

# Treasury Targets Hizballah Finance Official and Shadow Bankers in Lebanon

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WASHINGTON — Today, the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) designated seven individuals in connection with Hizballah and its financial firm, Al-Qard al-Hassan (AQAH). AQAH, which was designated by OFAC in 2007, is used by Hizballah as a cover to manage the terrorist group's financial activities and gain access to the international financial system. **Ibrahim Ali Daher (Daher)** serves as the Chief of Hizballah's Central Finance Unit, which oversees Hizballah's overall budget and spending, including the group's funding of its terrorist operations and killing of the group's opponents. The other six individuals designated today used the cover of personal accounts at certain Lebanese banks, including U.S.-designated Jammal Trust Bank (JTB), to evade sanctions targeting AQAH and transfer approximately half a billion U.S. dollars on behalf of AQAH.

"From the highest levels of Hizballah's financial apparatus to working level individuals, Hizballah continues to abuse the Lebanese financial sector and drain Lebanon's financial resources at an already dire time," said Director of the Office of Foreign Assets Control Andrea Gacki. "Such actions demonstrate Hizballah's disregard for financial stability, transparency, or accountability in Lebanon."

While AQAH purports to serve the Lebanese people, in practice it illicitly moves funds through shell accounts and facilitators, exposing Lebanese financial institutions to possible sanctions. AQAH masquerades as a non-governmental organization (NGO) under the cover of a Ministry of Interior-granted NGO license, providing services characteristic of a bank in support of Hizballah while evading proper licensing and regulatory supervision. By hoarding hard currency that is desperately needed by the Lebanese economy, AQAH allows Hizballah to build its own support base and compromise the stability of the Lebanese state. AQAH has taken on a more prominent role in Hizballah's financial infrastructure over the years, and designated Hizballah-linked entities and individuals have evaded sanctions and maintained bank accounts by re-registering them in the names of senior AQAH officials, including under the names of certain individuals being designated today.

**Daher** is being designated pursuant to Executive Order (E.O.) 13224, as amended, for having acted or purported to act for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, Hizballah.

Daher leads Hizballah's Central Finance Unit, which oversees the receipt of Hizballah's worldwide income and is responsible for managing and auditing the budgets of all Hizballah units and departments, including coordinating the payment of all Hizballah members. Daher and the Central Finance Unit, which is comprised of dozens of officers, operate within the group's Executive Council, and with direction from Hassan Nasrallah on where to distribute funds. In this capacity, Daher has been a key figure in Hizballah's financial infrastructure for well over a decade.

**Ahmad Mohamad Yazbeck (Yazbeck), Abbas Hassan Gharib (Gharib), Wahid Mahmud Subayti (Subayti), Mostafa Habib Harb (Harb), Ezzat Youssef Akar (Akar), and Hasan Chehadeh Othman (Othman)** are being designated pursuant to E.O. 13224, as amended, for having acted or purported to act for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, AQAH.

The AQAH officials designated today have all participated in evasive "shadow" banking activity. Yazbeck, Gharib, Harb, Akar, and Othman maintain joint bank accounts in Lebanese banks that have allowed them to transfer more than \$500 million within the formal financial system over the past decade, despite existing sanctions against AQAH.

Yazbeck, AQAH's financial director, and Gharib, AQAH's informatics manager, both hold several "shadow accounts" through which transactions are conducted on Hizballah's behalf. Harb, Akar, and Othman also hold "shadow accounts" through which transactions are conducted on Hizballah's behalf. Another AQAH official, Subayti, has also been involved in conducting transactions through "shadow accounts" on behalf of Hizballah. Subayti previously played a similar role in maintaining bank accounts in his own name along with other senior Bayt al-Mal officials. Hizballah's Bayt al-Mal, along with the Central Finance Unit, acted as Hizballah's finance ministry.

Hizballah was designated by the Department of State as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT) pursuant to E.O. 13224 on October 31, 2001. AQAH was designated as an SDGT on July 24, 2007, pursuant to E.O. 13224, for being owned or controlled by, and providing support to, Hizballah

## **SANCTIONS IMPLICATIONS**

As a result of today's action, all property and interests in property of these individuals named 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 must be blocked and 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 the United States (including transactions transiting the United States) that involve any property or interests in property of designated or otherwise blocked persons.

Furthermore, engaging in certain transactions with the individuals designated today entails risk of secondary sanctions pursuant to E.O. 13224, as amended. All individuals being designated today are subject to the Hizballah Financial Sanctions Regulations, which implements the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015, as amended by the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Amendments Act of 2018. Pursuant to these authorities, 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 either knowingly conducted or facilitated any significant transaction on behalf of an SDGT or, among other things, knowingly facilitates a significant transaction for Hizballah or certain persons designated for their connection to Hizballah.

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

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