

Treasury Sanctions Cuban Ministry of Interior Officials and Military Unit in Response to Violence Against Peaceful Demonstrators

August 13, 2021

WASHINGTON — Today, the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) sanctioned two Cuban individuals and one Cuban entity 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 around the world. This is the third round of sanctions since protests started in Cuba on July 11, 2021, as Treasury continues to aggressively target persons in connection with actions to suppress peaceful, pro-democratic protests in Cuba. The targets of today's designations are **Romarico Vidal Sotomayor Garcia (Sotomayor)** and **Pedro Orlando Martinez Fernandez (Martinez)** of the Cuban Ministry of the Interior (MININT); and the **Tropas de Prevencion (TDP)** of the Cuban Ministry of Revolutionary Armed Forces (MINFAR).

"The Treasury Department will continue to designate those who enable the Cuban government to perpetuate human rights abuses against peaceful demonstrators," said Director of the Office of Foreign Assets Control Andrea M. Gacki. "Today's action shines a spotlight on additional perpetrators responsible for suppressing the Cuban people's calls for freedom and respect for human rights."

SANCTIONS ON CUBA

In addition to the sanctions imposed today under the Global Magnitsky program, OFAC continues to enforce the Cuba sanctions program. With exceptions and licenses to ensure that certain categories of activity are allowed that directly benefit the Cuban people, including for humanitarian purposes, OFAC administers an economic embargo on Cuba that prohibits persons subject to U.S. jurisdiction from engaging transactions involving property in which Cuba or a Cuban national has an interest. In addition, the Cuban Assets Control Regulations, 31 C.F.R. part 515 (CACR), block the property and interests in property of all Cuban nationals (unless unblocked) — regardless of whether they appear on Treasury's

Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List (SDN List). The Treasury Department will continue to enforce these prohibitions consistent with applicable statutes and regulations.

VIOLENT REPRESSION OF PROTESTORS IN CUBA

Since the beginning of the July 2021 protests in Cuba, the Cuban regime has dispatched security forces to suppress peaceful demonstrators, deploying units from both MININT and MINFAR. **Sotomayor** is the chief of the Political Directorate of MININT, which has deployed, amongst other forces, the Brigada Especial Nacional del Ministerio del Interior (SNB) and the Policia Nacional Revolucionaria (PNR), both previously designated by OFAC. **Martinez** is the chief of the Political Directorate of the PNR. The SNB and PNR, along with other MININT security forces and the **TDP**, have violently attacked and arrested protestors across Cuba.

The **TDP**, also known as “Boinas Rojas” or Red Berets, is a unit of the Revolutionary Armed Forces (FAR) that is commanded by MINFAR and functions as military police. During the recent protests, TDP soldiers have been deployed, and in one instance have been involved in a violent engagement with a protestor.

Sotomayor and **Martinez** were designated pursuant to E.O. 13818 for having acted or purported to act for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, MININT. MININT was previously designated by OFAC pursuant to E.O. 13818 on January 15, 2021 for being responsible for or complicit in, or having directly or indirectly engaged in, serious human rights abuse.

The **TDP** was designated pursuant to E.O. 13818 for being owned or controlled by, or for having acted or purported to act for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, ALVARO LOPEZ MIERA (MIERA), Minister of the FAR. MIERA was previously designated by OFAC pursuant to E.O. 13818 on July 22, 2021 for being a leader or official of MINFAR, an entity that has engaged in, or whose members have engaged in, serious human rights abuse, relating to his tenure. MINFAR is also blocked pursuant to the CACR.

SANCTIONS IMPLICATIONS

All property and interests in property of these persons that are blocked pursuant to the CACR continue to be blocked. The CACR prohibits persons subject to U.S. jurisdiction from dealing in property in which Cuba or a Cuban national has an interest, unless authorized or exempt. Additionally, pursuant to the Global Magnitsky Sanctions Regulations, 31 C.F.R. part 583, all property and interests in property of the persons above that are in the United States

or in the possession or control of U.S. persons are blocked, and 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 are prohibited unless authorized by a general or specific license issued by OFAC, or otherwise exempt. These 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.

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

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