

# Two former SNC-Lavalin executives charged with bribery, other criminal offences

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More than two years after the overthrow of the dictatorship in Libya, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police have laid criminal charges in their ongoing investigation into SNC-Lavalin Group Inc. and its ties to the regime of the late Moammar Gadhafi.

A former executive vice-president who led SNC's push into North Africa and a former comptroller who was heavily involved in the engineering company's Libyan operations were both charged on Friday with bribery of a foreign public official and fraud over \$5,000.

Sami Bebawi, the head of SNC's international construction division from 1998 until 2006, has also been charged with two counts of money laundering and four counts of possessing property obtained by crime. Mr. Bebawi's whereabouts are unknown to the authorities, the RCMP said in a statement.

Stéphane Roy, a former comptroller at the engineering giant who left the company after it launched an audit into suspicious payments and suspected bribes, is also accused of contravening a special United Nations resolution.

Mr. Roy's alleged violation of the UN resolution relates to payments that he is suspected of making to maintain a Toronto penthouse condominium previously owned by Saadi Gadhafi, the third-born son of the late dictator, a police source said. The UN resolution forbids citizens of member countries to deal with Gadhafi regime financially.

The allegations have not been proven in court.

Lawyers for the two men could not be reached for comment. SNC also declined comment.

Mr. Bebawi was a key hire for SNC that was heralded with a promotional tour of the Middle East and North Africa with the company's then chief executive, Jacques Lamarre. During Mr. Bebawi's tenure, the company secured hundreds of millions of dollars in contracts in Libya and Algeria.

But since the 2011 revolutions in North Africa and SNC's audit of suspicious payments, his legacy at the company has changed dramatically. In May, the RCMP froze many North American assets belonging to him and his family, including six properties worth about \$3.5-million, alleging they were bought with the proceeds of crime.

In an affidavit that was filed in connection with the freezing orders, the RCMP alleged that from 2001 to 2011, SNC funnelled \$118-million to a mysterious British Virgin Islands company, Duvel Securities, that was ostensibly helping the firm secure contracts in Libya. In reality, the RCMP alleges, Duvel was created to make bribe payments to Saadi Gadhafi, and to help Mr. Bebawi and Riadh Ben Aissa, another executive, defraud the company.

Mr. Ben Aissa has been jailed in Switzerland since 2012 on suspicion of fraud, money laundering and corruption.