

The United States and Qatar Take Coordinated Action Against Hizballah Financiers

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WASHINGTON — Today, the United States, through the Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), and the Government of Qatar both designated in coordinated actions a major Hizballah financial network based in the Arabian Peninsula.

"Hizballah seeks to abuse the international financial system by developing global networks of financiers to fill its coffers and support its terrorist activity," said Office of Foreign Assets Control Director Andrea M. Gacki. "The cross-border nature of this Hizballah financial network underscores the importance of our continued cooperation with international partners, such as the Government of Qatar, to protect the U.S. and international financial systems from terrorist abuse."

The United States designated Hizballah as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on October 8, 1997 and as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist on October 31, 2001, and the Gulf Cooperation Council designated Hizballah as a terrorist organization on March 2, 2016. Today, **Ali Reda Hassan al-Banai** (Ali al-Banai), **Ali Reda al-Qassabi Lari** (Ali Lari), and **Abd al-Muayyid al-Banai** (Abd al-Muayyid) are being designated as Specially Designated Global Terrorists (SDGTs) pursuant to Executive Order (E.O.) 13224, as amended, for having materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services to or in support of, Hizballah.

Ali al-Banai and Lari are longstanding supporters of Hizballah and have secretly sent tens of millions of dollars to the terrorist organization through the formal financial system and cash couriers. They both regularly met with Hizballah officials during their travels to Lebanon and Iran. Ali al-Banai initially began contributing funds to Hizballah via another Kuwait-based Hizballah donor and a Kuwait-based branch of the U.S.-designated Martyrs Foundation, which was designated in 2007 for providing financial support to the families of killed or imprisoned terrorists, including suicide bombers in the Palestinian territories. Ali al-Banai and his brother, Abd al-Muayyid, who is also being designated today, held joint accounts in several banks, transferred funds to Hizballah as recently as late 2020, and maintained ties to

senior Hizballah associates. In 2017, Ali al-Banai planned to transfer millions of dollars to a senior Hizballah official from a bank account from which Hizballah representatives could also withdraw and transfer funds. Lari has been providing financial support to Hizballah since 2000 when he would deliver cash to Hizballah during his trips to Lebanon. During a trip to Iran, Lari met with a high-ranking Hizballah official to transfer funds to the group. As of 2018, Lari was involved in financial facilitation activities supporting Hizballah and worked with al-Banai to move money from Qatar to Hizballah-run organizations.

Abd al-Rahman Abd al-Nabi Shams (Shams), **Yahya Muhammad al-Abd-al-Muhsin** (Abd-al-Muhsin), **Majdi Fa'iz al-Ustadz** (Ustadz), and **Sulaiman al-Banai** are being designated as SDGTs pursuant to E.O. 13224, as amended, for having materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services to or in support of, Ali al-Banai.

As of 2019, Shams, Ali al-Banai's Bahrain-based nephew, coordinated the development of two real estate projects in Bahrain and the delivery of funds to Gulf-based individuals on behalf of Ali al-Banai. As of 2019, Ali al-Banai had transferred millions of Qatari riyals to an account held by Shams. Concurrent with this action, the Government of Bahrain has frozen the bank accounts of this individual and has additionally referred three individuals to their prosecutor's office.

As of 2019, Abd-al-Muhsin, a Saudi Arabia-based relative of Lari, managed Ali al-Banai's real estate throughout the Gulf, including Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and was tasked by Ali al-Banai to manage Lari's businesses in the UAE. Abd-al-Muhsin also maintained power of attorney for Banai's properties in Bahrain. As of 2018, Abd-al-Muhsin maintained regular contact with both Ali al-Banai and Lari and made regular trips to Qatar to meet with Ali al-Banai. As of 2019, Ali al-Banai had transferred hundreds of thousands of Qatari riyals to Abd-al-Muhsin. As of 2019, Ustadz coordinated Ali al-Banai's commercial activities in Qatar. Ustadz owned properties on behalf of Ali al-Banai, which Ali al-Banai used as collateral to obtain loans to fund investments in Turkey. Ustadz also oversaw financial matters for Ali al-Banai.

As of 2019, Sulaiman al-Banai, a relative of Ali al-Banai, was a primary manager of Ali al-Banai's business and financial activity in Qatar and abroad.

Qatar-based **AIDar Properties** is being designated for being owned, controlled, or directed by, directly or indirectly, Sulaiman al-Banai. According to its public website, AIDar Properties is owned and managed by Sulaiman al-Banai. AIDar Properties is engaged in property

management of multi-family residential and commercial properties in Qatar. Qatar-based Aldar Properties is not associated or affiliated with the real estate company Aldar Properties PJSC in the UAE.

Through sustained information-sharing and collaboration on this and other networks of Lebanese Hizballah financial facilitators operating in the Arabian Peninsula, the U.S. government will continue to disrupt the financial support that flows to terrorist groups such as Hizballah, including through multilateral and bilateral initiatives.

Sanctions Implications

As a result of today's action, all property and interests in property of these individuals and entity 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 and entity designated today entails risk of secondary sanctions pursuant to E.O. 13224, as amended. Pursuant to these authorities, OFAC can prohibit or impose strict conditions on the opening or maintaining in the United States or a correspondent account or a payable-through account by a foreign financial institution that either knowingly conducts or facilitates any significant transactions on behalf of an SDGT, or that, among other things, knowingly facilitates a significant transaction for Hizballah or certain persons designated for their connection to Hizballah.

For information concerning the process for seeking removal from an OFAC list, including the Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List, please refer to OFAC's Frequently Asked Question 897 at <https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/financial-sanctions/faqs/897>. Additional information regarding sanctions programs administered by OFAC can be found at <https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/financial-sanctions/sanctions-programs-and-country-information>.

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

