

Treasury Sanctions High-Ranking Syrians, Identifies Government-Controlled Businesses

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(Archived Content)

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of the Treasury today announced the designation of two high-ranking Syrians pursuant to Executive Order (E.O.) 13573 and identified the Military Housing Establishment and Real Estate Bank as entities owned or controlled by the Government of Syria pursuant to E.O. 13582, as the Government of Syria continues to employ brutal tactics against peaceful protestors across the country.

Today's action, along with recent measures announced by the Arab League, Turkey and the EU, demonstrate a commitment by the United States and its partners to work in close coordination to bring pressure to bear on the Assad regime, its agencies and instrumentalities by denying them access to the U.S. and international financial system.

“It has never been more critical to escalate pressure on the Syrian government to immediately cease all violence against its own people and isolate the regime from the international financial system,” said Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence David S. Cohen. “We will continue to work closely with our partners in Europe and around the world to hasten a transition to democracy in Syria.”

As a result of today's action, U.S. persons are generally prohibited from engaging in transactions with Muhammad Makhluf and Aus Aslan and any assets they might have under U.S. jurisdiction are blocked. In addition, U.S. persons are generally prohibited from engaging in transactions with the Military Housing Establishment and Real Estate Bank pursuant to E.O. 13582, which blocks all property and interests in property within U.S. jurisdiction of the Government of Syria. Today's identifications are intended to aid U.S. persons and others in meeting their obligations under E.O. 13582.

Muhammad Makhluf and Aus Aslan

Designated for materially assisting, sponsoring, or providing financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services in support of Bashar Al-Assad was Muhammad Makhlef, the maternal uncle of Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad and father of Rami Makhlef. Muhammad Makhlef has served as one of President Bashar Al-Assad's money men whom Assad used to make and move money, and has long served as a financial advisor to the Assad family. Makhlef ensured that assets in nearly all sectors were controlled by businessmen who were willing to act as proxies for the Assad regime in return for profits. In addition, he served as President Assad's primary economic advisor and final decision maker on capital allocation decisions for Syrian regime investments in private banks in Syria.

Designated as a Syrian government official is Aus Aslan, a general in the Syrian military and commander within Syria's 4th Armored Division, which is a key regime protection unit.

Military Housing Establishment and Real Estate Bank

The Military Housing Establishment is a public works company, controlled by the Syrian Ministry of Defense, which provides funding to the regime. Real Estate Bank, which is Syria's second largest bank, is owned by the Syrian government's Public Debt Fund – the institution responsible for administering the Government of Syria's borrowings.

Today's action was taken pursuant to E.O. 13582, which targets all property and interests in property of the Government of Syria. The Military Housing Establishment and Real Estate Bank were also designated by the European Union on June 23, 2011 and September 3, 2011, respectively.

Identifying Information:

Individual: Muhammad Makhlef

AKA: Mohammed Makhlef

DOB: October 19, 1932

POB: Latakia, Syria

Individual: Aus Aslan

DOB: 1959 or 1960

Entity: Military Housing Establishment

Location: Mili House, Adra Road, Damascus, Syria

Entity: Real Estate Bank

AKA: Real-Estate Bank

Location: P.O. Box 2337, Insurance Bldg., Youssef Alazma Square, Damascus, Syria

Alt. Location: General Insurance Company Building, Youssef Al Azmeh Square, P.O. Box 2337, Damascus, Syria

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