

# Treasury Designates Individuals Furthering Syrian Regime's Efforts to Undermine Lebanese Democracy

Contributed by Treasury Dept, AP, CRNews  
Monday, 05 November 2007  
Last Updated Tuesday, 06 November 2007

The U.S. Department of the Treasury today designated four individuals affiliated with the Syrian regime's efforts to reassert Syrian control over the Lebanese political system.

"Syria has used all means at its disposal &ndash; from bribery to intimidation to violence &ndash; to undermine the legitimate political process in Lebanon," said Stuart Levey, Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence. "Today's action exposes four individuals involved in such activities and serves as a warning to others who would do likewise."

Syrian troops formally withdrew from Lebanon in April 2005 after a 29-year military presence. The Syrian regime is working through Lebanese proxies to exert control over the Lebanese political system; to weaken the majority pro-government March 14 Coalition; and to undermine Lebanese sovereignty and security. The regime has used a range of tools to further these objectives, including bribing politicians, intimidation, interference in the selection of a new president, support for violence, and providing arms to militias and terrorist groups. The four individuals designated today have worked to undermine Lebanese sovereignty and support the Syrian regime's efforts to interfere in Lebanon's internal affairs.

Syrian intelligence has assisted Hizballah and other oppositionists in Lebanon to orchestrate protests and demonstrations demanding the resignation of Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora's cabinet, which it deems illegitimate. The protests began in December 2006 in Beirut and continue today. Additionally, the Syrian regime has provided arms to illicit Lebanese militias and Palestinian terrorist groups. In addition, the Syrian regime is believed to be intimidating Lebanese who call for the establishment of an international tribunal to try the killers of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri.

Assaad Halim Hardan, Wi'am Wahhab and Hafiz Makhlef were designated pursuant to Executive Order (E.O.) 13441, signed by President George W. Bush on August 1, 2007. E.O. 13441 blocks the property of persons undermining the sovereignty of Lebanon or its democratic processes and institutions.

Muhammad Nasif Khayrbik was designated pursuant to E.O. 13338, which is aimed at individuals and entities contributing to the Government of Syria's problematic behavior. President Bush signed E.O. 13338 on May 11, 2004 in response to the Syrian government's continued support of international terrorism, sustained occupation of Lebanon, pursuit of weapons of mass destruction and missile programs, and undermining of U.S. and international efforts in Iraq.

Today's designations freeze any assets the designees may have located in the United States, and prohibit U.S. persons from engaging in transactions with these individuals.

## Identifying Information

Assaad Halim Hardan  
AKAs: Assad Hardan  
As'ad Hardan  
DOB: July 31, 1951  
POB: Rashayya al-Fakhar, Lebanon  
Profession: Member of Parliament, Lebanon  
Political Affiliation: Chief of the Syrian Socialist Nationalist Party (SSNP) Central  
Political Bureau

Assaad Hardan is a senior official in the SSNP. During 2007, the SSNP received arms and military training from Syria and Hizballah. Hardan works with senior Syrian officials to significantly influence Lebanese politics in furtherance of Syria's efforts to undermine Lebanese sovereignty.

Wi'am Wahhab  
AKAs: Wi'am Wihab  
Wiam Wahhab  
Wiyam Wihab  
Wiyam Wahab  
DOB: 1964

POB: Al-Jahiliya, Shouf Mountains, Lebanon

Wi'am Wahhab, a former member of the Lebanese Parliament, works with senior Syrian officials to significantly influence Lebanese politics in furtherance of Syria's efforts to undermine Lebanese sovereignty.

Hafiz Makhluuf  
 AKA: Hafez Makhoulouf  
 Position: General Intelligence Directorate senior official  
 Military Rank: Colonel  
 DOB: Circa 1975  
 POB: Damascus, Syria

Colonel Hafiz Makhluuf, a senior official in the Syrian General Intelligence Directorate, has supported the reassertion of Syrian control or otherwise contributed to Syrian interference in Lebanon.

Makhluuf is a maternal cousin to Syrian President Bashar al-Asad. He is also the brother of Rami Makhluuf, Syria's leading businessman, who has been the subject of persistent allegations of corruption and cronyism.

Muhammad Nasif Khayrbik  
 AKAs: Muhammad Nasif Khayr-Bayk  
 Mohammed Nassif Khairbek  
 Mohammad Nasif Kheirbek  
 Address: Damascus, Syria  
 Position: Deputy Vice President for Security Affairs  
 Military Rank: Major General  
 DOB: April 5, 1937

As of early 2007, Khayrbik was one of several key advisors to Syrian President Bashar al-Asad. In early 2006, Khayrbik was named Deputy Vice President for Security Affairs. In this position, Khayrbik has played a central role in Syria's continuing policy of destabilizing Lebanon and Syria's relationship with known designated terrorist organizations, including Hizballah. In early 2006, Khayrbik coordinated Syrian and Hizballah positions during regular meetings with Hassan Nasrallah, the Secretary General of the Lebanese Hizballah.

Khayrbik has long served the Syrian regime, having served as a close advisor to former President Hafiz al-Asad. In mid-1999, President Hafiz al-Asad appointed Khayrbik as the deputy director of the Syrian General Intelligence Directorate (GID), a position he served in until February 2006.

#### -----

#### U.S. Imposes Sanctions on Lebanese, Syrians for 'Undermining' Lebanon

In a bid to combat Syrian influence over Lebanon, the U.S. announced economic sanctions against four people -- two Lebanese and two Syrians, including a cousin of Syrian President Bashar Assad.

The Treasury Department announced that it was freezing any assets the four individuals might have in U.S. financial institutions. The action also prohibits any U.S. citizen from engaging in transactions with the four.

"Syria has used all means at its disposal -- from bribery to intimidation to violence -- to undermine the legitimate political process in Lebanon," Treasury Undersecretary Stuart Levey said in announcing the sanctions.

"Today's action exposes four individuals involved in such activities and serves as a warning to others who would do likewise."

They were identified by the Treasury as Assaad Halim Hardan, a member of the Lebanese parliament and leader of the Syrian Social National Party central political bureau, and Wiam Wahhab, a former cabinet minister. Treasury said both men work with senior Syrian officials to undermine Lebanese sovereignty.

The Treasury Department also sanctioned Hafiz Makhoulouf, a colonel and senior official in the Syrian General Intelligence Directorate and a cousin of Assad, and Mohammed Nassif Khayrbik, identified as a close adviser to Assad.

Syrian troops formally withdrew from Lebanon in April 2005 after a 29-year military presence.

Treasury said in its announcement that the Syrian government is working through Lebanese proxies to exert control over the Lebanese political system and weaken the pro-government ruling coalition in Lebanon.

The Treasury statement said Syria's efforts include bribing politicians, intimidation, support for violence and providing arms to militias and terrorist groups.

The sanctions announced Monday were imposed under two executive orders signed by U.S.President George Bush in May 2004 and this past August.(AP)

Beirut, 06 Nov 07, 08:14

<http://www.naharnet.com/domino/tn/NewsDesk.nsf/getstory?openform&91FC1D0194267C4BC225738A006C040B>

-----