

Treasury Sanctions Key Hizballah, IRGC-QF Networks in Iraq

November 13, 2018

*Action follows signing of new Hizballah sanctions legislation
and re-imposition of Iran-related sanctions*

Washington – The U.S. Department of the Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) took action today to target four Hizballah-affiliated individuals who lead and coordinate the group’s operational, intelligence, and financial activities in Iraq. Specifically, OFAC designated Shibl Muhsin ‘Ubayd Al-Zaydi, Yusuf Hashim, Adnan Hussein Kawtharani, and Muhammad ‘Abd-Al-Hadi Farhat as Specially Designated Global Terrorists (SDGTs) pursuant to Executive Order (E.O.) 13224, which targets terrorists and those providing support to terrorists or acts of terrorism.

“Hizballah is a terrorist proxy for the Iranian regime that seeks to undermine Iraqi sovereignty and destabilize the Middle East. We are targeting terror facilitators like Al-Zaydi who smuggle oil for Iran, raise funds for Hizballah, and send fighters to Syria for the IRGC-Qods Force on behalf of Qasem Soleimani,” said Sigal Mandelker, Under Secretary of the Treasury for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence. “Treasury’s concerted actions aim to deny Hizballah’s clandestine attempts to exploit Iraq to launder funds, procure weapons, train fighters, and collect intelligence as a proxy for Iran. This administration will impose severe consequences on anyone assisting Hizballah and their global support networks, and those who engage in business relationships with these terrorists expose themselves to serious sanctions risk.”

These designations follow the signing into law on October 25, 2018, of the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Amendments Act of 2018, which reinforces the U.S. Government’s efforts to protect the international financial system by targeting Hizballah’s supporters, financial networks, and those that facilitate and enable its destabilizing activities worldwide. Today’s designations specifically target individuals enabling Hizballah’s activities that undermine security and stability in Iraq, and carry significant risks for those attempting to conduct business with Hizballah globally. Today’s action continues Treasury’s historic level of Hizballah-related designations, which have reached record numbers in 2018.

Treasury's actions today again highlight the degree to which Hizballah operates as a clandestine, terrorist arm of the Iranian regime. On November 5, 2018, in its largest ever single-day action targeting the Iranian regime, OFAC sanctioned over 700 individuals, entities, aircraft, and vessels. This action completed the re-imposition of U.S. nuclear-related sanctions that were lifted or waived under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

The individuals designated today are subject to secondary sanctions pursuant to the Hizballah Financial Sanctions Regulations, which implements the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015. Pursuant to this authority, OFAC can prohibit or impose strict conditions on the opening or maintaining in the United States of a correspondent account or a payable-through account by a foreign financial institution that knowingly facilitates a significant transaction for Hizballah.

All property and interests in property of those persons designated today that are subject to U.S. jurisdiction are now blocked, and U.S. persons are generally prohibited from engaging in transactions with them.

SHIBL MUHSIN 'UBAYD AL-ZAYDI (AL-ZAYDI)

Al-Zaydi was designated for acting for or on behalf of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps–Qods Force (IRGC-QF), and assisting in, sponsoring, or providing financial, material, or technological support for, or financial or other services to or in support of, Hizballah.

Al-Zaydi has served as a financial coordinator between the IRGC-QF and sectarian armed groups in Iraq and assisted in facilitating Iraqi investments on behalf of IRGC-QF Commander Qasem Soleimani, whom OFAC designated on October 11, 2011, for acting for or on behalf of the IRGC-QF. Al-Zaydi has also coordinated the smuggling of oil from Iran on behalf of Iran, the smuggling of oil into Syria on behalf of Iran, and has sent Iraqi fighters to Syria allegedly at the IRGC-QF's request. Al-Zaydi has appeared publically with IRGC-QF Commander Qasem Soleimani at least four times (see photos below).



Al-Zaydi has maintained close business ties to Hizballah officials and Hizballah financier Adham Tabaja (Tabaja). These activities have included providing protection for companies in Iraq allegedly financed by Hizballah and facilitating the movement of Hizballah funding into Iraq for investments. Al-Zaydi has also worked with senior Hizballah officials to transfer large sums of money to Lebanon to help fund Hizballah's participation in the Syrian civil war. Moreover, Al-Zaydi has transferred large sums of money to Tabaja and worked with OFAC-designated Muhammad Al-Mukhtar Kallas to facilitate the movement of bulk cash from Iraq to Lebanon on Tabaja's behalf. OFAC designated Tabaja on June 6, 2015, for acting for or on behalf of Hizballah. Tabaja maintains direct ties to senior Hizballah officials and Hizballah's operational component, the Islamic Jihad, and holds properties in Lebanon on behalf of the group.

In addition, Al-Zaydi is a partner and founder of Global Cleaners S.A.R.L., which OFAC designated on October 20, 2016, as an SDGT pursuant to E.O. 13224 for being owned or controlled by Tabaja. Also, since its founding in 2014, Al-Zaydi has been the Secretary General of an Iran-aligned Iraqi sectarian armed group. This armed group primarily operates in Iraq, but has also dispatched fighters to Syria, and its members have trained in Iran and with Hizballah in Lebanon.

YUSUF HASHIM (HASHIM)

Hashim was designated for acting for or on behalf of Hizballah.

Hashim oversees all Hizballah-related operational activities in Iraq and is in charge of protecting Hizballah interests in Iraq. Additionally, Hashim arranges for the protection of Tabaja inside of Iraq.

Hashim has also managed Hizballah's relations with sectarian armed groups in Iraq, including the coordination of the deployment of fighters to Syria.

ADNAN HUSSEIN KAWTHARANI (KAWTHARANI)

Kawtharani was designated for assisting in, sponsoring, or providing financial, material, or technological support for, or financial or other services to or in support of, Hizballah.

Kawtharani facilitates business transactions for Hizballah inside Iraq and has attended meetings in Iraq with sectarian armed groups and Hizballah officials. Kawtharani has also been involved in securing a significant source of funding for Hizballah, and has served as the right hand man for his brother and senior Hizballah member Muhammad Kawtharani, whom OFAC designated on August 22, 2013, pursuant to E.O. 13224, for being in charge of Hizballah's Iraq activities and working on behalf of Hizballah leadership to promote the group's interests in Iraq, including Hizballah efforts to provide training, funding, political, and logistical support to Iraqi sectarian armed groups.

Further, as of 2016, Kawtharani worked to obtain a weapons contract in order to raise funds for Hizballah fighters.

Kawtharani is also a partner in the company Global Cleaners S.A.R.L.

MUHAMMAD 'ABD-AL-HADI FARHAT (FARHAT)

Farhat was designated for acting for or on behalf of Hizballah.

Farhat has been involved in advising sectarian armed groups in Iraq on behalf of Hizballah. As of 2017, Farhat was tasked with collecting security and intelligence information in Iraq and subsequently providing reports to senior Hizballah and Iranian leadership. Farhat has been involved in a project to analyze and report on the Iraqi security situation for Hizballah and the IRGC-QF.

[View identifying information on the individuals designated today.](#)

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