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This Week in Iran Policy

FACT SHEET

OFFICE OF THE SPOKESPERSON

OCTOBER 30, 2020

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"Instead of using its natural resource wealth to improve living conditions for the Iranian people, the Iranian regime prefers to pawn its oil to fund the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Qods Force (IRGC-QF) and support its terror proxies as they sow chaos and destruction around the Middle East. We will not let that happen."

– Secretary Pompeo, October 26, 2020

United States Sanctions Entities Related to Iran's Petroleum Industry, October 30.

- ◆ The United States will continue to prevent the Iranian regime from using the Iranian people's natural resources to fund terror and support oppression. Yesterday, the Department of State, Department of the Treasury, and Department of Justice took important actions to constrain the regime's oil and petrochemical sales. The Justice Department announced the filing of a complaint to seek the forfeiture of two shipments of Iranian missiles the U.S. Navy seized in transit from Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps to militant groups in Yemen, as well as the sale of approximately 1.1 million barrels of Iranian petroleum the U.S.

previously took custody of from four foreign-flagged oil tankers bound for Venezuela. These actions represent the U.S. government's largest-ever forfeiture actions for fuel and weapons shipments from Iran.

- ◆ The State Department imposed sanctions on Arya Sasol Polymer Company, Binrin Limited, Bakhtar Commercial Company, Kavian Petrochemical Company, and Strait Shipbrokers PTE. LTD, pursuant to section 3(a)(ii) of Executive Order (E.O.) 13846. These entities based in Iran, China, and Singapore, have knowingly engaged in a significant transaction for the purchase, acquisition, sale, transport, or marketing of petroleum products from Iran. In addition, the State Department imposed sanctions on Amir Hossein Bahreini, Lin Na Wei, Murtuza Mustafamunir Basrai, Hosein Firouzi Arani, and Ramezan Oladi for being principal executive officer of the aforementioned entities, or performing similar functions and with similar authorities as a principal executive officer, for purposes of Section 5(a)(vii) of E.O.13846.
- ◆ Moreover, the Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control designated eight entities related to involvement in the sale and purchase of Iranian petrochemical products brokered by Triliance Petrochemical Co. Ltd., a U.S.-designated entity, pursuant to E.O.13846.
- ◆ Instead of providing for their people, the Iranian regime's brutal leaders continue to use Iran's revenues to support destabilizing activities in the Middle East and support terrorism around the world. The United States will not waver in our efforts to pursue any entity or individual helping the Iranian regime evade our sanctions.
- ◆ For more information about the Departments of the Treasury's and Justice's actions, please see Treasury's [press release](#) and DOJ's [press release](#).

Iran-backed Houthi Attacks Against Saudi Arabia, October 29.

- ◆ We condemn yesterday's attacks by the Iranian-backed Houthis against Saudi Arabia. These attacks were launched indiscriminately towards Riyadh, and risked the lives of innocent civilians, including Americans. For years, Saudi Arabia has endured these types of reckless attacks and for the past week, these attacks have occurred almost daily. This irresponsible escalation coincides with the Houthis' declared desire to strengthen their ties with Iran. Just this month, the Iranian regime smuggled Hassan Irloo, a member of the terrorist Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), into Sana'a, Yemen's Houthi-occupied capital. Irloo now calls himself "ambassador." These acts demonstrate that the Houthis are not serious about seeking a political solution in order to bring peace to Yemen. The United States calls on Iran

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to stop smuggling weapons to the Houthis in violation of UN Security Council resolutions and to stop enabling the Houthis' aggressive acts against Yemen and towards its neighbors, including Saudi Arabia.

United States Sanctions Iranian Energy Institutions Supporting the IRGC-QF, October 26.

- ◆ Instead of using its natural resource wealth to improve living conditions for the Iranian people, the Iranian regime prefers to pawn its oil to fund the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Qods Force (IRGC-QF) and support its terror proxies as they sow chaos and destruction around the Middle East. We will not let that happen.
- ◆ Pursuant to Executive Order 13224 (as amended) the United States is imposing sanctions on several Iranian government entities and state-owned enterprises involved in Iran's energy sector that have provided financial support to the IRGC-QF. We are also sanctioning several related individuals, entities, and vessels. These include sanctions on Iran's Ministry of Petroleum and Minister of Petroleum, the National Iranian Oil Company, the National Iranian Tanker Company, and 21 other individuals, entities, and vessels related to the provision of support or services to the IRGC-QF.
- ◆ These designations are an important step in the maximum pressure campaign to limit the Iranian regime's ability to threaten its neighbors and destabilize the Middle East. Our action will further restrict the scope of activities permitted with the designated individuals and entities, further limiting the Iranian regime's access to funds it uses to enrich itself and support terrorism around the world. The few remaining buyers of Iranian crude oil should know that they are helping to fund Iran's malign activity across the Middle East, including its support for terrorism.
- ◆ The maximum pressure campaign targets the Iranian regime, not the Iranian people. That is why, in parallel with these designations, the Department of the Treasury updated a **general license** related to humanitarian trade and issued **associated guidance** . The Iranian regime's longest-suffering victims are its own people, and the United States supports the Iranian people's ability to access humanitarian goods.
- ◆ For more information about today's actions, including a full list of the individuals, entities, and vessels involved, please see the Department of the Treasury's **press release** .

United States Sanctions Five Iranian Entities and Watchlists IRGC Cyber Actors for

Interfering in Our Elections, October 23.

- ◆ The United States will not tolerate foreign interference in our elections. The whole of the U.S. government is using all the tools at our disposal to target those who attempt to interfere in our democratic process. Yesterday's action sanctions five Iranian entities pursuant to Executive Order 13848 for their efforts to spread disinformation and undermine our elections. We are also adding several cyber actors to our terrorist watch list and databases for their known association with the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), a U.S.-designated Foreign Terrorist Organization and Specially Designated Global Terrorist, which will effectively prevent those individuals and their families from traveling to the United States.
- ◆ For far too long, the Iranian regime has used its state propaganda machine to lie to the Iranian people and fan the flames of hatred against the United States. Iran has now deployed some of the same propaganda and media infrastructure in an attempt to undermine elections in the United States. The five entities designated – the IRGC, the IRGC-Qods Force (IRGC-QF), Bayan Rasaneh Gostar Institute, Iranian Islamic Radio and Television Union (IRTVU), and International Union of Virtual Media (IUVM) – have engaged directly or indirectly in, sponsored, concealed, or otherwise been complicit in, foreign interference in the 2020 U.S. presidential election, or are owned or controlled by entities engaged in such activity.
- ◆ Through covert media operations, including targeted disinformation efforts directed at U.S. voters, the Iranian regime has demonstrated its intent is to undermine American elections. Over the past few months, Bayan Gostar, a front company for IRGC-QF propaganda efforts, has actively planned influence operations involving U.S. elections. IRTVU and IUVM appear to be propaganda arms of the Iranian regime that assisted in these efforts.

The individuals added to the terrorist watchlist are known members of the IRGC's cyber operations unit. Those with the technical and educational skills required to carry out malicious cyber acts should take note; we will hold accountable those who join the IRGC and carry out malicious cyber activities. Talented Iranians should use their skills to promote peace and foster prosperity for their families, not assist the Islamic Republic in conducting its oppression at home and spreading terror abroad.

- ◆ For more information about yesterday's designations, please see the Department of the Treasury's [press release](#) .

Rewards for Justice – Up to \$10 Million Reward Offer for Information on Hizballah’s Financial Networks: Muhammad Qasir, Muhammad Qasim al-Bazzal, October 23.

- ◆ The U.S. Department of State’s Rewards for Justice (RFJ) program, which is administered by the Diplomatic Security Service, has a standing reward offer of up to \$10 million for information leading to the disruption of the financial mechanisms of the global terrorist organization Lebanese Hizballah.
- ◆ In that reward offer, RFJ is seeking information on the activities, networks, and associates of Hizballah that form a part of its financial support, which includes financiers and facilitators like Muhammad Qasir, Muhammad Qasim al-Bazzal, and Ali Qasir, the individuals the Department highlights today.
- ◆ Muhammad Qasir is a critical link between Hizballah and its primary funder, Iran. He has been a significant conduit for financial disbursements from Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps – Qods Force (IRGC-QF) to Hizballah. Qasir and other Hizballah officials oversee several front companies to hide the IRGC-QF’s role in selling crude oil, condensate, and gas oil, thus evading U.S. sanctions related to the IRGC. Qasir also directs the Hizballah unit that assists in the transfer of weapons, technology and other support from Syria to Lebanon.
- ◆ Muhammad Qasim al-Bazzal is a key financier for Hizballah and the IRGC-QF. He also is a co-founder of the Syria-based Talaqi Group and oversees other terrorist financing enterprises, such as Hokoul S.A.L. Offshore and Nagham Al Hayat. Since late 2018, al-Bazzal has used the Talaqi Group and his other companies to finance, coordinate and obscure various illicit IRGC-QF-linked oil shipments. Al-Bazzal also has overseen Talaqi Group’s partnership with Lebanon-based ALUMIX for aluminum shipments to Iran.
- ◆ Ali Qasir is the managing director of the Hizballah-linked front company Talaqi Group. Ali Qasir assigns maritime vessels to deliver shipments for the terrorist network based on the IRGC-QF’s guidance. Ali Qasir has overseen sales price negotiations and collaborated to cover expenses and to facilitate an Iranian oil shipment by the Adrian Darya 1 for the benefit of the IRGC-QF. Ali Qasir represents the Lebanon-based Hokoul company in negotiations over its supply of Iranian crude to Syria. Additionally, Ali Qasir has worked with others to use the Talaqi Group to facilitate the sale of tens of millions of dollars’ worth of steel.
- ◆ All three individuals have previously been designated by the U.S. Department of the Treasury as Specially Designated Global Terrorists. As a result of these designations, U.S.

persons are generally prohibited from engaging in any transactions with these individuals, and property and interests in property they have subject to U.S. jurisdiction are blocked.

- ◆ More information about these reward offers is located on the Rewards for Justice website at rewardsforjustice.net . We encourage anyone with information on Hizballah financial networks to text Rewards for Justice at 1-202-702-7843 via Signal, Telegram, or WhatsApp. All information will be kept strictly confidential.
- ◆ The Rewards for Justice Program is an effective law enforcement tool and is administered by the U.S. Department of State's Diplomatic Security Service. Since its inception in 1984, the program has paid in excess of \$150 million to more than 100 people who provided actionable information that helped bring terrorists to justice or prevented acts of international terrorism worldwide. Follow us on Twitter at https://twitter.com/rfj_usa .

United On the Anniversary of the Marine Barracks Terrorist Attack, October 23.

- ◆ On October 23, 1983, Hizballah carried out a suicide bombing targeting the United States Marine Barracks in Beirut, claiming the lives of 241 American service members who had been sent on a peacekeeping mission. The service members who lost their lives that day were true heroes, far from home in a troubled land, seeking to protect the innocent. As inscribed on the U.S. Embassy Beirut Memorial and the Beirut Memorial at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune in North Carolina, "They came in peace." We will never forget their sacrifice.
- ◆ This attack, and the many more that followed around the world, make clear Hizballah's commitment to violence and bloodshed and demonstrate its continuing disregard for the lives of the very people that it claims to protect. These terrorist acts have unmasked Iran, Hizballah's patron, as a rogue state willing to pursue its malevolent interests at all costs.
- ◆ On this solemn day, we honor the sacrifice of those brave Americans, and we renew our commitment to preventing Hizballah and its sponsor Iran from spilling more innocent blood in Lebanon or anywhere in the world. The United States will continue to target, disrupt, and dismantle Hizballah's financing and operational networks, and will continue to take all actions available to starve this terrorist entity of funds and support. We are grateful for the nations around the world that have designated or acted to ban the activities of Hizballah as a terrorist organization.

- ◆ Working together, we can ensure the tragedy that befell our brave Marines, Sailors, and Soldiers 37 years ago will never happen again.

United States Designates Senior Iranian Official in Iraq, October 22.

- ◆ For many years, the Iranian regime and its primary tool of regional destabilization, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Qods Force (IRGC-QF), have exploited Iraq to advance their own interests at the expense of the Iraqi people. The IRGC-QF's activities in Iraq continue to undermine Iraqi security, sovereignty, and prosperity.
- ◆ The United States is taking another step to protect the Iraqi people from malign IRGC-QF influence by designating Iraj Masjedi, a senior IRGC-QF general in Iraq who also serves as Iran's ambassador to Iraq. Masjedi has helped direct a variety of IRGC-QF activities in Iraq for many years, including training and providing support for Iraqi militia groups and facilitating large-scale financial transactions involving the IRGC-QF. Acting in a nefarious fashion for the IRGC-QF's benefit, Masjedi has exploited his diplomatic position to facilitate financial transfers in Iraq for the IRGC-QF, concealing the group's interest in the funds. Moreover, Masjedi has publicly acknowledged the IRGC-QF's role in training militia groups in Iraq and Syria. The United States is designating Masjedi pursuant to Executive Order 13224, as amended, for acting or purporting to act for or on behalf of the IRGC-QF, a Specially Designated Global Terrorist. The United States previously designated the IRGC, including the IRGC-QF, as Foreign Terrorist Organization as it supports, finances, and directs terrorist activities around the world.
- ◆ In his decades of service with the IRGC-QF, Masjedi has overseen a program of training and support to Iraqi militia groups, undermining the Iraqi government, increasing sectarianism, and targeting peaceful Iraqi citizen protesters with violence. He has directed or supported groups that are responsible for attacks against U.S. and coalition forces in Iraq. Today's action is another reminder that the United States will continue to counter the Iranian regime's malign behavior in the region.
- ◆ For more information about today's designation, please see the Department of the Treasury's **press release**.

The United States Imposes Sanctions on Chinese and Hong Kong Persons for Activities Related to Supporting the Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines, October 19.

- ◆ The international community has long recognized that the Iranian regime uses the Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines (IRISL) to transport proliferation-sensitive items intended for Iran's ballistic missile and military programs. A provision of UN Security Council Resolution 1929 mandates vigilance when doing business with IRISL and entities owned or controlled by IRISL under certain circumstances. This provision is now in effect due to the snapback of UN sanctions.
- ◆ The United States is sanctioning six entities and two individuals for conduct related to IRISL and its subsidiary, Hafez Darya Arya Shipping Company (HDASCO), pursuant to the Iran Freedom and Counter-Proliferation Act Section 1244 (IFCA 1244).
- ◆ On June 8, 2020, the State Department designated IRISL and IRISL's Shanghai-based subsidiary, E-Sail Shipping Company Ltd., pursuant to Executive Order 13382 for their proliferation-related conduct. The State Department warned that any stakeholder who continued doing business with IRISL or E-Sail was at risk of sanctions.
- ◆ Since the June 2020 designation of IRISL and E-Sail, Reach Holding Group (Shanghai) Co. Ltd. and Reach Shipping Lines arranged for port berths for IRISL vessels at Chinese ports. Reach Shipping Lines knowingly sold, supplied, or transferred four large container vessels to IRISL's subsidiary, HDASCO.
- ◆ Reach Holding Group (Shanghai) Company Ltd.; Reach Shipping Lines; Delight Shipping Co., Ltd.; Gracious Shipping Co. Ltd.; Noble Shipping Co. Ltd.; and Supreme Shipping Co. Ltd. are being designated pursuant to IFCA Section 1244(d)(1)(A) for having knowingly sold, supplied, or transferred to Iran significant goods or services used in connection with the shipping sector of Iran. Eric Chen (Chen Guoping), Chief Executive Officer of Reach Holding Group (Shanghai) Company Ltd., and Daniel Y. He (He Yi), President of Reach Holding Group (Shanghai) Company Ltd., are also being sanctioned pursuant to Iran Sanctions Act Section 6(a)(11) as a part of this action. Delight Shipping Co., Ltd.; Gracious Shipping Co. Ltd.; Noble Shipping Co. Ltd.; and Supreme Shipping Co. Ltd. each knowingly sold, supplied, or transferred a large container vessel to Iran to be used in connection with the shipping sector of Iran.
- ◆ In addition to the foregoing activities, since the June 2020 designation of IRISL and E-Sail pursuant to E.O.13382, Reach Holding Group (Shanghai) Company Ltd. and its subsidiary, Reach Shipping Lines, have provided services to IRISL, E-Sail, and HDASCO to help these Iranian shipping entities evade the consequences of U.S. sanctions. For instance, during this

time, Reach Holding Group (Shanghai) Company Ltd. has also taken actions and performed certain services for IRISL and its subsidiaries specifically designed to shield Chinese entities from U.S. sanctions; likewise, Reach Shipping Lines has been involved in activities, services, and the provision of goods to IRISL and its subsidiaries intended to conceal IRISL and its subsidiaries' activities from Chinese government, industry, and maritime stakeholders. Additionally, Reach Holding Group (Shanghai) Company Ltd. has also worked on behalf of IRISL and its subsidiaries to conceal these Iranian entities activities in the PRC including by lying to Chinese companies about the roles of IRISL and its subsidiaries in shipments and by falsifying documents and engaging in other deceptive practices so that Chinese government, industry, and maritime stakeholders would not know about IRISL and its subsidiaries activities in the PRC.

- ◆ We reiterate a warning to stakeholders worldwide: If you do business with IRISL, you risk U.S. sanctions.

The Destructive Record of Iranian Arms

- ◆ Please see slide show of **Iran's Dangerous and Reckless Conventional Arms Activities**.

NOTABLE TWEETS

@SecPompeo Oct 29

We condemn Iranian-backed Houthi attacks on Saudi Arabia that threaten regional security and endanger the lives of innocent civilians, including Americans. The Houthis must stop working with Iran, stop threatening regional security, & should work to help the people of Yemen.

@statedeptspox Oct 29

This week's indiscriminate attacks on Riyadh by Iranian-backed Houthis who are aided and abetted by Iran must stop. By working with the IRGC, the Houthis demonstrate they are not serious about achieving a peaceful political solution in Yemen.

@SecPompeo Oct 29

The Iranian regime pawns its oil to fund the destabilizing misadventures of the IRGC rather than improving conditions for its people. Today the U.S. is imposing major counterterrorism sanctions

improving conditions for its people. Today the U.S. is imposing major counterterrorism sanctions against Iranian energy institutions for providing support to the IRGC's Qods Force.

@statedeptspox Oct 23

We will not tolerate Iran's attempts to interfere in our elections. Yesterday, the United States designated five Iranian entities for plotting disinformation operations targeting our electoral process.

@statedeptspox Oct 23

The Iranian regime transferred Nasrin Sotoudeh to the notorious Qarchak Prison, known for gross violations of human rights, instead of providing her urgent medical care. Nasrin and many other prisoners of conscience inspire us all in the face of this disregard for human dignity.

@SecPompeo Oct 22

The IRGC-QF continues to exploit Iraq to pursue its interests at the expense of the Iraqis. Today, the U.S. designated a senior IRGC-QF official, Iraj Masjedi, who serves as Iran's ambassador to Iraq. He has directed the group's activities for years, threatening Iraqi stability.

@statedeptspox Oct 22

Today's designation of Iraj Masjedi is a stark reminder that the United States will continue to disrupt the IRGC-QF's attempts to threaten the security, sovereignty, and prosperity of Iraq and its people. <http://go.usa.gov/x7YYE>

@SecPompeo Oct 19

On October 15, an Iranian-flagged vessel in distress signaled to the USS Winston S. Churchill. The **@USNavy** delivered food, water, and supplies to the crew and helped them get on their way. That's what professionalism looks like – and it's a lesson for Iran.

@SecPompeo Oct 18

No nation that desires a peaceful Middle East should contemplate arms sales with Iran – every weapon the regime buys will be at the disposal of its radical ideology. We are prepared to use domestic authorities to sanction individuals or entities contributing to these arms sales.

TAGS

Arms Control and Nonproliferation Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations

Bureau of Counterterrorism Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor

Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs

Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs

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