

## U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

## Press Center



## Treasury Sanctions Gulf Cartel Drug Trafficker

5/21/2015

*Action Targets Mexican Cocaine Trafficker, Abel Briones Ruiz, and His Support Network*

**WASHINGTON** – The U.S. Department of the Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) today has designated Mexican narcotics trafficker Abel Briones Ruiz as a Specially Designated Narcotics Trafficker (SDNT) pursuant to the Foreign Narcotics Kingpin Designation Act (“Kingpin Act”) for providing support for the international narcotics trafficking activities of the Gulf Cartel. OFAC has also designated four individuals involved in Briones Ruiz’s network and one entity, Combustibles Briones, S.A. de C.V. In 2007, the President identified the Gulf Cartel as a SDNT pursuant to the Kingpin Act. As a result of today’s action, all assets of these entities and individuals that are based in the United States or in the control of U.S. persons are frozen, and U.S. persons are generally prohibited from engaging in transactions with them.


“Abel Briones Ruiz and his drug trafficking network control a major cocaine smuggling route across our Southwest border,” said OFAC Acting Director John E. Smith. “With today’s action, we are able to financially isolate this long-time cocaine trafficker and those supporting his operations.”

In Tamaulipas, Mexico, Briones Ruiz operates a network of cocaine and bulk cash smugglers, which includes Rogelio Nieto Gonzalez (his brother-in-law) and Myriam Susana Beattie De Briones (his wife, a.k.a. Myriam Susana Beattie Martinez). Claudia Aide Briones Ruiz (his sister) and Magdalena Ruiz De Briones (his mother, a.k.a. Magdalena Ruiz Carrion), provide services to his company, Combustibles Briones, S.A. de C.V.


Using his network of transporters, Briones Ruiz has distributed significant quantities of cocaine through the Southwest border for sale in the United States, including in Texas and Tennessee. On May 18, 2015, the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas unsealed cocaine trafficking charges against Briones Ruiz and Nieto Gonzalez, financial structuring charges against Briones Ruiz and Beattie de Briones, and money laundering charges against all three individuals. OFAC today has designated Nieto Gonzalez and Beattie De Briones for providing support for the international narcotics trafficking activities of Briones Ruiz. Combustibles Briones, S.A. de C.V., a Mexican gas station company located in Matamoros along the Brownsville, Texas border, has been designated for being owned or controlled by Briones Ruiz.

Today’s designation was taken in close coordination with the Brownsville Field Division of the Drug Enforcement Administration and the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Southern District of Texas.

Since June 2000, more than 1,700 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 of 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 see a chart relating to today’s action, click [here](#). 

To see the identifying information relating to today’s actions, click [here](#).

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

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