

United States Increases Sanctions Against the Government of Iran and its Proliferation Networks; Treasury and State Department Actions Target More Than 50 Entities Tied to Iran's Procurement, Petroleum, and Shipping Networks

Media Note

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Today, the United States is imposing additional sanctions on Iran's nuclear and ballistic missile proliferation networks, and is also taking additional steps to prevent the evasion of sanctions by publicly identifying a group of Iranian front companies and banks. These actions are part of the United States government's dual-track approach of increasing pressure to convince Iran to engage seriously and address the international community's concerns about its nuclear program.

"Iran today is under intense, multilateral sanctions pressure, and we will continue to ratchet up the pressure so long as Iran refuses to address the international community's well-founded concerns about its nuclear program," said Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence David S. Cohen. "Today's actions are our next step on that path, taking direct aim at disrupting Iran's nuclear and ballistic missile programs as well as its deceptive efforts to use front companies to sell and move its oil."

Targeting Iran's Nuclear and Missile Proliferation Activities

Since 2005, the United States has imposed a series of targeted, conduct-based sanctions under E.O. 13382, "Blocking Property of Weapons of Mass Destruction Proliferators and Their Supporters," on persons, firms, and financial institutions involved in Iran's nuclear and ballistic missile programs. This sustained sanctions effort has both disrupted the progress of Iran's nuclear and ballistic missile program and imposed significant pressure on the Iranian government.

Continuing the effort to target Iran's nuclear and missile proliferation activities, the U.S. Departments of the Treasury and State are today designating 11 entities and four individuals under E.O. 13382. As described in more detail in the accompanying Fact Sheet, many of the individuals and entities designated today are part of a network of proliferators headed by Iran's Ministry of Defense for Armed Forces Logistics (MODAFL) and its subsidiary, Aerospace Industries Organization (AIO). A number of additional designations are related to Iran's national maritime carrier, Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines (IRISL), and Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), both of which have been the target of a numerous sanctions actions by the United States and our partners around the world.

Preventing the Circumvention of International Sanctions on Iran

The Treasury Department is also acting today to prevent the circumvention of international sanctions on Iran – including sanctions on oil trade with Iran – by publicly exposing numerous Iranian front companies, ships and banks and that are part of the Government of Iran. The specific entities identified in today's action are described in the accompanying Fact Sheet.

Treasury is identifying these Government of Iran entities pursuant to E.O. 13599, which blocks all property and interests in property within U.S. jurisdiction of the Government of Iran and of all Iranian financial institutions, and prohibits U.S. persons or those within U.S. jurisdiction from having dealings with them. To assist U.S. persons in complying with their obligation to freeze the assets of, and not to deal with, any such entities, the Treasury Department from time to time identifies entities that are owned or controlled by, or acting for or on behalf of, the Government of Iran.

Today's identifications include four front companies for the Naftiran Intertrade Company (NICO) or the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) -- Petro Suisse Intertrade Company SA; Hong Kong Intertrade Company; Noor Energy (Malaysia) Ltd.; and Petro Energy Intertrade Company. NICO intended to use Petro Energy Intertrade to evade western sanctions. The Treasury Department identified in NICO and NIOC, both of which are centrally involved in the sale of Iranian oil, in 2008 as entities that are owned or controlled by the Government of Iran.

The Treasury Department is also identifying today the National Iranian Tanker Company (NITC) as a Government of Iran entity and, for the first time, the NITC fleet and various front companies belonging to NITC. In addition, the Treasury Department is also identifying 20 Iranian financial institutions for inclusion on its List of Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons (SDN List).

These identifications highlight Iran's attempts to evade sanctions through the use of front companies, as well as its attempts to conceal its tanker fleet by repainting, reflagging, or disabling GPS devices. They will assist U.S. persons in complying with E.O. 13599, and will also assist persons and entities around the world in complying U.S. and international sanctions, including the EU's prohibition on the import of Iranian oil that went into effect on July 1.

U.S. persons are generally prohibited from engaging in any transactions with individuals or entities blocked pursuant to E.O. 13382 or E.O. 13599, and any assets such persons may have under U.S. jurisdiction are blocked. Entry into the United States of aliens designated pursuant to E.O. 13382 is suspended under Presidential Proclamation 8693, Suspension of Entry of Aliens Subject to U.S. Security Council Travel Ban and International Emergency Economic Powers Act Sanctions.