



SHURAT HADIN: INMARSAT ADMITS PROVIDING SERVICES TO IRANIAN OIL TANKERS DESPITE SANCTIONS

On July 25, Shurat HaDin warned Inmarsat against providing prohibited satellite communications services to Iranian oil tankers and other vessels. The warning letter stressed that Inmarsat's actions would expose the telecommunications giant to criminal prosecution and civil liability from Americans and others who suffer as a result of Tehran's sponsorship of terrorism.

In a reply sent today to the mobile satellite company, Shurat HaDin pointed out that the US sanctions regime against Iran does not merely prohibit the direct-sale of telecommunications services to Iran or its shipping lines, but moreover prevents its end-run by supplying services via non-US distributors. Hence, contrary to claims made by Inmarsat in its July 30 response letter, the latter's providing of services through non-US distributors constitutes a further breach of US law.

"Inmarsat's responses...have confirmed that not only is Inmarsat supplying satellite communications services to a large number of ships owned, operated or controlled by the Government of Iran...it is knowingly participating in attempts to circumvent the US sanctions regime against Iran," stressed Nitsana Darshan-Leitner, director of the Tel Aviv-based counter terrorist organization.

Shurat HaDin's director, Nitsana Darshan-Leitner adds: "We will not tolerate Inmarsat's – or any corporation's – profiting from the blood of innocent people. It is unacceptable for a global company to seek to cover up its links to Iranian interests or to claim these ties are handled by third party partners or vendors, which by itself is a violation of US law. The maritime satellite industry can no longer get a free pass."

On August 1, the US Congress overwhelmingly passed a new package of sanctions against Iran, aiming to punish banks, insurance and shipping companies helping the Islamic state sell its oil. This comes as the Obama administration continues to slap additional Treasury Department sanctions on Tehran's vessels, found to be facilitating the latter's nuclear weapons program and global terrorist network. On a visit this week in Israel, US Defense Secretary Panetta also stressed the need for more sanctions on the Iranian regime.

Shurat HaDin underlined that Inmarsat, with offices in Miami and Washington DC, owns and/or operates satellites providing various telecommunications services to those with appropriate equipment to send and receive signals from them. It is thus that if those satellites are used to provide services to, or for the benefit of, any entity or vessel directly or indirectly controlled by Tehran, Inmarsat would be breaching multiple US laws, regulations and Presidential Executive Orders. Inmarsat could also be subjected to forfeiture of its assets to judgment creditors who hold unenforced judgments against the Islamic regime.

Shurat HaDin noted that even an Inmarsat spokesperson, Christopher McLaughlin, admitted in a July 26 interview to Space News, that "some of these ships nonetheless appear to be using older Inmarsat gear." Furthermore, Inmarsat's July 30 letter to Shurat HaDin appears to suggest that Inmarsat believes it is able to provide services to Iran via non-US distributors, even as this activity is also prohibited under US law.

Shurat HaDin's reply to Inmarsat's letter further points out that a search of Inmarsat's website reveals the company is providing satellite communications services, including broadband services, to 27 ships that are blacklisted on the Treasury Department's listing. Iran is also listed by the US State Department as a State Sponsor of Terrorism.

On July 12, the US Treasury Department updated its listing of proscribed companies, individuals, and property that American and non-American citizens are prohibited from engaging and providing services to, with Iran named as its chief culprit. The listing noted Iranian ships that have been reflagged or operating under front companies.

Shurat HaDin notes that companies like Inmarsat that attempt to thwart the US sanctions regime by pretending that they do not know the actual ownership of the ships they service, or the parties they are doing business with, will face criminal and civil liability.

Furthermore, although Inmarsat appeared to be asserting in statements that it has a contractual obligation to provide safety communications services for all ships, it is undeniably true that the purpose of the sanctions on Iran is to prevent their ships from sailing. In other words, withdrawal of the mandatory safety communications services would effectively prevent Iranian ships setting sail. In addition, US law trumps and voids any contractual or international convention obligations that may be in conflict with it as well.

In June 2011, Shurat HaDin brought legal action against Inmarsat for continuing to support ships seeking to breach Israel's naval blockade of Gaza. Shurat HaDin underlined that Inmarsat's services provided communications to the Mavi Marmara and other ships that participated in the Gaza Flotilla of May 2010. The case was filed in a Federal Court in Miami.

Contrary to claims made by the telecommunications company, Shurat HaDin underlines that Inmarsat does not nor can it deny that it provided services to the Turkish boats Mavi Marmara that was utilized by the Islamic terrorists that sought to breach Israel's maritime blockade of Gaza in 2010 and 2011. In 2010, nine individuals were killed on the Turkish boat, including one US citizen. In 2011, after Shurat HaDin filed its lawsuit against Inmarsat in Federal Court in Miami, the Mavi Marmara announced it was dropping out of the Flotilla because of technical problems.

In addition, unlike recent statements made by Inmarsat, their attorneys were the ones that asked if Shurat HaDin would drop the lawsuit, as it was no longer necessary. Shurat HaDin complied. This did not mean that Inmarsat was not compliant in assisting the Gaza Flotilla boats that violated the US Neutrality Act and other US laws.

Shurat HaDin's actions represent the latest example of the center's harnessing of American and international law to knock down the financial and technological buttresses of terrorist regimes.

[Shurat HaDin's August 2 Response Letter to Inmarsat \(http://www.scribd.com/doc/101853478/Shurat-HaDin-s-August-2-2012-Letter-to-Inmarsat\)](http://www.scribd.com/doc/101853478/Shurat-HaDin-s-August-2-2012-Letter-to-Inmarsat)

[Inmarsat's July 30 Letter to Shurat HaDin \(http://www.scribd.com/doc/101853508/Inmarsat-s-July-30-2012-Letter-to-Shurat-HaDin\)](http://www.scribd.com/doc/101853508/Inmarsat-s-July-30-2012-Letter-to-Shurat-HaDin)

[SHURAT HADIN'S JULY 25 WARNING LETTER TO INMARSAT \(http://www.scribd.com/doc/101021494/Shurat-HaDin-s-July-25-2012-Letter-to-Inmarsat\)](http://www.scribd.com/doc/101021494/Shurat-HaDin-s-July-25-2012-Letter-to-Inmarsat)

[Selected List of Iranian-linked ships marked by US Treasury Dept \(http://www.scribd.com/doc/101635486/Selected-List-of-Iranian-linked-ships-marked-by-US-Treasury-Dept\)](http://www.scribd.com/doc/101635486/Selected-List-of-Iranian-linked-ships-marked-by-US-Treasury-Dept)

[Documentation of Iranian-linked ships present on Inmarsat's ship directory \(http://www.scribd.com/doc/101635042/Documentation-of-Iranian-linked-ships-Inmarsat-s-ship-directory\)](http://www.scribd.com/doc/101635042/Documentation-of-Iranian-linked-ships-Inmarsat-s-ship-directory)

[Iran Economic Sanctions Summary Sheet \(http://www.scribd.com/book/212563464/Iran-Sanctions-Energy-Arms-Control-and-Regime-Change\)](http://www.scribd.com/book/212563464/Iran-Sanctions-Energy-Arms-Control-and-Regime-Change)

[FACTSHEET ABOUT INMARSAT \(http://www.scribd.com/doc/101019427/Inmarsat-Fact-Sheet\)](http://www.scribd.com/doc/101019427/Inmarsat-Fact-Sheet)

[JULY 2012 US TREASURY DEPARTMENT IRAN SANCTIONS \(http://www.scribd.com/doc/101019424/Dept-of-State-Fact-Sheet-Increasing-Sanctions-Against-Iran\)](http://www.scribd.com/doc/101019424/Dept-of-State-Fact-Sheet-Increasing-Sanctions-Against-Iran)

[PREVIOUS LETTER SENT ON FLOTILLA \(http://www.scribd.com/doc/101019445/Warning-Letters-Sent-to-Inmarsat-During-Flotilla\)](http://www.scribd.com/doc/101019445/Warning-Letters-Sent-to-Inmarsat-During-Flotilla)

For more information: (Tel Aviv, Israel) 972-3-751-4175, 972-52-383-7020 (cell), media@israellawcenter.org