

Press Releases: State Department Terrorist Designations of ISIS in the Greater Sahara (ISIS-GS) and Adnan Abu Walid al-Sahrawi

Media Note
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
May 16, 2018

The Department of State has designated ISIS in the Greater Sahara – also known as ISIS-GS – as a Foreign Terrorist Organization under section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act. The Department has also designated ISIS-GS and its leader, Adnan Abu Walid al-Sahrawi, as Specially Designated Global Terrorists (SDGTs) under section 1(b) of Executive Order (E.O.) 13224.

As a result of these designations, U.S. persons are generally prohibited from engaging in any transactions with ISIS-GS or al-Sahrawi. Their property and interests in property subject to U.S. jurisdiction are blocked. In addition, it is a crime to knowingly provide, or attempt or conspire to provide, material support or resources to the organization.

ISIS-GS emerged when Adnan Abu Walid al-Sahrawi and his followers split from Al-Mourabitoun, an al-Qa'ida splinter group and U.S.-designated FTO and SDGT. Al-Sahrawi first pledged allegiance to ISIS in May 2015, and in October 2016, ISIS acknowledged it received a pledge of allegiance from the group under al-Sahrawi. ISIS-GS is primarily based in Mali operating along the Mali-Niger border and has claimed responsibility for several attacks under al-Sahrawi's leadership, including the October 4, 2017 attack on a joint U.S.-Nigerien patrol in the region of Tongo Tongo, Niger, which killed four U.S. soldiers and five Nigerien soldiers.

Today's designations notify the U.S. public and the international community that this group is a terrorist organization and this individual has committed or poses a significant risk of committing acts of terrorism. Terrorist designations expose and isolate entities 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 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.

A list of State Department-designated FTOs and SDGTs is available here:

<http://www.state.gov/j/ct/list/index.htm>.

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