

US Sanctions Turkish Officials Over Imprisoned Missionary

The U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) took action today targeting Turkey's Minister of Justice Abdulhamit Gul and Minister of Interior Suleyman Soylu, both of whom played leading roles in the organizations responsible for the arrest and detention of Pastor Andrew Brunson. These officials serve as leaders of Turkish government organizations responsible for implementing Turkey's serious human rights abuses and are being targeted pursuant to Executive Order (E.O.) 13818, "Blocking the Property of Persons Involved in Serious Human Rights Abuse or Corruption," which builds upon Treasury's Global Magnitsky Act authorities.

"Pastor Brunson's unjust detention and continued prosecution by Turkish officials is simply unacceptable," said Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin. "President Trump has made it abundantly clear that the United States expects Turkey to release him immediately."

Pastor Andrew Brunson has reportedly been a victim of unfair and unjust detention by the government of Turkey. He was arrested in Izmir, Turkey, in October 2016, and with an absence of evidence to support the charges, he was accused of aiding armed terrorist organizations and obtaining confidential government information for political and military espionage.

As the head of Turkey's Ministry of Justice, Abdulhamit Gul is being designated pursuant to E.O. 13818 for being the leader of an entity that has engaged in, or whose members have engaged in, serious human rights abuse.

As head of Turkey's Ministry of Interior, Suleyman Soylu is

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As a result of these actions, any property, or interest in property, of both Turkey's Minister of Justice Abdulhamit Gul and Turkey's Minister of Interior Suleyman Soylu within U.S. jurisdiction is blocked, and U.S. persons are generally prohibited from engaging in transactions with them.