

# U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

## Press Center

### Treasury Designates Colombian Narcotics Trafficker

2/19/2014

*Action Targets Individuals and Entities Tied to the FARC and Mexican Cartels*

**WASHINGTON** – The U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) today designated Colombian national Fernain Rodriguez Vasquez as a significant foreign narcotics trafficker under the Foreign Narcotics Kingpin Designation Act (Kingpin Act). OFAC also designated seven other individuals and five entities in Colombia who acted for or on behalf of Rodriguez Vasquez and provided support to his narcotics trafficking activities, often in collaboration with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and Mexico's Los Zetas and Sinaloa drug cartels.

"Drug trafficker Fernain Rodriguez Vasquez and his network have moved massive quantities of drugs for some of the most violent drug trafficking organizations in the Western Hemisphere, including the FARC, Los Zetas, and the Sinaloa cartel," said OFAC Director Adam J. Szubin. "These sanctions will expose Rodriguez Vasquez's illicit network of agents and front companies and exclude them from the legitimate financial system."

Rodriguez Vasquez is the leader of an international drug trafficking and money laundering organization based in Colombia that exported nearly 100 tons of cocaine per year. Rodriguez Vasquez managed the daily narcotics trafficking operations of Lebanese-Colombian national Jorge Fadlallah Cheaitelly, who was previously designated on December 29, 2011 under the Kingpin Act. Also designated today are important drug trafficking and money laundering associates of Rodriguez Vasquez – Segundo Alberto Villota Segura, Aldemar Villota Segura, Luis Ramiro Quintero Caballero, Jonh Eduarth Monje Alvarado, Luis Eduardo Cuellar Castro, Hermes Alirio Casanova Ordonez, and Romey Jose Sabagh-Cajeli, all of whom were indicted in the Eastern District of Texas on February 14, 2013 on drug trafficking offenses.

"OFAC's decision to designate Fernain Rodriguez Vasquez as a significant foreign narcotics trafficker under the Kingpin Act is gratifying on at least two levels," said United States Attorney John M. Bales. "It is always our objective to deliver a maximum blow to those narcotics traffickers who really do control the volume and direction of narcotics trafficking into the United States and OFAC's designation emphatically underscores that strategy. More importantly, OFAC's decision will bring powerful financial weapons to bear on this organization that will hopefully accelerate its ultimate demise."

"Today's actions represent a significant step in the targeting of these high level drug traffickers and are reflective of the strong relationship between all of the federal partners dedicated to stopping the importation of dangerous drugs into our country," said Daniel R. Salter, Special Agent In Charge of the Dallas Field Division at the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA).

As a result of the Eastern District of Texas indictment and arrest warrants, Colombian authorities arrested eleven individuals in August 2013, including Rodriguez Vasquez, Monje Alvarado, Cuellar Castro, Sabagh-Cajeli, Quintero Caballero and Villota Segura, all of whom were involved in drug trafficking and money laundering activities, including overseeing the production, transportation, and sale of cocaine to customers in Colombia, Central America, and North America. Those arrested were also known to collaborate with the FARC and Mexico's Los Zetas and Sinaloa cartels, all designated drug trafficking entities. Specifically, Rodriguez Vasquez utilized the FARC to protect cocaine laboratories in Colombia and to escort drug loads while he also provided members of Los Zetas with multi-ton quantities of cocaine which were ultimately distributed into the United States.

The companies designated today are controlled by Quintero Caballero, Sabagh-Cajeli, and Monje Alvarado in Colombia. They include three money exchange businesses in Colombia – Inversiones Y Representaciones El Cairo Ltda., Internacional Money Servicio Ltda., and El Kairo Internacional SAS. These currency exchange businesses facilitate the buying and selling goods in foreign markets and are highly prone to money laundering and illegal financial activities. Other companies designated today include a real estate company in Bogota, Colombia, known as Agro Negocios Saje Ltda., and an electronics store located in Maicao, Colombia, called Almacen Sonipal.

Treasury took today's actions in close coordination with criminal investigations by the DEA.

As a result of today's action, all property and interests in property in the United States or in the possession or control of U.S. persons in which Rodriguez Vasquez, and the seven individuals and five entities have an interest are blocked, and U.S. persons are generally prohibited from engaging in transactions with them.

Today's action is part of a coordinated U.S. effort to leverage the Kingpin Act in order to attack the financial infrastructure of significant foreign narcotics traffickers and organizations worldwide. The Treasury Department has designated over 1,400 individuals and entities pursuant to the Kingpin Act since June 2000. Penalties for violations of the Kingpin Act range from civil penalties of up to \$1.075 million per violation to more severe criminal penalties. Criminal penalties for corporate officers may include up to 30 years in prison and fines up to \$5 million. Criminal fines for corporations may reach \$10 million. Other individuals face up to 10 years in prison and fines pursuant to Title 18 of the United States Code for criminal violations of the Kingpin Act.

For a chart relating to today's actions click [here](#).

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