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PRESS RELEASE

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United States Files Forfeiture Action Against More Than One Million Rounds of Ammunition Enroute from Iran to Yemen

Action is One of the Government's Largest-Ever Forfeiture Actions for Weapons Shipments from Iran

WASHINGTON - The Justice Department today announced the filing of a forfeiture complaint against more than one million rounds of ammunition, thousands of proximity fuses for rocket-propelled grenades, and thousands of pounds of propellant for rocket-propelled grenades that the U.S. Navy seized in transit from Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) to militant groups in Yemen.

"The United States disrupted a major operation by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) to smuggle weapons of war into the hands of a militant group in Yemen. The Justice Department is now seeking the forfeiture of those weapons, including over one million rounds of ammunition and thousands of proximity fuses for rocket-propelled grenades," said Attorney General Merrick B. Garland. "The Justice Department will be relentless in holding accountable those who break our laws and threaten our national security."

"This forfeiture action aims to stop in its tracks yet another attempt by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and its proxies to fuel violence and conflict around the globe," said U.S. Attorney Matthew M. Graves of the District of Columbia. "The U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia will use all our tools, including our jurisdiction to seize and forfeit assets, located abroad, to disrupt the IRGC's efforts to sow discord."

"This forfeiture action prevents ammunition and dangerous weapons from falling into the wrong hands and highlights the importance of our investigative work to deny criminal and terrorist networks their instruments of violence and destruction," said Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro N. Mayorkas. "I am extremely proud of the critical investigative role played by

Homeland Security Investigations alongside our law enforcement and Department of Defense partners in a collaborative whole-of-government effort.”

According to court documents, on or about December 1, 2022, U.S. Central Command forces seized the weapons from a flagless vessel in the Arabian Sea. The seizure included 1.063 million rounds of 7.62mmx54mm ammunition, 24,000 rounds of 12.7mmx99mm ammunition, 6,960 proximity fuses for rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs), and 2,000 kg of propellant for rocket-propelled grenades.

“Today’s outcome should serve as a stark reminder to individuals and entities seeking to illicitly traffic in armaments that could potentially be used in a manner that is contrary to our nation’s interests,” said Principal Deputy Director James R. Ives of the Defense Criminal Investigative Service (DCIS), the investigative arm of the Department of Defense’s Office of Inspector General. “DCIS and our law enforcement partners will work tirelessly to bring to justice those who engage in unlawful weapons proliferation that serves to destabilize communities and countries, and contributes to a range of nefarious activities, including terrorism, organized crime, and violent conflicts.”

The government’s forfeiture action is part of a larger investigation of an Iranian weapons-smuggling network. The network was involved in the illicit trafficking of advanced conventional weapons systems and components by sanctioned Iranian entities that directly support military action by the Houthi movement in Yemen and the Iranian regime’s campaign of terrorist activities throughout the region. The forfeiture complaint alleges a sophisticated scheme by the IRGC to clandestinely ship weapons to entities that pose grave threats to U.S. national security.

This forfeiture action is a product of the U.S. government’s coordinated effort to enforce U.S. sanctions against the IRGC and the Iranian regime and are merely allegations.

HSI’s Washington Field Office and DCIS’s Mid-Atlantic Field Office are leading the larger investigation of the Iranian weapons-smuggling network, with substantial assistance from the U.S. Central Command Forces in conducting the seizure.

The case is being litigated by the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of Columbia and the National Security Division. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Stuart D. Allen, Brian P. Hudak, Rajbir S. Datta, and Anna D. Walker and National Security Division Trial Attorney S. Derek Shugert are litigating the case, with support from Paralegal Specialists Brian Rickers and Angela DeFalco.

On December 1, 2022, U.S. authorities seized:



Alt. text: Picture displays large amount of ammo subject to forfeiture spread across a gray surface.

1.063 million rounds of 7.62 mm ammunition; 24,000 rounds of 12.7 mm ammunition; 6,960 proximity fuses for rocket-propelled grenades; and 2,000 kg (800 boxes/2,500 g) of propellant used to launch rocket-propelled grenades.



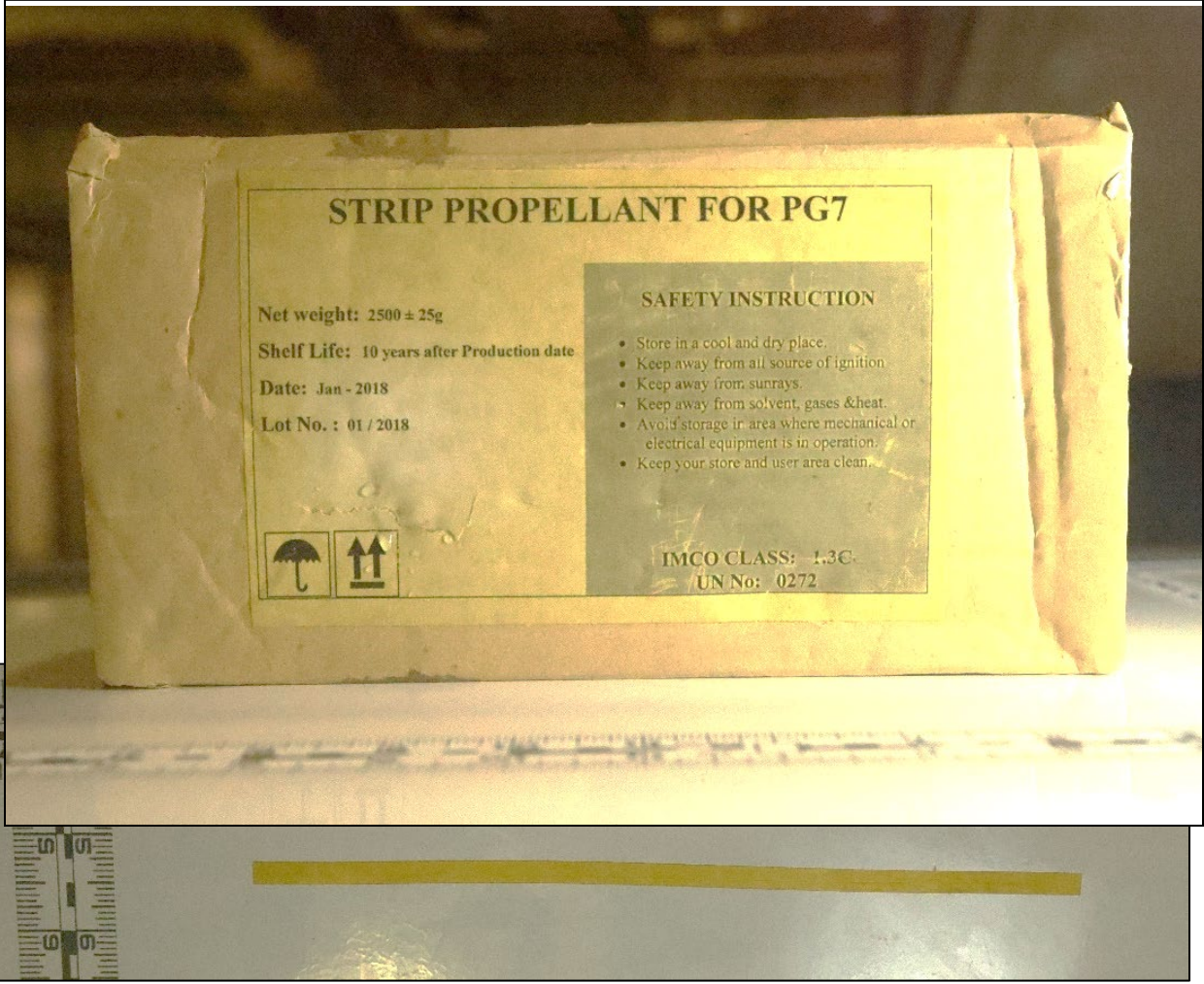
1.063 million rounds of 7.62mm ammunition



24,000 rounds of 12.7mm ammunition



6,960 proximity fuses for rocket-propelled grenades



STRIP PROPELLANT FOR PG7

Net weight: 2500 ± 25g
Shelf Life: 10 years after Production date
Date: Jan - 2018
Lot No. : 01 / 2018



SAFETY INSTRUCTION

- Store in a cool and dry place.
- Keep away from all source of ignition.
- Keep away from sunrays.
- Keep away from solvent, gases & heat.
- Avoid storage in area where mechanical or electrical equipment is in operation.
- Keep your store and user area clean.

IMCO CLASS: 1.3C
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