

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Press Center



Treasury Sanctions Five Individuals Tied to Iranian Plot to Assassinate the Saudi Arabian Ambassador to the United States

10/11/2011 **WASHINGTON** – The U.S. Department of the Treasury today announced the designation of five individuals, including four senior Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Qods Force (IRGC-QF) officers connected to a plot to assassinate the Saudi Arabian Ambassador to the United States Adel Al-Jubeir, while he was in the United States and to carry out follow-on attacks against other countries' interests inside the United States and in another country. As part of today's action, Treasury also designated the individual responsible for arranging the assassination plot on behalf of the IRGC-QF.

Designated today pursuant to Executive Order (E.O.) 13224 for acting for or on behalf of the IRGC-QF were: **Manssor Arbabsiar**, a naturalized U.S. citizen holding both Iranian and U.S. passports who acted on behalf of the IRGC-QF to pursue the failed plot to assassinate the Saudi ambassador; IRGC-QF commander **Qasem Soleimani**; **Hamed Abdollahi**, a senior IRGC-QF official who coordinated aspects of the plot and oversaw the other Qods Force officials directly responsible for coordinating and planning this operation; **Abdul Reza Shahlai**, an IRGC-QF official who coordinated this operation; and **Ali Gholam Shakuri**, an IRGC-QF official and deputy to Shahlai, who met with Arbabsiar on several occasions to discuss the assassination and other planned attacks.

Arbabsiar and Shakuri were named by the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York in a criminal complaint unsealed today connected with the IRGC-QF plot. Among the charges brought against them was conspiracy to engage in foreign travel and use interstate and foreign commerce facilities in the commission of murder-for-hire. According to the criminal complaint, Arbabsiar arranged for \$100,000 to be sent from Tehran to the U.S. as a down payment for the assassination of the Saudi ambassador. Two wire transfers totaling approximately \$100,000 were sent from a non-Iranian foreign bank to a bank in the United States, to the account of the person recruited by Arbabsiar to carry out the assassination.

"Iran once again has used the Qods Force and the international financial system to pursue an act of international terrorism, this time aimed against a Saudi diplomat," said David S. Cohen, Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence. "The financial transactions at the heart of this plot lay bare the risk that banks and other institutions face in doing business with Iran."

As a result of today's designations, U.S. persons are prohibited from engaging in transactions with these individuals, and any assets they may hold in the U.S. are frozen.

Manssor Arbabsiar

Arbabsiar met on a number of occasions with senior IRGC-QF officials regarding this plot and acted on behalf of senior Qods Force officials – including his cousin Abdul Reza Shahlai and Shahlai's deputy Gholam Shakuri – to execute the plot. During one such meeting, a \$100,000 payment for the murder of the Saudi ambassador was approved by the IRGC-QF. After this meeting, Arbabsiar arranged for approximately \$100,000 to be sent from a non-Iranian foreign bank to the United States, to the account of the person he recruited to carry out the assassination.

Qasem Soleimani

As IRGC-QF Commander, Qasem Soleimani oversees the IRGC-QF officers who were involved in this plot. Soleimani was previously designated by the Treasury Department under E.O. 13382 based on his relationship to the IRGC. He was also designated in May 2011 pursuant to E.O. 13572, which targets human rights abuses in Syria, for his role as the Commander of the IRGC-QF, the primary conduit for Iran's support to the Syrian General Intelligence Directorate (GID).

Hamed Abdollahi

Abdollahi is also a senior IRGC-QF officer who coordinated aspects of this operation. Abdollahi oversees other Qods Force officials – including Shahlai – who were responsible for coordinating and planning this operation.

Abdul Reza Shahlai

Shahlai is an IRGC-QF official who coordinated the plot to assassinate the Saudi Arabian Ambassador to the United States Adel Al-Jubeir, while he was in the United States and to carry out follow-on attacks against other countries' interests inside the United States and in another country. Shahlai worked through his cousin, Mansour Arbabsiar, who was named in the criminal complaint for conspiring to bring the IRGC-QF's plot to fruition. Shahlai approved financial allotments to Arbabsiar to help recruit other individuals for the plot, approving \$5 million dollars as payment for all of the operations discussed.

Shahlai was designated by Treasury in September 2008 pursuant to E.O. 13438 for threatening the peace and stability of Iraq and the Government of Iraq.

Ali Gholam Shakuri

Shakuri is an IRGC-QF officer and deputy to Abdul Reza Shahlai who acted on behalf of Shahlai in support of this plot. Shakuri provided financial support to Arbabsiar and met with Arbabsiar several times to discuss the planned assassination and other attacks. With Shakuri's approval, Arbabsiar arranged for the \$100,000 down payment to be sent from a non-Iranian foreign bank to the United States.

Background on Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Qods Force

The IRGC-QF is the Government of Iran's primary foreign action arm for executing its policy of supporting terrorist organizations and extremist groups around the world. The IRGC-QF provides training, logistical assistance and material and financial support to militants and terrorist operatives, including the Taliban, Lebanese Hizballah, Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command.

IRGC-QF officers and their associates have supported attacks against U.S. and allied troops and diplomatic missions in Iraq and Afghanistan. The IRGC-QF continues to train, equip and fund Iraqi Shia militant groups – such as Kata'ib and Hizballah – and elements of the Taliban in Afghanistan to prevent an increase in Western influence in the region. In the Levant, the IRGC-QF supports terrorist groups such as Lebanese Hizballah and Hamas, which it views as integral to its efforts to challenge U.S. influence in the Middle East.

The Government of Iran also uses the IRGC and IRGC-QF to implement its foreign policy goals, including, but not limited to, seemingly legitimate activities that provide cover for intelligence operations and support to terrorist and insurgent groups. These activities include economic investment, reconstruction, and other types of aid to Iraq, Afghanistan and

Lebanon, implemented by companies and institutions that act for or on behalf of, or are owned or controlled by, the IRGC and the Iranian government.

The IRGC-QF was designated by Treasury pursuant to E.O. 13224 in October 2007 for its support for terrorism, and was listed in the Annex to E.O. 13572 of April 2011 as the conduit for Iran's support to Syria's GID, the overarching civilian intelligence service in Syria which has been involved in human rights abuses in Syria.

Identifying Information:

Individual: Manssor Arbabsiar

AKA: Mansour Arbabsiar
DOB: March 15, 1955
Alt. DOB: March 6, 1955
POB: Iran
Citizenship: United States
Driver's License: 07442833 (United States); expires March 15, 2016
Passport: C2002515 (Iran)
Alt. Passport: 477845448 (United States)

Individual: Ali Gholam Shakuri

DOB: 1964
Alt. DOB: 1965
Alt. DOB 2: 1966
Location: Tehran, Iran

Individual: Abdul Reza Shalhai

AKA: Abdol Reza Shala'i
AKA: Abd-al Reza Shalhai
AKA: 'Abdorrezza Shalhai
AKA: Abdolreza Shahla'i
AKA: Abdul-Reza Shahlaee
AKA: Hajj Yusef
AKA: Hajj Yusif
AKA: Hajji Yasir
AKA: Hajji Yusif
AKA: 'Yusuf Abu-al-Karkh'
DOB: Circa 1957
Location: Kermanshah, Iran
Alt. Location: Mehran Military Base, Ilam Province, Iran

Individual: Hamed Abdollahi

AKA: Mustafa Abdullahi
DOB: August 11, 1960
Passport: D9004878
Citizenship: Iran

Individual: Qasem Soleimani

AKA: Ghasem Soleymani
AKA: Qasmi Sulayman
AKA: Qasem Soleymani
AKA: Qasem Solaimani
AKA: Qasem Salimani
AKA: Qasem Solemani
AKA: Qasem Sulaimani
AKA: Qasem Sulemani
DOB: March 11, 1957
POB: Qom, Iran
Passport: 1999 Diplomatic Passport 008827 (Iran)