

ACTION NEA-00

INFO	LOG-00	AID-00	CIAE-00	COME-00	DODE-00	DOTI-00	PERC-00
	DS-00	EB-00	EUR-00	FAAE-00	FBIE-00	VCI-00	FRB-00
	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	CAC-00	M-00	VCIE-00	DCP-00
	NSAE-00	OIC-00	OMB-00	NIMA-00	PA-00	SCT-00	DOHS-00
	FMPC-00	SSO-00	SS-00	VO-00	ASDS-00	CBP-00	BBG-00
	EPAE-00	ECA-00	IIP-00	DSCC-00	PRM-00	DRL-00	G-00
	CARC-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00	SWCI-00	/000W		

-----1136AE 220703Z /38

O 220658Z AUG 06
 FM AMEMBASSY RIYADH
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0837
 INFO DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC IMMEDIATE
 NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
 GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
 AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY
 AMCONSUL ISTANBUL PRIORITY
 AMCONSUL JEDDAH PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L RIYADH 006666

DEPT FOR NEA/PPD, NEA/ARPI, NEA/RA, PA/RRU, EB/ESC/TFS,
S/CT, IO/PSC, NSC, TREASURY FOR GLASER, OFAC FOR WERNER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/22/2016
 TAGS: ECON, PREL, PGOV, SA, KFTN, EFIN, TU, PTER, CVIS, KVPR
 SUBJECT: SAUDI TERRORIST FINANCIER YASSIN QADI CLAIMS
 VICTORY AFTER TURKS RELEASE HIS ASSETS

REF: ANKARA 4833

Classified By: DCM Michael Gfoeller for Reasons 1.4 (B) AND (D)

1. (C) SUMMARY: When Turkey's highest court suspended on July 21 a five-year old freeze on Saudi businessman Yassin Qadi's assets, Qadi claimed victory over the U.S. in the local press. His assets remain frozen in Saudi Arabia, to Post's knowledge.

B1

END SUMMARY.

 BACKGROUND

2. (U) The Turkish Government ordered the freeze of Saudi businessman Yassin Qadi's assets in December of 2001, when

UNCLASSIFIED

Qadi was first designated by the U.N. Qadi had been the head of the "Muwafaq" (Blessed Charity) Foundation, which appeared on a USG list of suspected al-Qaeda front organizations and subsequently disbanded. In late 2001, Qadi told Saudi press that "the (U.S.) charges are ridiculous and unfounded allegations." According to a U.S. Treasury press release on January 22, 2004, the SAG supported Qadi's addition to the U.N. "1267" list.

3. (U) Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan publicly backed Qadi. According to press coverage on July 17, Erodogan announced that he personally knew Qadi and was certain that Qadi had no association with any terrorist organization. Erdogan stated in a television interview that Qadi "is a philanthropist." Erdogan's press spokesman stated that "our concerned authorities have no intelligence or document proving the suspicion against Qadi." Turkey's highest court unblocked Qadi's assets in Turkey on July 21, just over two weeks before King Abdullah's visit.

4. (U) Turkey was not the first country to unblock Yassin Qadi's assets; the Swiss Federal Court stated on December 12, 2005 that there was insufficient evidence to show that Qadi knew his money could end up in the hands of a known terrorist organization. At the time of the Swiss court decision, Qadi issued a statement to the local Saudi press saying that the Swiss verdict "categorically concludes" that his previous monetary transfers were "bona fide donations."

QADI CLAIMS VICTORY

5. (U) According to an August 9 interview in the Saudi daily English-language Arab News, Qadi said that "the most important thing now after the Saudi government has formally requested the lifting of my name from the list is to get that done and get all the charges and cases overturned." Qadi blamed the U.S. for his situation, saying, "the problem is the U.S. pressure on the U.N. in freezing assets." Qadi has a pending case with the European Court of Justice requesting that individuals designated by the U.N. be provided with full details of the accusations against them and an opportunity to defend themselves before an independent tribunal. Qadi's British defense firm Carter-Ruck issued a statement on behalf of its Saudi client that "the sanctions regime is vulnerable to abuse of the kind that presently exists, whereby innocent persons such as Mr. Qadi remain on the list indefinitely for purely political reasons." In an August 9 statement to the Arabic language newspaper Al-Watan, Qadi alleged that the

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

U.S. "provided weak evidence for the case" and that "no official charges have been filed against me by any entity anywhere in the world. There are mere suspicions that arose after the 9/11 attacks and at that time my name was added to a list of suspects in the U.S."

6. (C) COMMENT: The Turkish court decision in favor of Qadi received more press attention in the Kingdom than the Swiss decision. Qadi's public claim that the SAG supports his legal efforts is spurious; the SAG froze his assets in the Kingdom.

B1

[REDACTED] Mission would appreciate Embassy Ankara's assessment. END COMMENT.

OBERWETTER

NNNN

UNCLASSIFIED