



EIB World Trade Headlines

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U.S. Commerce Department Announces \$200 Billion Milestone in Foreign Direct Investment

Commerce's SelectUSA program promotes foreign direct investment that supports hundreds of thousands of good-paying jobs in critical sectors across the United States

WASHINGTON – Today, the U.S. Department of Commerce announced that it has achieved a new milestone of facilitating more than \$200 billion in client-verified foreign direct investment (FDI), supporting more than 200,000 jobs throughout the United States and its territories since the SelectUSA program, housed within the Department's International Trade Administration, was established in 2011.

This remarkable milestone highlights the continued success of the Biden-Harris Administration's Investing in America agenda – powered by historic legislation such as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the CHIPS and Science Act, and the Inflation Reduction Act – by creating U.S. jobs through FDI in critical sectors and building an attractive ecosystem for international businesses to invest throughout the United States.

"SelectUSA continues to serve as an indispensable tool within the Department of Commerce to attract FDI into the United States and help create good-paying jobs across the country," said U.S. Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo. "2023 was a groundbreaking year for the SelectUSA program, with President Biden's historic Investing in America agenda driving investments in critical industries like semiconductors and clean energy. Workers all over the nation are seeing the benefits of SelectUSA's work to promote FDI and the President's commitment to investing in our country."

This announcement follows a strong year for the SelectUSA program, which facilitated more than \$55 billion in client-verified FDI, supporting more than 35,000 American jobs in fiscal year 2023. This FDI figure represents more than a quarter of the total announced FDI facilitated by SelectUSA since its inception in 2011. SelectUSA-supported investments span critical industries ranging from rare earths facilities in Texas to lithium-ion batteries manufacturing in Kansas to pharmaceutical manufacturing in Puerto Rico.

For 11 years consecutively, the United States has ranked as the world's top destination for FDI, reflecting the continued strength of the U.S. economy. According to the latest data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), FDI is responsible for over 15 million total direct and indirect jobs in across the United States.

About SelectUSA

The U.S. Department of Commerce-led SelectUSA program, housed within the International Trade Administration, promotes and facilitates business investment into the United States by coordinating related federal government agencies to serve as a single point of contact for investors and raises awareness of the critical role that economic development plays in the U.S. economy. SelectUSA assists U.S. economic development organizations to compete globally for investment by providing information, a platform for international marketing, and high-level advocacy. SelectUSA also helps business investors find the information they need to make decisions, connect to the right people at the local level, navigate the federal regulatory system, and find solutions to issues related to the federal government. For more information, visit www.trade.gov/selectusa.

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Treasury Targets Procurement Network Across Middle East and East Asia Supporting Iran's UAV Program - December 19, 2023

U.S. Departments of Justice, Homeland Security, and the Treasury take joint action to disrupt international procurement network aiding IRGC UAV production

WASHINGTON — Today, the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) is imposing sanctions on 10 entities and four individuals based in Iran, Malaysia, Hong Kong, and Indonesia supporting Iran's unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) production. This network, led by Iran-based Hossein Hatefi Ardakani, has facilitated the procurement of U.S.- and foreign-origin components worth hundreds of thousands of dollars for the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Aerospace Force Self Sufficiency Jihad Organization (IRGC ASF SSJO) and its UAV program.

"Iran's illicit production and proliferation of its deadly UAVs to its terrorist proxies in the Middle East and to Russia continues to exacerbate tensions and prolong conflicts, undermining stability," said Under Secretary of the Treasury for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence Brian E. Nelson. "The United States, in close coordination with our allies and partners, will continue to use the full range of our tools and authorities to disrupt these illicit procurement networks, as well as hold accountable the individuals and entities who seek to support them."

Concurrent with OFAC's action and following a multi-year investigation by Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), the Department of Justice announced the unsealing of an indictment charging Hossein Hatefi Ardakani and Gary Lam with crimes related to an illicit procurement network and scheme to unlawfully export U.S.-origin, dual-use, and sensitive technology to Iran. HSI's global investigation identified a network of Iranian intermediary companies, front companies, and logistics businesses used to procure and facilitate the transfer of sensitive U.S.- and foreign-origin technology to Iran for its weapons programs. On [October 18, 2023](#), OFAC designated Gary Lam, whose primary name is Lin Jinghe, for his support to an Iran-based procurement agent working on behalf of the IRGC-owned Saber Kish Company.

Today's action was taken pursuant to Executive Order (E.O.) 13382, which targets proliferators of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. OFAC has issued two previous rounds of designations targeting the IRGC ASF's production of Shahed-series one-way attack UAVs, which self-destructively detonate upon impacting their target with built-in warheads. On [November 15, 2022](#), OFAC designated Iran's Shahed Aviation Industries Research Center (SAIRC), a firm subordinate to the IRGC ASF that designs and manufactures the Shahed-136 one-way attack UAV that Iran has supplied to Russia for use against Ukraine. On [September 27, 2023](#), OFAC targeted five entities and two individuals based in Iran, the People's Republic of China, Hong Kong, Türkiye, and the United Arab Emirates that had procured servomotors — one of which was recovered in the remnants of a Shahed-136 found in Ukraine — for the IRGC ASF SSJO. The IRGC ASF was designated pursuant to E.O. 13382 on June 16, 2010, and the IRGC ASF SSJO was designated pursuant to E.O. 13382 on July 18, 2017.

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Iran's Hossein Hatefi Ardakani

Iran-based **Hossein Hatefi Ardakani (Ardakani)** oversees a transnational procurement network that spans the Middle East and East Asia and has procured hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of servomotors, inertial navigation equipment, and other items with UAV applications for the IRGC ASF SSJO. Ardakani directly contracts with the IRGC ASF SSJO using his Iran-based firms and coordinates foreign defense procurements through front companies in Malaysia, Hong Kong, and other jurisdictions.

Ardakani is being designated pursuant to E.O. 13382 for having provided, or attempted to provide, financial, material, technological or other support for, or goods or services in support of, the IRGC ASF SSJO.

ARDAKANI's Iran-based firms and associates

Ardakani serves as the chairman of the board of directors for Iran-based **Kavan Electronics Behrad Limited Liability Company (Kavan Electronics)**. Under Ardakani's leadership, Kavan Electronics has acquired and sold servomotors and other UAV-applicable items worth hundreds of thousands of dollars to the IRGC ASF SSJO. Iran-based **Mehdi Dehghani Mohammadabadi (Mohammadabadi)** serves as Kavan Electronics' CEO.

Iran-based procurement agent **Gholamreza Ebrahimzadeh Ardakani (Ebrahimzadeh)** has procured antennas, U.S.-origin gas thrusters, modular measurement systems, and other UAV-applicable items for Ardakani and his network. Ardakani also manages Iran-based **Teyf Tadbir Arya Engineering Company (Teyf Tadbir)** and owns and manages Iran-based **Basamad Electronic Pouya Engineering Limited Liability Company (Basamad Electronic)**.

Kavan Electronics is being designated pursuant to E.O. 13382 for being owned or controlled by, or acting or purporting to act for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, Ardakani, and for having provided, or attempted to provide, financial, material, technological or other support for, or goods or services in support of, the IRGC ASF SSJO. Mohammadabadi is being designated pursuant to E.O. 13382 for acting or purporting to act for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, Kavan Electronics. Ebrahimzadeh is being designated pursuant to E.O. 13382 for having provided, or attempted to provide, financial, material, technological or other support for, or goods or services in support of, Ardakani. Teyf Tadbir and Basamad Electronic are being designated pursuant to E.O. 13382 for being owned or controlled by Ardakani.

IRGC ASF SSJO Commercial front

Iran-based **Saman Industrial Group (SIG)** serves as a commercial front company for the IRGC ASF SSJO. SIG has directly contracted with Ardakani's Kavan Electronics to acquire servomotors on behalf of the IRGC ASF SSJO.

SIG is being designated pursuant to E.O. 13382 for being owned or controlled by, or acting or purporting to act for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, the IRGC ASF SSJO.

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Malaysia- and Hong Kong-based front companies

Ardakani and Ebrahimzadeh have used Malaysia-based **Skyline Advanced Technologies SDN BHD (Skyline)** to procure and overhaul UAV-applicable servomotors, U.S.-origin spectrum analyzers, and other equipment. Ardakani and Ebrahimzadeh have also used Hong Kong-based **Dirac Technology HK Limited (Dirac)** to procure UAV-applicable antennas. Malaysia- and Hong Kong-based **Integrated Scientific Microwave Technology SDN BHD (ISM Tech)** has been used by Ardakani to procure inertial measurement units.

Malaysia- and Hong Kong-based **Arta Wave SDN BHD (Arta Wave)** has procured thousands of UAV servomotors and attempted to facilitate Ardakani's acquisition of more than 1,000 servomotors on behalf of the IRGC ASF SSJO. Malaysia-based **Nava Hobbies SDN BHD (Nava Hobbies)** has facilitated or attempted to facilitate the procurement of electrical motors, electrical fuel pumps, and servomotors for Ardakani's network.

Skyline, Dirac, ISM Tech, Arta Wave, and Nava Hobbies are being designated pursuant to E.O. 13382 for having provided, or attempted to provide, financial, material, technological or other support for, or goods or services in support of, Ardakani.

Indonesia-based Servomotors procurement

Indonesia-based firm **Surabaya Hobby CV (Surabaya Hobby)** has facilitated shipments of at least 100 servomotors destined for Iran's Pishgam Electronic Safeh Company (PESC), which was previously designated for its procurement of servomotors for the IRGC ASF SSJO. Indonesia-based Surabaya Hobby owner and representative **Agung Surya Dewanto (Dewanto)** coordinated with PESC on these shipments.

PESC was designated pursuant to E.O. 13382 on September 27, 2023, for having provided or attempted to provide, financial, material, technological or other support for, or goods or services in support of, the IRGC ASF SSJO.

Surabaya Hobby is being designated pursuant to E.O. 13382 for having provided or attempted to provide, financial, material, technological or other support for, or goods or services in support of, PESC. Dewanto is being designated pursuant to E.O. 13382 for acting or purporting to act for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, Surabaya Hobby.

Sanctions implications

As a result of today's action, all property and interests in property of the individuals and entities named above, and of any entities that are owned, directly or indirectly, 50 percent or more by them, individually, or with other blocked persons, that are in the United States or in the possession or control of U.S. persons must be blocked and reported to OFAC. All transactions by U.S. persons or within the United States (including transactions transiting the United States) that involve any property or interests in property of blocked or designated persons are prohibited.

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In addition, persons that engage in certain transactions with the individuals or entities designated today may themselves be exposed to sanctions. Furthermore, any foreign financial institution that knowingly facilitates a significant transaction or provides significant financial services for any of the individuals or entities designated today could be subject to U.S. sanctions.

The power and integrity of OFAC sanctions derive not only from OFAC's ability to designate and add persons to the SDN List but also from its willingness to remove persons from the SDN List consistent with the law. The ultimate goal of sanctions is not to punish but to bring about a positive change in behavior. [For information concerning the process for seeking removal from an OFAC list, including the SDN List, please refer to OFAC's FAQ 897.](#)

[For identifying information on the individuals and entities designated today, click here: https://ofac.treasury.gov/recent-actions/20231219](https://ofac.treasury.gov/recent-actions/20231219)

Secretary Antony J. Blinken at a U.S. National Space Council Meeting

Remarks

December 20, 2023

SECRETARY BLINKEN: Phil, thank you very, very much, and it's wonderful to be with everyone here today, as well as in this remarkable and historic space. And I want to start by thanking the Vice President for not just convening us today but for her stewardship of the National Space Council.

Our leadership, America's leadership in space, is critical to so many priorities here at home – for our national security, to our economic and technological competitiveness, to our strength and standing around the world. The remarkably diverse voices on this council reflect this expansive set of priorities and interests, and again, it's so good to be with colleagues from across the Government on this here today.

It's not exactly a secret that we're in an era of extraordinary dynamism and activity for space exploration and research. More than 80 countries now operate in space. Dozens of space exploration companies are launching thousands of new satellites into orbit. The global space industry is valued at hundreds of billions of dollars. Space-related capabilities – like GPS technology, satellite data – are more integrated with our economy than ever before.

At the same time, I think we all know that new challenges have arisen, including from our strategic competitors. The landscape in which we operate now is far different than it was six decades ago when President Kennedy launched the mission that put a man on the moon. But our responsibilities are no less important, both for our own people but also for humankind. Our obligation today is to shape the future of the space environment so that it benefits all. Those benefits are maximized for people around the world and for generations to come.

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From our perspective, one of the most effective ways that we can do this is by leveraging our partnerships. By leading with diplomacy, we are best positioned to advance discoveries that benefit us at home and that bolster our leadership around the world. We know from experience that collaboration on space delivers, and we've seen that most recently with the launch of the James Webb Space Telescope and the landing of a rover on Mars, both projects that were made possible by international partnership and international collaboration.

Today what I'd like to do is just briefly update the council on three lines of effort that the State Department is leading to advance international partnerships on space priorities. And the Vice President has touched on a number of these, but let me just foot stomp a few of the points that she made.

First, with our colleagues at NASA, we've grown the coalition of countries under the Artemis Accords, a set of practical principles to guide safe, peaceful, and sustainable space exploration and cooperation. You heard the Vice President say this – when this council first met just two years ago, we had about a dozen countries participating in the Artemis Accords. Today, 33 countries are on board, with 12 new signatories joining just over the past year including Angola, which joined us earlier this month. To the ambassadors here with us today from those Artemis countries: thank you. Thank you for your partnership. Thank you for your collaboration.

We are determined to continue to expand this coalition and expand its areas of cooperation as well, like we did this past October in Baku when we agreed to take practical steps to increase mission deconfliction and ensure that future operations on the lunar surface are both transparent and safe.

Second, we have made significant progress toward ending destructive, direct ascent anti-satellite missile tests in space. A single test – a single test – can release thousands of pieces of debris into space, and we know it takes only one piece of debris, traveling at thousands of miles an hour, to destroy a satellite or threaten the life of an astronaut. Since Vice President Harris committed in April 2022 that the United States would refrain from conducting anti-satellite missile tests, 36 countries, as you've heard, have pledged to do the same. Next year we'll continue our diplomatic efforts to establish this as an international norm.

Third, we're laying the groundwork for future international collaboration. A few months ago, in May, the State Department released our first-ever Strategic Framework for Space Diplomacy. We're leading with diplomacy, advancing space policy to leverage space activities to meet a wider range of diplomatic goals; for example, making progress on the climate crisis, contending with pollution, dealing with illegal, under-reported, and unregulated fishing. As part of those efforts, we're continuing capacity-building outreach to emerging spacefaring nations.

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And here, these partnerships, the transfer of knowledge, the transfer of expertise, is in many ways one of our most powerful exports.

We're also modernizing our diplomatic workforce to ensure that they have the skills that they need to advance U.S. interests and maintain American leadership in space. Early next year we'll add an expert focused on space to our Science Envoy Program at the State Department.

One of the most remarkable powers of space exploration is its ability to bring people together across geographies in pursuit of knowledge of the wider universe and in pursuit of progress right here on Earth. So for the State Department, I can tell you we look forward to continued close collaboration with this council, with our partners abroad, as we strive together to reach new frontiers.

Thank you very much for being here today. Phil. (Applause.)

Settlement Agreement between the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control and Privilege Underwriters Reciprocal Exchange

The U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) today announced a \$466,200 settlement with Privilege Underwriters Reciprocal Exchange (PURE). PURE agreed to settle its potential civil liability for 39 apparent violations of OFAC's Ukraine-/Russia-Related sanctions. Between May 2018 and July 2020, PURE engaged in transactions related to four insurance policies involving a blocked Panama-based company owned by Specially Designated National Viktor Vekselberg (Vekselberg). The settlement amount reflects OFAC's determination that PURE's apparent violations were not voluntarily self-disclosed and were non-regious.

Biden Administration Announces Additional U.S. Military Assistance for Ukraine

12/27/2023 03:34 PM EST

Antony J. Blinken, Secretary of State

The United States is announcing the year's final package of weapons and equipment for Ukraine. Our assistance has been critical to supporting our Ukrainian partners as they defend their country and their freedom against Russia's aggression.

This package provides up to \$250 million of arms and equipment under previously directed drawdowns for Ukraine. Capabilities provided in today's package include air defense munitions, other air defense system components, additional ammunition for high mobility artillery rocket systems, 155mm and 105mm artillery ammunition, anti-armor munitions, and over 15 million rounds of ammunition.

A coalition of more than 50 countries continues to provide critical support for Ukraine's forces. It is imperative that Congress act swiftly, as soon as possible, to advance our national security interests by helping Ukraine defend itself and secure its future.

MISSION STATEMENT:

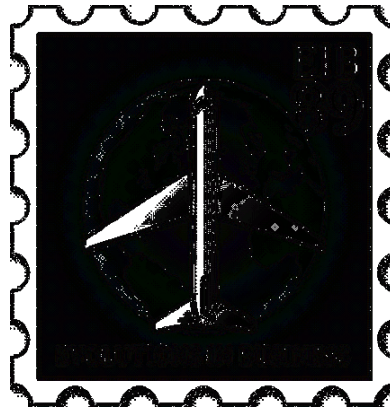
Given the geopolitical state of affairs with China, Russia, and Crimea, the Occupied territories of UKRAINE, Donetsk and Luhansk Oblast, embargoed countries and other specific threatening end users and entities, located in the United States and around the globe;

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