



Have Terrorists Crossed Our Border?

An initial count of suspected terrorists encountered en route and at the U.S. Southwest Border Since 2001

By Todd Bensman

On several occasions in October 2018, President Donald Trump and some administration officials suggested that migrants from Middle Eastern countries might have traveled among the thousands of Hondurans in a U.S.-bound column. Later, the president stated he had “very good information” that Middle Eastern migrants had been traveling through Latin America for a number of years, independently of migrant columns, that “there could very well be” Islamic terrorists in this traffic, and that U.S. Border Patrol has intercepted “some real bad ones”.¹

The administration did not provide either publicly available or protected Classified and Law Enforcement Sensitive information to support the assertions, leaving them challenged and unresolved, whereas more information might have advanced discourse regarding a significant security question relevant to an ongoing national policy debate. Republican Sen. Jeff Flake, in one emblematic expression, dismissed the idea of Middle Eastern travelers through Latin America and potential terrorists among them as “pretty much a canard and a fear tactic”.²

This *Backgrounder* provides an initial accounting of publicly documented instances, between 2001 and November 2018, of some 15 migrants with credibly suspected or confirmed terrorism ties who were encountered at the southern border after smuggling through Latin America, or who were encountered while presumably en route. The purpose of this *Backgrounder* is to inform the extent to which claims by the Executive Branch and its skeptics are supportable and also to usefully inform any other interested stakeholders.

Key findings:

- From only public realm reporting, 15 suspected terrorists have been apprehended at the U.S.-Mexico border, or en route, since 2001.
- The 15 terrorism-associated migrants who traveled to the U.S. southern border likely represent a significant under-count since most information reflecting such border-crossers resides in classified or protected government archives and intelligence databases.
- Affiliations included al-Shabbab, al-Ittihad al-Islamiya, Hezbollah, the Pakistani Taliban, ISIS, Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami Bangladesh, and the Tamil Tigers.
- At least five of the 15 were prosecuted for crimes in North American courts. One is currently under Canadian prosecution for multiple attempted murder counts. Of the four in the United States, one was prosecuted for lying to the FBI about terrorism involvement, one for asylum fraud, one for providing material support to a terrorist organization, and one for illegal entry, false statements, and passport mutilation.

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Note About Data. Several caveats about the data are warranted. Most information relevant to addressing the question of how often terrorist suspects were apprehended at, or migrating to, the border would reside in government intelligence database systems exempt from public disclosure, and no collection of relevant publicly available material could be found. Information that could enlighten the border security threat issue raised by President Trump in October 2018, therefore, was not readily available.

This paper is based on a CIS compilation of source material from the public realm — largely media reports and U.S. court prosecution records that were judged significantly credible. Absent the benefit of a large body of classified and protected government information that also exists about the subject, this list therefore cannot be regarded as comprehensive. Additionally, open source information is unavailable, missing, or incomplete for some of the included cases, presenting the possibility that subsequent investigations cleared or further confirmed initially reported suspicions about some listed migrants. Likewise, several reports that strongly indicated the crossing of additional migrant terrorism suspects were excluded from this list due to insufficient detail.

Suspected Migrant-Terrorists Encountered and Apprehended

This prosecution demonstrates the vigilance of the federal government in detecting and disabling individuals who seek to enter the country illegally with the purpose of doing harm. We will continue to be aggressive in protecting our borders and seeking severe punishment for those who violate our laws.

- Western District of Texas U.S. Attorney Robert Pittman, speaking of the sentencing of a Somali al-Shabaab terrorist who crossed the Mexico-Texas border, July 25, 2013.

From intelligence community sources with access to protected government information, the Center for Immigration Studies has learned that at least 100 migrants from “countries of interest,”³ encountered between 2012 and 2017 at or en route to the southern border, matched the U.S. terrorism “watch lists” known as the Terrorist Identities Datamart Environment (TIDE), or the Terrorist Screening Database (TSDB). The number of such law enforcement land border encounters with such watch-listed migrants has risen drastically each year after 2012, according to the information, which is deemed credible but could not be independently corroborated.

As many as 50 TIDE- or TSDB-listed migrants were first encountered at the southern U.S. border during 2012-2017, while unspecified numbers of others were first encountered by a cooperating government along known routes leading to the U.S. border. Individuals would have been placed on TIDE or TSDB when security officers, at some point prior to the encounter, judged they met “reasonable suspicion” or “articulable evidence” thresholds that the migrant was a “known or suspected terrorist.”⁴

For perspective, the 100 or so watch-listed migrants logged from 2012-2017 compares to roughly 3,000 “special interest alien” migrants from countries of interest who are annually apprehended at the southern border.⁵ This indicates a small ratio of terrorist suspects apprehended at the border, though a high number considering the threat that any one of them poses is outsized and of high consequence. Still, these figures represent only publicly reportable cases and would not represent, for instance, terrorism-associated migrants who evaded detection altogether or who simply had not been watch-listed or never raised suspicion after apprehension as they were released pending asylum claims into the country’s interior.

Abdulahi Sharif, Somalia, detained in Alberta, Canada, September 2017, ISIS

While other extremist border-crossers have been prosecuted for supporting terrorism, asylum fraud, and false statements about terrorism, Sharif allegedly went on to stab a police officer and conduct two vehicle ramming attacks in Edmonton, Alberta, in September 2017. His attack while carrying an ISIS flag injured a police officer and four other people. It soon emerged that some years earlier, in 2011, Sharif smuggled through Latin America and Mexico to the California border.⁶ After an immigration judge ordered him deported, he made bond and crossed the Canadian border and achieved refugee status. Within 36 months, however, Canada’s federal anti-terrorism police were investigating claims that he held “genocidal beliefs” consistent with extremist ISIS ideology.⁷

Ibrahim Qoordheen, Somalia, detained in Costa Rica, March 2017, probable al-Shabaab

Costa Rican immigration authorities apprehended Qoordheen after he had passed through Panama en route to the U.S. border.⁸ In a statement released to the public, Costa Rica's security ministry announced that U.S. authorities "confirmed that the person is allegedly linked to international terrorist organizations and sought his immediate detention to begin investigating the case." Qoordheen had been fingerprinted and released when apprehended in Panama and was detained in Costa Rica after U.S. immigration authorities alerted Costa Rican law enforcement that he was en route, strongly suggesting that derogatory intelligence about Qoordheen was already in hand.

Unidentified Afghan national, reported smuggled into the United States, between 2014-2016, Pakistani Taliban

In 2017, federal prosecutors convicted Sharafat Ali Khan, a Pakistani human smuggler based in Brazil, for transporting between 25 and 99 illegal immigrants from Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Afghanistan from Brazil to Texas and California over the Mexican border. According to the *Washington Times*, at least one of Khan's customers was an Afghan "who authorities said was involved in a plot to conduct an attack in the U.S. or Canada and had family ties to members of the Taliban."⁹ No secondary corroboration for the report could be found, but it also has not been disputed, retracted, or corrected. The newspaper reported that "documents reviewed by *The Times*" said the Afghan man was listed on the U.S. No Fly List and in the TSDB for family ties to Taliban terrorists. At an October 2017 sentencing hearing, U.S. District Judge Reggie B. Walton did not mention the Afghan, but admonished Khan, "You don't know whether they're seeking a better life or whether they're trying to get in here to engage in terrorism. People could have died, people could have gotten injured, families could have lost loved ones."¹⁰

Muhammad Azeem and Mukhtar Ahmad, Pakistani nationals, Mexico-California border, September 2015, affiliation unknown

U.S. Border Patrol agents apprehended Azeem and Ahmad just north of Tijuana after the pair had traveled from their home in Gujrat, Pakistan, through Latin America. Database checks revealed that both migrants were on U.S. terrorism watch lists.¹¹ Two months earlier, Panama had detained and released both migrants to continue their travels north. One of the Pakistanis was listed in the TSDB because of associations with a known or suspected terrorist. The second was a positive match for "derogatory information" in another database, most likely TIDE.¹²

Unnamed Somali national, detained at the Texas-Mexico border port of entry, June 2014, probable al-Shabaab

This Somali entrant told U.S. immigration officials that two months prior to his border entry to claim asylum he had completed training for a suicide attack in Mogadishu but instead went to African Union troops who were able to thwart the planned terrorist operation. He stated that he had trained with 13 other Somalis for 10 weeks to use suicide belts, AK-47s, and grenades.¹³ Admitted involvement in any designated terror group is usually grounds for deportation, despite assertions about a change of heart.

Unnamed Sri Lankan national, detained at Texas-Mexico border, March 2012, Tamil Tigers

This Sri Lankan was with two other Sri Lankans apprehended by Border Patrol agents in McAllen, Texas. He stated that he belonged to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, a U.S.-designated foreign terrorist organization. He stated that his group was en route to Canada.¹⁴ The Tamil Tigers, militarily defeated in 2009, perfected the art of suicide bombing and were reportedly attempting to reconstitute the organization abroad.¹⁵

Unnamed Somali national, detained at Mexico-California port of entry, May 2011, probable al-Shabaab

This Somali individual crossed the border at the San Ysidro, Calif., port of entry. He had previously been denied a U.S. immigration visa and was on multiple U.S. terrorism watch lists. His mother, father, and four siblings also were on terrorism watch lists.¹⁶

Unnamed Bangladeshi national, detained near Naco, Ariz., June 2010, Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami Bangladesh

One of two Bangladeshis apprehended after traveling together and illegally crossing from Mexico admitted to U.S. Border Patrol interviewers that both had worked in the “General Assembly” for the U.S.-designated terrorist group Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami Bangladesh. Subsequently, one of two detainees was deported, but the other was granted bond on an asylum claim and absconded.¹⁷

Abdullahi Omar Fidse, Somalia, detained at Mexico-Texas Border, June 2008, al-Shabaab

In July 2013, a U.S. District Judge sentenced Fidse on convictions for lying to the FBI about his terrorism associations after he traveled through Latin America to a Mexico-Texas port of entry in 2008.¹⁸ An FBI counterterrorism investigation found he had served as an al-Shabaab combat operative, crossed the border intending to conduct an unspecified operation, possessed the cell phone number of a terrorist implicated in the 2010 Uganda bombing that killed 70 soccer fans, and laid out details of a plan to assassinate the U.S. ambassador to Kenya and his Marine guard. He also worked as a weapons procurement operative, once buying an armed vehicle for \$100,000 that was blown up in battle, killing all aboard. To a government informant, Fidse discussed the Quranic imperative to “terrorize the infidels” and stated, “We are terrorists.”¹⁹

He admired Osama bin Ladin, demanded vengeance on infidels for the U.S. Hellfire missile killing of a senior al-Shabaab leader, and believed all good Muslims must commit two acts of jihad a year. Fidse’s terrorism involvement was uncovered after an FBI informant inside a Texas detention facility began recording him discussing it.²⁰ U.S. Attorney Robert Pittman said after sentencing: “This prosecution demonstrates the vigilance of the federal government in detecting and disabling individuals who seek to enter the country illegally with the purpose of doing harm.”

Mohammad Ahmad Dhakane, Somalia, detained at Mexico-Texas border port of entry, October 2008, al-Ittihad al-Islamiya

In 2010, Dhakane was convicted at trial in San Antonio, Texas, on asylum fraud charges derived from an FBI terrorism investigation, which began when he was recorded speaking about his work as a terrorist to an undercover informant inside a Texas detention facility. Dhakane had worked as a Brazil-based smuggler of fellow Somalis to the U.S. border before he decided to cross himself and declare asylum. It quickly emerged that Dhakane had belonged to the U.S.-designated terrorist group al-Ittihad al-Islamiya (AIAI) as a guerilla fighter and finance official.²¹ He served for six years as a “hawaladar”, or transferor of funds outside the normal banking system, for al-Barakat, an organization the Treasury Department designated as a banned terrorist entity.²² While working as a smuggler in South America, Dhakane facilitated the transportation of as many as seven Somali men across the Texas and California borders whom he knew, from long personal discussions in hotel rooms along the way, were extremist affiliates of AIAI who he knew were “ready to die for the cause”.

Farida Goolam Ahmed, Pakistani national, illegally crossed the Mexico-Texas border, July 2004, Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM)

Ahmed’s apprehension at the McAllen, Texas, airport while carrying clothing still wet from crossing the Rio Grande and a passport mutilated to hide her airport arrival in Mexico City drew brief national media attention as a potential terrorist infiltration, which faded after official government declarations that she was not connected to terrorism.²³ However, a December 9, 2004, U.S. Border and Transportation Security intelligence summary of the case stated that Ahmed was “linked to specific terrorist activities.”²⁴ MQM is a Pakistan political movement and party that has been involved in terroristic political violence and has been regarded by the U.S. government as a “Tier III” terrorist organization.²⁵ Court transcripts and government investigative materials identified Ahmed as a South Africa-based human smuggler for MQM who sources said operated an MQM safe house in Johannesburg that provided shelter for terrorists “on the run”, to include a participant in a 1995 ambush murder of two U.S. consulate employees in Karachi, Pakistan.²⁶ An FBI official with direct knowledge of the investigation said Ahmed’s husband was a confirmed member of a terrorist organization.²⁷

She regularly transported Pakistanis and others associated with MQM over the U.S.-Mexico border and also into Canada and Australia. Houston-based federal prosecutor Abe Martinez, chief of the Southern District of Texas national security section in the U.S. Attorney’s Office, was asked if she or anyone she smuggled might have been involved in terrorism. “Were they linked to any terrorism organizations? I would have to say yes.”²⁸ An uncorroborated *Homeland Security Today* magazine

report cited U.S. intelligence sources alleging that Ahmed was linked to Pakistanis arrested in the United Kingdom who were plotting a terror attack in New York.²⁹ Ahmed pleaded guilty to illegal entry and false statements and was deported with time served.³⁰

Muhammad Kourani, Lebanese national, illegally crossed Mexico-U.S. border, date unknown (sometime before 2003), Hezbollah

Court records from a current prosecution of a New York City-based member of Hezbollah's foreign terrorist wing known as "Unit 910" revealed that the defendant's father, Muhammad Kourani, had "entered the United States illegally on foot."³¹ "U.S. prosecutors accuse the son, Ali Kourani, in a multi-count indictment of collecting intelligence for potential assassinations and bombings in the United States for Unit 910 from 2008 through at least 2015."³²

Court records from his son's New York prosecution describe Mohammed Kourani as having intimate knowledge of and participation in his son's communications with a Hezbollah overseer inside Lebanon and also that the father knew two other sons were Hezbollah members and that at least one unrelated man in the New York area was a Hezbollah intelligence operative.³³ After Muhammad Kourani illegally entered the United States from Mexico, he fraudulently married a woman to gain legal residency. The date of the illegal entry is not provided. He then sought immigration relief for his son, the defendant Ali Kourani, and also one other of his sons, Moustafa Kourani, based on the purported marriage. Court records from the case show at least three of Muhammad Kourani's sons were Hezbollah operatives.³⁴ Ultimately, the U.S. defendant, Ali Kourani, legally immigrated from Cyprus to the United States in 2003. It was unclear whether his father was involved in that immigration, but the dates indicate that Muhammad Kourani would likely have crossed from Mexico prior to 2003. The other son and defendant's brother, Moustafa Kourani, whom their father also helped enter the United States was, in 2017, undergoing deportation proceedings while also under FBI investigation as a suspected Hezbollah operative.

Al-Manar Television employee, Lebanese national, smuggled over Mexico-California border, 2001 or 2002, Hezbollah

Out of the 2003-2004 U.S. smuggling prosecution of Lebanese national Salim Boughader Mucharraille came information that his Tijuana-based organization smuggled one client over the Mexico-California who worked for a Hezbollah-owned satellite television network.³⁵ The U.S. government designated Hezbollah a foreign terrorist organization in 1997. The U.S. Department of the Treasury designated its satellite television operation as a terrorist entity in part because employees have been known to conduct pre-operational surveillance for Hezbollah "under cover of employment by Al-Manar", according to the U.S. Treasury Department.³⁶ The station was added to the U.S. State Department's Terrorist Exclusion List in 2004.³⁷

Mahmoud Kourani, Lebanese national, illegally crossed Mexico-California border, February 2001, Hezbollah

In 2001, Kourani (no known family relation to other listed individuals in this report) was smuggled across the Mexican border and into the United States in the trunk of a car and settled in Dearborn, Mich.³⁸ In 2005, Kourani was sentenced to 54 months in prison for his activities as a "fighter, recruiter and fund-raiser" for Hezbollah, operating in Lebanon and in the United States.³⁹ Court records said Kourani had received "specialized training in radical Shiite fundamentalism, weaponry, spy craft and counterintelligence in Lebanon and Iran." Prosecutors said his brother, Haidar, was chief of military security for the group in southern Lebanon. The government said Kourani paid a Mexican consular official in Beirut \$3,000 for a visa to enter Mexico, then sneaked across the border.⁴⁰ He was smuggled by the Salim Boughader Mucharraille network of Lebanon, along with at least 200 Lebanese the network moved over the border from Tijuana, to include an Al-Manar Television employee.⁴¹

Conclusion

While the list provided in this *Backgrounder* is necessarily partial, indications are strong that far greater numbers of migrants with terrorism connections crossed the land border but cannot be publicly reported. One example involves the case of Islamic convert and Virginia native Anthony Joseph Tracy — who left his wife and children and moved to Kenya. There, he began working with Somali war refugees and opened the business "Noor Services."⁴² Ultimately, Tracy was prosecuted for providing 270 Somalis with fraudulently obtained Kenyan passports, Cuban visas, and travel documentation to help them be smuggled over the U.S. land border.⁴³ According to 2010 prosecution records, Tracy admitted the terrorist organization al-

Shabaab asked him to provide fraudulent travel documents to its operatives and that he failed a polygraph test while insisting he had refused the entreaty. In court, investigators produced an e-mail from Tracy to an associate in which he admitted, “I helped a lot of Somalis, and most are good, but there are some who are bad, and I leave them to Allah.”⁴⁴

This and other evidence prompted FBI investigators to mount a nationwide, around-the-clock hunt for Tracy’s Somali clients on grounds that “we have no idea who these individuals are that he assisted. These individuals pose — possibly pose — a risk of national security to the country.”⁴⁵ What they found remains publicly unknown, as when FBI agents mounted a nationwide search for several of Mohammad Dhakane’s clients that he believed were members of AIAI willing to conduct terrorist acts if asked.

Meanwhile, other reporting strongly suggests that Latin American countries are grappling with the migrant terrorists en route to the border, efforts also not reportable in that officials decline to provide details. One case in point developed in August 2016, when Panama decided to deport six Pakistani nationals it apprehended moving through its territory.⁴⁶ For Panama to deport any of the roughly 8,000 migrants a year normally allowed to pass through its territory from Colombia northward is highly unusual. The deportations suggest that unusual derogatory information was associated with the six Pakistanis, probably related to terrorism. Authorities would only state the deportations were for “incomplete documents”, a circumstance that would be common to many thousands of migrants passing through the country.

While President Trump may have raised the prospect of terrorist border infiltration to gain political advantage, facts would support his contention that Middle Easterners from places like Syria, Iraq, and Egypt, as well as from South Asia and the Horn of Africa, do indeed routinely travel the same routes as Hondurans to the U.S. southern border and that some terrorist suspects have traveled among them.⁴⁷

End Notes

¹ President Donald Trump, [Twitter post](#), October 22, 2018, 5:37 a.m.; Oval Office [press conference statements](#), October 23 2018, at 27:15 and 29:33.

² Josh Feldman, [“Jeff Flake Responds to Trump’s ‘Unknown Middle Easterners’ Tweet: ‘A Canard and a Fear Tactic’”](#), Mediaite, October 22, 2018.

³ See Todd Bensman, [“Terrorist Infiltration Threat at the Southwest Border: The national security gap in America’s immigration enforcement debate”](#), Center for Immigration Studies *Backgrounders*, August 13, 2018.

⁴ Evan Simon, [“How ‘the Terrorist Watch List’ Works”](#), ABC News, June 17, 2016.

⁵ See Eleanor Mueller, [“DHS Secretary: This Migrant Caravan is Not Getting Through”](#), *Politico*, October 28, 2018; Todd Bensman, [“Terrorist Infiltration Threat at the Southwest Border”](#), Center for Immigration Studies *Backgrounders*, August 13, 2018, noting that “hundreds of SIAs, perhaps ranging to the low thousands ... are apprehended annually.”

⁶ [“Man charged in Edmonton attacks crossed into U.S. from Mexico, records show”](#), CBC, October 4, 2017.

⁷ See Todd Bensman, [“The First Border-Crosser to Attack in North America: Finally, an Update”](#), Center for Immigration Studies blog, October 3, 2018; Johnny Wakefield, [“Everything we know about the man charged in Edmonton’s truck attack from the woman who knows him best”](#), *Edmonton Journal*, September 28, 2018.

⁸ See Enrique Andres Pretel, [“Costa Rica detains Somali with alleged terrorism links”](#), Reuters News, March 23, 2017; Michael Kumholtz, [“Terror Alert”](#), *The Tico Times*, March 23, 2017.

⁹ See Stephen Dinan, [“Sharafat Ali Khan smuggled terrorist-linked immigrants”](#), *Washington Times*, April 12, 2017.

¹⁰ See Stephen Dinan, [“Pakistani mastermind of plot to smuggle ‘terrorism’ immigrants to U.S. sentenced”](#), October 17, 2017.

¹¹ See Stephen Dinan, [“Agents nab Pakistanis with terrorist connections crossing U.S. border”](#), *Washington Times*, December 30, 2015.

¹² See Tatiana Sanchez, [“Hunter raises questions about Pakistani border arrests”](#), *San Diego Union-Tribune*, January 6, 2016.

¹³ This information is derived from a Law Enforcement Sensitive Texas Department of Public Safety intelligence assessment that was provided, unauthorized, to several media outlets. For this item, the [DPS document](#) cites in end note 109 unclassified intelligence Report “4 0061329 14”.

¹⁴ This information is derived from a Law Enforcement Sensitive Texas Department of Public Safety intelligence assessment that was provided, unauthorized, to several media outlets. For this item, the [DPS document](#) cites in end note 110 Customs and Border Protection Field Intelligence Report “FIR-MCS-12-1207179”.

¹⁵ See Stewart Bell, [“Canadian Tamil Tigers ‘operative’ pleads guilty in U.S. after working as arms supplier for Sri Lankan rebels”](#), *The National Post*, October 16, 2013.

¹⁶ This information is derived from a Law Enforcement Sensitive Texas Department of Public Safety intelligence assessment that was provided, unauthorized, to several media outlets. For this item, the [DPS document](#) cites in end note 111 as “HIR/CBP 0295-11”.

¹⁷ This information is derived from a Law Enforcement Sensitive Texas Department of Public Safety intelligence assessment that was provided, unauthorized, to several media outlets. For this item, the [DPS document](#) cites in end note 114 as “Information shared by HIS agents, 2012”.

- ¹⁸ [“Somali national sentenced to more than 8 years in federal prison for making false statements in terrorism investigation”](#), press release, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, July 25, 2013.
- ¹⁹ *United States v. Fidse*, Case 13-50734, (U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, August 2014); *United States v. Fidse*, Case 5:11-cr-00425-FB (W.D. Tex. August 2011).
- ²⁰ *United States v. Fidse and Sheikh*, Case 5:11-cr-00425-FB, (W.D. Tex., June 2011), Detention Order; *United States v. Fidse and Sheikh*, Case 5:11-cr-00425-FB, (W.D. Tex., May 2011), unsealed indictment.
- ²¹ *United States v. Muhammad Ahmad Dhakane*, 5th Cir. Ct. (W.D. Tex., 2010), [Government Sentencing Memorandum](#), Document 57.
- ²² *Ibid.*
- ²³ *United States v. Ahmed*, No. M-04-3156-M, criminal complaint, (S.D. Tex, July 23, 2004); See Sylvia Moreno and John Mintz, [“South African in Texas May Have Terror Ties”](#), *The Washington Post*, August 1, 2004; [“Not a Terrorist, Woman is Deported to South Africa”](#), *Los Angeles Times*, March 9, 2005.
- ²⁴ In 2006, the author was granted access to the document and permission to cite information from it.
- ²⁵ *Aqueel Ahmed v. Eric Holder*, in United States District Court (E.D. of Pennsylvania) civil action 13-3017, [Memorandum](#); *United States v. Farida Goolam Mohommed Ahmed* in United States District Court (S.D. Tex, McAllen District), Preliminary Examination/Detention Hearing Transcript, case 04-CR-3156-M, July 27, 2004; see Murtaza Ali Shah, [“MQM-London leaders interrogated in Washington”](#), *The International News*, October 24, 2018.
- ²⁶ Access to investigative materials provided to the author in 2006.
- ²⁷ FBI official interview with the author circa 2006; See Todd Bensman, [“Have Terrorists Crossed?”](#), *The Investigative Project on Terrorism*, March 25, 2008.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.* In 2007, the author conducted a telephone interview with Martinez and quoted him in the article.
- ²⁹ [“Al Qaeda Operatives Captured by CIA Provided Intelligence Behind New Orange Heightened Terrorist Threat Alert”](#), *Homeland Security Today Magazine*, August 5, 2004.
- ³⁰ *United States v. Farida Goolam Mahomed Ahmed*, No. 4:04CR003370-001, Judgement in a criminal case, (S.D. Tex December 15, 2004); [“Woman who raised terrorism concerns deported”](#), MyPlainview.com, March 7, 2005.
- ³¹ *United States v. Kourani*, Case 1:17-cr-00417-AKH, (S.D. New York 2018), 2018, Government Memorandum of Opposition to Defendant’s Bail Application, p. 13 footnote 7.
- ³² *United States v. Kourani*, Case 1:17-cr-00417-AKH (S.D.N.Y. June 28, 2017) Indictment.
- ³³ *United States v. Kourani*, No. 1:17-cr-00417-AKH, Document 63 (S.D.N.Y., September 10, 2018); p. 1 of 11, FBI 302 form states that, when Ali Kourani needed to meet with the Unit 910 Hezbollah handler, Fadi, he was to send a coded number to a pager number held by Fadi, who would then contact Muhammed Kourani’s cell phone within 48 hours and that he, the defendant’s father, would set up a face-to-face meeting; On p. 6 of 11 FBI 302 forms says “Kourani’s father, Muhammed, knows Shahin, and also knows that Shahin and Shahin’s family are closely affiliated with Hizbollah” and that Shahin was a member of Unit 910.
- ³⁴ *United States v. Kourani*, Case: 1:17-cr-00417-AKH (S.D.N.Y. April 11, 2018) Suppression Hearing Transcript starting p. 63).

- ³⁵ See Pauline Arrillaga and Olga R. Rodriguez, [“The terror-immigration connection”](#), Associated Press, July 3, 2005.
- ³⁶ [“U.S. Designates Al-Manar as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist Entity Television Station is Arm of Hizballah Terrorist Network”](#), press release, U.S. Department of Treasury, March 23, 2006.
- ³⁷ [“Addition of Al-Manar to the Terrorist Exclusion List”](#), State Department Press Statement, December 28, 2004.
- ³⁸ *United States v. Mohmoud Youssef Kourani*, (E.D. Michigan Southern Div), p. 3 Indictment, November 19, 2003; Warren Richey, [“Are terrorists crossing the US-Mexico border? Excerpts from the case file”](#), *Christian Science Monitor*, January 15, 2017.
- ³⁹ *United States v. Kourani*, Case 04-80910, (E.D. Mich. June 2005), [indictment](#).
- ⁴⁰ [“Hezbollah Fundraiser sentenced to prison”](#), Associated Press, June 15, 2005.
- ⁴¹ See Pauline Arrillaga and Olga R. Rodriguez, [“The terror-immigration connection”](#), Associated Press, July 3, 2005; Warren Richey, [“Are terrorists crossing the US-Mexico border? Excerpts from the case file”](#), *Christian Science Monitor*, January 15, 2017.
- ⁴² *United States v. Tracy*, Case 1:10-cr-00122-LMB, (E.D.Va., February 2010), criminal complaint affidavit.
- ⁴³ *United States v. Tracy*, Case 1:10-cr-00122-LMB, (E.D. Va. June 2010), detention hearing transcript, p. 33.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁶ [“6 deported from Panama handed over to FIA”](#), *Pakistan Today*, August 6, 2016.
- ⁴⁷ See Todd Bensman, [“Terrorist Infiltration Threat at the Southwest Border”](#), Center for Immigration Studies *Backgrounder*, August 13, 2018; Todd Bensman, [“Breaching America: The Latin Connection”](#), *San Antonio Express-News*, May 21, 2007; [“Border Patrol Checkpoints Contribute to Border Patrol’s Mission, but More Consistent Data Collection and Performance Measurement Could Improve Effectiveness”](#), United States Government Accountability Office Report 09-824, August 2009; Todd Bensman, [“The Ultra-Marathoners of Human Smuggling: Defending Forward Against Dark Networks That Can Transport Terrorists Across American Land Borders”](#), Master’s thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, September 2015.