

## WSGR ALERT

AUGUST 2011

### NEW SANCTIONS ON SYRIA RESULT IN BROAD EMBARGO

In response to the Syrian government's continuing escalation of violence against the citizens of Syria, President Obama by Executive Order<sup>1</sup> issued new sanctions against Syria yesterday that nearly equate to a complete trade and financial embargo. As stated in the fact sheet<sup>2</sup> issued with the Executive Order, these sanctions are "the strongest . . . action . . . taken against the Syrian regime thus far."

The Executive Order prohibits the following activities:

- Exports, reexports, sale, or supply of any service to Syria, either direct or indirect, by U.S. persons or from the United States
- Approval, financing, or facilitation of any foreign person transaction where that transaction would be prohibited if performed by a U.S. person
- New investment in Syria by U.S. persons
- Any transaction by U.S. persons involving the government of Syria, including its agencies, instrumentalities, or controlled entities
- Importation of Syrian-origin petroleum or petroleum products into the United States or any transaction or dealing by U.S. persons related to petroleum or petroleum products of Syrian origin

The Executive Order also ordered that property and interests in property of the government of Syria be blocked and may not be transferred, paid, exported, or otherwise dealt in.

Along with the Executive Order, President Obama issued a statement<sup>3</sup> on the situation in Syria announcing the "unprecedented sanctions to deepen the financial isolation" of the government of Syria to "further disrupt its ability to finance a campaign of violence against the Syrian people." The new sanctions, coupled with the preexisting prohibition on the export or re-export to Syria of any items, software, or technology subject to the Export Administration Regulations, parallel the trade and financial embargoes currently instituted against Iran and Sudan.

Though implementing regulations will be issued by the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), these policies are *effective immediately*. U.S. companies, including third parties working on behalf of U.S. companies, must immediately take steps to ensure compliance with the new sanctions. This should include: (1) ensuring that companies that were previously lawfully providing services to Syria discontinue such services immediately; (2) informing all export control, business, and marketing personnel about the new sanctions; and (3) updating compliance policies accordingly.

For additional information, please contact a member of Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati's export control and trade sanctions team: Josephine Aiello LeBeau (jalebeau@wsgr.com), Melissa Mannino (mmannino@wsgr.com), Anne Seymour (aseymour@wsgr.com), or Lawrence Perrone (lperrone@wsgr.com).



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<sup>1</sup> View the complete Executive Order at [http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Programs/Documents/syria\\_eo\\_08182011.pdf](http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Programs/Documents/syria_eo_08182011.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> See the fact sheet at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/08/18/fact-sheet-syria>.

<sup>3</sup> The President's statement is available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/08/18/statement-president-obama-situation-syria>.