

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Treasury Sanctions Iraqi Militia Leader Connected to Serious Human Rights Abuse

January 8, 2021

Washington – Today, the U.S. Department of the Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) designated Iraqi Popular Mobilization Committee (PMC) Chairman and former National Security Advisor Falih al-Fayyadh for his connection to serious human rights abuse. During protests beginning in October 2019, Iran-aligned elements of the PMC attacked Iraqi civilians demonstrating against corruption, unemployment, economic stagnation, poor public services, and Iranian interference in Iraq’s domestic affairs. Al-Fayyadh was part of a crisis cell comprised primarily of Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF) militia leaders formed in late 2019 to suppress the Iraqi protests with the support of Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Qods Force (IRGC-QF). Today, Iran-aligned elements of the PMF continue to wage an assassination campaign against political activists in Iraq who are calling for free and fair elections, respect for human rights, and clean government.

“By directing and supervising the murder of peaceful Iraqi demonstrators, Iran-aligned militants and politicians such as Falih al-Fayyadh have been waging a violent campaign against Iraqi democracy and civil society,” said Secretary Steven T. Mnuchin. “The United States will continue to hold accountable human rights abusers in Iraq who aim to deny the Iraqi people in their efforts to peacefully protest, seek justice, and root out corruption in their country.”

This action is taken pursuant to Executive Order (E.O.) 13818, which builds upon and implements the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act and targets perpetrators of serious human rights abuse and corruption.

FALIH AL-FAYYADH

Falih al-Fayyadh (al-Fayyadh) is the head of the PMC, a body created by Iraqi legislation to bring the PMF militias under central government control. Although the PMF was established to fight the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), many PMF militias are increasingly focused on advancing their own economic interests and supporting Iran’s regional agenda in Iraq,

rather than protecting the Iraqi state or its citizens. **Al-Fayyadh** was the head of the PMC when many of its subcomponents fired live ammunition at peaceful protesters in late 2019, resulting in the deaths of hundreds of Iraqis. **Al-Fayyadh** was a member of the IRGC-QF-supported crisis cell with previously sanctioned militia leaders Qais al-Khazali and Hussein Falah al-Lami, as well as the now-deceased IRGC-QF commander Qasem Soleimani and PMC deputy leader Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis. Until July 2020, **Al-Fayyadh** was also the Iraqi Prime Minister's National Security Advisor.

Al-Fayyadh is being designated pursuant to E.O. 13818 for being a foreign person who is or has 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.

The IRGC-QF, designated pursuant to E.O. 13224 on October 25, 2007, is a branch of the IRGC responsible for external operations and has provided material support to numerous terrorist groups, making it a key component of Iran's destabilizing regional activities. The IRGC-QF's parent organization, the IRGC, was designated pursuant to E.O. 13224 on October 13, 2017, and on April 15, 2019 was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization by the Secretary of State.

SANCTIONS IMPLICATIONS

As a result of today's action, all property and interests in property of the person above that are in the United States or in the possession or control of U.S. persons are blocked and must be reported to OFAC. In addition, any entities that are owned, directly or indirectly, 50 percent or more by one or more blocked persons are also blocked. 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.

[View more information on the individual designated today.](#)

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