

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Press Center



Treasury Expands Sanctions Against Family Members of Esparragoza Moreno

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WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) today announced the designation of two family members and one entity linked to Juan Jose Esparragoza Moreno (a.k.a. El Azul), a leader of Mexico's Sinaloa Cartel. Today's action, pursuant to the Foreign Narcotics Kingpin Designation Act (Kingpin Act), generally prohibits U.S. persons from conducting financial or commercial transactions with these designees and also freezes any assets they may have under U.S. jurisdiction.

Esparragoza Moreno and the Sinaloa Cartel were identified as significant foreign narcotics traffickers pursuant to the Kingpin Act in 2003 and 2009, respectively. Esparragoza Moreno has been active in drug trafficking since the late 1970s when he and others formed the Guadalajara drug cartel. Rafael Caro Quintero, whom the President also identified as a significant foreign narcotics trafficker pursuant to the Kingpin Act in 2000, was among these other individuals who were part of the Guadalajara drug cartel. Esparragoza Moreno was indicted on drug trafficking charges in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Texas in 2003 and is wanted in both the U.S. and Mexico. The U.S. State Department Narcotics Rewards Program is offering a reward of up to \$5 million for information leading to Esparragoza Moreno's arrest and/or conviction and the Mexican authorities are offering 30 million pesos for information leading to his capture.


"Drug traffickers often use family members in their business activities and this is particularly true in the case of Esparragoza Moreno and the Sinaloa Cartel. We will continue to target Esparragoza Moreno's complicit family members, as well as anyone else who is engaged in illicit activity in support of the Sinaloa Cartel," said OFAC Director Adam J. Szubin.

Today's action targets Luis Francisco Vallarta Escalante and Alvaro Padro Pastor, who have family ties to Esparragoza Moreno's daughters, Brenda Guadalupe Esparragoza Gastelum and Nadia Patricia Esparragoza Gastelum, respectively. Brenda Guadalupe Esparragoza Gastelum and Nadia Patricia Esparragoza Gastelum were designated on July 24, 2012, along with other Esparragoza Moreno family members, because they have acted on behalf of their father. Vallarta Escalante plays roles along with Brenda Guadalupe Esparragoza Gastelum in the previously-designated Mexican companies Grupo Impergoza, S.A. de C.V., which is engaged in real estate development, and Socialika Rentas y Catering, S.A. de C.V., an events planning company.

Alvaro Padro Pastor, a Spanish national living in Mexico, is the husband of Nadia Patricia Esparragoza Gastelum. Padro Pastor is a co-owner in the Mexican swimming pool company Piscilanea, S.A. de C.V., which was designated on June 12, 2013, because it is linked to the organization led by Rafael Caro Quintero. Piscilanea, S.A. de C.V. is headquartered at Provenza Center, a designated shopping mall located in Tlajomulco de Zuniga, Jalisco that is managed by the Esparragoza Moreno-controlled company Grupo Impergoza, S.A. de C.V.

Also designated today is Casa V, a banquet hall located in Guadalajara and controlled by Padro Pastor. This property was previously linked to deceased Juarez Cartel leader Amado Carrillo Fuentes (a.k.a. "El Señor de los Cielos").

Internationally, OFAC has designated more than 1,300 businesses and individuals linked to 103 drug kingpins 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 could 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.

For a chart relating to today's actions click [here](#). 

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