

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Treasury Sanctions Pakistan-based Transnational Human Smuggling Organization Involved in Smuggling Migrants to the United States

April 7, 2021

WASHINGTON – Today, the U.S. Department of the Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) designated Pakistani national Abid Ali Khan and the Abid Ali Khan Transnational Criminal Organization (TCO) pursuant to Executive Order (E.O.) 13581, “Blocking Property of Transnational Criminal Organizations,” as amended. The Abid Ali Khan TCO is a human smuggling organization based in Nowshera, Pakistan, that has facilitated the unlawful smuggling of foreign nationals, including foreign nationals who may pose a national security risk to the United States or its interests, into the United States using various travel routes through Latin America since at least 2015. Additionally, OFAC designated three individuals and one entity associated with the Abid Ali Khan TCO.

“Treasury’s designation of this human smuggling organization as a significant Transnational Criminal Organization is an important step, taken alongside our partners, towards disrupting Abid Ali Khan operations based in Pakistan and around the world,” said Andrea Gacki, Director of the Office of the Foreign Assets Control. “The Abid Ali Khan TCO should not be allowed to prey on the vulnerable and take advantage of the U.S. financial system.”

Today’s action was conducted in close coordination with Homeland Security Investigations’ (HSI) Miami Field Office, the Department of Justice Criminal Division’s Human Rights and Special Prosecutions Section, the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Eastern District of Virginia, the HSI Human Smuggling Unit, and U.S. Customs and Border Protection’s National Targeting Center, under the Extraterritorial Criminal Travel Strike Force program, along with the U.S. Northern Command, U.S. Southern Command, and other U.S. government partners.

“Abid Ali Kahn allegedly organized and leads a widespread smuggling organization that facilitates the illegal smuggling of individuals through various countries and to the United States,” said Acting Assistant Attorney General Nicholas L. McQuaid of the Justice Department’s Criminal Division. “This case is another example of the department’s continued work to prosecute those who seek to profit from thwarting our system of legal

immigration, jeopardizing our national security, and imperiling the lives of the persons being smuggled under dangerous conditions.”

“Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) Miami is committed to prosecuting individuals who pose a threat to national security and our critical infrastructure, including exploiting our global financial systems through their smuggling networks,” said HSI Miami Special Agent in Charge Anthony Salisbury. “A recent HSI-led investigation revealed the Pakistani-based Abid Khan human smuggling network, operating in the Middle East and South America, is exploiting systemic vulnerabilities in order to move people with nefarious motivations into the United States and elsewhere.”

Human smuggling is a profitable business. Based on migrants’ accounts of how much they paid smugglers, media reports have estimated Latin American smuggling networks generate at least \$150 million and as much as \$350 million a year — not counting payments to corrupt officials, local agents, or others on the U.S.–Mexico border who exploit the desperation of migrants. For the individuals who engage in this business, the safety and security of their clients matter far less than the profit they can make, and an untold number of migrants make the dangerous decision to embark on an irregular migration journey based on smugglers’ misrepresentations about U.S. border policy.

Pakistani national Abid Ali Khan (Khan) is the leader of the Abid Ali Khan TCO, a prolific human smuggling organization based in Nowshera, Pakistan. Khan and members of his TCO operate a global network of human smugglers that are responsible for the international smuggling of migrants into the United States. Khan and members of his TCO coordinate the smuggling of foreign nationals to the United States for an average cost of approximately the equivalent of \$20,000 USD per individual; this sum includes, but is not limited to, fees to procure fraudulent or counterfeit documents, make payoffs to corrupt officials, secure lodging along smuggling route, and provide payments to facilitators in various countries. Abid Ali Khan TCO often provides travelers with fraudulently obtained passports from different countries to facilitate his clients’ global movement and smuggling to the United States. The Abid Ali Khan TCO frequently utilizes a common route of travel that begins in Pakistan or Afghanistan, transiting through certain South and Central American countries before arriving at the southern border of the United States.

OFAC is also designating three Khan associates for having materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services to or in support of, or for having acted or having purported to act for or on behalf of, directly or

indirectly, the Abid Ali Khan TCO. Afghan national Redi Hussein Khal Gul serves as Khan's secretary, performing functions that include, but are not limited to, initial contact with clients, travel facilitation, and obtaining fraudulent documents for the migrants. Pakistani national Shakeel Karim is an employee of Khan and uses Friends Travel Inn PVT LTD to coordinate travel for migrants. Pakistani national Mohammed Choudry Ikram Waraich serves as Khan's contact in the Middle East and facilitates travel into the United States. All three individuals are linked to the procurement or use of fraudulent documents for travel or asylum applications, which can significantly impair appropriate immigration vetting processes.

In addition to the national security concerns, the practice of smuggling-for-profit and the facilitation of fraudulent documentation undermines the credibility of the U.S. asylum system, damaging public confidence in the vetting process, and jeopardizing access to protection for vulnerable persons fleeing conflict, famine, and persecution.

As a result of today's action, all assets of Abid Ali Khan the Abid Ali Khan TCO, and the three individuals named above, that are in the United States or in the possession or control of U.S. persons must be blocked and reported to OFAC. OFAC's regulations generally prohibit all dealings by U.S. persons or within (or transiting) the United States that involve any property or interests in property of Abid Ali Khan, the Abid Ali Khan TCO, or any other blocked or designated persons.

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

[View the human smuggling network chart on the individuals designated today](#) .

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