

Press Releases: State Department Terrorist Designations of Ahmad Alkhalid and Abu Yahya al-Iraqi

Media Note
Office of the Spokesperson

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The Department of State has designated two ISIS leaders – Ahmad Alkhalid and Abu Yahya al-Iraqi – as Specially Designated Global Terrorists (SDGTs) under Section 1(b) of Executive Order (E.O.) 13224. E.O. 13224 imposes strict sanctions on foreign persons determined to have committed, or pose a significant risk of committing, acts of terrorism that threaten the security of U.S. nationals or the national security, foreign policy, or economy of the United States. These designations seek to deny Alkhalid and al-Iraqi the resources they need to plan and carry out further terrorist attacks. Among other consequences, all of Alkhalid's and al-Iraqi's property and interests in property subject to U.S. jurisdiction are blocked, and U.S. persons are generally prohibited from engaging in any transactions with them.

Ahmad Alkhalid is an ISIS bomb-maker responsible for the deaths of numerous civilians in Europe. He is the explosives chief of the terrorist cell that carried out the November 2015, attacks in Paris and the March 2016, attacks in Brussels. A Syrian national, Alkhalid traveled to Europe, where he helped plan the Paris attacks and manufacture the explosive belts used in that plot, which killed and injured hundreds of people, including a number of Americans. Following his return to Syria shortly before the attacks in Paris, Alkhalid continued to guide ISIS operatives in Europe on making the bombs used in the March 2016, Brussels attacks. Alkhalid is wanted internationally and a European warrant for his arrest has been issued.

Abu Yahya al-Iraqi, also known as Iyad Hamed Mahl al-Jumaily, is a senior ISIS figure who reports to ISIS leader and designated SDGT Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. Al-Iraqi has reportedly played a key role in security for al-Baghdadi and oversees ISIS security in Iraq and Syria. ISIS has killed hundreds of Iraqi civilians and forced residents to serve as human shields as it has continued to suffer territorial losses throughout 2016 and 2017. ISIS has demonstrated its continuing ability to conduct massive terrorist attacks with high civilian death tolls.

Today's action notifies the U.S. public and the international community that Alkhald and al-Iraqi have committed or pose a significant risk of committing acts of terrorism. Terrorism designations expose and isolate organizations and individuals, and deny them access to the U.S. financial system. Moreover, designations can assist the law enforcement activities of U.S. agencies and other governments.

These designations are part of a larger comprehensive plan to defeat ISIS that, in coordination with the 73-member Global Coalition, has made significant progress toward this goal. This whole-of-government effort is destroying ISIS in its safe havens, denying its ability to recruit foreign terrorist fighters, stifling its financial resources, countering the false propaganda it disseminates over the internet and social media, and helping to stabilize liberated areas in Iraq and Syria so the displaced can return to their homes and begin to rebuild their lives.

In addition to designating ISIS as a Foreign Terrorist Organization and a Specially Designated Global Terrorist under E.O. 13224, the Department of State has also designated over 30 ISIS leaders and operatives under E.O. 13224, and will continue to target the group to deny it access to the U.S. financial system. A list of State Department-designated FTOs and SDGTs is available here: <https://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/other/des/index.htm>.

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