

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, February 23, 2017

Owner of Mall Kiosk Businesses Sentenced for Immigration and Money Laundering Crimes

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. – Eyal Katz, 38, a citizen of Israel, was sentenced today to seven years in prison for his role in an immigration fraud and money laundering scheme. Katz was sentenced to three years of supervised release, a \$20,000 fine and ordered to forfeit certain property.

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 his 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.

Dana J. Boente, U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia; Robin Blake, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Washington, DC Regional Office, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General; Martin Culbreth, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI's Norfolk Field Office; Michael K. Lamonea, Assistant Special Agent in Charge of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) Norfolk; and Christian Schurman, Acting Director of the Diplomatic Security Service for the U.S. Department of State, made the announcement after sentencing by U.S. District Judge Raymond A. Jackson. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Brian J. Samuels, Lisa R. McKeel and Kevin Hudson prosecuted 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. 4:16-cr-17**.