

High-Risk Jurisdictions subject to a Call for Action – February 2021

High-risk jurisdictions have significant strategic deficiencies in their regimes to counter money laundering, terrorist financing, and financing of proliferation. For all countries identified as high-risk, the FATF calls on all members and urges all jurisdictions to apply enhanced due diligence, and, in the most serious cases, countries are called upon to apply counter-measures to protect the international financial system from the money laundering, terrorist financing, and proliferation financing (ML/TF/PF) risks emanating from the country. This list is often externally referred to as the “black list”. Since February 2020, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the FATF has paused the review process for countries in the list of High-Risk Jurisdictions subject to a Call for Action, given that they are already subject to the FATF’s call for countermeasures. Therefore, please refer to the statement on these jurisdictions adopted in February 2020. While the statement may not necessarily reflect the most recent status of Iran and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea’s AML/CFT regimes, the FATF’s call for action on these high-risk jurisdictions remains in effect.

Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)

The FATF remains concerned by the DPRK’s failure to address the significant deficiencies in its anti-money laundering and combating the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) regime and the serious threats they pose to the integrity of the international financial system. The FATF urges the DPRK to immediately and meaningfully address its AML/CFT deficiencies. Further, the FATF has serious concerns with the threat posed by the DPRK’s illicit activities related to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) and its financing.

The FATF reaffirms its 25 February 2011 call on its members and urges all jurisdictions to advise their financial institutions to give special attention to business relationships and transactions with the DPRK, including DPRK companies, financial institutions, and those acting on their behalf. In addition to enhanced scrutiny, the FATF further calls on its members and urges all jurisdictions to apply effective counter-measures, and targeted financial sanctions in accordance with applicable United Nations Security Council Resolutions, to protect their financial sectors from money laundering, financing of terrorism and WMD proliferation financing (ML/TF/PF) risks emanating from the DPRK. Jurisdictions should take necessary measures to close existing branches, subsidiaries and representative offices of DPRK banks within their territories and terminate correspondent relationships with DPRK banks, where required by relevant UNSC resolutions.

Iran

In June 2016, Iran committed to address its strategic deficiencies. Iran’s action plan expired in January 2018. In February 2020, the FATF noted Iran has not completed the action plan.^[1]

In October 2019, the FATF called upon its members and urged all jurisdictions to: require increased supervisory examination for branches and subsidiaries of financial institutions based in Iran; introduce enhanced relevant reporting mechanisms or systematic reporting of financial transactions; and require increased external audit requirements for financial groups with respect to any of their branches and subsidiaries located in Iran.

Now, given Iran’s failure to enact the Palermo and Terrorist Financing Conventions in line with the FATF Standards, the FATF fully lifts the suspension of counter-measures and calls on its members and urges all jurisdictions to apply effective counter-measures, in line with Recommendation 19.^[2]

Iran will remain on the FATF statement on [High Risk Jurisdictions Subject to a Call for Action] until the full Action Plan has been completed. If Iran ratifies the Palermo and Terrorist Financing Conventions, in line with the FATF standards, the FATF will decide on next steps, including whether to suspend countermeasures. Until Iran implements the measures required to address the deficiencies identified with respect to countering terrorism-financing in the Action Plan, the FATF will remain concerned with the terrorist financing risk emanating from Iran and the threat this poses to the international financial system.

[1] In June 2016, the FATF welcomed Iran’s high-level political commitment to address its strategic AML/CFT deficiencies, and its decision to seek technical assistance in the implementation of the Action Plan. Since 2016, Iran established a cash declaration regime, enacted amendments to its Counter-Terrorist Financing Act and its Anti-Money Laundering Act, and adopted an AML by-law.

In February 2020, the FATF noted that there are still items not completed and Iran should fully address: (1) adequately criminalizing terrorist financing, including by removing the exemption for designated groups “attempting to end foreign occupation, colonialism and racism”; (2) identifying and freezing terrorist assets in line with the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions; (3) ensuring an adequate and enforceable customer due diligence regime; (4) demonstrating how authorities are identifying and sanctioning unlicensed money/value transfer service providers; (5) ratifying and implementing the Palermo and TF Conventions and clarifying the capability to provide mutual legal assistance; and (6) ensuring that financial institutions verify that wire transfers contain complete originator and beneficiary information.

[2] Countries should be able to apply appropriate countermeasures when called upon to do so by the FATF. Countries should also be able to apply countermeasures independently of any call by the FATF to do so. Such countermeasures should be effective and proportionate to the risks.

[The Interpretative Note to Recommendation 19](#) specifies examples of the countermeasures that could be undertaken by countries.

* This statement was previously called "Public Statement"