

Treasury Sanctions Entities in Iran and Russia That Attempted to Interfere in the U.S. 2024 Election

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WASHINGTON – Today, the Department of the Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) is designating a subordinate organization of Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), and a Moscow-based affiliate organization of the Russian Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU) and its director pursuant to Executive Order (E.O.) 13848, the U.S. election interference authority. As affiliates of the IRGC and GRU, these actors aimed to stoke socio-political tensions and influence the U.S. electorate during the 2024 U.S. election. Today’s actions build on sanctions previously imposed on the IRGC, the GRU, and their numerous subordinate and proxy organizations, pursuant to several authorities targeting the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and malicious cyber-enabled activities.

“The Governments of Iran and Russia have targeted our election processes and institutions and sought to divide the American people through targeted disinformation campaigns,” said Acting Under Secretary of the Treasury for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence Bradley T. Smith. “The United States will remain vigilant against adversaries who would undermine our democracy.”

TEHRAN’S MALIGN INFLUENCE AND ELECTION INTERFERENCE ACTIVITIES

In the summer of 2024, [a joint U.S. government statement announced that the Government of Iran](#) sought to stoke discord and undermine confidence in the United States’ democratic institutions, using social engineering and other efforts to gain access to individuals with direct access to the presidential campaigns of both parties. Such activities, including thefts and disclosures of private information, are intended to influence the U.S. electoral process. Following this announcement, on September 27, 2024, OFAC [designated](#) pursuant to E.O. 13848 an Iranian national and IRGC member who compromised several accounts of officials and advisors of a 2024 presidential campaign. OFAC also designated five employees of the Iranian cybersecurity firm Emennet Pasargad, formerly known as Net Peygard Samavat Company, which OFAC [designated](#) in November 2021 pursuant to E.O. 13848 for attempting to influence the U.S. 2020 presidential election.

IRGC SUBSIDIARY ORGANIZATION’S INFLUENCE OPERATIONS

The **Cognitive Design Production Center** (CDPC) is a subsidiary organization of the IRGC. Since at least 2023, CDPC planned influence operations designed to incite socio-political tensions among the U.S. electorate in the lead up to the 2024 U.S. elections, on behalf of the IRGC.

OFAC is designating CDPC pursuant to E.O. 13848 for being owned or controlled by, or having acted or purported to act for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, the IRGC, a person whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to E.O. 13848.

MOSCOW’S MALIGN INFLUENCE AND ELECTION INTERFERENCE ACTIVITIES

The Government of the Russian Federation employs an array of tools, including covert foreign malign influence campaigns and illicit cyber activities, to undermine the national security and foreign policy interests of the United States and its allies and partners globally. Moscow also routinely uses its intelligence services, government-directed proxies, and covert influence tools in these efforts. The Kremlin has increasingly adapted its efforts to hide its involvement by developing a vast ecosystem of Russian proxy websites, fake online personas, and front organizations that give the false appearance of being independent news sources unconnected to the Russian state.

Today's designations follow prior OFAC actions that have highlighted and disrupted Russia's global malign influence campaigns, including [RT, RaHDit, RRN, and Doppelgänger influence operations](#); [Kremlin-directed malign influence efforts](#); [interference in U.S. elections](#); [efforts to subvert democracy in Moldova](#); [destabilization activities in Ukraine](#); and [the operation of outlets](#) controlled by Russian intelligence services.

GRU-AFFILIATED ENTITY USES ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TOOLS TO INTERFERE IN THE U.S. 2024 ELECTION

The Moscow-based **Center for Geopolitical Expertise** (CGE), founded by [OFAC-designated](#) Aleksandr Dugin, directs and subsidizes the creation and publication of deepfakes and circulated disinformation about candidates in the U.S. 2024 general election. CGE personnel work directly with a GRU unit that oversees sabotage, political interference operations, and cyberwarfare targeting the West. Since at least 2024, a GRU officer and CGE affiliate directed CGE Director **Valery Mikhaylovich Korovin** (Korovin) and other CGE personnel to carry out various influence operations targeting the U.S. 2024 presidential election.

At the direction of, and with financial support from, the GRU, CGE and its personnel used generative AI tools to quickly create disinformation that would be distributed across a massive network of websites designed to imitate legitimate news outlets to create false corroboration between the stories, as well as to obfuscate their Russian origin. CGE built a server that hosts the generative AI tools and associated AI-created content, in order to avoid foreign web-hosting services that would block their activity. The GRU provided CGE and a network of U.S.-based facilitators with financial support to: build and maintain its AI-support server; maintain a network of at least 100 websites used in its disinformation operations; and contribute to the rent cost of the apartment where the server is housed. Korovin played a key role in coordinating financial support from the GRU to his employees and U.S.-based facilitators.

In addition to using generative AI to construct and disseminate disinformation targeting the U.S. electorate in the lead up to the U.S. 2024 general election, CGE also manipulated a video it used to produce baseless accusations concerning a 2024 vice presidential candidate in an effort to sow discord amongst the U.S. electorate.

Today, OFAC is designating CGE and Korovin pursuant to E.O. 13848 for having directly or indirectly engaged in, sponsored, concealed, or otherwise been complicit in foreign malign influence in the 2024 U.S. election. Additionally, OFAC is designating CGE pursuant to E.O. 13694, as amended, E.O. 14024, and section 224 of the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act of 2017 (CAATSA) for being owned or controlled by, or having acted or purported to act for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, the GRU, a person whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to E.O. 13694, as amended, E.O. 14024, and section 224 of CAATSA. OFAC is also designating Korovin pursuant to E.O. 14024 for being or having been a leader, official,

senior executive officer, or member of the board of directors of CGE, a person whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to E.O. 14024.

SANCTIONS IMPLICATIONS

As a result of today's action, all property and interests in property of the designated persons described above that are in the United States or in the possession or control of U.S. persons are blocked and must be reported to OFAC. In addition, any entities that are owned, directly or indirectly, individually or in the aggregate, 50 percent or more by one or more blocked persons are also blocked. Unless authorized by a general or specific license issued by OFAC, or exempt, OFAC's regulations generally prohibit all transactions by U.S. persons or within (or transiting) the United States that involve any property or interests in property of designated or otherwise blocked persons.

In addition, financial institutions and other persons that engage in certain transactions or activities with the sanctioned individuals may expose themselves to sanctions or be subject to an enforcement action. The prohibitions include the making of any contribution or provision of funds, goods, or services by, to, or for the benefit of any designated person, or the receipt of any contribution or provision of funds, goods, or services from any such person.

Non-U.S. persons are also prohibited from causing or conspiring to cause U.S. persons to violate U.S. sanctions, wittingly or unwittingly, as well as engage in conduct that evades U.S. sanctions. OFAC's [Economic Sanctions Enforcement Guidelines](#) provide more information regarding OFAC's enforcement of U.S. sanctions, including the factors that OFAC generally considers when determining an appropriate response to an apparent violation.

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 Frequently Asked Question 897 here](#). [For detailed information on the process to submit a request for removal from an OFAC sanctions list, please click here](#)

[Click here for more information on the individuals designated today.](#)

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