

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Press Center



Treasury Sanctions Three Drug Traffickers Tied to Mexican Drug Lord Chapo Guzman

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The U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) today designated three individuals with ties to Sinaloa Cartel leader Joaquin Guzman Loera (a.k.a. Chapo Guzman) as Specially Designated Narcotics Traffickers (SDNTs) pursuant to the Foreign Narcotics Kingpin Designation Act (Kingpin Act). As a result of today's action, U.S. persons are prohibited from conducting financial or commercial transactions with the designees and any assets they may have under U.S. jurisdiction are frozen.

"Today marks the fourth time in the past year that OFAC has targeted and exposed the support structures of the organization led by Chapo Guzman, the world's most powerful drug trafficker," said OFAC Director, Adam J. Szubin. "OFAC will continue to work with law enforcement and foreign counterparts to help disrupt, and eventually dismantle, Chapo Guzman's criminal empire."

Two of the individuals designated today, Mexican nationals Oscar Alvarez Zepeda and Joel Valdez Benites, are from Culiacan, Sinaloa, Mexico. The other individual, Colombian national Carlos Mario Torres Hoyos, is from Medellin, Colombia. These three individuals provide material support to the drug trafficking activities of Guzman Loera and the Sinaloa Cartel and also have ties to Colombian drug trafficker Jorge Milton Cifuentes Villa. Oscar Alvarez Zepeda is the brother of the previously-designated Mexican national Alfredo Alvarez Zepeda. The Alvarez Zepeda brothers are relatives of Chapo Guzman.

Guzman Loera and the Sinaloa Cartel were identified by the President as drug kingpins pursuant to the Kingpin Act in 2001 and 2009, respectively. OFAC designated Cifuentes Villa as an SDNT in February 2011 along with more than 70 other individuals and entities. Guzman Loera and Jorge Milton Cifuentes Villa were indicted on drug trafficking and/or money laundering charges in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida in November 2010. In February 2011, Jorge Milton Cifuentes Villa was also indicted on drug trafficking charges in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York.

OFAC coordinated on this investigation with the Drug Enforcement Administration. Today's action is part of ongoing efforts pursuant to the Kingpin Act to apply financial measures against significant foreign narcotics traffickers and their organizations worldwide. Treasury has designated more than 1,000 individuals and entities pursuant to the Kingpin Act 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.

To view a chart of the Chapo Guzman affiliates, click [here](#). 

