

June 16, 2017

U.S. Authorities Arrest Two Hezbollah Operatives Plotting Against American and Israel Targets

On June 8, the U.S. Department of Justice announced the arrest of two men on charges related to their alleged involvement in activities on behalf of the Iranian-backed terrorist organization Hezbollah. Ali Kourani was arrested in the Bronx, New York on June 1 for providing material support to Hezbollah and receiving military-type training from the terrorist group. He is also charged on a related weapons offense that involves a rocket-propelled grenade launcher and machine guns. In 2000, Kourani began attending Hezbollah-sponsored weapons training in Lebanon. Samer El-Debek was also arrested on June 1, near Detroit, Michigan. Hezbollah allegedly recruited him in late 2007 or early 2008. He was paid by the group through approximately 2015 and received extensive military training, including “various weapons, surveillance and counter-surveillance techniques, and the creation and handling of explosives and explosive devices.” According to the FBI, he possesses a “high degree of technical sophistication” in explosives. Hezbollah has been designated as a U.S. terrorist organization since 1995. The group has killed more Americans than any terrorist group other than al-Qaida.