

FIN-2016-A002

March 21, 2016

Advisory

Advisory on the FATF-Identified Jurisdictions with AML/CFT Deficiencies

On February 19, 2016 the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) updated its list of jurisdictions with strategic AML/CFT deficiencies. These changes may affect U.S. financial institutions' obligations and risk-based approaches with respect to relevant jurisdictions.

As part of the FATF's listing and monitoring process to ensure compliance with the international Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) standards, the FATF identifies certain jurisdictions as having strategic deficiencies in their AML/CFT regimes.¹ These jurisdictions appear in two documents: (I) jurisdictions that are subject to the FATF's call for countermeasures or are subject to Enhanced Due Diligence (EDD) due to their AML/CFT deficiencies (referred to by

the FATF as the "[FATF Public Statement](#)") and (II) jurisdictions identified by the FATF to have AML/CFT deficiencies (referred to by the FATF as "[Improving Global AML/CFT Compliance: on-going process](#)").² On February 19, 2016, the FATF updated both of these documents. Financial institutions should consider these changes when reviewing their enhanced due diligence obligations and risk-based policies, procedures, and practices with respect to the jurisdictions noted below.

I. Jurisdictions that are subject to the FATF's call for countermeasures or are subject to EDD due to their AML/CFT deficiencies

The FATF has indicated that the following jurisdictions have strategic deficiencies in their AML/CFT regimes and has called upon its members and urged all jurisdictions to (A) impose countermeasures or (B) consider the risk arising from each jurisdiction due to a lack of sufficient progress in addressing

1. The FATF (www.fatf-gafi.org) is a 37-member intergovernmental policy-making body that establishes international standards to combat money laundering and counter the financing of terrorism and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The United States is a member of the FATF.
2. The FATF public identification of countries with strategic AML/CFT deficiencies is in response to the G-20 leaders' call for the FATF to reinvigorate its process for assessing countries' compliance with international AML/CFT standards. The G-20 leaders have consistently called for the FATF to issue regular updates on jurisdictions with strategic deficiencies. Specifically within the FATF, the International Cooperation Review Group (ICRG) is tasked with leading the process to identify and monitor countries with AML/CFT deficiencies. For more information on the ICRG procedures, please visit the FATF's website – www.fatf-gafi.org/topics/high-riskandnon-cooperativejurisdictions/documents/moreabouttheinternationalco-operationreviewgroupicrg.html.

AML/CFT deficiencies. Previously, FinCEN has advised U.S. financial institutions to apply enhanced due diligence for countries in category (B). Each of these jurisdictions is included in the [FATF Public Statement](#). Please click on each jurisdiction for additional information.

See Subsection A for FinCEN Guidance on each jurisdiction listed in Section I of this advisory.

A. Countermeasures:

[Iran](#) and [Democratic People's Republic of Korea \(DPRK\)](#)

B. Enhanced Due Diligence:

FATF did not list any jurisdictions in this section at this time.

Summary of Changes to this List

- The FATF has recognized that [Myanmar \(Burma\)](#) has made progress in substantially addressing its FATF action plan at a technical level. Consequently, the FATF has removed [Myanmar \(Burma\)](#) from the [FATF Public Statement](#) and now includes this jurisdiction in its [Improving Global AML/CFT Compliance: on-going process](#) (see Section II below).

II. Jurisdictions identified by the FATF as having AML/CFT deficiencies

The FATF has identified the following jurisdictions as having deficiencies in their AML/CFT regimes, for which they have developed an action plan with the FATF. Consequently, these jurisdictions are included in the following list of jurisdictions with AML/CFT deficiencies (as described in the FATF's [Improving Global AML/CFT Compliance: on-going process document](#)).

Please click on each jurisdiction for additional information and see the FinCEN guidance in Section II.

[Afghanistan](#), [Bosnia and Herzegovina](#), [Guyana](#), [Iraq](#), [Lao PDR](#), [Myanmar \(Burma\)](#), [Papua New Guinea](#), [Syria](#), [Uganda](#), [Vanuatu](#), and [Yemen](#).

Summary of Changes to this List

- [Algeria](#), [Angola](#), and [Panama](#) have been removed from the FATF listing and monitoring process due to their significant progress in establishing the legal and regulatory framework to address all or nearly all their strategic AML/CFT deficiencies on a technical level. These jurisdictions will work with their respective FATF-Style Regional Bodies as they continue to address the full range of AML/CFT issues identified as part of the mutual evaluation process.
- [Myanmar \(Burma\)](#) has made progress in substantially addressing its FATF action plan at a technical level and is now identified on this list, having been removed from the [FATF Public Statement](#) (see Section I above).

- [Vanuatu](#) has been identified and added to this list because of strategic deficiencies in its AML/CFT regime. In response to these results, [Vanuatu](#) has made a high-level political commitment to work with the FATF and its respective FATF-Style Regional Body to address its strategic AML/CFT deficiencies.

FinCEN Guidance regarding jurisdictions listed in Section I of this Advisory

A. Jurisdictions Subject to Countermeasures

Jurisdictions in this section ([Iran](#) and [DPRK](#)) are subject to the FATF's call on its members and other countries to apply countermeasures to protect the international financial system from AML/CFT risks. U.S. financial institutions should continue to consult existing FinCEN and U.S. Department of the Treasury (Treasury) guidance on engaging in financial transactions with Iran and DPRK. Previous FinCEN advisories and guidance on DPRK remain in effect.³

With respect to Iran, U.S. financial institutions are subject to a broad range of restrictions and prohibitions due to a number of illicit financing risks, including money laundering, terrorist financing, and the financing of Iran's ballistic missile program. Financial institutions are reminded of the existing U.S. sanctions that are administered by the Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), including but not limited to sanctions against Iranian banks and other entities, as well as Iranian entities that have links to terrorist activity and Iran's ballistic missile program. Information about these sanctions is available on OFAC's website www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Programs/Pages/iran.aspx. Furthermore, on November 21, 2011, Treasury issued a notice of proposed rulemaking to impose a special measure against Iran based on its finding that Iran is a jurisdiction of "primary money laundering concern" under Section 311 of the USA PATRIOT Act.⁴

3. FinCEN Advisories pertaining to DPRK: [FIN-2013-A005](#), [FIN-2009-A002](#), and [FinCEN Advisory – Issue 40](#).

4. 76 FR 72756 (Nov. 25, 2011). See FinCEN, [Finding that the Islamic Republic of Iran is a Jurisdiction of Primary Money Laundering Concern](#).

In addition, financial institutions should be familiar with the financial provisions and prohibitions contained in United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCRs) against Iran and DPRK.^{5,6}

Existing U.S. sanctions – in particular, those under the North Korea Sanctions Regulations and Executive Orders 13466, 13551, 13570, 13687, and 13722 – contain prohibitions on U.S. persons that limit U.S. financial institutions’ direct exposure to the types of North Korean financial or commercial transactions contributing to DPRK’s proliferation activities that are the focus of UNSCRs 2270, 2087, 2094, and 1718.⁷ Information about DPRK related sanctions is available on OFAC’s website <https://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Programs/pages/nkorea.aspx>.

B. Jurisdictions Subject to Enhanced Due Diligence

FATF did not list any jurisdictions in this section at this time.

Jurisdictions that are listed in this section have strategic AML/CFT deficiencies and have not made sufficient progress in addressing the deficiencies. In concurrence with the FATF’s decision, FinCEN is advising U.S. financial institutions of their increased obligations under Section 312 of the USA PATRIOT Act, 31 USC § 5318(i). Accordingly, U.S. financial institutions should apply enhanced due diligence, as described under implementing regulations 31 C.F.R. § 1010.610(b) and (c), when maintaining correspondent accounts for foreign banks operating under a banking license issued by a designated country.

5. UNSCR 2231 (July 2015) relating to implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action of July 14, 2015 (JCPOA) provides that, when the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) verifies that Iran has completed certain nuclear commitments under the JCPOA: (1) prior Iran-related UNSCRs (including UNSCRs 1929 (June 2010), 1803 (March 2008), 1747 (March 2007), and 1737 (December 2006)) shall be terminated and (2) states shall simultaneously comply with certain provisions of Annex B to UNSCR 2231, including paragraph 6 relating to financial provisions and restrictions. On January 16, 2016, the IAEA issued its report verifying that Iran had completed certain nuclear commitments under the JCPOA; as a result, UNSCRs 1929, 1803, 1747, and 1737 have been terminated, and the measures described in Annex B of UNSCR 2231 have come into effect. See www.un.org/en/documents/ for more information.
6. UNSCRs include 2270 (March 2016), 2094 (March 2013), 2087 (January 2013), 1874 (June 2009), and 1718 (October 2006). See www.un.org/en/documents/ for more information.
7. 31 C.F.R. part 510.

As required by the regulations implementing the Bank Secrecy Act (BSA), covered financial institutions should ensure that their enhanced due diligence programs include, at a minimum, steps to:

- Conduct enhanced scrutiny of correspondent accounts to guard against money laundering and to identify and report any suspicious transactions, in accordance with applicable law and regulation;
- Determine whether the foreign bank for which the correspondent account is established or maintained in turn maintains correspondent accounts for other foreign banks that use the foreign correspondent account established or maintained by the covered financial institution and, if so, take reasonable steps to obtain information relevant to assess and mitigate money laundering risks associated with the foreign bank's correspondent accounts for other foreign banks, including, as appropriate, the identity of those foreign banks; and
- Determine, for any correspondent account established or maintained for a foreign bank whose shares are not publicly traded, the identity of each owner of the foreign bank and the nature and extent of each owner's ownership interest.⁸

FinCEN Guidance regarding jurisdictions listed in Section II of this Advisory

U.S. financial institutions should consider the risks associated with the AML/CFT deficiencies of the countries identified under this section ([Afghanistan](#), [Bosnia and Herzegovina](#), [Guyana](#), [Iraq](#), [Lao PDR](#), [Myanmar](#), [Papua New Guinea](#), [Syria](#), [Uganda](#), [Vanuatu](#), and [Yemen](#)).⁹ With respect to these jurisdictions, U.S. financial institutions are reminded of their obligations to comply with the general due diligence obligations under 31 C.F.R. § 1010.610(a). As required under 31 C.F.R. § 1010.610(a), covered financial institutions should ensure that their due diligence programs, which address correspondent accounts maintained for foreign financial institutions, include appropriate, specific, risk-based, and, where necessary, enhanced policies, procedures, and controls that are reasonably designed to detect and report known or suspected money laundering activity conducted through or involving any correspondent account established, maintained, administered, or managed in the United States.

8. 31 C.F.R. § 1010.610(b): Enhanced Due Diligence for correspondent accounts established, maintained, administered or managed in the United States for foreign banks.

9. This Advisory updates previous FATF-related guidance on identified jurisdictions with AML/CFT deficiencies. Additional FinCEN guidance on Syria includes [FIN-2013-A002](#) and [FIN-2011-A010](#) as well as FinCEN's guidance on the Commercial Bank of Syria; see [FIN-2011-A013](#).

FinCEN General Guidance

For jurisdictions that have been recently removed from the FATF listing and monitoring process, financial institutions should take the FATF's decisions and the reasons behind the delisting into consideration when assessing risk.

If a financial institution knows, suspects, or has reason to suspect that a transaction involves funds derived from illegal activity or that a customer has otherwise engaged in activities indicative of money laundering, terrorist financing, or other violation of federal law or regulation, the financial institution shall then file a Suspicious Activity Report.¹⁰

For Further Information

Additional questions or comments regarding the contents of this Advisory should be addressed to the FinCEN Resource Center at (800) 767-2825 or (703) 905-3591. *Financial institutions wanting to report suspicious transactions that may relate to terrorist activity should call the Financial Institutions Toll-Free Hotline at (866) 556-3974 (7 days a week, 24 hours a day).* The purpose of the hotline is to expedite the delivery of this information to law enforcement. Financial institutions should immediately report any imminent threat to local-area law enforcement officials.

FinCEN's mission is to safeguard the financial system from illicit use and combat money laundering and promote national security through the collection, analysis, and dissemination of financial intelligence and strategic use of financial authorities.

10. Required under 31 C.F.R. §§ 1020.320, 1021.320, 1022.320, 1023.320, 1024.320, 1025.320 and 1026.320.