

## U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

# Treasury Sanctions Militia and Its Leader in Connection with Serious Human Rights Abuse in Libya

November 25, 2020

**Washington** – Today, the U.S. Department of the Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) took action against Mohamed al-Kani (al-Kani) and the Kaniyat militia, which is responsible for the murder of civilians recently discovered in numerous mass graves in Tarhouna, as well as torture, forced disappearances, and displacement of civilians. Al-Kani and the Kaniyat militia are designated pursuant to Executive Order (E.O.) 13818, which builds upon and implements the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act, and targets serious human rights abuse and corruption around the world.

“Mohamed al-Kani and the Kaniyat militia have tortured and killed civilians during a cruel campaign of oppression in Libya,” said Secretary Steven T. Mnuchin. “The United States stands with the Libyan people and will use the tools and authorities at its disposal to target human rights abusers in Libya and across the world.”

### **MOHAMED AL-KANI AND THE KANIYAT MILITIA**

Al-Kani is the leader of the Kaniyat militia, which over several years gained control over the city of Tarhouna, Libya, while detaining, torturing, and murdering civilians. In April 2019, the Kaniyat militia changed allegiances from Libya’s recognized Government of National Accord (GNA), to the self-styled Libyan National Army (LNA), providing the LNA a foothold near Tripoli during its offensive against the Libyan capital. In June 2020, following a de facto truce, GNA-aligned forces re-entered Tarhouna and discovered at least 11 mass graves containing the bodies of civilians previously detained by the Kaniyat militia, including women, children, and elderly. Some of the deceased appeared to have been tortured, burned, or buried alive. The Kaniyat militia is also responsible for hundreds of summary executions at Tarhouna prison, numerous forced disappearances, and the displacement of entire families from Tarhouna.

Al-Kani is designated for being or having been a leader or official of an entity, including any government entity, that has engaged in, or whose members have engaged in, serious human rights abuse related to his tenure.

The Kaniyat militia is designated for being responsible for or complicit in, or for having directly or indirectly engaged in, serious human rights abuse.

## **SANCTIONS IMPLICATIONS**

As a result of today's action, all property and interests in property of the persons above, and of any entities that are owned, directly or indirectly, 50 percent or more by them, individually, or with other blocked persons, that are in the United States or in the possession or control of U.S. persons, are blocked and must be reported to OFAC. Unless authorized by a general or specific license issued by OFAC or otherwise exempt, OFAC's regulations generally prohibit all transactions by U.S. persons or within (or transiting) the United States that involve any property or interests in property of designated or otherwise blocked persons. The prohibitions include the making of any contribution or provision of funds, goods, or services by, to, or for the benefit of any blocked person or the receipt of any contribution or provision of funds, goods, or services from any such person.

## **GLOBAL MAGNITSKY**

Building upon the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act, the President signed E.O. 13818 on December 20, 2017, in which the President found that the prevalence of human rights abuse and corruption that have their source, in whole or in substantial part, outside the United States, had reached such scope and gravity that it threatens the stability of international political and economic systems. Human rights abuse and corruption undermine the values that form an essential foundation of stable, secure, and functioning societies; have devastating impacts on individuals; weaken democratic institutions; degrade the rule of law; perpetuate violent conflicts; facilitate the activities of dangerous persons; and undermine economic markets. The United States seeks to impose tangible and significant consequences on those who commit serious human rights abuse or engage in corruption, as well as to protect the financial system of the United States from abuse by these same persons.

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