montenegro Ministry of Justice, Prosecutor’s Office, and Special Police Unit for their assistance in this case.

“Redzepagic has admitted to travelling overseas to try to join and provide material support to ISIS and the al-Nusra Front, two foreign terrorist organizations that were engaged in fighting in Syria,” stated Assistant Attorney General Demers. “The threat from

these terrorist organizations has not ended, and we will continue to work to stem the flow of fighters and bring to justice those who provide material support to these groups.”

In early 2015, Redzepagic began communicating with an individual he believed to be both the commander of a battalion in Syria and a member of ISIS or the al-Nusra Front, and made attempts to join that individual’s battalion to engage in violent jihad. In July 2015, Redzepagic traveled to Turkey and made multiple unsuccessful attempts to cross the border into Syria. Unable to enter Syria from Turkey, Redzepagic traveled to Jordan in August 2016, but was stopped and deported by Jordanian authorities.

In Facebook messages from October 2015, Redzepagic explained that “jihad” is when “you fight for the sake of God” and “die for the sake of Allah.” Redzepagic stated that he traveled to Turkey to “perform Jihad and join Jabhat Al-Nusra.” He predicted, “there will come a time where people will only know to say Allahu Akbar.” In subsequent interviews with law enforcement, Redzepagic admitted that at the time he attempted to enter Syria, he was prepared to strap a bomb to himself.

The government’s case is being handled by the Office’s National Security and Cybercrime Section. Assistant United States Attorneys Saritha Komatireddy and Artie McConnell are in charge of the prosecution, with assistance provided by Trial Attorney Stephanie Sweeten of the National Security Division’s Counterterrorism Section.

**The Defendant:**

ELVIS REDZEPAGIC

Age: 30

Commack, New York

E.D.N.Y. Docket No. 17-CR-228 (DRH)

Topic(s):

Counterterrorism

Component(s):

USAO - New York, Eastern

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