

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Treasury Sanctions Transporters At Center of Sinaloa Cartel Poly-Drug Network

October 19, 2022

OFAC action targets drug trafficking network that rose to prominence transporting drug-laden trucks across the U.S./Mexico border

WASHINGTON — Today, the U.S. Department of the Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) designated **Juan Francisco Valenzuela Valenzuela** and the **Valenzuela Drug Trafficking Organization (“Valenzuela DTO”)**, among others, pursuant to Executive Order (E.O.) 14059.

Originally established as a transportation cell, the Valenzuela DTO evolved into a sophisticated network that became invaluable to Sinaloa Cartel leadership. Named after the family who facilitated its rise to prominence, the Valenzuela DTO was run by siblings Jorge Alberto, Wuendi Yuridia, and Juan Francisco Valenzuela Valenzuela in recent years. Following the arrests of Jorge Alberto and Wuendi Yuridia by U.S. authorities in October 2020 and November 2021, respectively, Juan Francisco Valenzuela Valenzuela is the last remaining sibling involved in the Valenzuela DTO’s operations in Mexico. Operating under the umbrella of the Sinaloa Cartel, the Valenzuela DTO is involved in the importation and transport of multi-ton quantities of illicit drugs, including methamphetamine, heroin, and fentanyl, from Mexico to the United States.

“The Valenzuela drug trafficking organization fuels the ongoing drug epidemic we face in the United States which has resulted in the deaths of tens of thousands of Americans annually,” said Under Secretary of the Treasury for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence Brian E. Nelson. “Starving this network of resources will help deprive the Sinaloa Cartel of critical support it needs to traffic its dangerous illicit drugs.”

In addition to the Valenzuela DTO and Juan Francisco Valenzuela Valenzuela, two Mexican nationals and Valenzuela DTO members, **Hector Alfonso Araujo Peralta** and **Raul Rivas Chaires**, as well as three Mexico-based transportation companies, **Arfel Transportadora Cool Logistic, S.A. de C.V.**, **Servicios de Transporte Maruha, S.A. de C.V.**, and **Transportes**

Refrigerados Pandas Trucking, S.A. de C.V., were also designated today for having engaged in, or attempted to engage in, activities or transactions that have materially contributed to, or pose a significant risk of materially contributing to, the international proliferation of illicit drugs or their means of production.

Today's action is the result of OFAC's ongoing collaboration with Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) San Diego Strike Force Group, U.S. Customs and Border Protection's National Targeting Center, and the Government of Mexico.

On October 19, 2021, federal drug trafficking indictments were returned in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California against Juan Francisco Valenzuela Valenzuela, Hector Alfonso Araujo Peralta, and Raul Rivas Chaires. To date, these individuals are fugitives from these charges.

SANCTIONS IMPLICATIONS

As a result of today's action, all property and interests in property of the designated individuals and entities that are in the United States or in the possession or control of U.S. persons must be blocked and 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. OFAC's regulations generally prohibit all dealings 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.

In addition, persons that engage in certain transactions with the individuals and entities designated today may themselves be exposed to sanctions or subject to an enforcement action. Furthermore, unless an exception applies, any foreign financial institution that knowingly facilitates a significant transaction or provides significant financial services for any of the individuals or entities designated today could be subject to U.S. sanctions.

Today's action is part of a whole-of-government effort to counter the global threat posed by the trafficking of illicit drugs into the United States that causes the deaths of tens of thousands of Americans annually, as well as countless more non-fatal overdoses. OFAC, in coordination with its U.S. government partners and foreign counterparts, will continue to target and pursue accountability for foreign illicit drug actors.

The power and integrity of OFAC sanctions derive not only from OFAC's ability to designate and add persons to the Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List (SDN List), but also from its willingness to remove persons from the SDN List consistent with the law. The ultimate goal of sanctions is not to punish, but to bring about a positive change in behavior. For information concerning the process for seeking removal from an OFAC list, including the SDN List, please refer to OFAC's [Frequently Asked Question 897](#). For detailed information on the process to submit a request for removal from an OFAC sanctions list, please visit [here](#).

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

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

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