

U.S. Treasury Imposes Sanctions on Assad Regime's Key ISIS Intermediary and a Petroleum Procurement Network

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Nine targets designated for facilitating petroleum shipments and financing to the Syrian Regime

Washington – Today, the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) designated four individuals and five entities pursuant to Executive Order (E.O.) 13582, "Blocking Property and Interest in Property of the Government of Syria and Prohibiting Certain Transactions with Respect to Syria." Those added to the Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List (SDN List) as a result of today's action have facilitated financial transactions and shipments of fuel and weapons to the Syrian regime.

"Millions of innocent people in Idlib province are currently under the threat of imminent attack from the Assad regime, backed by Iran and Russia, under the pretense of targeting ISIS. At the same time, the Assad regime has a history of trading with the terror group," said Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin. "The United States will continue to target those who facilitate transactions with the murderous Assad regime and support ISIS."

Assad-ISIS Intermediary

OFAC designated Muhammad al-Qatirji and his company Qatirji Company pursuant to E.O. 13582. Qatirji maintains strong ties to the Syrian regime and facilitates fuel trade between the regime and ISIS, including providing oil products to ISIS-controlled territory. Qatirji is the CEO of Qatirji Company, and he has conducted business with ISIS in the petroleum sector, working directly with ISIS representatives to provide oil products for ISIS. Qatirji has a strong working relationship with multiple officials within the Government of Syria, to include several contracts with the Syrian Ministry of Oil and Syrian Ministry of Trade. Qatirji is responsible for import and export activities in Syria and assists with transporting weapons and ammunition under the pretext of importing and exporting food items. These shipments were overseen by the U.S.-designated Syrian General Intelligence Directorate. The Syria-based Qatirji Company is a trucking company that has also shipped weapons from Iraq to Syria. Additionally, in a 2016

trade deal between the Government of Syria and ISIS, the Qatirji Company was identified as the exclusive agent for providing supplies to ISIS-controlled areas, including oil and other commodities.

Pursuant to E.O. 13582, OFAC is also designating Syria-based middleman Yasir 'Abbas for providing financial, material, or technological support to the Government of Syria. 'Abbas facilitates oil and weapons imports on behalf of the Syrian regime, including involvement in the shipment of goods and military equipment from Iran to Syria on behalf of Syrian Air Force Intelligence and the Army Supply Bureau of the Syrian Ministry of Defense. As of 2017, Syria's Ministry of Petroleum allocated all oil import contracts to Yasir 'Abbas.

Fuel Procurement Network

Additionally, OFAC designated a large-scale fuel procurement network that operates entities in Syria, Lebanon, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to secure deliveries of crude oil, fuel, and liquefied natural gas for the Syrian regime. This network includes Abar Petroleum Service SAL (Abar Petroleum), Adnan Al-Ali, Sonex Investments, Ltd. (Sonex Investments), Nasco Polymers & Chemicals (Nasco Polymers), and Fadi Nasser.

Abar Petroleum, a Lebanon-based company that works with the Government of Syria to evade sanctions and import crude oil and petroleum products to Syrian ports, was designated pursuant to E.O. 13582 for providing financial, material, or technological support to the Government of Syria. Abar Petroleum consigned on nearly all petroleum product shipments delivered by commercial vessels to Baniyas, Syria throughout 2016 that were not jet fuel or Iranian-origin. Additionally, Abar Petroleum coordinates the movement of payments for petroleum products through bank accounts belonging to Government of Syria entities and front companies. In 2017, Abar Petroleum brokered over \$30 million of shipments of petroleum products to Baniyas, Syria, including gasoline, gasoil, and liquefied petroleum gas.

Adnan Al-Ali was designated pursuant to E.O. 13582 for providing financial, material, or technological support to Abar Petroleum. Al-Ali is an advisor for Abar Petroleum and a probable agent of the Syrian General Intelligence Directorate. In 2017, Al-Ali used a personal bank account at the Central Bank of Syria to transfer U.S. dollar payments to Abar Petroleum from Mahrukat Company, a Syrian-state-owned enterprise that manages trade and distribution of petroleum products in Syria.

Lebanon-based Nasco Polymers and UAE-based Sonex Investments were designated for facilitating shipments to Syrian ports by serving as consignees and chartering the vessels. This procurement network was designated pursuant to E.O. 13582 for providing financial, material, or technological support for the Syrian Company or Oil Transport (SCOT), which acts as the port authority for the ports of Baniyas and Tartus. SCOT was identified as a Government of Syria entity by OFAC in August 2011 pursuant to E.O. 13582. Nasco Polymers has arranged and shipped petroleum products to Syria, using Sonex Investments as a front company to pay for the shipments. Over the course of 2016 and 2017, UAE-based Sonex Investments acted as a buyer, consignee, or charterer for shipments of crude oil and petroleum products discharged at Baniyas, Syria, and received payments for providing these services. Sonex Investments was consigned a shipment of over 90,000 metric tons of fuel oil, delivered to Baniyas, Syria in May 2017 and another shipment of over 43,000 metric tons of crude oil, delivered to Baniyas, Syria, in November 2017.

Lebanon-based businessman Fadi Nasser was designated pursuant to E.O. 13582 for providing financial, material, or technological support to SCOT and for acting for or on behalf of Nasco Polymers. Nasser is the Chairman, founder, corporate director, and 80% shareholder of Nasco Polymers. Nasser has arranged delivery of thousands of tons of fuel to Syrian ports and has received millions of dollars for facilitating such shipments.

International Pipeline Construction (IPC)

IPC was designated for being owned or controlled by Hesco Engineering. IPC is a UAEbased company controlled by Hesco Engineering, which facilitates payments originating in Syria. Hesco Engineering is owned by George Haswani, one of the Syrian regime's middlemen for dealings between the Government of Syria and ISIS. Both Haswani and Hesco Engineering were designated pursuant to E.O. 13582 on November 25, 2015.

Any property or interests in property of the designated persons in the possession or control of U.S. persons or within the United States must be blocked and reported to OFAC. U.S. persons are generally prohibited from engaging in any transactions with the individuals and entities identified.

[More information on the individuals and entities designated today](#)

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