

U.S. Sanctions Filipino Pastor Apollo Quiboloy Over Alleged Human Rights Violations

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The United States has imposed sanctions on Apollo Quiboloy, a controversial religious leader from the Philippines, citing his involvement in serious human rights abuses. The Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) announced the move as part of a broader effort to address global human rights violations, targeting individuals allegedly involved in abuse, trafficking, and exploitation.

According to the U.S. Department of the Treasury, Quiboloy, founder of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ (KOJC), is accused of overseeing a pattern of abuse that includes sexual exploitation and coercion of church members, including minors. The Treasury's statement claims that Quiboloy and other KOJC leaders used psychological manipulation and threats to maintain control over members of the organization.

The sanctions fall under the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act, a U.S. law that allows for financial and visa restrictions on foreign individuals involved in significant corruption or gross violations of human rights. As a result of the designation, Quiboloy's assets within U.S. jurisdiction are frozen, and American entities are prohibited from conducting any transactions with him.

The action comes in coordination with the U.S. Department of State, which also imposed visa restrictions on Quiboloy for his alleged involvement in "gross violations of human rights," including the trafficking of children. These restrictions extend to certain immediate family members. Secretary of State Antony Blinken emphasized that the U.S. government remains committed to holding perpetrators accountable, regardless of their status or influence.

Quiboloy, who has claimed close ties with former Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte, has previously denied all allegations, framing them as politically motivated. He currently faces multiple criminal charges in the Philippines, including human trafficking and child abuse. U.S. federal authorities have also filed charges against him, and he is listed as a fugitive by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

The sanctions mark a significant diplomatic statement from Washington, reinforcing its stance against international human rights abuses. The Department of the Treasury underscored that such measures aim to support victims and promote accountability for those found responsible for systemic mistreatment.

This move adds to the growing list of international figures sanctioned under the Global Magnitsky program, which continues to be a key tool in the United States' foreign policy and human rights enforcement efforts.