

16 April 2024

#### **CYPRUS - COMPANY RAIDED AS PART OF SANCTIONS INVESTIGATION**

On 15 April, Duane Morris reported that the compliance and oversight department of the Cyprus Bar Association had raided the company Finsol, which is controlled by a Greek national. The group is said to be linked to a surveillance scandal in Cyprus and Greece.

<https://www.tovima.com/society/cyprus-authorities-tighten-grip-on-intellexa-linked-companies>

<https://blogs.duanemorris.com/europeansanctionsenforcement/2024/04/15/cyprus-company-raided-as-part-of-sanctions-investigation/#page=1>

<https://in-cyprus.philenews.com/local/us-sanctions-prompt-investigation-into-fictitious-transactions/>

#### **EU COMMISSION PUBLISHES FAQ ON REPORTING OUTGOING TRANSFERS**

On 16 April, the Global Sanctions blog reported that the EU had issued new FAQ on the obligation of Russian-owned entities and EU credit and financial institutions to report transfers from Russian-owned entities out of the EU.

<https://globalsanctions.co.uk/2024/04/eu-commission-publishes-faqs-on-reporting-outgoing-transfers/>

#### **INTERNATIONAL UNILATERAL EXPORT CONTROLS — AN INCREASED FOCUS ON ADVANCED TECHNOLOGIES**

ON 15 April, an article from Akin Gump says that new UK controls coincide with changes introduced by France, the Netherlands and Spain to their national export control regimes, which have extended the scope of export restrictions beyond the dual-use items specified within Annex I of the EU dual-use Regulation. The article reflects on these changes, as well as those in Japan.

<https://www.mondaq.com/unitedstates/export-controls--trade--investment-sanctions/1450438/international-unilateral-export-controlsan-increased-focus-on-advanced-technologies>

#### **AUSTRIA: ANTI-CORRUPTION PROSECUTOR OPENS AN INVESTIGATION INTO RENE BENKO, HEAD OF THE SIGMA PROPERTY GROUP**

On 16 April, MSN and others reported that Austria's anti-corruption prosecutor has opened an investigation into Rene Benko, head of the crisis-ridden Sigma property group, on suspicion of fraud.

<https://www.msn.com/en-gb/money/other/austria-opens-fraud-probe-into-signas-benko-over-bank-loan/ar-BB1llaxa>

#### **4 ARRESTED ON SUSPICION OF SMUGGLING MONEY FROM UK TO ALBANIA**

On 15 April, a news release from the NCA advised that 4 alleged members of an organised crime group that specialises in smuggling criminal cash out of the country and into Albania have been arrested in a National Crime Agency investigation.

<https://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/news/four-arrested-on-suspicion-of-smuggling-money-from-uk-to-albania>

#### **UN AMENDS 1 ENTRY ON NORTH KOREA SANCTIONS LIST**

On 15 April, the UN advised that the existing entry for NATIONAL AEROSPACE TECHNOLOGY ADMINISTRATION had been amended.

<https://press.un.org/en/2024/sc15664.doc.htm>

#### **DUTCH GOVERNMENT TO PUSH THROUGH WITH BAN ON CASH PURCHASES OVER €3,000**

On 16 April, the NL Times reported that failing to implement the ban would mean the Netherlands loses out on €600 million of EU money.

<https://nltimes.nl/2024/04/16/dutch-govt-push-ban-cash-purchases-eu3000-lose-eu-grant>

#### **SOMALIS RELEASE *ABDULLAH* AND ITS CREW**

On 16 April, Insurance Marine News reported that the hijacked Bangladeshi bulk carrier had been released. It is reported that 2 of the pirates said that a \$5 million ransom had been paid.

<https://insurancemarineneews.com/insurance-marine-news/somalis-release-abdullah-and-its-crew/>

#### **RUSSIA AND CHINA TRADE NEW COPPER DISGUISED AS SCRAP TO SKIRT TAXES AND SANCTIONS**

On 15 April, Reuters reported that a Russian producer and Chinese companies have avoided taxes and skirted the impact of Western sanctions by trading in new copper wire rod disguised as scrap.

<https://www.reuters.com/markets/commodities/russia-china-trade-new-copper-disguised-scrap-skirt-taxes-sanctions-2024-04-15/>

#### **WHAT NEW METAL SANCTIONS ON RUSSIA MEAN FOR GLOBAL TRADE**

On 16 April, Hellenic Shipping News reported that no Russian nickel, aluminium, and copper produced from 13 April onwards will be eligible for delivery to the LME or the Chicago Mercantile

Exchange (CME). The US is also banning Russian imports of all 3 metals. Russia accounts for about 6% of global nickel production, 5% of aluminium and 4% of copper.

<https://www.hellenicshippingnews.com/what-new-metal-sanctions-on-russia-mean-for-global-trade/>

#### **JERSEY: THE FSC APPROACH TO ENFORCEMENT AND MAKING REFERRALS TO THE POLICE AND/OR THE ATTORNEY GENERAL**

On 16 April, the FSC published a new guidance note setting out its approach to enforcement and updated guidance on making a referral to the police and/or the Attorney General. These guidance notes reflect existing practice and do not mark any change in approach.

<https://www.jerseyfsc.org/news-and-events/our-approach-to-enforcement-and-making-referrals-to-the-police-and-or-the-attorney-general/>

#### **CLAIM THAT MILLIONS IN LIBYAN STATE FUNDS LAUNDERED THROUGH ESTONIA**

On 7 April, the Libya Observer reported that an investigative report broadcast on an Estonian TV program revealed that millions of euros belonging to the Libyan state, which were held in the Central Bank of Libya branch in Benghazi, ended up being laundered and used in Estonia.

<https://libyaobserver.ly/news/millions-libyan-state-funds-laundered-through-estonia-report-claims>

#### **SWITZERLAND: BANK CONVICTED FOR CORPORATE LIABILITY IN CONNECTION WITH AGGRAVATED MONEY LAUNDERING**

On 4 April, a news release from the Swiss Government advised that the Office of the Attorney General of Switzerland (OAG) has ordered PKB PRIVATBANK AG (PKB) to pay a fine of CHF 750,000 following an investigation revealed that between 2011 and 2014, in the course of its business, the bank failed to take all reasonable and indispensable organisational measures to prevent the crime of aggravated money laundering committed by 2 employees, a consultant in charge of South American customer development and his direct hierarchical superior.

<https://www.admin.ch/gov/en/start/documentation/media-releases.msg-id-100600.html>

#### **KENYA: FARMERS USING WHAT THEY BELIEVED TO BE SUBSIDISED FERTILISER IN FACT RECEIVED ORDINARY SAND CLEVERLY DISGUISED AND SOLD AT INFLATED PRICES**

In March, a report from Africa Uncensored is said to have uncovered an intricate web of mining, packaging, and widespread distribution of the counterfeit product.

<https://africauncensored.online/fertile-deception-1/>

### **ILLEGAL TIMBER MAY HAVE BEEN LOGGED IS ENTERING THE SUPPLY CHAIN DUE TO A FLAW IN ROMANIA'S NEW DIGITAL SYSTEM TO TRACK TIMBER**

On 8 April, OCCRP reported that it had investigated the SUMAL system — which has been billed as Europe's most sophisticated timber traceability system.

<https://www.occrp.org/en/investigations/the-simple-fraud-undermining-europes-most-sophisticated-timber-tracing-system>

### **UK AMENDS NORTH KOREA SANCTIONS ENTRY**

On 16 April, a Notice from HM Treasury advised that, following notification from the UN, the existing entry for the NATIONAL AEROSPACE TECHNOLOGY ADMINISTRATION had been amended.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/661e5b007469198185bd3d68/Notice\\_Democratic\\_Peoples\\_Republic\\_of\\_Korea\\_160424.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/661e5b007469198185bd3d68/Notice_Democratic_Peoples_Republic_of_Korea_160424.pdf)

### **ISLAMIC STATE GROUP BLAMED FOR CHEMICAL ATTACK 9 YEARS AGO IN SYRIA**

In April, the Arms Control Association reported that, in a report in February, the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT) of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) said that there are “reasonable grounds” to find the Islamic State group culpable for the attack in Marea in September 2015, in which 11 individuals showed symptoms consistent with exposure to sulphur mustard.

<https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2024-04/news/islamic-state-group-blamed-chemical-attack-syria>  
<https://www.opcw.org/media-centre/news/2024/02/opcw-fact-finding-mission-concludes-investigation-reported-allegation-al>

### **US CUSTOMS REVIVES ITS ENFORCEMENT MECHANISM TO TARGET A CHINESE IMPORTER AND AFFILIATES OPERATING IN THE SAFETY PRODUCTS INDUSTRY**

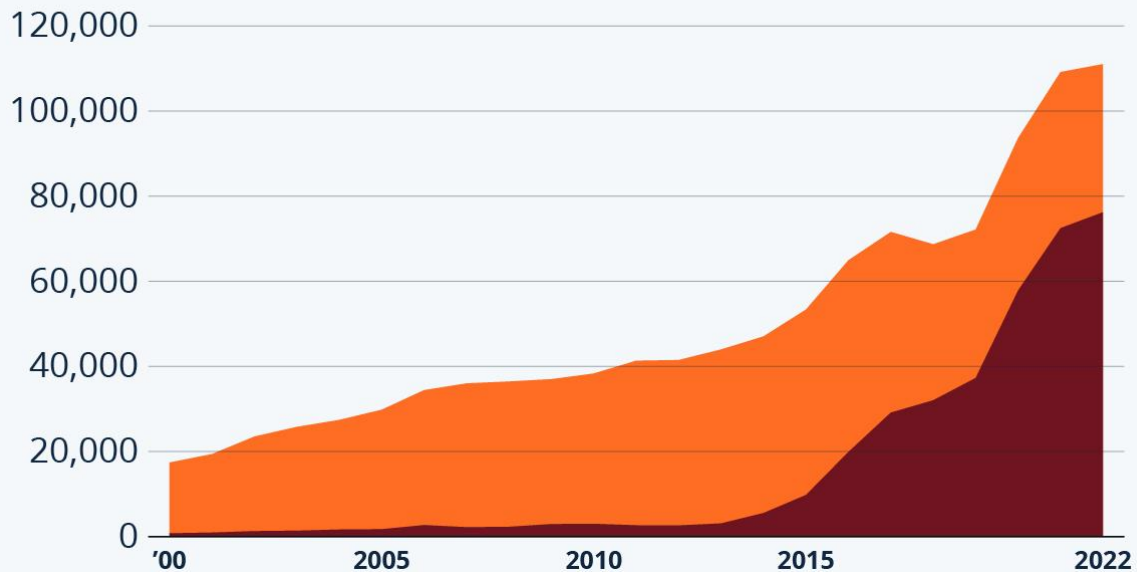
On 16 April, Crowell Moring reported that, 17 months since its last Withhold Release Order (WRO), US CBP will detain work gloves manufactured by Shanghai Select Safety Products Company, Limited and its 2 subsidiaries from China due to evidence of use of convict labour.

<https://www.cmtradelaw.com/2024/04/withhold-release-order-issued-on-shanghai-select-safety-products-and-subsidiaries/>

# Fentanyl Fuels Surge in U.S. Drug Overdose Deaths

Estimated number of drug overdose deaths in the U.S.

■ Total overdose deaths ■ Thereof deaths involving synthetic opioids\*



\* Mostly fentanyl, excl. methadone

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



statista

<https://www.statista.com/chart/18744/the-number-of-drug-overdose-deaths-in-the-us>

## CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL TERRORISM - TERRORISM AND ANTI-TERRORISM EFFORTS: A QUICK HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Included in a Working Paper released on 18 March by CBW Net was a brief history of efforts to prevent terrorist use of chemical or biological weapons. The Working Paper came from a Workshop that sought to analyse the emergence of CBW terrorism, assess its impact on the CBW prohibition regimes, and evaluate the measures taken to strengthen regime implementation.

[https://cbwnet.org/media/pages/publications/working-paper/chemical-and-biological-terrorism-and-the-norms-of-the-cbw-prohibition-regimes/507acf1b48-1710767014/2024-0318\\_cbwnet-terrorism-workshop\\_collection-of-one-pagers\\_for\\_web.pdf](https://cbwnet.org/media/pages/publications/working-paper/chemical-and-biological-terrorism-and-the-norms-of-the-cbw-prohibition-regimes/507acf1b48-1710767014/2024-0318_cbwnet-terrorism-workshop_collection-of-one-pagers_for_web.pdf)

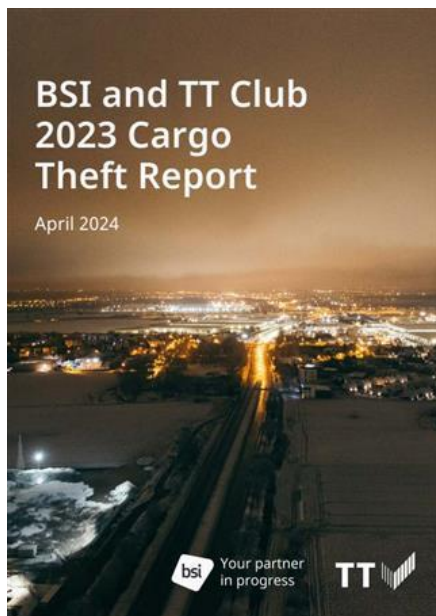
## **US: FINAL RULE TO REMOVE THE ZIMBABWE SANCTIONS REGULATIONS – WHICH HAVE BEEN REPLACED**

On 16 April, OFAC advised that the Final Rule takes effect from 17 April.

<https://ofac.treasury.gov/media/932816/download?inline>

## **HIGH INFLATION EMERGES AS A SIGNIFICANT MACROECONOMIC CATALYST DRIVING GLOBAL CARGO CRIME PATTERNS**

On 11 April, Global Trade Magazine reported on the release of the Annual Cargo Theft Report 2023. The report aims to raise awareness among stakeholders in supply chain security and offer mitigation strategies to address these persistent threats. It includes several case studies including credit fraud in Europe, “blue light gangs” in South Africa, fraudulent thefts in the US and others. Looking ahead, it provides mitigation recommendations throughout the report to reduce the threats.



<https://www.globaltrademag.com/global-cargo-theft-trends>

<https://www.ttclub.com/news-and-resources/publications/tt-bis-cargo-theft-reports/bis-and-tt-club-cargo-theft-report-2023>

## **IS THE KREMLIN OVERCONFIDENT ABOUT RUSSIA’S ECONOMIC STABILITY?**

On 10 April, an article from CSIS looks at the effects of sanctions on the Russian economy, and the argument (favoured by the Russian Government) that sanctions have actually helped make the economy stronger.

<https://carnegieendowment.org/2024/04/10/is-kremlin-overconfident-about-russia-s-economic-stability-pub-92174>

**UK: HOW HIGH STREET NAIL BARS ARE BEING USED AS A FRONT FOR ORGANISED CRIME AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

On 16 April, the Daily Mail reported on some nail bars and how legitimate business owners said they were struggling to compete with illegal rivals.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-13275123/The-true-cost-manicure-high-street-nail-bars-used-organised-crime-staffed-trafficking-victims-coming-UK-promise-better-life-passport-snatched-away.html>

**US: FUGITIVE INTERNATIONAL ARMS DEALERS CHARGED WITH CONSPIRING TO UNLAWFULLY EXPORT WEAPONS AND AMMUNITION FROM THE US TO SUDAN AND IRAQ**

A news release from the US DoJ on 16 April said that 2 principals of an Iraq-based arms company Black Shield Ltd had been charged with conspiring to export munitions from the US to Sudan and Iraq without the necessary licences and approvals. The 2 men remain at large and may have ties to or may visit Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Turkey, Russia, Belarus, Sudan and Libya.

<https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/international-arms-dealers-charged-conspiring-unlawfully-export-weapons-and-ammunition>

**US: FORMER NORTH KOREAN DIPLOMAT INDICTED ON SANCTIONS EVASION, CONSPIRACY TO COMMIT BANK FRAUD, AND MONEY LAUNDERING CHARGES**

On 16 April, a news release from US DoJ advised that a former North Korean official serving in Thailand, Myong Ho Ri, had been charged with conspiracy to violate US economic sanctions, bank fraud, and international money laundering.

<https://www.justice.gov/usao-dc/pr/former-north-korean-diplomat-indicted-sanctions-evasion-conspiracy-commit-bank-fraud-and>

**CYPRUS: MONKS TAKE SCANDAL OVER SEIZED €807,000 TO COURT**

On 16 April, the Cyprus Mail reported that the monks suspected of involvement in a money laundering scandal at the Osiou Avakoum monastery had filed an appeal. The appeal seeks to have the €807,000 cash seized in an investigation into dealings at the monastery returned to them and have the bank accounts of 3 monks unfrozen.

<https://cyprus-mail.com/2024/04/16/monks-take-cash-scandal-to-court/>

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