

Treasury Sanctions Corrupt Haitian Politicians for Narcotics Trafficking

November 4, 2022

Bilateral Action Taken with Government of Canada

Washington – Today, the U.S. Department of the Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), along with the Government of Canada, designated Haitian nationals Joseph Lambert (Lambert) and Youri Latortue (Latortue) pursuant to Executive Order 14059 of December 15, 2021, “Imposing Sanctions on Foreign Persons Involved in the Global Illicit Drug Trade.” OFAC designated Lambert and Latortue 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. Lambert is the sitting President of the Haitian Senate and has held political positions in Haiti for 20 years. Latortue is a former Haitian Senator and a longtime politician.

“Joseph Lambert and Youri Latortue have abused their official positions to traffic drugs and collaborated with criminal and gang networks to undermine the rule of law in Haiti,” said Under Secretary of the Treasury for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence Brian E. Nelson. “The United States and our international partners will continue to take action against those who facilitate drug trafficking, enable corruption, and seek to profit from instability in Haiti.”

Lambert’s history with drug trafficking covers two decades. During this time, Lambert used his position to lead and facilitate the trafficking of cocaine from Colombia to Haiti and to facilitate impunity in Haiti for other narcotics traffickers. Lambert has also directed others to engage in violence on his behalf. His drug trafficking, corrupt tactics, and continued disregard for the rule of law have contributed to the continued destabilization of Haiti.

Like Lambert, Latortue has also had lengthy involvement in drug trafficking activities. Latortue has engaged in the trafficking of cocaine from Colombia to Haiti and has directed others to engage in violence on his behalf.

OFAC coordinated closely with the Drug Enforcement Administration on this designation.



SANCTIONS IMPLICATIONS

As a result of today's action, all property and interests in property of the designated individuals 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 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 the individuals designated today could be subject to U.S. sanctions.

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.](#)

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

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