

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Press Center



Treasury Sanctions Mexican Attorneys and a Company Tied to the Illicit Activities of the Sinaloa Cartel

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Action Targets Three Individuals and a Company Linked to Rafael Caro Quintero and Juan Jose Esparragoza Moreno

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of the Treasury today announced the designation of three Mexican attorneys and one company as Specially Designated Narcotics Traffickers (SDNTs) pursuant to the Foreign Narcotics Kingpin Designation Act (Kingpin Act) because of their links to major drug traffickers Rafael Caro Quintero and Juan Jose Esparragoza Moreno (a.k.a. “El Azul”). As a result of today’s action, all assets of those designated today that are based in the United States or are in control of U.S. persons are frozen, and U.S. persons are generally prohibited from engaging in transactions with them.


“Narcotics traffickers often employ corrupt attorneys to disguise and advance their illicit activities,” said Adam J. Szubin, Director of the Office of Foreign Assets Control. “We will continue to cut off the funding of any actors who enable the illegal dealings of drug trafficking organizations.”


Today’s action targets Jose Avina Bribiesca, Ignacio Gonzalez Hernandez, and Janette Iliana Gonzalez Linares, all of whom are attorneys based in Guadalajara, Mexico. They act on behalf of the previously designated Mexican attorney Juvencio Igancio Gonzalez Parada, a longtime advisor to drug lords Rafael Caro Quintero and Juan Jose Esparragoza Moreno. Gonzalez Parada has engaged in bribery and helps manage these drug traffickers’ illicitly obtained assets and properties. Avina Bribiesca and Gonzalez Hernandez, the son-in-law and son of Gonzalez Parada respectively, along with Gonzalez Linares are involved in a range of activities, on behalf of the Caro Quintero and Esparragoza Moreno networks, including the management of real estate. Additionally, Avina Bribiesca, Gonzalez Hernandez, and Gonzalez Linares hold official positions in the Guadalajara-based real estate company Bona-Habitat, which was also designated today because it is controlled by Gonzalez Parada.

Caro Quintero and Esparragoza Moreno were identified as significant foreign narcotics traffickers pursuant to the Kingpin Act in 2000 and 2003, respectively. Both are fugitives from U.S. drug trafficking charges. Caro Quintero is also wanted for the 1985 kidnapping, torture, and murder of Enrique Camarena, a Special Agent with the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). The U.S. State Department’s Narcotics Rewards Program is offering rewards of up to \$5 million for information leading to the arrest and/or conviction of Caro Quintero and Esparragoza Moreno. In June 2014, uncorroborated rumors began to circulate concerning the possible death of Esparragoza Moreno. However, Mexican officials have not been able to confirm these claims.

Today’s designation was taken in close coordination with the DEA and is part of a larger effort to sanction Mexican drug trafficking organizations in collaboration with Mexican authorities.

Since June 2000, more than 1,600 entities and individuals have been named pursuant to the Kingpin Act for their role in international narcotics trafficking. 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.

To view a chart regarding today’s action, click [here](#). 

For a complete listing of designations pursuant to the Kingpin Act, click [here](#). 

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