

## U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

## Press Center



## Treasury Sanctions Leadership of Central American Gang MS-13

2/16/2016

### *Action Targets Leaders of One of the Most Dangerous Criminal Gangs Worldwide*

**WASHINGTON** – The U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) today designated two leaders of the notorious Central American gang known as the Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) pursuant to Executive Order (E.O.) 13581, which targets transnational criminal organizations (TCOs) and their supporters. Salvadoran nationals José Roberto Orellana and Dany Balmore Romero García were designated today for acting or having acted or purported to act for or on behalf of MS-13. Today's action is part of OFAC's ongoing efforts to target the leadership of global criminal organizations that pose significant threats to the national security, foreign policy, or economy of the United States. As a result of today's action, all assets of these 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.

"From leading local operations to orchestrating assassination campaigns for MS-13, Roberto Orellana and Romero García have sought to disrupt Salvadoran government efforts to combat MS-13 activity," said John E. Smith, Acting OFAC Director. "We will continue to undermine the reach and influence of MS-13 by constraining the financial resources of those who support it."

In October 2012, MS-13 became the first transnational criminal street gang to be designated by OFAC as a TCO. The MS-13 criminal network consists of "cliques," which take direction from the group's senior leadership for strategic decisions involving moves into new territories and efforts to recruit new members. There are at least 30,000 MS-13 members in a range of countries, including El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Mexico. MS-13 is also active within the United States, with at least 8,000 members operating in more than 40 states and the District of Columbia. MS-13 has been involved in serious transnational criminal activities, including drug trafficking, kidnapping, human smuggling, sex trafficking, murder, assassinations, racketeering, blackmail, extortion, and immigration offenses.

Roberto Orellana and Romero García serve as leaders of cliques in El Salvador and are responsible for orchestrating assassination campaigns against Salvadoran law enforcement, military, and government officials.

Today's action was supported by the National Gang Intelligence Center, the FBI's Criminal Investigative Division, and the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations, and is part of a larger effort by the Treasury Department to collaborate with authorities in Central America to combat the activities of MS-13.

Penalties for violations of E.O. 13581 range from civil monetary penalties of up to \$250,000 or twice the amount of the underlying transaction. The penalties may be imposed against any person who violates or attempts to violate the E.O. Upon conviction, criminal penalties of up to \$1 million, imprisonment for up to 20 years, or both, may be imposed on any person who willfully commits or attempts to commit a violation.

For identifying information regarding the individuals designated today, click [here](#).

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