

Treasury Designates Syrian Entity, Others Involved in Arms and Communications Procurement Networks and Identifies Blocked Iranian Aircraft

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(Archived Content)

Treasury Actions Target Syria's Army Supply Bureau, Belarus-based Arms Company, and more than 100 Iranian Aircraft

State Department also Targets the Director of Syria's Scientific Studies Research Center

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of the Treasury today imposed sanctions against entities that support the Assad regime's efforts to procure arms and communications equipment that contribute to the regime's violence against the Syrian people.

Syria's Army Supply Bureau and Belarus-based Belvneshpromservice are being designated today pursuant to Executive Order (E.O.) 13382, which targets the assets of proliferators of weapons of mass destruction and their supporters. The Department of the Treasury also is identifying the Army Supply Bureau as being part of the Government of Syria pursuant to E.O. 13582. The U.S. Department of State today is also designating the Director of Syria's Scientific Studies Research Center (SSRC), Amr Armanazi, under E.O. 13382.

In addition to these actions, the Treasury Department is identifying 117 aircraft operated by Iran Air, Mahan Air or Yas Air. Iran Air was previously designated pursuant to E.O. 13382 for providing support to the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC). Mahan Air and Yas Air were designated pursuant to E.O. 13224 for providing support to or acting for or on behalf of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps-Qods Force (IRGC-QF). Today's designations will make it easier for interested parties to keep track of this blocked property, and more difficult for Iran to use deceptive practices to try to evade sanctions.

"Today's actions seek to disrupt the flow of weapons and communications equipment to the Syrian regime and help prevent their use against the Syrian people," said Treasury Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence David S. Cohen. "The identification of Iranian aircraft also further highlights Iran's ongoing effort to support the Assad regime's WMD programs and crackdown against the Syrian people."

Syria's Army Supply Bureau

Syria's Army Supply Bureau, an element of the Syrian Ministry of Defense involved in conventional military and missile-related procurement, is being identified today as an entity belonging to the Government of Syria as well as designated under E.O. 13382 for

providing support for Iran's Ministry of Defense and Armed Forces Logistics (MODAFL) subsidiary Iran Electronics Industries (IEI). The Army Supply Bureau has standing contracts with IEI. In March 2012, IEI prepared to send two large shipments of communications equipment, including VHF/UHF jammers, to Syria's Army Supply Bureau. These shipments were valued at more than \$2 million and financed by the Central Bank of Syria. In August 2012, international press reported on the suspected use of jamming equipment by the Syrian government against Syrian anti-government fighters at an army checkpoint at the entrance to Aleppo.

Syria's Army Supply Bureau was sanctioned by the U.S. Department of State, pursuant to the Iran, North Korea, and Syria Nonproliferation Act (INKSNA), in December 2011.

Belvneshpromservice (BVPS)

Belarus state-owned Belvneshpromservice (BVPS) is being designated today for providing services to Syria's Army Supply Bureau. In March 2012, Syria's Army Supply Bureau prepared to receive possible fuses for general purpose aerial bombs from BVPS. Aerial bombs were used by the Syrian military as recently as July 2012, in an aerial bombardment of Aleppo as part of a coordinated assault by government forces to intimidate opposition forces.

Belarus-based BVPS was sanctioned by the U.S. Department of State, pursuant to INKSNA in December 2011.

Director of Syria's Scientific Studies Research Center (SSRC) Amr Armanazi

The State Department today is designating SSRC Director Amr Armanazi pursuant to E.O. 13382. The SSRC is the Syrian government agency responsible for developing and producing non-conventional weapons and the missiles to deliver them. The SSRC also has a public civilian research function; however, its activities focus on the development of biological weapons, chemical weapons, and missiles. During his tenure, Armanazi oversaw a facility that was involved in the production of sarin nerve agent.

The SSRC was listed in the Annex to E.O. 13382 in June 2005 for its ties to Syria's WMD proliferation activities. The SSRC has also been sanctioned under INKSNA since May 23, 2011.

Identified Aircraft Operated by Iran Air, Mahan Air, and Yas Air

The Treasury Department is also identifying as blocked property 117 aircraft operated by Iran Air, Mahan Air, and Yas Air. In the summer of 2012, Iran used Iran Air and Mahan Air flights between Tehran and Damascus to send military and crowd control equipment

to the Syrian regime. This activity was coordinated with Hizballah, which in mid-August was designated pursuant to E.O. 13582 for providing support to the Government of Syria.

Iran has used deceptive measures when shipping such items to Syria, by using a combination of passenger and cargo flights and declaring illicit cargo as humanitarian and other licit goods. In the case of Yas Air, the Iranian cargo airline has moved IRGC-QF personnel and weapons under the cover of humanitarian aid. For example, a Turkish inspection in March 2011 of a Yas Air flight bound for Syria - which listed “auto spare parts” on its cargo manifest - found weapons including Kalashnikov AK-47 assault rifles, machine guns, nearly 8,000 rounds of ammunition, as well as an assortment of mortar shells.

Iran Air was designated pursuant to E.O. 13382 on June 23, 2011 for providing support and services to Iran's MODAFL, Iran's Aerospace Industries Organization (AIO), and the IRGC, which are tied to Iran's ballistic missile program. On numerous occasions since 2000, Iran Air has shipped military-related equipment on behalf of MODAFL and IRGC.

Iran Air in Damascus, Syria



Mahan Air was designated pursuant to E.O. 13224 on October 12, 2011 for providing financial, material, and technological support to the IRGC-QF. Based in Tehran, Mahan Air has provided transportation, funds transfers and personnel travel services to the IRGC-QF, including IRGC-QF personnel flown to and from Iran and Syria for military training.

Mahan Air in Damascus, Syria

Yas Air was designated pursuant to E.O. 13224 on March 27, 2012. Based in Tehran, Yas Air is an



Iranian cargo airline that acts for or on behalf of the IRGC-QF to transport illicit cargo – including weapons – to Iran’s clients in the Levant. Yas Air has moved IRGC-QF personnel and weapons under the cover of humanitarian aid.

The recently enacted Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012 (ITRSHRA) provides significant sanctions for foreign financial institutions that knowingly facilitate transactions or provide significant financial services to persons whose property or interests in property are blocked in connection with Iran’s support for the proliferation of WMD or for international terrorism, including prohibitions or the imposition of strict conditions on the opening or maintaining in the United States of correspondent accounts or payable-through accounts. As a result of ITRSHRA, foreign financial institutions that knowingly engage in significant transactions with Syria’s Army Supply Bureau, BVPS, Iran Air, Mahan Air, or Yas Air, including any of 117 aircraft operated by any of these airlines, risk losing access to the U.S. banking system.

Today's designations and identifications build upon a number of actions that the U.S. government has taken to disrupt the Assad regime's procurement network. In addition, today's actions support the United States Government's effort over the past 18 months against the Syrian regime for its human rights abuses and repression of the Syrian people.

Identifying Information

Entity: Army Supply Bureau

Location: P.O. Box 3361, Damascus, Syria

Entity: Belvneshpromserivice

Location: 2 Kazinets Street, 220099 Minsk, Republic of Belarus

Individual: Amr Armanazi

AKA: Amr Muhammad Najib Al-Armanazi

AKA: Amr Najib Armanazi

DOB: 07 FEB 1944

Identifying information for the aircraft:

The identifying information as for the aircraft mentioned in this release (as well as other identifying information already mentioned above) can be found at the following

URL: www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/OFAC-Enforcement/Pages/20120919.aspx

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