The U.S. Department of State’s Rewards for Justice (RFJ) program, which is administered by the Diplomatic Security Service, is offering a reward of up to $5 million for information that could lead to the identification or location of Daesch-DRC leader Seka Musa Baluku.

This is indicated by the statement issued on Thursday and March by the U.S. Embassy in the DRC.

“Under the leadership of Seka Musa Baluku, Daesch-DRC has carried out brutal violence against Congolese citizens and regional military forces in eastern DRC’s North Kivu and Ituri provinces. Daesh-DRC, also known as the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) and Madina in Tauheed Wau Mujahedeen, among other names, killed more than 849 civilians in 2020 alone, according to the UN Security Council,” the statement said.

Under Baluku’s command, the RFJ notes, the organization continues to target, kill, maim, rape, and commit other acts of sexual violence and abductions of civilians, including children. The group also recruits and uses children during attacks and forced labor in Beni territory in DRC.

Targeted sanctions

In March 2021, the State Department designated Baluku as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT).

At the same time, the State Department also designated Daesh-DRC as a Foreign Terrorist Organization and SDGT.

“As a result of these designations, among other consequences, all assets and interests in real estate of designated persons that are subject to the jurisdiction of the United States are frozen and U.S. citizens are generally prohibited from transacting with them. Foreign financial institutions that knowingly conduct or facilitate any significant transactions on behalf of Baluku or Daesch-DRC could be subject to U.S. sanctions relating to correspondent accounts or transient accounts,” the document adds.

Furthermore, it constitutes a crime to deliberately provide material support or resources to Daesh-DRC or to attempt to do so or conspire for the same purpose.

The ADF was previously sanctioned by the U.S. Treasury Department and the United

Nations under the UN Security Council’s 2014 DRC sanctions regime for its violence and atrocities.

The U.S. Treasury Department also sanctioned Baluku and five other ADF members in 2019 under the Global Magnitsky Sanctions Program for their role in serious human rights abuses.

In 2020, the UN designated Baluku for the imposition of additional sanctions as part of its sanctions program for the DRC.

“We encourage anyone with information about Seka Musa Baluku to contact RFJ via Signal, Telegram or WhatsApp at +1-202-702-7843. All information will be kept under the seal of strict confidentiality. Relocation may be available,” the statement said.