

World

## Belgian Court Jails Militants Who Travelled to Syria to Fight



ASHARQ AL-AWSAT  
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Belgian Authorities arresting Belkacem

Brussels – Brussels Court of Appeal convicted three Belgians from Fulford who left Belgium for Syria.

According to local media, the three convicts: Mohammed Akyshooh, Anas Kondi, and Zuhair B. are members of Fulford Youth Group, trained by the extremist Fouad Belkacem, leader of Sharia4Belgium.

Two years ago, Belkacem and others were convicted of crimes which they denied.

Mohammed Akyshooh and Anas Kondi left to Syria in March 2013 accompanied by Mohammed Sadeq Sharabi. Akyshooh remained in Syria till April.

Later, Mohammed Sharabi returned to Belgium and started preparing to leave to Syria with Zuhair B., but he eventually left alone since Zuhair was arrested on the ground of other crimes.

Criminal court sentenced Sharabi for seven years in prison, Anas Kondi for six years, and both Zuhair B. and Mohammed Akyshooh for four years.

Mohammed Akyshooh was acquitted of charges of torturing the Belgian Jijoein Bontik.

Court of Appeal confirmed the sentences for Akyshooh and Zuhair, while Kondi received 5 years, whereas Mohammed Sharabi didn't appeal his sentence. The court also ordered for immediate arrest of the convicts.

In January last year, Belgian authorities arrested two persons in Brussels airport on their way to Syria through Greece. Belgian Federal Bureau said that two persons were arrested in the airport on their way to Greece and possibly from there to Syria.

VRT TV said that a 30-year-old man and another 20-year-old were arrested, along with a woman who was later released.

Authorities announced earlier that it had arrested a 19-year old student in the Industrial School at Fiel Ford town before heading to Syria with forged ID.

The police did series of raids targeting houses of those involved in the FurFei incident.

Belgian Minister of Interior Affairs Jan Jambon announced that the number of people heading to fight in Syria has indeed decreased. Since January, authorities has been revoking the ID of any person suspected of planning to travel to areas of terrorist groups.

The minister also announced that statistics show that the total number of Belgians who traveled or tried to travel to Syria is over 500. Whereas, countries like France and UK, with a population larger than that of Belgium, had fewer numbers of persons traveling to fight outside.

The numbers declared by the minister of interior are not different from the official numbers issued by the Belgian Parliament. Brussels had 197-person travel, 112 of which are in Syria and 59 returned to Belgium.



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