

United States and United Kingdom Take Coordinated Action Against Hamas Leaders and Financiers



November 14, 2023

WASHINGTON — Today, U.S. Department of the Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) imposed its third round of sanctions targeting Hamas-affiliated individuals and entities since the October 7 Hamas terrorist attacks on Israel. This action designates key Hamas officials and the mechanisms by which Iran provides support to Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ). Today’s designations are coordinated with action by the U.K. and are aimed at protecting the international financial system from abuse by Hamas and their enablers. The U.S. Department of State is concurrently designating a leader of PIJ’s military wing.

“The United States will continue to work with our partners, including the U.K., to deny Hamas the ability to raise and use funds to carry out its atrocities,” said Secretary of the Treasury Janet L. Yellen. “Hamas’s actions have caused immense suffering and shown that terrorism does not occur in isolation. Together with our partners we are decisively moving to degrade Hamas’s financial infrastructure, cut them off from outside funding, and block the new funding channels they seek to finance their heinous acts.”

This action builds on OFAC’s recent [October 27](#) and [October 18](#) designations of Hamas operatives and financial facilitators, as well as its [May 2022](#) designation of officials and companies involved in managing Hamas’s secret international investment portfolio. These persons are being designated pursuant to Executive Order (E.O.) 13224, as amended, which targets terrorist groups and their supporters.

IRANIAN SUPPORT TO PALESTINIAN ISLAMIC JIHAD

Iranian support, primarily through its Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), has enabled Hamas’s and PIJ’s terrorist activities, to include the transfer of hundreds of millions of dollars in financial assistance and the furnishing of both weapons and operational training.

Nasser Abu Sharif serves as the PIJ representative to Iran, the group’s primary financier. Iran’s IRGC has trained PIJ fighters to build and develop missiles in Gaza.

PIJ's financial activities have been carried out through the **Muhjat AlQuds Foundation** in Gaza, a PIJ-run, Iran-funded organization whose primary mission is to provide financial support to the families of PIJ fighters and prisoners. Hamas financial facilitators have assisted PIJ in laundering money from outside of Gaza for eventual transfer to the Muhjat AlQuds Foundation. The Muhjat AlQuds Foundation is led by PIJ political official **Jamil Yusuf Ahmad 'Aliyan**, who has distributed Iranian provided funds to PIJ personnel in Gaza. 'Aliyan, who has served on PIJ's executive committee, has overseen PIJ finances as it relates to important group logistics.

Nasser Abu Sharif and Jamil Yusuf Ahmad 'Aliyan are being designated pursuant to E.O. 13224, as amended, for having acted or purported to act for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, PIJ. The Muhjat AlQuds Foundation is being designated 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, PIJ.

Additionally, today, the Department of State designated **Akram al-Ajouri (Ajouri)**, the Damascus-based Deputy Secretary General of PIJ and leader of the Al-Quds Brigades, PIJ's militant wing. Ajouri coordinated the militant training and recruitment operations for PIJ in Gaza, Syria, Sudan, Lebanon, and Yemen. Ajouri is being designated pursuant to E.O. 13224, as amended, for being a leader of PIJ.

Hamas uses the Lebanon-based money exchange company **Nabil Chouman & Co (Chouman)** to transfer money from Iran to Gaza. For several years, the company has served as a conduit for transferring funds to Hamas, transferring tens of millions of dollars to the terrorist organization. Chouman owner and founder **Nabil Khaled Halil Chouman**, together with his son **Khaled Chouman** and another Lebanon-based money exchanger **Reda Ali Khamis (Khamis)** worked with Hamed Ahmed al-Khudari (Khudari). Khudari was a member of Hamas and its militant wing, the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, and a prominent money exchanger for the group until his death in 2019. Khamis was involved in facilitating financial transfers from the Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Qods Force (IRGC-QF) to Hamas as well as PIJ in Gaza, and was responsible for the transfer of more than \$7 million from the IRGC-QF to Hamas.

Nabil Chouman & Co, Nabil Khaled Halil Chouman, Khaled Chouman, and Reda Ali Khamis are being designated 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, Hamas.

KEY HAMAS OFFICIALS

Mahmoud Khaled Zahhar (Zahhar) is a senior member and co-founder of Hamas who has worked closely with Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT) and Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh. Zahhar has spoken publicly on behalf of Hamas, including in formal interviews, to threaten violence against Jewish civilians and emphasize its commitment to the destruction of Israel. As a Hamas representative, Zahhar has also acknowledged and thanked Iran for its support of Hamas.

Mahmoud Khaled Zahhar is being designated pursuant to E.O. 13224, as amended, for having acted or purported to act for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, Hamas.

Additionally, **Mu'ad Ibrahim Muhammed Rashid al-Atili** is being designated pursuant to E.O. 13224, as amended, for having acted or purported to act for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, Hamas.

SANCTIONS IMPLICATIONS

As a result of today's action, all property and interests in property of the designated persons described above that are in the United States or in the possession or control of U.S. persons are blocked and must be reported to OFAC. In addition, any entities that are owned, directly or indirectly, individually or in the aggregate, 50 percent or more by one or more blocked persons are also blocked. Unless authorized by a general or specific license issued by OFAC, or exempt, OFAC's regulations generally prohibit 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.

In addition, financial institutions and other persons that engage in certain transactions or activities with sanctioned entities and individuals may expose themselves to sanctions or be subject to an enforcement action. The prohibitions include the making of any contribution or provision of funds, goods, or services by, to, or for the benefit of any designated person, or the receipt of any contribution or provision of funds, goods, or services from any such person.

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 (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 here](#). For detailed information on the process to submit a request for [removal from an OFAC sanctions list](#), please [click here](#).

Treasury remains committed to enabling the flow of legitimate humanitarian assistance supporting the basic human needs of vulnerable populations, while continuing to deny resources to terrorists and other malicious actors. Accordingly, OFAC sanctions programs contain [provisions for legitimate humanitarian support to vulnerable populations](#), including authorizations for certain humanitarian transactions in support of nongovernmental organizations' activities to ensure legitimate support is reaching the intended recipients. For more information, please review relevant authorizations and guidance on OFAC's website.

[Click here for more information on the individuals and entities designated today.](#)

Additional Treasury resources on countering the financing of terrorism:

- [FinCEN Alert to Financial Institutions to Counter Financing to Hamas and its Terrorist Activities](#) 
- [2022 National Terrorist Financing Risk Assessment](#) 
- [National Strategy for Combating Terrorist and Other Illicit Financing](#) 
- [Action Plan to Address Illicit Financing Risks of Digital Assets](#) 
- [FATF Report: Virtual Assets Red Flag Indicators of Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing](#)
- [Terrorist Financing Targeting Center](#)

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