

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Press Center



Treasury Imposes Sanctions On Key Members Of The Yakuza And Brothers' Circle Criminal Organizations

2/23/2012

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of the Treasury today designated seven key members and associates of the Brothers' Circle crime syndicate as well as the largest group within the Japanese Yakuza, the Yamaguchi-gumi, and two Yamaguchi-gumi leaders. These are the first designations by Treasury pursuant to Executive Order (E.O.) 13581, which President Obama issued in 2011 to target and disrupt significant transnational criminal organizations (TCOs).

President Obama identified the Brothers' Circle and the Yakuza as significant TCOs in the Annex to E.O. 13581 (Blocking Property of Transnational Criminal Organizations) of July 24, 2011, and charged the Treasury Department with pursuing additional sanctions against their members and supporters. Drawing on this authority, the Treasury Department today is identifying key members and associates of these transnational organized criminal networks, freezing any assets the designated persons may have within the jurisdiction of the United States and prohibiting any transactions with them by U.S. persons.

"Today's action casts a spotlight on key members of criminal organizations that have engaged in a wide range of serious crimes across the globe," said David S. Cohen, Treasury Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence. "We will continue to work with our international partners to target those who deal in violence, narcotics, money laundering, and the exploitation of women and children.

Today's designations are just the first under our new our sanctions authority to target transnational criminal organizations and isolate them from the global financial system."

THE BROTHERS' CIRCLE

The Brothers' Circle (f.k.a. Family of Eleven; f.k.a. The Twenty) is a multi-ethnic criminal group composed of leaders and senior members of several Eurasian criminal groups largely based in countries of the former Soviet Union but operating in Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Latin America. The Brothers' Circle serves as a coordinating body for several criminal networks, mediating disputes between the individual criminal networks and directing member criminal activity globally.

The individuals designated today represent criminal syndicates that operate throughout Eurasia and the Gulf, specifically within Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Russia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). They include key Brothers' Circle members Vladislav Leontyev, Vasily Khristoforov, Kamchybek Kolbayev and Gafur Rakhimov. Lazar Shaybazyan, Aleksandr Manuylov and Aleksey Zaytsev are designated today based on their support to Vladislav Leontyev. Several of these individuals reside in Dubai, UAE.

Two key Brothers' Circle members, Vladislav Leontyev and Vasily Khristoforov, are targeted today for acting for or on behalf of the Brothers' Circle. Both have been involved in criminal activities, including narcotics trafficking, and were involved in a shooting between regional factions within Russian organized criminal networks over an attempt to seize control of a local precious metals enterprise. Leontyev is currently wanted by Russian authorities for illegal transactions involving precious metals and narcotics.

Kamchybek Kolbayev acts for or on behalf of the Brothers' Circle by serving as the Brothers' Circle "overseer" for its Central Asian activities, including narcotics trafficking. In June 2011, President Obama identified Kolbayev as a significant foreign narcotics trafficker under the Foreign Narcotics Kingpin Designation Act. Kolbayev is wanted in Kyrgyzstan for organized crimes and crimes involving the use of weapons/explosives, and organized/transnational crime.

As a key member of the Brothers' Circle, Gafur Rakhimov acts for or on behalf of the Brothers' Circle. Rakhimov is one of the leaders of Uzbek organized crime with a specialty in the organized production of drugs in the countries of Central Asia. He has operated major international drug syndicates involving the trafficking of heroin.

Aleksey Zaytsev, who acts for or on behalf of the Brothers' Circle key member Vladislav Leontyev, is involved in fraud and a variety of other such activities as fraud, including his 2008 participation in a financial pyramid scheme involving the St. Petersburg-based Business Club Rubin.

Lazar Shaybazyan and Aleksandr Manuylov also act for or on behalf of, Brothers' Circle key member Vladislav Leontyev.

The YAKUZA

The Yakuza (a.k.a. Boryokudan; a.k.a. Gokudo) was listed in the Annex to E.O. 13581 for its involvement in serious criminal activities, including weapons trafficking, prostitution, human trafficking, drug trafficking, fraud and money laundering. The Yamaguchi-gumi is the largest and most prominent of the Yakuza's crime families, and is being designated today for acting for or on behalf of the Yakuza. The Yamaguchi-gumi has a pyramid structure with a *kumicho* ("godfather") at the top. Today's action also imposes sanctions on Kenichi Shinoda, the Yamaguchi-gumi *kumicho* since August 2005, as well as the Yamaguchi-gumi's *wakagashira* ("deputy godfather"), Kiyoshi Takayama, both for acting for or on behalf of Yamaguchi-gumi.

As leaders of the Yamaguchi-gumi crime syndicate, both Shinoda and Takayama play key roles in directing the syndicate's policies and settling disputes with other Yakuza syndicates. The Yamaguchi-gumi is involved in criminal endeavors in Japan and abroad, including drug trafficking, human trafficking, extortion, prostitution, fraud and money laundering. The Yamaguchi-gumi is estimated to generate billions of dollars annually in illicit proceeds.

Today's action is designed to protect the integrity of the U.S. financial system, to prevent U.S. financial institutions from being used unwittingly to facilitate the unlawful activities of these groups, and to deny the named individuals and entity access to the U.S. economy.

Identifiers

1. KHRISTOFOROV, Vasily Alexandrovich (a.k.a. KHRISTOFOROV, Vasily; a.k.a. "VASYA"; a.k.a. "VOSKRES"), Murjan 6 Sector, Tower D01-T03.1, Apartment 401, Dubai 39409, United Arab Emirates; DOB 12 Mar 1972; POB Gorky Oblast, Russia; National ID No. 76481815 (United Arab Emirates); Passport 63-7186356 (Russia) (individual) [TCO]
1. KOLBAYEV, Kamchybek Asanbekovich (a.k.a. KOLBAEV, Kamchibek; a.k.a. KOLBAYEV, Kamchy; a.k.a. KOLBAYEV, Kamchi; a.k.a. KOLBAYEV, Kamchibek; a.k.a. "KAMCHI BISHKEKSKIY"; a.k.a. "KOLYA-BISHKEKSKIY"; a.k.a. "KOLYA-KYRGYZ"), Bahar 1 Sector, C09-T02 Tower, Apartment 3203, Dubai 31672, United Arab Emirates; Volokolamskoye Shosse, House 15/22, Moscow, Russia; DOB 3 Aug 1974; alt. DOB 1 Jan 1973; POB Cholpon-Ata, Kyrgyzstan; citizen Kyrgyzstan; Passport A0832532 (Kyrgyzstan) expires 17 Mar 2009 (individual) [SDNTK] [TCO]
1. LEONTYEV, Vladislav Vladimirovich (a.k.a. LEONTIEV, Vladislav; a.k.a. LEONTIEV, Vlantislav; a.k.a. LEONTYEV, Vyacheslav; a.k.a. LEONTYEV, Vadim; a.k.a. LEONTYEV, Vadik; a.k.a. "BELOBRYSYY"; a.k.a. "BELYY"), Al-Fattan Building, Dubai, United Arab Emirates; DOB 5 Jul 1971; POB Gorky, Russia; alt. POB Caracas, Venezuela; National ID No. 60229551 (United Arab Emirates); Passport AB4065216 (Greece); alt. Passport H2214925 (Ghana); alt. Passport C1602418 (Venezuela) (individual) [TCO]
1. MANUYLOV, Aleksandr Leonidovich (a.k.a. MANUILOV, Alexander; a.k.a. MANUYLOV, Alexander; a.k.a. "SASHA SAMARSKIY"); DOB 3 Mar 1962; POB Russia; Passport 3056306 (Russia) (individual) [TCO]
2. RAKHIMOV, Gafur Akhmedovich (a.k.a. RAKHIMOV, Gofur-Arslonbek; a.k.a. RAKHIMOV, Gafur-Arslanbek Akhmedovich), The Meadows, Villa Number 64, Sheikh Zayed Road, near Emirates Hills, Dubai, United Arab Emirates; DOB 22 Jul 1951; POB Tashkent, Uzbekistan; National ID No. 03101200302034752 (United Arab Emirates); Passport CA1804389 (Uzbekistan); alt. Passport CA1890392 (Uzbekistan) (individual) [TCO]
1. SHAYBAZIAN, Lazar Gurgenovich (a.k.a. SHAYBAZIAN, Lazar); DOB 1 Apr 1966; Passport CA2485930 (Uzbekistan); alt. Passport CA2179793 (Uzbekistan) (individual) [TCO]
1. SHINODA, Kenichi (a.k.a. TSUKASA, Shinobu); DOB 25 Jan 1942; POB Oita Kyushu, Japan (individual) [TCO]
1. TAKAYAMA, Kiyoshi ; DOB 5 Sep 1947; POB Tsushimasi, Aichi Prefecture, Japan (individual) [TCO]
1. ZAYTSEV, Aleksey Alekseyevich (a.k.a. ZAITSEV, Alexei; a.k.a. ZAYTSEV, Alexey); DOB 7 Sep 1965; POB Leningrad, Russia; National ID No. 74914883 (United Arab Emirates); Passport 63-4604880 (Russia); alt. Passport 4103417473 (Russia); alt. Passport H2029462 (Ghana) (individual) [TCO]
1. YAMAGUCHI-GUMI (a.k.a. ROKUDAIME YAMAGUCHI-GUMI; a.k.a. SIXTH YAMAGUCHI-GUMI), 4-3-1 Shinohara-honmachi, Nada-Ku, Kobe City, Hyogo, Japan [TCO]

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