



[United States Issues Fresh Sanctions Against Syrian Regime Officials and Entities](#)

This week, the United States imposed new sanctions against various Syrian regime officials and entities including its central bank and Asma al-Assad, the wife of autocrat Bashar al-Assad. Overall, the U.S. Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) added two individuals, nine business entities, and the Central Bank of Syria to the Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List. The fresh measures were introduced almost exactly one year after outgoing President Trump signed the Caesar Act into law back in December of 2019. The aforementioned legislation allowed for punitive economic sanctions to be implemented against individuals and businesses who provide funding or assistance to the Syrian regime. The latest round of sanctions also comes close to the five-year anniversary of the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopting Resolution 2254, which endorsed a road map for the peace process in Syria. The conflict in Syria has been ongoing since 2011, when the Assad regime brutally cracked down on pro-democracy protesters, and has seen hundreds of thousands killed and millions more displaced.

The most recent actions are part of a continued effort to cut off funds for the Assad government and its allies, and to force the regime back into negotiations aimed at ending the Syrian conflict. As such, when announcing the measures on Tuesday, the U.S. Treasury Department stated that its purpose was to discourage any future investment in government-controlled areas of Syria in order to compel the regime to end the violence and abide by U.N. Security Council Resolution 2254. This week's sanctions freeze any U.S. assets of those who were blacklisted and also prohibits Americans from dealing with them. Additionally, any non-Americans that take part in certain transactions with the targeted individuals and entities can also be subject to being sanctioned themselves as well.

The full list of those sanctioned includes Asma al-Assad, the wife of Bashar al-Assad. Both she and several of her immediate family members were blacklisted for engaging in attempts to consolidate economic and political power for the regime. Asma al-Assad has also been accused of using her charities and civil society organizations as a means of funneling funds for the government's ruthless war efforts. Two other key figures included in the sanction list were Lina Mohammed Nazir al-Kinayeh and her husband Mohammed Hammam Mohammed Adnan Masouti. Lina has been one of al-Assad's key advisers for over a decade, while Mohammed is a member of parliament. In addition to being sanctioned individually, several of the couple's businesses were also included on the blacklist. Out of the nine companies that were added to the Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List by OFAC, four of those entities are either owned or controlled by the couple.

Furthermore, General Kifah Moulhem, commander of Syria's Military Intelligence organization, was sanctioned as well. In his role with Assad's military forces, Moulhem is believed to have committed a range of crimes against the Syrian people and has been described by U.S. State Department officials as "one of the architects of the Syrian people's suffering." Finally, OFAC also added the Central Bank of Syria to the Special Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List. The bank is directly linked with the regime and acts as the fiscal and depository agent of the government. Therefore, the United States views it as a critical entity that it is keen to hamper in order to weaken the Syrian regime as a whole.