

## Maritime and Aviation Risks Addressed by New International Working Groups

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On October 15, 2019, the U.S. Department of the Treasury convened the first meeting of the Counter-Hizballah International Partnership (“CHIP”) with the goal of building multilateral cooperation to target and dismantle global financial networks used by Hizballah to fund its agenda. Over 30 countries participated in the meeting, which took place during the World Bank and International Monetary Fund Fall Meetings.

The CHIP program seeks to establish better channels of information sharing between financial intelligence units, strengthen terrorist financing risk assessments, develop targeted financial sanctions regimes, and prosecute terrorists and their financial facilitators on an international level. The program further aims to leverage all available financial tools against Hizballah.

The Partnership plans to send technical experts to the International Law Enforcement Coordination Group, which will meet in December in The Hague. The Coordination Group has focused on countering Hizballah’s terrorist activities for several years. The new Partnership will support those activities by attacking the financial systems supporting those activities. This increased level of international collaboration will most likely lead to tougher and broader sanctions regimes. For commercial entities, the increased focus on Hizballah may lead to greater anti-money laundering due diligence requirements. We also would anticipate that given Hizballah’s presence in Latin America, trade-based money laundering may also be identified as a result.

More recently, on October 21, 2019, the United States, Bahrain, and Poland, acting as co-hosts, opened a meeting of the Warsaw Ministerial Maritime and Aviation Security Working Group, in Manama, Bahrain. The meeting follows the earlier Ministerial to Advance Peace and Security in the Middle East, which took place in Warsaw, Poland, in February 2019. The Working Group is focused on maintaining maritime and aviation security in the Middle East and promoting steps to interdict and prevent illicit weapons of mass destruction-related shipments. Beneath the surface of those diplomatically vague statements, a number of its participants are more immediately focused on dealing with threats to the freedom of navigation attributed to Iran.

The Working Group expects to issue a Summary Statement after the meeting listing the participating countries, various collaborative efforts, and a general summary of the meeting. More than 80 countries have been invited to participate in the Warsaw Process, an effort jointly led by the U.S. and Poland to address both ongoing threats to peace and security and longer-term strategic issues in the Middle East. Companies involved in shipping and aviation

in the Persian Gulf area may look for international initiatives to address the risks of attacks as well as the threat of illegal shipments of weapons of mass destruction.

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