

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Press Center



Treasury Targets Medellin-Based Drug Trafficker, Key Link Between Colombian and Mexican Drug Cartels

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WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) today designated Medellin-based drug trafficker Pedro Antonio Bermudez Suaza (alias "*El Arquitecto*") as a Specially Designated Narcotics Trafficker (SDNT) pursuant to Executive Order 12978. OFAC also designated as SDNTs 13 other individuals and 14 entities located in Colombia, Mexico, and Panama. Mexican authorities captured Bermudez Suaza in Mexico City on October 2, 2008.

"When Mexican authorities captured Bermudez Suaza, they took down a major conduit of cocaine between the Colombian and Mexican drug cartels," said OFAC Director Adam J. Szubin. "Today's designations expose Bermudez Suaza's numerous illicitly-obtained assets in his hometown of Medellin, Colombia as well as those in Mexico and Panama."

Bermudez Suaza, whose criminal expertise is centered on the smuggling of cocaine via aircraft, was arrested in October 2008 by Mexican authorities on charges related to narcotics trafficking and money laundering. Bermudez Suaza also faces federal drug trafficking charges in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York, where he was indicted in September 2008.

Today's action also targets 13 individuals who act on behalf of Bermudez Suaza. Mexican nationals Felipe Bermudez Duran (Bermudez Suaza's son), Julio Cesar Sanchez Martell, and Omar Alfredo Jacome Del Valle are three of the individuals designated today. Mexican authorities arrested these three men in 2007 for their links to a plane carrying 3.7 metric tons of cocaine, which crashed in Mexico on September 24, 2007. This failed smuggling operation was managed by Bermudez Suaza. OFAC also designated several Colombian nationals -- including Bermudez Suaza's mother, Maria del Carmen Suaza Barco, another of Bermudez Suaza's sons, Santiago Bermudez Luque, and key financial associates Martha Marina Munera Velasquez and Natalia Andrea Vasquez Valencia -- for their roles as front persons for Bermudez Suaza's assets in Colombia

Fourteen companies controlled by Bermudez Suaza were also designated today. In Mexico, *Aeronautica Condor S.A. de C.V.*, a small airline, and *Consultoria en Cambios Falcon S.A. de C.V.*, a small money service business ("*centro cambiario*"), were designated. In Panama, *Grupo Falcon de Panama, S.A.*, which owns commercial real estate, was designated. In Colombia, the designated entities include *Taxi Aereo Antioqueno S.A.*, a small Medellin-based airline, *Llanotour Ltda (a.k.a. Hosteria Llanogrande)*, a hotel management company in Rionegro operated by front person Martha Marina Munera Velasquez, and *Franzul S.A.*, a real estate holding company. Through his Colombian companies, Bermudez Suaza owns numerous real properties in the Medellin area.

This designation is part of the ongoing interagency effort by the Department of the Treasury and the Departments of Justice, State and Homeland Security to implement Executive Order 12978 of October 21, 1995, which applies financial sanctions against Colombia's drug cartels. Today's designation action freezes any assets the designees may have that are subject to U.S. jurisdiction and prohibits all financial and commercial transactions by any U.S. person with the designated entities and individuals. OFAC thanks U.S. law enforcement agencies' offices in Mexico and Colombia for their assistance with this investigation.

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REPORTS

- [bermudez suaza organization.pdf](#) 

