

Treasury Sanctions Senior Al-Nusra Front Leaders Concurrently with UN Designations

February 23, 2017

Separate action targets Syrian entity related to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of the Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) took action today against two al-Nusra Front (ANF) leadership officials, Iyad Nazmi Salih Khalil (Khalil) and Bassam Ahmad al-Hasri (al-Hasri). Both individuals, based in Syria, are being designated pursuant to Executive Order (E.O.) 13224, which targets terrorists and those providing support to terrorists or acts of terrorism. As a result of today’s action, all property and interests in property of Khalil and al-Hasri subject to U.S. jurisdiction are blocked, and U.S. persons are generally prohibited from engaging in transactions with them.

Underscoring the international commitment to counter ANF, the United Nations (UN) last night added these individuals to the UN ISIL (Da’esh) and al-Qa’ida Sanctions List. Consequently, all member states of the UN are obligated to freeze the assets of these individuals, deny them access to the international financial system, and prohibit their travel.

“From overseeing militant operations to developing al-Nusra Front’s strategy, these senior Al-Nusra Front leaders and al-Qa’ida terrorists are responsible for providing key support to the violent terrorist group,” said John E. Smith, Acting OFAC Director. “Today, the Treasury Department, in line with actions just taken by the United Nations, is cutting off their access to the international financial system to further disrupt al-Nusra Front’s ability to plan and execute terrorist attacks.”

Also today, OFAC designated Syrian-based Metallic Manufacturing Factory (MMF) for acting for or on behalf of a designated entity, Mechanical Construction Factory. As a result of today’s action, any property or interests in property of MMF that are in the possession or control of U.S.

persons or within the United States must be blocked. Additionally, transactions by U.S. persons involving MMF are generally prohibited.

Iyad Nazmi Salih Khalil

Khalil was designated for acting for or on behalf of ANF.

As of early 2016, Khalil was ANF's third highest-ranking official and appointed as the group's emir for Syria's coastal area by ANF emir and Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT) Abu-Muhammad al-Jawlani (al-Jawlani). As a senior ANF official, Khalil took part in discussions among the group's senior leadership regarding ANF's overall strategy and the feasibility of establishing an emirate in Idlib, Syria.

For at least two years prior to being appointed emir for Syria's coastal area, Khalil served as ANF emir of Dar'a, Syria. Under his leadership, he empowered ANF's security and intelligence operatives responsible for assassinations, ran prisons notorious for torture, and encouraged the looting of vehicles and possessions of Free Syrian Army members.

Khalil was originally sent to Syria with six other individuals in 2011 by former al-Qa'ida in Iraq (AQI) official and current ISIS leader and SDGT Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi to establish what would eventually become ANF. Prior to his involvement with ANF, Khalil joined AQI in the mid-2000s, and remained close to AQI's former head Abu-Musa'b al-Zarqawi until Zarqawi's death in 2006.

Bassam Ahmad al-Hasri

Al-Hasri was designated for acting for or on behalf of ANF.

As of June 2016, al-Hasri served as ANF's emir of Dar'a, a position he took over from Khalil starting in December 2015 at the behest of al-Jawlani. As emir of Dar'a, al-Hasri oversaw the group's military operations in southern Syria. Previously, al-Hasri served as a religious advisor for ANF. Al-Hasri has longstanding ties to al-Qa'ida, and was released in 2011 by Syrian authorities after spending six years in prison for his association with the group.

Metallic Manufacturing Factory

MMF acts for or on behalf of Mechanical Construction Factory, an entity whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to E.O. 13382, which targets proliferators of weapons of mass destruction and their supporters. OFAC previously designated Mechanical Construction Factory for acting for or on behalf of Syria's Scientific Studies and Research Center (SSRC). SSRC is the Syrian government agency responsible for developing and producing non-conventional weapons and the means to deliver them and was named in the annex to E.O. 13382.

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

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