



Council of the EU

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Violence against women and girls: EU sanctions nine individuals and three entities under its Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime

The Council decided today to impose restrictive measures on **nine individuals** and **three entities** in view of their role in committing serious human rights violations and abuses, particularly **sexual and gender-based violence**. Today's action reaffirms the EU's determination to promote and protect human rights around the world.

Ahead of the International Women's Day, we move from words to action. No matter where it happens, we will combat and eliminate all forms of violence against women. With today's decision, we are enhancing efforts to counter sexual and gender-based violence, to ensure that those responsible are fully accountable for their actions, and to combat impunity.

Josep Borrell, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

The new listings include:

- two acting **Taliban ministers** for Higher Education and for the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice, who are behind the decrees banning women from higher education and gender-segregated practices in public spaces
- officers of the **Moscow Police Station** responsible for arbitrary arrests and detentions as well as torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment in the context of the censorship and oppression led by the Russian authorities. The listings will also target high-ranking members of the **Russian armed forces**, whose units systematically participated in acts of sexual and gender-based violence in Ukraine in March/April 2022, in the context of Russia's unprovoked and unjustified military aggression against Ukraine
- government officials commanding **South Sudanese militias** responsible for the widespread and systematic use of sexual and gender-based violence as a war tactic in the country
- the **Deputy Minister of Home Affairs in Myanmar/Burma**
- the **Qarchak Prison** in Iran, the **Syrian Republican Guard** and the **Office of the Chief of Military Security Affairs** in Myanmar/Burma are sanctioned in view of their roles in serious sexual and gender-based human rights violations

The listed individuals and entities will now be subject to an **asset freeze** in the EU. In addition, listed individuals will be subject to a **travel ban** to the EU. Moreover, persons and entities in the EU will be **prohibited from making funds available**, either directly or indirectly, to those listed.

The relevant legal acts, including the names of the persons and entities concerned, have been published in the Official Journal of the EU.

Background

On 7 December 2020, the Council established a global human rights sanctions regime which applies to acts such as genocide, crimes against humanity and other serious human rights violations or abuses (e.g. torture, slavery, extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests or detentions). The EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime underscores the Union's determination to enhance its role in addressing serious human rights violations and abuses worldwide. Realising the effective enjoyment of human rights by everyone is a strategic goal of the Union. Respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights are fundamental values of the Union and its common foreign and security policy.

In its conclusions of 14 November 2022, the Council expressed concern about the disproportionate effect that armed conflicts continue to have on women and girls worldwide, as well as the prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence including conflict-related sexual violence, offline and online. It committed to enhanced efforts to counter such violence in order to ensure full accountability and to combat impunity.

Furthermore, in its conclusions of June 2014, the Council stressed that combating and eliminating all forms of violence against women requires coordinated policies at all relevant levels and a comprehensive approach targeting the key issues of prevention, under-reporting, protection, victim support, and the prosecution of perpetrators as well as other measures. The strategic use of restrictive measures reinforces this approach by increasing pressure to prevent further violations and abuses and, in coordination with other EU instruments in the human rights toolbox, draws attention to these violations and abuses and those responsible.

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