



Country Reports on Terrorism 2017

Bureau of Counterterrorism
September 19, 2019

Chapter 1. Country Reports: Western Hemisphere Overview

ARGENTINA

Overview: During 2017, Argentina consolidated plans to redefine its counterterrorism strategy with a focus on its remote northern and northeastern borders, which include the Tri-Border Area where Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay meet, and where suspected terrorism financing networks operate. Robust U.S.-Argentine law enforcement and security cooperation continued in 2017. While no terrorist acts occurred in Argentina during 2017, five Argentine nationals were among the random victims of the October 31 terrorist attack perpetrated by a lone actor in New York.

The UN Executive Director for the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate visited Argentina in 2017 to evaluate Argentina's legislative efforts to combat terrorism.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: In 2017, the Government of Argentina proposed changes to the penal code to reform its counterterrorism legal framework. The proposed legislation would include penal system reforms, a new approach to combating terrorism financing, and a modernization of security and intelligence capabilities. The 1994 bombing of the Argentine Jewish Mutual Association (AMIA) remained in the news and prompted a separate proposal to reform the penal code by incorporating trials in absentia as a mechanism to prosecute fugitives. In December 2017, an Argentine federal judge issued pre-trial detention orders for former Argentine President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner and several former associates accused of treason for allegedly covering up Iran's involvement in the AMIA attack.

Multiple security agencies maintained specialized law enforcement units that have substantial capabilities to respond to criminal activities, including terrorist incidents. The Government of Argentina established a Counter Narcotics Task Force in Salta Province composed of the four Argentine federal law enforcement agencies and provincial forces. As a result of its success, the Ministry of Security (MOS) created a second task force focused on the northeastern provinces covering the Tri-Border Area of Argentina, Paraguay, and Brazil.

Throughout 2017, the Argentine National Directorate for Migration (DNM) improved its capacity to use Advance Passenger Information to identify known or suspected terrorists attempting to enter Argentina via commercial carrier.

By deploying additional technology, personnel, and equipment, the Argentine MOS improved its law enforcement capacity at high-risk ports of entry along its northern border. U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and the Department of State's Export Control and Related Border Security (EXBS) Program further contributed to these efforts through the donation of contraband inspection kits to Argentine Customs officials at the Posadas, Aguas Blancas, and La Quiaca ports of entry. In June, officers from the Argentine Gendarmeria Nacional and Argentine Customs joined their Brazilian counterparts in a four-day International Border Interdiction Seminar sponsored by CBP and EXBS.

Partly in support of the Preventing and Combating Serious Crime agreement signed in 2016 by the MOS and the U.S. Departments of Justice and Homeland Security, MOS and its federal security forces worked to incorporate biometric data into their fight against international terrorism and transnational crime. The MOS incorporated biometrics into its security vetting process to prevent known or suspected terrorists from exploiting its immigration system.

Argentina continued its participation in courses at the International Law Enforcement Academy in San Salvador, El Salvador.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Argentina is a member of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), as well as the Financial Action Task Force of Latin America, a FATF-style regional body. Argentina held the presidency of the FATF from July 2017 through the end of the year; its presidency expires June 30, 2018. Its Financial Information Unit (UIF) is a member of the Egmont Group. Recent reforms have empowered the UIF to act as the lead agency on all financial intelligence matters.

In 2017, Argentine Customs fully re-established its Trade Transparency Unit in partnership with DHS, strengthening Argentina's ability to identify and disrupt trade-based money laundering, smuggling, and other transnational crimes linked to terrorist financing. The Ministry of Security and Homeland Security Investigations co-hosted the country's first-ever Transnational Financial Investigations Seminar, which was attended by 50 participants from more than a dozen Argentine law enforcement, border security, judiciary, and prosecutorial agencies involved in combating money laundering and the financing of terrorism.

Argentina's UIF participated in a June fact-finding mission to gather information on financial activities and illicit finance risks in the Tri-Border Area encompassing Puerto Iguazu, Argentina; Ciudad del Este, Paraguay; and Foz do Iguazu, Brazil. This was a joint project with the U.S. Department of the Treasury, the Argentine, Brazilian, and Paraguayan financial intelligence units, and the Argentine and Paraguayan Central Banks, and supervisory authorities.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes.](#)

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): The Government of Argentina has systematically issued statements of condemnation against major acts of terrorism.

International and Regional Cooperation: The Government of Argentina and the United Nations (UN) Office of Counter-Terrorism signed a Memorandum of Understanding in which the UN pledged its support for Argentina's ongoing efforts to adjust its penal code to comply with "international standards on cyberterrorism and terrorist financing." Argentina participated in the Organization of American States Inter-American Committee against Terrorism 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.

In February 2017, Argentina hosted a Practitioner's Workshop on Countering Transnational Terrorist Groups in the Tri-Border Area. The conference was hosted by the Argentine Federal Intelligence Agency with the sponsorship of the U.S. Departments of State and Justice. The two-day workshop included prosecutors, judges, law enforcement investigators, financial intelligence/sanctions officials, and intelligence officials from the region.