

# Bush bans Syrians / Lebanese that Threaten Lebanon's Sovereignty and Democracy

Contributed by Administrator  
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"This is a tool the United States has to demonstrate to Syria our desire for them to stop meddling in Lebanon &mdash; to demonstrate to Syria and those who want to destabilize the democratically elected government in Lebanon that we will continue to increase pressure until they suspend their activities," said National Security Council spokesman Gordon Johndroe.

KENNEBUNKPORT, Maine, June 29 (Reuters) - President George W. Bush on Friday banned Syrian and Lebanese officials whom Washington accuses of undermining the Lebanese government from entering the United States, the White House said.

The list of Syrian officials the United States considers to have meddled in Lebanon includes Assef Shawkat, Syria's director of military intelligence, Hisham Ikhtiyar, adviser to President Bashar al-Assad, and Brig. Gen. Jama'a Jama'a.

The U.S. move followed repeated calls for Damascus to stop fomenting instability in Lebanon, where Washington is trying to shore up the elected government of embattled Prime Minister Fouad Siniora.

Bush has sought to isolate Syria diplomatically. He accuses Damascus of sponsoring terrorism, not doing enough to prevent foreign fighters from crossing into Iraq and doing little to rein in Hamas and Hezbollah militants opposed to Israel.

Damascus, which withdrew its forces from Lebanon in 2005 after a 29-year military presence, has denied the accusations.

"This is a tool the United States has to demonstrate to Syria our desire for them to stop meddling in Lebanon," White House National Security Council spokesman Gordon Johndroe told reporters about the travel ban.

He said the decision had been in the works for a while and was prompted by events such as the assassination this month of Lebanese legislator Walid Eido, a member in the majority anti-Syrian parliamentary bloc.

Others listed as subject to the travel ban included Rustum Ghazali, identified as another top Syrian intelligence official, plus five former Lebanese Cabinet ministers and a former lawmaker.

The United States froze Ikhtiyar and Jama'a's U.S. assets last year, saying they had played a key role in what it said was Damascus's policies to support terrorism and destabilize Lebanon.

The United States backed a recent U.N. Security Council resolution setting up an international tribunal to try suspects in the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik al-Hariri, who was killed in 2005. Syria has been accused of complicity, a charge it denies.

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## Syrians Banned Include

Assef Shawkat  
Rustum Ghazali  
Jama'a Jama'a  
Hisham Ikhtiyar

## Lebanese Banned Include

Wi'am Wahhab  
Nassar Qandil  
Assam Qanso  
Assad Hardan  
Abdulahim Mrad  
Michel Samaha

White House list of leading figures banned from entry to U.S.

A list provided by the White House named the following individuals who could be subject to the ban, but those who could be subject to the ban were not limited to this list:

Assaf Shawkat, director of Syrian military intelligence. Syrian President Bashar Assad's brother-in-law.

Hisham Ikhtiyar, adviser to Assad.

Jama'a Jama'a, top Syrian military intelligence official.

Rustum Ghazale, top Syrian military intelligence official. Ghazale was Syrian intelligence chief in Lebanon when former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri was killed and Syria was forced to withdraw its army from the neighboring country. In Syria, he was put in charge of the Damascus countryside, a region that includes the border with Lebanon. He was one of the security officials interviewed by U.N. investigators in the Hariri bombing.

Abdulrahim Murad, former Lebanese minister of defense. Murad is a Sunni Arab nationalist politician who is a staunch supporter of Syria.

Assad Hardan, former Lebanese minister of labor. Hardan is a sitting member of parliament, a pro-Syrian from the Syrian Social Nationalist Party.

Assam Qanso, former Lebanese minister of labor. A Shiite, he is a former chief of the Lebanon chapter of Syria's Baath Party.

Michel Samaha, former Lebanese minister of information. Samaha is a Christian pro-Syrian politician.

Nasser Qandil, former Lebanese member of parliament. A Shiite, he was questioned by U.N. investigators for a possible link to the Hariri assassination.

Wi'am Wahhab, former Lebanese minister of environment. A member of the Druse community, he leads a pro-Syrian opposition group that often engaged in troubles with opponents.

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The Whitehouse Press Release

For Immediate Release  
Office of the Press Secretary  
June 29, 2007

Suspension of Entry as Immigrants and Nonimmigrants of Persons Responsible for Policies and Actions That Threaten Lebanon's Sovereignty and Democracy  
A Proclamation by the President of the United States of America

In order to foster democratic institutions in Lebanon, to help the Lebanese people preserve their sovereignty and achieve their aspirations for democracy and regional stability, and to end the sponsorship of terrorism in Lebanon, it is in the interest of the United States to restrict the international travel, and to suspend the entry into the United States, as immigrants or nonimmigrants, of aliens who deliberately undermine or harm Lebanon's sovereignty, its legitimate government, or its democratic institutions, contribute to the breakdown in the rule of law in Lebanon, or benefit from policies or actions that do so, including through the sponsorship of terrorism, politically motivated violence and intimidation, or the reassertion of Syrian control in Lebanon.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, by the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, including section 212(f) of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, 8 U.S.C. 1182(f), and section 301 of title 3, United States Code, hereby find that the unrestricted immigrant and nonimmigrant entry into the United States of persons described in section 1 of this proclamation would, except as provided for in sections 2 and 3 of this proclamation, be detrimental to the interests of the United States.

I therefore hereby proclaim that:

Section 1. The entry into the United States, as immigrants or nonimmigrants, of the following aliens is hereby suspended:

(a) Lebanese government officials, former Lebanese government officials, and private persons who deliberately undermine or harm Lebanon's sovereignty, its legitimate government, or its democratic institutions, or contribute to the breakdown in the rule of law in Lebanon, including through the sponsorship of terrorism, politically motivated violence or intimidation, or the reassertion of Syrian control in Lebanon;

(b) Syrian government officials, former Syrian government officials, and persons who meet the criteria for designation under section 3(a)(i) or (ii) of Executive Order 13338 of May 11, 2004, who deliberately undermine or harm Lebanon's sovereignty, its legitimate government, or its democratic institutions, or contribute to the breakdown in the rule of law in Lebanon, including through the sponsorship of terrorism, politically motivated violence or intimidation, or the reassertion of Syrian control in Lebanon;

(c) Persons in Lebanon who act on behalf of, or actively promote the interests of, Syrian government officials by deliberately undermining or harming Lebanon's sovereignty, its legitimate government, or its democratic institutions, or contribute to the breakdown in the rule of law in Lebanon, including through the sponsorship of terrorism, politically motivated violence or intimidation, or the reassertion of Syrian control in Lebanon;

(d) Persons who, through their business dealings with any of the persons described in subsection (a), (b), or (c) of this section, derive significant financial benefit from, or materially support, policies or actions that deliberately undermine or harm Lebanon's sovereignty, its legitimate government, or its democratic institutions, or contribute to the breakdown in the rule of law in Lebanon, including through the sponsorship of terrorism, politically motivated violence or intimidation, or the reassertion of Syrian control in Lebanon; and

(e) The spouses and dependent children of persons described in subsections (a), (b), (c), and (d) of this section.

Sec. 2. Section 1 of this proclamation shall not apply with respect to any person otherwise covered by section 1 where entry of such person would not be contrary to the interests of the United States.

Sec. 3. Persons covered by section 1 or 2 of this proclamation shall be identified by the Secretary of State or the Secretary's designee, in his or her sole discretion, pursuant to such procedures as the Secretary may establish under section 5 of this proclamation.

Sec. 4. Nothing in this proclamation shall be construed to derogate from U.S. Government obligations under applicable international agreements.

Sec. 5. The Secretary of State shall have responsibility for implementing this proclamation pursuant to such procedures as the Secretary, in the Secretary's sole discretion, may establish.

Sec. 6. This proclamation is effective immediately. It shall remain in effect until such time as the Secretary of State determines that it is no longer necessary and should be terminated, either in whole or in part. Any such determination by the Secretary of State shall be published in the Federal Register.

Sec. 7. This proclamation is not intended to, and does not, create any right, benefit, or privilege, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity, by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies, instrumentalities, or entities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty eighth day of June, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

GEORGE W. BUSH