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ICE NEWSROOM

FEBRUARY 12, 2016 • SAN FRANCISCO, CA • ENFORCEMENT AND REMOVAL

## ICE removes former Orange County woman convicted of terrorism charge

*Turkish national sent money to Pakistan to be used in attacks against US forces overseas*





**SAN FRANCISCO –** A Turkish woman, who resided in Orange County and was convicted of providing material support to terrorists to harm U.S. interests overseas, was turned over to authorities in Istanbul Friday by officers with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO).

Oytun Ayse Mihalik, 43, formerly of La Palma, was repatriated on board commercial flights escorted by San Francisco-based ERO officers. After arriving at Istanbul Ataturk Airport, ERO officers transferred Mihalik to the custody of Turkish law enforcement. Mihalik who pleaded guilty to one count of providing material support to terrorists, was sentenced to five years in federal prison in March 2013.

In her guilty plea, Mihalik admitted she provided money to an individual in Pakistan with the intention the money would be used to prepare for and carry out attacks against U.S. military personnel and other persons overseas. Using the alias "Cindy Palmer," Mihalik sent \$2,050 in three wire transfers to an individual in Pakistan in late 2010 and early 2011. As part of her plea, Mihalik agreed to forfeit her lawful permanent resident status and be removed to Turkey after serving her prison sentence.

"Becoming a lawful permanent resident of the United States is a privilege," said Adrian Macias, acting field office director for ERO San Francisco. "ICE will move aggressively against those engaged in actions that seek to harm those responsible for safeguarding the very freedoms that privilege affords."

The charge against Mihalik was the result of an investigation by the Joint Terrorism Task Force, including the FBI, ICE's Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), and the Orange County Sheriff's Department.

Department of Homeland Security databases show Mihalik arrived in the U.S. in July 2006 on a work visa and became a lawful permanent resident in January 2011. In April 2013, she was ordered removed to Turkey by a federal magistrate judge as part of a judicial order based on her involvement in providing material support to terrorist activity.

In July 2013, San Francisco ERO officers encountered Mihalik at the Federal Corrections Institution in Dublin, California, and lodged an immigration detainer. On Jan. 5, ERO officers took Mihalik into custody following her release from prison and began making final arrangements for her removal.

Updated: 02/16/2016

## MEDIA INQUIRIES

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