



Fact Sheet: Provision of Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan and Support for the Afghan People

April 13, 2022

The United States is the largest single provider of humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan and is committed to continuing to support the Afghan people. The Treasury Department seeks to ensure that humanitarian assistance and other support to the Afghan people (including COVID-19 related assistance) can continue to flow directly to Afghanistan through legitimate and transparent channels, including the U.S. government, international organizations (IOs), and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and that such entities can continue to engage in humanitarian assistance and certain other activities that support the Afghan people. In addition, Treasury seeks to enable Afghan-Americans and Afghans in the United States and around the world to continue to support their families in Afghanistan through personal remittances.

As part of the United States' commitment to supporting the Afghan people, Treasury's OFAC is issuing this Fact Sheet to emphasize that U.S. sanctions on the Taliban and the Haqqani Network do not stand in the way of transactions and activities that support basic human needs of the people in Afghanistan. This Fact Sheet also provides consolidated guidance highlighting the most relevant authorizations and guidance for humanitarian and other assistance related to Afghanistan. To make sure that this support can continue to flow, OFAC has issued six General Licenses (GLs) — 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20 — under the Global Terrorism Sanctions Regulations, 31 CFR part 594 (GTSR), the Foreign Terrorist Organizations Sanctions Regulations, 31 CFR part 597 (FTOSR), and Executive Order (E.O.) 13224, as amended. These GLs authorize certain transactions and activities that are ordinarily incident and necessary to allow for the continued flow of humanitarian assistance and other activities to support the people of Afghanistan and that involve the Taliban and the Haqqani Network, as explained in greater detail below.

The Taliban and Haqqani Network are designated as Specially Designated Global Terrorists (SDGTs) under E.O. 13224, and the Haqqani Network is also designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization under section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act. However, there are no OFAC-administered sanctions that prohibit the export or reexport of goods or services to Afghanistan, moving or sending money into and out of Afghanistan, or activities in Afghanistan, provided that such transactions or activities do not involve sanctioned individuals, entities, or property in which sanctioned individuals and entities have an interest. In addition, as described below, OFAC has issued seven Afghanistan-related GLs to authorize certain transactions involving the Taliban, the Haqqani Network, and, in the case of GL 20, blocked individuals who are in leadership roles of governing institutions in Afghanistan.

While the United States is working to facilitate financial flows that benefit the Afghan people, Treasury recognizes that the Afghan people will continue to face grave challenges, exacerbated by donor and private sector flight sparked by the Taliban's takeover, longstanding dependences on foreign aid, drought, structural macroeconomic issues, and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Afghanistan-Related OFAC General Licenses

The following GLs are issued by OFAC related to humanitarian assistance, other support, and trade with Afghanistan:

- **All transactions involving Afghanistan or governing institutions in Afghanistan: GL [20](#)**, “Authorizing Transactions Involving Afghanistan or Governing Institutions in Afghanistan,” authorizes **all transactions involving Afghanistan or governing institutions in Afghanistan, subject to certain conditions**. The authorization in Afghanistan-related GL 20 may overlap with the authorizations in Treasury’s other Afghanistan-related GLs 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19 (described in detail below). Where appropriate, U.S. persons may rely on the broader authorization in GL 20 instead of the authorizations in GLs 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19. As with all OFAC GLs, GLs 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20 are “self-executing,” meaning that persons who determine that such activities are ordinarily incident and necessary to their authorized activity within the scope of the GL may proceed without further assurance from OFAC.
- **Humanitarian Activities in Afghanistan: GL [14](#)**, “Authorizing Humanitarian Activities in Afghanistan,” authorizes **all transactions** involving the Taliban or the Haqqani Network, or any entity in which the Taliban or the Haqqani Network owns, directly or indirectly, individually or in the aggregate, a 50 percent or greater interest, prohibited by the GTSR, the FTOSR, or E.O. 13224, as amended, **that are ordinarily incident and necessary to the provision of humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan or other activities that support basic human needs in Afghanistan by the following entities and their employees, grantees, contractors, or other persons acting on their behalf, subject to certain conditions:**
 - The United States Government;
 - Nongovernmental organizations;
 - The United Nations, including its Programmes, Funds, and Other Entities and Bodies, as well as its Specialized Agencies and Related Organizations;
 - The International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA);
 - The African Development Bank Group, the Asian Development Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and the Inter-American Development Bank Group (IDB Group), including any fund entity administered or established by any of the foregoing;
 - The International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies; and

- The Islamic Development Bank.
- **Agricultural Commodities, Medicine, and Medical Devices: GL 15**, “Transactions Related to the Exportation or Reexportation of Agricultural Commodities, Medicine, Medical Devices, Replacement Parts and Components, or Software Updates,” authorizes **all transactions** involving the Taliban or the Haqqani Network, or any entity in which the Taliban or the Haqqani Network owns, directly or indirectly, individually or in the aggregate, a 50 percent or greater interest, prohibited by the GTSR, the FTOSR, or E.O. 13224, as amended, **that are ordinarily incident and necessary to the exportation or reexportation of agricultural commodities, medicine, medical devices, replacement parts and components for medical devices, or software updates for medical devices to Afghanistan, or to persons in third countries purchasing specifically for resale to Afghanistan, subject to certain conditions.**
- **Personal Remittances: GL 16**, “Authorizing Noncommercial, Personal Remittances to Afghanistan,” authorizes **all transactions** involving the Taliban or the Haqqani Network, or any entity in which the Taliban or the Haqqani Network owns, directly or indirectly, individually or in the aggregate, a 50 percent or greater interest, prohibited by the GTSR, the FTOSR, or E.O. 13224, as amended, **that are ordinarily incident and necessary to the transfer of noncommercial, personal remittances to Afghanistan, including through Afghan depository institutions, subject to certain conditions.** As noted in OFAC FAQ 949, transactions that are ordinarily incident and necessary to give effect to the activities authorized in GL 16, including clearing, settlement, and transfers through, to, or otherwise involving privately owned and state-owned Afghan depository institutions, are also authorized pursuant to GL 16.
- **U.S. Government Business: GL 17**, “Official Business of the United States Government,” authorizes **all transactions and activities** involving the Taliban or the Haqqani Network, or any entity in which the Taliban or the Haqqani Network owns, directly or indirectly, individually or in the aggregate, a 50 percent or greater interest, prohibited by the GTSR, the FTOSR, or E.O. 13224, as amended, **that are for the conduct of the official business of the United States Government by employees, grantees, or contractors thereof, subject to certain conditions.**
- **International Organizations: GL 18**, “Official Activities of Certain International Organizations and Other International Entities,” authorizes **all transactions and activities** involving the Taliban or the Haqqani Network, or any entity in which the Taliban or the Haqqani Network owns, directly or indirectly, individually or in the aggregate, a 50 percent or greater interest, prohibited by the GTSR, the FTOSR, or E.O. 13224, as amended, **that are for the conduct of the official business of the following entities by employees, grantees, or contractors thereof, subject to certain conditions:**
 - The United Nations, including its Programmes, Funds, and Other Entities and Bodies, as well as its Specialized Agencies and Related Organizations;

- The International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA);
- The African Development Bank Group, the Asian Development Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and the Inter-American Development Bank Group (IDB Group), including any fund entity administered or established by any of the foregoing;
- The International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies; and
- The Islamic Development Bank.
- **Nongovernmental Organizations: GL 19**, “Certain Transactions in Support of Nongovernmental Organizations’ Activities in Afghanistan,” authorizes **all transactions and activities** involving the Taliban or the Haqqani Network, or any entity in which the Taliban or the Haqqani Network owns, directly or indirectly, individually or in the aggregate, a 50 percent or greater interest, prohibited by the GTSR, the FTOSR, or E.O. 13224, as amended, **that are ordinarily incident and necessary to activities described below by NGOs, subject to certain conditions:**
 - Activities to support humanitarian projects to meet basic human needs in Afghanistan, including drought and flood relief; food, nutrition, and medicine distribution; the provision of health services; assistance for vulnerable or displaced populations, including individuals with disabilities, the elderly, and survivors of sexual- and gender-based violence; and environmental programs;
 - Activities to support the following in Afghanistan: rule of law, citizen participation, government accountability and transparency, human rights and fundamental freedoms, access to information, and civil society development projects;
 - Activities to support education in Afghanistan, including combating illiteracy, increasing access to education, international exchanges, and assisting education reform projects;
 - Activities to support non-commercial development projects directly benefitting the Afghan people, including those related to health, food security, and water and sanitation; and
 - Activities to support environmental and natural resource protection in Afghanistan, including the preservation and protection of threatened or endangered species, responsible and transparent management of natural resources, and the remediation of pollution or other environmental damage.

In all cases, authorized transactions and activities must comply with the terms and conditions set forth in the applicable GL. Notably, the GLs listed above explicitly do not authorize financial transfers to the Taliban or the Haqqani Network, other than for the purpose of effecting the payment of taxes, fees, or import duties, or the purchase or receipt of permits, licenses, or public utility services related to the activities specified. GL 20, specifically, does not authorize financial transfers to the Taliban, the Haqqani Network, any entity in which the Taliban or the Haqqani Network owns, directly or indirectly, individually or in the aggregate, a 50 percent or greater interest, or any blocked individual who is in a leadership role of a governing institution in Afghanistan, other than for the purpose of effecting the payment of taxes, fees, or import duties, or the purchase or receipt of permits, licenses, or public utility services, provided that such payments do not relate to luxury items or services. In addition, these GLs do not relieve any person from compliance with other U.S. federal laws or requirements of other federal agencies, or from applicable international obligations.

These GLs also help implement adopted resolution UNSCR 2615 (2021), which authorizes humanitarian assistance and other activities that support basic human needs as those terms are understood by the United Nations Security Council, as well as the processing and payment of funds, other financial assets or economic resources, and the provision of goods and services necessary to ensure the timely delivery of such assistance or to support such activities. Specifically, UNSCR 2615 (2021) was intended to cover activities contemplated in the United Nations' Transitional Engagement Framework (TEF) for Afghanistan, such as providing life-saving assistance; sustaining essential services; and preserving social investments and community-level systems essential to meeting basic human needs.

Afghanistan-Related Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The following FAQs provide information on the provision of humanitarian assistance and certain other activities in support of the Afghan people:

FAQ [928](#) – Guidance on U.S. sanctions on the Taliban and the Haqqani Network and humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan

FAQ [929](#) – Guidance on activities included in “Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan” and “Other Activities to Support Basic Human Needs in Afghanistan”

FAQ [930](#) – Guidance on U.S. sanctions on the Taliban and the Haqqani Network and exportation or reexportation of agricultural commodities, medicine, and medical devices to Afghanistan

FAQ [931](#) – Guidance related to non-U.S. persons engaging in activities authorized under GLs 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19

FAQ [949](#) – Guidance on U.S. sanctions on the Taliban and the sending of personal, non-commercial remittances to Afghanistan

FAQ [950](#) – Guidance on organizations included within the United Nations’ “Programmes, Funds, and Other Entities and Bodies, as well as its Specialized Agencies and Related Organizations,” for purposes of GL 18

FAQ [951](#) – Guidance on U.S. sanctions and Afghanistan

FAQ [952](#) – Guidance on identifying Specially Designated Global Terrorists (SDGTs) when operating in Afghanistan

FAQ [953](#) – Guidance on U.S. sanctions on the Taliban and the Haqqani Network and moving money in and out of Afghanistan

FAQ [954](#) – Guidance on transactions and activities considered “Ordinarily Incident and Necessary” to activities authorized under GLs 14, 15, and 19

FAQ [955](#) – Guidance on GLs 17, 18, and 19 and the UN Security Council’s 1988 (Taliban) sanctions regime

FAQ [957](#) – Guidance on processing transactions related to shipping food to Afghanistan

FAQ [958](#) – Guidance on authorized transactions with the Taliban and the Haqqani Network

FAQ [959](#) – Guidance on support to public hospitals in Afghanistan

FAQ [960](#) – Guidance on direct payments to Afghan teachers and healthcare workers

FAQ [961](#) – Guidance on support to municipal water systems in Afghanistan

FAQ [962](#) – Guidance on banks’ processing of transactions related to activities authorized by general licenses

FAQ [963](#) – Guidance on humanitarian cash shipments to Afghanistan

FAQ [991](#) – Guidance on why Treasury issued GL 20

FAQ [992](#) – Guidance on examples of activities authorized by GL 20

FAQ [993](#) – Guidance on governing institutions in Afghanistan led by blocked individuals

FAQ [994](#) – Guidance on what are considered luxury items and services for the purposes of GL 20

FAQ [995](#) – Guidance on financial transfers to governing institutions and state-owned and -controlled companies in Afghanistan

FAQ [996](#) – Guidance on the scope of GL 20 vs. GLs 14-19

FAQ [997](#) – Guidance on whether the United States has lifted sanctions on the Taliban and the Haqqani Network

Additional Licensing

For transactions not otherwise authorized by OFAC general licenses, OFAC considers specific license requests on a case-by-case basis and prioritizes license applications and other requests for guidance that are related to humanitarian activity. Please see OFAC's [License Application Page](#) for additional details regarding the specific licensing process.

Additional Information

If you have additional questions, we encourage you to contact the OFAC Compliance Hotline at 1-800-540-6322 or email OFAC_Feedback@treasury.gov. As with specific license requests, OFAC prioritizes answering questions that are related to humanitarian activity.