
US sanction Chechen special police force in latest Magnitsky Act blacklist for 'human rights abuses'

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The US has blacklisted a Russian police unit in the southern republic of Chechnya as well as five individuals, under the Global Magnitsky Act that allows Washington to sanction 'human rights abusers' anywhere.

Thursday's [announcement](#) by the Treasury Department affects the Terek Special Rapid Response Team (SOBR), the Russian equivalent of a SWAT team. The sanctions also apply against the team commander, listed as Abuzayed Vismuradov.

Four more individuals were added to the blacklist, including the warden of Penal Colony IK-7 by the name of Sergey Leonidovich Kossiev. The official positions of three other sanctioned Russian citizens were not given.

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"We are focused on holding accountable those responsible for atrocious acts within Russia, including the extrajudicial killing of Boris Nemtsov and the pervasive abuse of LGBTI persons in Chechnya," Terrorism and Financial Intelligence Under Secretary of Treasury Sigal Mandelker told reporters.

Enacted in December 2016, the Global Magnitsky Act allows the US government to sanction anyone it sees as violating human rights anywhere in the world, freezing any assets they may

have in the US and preventing them from entering. It was an expansion of the 2012 law specifically targeting Russia.

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These are the first Magnitsky-related sanctions in 2019, and the first addition to that particular blacklist since the November 2018 sanctions against 17 Saudi nationals suspected of involvement in the killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi.
