

Press Release

Massachusetts Man Convicted of Violating U.S. Sanctions Against Iran

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Scheme Involved Sending Sensitive U.S. Electronic Components to Iran

A Massachusetts man was convicted yesterday in federal court in Boston following a 14-day jury trial for charges related to a scheme to illegally export sophisticated electronic components from the United States to Iran.

Mahdi Mohammad Sadeghi, 43, a dual U.S.-Iranian national of Natick, Massachusetts, was convicted of one count of conspiracy to violate the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) and the Iranian Transactions and Sanctions Regulations (ITSR); and two counts of violation of the IEEPA and the ITSR. U.S. District Court Judge Indira Talwani scheduled sentencing for Oct. 13.

The defendant was charged by [criminal complaint](#) in [December 2024](#) alongside Mohammad Abedinajafabadi, also known as Mohammad Abedini (Abedini), of Tehran, Iran, and subsequently [indicted](#) by a federal grand jury shortly thereafter. They were again charged in a superseding indictment in December 2025. Abedini remains a fugitive in wanted status.

“This guilty verdict demonstrates the National Security Division’s commitment to holding accountable those who violate U.S. sanctions against Iran,” said Assistant Attorney General for National Security John A. Eisenberg. “For years, Sadeghi conspired to and did send sensitive microelectronic parts from the United States to Iran through a company in Europe despite receiving training on U.S. sanctions and export law. The National Security Division will continue to pursue those who, through unlawful export and deception, threaten our national security.”

“This defendant exploited his access to sophisticated U.S. technology to help funnel sensitive electronic components to Iran in violation of U.S. sanctions and export control laws. These laws exist to protect our national security by preventing these high-tech components from reaching – and being used by – hostile foreign actors and terrorist organizations. This verdict makes clear that individuals who conspire to evade U.S. sanctions will be held accountable,” said U.S. Attorney Leah B. Foley for the District of Massachusetts. “We will continue working closely with our law enforcement partners to identify, investigate and prosecute those who seek to evade these critical safeguards.”

“This verdict should serve as a wake-up call to those in corporate America that if you violate our country’s export laws, you will not get away with it,” said Special Agent in Charge Ted E. Docks of the FBI Boston Field Office. “Mahdi Mohammad Sadeghi learned this the hard way when he conspired to send electronic components to Iran, one of the world’s most infamous state sponsors of terrorism. There’s no question Mr. Sadeghi put his own personal interests ahead of our country’s best interests. Export laws exist for a reason and that’s to protect our national security, here and abroad. Make no mistake, the FBI will continue to defend the homeland by going after anyone who illegally transfers U.S. technology to our adversaries.”

According to court documents, Abedini is the founder and managing director of an Iranian company, San’at Danesh Rahpooyan Aflak Co. (SDRA or SADRA), that manufactures navigation modules used in the IRGC’s military drone program. SDRA’s main business is the sale of a proprietary navigation system—known as the Sepehr Navigation System—to the IRGC, which the United States designated as a foreign terrorist organization (FTO) on April 15, 2019. The primary application of SDRA’s Sepehr Navigation System is for use in Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAVs) – also known as drones – as well as cruise and ballistic missiles.

Sadeghi was employed by a Massachusetts-based microelectronics manufacturer (U.S. Company 1) and was one of the founders of a Massachusetts-based technology company (U.S. Company 2) that specializes in wearable sensors that provide kinetic monitoring for fitness applications.

Sadeghi and, allegedly, Abedini and others conspired to evade U.S. export control and sanctions laws by procuring U.S. origin goods from, U.S. Company 1 and causing them to be exported and supplied to Iran and, in particular, Abedini’s Iranian company, SDRA.

In or around 2016, Sadeghi traveled to Iran to request funding for U.S. Company 2 from the Iranian National Elites Foundation (INEF), which is an Iranian governmental organization whose main purpose is to recognize, organize and support Iran’s elite national talents. In exchange for funding for U.S. Company 2, which Sadeghi’s company ultimately received from the INEF, Sadeghi and others created a second company in Iran (Iranian Company 1). Shortly after forming Iranian Company 1, Sadeghi, through Iranian Company 1, entered into a contract with SDRA for the purchase of SDRA’s technology. On multiple occasions beginning in or around 2016, Sadeghi helped Abedini procure U.S. export-controlled electronic components for reexport to Iran.

Due to U.S. laws restricting exports to Iran, Abedini established a Switzerland front company for SDRA, Illumove SA (Illumove). According to court documents, with Sadeghi’s assistance, Abedini, through Illumove, entered into a contract with U.S. Company 1 to develop a product to evaluate U.S. Company 1’s electronic components, including sophisticated semiconductors. Sadeghi caused U.S.-origin goods to be transferred to Iran, through Illumove, for the benefit of SDRA, including accelerometers, gyroscopes, and inertial measurement units. Certain of the electronic components that Abedini allegedly obtained through Illumove were the same types of electronic components used in SDRA’s Sepehr Navigation System.

Abedini also allegedly provided material support to a foreign terrorist organization, the IRGC Aerospace Force, which is a strategic missile, air and space force. Since at least in or about 2014, SDRA has had multiple projects with the IRGC Aerospace Force, including projects for guided rockets and integrated navigation systems. As alleged, between 2021 and 2022, approximately 99% of SDRA's sales of the Sepehr Navigation System, which are used in IRGC one-way attack drones, were to the IRGC's Aerospace Force.

On Jan. 28, 2024, three U.S. service members were killed, and more than 40 others were injured, in a drone attack by IRGC-backed militants on a military base located in northern Jordan, known as Tower 22. According to court documents, analysis of the drone that was recovered from the site of the attack showed that the drone was an Iranian Shahed UAV and that the navigation system used in the drone was manufactured by Abedini's company.

The charges of violation of the IEEPA and the ITSR, and conspiracy to do so, each provide for a sentence of up to 20 years in prison, three years of supervised release and a fine of up to \$1 million fine. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and statutes which govern the determination of a sentence in a criminal case.

Assistant U.S. Attorneys Jared C. Dolan and Alatheia E. Porter of the District of Massachusetts' National Security Unit; Trial Attorney Leslie Esbrook of the National Security Division's Counterintelligence and Export Control Section, are prosecuting the case.

The details contained in the charging documents are allegations. The remaining defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

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