

Treasury and the United Kingdom Target Qods Force Deputy Commander and Houthi-Affiliated Supporters

February 27, 2024

WASHINGTON — Today, the Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), in coordination with the United Kingdom, is taking action against the Deputy Commander of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Qods Force (IRGC-QF), Mohammad Reza Falahzadeh, as well as a Houthi group member. OFAC is also designating the owner and operator of a vessel used to ship Iranian commodities that were sold to support both the Houthis and the IRGC-QF. The revenue generated through these illicit networks enables the Houthis' militant efforts, including numerous terrorist attacks in the region using advanced unmanned aerial vehicles and missiles. Today's action follows the recent U.S. Department of State designation of Ansarallah (commonly known as the Houthis) as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist as a result of their ongoing and unprecedented attacks on international maritime commerce in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden.

"Today's action underscores our resolve to target efforts by the IRGC-QF and the Houthis to evade U.S. sanctions and fund further attacks in the region," said Under Secretary of the Treasury for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence Brian E. Nelson. "As the Houthis persistently threaten the security of peaceful international commerce, the United States and the United Kingdom will continue to disrupt the funding streams that enable these destabilizing activities."

Today's action is being taken pursuant to the counterterrorism authority Executive Order (E.O.) 13224, as amended, which targets terrorist groups, their supporters, and those who aid acts of terrorism. The IRGC-QF was designated pursuant to E.O. 13224 on October 25, 2007, for providing support to multiple terrorist groups.

IRGC-QF SUPPORT TO HOUTHIS MILITANT EFFORTS

The IRGC-QF has provided the Houthis with an increasingly sophisticated arsenal of weapons and the training to deploy these weapons against commercial shipping and civilian infrastructure in the region. Iranian military officials have also provided intelligence support to

target vessels transiting the region, providing key support to enable the Houthis' maritime attacks against international shipping. Since mid-November 2023, the Houthis have attempted dozens of strikes targeting vessels in the region.

Mohammad Reza Falahzadeh serves as the current IRGC-QF deputy commander, having replaced U.S.-designated IRGC-QF official Mohammad Hejazi following Hejazi's death in April 2021. Falahzadeh served as an IRGC-QF officer in Syria during the Syrian Civil War, during which he participated in the Battle of Aleppo, which caused immense destruction and civilian casualties. Falahzadeh also previously served as chief of Karbala Roads and Urban Development, a subsidiary of U.S.-designated Khatam al-Anbia Construction Headquarters, the construction conglomerate of the IRGC, which manages projects worth tens of billions of dollars.

Mohammad Reza Falahzadeh is being designated pursuant to E.O. 13224, as amended, for having acted for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, the IRGC-QF.

The IRGC-QF and the Houthis engage in the sale of Iranian commodities to foreign buyers to generate revenue to fund Houthi operations. Much of this activity is directed through the network of Iran-based, IRGC-QF-backed Houthi financial facilitator Sa'id al-Jamal, whom OFAC designated on [June 10, 2021](#) for his support to the IRGC-QF.

The **ARTURA** (IMO: 9150365), which is owned and operated by Hong Kong-based **Cap Tees Shipping Co., Limited**, has transported Iranian commodities for the network of Sa'id al-Jamal. The ARTURA conducted ship-to-ship transfers to receive Iranian commodities before transferring the commodities to the MEHLE, a tanker sanctioned on [January 12, 2024](#) for its role selling Iranian commodities for Sa'id al-Jamal. The ARTURA has obfuscated its identity by using the name of a different vessel, SANAN II, to complete some of its shipments.

Cap Tees Shipping Co., Limited 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, Sa'id al-Jamal. The ARTURA is being identified as property in which Cap Tees Shipping Co., Limited. has an interest.

Today, OFAC is also designating **Ibrahim al-Nashiri**, a Houthi group member who has supported the Houthis' militant efforts.

Ibrahim al-Nashiri is being designated pursuant to E.O. 13224, as amended, for having acted for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, Ansarallah.

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 the 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 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](#).

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