

Treasury Sanctions Illicit Fentanyl Network Run by Key Sinaloa Cartel Family Members

July 12, 2023

Close relatives of “Los Chapitos” and Zamudio Lerma families targeted in collaboration with Government of Mexico

WASHINGTON — Today, the Department of the Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) sanctioned 10 individuals, including several Sinaloa Cartel members and fugitives, as well as one Mexico-based entity, pursuant to Executive Order (E.O.) 14059. Those sanctioned today are associated with Sinaloa, Mexico-based precursor chemical suppliers and brothers [Ludim and Luis Alfonso Zamudio Lerma](#) and ultimately operate under the [Los Chapitos](#) faction of the Sinaloa Cartel. Responsible for a significant portion of the illicit fentanyl and other deadly drugs trafficked into the United States, the Sinaloa Cartel is one of the most powerful and pervasive drug trafficking organizations in the world.

“On my visit to the southwest border, I’ve seen how Treasury’s authorities can best be used to expose and isolate those who profit from deadly fentanyl sales in the United States,” said Under Secretary of the Treasury for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence Brian E. Nelson. “Today’s sanctions demonstrate our ability and our resolve to exploit the financial vulnerabilities of networks involved in the illicit fentanyl trade.”

Today, OFAC designated **Noel Lopez Perez and Ricardo Paez Lopez**, both Mexican nationals, who are involved in drug trafficking and transportation, precursor chemical sales, overseeing illicit drug laboratories, cross-border tunnels, and enforcement operations for Los Chapitos. As a sibling of Joaquin “El Chapo” Guzman Loera’s second wife, [Griselda Lopez Perez](#), Noel Lopez Perez is a brother-in-law of Guzman Loera and therefore an uncle to [Ovidio](#) and Joaquin Guzman Lopez. Additionally, Ricardo Paez Lopez and his brother, Saul Paez Lopez, are maternal cousins of the Guzman Lopez brothers. OFAC designated Joaquin Guzman Lopez and Saul Paez Lopez in May of this year pursuant to E.O. 14059.

Further, today OFAC designated Mexican nationals **Dora Vanessa Valdez Fernandez**, who

purchases precursor chemicals from Ludim Zamudio Lerma; **Nestor Isidro Perez Salas** (a.k.a. “Nini”) and **Oscar Noe Medina Gonzalez** (a.k.a. “Panu”), fentanyl traffickers and violent enforcers for Los Chapitos; and **Jeuri Limon Elenes**, a methamphetamine trafficker and a brother-in-law of the Paez Lopez brothers, Ricardo and Saul.

OFAC designated Noel Lopez Perez, Ricardo Paez Lopez, Dora Vanessa Valdez Fernandez, Nestor Isidro Perez Salas, Oscar Noe Medina Gonzalez, and Jeuri Limon Elenes pursuant to E.O. 14059 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.

Also today, OFAC designated import/export company **REI Compania Internacional, S.A. de C.V. (REI Compania Internacional)** pursuant to E.O. 14059 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. Based in Metepec, Estado de Mexico, REI Compania Internacional regularly receives chemical shipments from exporters in the People’s Republic of China. OFAC concurrently designated the company’s majority shareholder, **Eliseo de Leon Becerra**, for being a leader or official of REI Compania Internacional.

Additionally, OFAC designated three siblings of Ludim and Luis Alfonso Zamudio Lerma today for their association with [Aceros y Refacciones del Humaya, S.A. de C.V.](#) (Aceros y Refacciones del Humaya), which OFAC designated in February of this year pursuant to E.O. 14059. Specifically, OFAC designated Mexican nationals **Angel Guillermo Zamudio Lerma**, **Daniel Zamudio Lerma**, and **Jorge Alberto Zamudio Lerma** for being or having been leaders or officials of Aceros y Refacciones del Humaya. In addition to each owning shares of Aceros y Refacciones del Humaya, each of the siblings maintains a position related to the company’s administration.

Today’s action was coordinated closely with the Government of Mexico’s La Unidad de Inteligencia Financiera (Mexico’s Financial Intelligence Unit) and is the result of ongoing collaboration with U.S. government partners, including the FBI Phoenix Field Office (Tucson Resident Agency), the FBI Legal Attaché San Salvador (Sub-Office Guatemala City), the FBI Washington Field Office Squad CR3, the FBI Los Angeles Strike Force, the DEA Tampa District Office (“CHEMEX”), the Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) Special Agent in Charge in Phoenix, the HSI Nogales Field Office, and the HSI Spokane Field Office.

Among other charges, Oscar Noe Medina Gonzalez and Jeuri Limon Elenes were indicted on drug trafficking charges related to methamphetamine, cocaine, and heroin in the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California in April 2015 and April 2017, respectively. In February 2021, Nestor Isidro Perez Salas was indicted in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia on drug trafficking charges related to methamphetamine and cocaine and, among other charges, conspiracy to retaliate against a witness. Additionally, Perez Salas and Medina Gonzalez were indicted in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York in April 2023. Medina Gonzalez, Limon Elenes, and Perez Salas are fugitives. Moreover, in April 2023, the Department of State issued reward offers for information leading to the arrest and/or conviction of [Oscar Noe Medina Gonzalez](#) and [Nestor Isidro Perez Salas](#).

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.

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 is causing the deaths of tens of thousands of Americans annually, as well as countless more non-fatal overdoses. Last week, 85 countries and 13 international organizations convened virtually to launch a [Global Coalition to Address Synthetic Drug Threats](#), providing support to more than 20 million Americans in recovery, partnering with law enforcement around the world to disrupt and dismantle transnational criminal organizations, and offering over 30 rewards—totaling over \$75 million—for information to help bring fentanyl traffickers to justice through the [Narcotics](#) and [Transnational Organized Crime Rewards Programs](#).

Treasury's action demonstrates the Administration's [strengthened approach](#) to saving lives by disrupting the trafficking of illicit fentanyl and its precursors into American communities. OFAC, in coordination with its U.S. Government partners and foreign counterparts, will continue to target and pursue accountability for foreign illicit drug actors.

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.

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 click here.](#)

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

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

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