



Bundeskriminalamt

**60 Years of the BKA:  
The Field of Contention between Freedom and Security**

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**“EG Zeit” Investigation Group –  
the Sauerland Terrorists**

Abstract

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Presiding Judge at the Higher Regional Court in Düsseldorf

On 4th March 2010, the 6th Criminal Division of Düsseldorf Higher Regional Court imposed final and binding prison sentences ranging between twelve and five years on the so-called Sauerland terrorists Fritz Martin G., Adem Y., Daniel Martin S. and Atilla S., after having tried this case for about ten months.

The case dealt with the following facts:

The then defendants and later sentenced persons, Fritz Martin G., Adem Y. and Daniel Martin S., who had completed paramilitary training with the terrorist organisation "Islamic Jihad Union" (IJU) in Waziristan in the year 2006 and joined the IJU as members, were tasked by the organisation to carry out explosives attacks in Germany, in particular targeting United States facilities, due to the deployment of United States troops in Afghanistan. With these attacks, the defendants also wanted to impact the German Federal Parliament's decision to extend the mandate of Germany's Federal Armed Forces in Afghanistan. By the end of their several-month preparation for the attacks - they had procured, inter alia, large quantities of hydrogen peroxide as a basic substance by that time - they were arrested in a holiday home in the Sauerland region on 4th September 2007, where they had already taken up the production of the explosive devices. The defendant Daniel Martin S. attempted to avoid arrest by escaping. In doing so, he fired a shot from a firearm he had previously snatched from a police officer; however, the officer was not hit.

The defendant Atilla S., who - like the other defendants - had attended an IJU training camp in Waziristan, but had not joined the organisation as a member, supported the attack preparations by procuring the required detonators in Turkey, where he had fled for fear of being arrested in Germany. He was arrested in Turkey in November 2007 and extradited to Germany one year later.

So much for the relevant incidents.

Thanks to the early intervention of Germany's Federal Criminal Police Office, specifically the Zeit Investigation Group (EG Zeit), the possibly largest attack by Islamist terrorists in Germany was prevented just in time. The arrest of the Sauerland terrorists was the result of extremely complex and intense investigations, predominantly undertaken by the Federal Criminal Police Office. According to initial intelligence gathered, in particular as a result of eavesdropping the conversations held between Fritz Martin G., Adem Y. and Daniel Martin S. – the core group of the so-called Sauerland terrorists – in different vehicles, and given the large quantity of hydrogen peroxide bought by Fritz Martin G., the investigating authorities – rightly – assumed that there were extraordinarily dangerous, large-scale attack plans. If the perpetrators had put everything into practice what they planned on behalf of the Islamic Jihad Union, a devastating bloodbath would have occurred resulting in a large number of deaths and injuries, mainly among members of the United States Army, but civilians would also have been among the victims. Luckily, the risk of a successful implementation of the plot was

averted by the investigating authorities. In the preparatory stage for the attacks, the Federal Criminal Police Office had successfully operated - unnoticed by the defendants - by replacing a hydrogen peroxide solution with a concentration of 35 % intended to be used as explosive – with a solution having a concentration of 3 %, which posed no risk.

During the subsequent main hearing, the four defendants confessed the crime and provided extensive information on their personal development towards Islamism and on the background of the criminal acts. Their confessions were caused, inter alia, by overwhelming evidence.