



Country Reports on Terrorism 2013

Bureau of Counterterrorism

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Chapter 2. Country Reports: Western Hemisphere Overview

ARGENTINA

Overview: Argentina maintained substantial capabilities for confronting terrorism at the federal level, but continued to face challenges in policing its remote northern and northeastern borders – including the Tri-Border Area, where Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay meet – against transnational crimes such as illicit drug and human trafficking, contraband smuggling, and illicit trade-based money laundering. Limited U.S. law enforcement and security cooperation with Argentina focused on information sharing.

2013 Terrorist Incidents: On September 19, a small improvised explosive device detonated in front of the headquarters of the Mutual Help Association of the Argentine National Gendarmerie, lightly wounding two gendarmes. Several groups inconclusively claimed responsibility.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Argentina's Antiterrorism Law of 2007, modified in 2011, serves as a supplement to the criminal code for the prosecution of terrorism cases. Multiple security agencies maintained specialized law enforcement units that have substantial capabilities to respond to terrorist incidents. The Argentine government enacted a program to strengthen coordination between federal and provincial security institutions in August. By the end of 2013, 15 of 23 provinces signed on to the initiative.

The Government of Argentina continued to implement an identification security system (similar to the Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) that uses a fingerprint database created via a national identity card implemented in 2009. This AFIS-type system was deployed at all Argentine international airports, along with a program that requires taking photos and fingerprints of all travelers upon arrival and departure. The Ministry of Interior continued to issue e-passports that include a new passport book numbering system that facilitates the reporting of lost and stolen passports to Interpol.

The Argentine government took steps that it maintained would help determine culpability for the July 18, 1994 terrorist bombing of the Argentine-Jewish Mutual Association (AMIA) community center in Buenos Aires that killed 85 and injured more than 150 people. The foreign ministers of Argentina and Iran met three times in 2013 for dialogues designed to clarify Iran's alleged role in the bombing, for which several former Iranian cabinet-level officials have outstanding Interpol Red Notices. President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner pressed the Iranian government at the

September UN General Assembly to be forthcoming in implementing a “truth commission,” agreed by the two governments in January. Fernandez also requested that the United States raise the AMIA bombing in its own negotiations with Iran. The Argentine-Jewish community and other opinion leaders publicly opposed the Argentina-Iran dialogue, and criticized the government for failing to share information about the talks.

In July, an Argentine court denied the extradition to Peru of Peruvian national Rolando Echarri Pareja, a member of the Movement for Amnesty and Fundamental Rights – an organization with links to the Shining Path. Echarri was detained by Argentine security forces in December 2012.

On December 16, the Argentine Federal Police arrested alleged Shining Path member Oswaldo Ceferino Quispe Caso, who is the subject of an Interpol Red Notice, seeking his arrest for the murder of multiple police officers in Peru.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Argentina is a member of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering in South America (GAFISUD), a FATF-style regional body. Argentina has been on FATF’s “grey list” since 2011; however, in October 2013, FATF noted that Argentina had taken steps towards improving its anti-money laundering/ counterterrorism terrorist finance (AML/CFT) regime. The 2011 revision of the Antiterrorism Law broadened the definition of terrorism and increased monetary fines and prison sentences for crimes linked to terrorist financing. It closed several loopholes in previous legislation, empowered the Argentine Financial Intelligence Unit (UIF) to freeze assets, and criminalized the financing of terrorist organizations, individuals, and acts. At year’s end, this law had been applied almost exclusively to human rights cases dating back to Argentina’s military dictatorship more than 30 years ago. However, in 2013, the UIF administratively froze funds of an individual who was already being prosecuted when they were notified of his association with an international terrorist organization.

While exchange houses are licensed by the Central Bank and subject to some AML/CFT requirements, Argentina has an extensive network of informal exchange houses and individuals that operate outside of government supervision.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the 2014 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume 2, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes: <http://www.state.gov/j/inl/rls/nrcrpt/index.htm> .

Regional and International Cooperation: Argentina participated in the OAS Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism (CICTE), and the Southern Common Market Special Forum on Terrorism. Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay coordinated law enforcement efforts in the Tri-Border Area via their Trilateral Tri-Border Area Command.