

# GW EXTREMISM TRACKER

## TERRORISM IN THE UNITED STATES

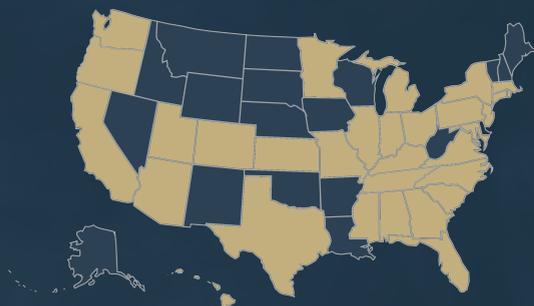
Program on Extremism

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY



**231** INDIVIDUALS HAVE BEEN CHARGED IN THE U.S. ON OFFENSES RELATED to the Islamic State (also known as IS, ISIS, and ISIL) since March 2014, when the first arrests occurred. Of those:

Their activities were located in **32** states and the District of Columbia



**90%** are male

**28** the average age of those charged.

**177** have pleaded or were found guilty

**13.4\*** the average length of sentence in years.

\*Uses 470 months for life sentences per the practice of the U.S. Sentencing Commission

**38%**

were accused of attempting to travel or successfully traveled abroad.

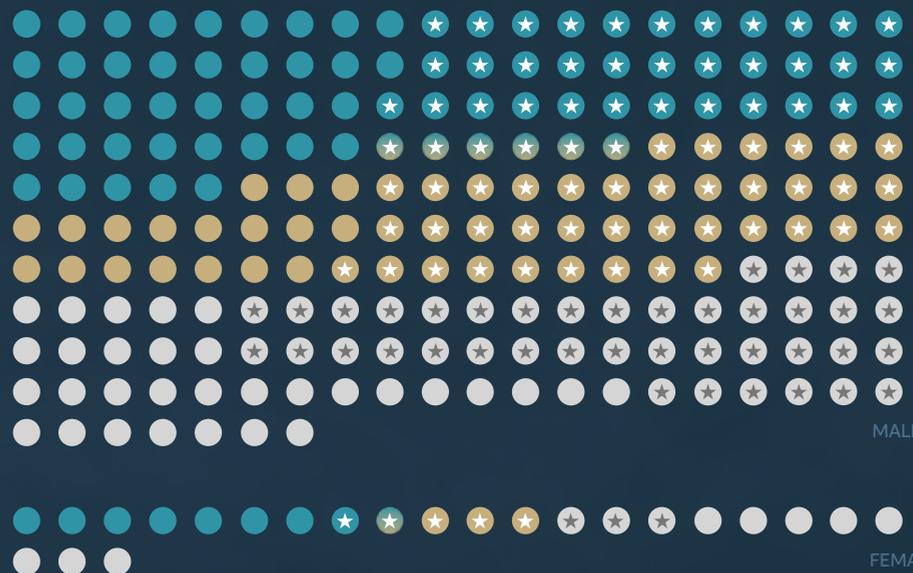
**30%**

were accused of being involved in plots to carry out attacks on U.S. soil.

**57%**

were charged in an operation involving an informant and/or an undercover agent.

★ indicates law enforcement operation



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### Disclaimer

The views and conclusions contained in this document are those of the authors and should not be interpreted as necessarily representing the official policies, either expressed or implied, of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

## Legal Proceedings (IS & Other Jihadist Groups)

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### ALEXANDA AMON KOTEY

SEP02 37  VA

**Alexanda Amon Kotey**, a 37-year-old former citizen of the United Kingdom, pleaded guilty in the Eastern District of Virginia to all charges of an eight-count indictment stemming from Kotey's role in an IS hostage-taking scheme from November 2012 through at least February 7, 2015 that resulted in the deaths of four American citizens - James Foley, Kayla Mueller, Steven Sotloff, Peter Kassig - as well as the deaths of British and Japanese nationals, in Syria. According to the plea agreement, Kotey and two other IS members - co-conspirator El Shafee Elsheikh and Mohamed Emwazi, who was killed in a U.S. military airstrike in Syria in 2015 - supervised the IS jail and detention facilities where the hostages were held. In pleading, Kotey admitted that the IS members engaged in a pattern of violence against the hostages in an attempt to control the hostages and compel ransom payments, including acts of torture and ultimately executions.

Sources: DOJ Press Release, Kotey Plea Agreement, Kotey Statement of Facts

### SHAHIDUL GAFFAR & NABILA KHAN

SEP09 40  PA SEP09 35  PA

**Shahidul Gaffar**, 40, and **Nabila Khan**, 35, both residents of Pennsylvania, were sentenced to 18 months and two years in prison, respectively, for conspiracy to provide material support and resources to IS. The pair, originally from Bangladesh, provided and attempted to provide support to two of Khan's

brothers who traveled to Syria to join IS. In January 2015, Khan asked her sister in Bangladesh to sell Khan's gold in order to fund her oldest brother's travel to Syria, and later returned to Bangladesh prior to his departure. Following this, Gaffar began sending international money transfers to Khan's second brother still in Bangladesh for the purpose of supporting his planned travel to Syria to join IS. Khan's second brother traveled to Syria in July 2015, and later shared messages of himself and his older brother sitting in front of an IS flag.

Sources: DOJ Press Release, Gaffar Judgment, Inquirer

### DAMON M. JOSEPH

SEP13 23  OH

**Damon M. Joseph**, aka **Abdullah Ali Yusuf**, a 23-year-old resident of Holland, Ohio, was sentenced in the Northern District of Ohio to 20 years in prison for attempting to provide material support to IS and attempting to commit a hate crime. Joseph, who pleaded guilty in May 2021, admitted to plotting an attack on a synagogue in the Toledo, Ohio area. Beginning in September 2018, Joseph began engaging in online communications with individuals he believed to be IS supporters in which he affirmed his support for the group and produced propaganda he believed would be used in their recruitment efforts. Following this, Joseph met with undercover FBI agents and discussed conducting a mass shooting at a synagogue, stating he wanted to kill a rabbi. Joseph took numerous steps in furtherance of this plot, including making written notes about firearms he wanted to use in the attack, identifying a specific synagogue, and conducting research to determine when the most people would be present at the synagogue. Joseph was arrested in December of 2018 upon taking possession of firearms which had been rendered inoperable.

Sources: DOJ Press Release, Judgment, WTOL

## MUSTAFA MOUSAB ALOWEMER

SEP 16

23

 PA

**Mustafa Mousab Alowemer**, a 23-year-old resident of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, pleaded guilty in the Western District of Pennsylvania to attempting to provide material support to IS. In pleading, Alowemer admitted to plotting to bomb a church in Pittsburgh using an explosive device. Alowemer stated that he was motivated to commit the attack to support IS, and that he wanted to take revenge for “our ISIS brothers in Nigeria.” In furtherance of the plot, Alowemer distributed instructional documents related to the construction of explosive devices, purchased nails and acetone for use in the construction of an improvised explosive device. In June 2019, Alowemer met with FBI undercover employees to discuss details of the plot, during which Alowemer provided satellite maps with identifying markings and a handwritten plan outlining the details of his plot to deliver the improvised explosive device to the church in a backpack. Alowemer was arrested following a final planning meeting with FBI undercover employees.

Sources: [DOJ Press Release](#), [Change of Plea](#), [WPXI](#)