

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Press Center



Treasury Designates Two Narcotics Traffickers in Guinea-Bissau Treasury Targets Emerging West African Narcotics Transit Route

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WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) today designated two Guinea-Bissau based individuals, Jose Americo Bubo Na Tchuto and Ibraima Papa Camara, as drug kingpins due to their significant roles in international narcotics trafficking. Today's action, pursuant to the Foreign Narcotics Kingpin Designation Act (Kingpin Act), prohibits U.S. persons from conducting financial or commercial transactions with these individuals and freezes any assets they may have under U.S. jurisdiction.

"Today's action underscores the harmful role that narcotics-related corruption plays in West Africa, especially in Guinea-Bissau," said OFAC Director Adam J. Szubin. "Targeting Na Tchuto and Camara impedes their ability to profit from the narcotics trade and engage in destabilizing activities."

Jose Americo Bubo Na Tchuto, Guinea-Bissau's former Navy Chief of Staff, and Ibraima Papa Camara, current Air Force Chief of Staff, are both involved in narcotics trafficking in Guinea-Bissau, including being linked to an aircraft suspected of flying a multi-hundred kilogram shipment of cocaine from Venezuela to Guinea-Bissau on July 12, 2008. Na Tchuto has long been suspected of being a major facilitator of narcotics trafficking in Guinea-Bissau. In August 2008, Na Tchuto fled into exile to The Gambia, but returned to Guinea-Bissau in late December 2009 to seek refuge at the United Nations Peace-Building Support Office. In addition to his narcotics trafficking activities that form the basis for his designation, most recently, Na Tchuto was complicit in the activities surrounding the illegal detention of Guinea-Bissau's Prime Minister Carlos Gomes Junior, and others on April 1, 2010.

According to the Department of State's 2010 *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report*, Guinea-Bissau provides an opportune environment for narcotics traffickers because of its lack of enforcement capabilities, susceptibility to corruption, porous borders, and location in relation to Europe, South America, and neighboring West African transit points. Cocaine transits through Guinea-Bissau from South America via air or sea, and continues on to Europe by way of maritime traffic, drug mules on commercial air flights, or traditional caravan routes through Northern Africa and across the Mediterranean to Southern Europe.

Today's action, taken in conjunction with the Department of State, is part of ongoing efforts pursuant to the Kingpin Act to apply financial measures against significant foreign narcotics traffickers worldwide. Internationally, more than 600 businesses and individuals associated with 82 drug kingpins have been named since June 2000. Penalties for violations of the Kingpin Act range from civil penalties of up to \$1.075 million per violation to more severe criminal penalties. Criminal penalties for corporate officers may include up to 30 years in prison and fines up to \$5 million. Criminal fines for corporations may reach \$10 million. Other individuals face up to 10 years in prison and fines pursuant to Title 18 of the United States Code for criminal violations of the Kingpin Act.

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