

Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Eastern District of Virginia

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, October 6, 2016

Israeli Owner of Mall Kiosk Businesses Pleads Guilty to Immigration and Money Laundering Charges

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. – Eyal Katz, 38, of Israel, pleaded guilty today to charges related to his role in an immigration fraud and money laundering scheme.

According to the statement of facts filed with the plea agreement, Katz, operating from an office in Tel Aviv, Israel, would identify, recruit and send foreign nationals from Israel to the United States on B-2 visitor visas. Once those foreign nationals were in the United States, they would be sent to work for one of several business entities, known collectively as RASKO; a mall-based kiosk business in Virginia, Georgia, Pennsylvania and New Jersey through which they sold Dead Sea Salt products. Katz and co-conspirators would provide housing and transportation to the foreign nationals. From 2011 through the present, the conspirators, led by Omer Gur in the United States and Katz in Israel, recruited over 140 foreign nationals from Israel to work at the kiosks, in violation of the workers' B-2 visitor visa status. From 2012 through 2014, RASKO received over \$14 million through its kiosk based sales. Several million dollars from these sales were then routed to Israel based accounts, including accounts controlled by Katz, and spent on lodging, travel, kiosk rentals and other expenses of the scheme. To date, nine of the ten charged defendants in the case have been arrested. Katz is the ninth defendant to plead guilty.

Katz was indicted by a federal grand jury on February 10, and was arrested in Romania and extradited to the United States in June. Katz faces a maximum penalty of 25 years in prison when sentenced on Jan. 17, 2017. The maximum statutory sentence is prescribed by Congress and is provided here for informational purposes, as the sentencing of the defendant will be determined by the court based on the advisory Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

Dana J. Boente, U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia; Robin Blake, Special Agent in Charge of the Washington, D.C. Regional Office, U.S. Department of Labor; and Jonathan F. Trimble, Acting Special Agent in Charge of the FBI's Norfolk Field Office, made the announcement after the plea was accepted by U.S. District Judge Raymond A. Jackson. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Brian J. Samuels, Lisa R. McKeel and Kevin Hudson are prosecuting the case.

A copy of this press release may be found on the website of the [U.S. Attorney's Office](#) for the Eastern District of Virginia. Related court documents and information may be found on the website of the [District Court](#) for the Eastern District of Virginia or on [PACER](#) by searching for **Case No. 4:116-cr-17**.