

Treasury Targets Syrian Regime Officials and the Central Bank of Syria

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Washington – Today, in support of the U.S. government’s efforts to promote accountability and reach a political resolution to the Syrian conflict, the U.S. Department of the Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) sanctioned a high-ranking official in the Syrian government; her husband, a member of the Syrian People’s Assembly; and their business entities. Further, OFAC added the Central Bank of Syria to the Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List (SDN List), underscoring its status as a blocked person, and additionally identified the property of other previous blocked persons. In total, OFAC added two individuals, nine business entities, and the Central Bank of Syria to the SDN List, pursuant to Syria sanctions authorities. Through this action, the Department of the Treasury aims to discourage future investment in government-controlled areas of Syria, force the regime to end its atrocities against the Syrian people, and compel its commitment to the United Nations-facilitated process in line with UN Security Council Resolution 2254.

“One year ago this week, the President signed into law the Caesar Act of 2019, an important step, reaffirmed by today’s action, in holding accountable the Assad regime for the atrocities it has committed against its own people,” said Secretary Steven T. Mnuchin. “The Treasury Department will continue to use all of its tools to expose those who stand with the Assad regime and enable these crimes to continue.”

Concurrent with the Treasury Department’s designations, the State Department also designated today six Syrian persons pursuant to Section 2 of Executive Order (E.O.) 13894, “Blocking Property and Suspending Entry of Certain Persons Contributing to the Situation in Syria.”

The United States will continue to stand alongside the Syrian people. Since the start of the conflict, the United States has provided over \$12 billion in assistance to Syrians in need. Humanitarian organizations are reminded of OFAC’s previous guidance related to the provision of humanitarian aid. The United States continues to provide guidance, including in Treasury’s COVID-19 press release, to better inform the public, partner governments, relevant international organizations, and NGOs about the general licenses and exemptions available to ensure the provision of humanitarian aid, including to the Syrian people, remains unimpeded. In addition, with today’s action, OFAC has issued further guidance in the form of FAQs on the continued availability of humanitarian-related sanctions exceptions.

SENIOR GOVERNMENT OF SYRIA OFFICIALS

Today, OFAC designated **Lina Mohammed Nazir al-Kinayeh (al-Kinayeh)**, the Director of the Follow-Up Office in the Office of the Syrian Presidency, a position she has held for over a decade. This office follows up on the files and decisions of the Presidential Palace's Anti-Corruption Committee, which Assad directly supervises, using judicial, advisory, and administrative authorities under its jurisdiction. Closely aligned with the Assad regime as a high-ranking official in the Presidential Palace, **al-Kinayeh** has conducted a range of business and personal activities on behalf of Syrian First Lady Asma al-Assad and previously headed the Office of the First Lady of Syria. **Al-Kinayeh** was designated pursuant to E.O. 13573 for being a senior official of the Government of Syria.

OFAC also sanctioned **Mohammed Hammam Mohammed Adnan Masouti (Masouti)**, **al-Kinayeh**'s husband, who represents the Damascus electoral district as a member of parliament in the Syrian People's Assembly, a position to which he was first elected in 2016. **Masouti** is a member of the Syrian People's Assembly's Arab and Foreign Affairs Committee and he has also served as the Director of the Educational Hospitals Directorate in the Ministry of Higher Education, which reportedly enabled his corruption in Syria's hospital system as well as self-serving deals with the support of his wife. **Masouti**'s connections to the Assad regime through his wife, as well as his businesses and vast financial holdings, make **Masouti** an unusually influential parliamentarian. **Masouti** was designated pursuant to E.O. 13573 for being a senior official of the Government of Syria.

Four companies owned or controlled by **al-Kinayeh** or **Masouti**, three as designations and one as an identification of blocked property, were added to the SDN List: **Souran Company, Lia Company, Letia Company**, and **Polymedics LLC**.

Souran Company, Lia Company, and **Polymedics LLC** were designated pursuant to E.O. 13573 for being owned or controlled by, or for having acted or purported to act for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, **Masouti**. **Letia Company** was identified for being owned in the aggregate, directly or indirectly, 50 percent or more by **al-Kinayeh** and **Masouti**.

KHITI BUSINESS NETWORK

On November 9, 2020, OFAC designated Amer Taysir Khiti for being a senior official of the Government of Syria and Khiti Holding Group for being owned or controlled by, or for having acted or purported to act for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, Amer Taysir Khiti. Today's action added five entities to the SDN List that were identified as blocked property of Amer Taysir Khiti or Khiti Holding Group, individually or in the aggregate: **Al-Amer for Manufacture of Concrete and Flagstone**, **Al-Amer for Manufacture of Plastic**, **Al-Layth Alzahabe Transportation and Shipping Services**, **Al-Amer Development and Real Estate Investment**, and **Good Land Company**.

Al-Amer for Manufacture of Concrete and Flagstone and **Al-Amer for Manufacture of Plastic** were identified for being owned in the aggregate, directly or indirectly, 50 percent or more by Khiti Holding Group and Amer Taysir Khiti. **Al-Layth**

Alzahabe Transportation and Shipping Services was identified for being owned, directly or indirectly, 50 percent or more by Khiti Holding Group. **Al-Amer Development and Real Estate Investment** and **Good Land Company** were identified for being owned, directly or indirectly, 50 percent or more by Amer Taysir Khiti.

CENTRAL BANK OF SYRIA

OFAC additionally added the **Central Bank of Syria (CBoS)** to the SDN List, highlighting its blocked status. The **CBoS** is already blocked as meeting the definition of the Government of Syria in E.O. 13582 and the Syrian Sanctions Regulations, 31 C.F.R. Part 542. The **CBoS** oversees monetary policy in Syria, and one of its main functions is the issuance of a national currency, which is exercised by the **CBoS** solely on behalf of the Government of Syria. The **CBoS** additionally regulates the operations of private sector banks and money services businesses in the markets and acts as the fiscal and depository agent of the Government of Syria. The **CBoS** has deep banking ties to Iran, the world's largest state sponsor of terrorism, and the **CBoS** has been an integral part of the regime's efforts to increase public revenues and prop up the Syrian currency.

SANCTIONS IMPLICATIONS

All property and interests in property of these persons that are in the United States or in the possession or control of U.S. persons must be blocked and reported to OFAC. Unless authorized by a general or specific license issued by OFAC or otherwise exempt, OFAC's regulations generally prohibit all dealings by U.S. persons or within (or transiting) the United States that involve any property or interests in property of designated or otherwise blocked persons. In addition, non-U.S. persons that engage in certain transactions with the persons designated today may be exposed to designation.

View identifying information on the individuals and entities designated today.

For more information regarding the scope of any sanctions program's requirements please contact OFAC's Sanction Compliance and Evaluation Division at (800) 540-6322 or (202) 622-2490, or by email at OFAC_Feedback@treasury.gov.

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