

Overview of State-Sponsored Terrorism

Several of the seven designated state sponsors of terrorism—most notably Libya and Sudan—took significant steps to cooperate in the global war on terrorism—and the liberation of Iraq removed a regime that had long supported terrorist groups. Nevertheless, the other state sponsors—Cuba, Iran, North Korea, and Syria—did not take all the necessary actions to disassociate themselves fully from their ties to terrorism in 2003. Although some in this latter group have improved their performances in some areas, most have also continued the very actions that led them to be declared state sponsors.

The ousting of Saddam Hussein's regime by Coalition forces removed a longstanding sponsor of terrorism in the Middle East region. The President, therefore, suspended on 7 May 2003, all sanctions against Iraq applicable to state sponsors of terrorism, which had the practical effect of putting Iraq on a par with nonterrorist states. However, Iraq became a central front in the global war on terrorism as Coalition and Iraqi authorities faced numerous attacks by a disparate mix of former regime elements, criminals, and some foreign fighters—including Islamic extremists linked to Ansar al-Islam, al-Qaida, and Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi. Increasingly, the line between insurgency and terrorism has been blurred by anti-Coalition attacks that have included suicide car bombings at police stations, an Italian military police base, and the headquarters of the International Red Cross. Members of the foreign terrorist group Mujahedin-e-Khalq (MEK) maintained an active presence in Iraq but were in US custody by the end of the year. The Kurdistan Freedom and Democracy Congress (KADEK, now renamed the Kurdistan People's Congress) continued to attack Turkish targets despite claiming a commitment to nonviolence.

In 2003, the Libyan Government reiterated assurances to the UN Security Council that it had renounced terrorism, undertook to share intelligence on terrorist organizations with Western intelligence services, and took steps to resolve matters related to its past support of terrorism. In September 2003, Libya addressed the requirements of the United Nations relating to the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103, accepting

State Sponsor: Implications

Designating countries that repeatedly support international terrorism (that is, placing a country on the terrorism list) imposes four main sets of US Government sanctions:

1. *A ban on arms-related exports and sales.*
2. *Controls over exports of dual-use items, requiring 30-day Congressional notification for goods or services that could significantly enhance the terrorist-list country's military capability or ability to support terrorism.*
3. *Prohibitions on economic assistance.*
4. *Imposition of miscellaneous financial and other restrictions, including:*
 - *Requiring the United States to oppose loans by the World Bank and other international financial institutions.*
 - *Lifting the diplomatic immunity to allow families of terrorist victims to file civil lawsuits in US courts.*
 - *Denying companies and individuals tax credits for income earned in terrorist-list countries.*
 - *Denial of duty-free treatment for goods exported to the United States.*
 - *Authority to prohibit any US person from engaging in a financial transaction with a terrorism-list government without a Treasury Department license.*
 - *Prohibition of Defense Department contracts above \$100,000 with companies controlled by terrorist-list states.*

responsibility for the actions of its officials and agreeing to a compensation package for the victims' families. As a result, UN sanctions,

suspended since 1999, were lifted. Libya also appeared to be trying to resolve a number of the other claims outstanding for Tripoli-sponsored attacks in the 1980s. On 19 December 2003, Colonel Qadhafi made a historic decision to eliminate Libya's weapons of mass destruction programs and missiles covered by the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR); and he took significant steps to implement this public commitment with the assistance of the United States, United Kingdom, and relevant international organizations.

Sudan's cooperation and information sharing improved markedly, although areas of concern remained. Khartoum sought to deter terrorists from operating from Sudan and took steps to strengthen its legal instruments for fighting terrorism.

The performances of Cuba, Iran, North Korea, and Syria showed little change from previous years. Cuba remained opposed to the US-led Coalition prosecuting the global war on terrorism and continued to provide support to designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations and to host several terrorists and dozens of fugitives from US state and federal justice. Cuba allowed Basque Fatherland and Liberty (ETA) members to reside in the country and provided support and safehaven to members of the Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN). Iran remained the most active state sponsor of terrorism in 2003: Islamic Revolutionary Guard and Ministry of Intelligence and Security personnel were involved in planning and support for terrorist acts. Although Iran detained al-Qaida operatives in 2003, it refused to identify senior members in custody. Tehran continued to encourage anti-Israel activities, both operationally and rhetorically, providing logistic support and training to Lebanese Hizballah and a variety of Palestinian rejectionist groups. North Korea announced it planned to sign several antiterrorism conventions but did not take any substantive steps to cooperate in efforts to combat terrorism. Syria continued to provide support to Palestinian rejectionist groups and allowed them to operate out of Syria, albeit with a lower profile after May 2003. Syria also served as a transshipment point for Iranian supply of Hizballah in Lebanon, and although Syrian officials have publicly condemned terrorism, they continue to distinguish between terrorism and what they view as legitimate resistance against Israel.

Nonetheless, Syria has cooperated with the United States against al-Qaida and other extremist Islamic terrorist groups and has made efforts to limit the movement of anti-Coalition fighters into Iraq.

State sponsors of terrorism impede the efforts of the United States and the international community to fight terrorism. These countries provide a critical foundation for terrorist groups. Without state sponsors, terrorist groups would have a much more difficult time obtaining the funds, weapons, materials, and secure areas they require to plan and conduct operations. The United States will continue to insist that these countries end the support they give to terrorist groups.

Cuba

Cuba remained opposed to the US-led Coalition prosecuting the global war on terrorism and actively condemned many associated US policies and actions throughout 2003. Government-controlled press reporting about US-led military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan were consistently critical of the United States and frequently and baselessly alleged US involvement in violations of human rights. Government propaganda claimed that those fighting for self-determination or against foreign occupation are exercising internationally recognized rights and cannot be accused of terrorism. Cuba's delegate to the UN said terrorism cannot be defined as including acts by legitimate national liberation movements—even though many such groups clearly employ tactics that intentionally target innocent civilians to advance their political, religious, or social agendas. In referring to US policy toward Cuba, the delegate asserted, "acts by states to destabilize other states is a form of terrorism."

The Cuban Government did not extradite nor request the extradition of suspected terrorists in 2003. Cuba continued to provide support to designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations, as well as to host several terrorists and dozens of fugitives from US justice. The Government refuses to return suspected terrorists to countries when it alleges that a receiving government could not provide a fair trial because the charges against the accused are "political." Cuba has publicly used this argument with respect to a number of fugitives from

Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear (CBRN) Terrorism

Production of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their delivery systems constitutes a major threat to international peace and security. The threat is compounded by the interests of terrorists in acquiring WMD. This would undermine the foundations of international order. We pledge to use all means available to avert WMD proliferation and the calamities that would follow.

Joint statement by President George W. Bush, European Council President Konstantinos Simitis, and European Commission President Romano Prodi.

The September 11, 2001, attacks confirmed that terrorists will seek to produce mass casualties whenever they believe it serves their purposes. Although terrorists will probably continue to rely on traditional terrorist tactics, several groups—including al-Qaida—increasingly look to chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear (CBRN) materials as a means to cause mass casualties rivaling or exceeding those of September 11. Troublesome amounts of dangerous materials, and information about how to create and deliver CBRN weapons, remain available to terrorists.

Usama Bin Ladin has said he sees the acquisition of WMD as a “religious duty,” and he has threatened to use such weapons. This rhetoric was underscored by reports that documents retrieved from al-Qaida facilities in Afghanistan contain information on CBRN materials.

However, the threat is not limited to Bin Ladin and al-Qaida. Information indicates that small but growing numbers of other terrorist groups are also interested in CBRN materials. In Europe, French police seized a chemical contamination suit and arrested a terrorist cell in December 2002 that allegedly was planning an attack using chemical agents. At least one related group was making ricin toxin in London at that same time for a future terrorist attack.

CBRN terrorism events to date have generally involved crude and improvised delivery means

that have been only marginally effective. With the exception of the US anthrax attacks, the materials employed in these events also have been crudely manufactured. Other events have involved dual-use materials that have legitimate civilian applications, such as industrial chemicals, poisons, and pesticides, and radiological source materials embedded in legitimate measuring instruments. Although terrorist events involving these materials and improvised delivery systems can cause significant casualties, damage, and disruption, such events pale in comparison to the casualties and damage that could occur if terrorists acquired WMD and the ability to deliver them effectively.

Preventing the proliferation of WMD, their delivery systems, and related materials and technologies has long been a pillar of national security. Since September 11, the prevention of WMD has become an even more urgent global priority. President Bush made this urgency clear in his December 2002 National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction, in which he set out a comprehensive strategy to prevent WMD proliferation, including to terrorists.

In May 2003, President Bush announced the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), a global multilateral arrangement to seize sensitive cargoes that may be in transit to and from states and nonstate actors of proliferation concern. PSI is an interdiction program. PSI participants will explore how best to use counterproliferation tools—diplomatic, intelligence, and operational—to stop proliferation at sea, in the air, and on land.

The United States is working within multilateral nonproliferation regimes and other international forums. Bilaterally, the United States promotes more stringent nonproliferation policies and programs; strengthened export controls; and improved border security to prevent terrorists or their state sponsors from acquiring WMD, their delivery systems, related materials, or technologies. As the President’s National Strategy notes, however, should our diplomatic efforts fall short, we will be prepared to deter and defend against the full range of WMD scenarios.

US justice, including Joanne Chesimard, wanted for the murder of a New Jersey State Trooper in 1973. Havana permitted up to 20 ETA members to reside in Cuba and provided some degree of safehaven and support to members of FARC and the ELN. Bogota was aware of the arrangement and apparently acquiesced; it has publicly indicated that it seeks Cuba's continued mediation with ELN agents in Cuba. A declaration issued by the Cuban Ministry of Foreign Affairs in May 2003 maintained that the presence of ETA members in Cuba arose from a request for assistance by Spain and Panama and that the issue is a bilateral matter between Cuba and Spain. The declaration similarly defended its assistance to the FARC and the ELN as contributing to a negotiated solution in Colombia.

Dozens of fugitives from US justice have taken refuge on the island. In a few cases, the Cuban Government has rendered fugitives from US justice to US authorities. The salient feature of Cuba's behavior in this arena, however, is its refusal to render to US justice any fugitive whose crime is judged by Cuba to be "political."

With respect to domestic terrorism, the Government in April 2003 executed three Cubans who attempted to hijack a ferry to the United States. The three were executed under Cuba's 2001 "Law Against Acts of Terrorism."

Cuba became a party to all 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism in 2001.

Iran

Iran remained the most active state sponsor of terrorism in 2003. Its Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and Ministry of Intelligence and Security were involved in the planning of and support for terrorist acts and continued to exhort a variety of groups that use terrorism to pursue their goals.

Iran's record against al-Qaida remains mixed. After the fall of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, some al-Qaida members fled to Iran where they have found virtual safehaven. Iranian officials have acknowledged that Tehran detained al-Qaida operatives during 2003, including senior members. Iran's publicized presentation of a list to the United

Nations of deportees, however, was accompanied by a refusal to publicly identify senior members in Iranian custody on the grounds of "security." Iran has resisted calls to transfer custody of its al-Qaida detainees to their countries of origin or third countries for further interrogation and trial.

During 2003, Iran maintained a high-profile role in encouraging anti-Israeli activity, both rhetorically and operationally. Supreme Leader Khamenei praised Palestinian resistance operations, and President Khatami reiterated Iran's support for the "wronged people of Palestine" and their struggles. Matching this rhetoric with action, Iran provided Lebanese Hizballah and Palestinian rejectionist groups—notably HAMAS, the Palestine Islamic Jihad, and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine—General Command—with funding, safehaven, training, and weapons. Iran hosted a conference in August 2003 on the Palestinian *intifadah*, at which an Iranian official suggested that the continued success of the Palestinian resistance depended on suicide operations.

Iran pursued a variety of policies in Iraq aimed at securing Tehran's perceived interests there, some of which ran counter to those of the Coalition. Iran has indicated support for the Iraqi Governing Council and promised to help Iraqi reconstruction.

Shortly after the fall of Saddam Hussein, individuals with ties to the Revolutionary Guard may have attempted to infiltrate southern Iraq, and elements of the Iranian Government have helped members of Ansar al-Islam transit and find safehaven in Iran. In a Friday Prayers sermon in Tehran in May, Guardian Council member Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati publicly encouraged Iraqis to follow the Palestinian model and participate in suicide operations against Coalition forces.

Iran is a party to five of the 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism.

Iraq

(Note: Most of the attacks that have occurred during Operation Iraqi Freedom do not meet the longstanding US definition of international terrorism because they were directed at combatants, that is, American and Coalition forces on duty.

Attacks against civilians and against military personnel who at the time of the incident were unarmed and/or not on duty are judged as terrorist attacks.)

On 7 May 2003, President Bush suspended, with respect to Iraq, all sanctions applicable to state sponsors of terrorism, which had the practical effect of putting Iraq on a par with nonterrorist states. Although Iraq is still technically a designated state sponsor of terrorism, its name can be removed from the state sponsors list when the Secretary of State determines that it has fulfilled applicable statutory requirements, which include having a government in place that pledges not to support acts of terrorism in the future.

In 2003, Operation Iraqi Freedom removed Saddam Hussein and his Ba'athist regime from power and liberated Iraq. Since then, however, Iraq has become a central battleground in the global war on terrorism. Former regime elements, who have been conducting insurgent attacks against Coalition forces, have increasingly allied themselves tactically and operationally with foreign fighters and Islamic extremists, including some linked to Ansar al-Islam, al-Qaida, and Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi. The line between insurgency and terrorism has become increasingly blurred as attacks on civilian targets have become more common. By end of the year, Coalition forces had detained more than 300 suspected foreign fighters.

Extremists associated with al-Qaida claimed credit for several suicide car bombings, including attacks in October against the headquarters of the International Committee of the Red Cross and three Baghdad police stations and an attack in November against an Italian military police base in Nasiriyah. Al-Qaida associate Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi—accused of working with Ansar al-Islam—emerged as a key suspect in the deadly bombing of Jordan's Baghdad embassy in August.

After Coalition strikes destroyed Ansar al-Islam's base in northern Iraq in late March, Ansar al-Islam members fled across the border and regrouped in Iran. Counterterrorist operations suggest many of those fighters have since reentered Iraq and are active in anti-Coalition activities. In September, suspected members of Ansar al-Islam were arrested in Kirkuk carrying 1,200 kilograms of TNT.



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Iraqi Umm Mohammed mourns over the coffin of her son, Mohammed Obeid, at a hospital after he was killed in a bombing close to the Jordanian Embassy in Baghdad on 7 August 2003.



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More than 100 Iraqis march to a wreath-laying ceremony outside the UN Headquarters in Baghdad, destroyed on 19 August 2003.

In November, Coalition forces killed two unidentified, high-ranking members of Ansar al-Islam during a raid on a terrorist hideout in Baghdad.

Other terrorist groups maintained a presence in Iraq. Members of the foreign terrorist organization Mujahedin-e-Khalq—which had received military



An Iraqi man dresses his wounds at the Shrine of Imam Ali in Najaf, Iraq, where a car bomb killed at least 82 persons and wounded 229 on 29 August 2003.



An injured Iraqi policeman leaves the al-Kindi Hospital after a double car-bomb suicide attack on a Baghdad hotel, 12 October 2003.



UN staff members are led in prayer by a Muslim Imam and a Christian pastor at the damaged UN headquarters in Baghdad, where a car bomb killed 22 persons on 19 August 2003.



Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, and Annie Vieira de Mello, widow of UN Envoy to Iraq Sergio Vieira de Mello, are pictured at his funeral in Rio de Janeiro. The Envoy's mother, Gilda Vieira de Mello, embraces his coffin, 23 August 2003.

support from the regime of Saddam Hussein—were stripped of their weapons and placed under US military detention. The terrorist group KADEK—renamed the Kurdistan People’s Congress (KHK) in the fall—continued to proclaim its commitment to nonviolence, while launching several attacks against Turkish targets inside Turkey. The presence of several thousand KHK members in northern Iraq underscores the group’s ability to carry out terrorist operations. The KHK periodically threatens to heighten its attacks against Turkey.

Iraq has signed eight of the 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism and is a party to five.

Libya

In 2003, Libya held to its practice in recent years of curtailing support for international terrorism, although Tripoli continues to maintain contact with some past terrorist clients. Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi and other Libyan officials continued their efforts to identify Tripoli with the international community in the war on terrorism. During an interview in January, Qadhafi stated that Libyan intelligence had been sharing information on al-Qaida and other Islamic extremists with Western intelligence services and characterized such cooperation as “irrevocable.” In a speech marking the 34th anniversary of his revolution, he declared that Libya and the United States had a common interest in fighting al-Qaida and Islamic extremism.

Regarding its own terrorist past, Libya took long-awaited steps in 2003 to address the UN requirements arising out of the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 but remained embroiled in efforts to settle international political and legal disputes stemming from other terrorist attacks Tripoli conducted during the 1980s.

In August, as required by the UN Security Council, the Libyan Government officially notified the UN Security Council that it accepted responsibility for the actions of its officials in connection with Pan Am Flight 103 (Abdel Basset Ali al-Meghrahi, a Libyan intelligence agent, was convicted by a Scottish court in 2001 for his role in the bombing). Libya further confirmed that it had made arrangements for the payment of appropriate compensation to the families of the victims: a total

of up to \$2.7 billion or \$10 million for each victim. Further, Libya renounced terrorism and affirmed its adherence to a number of UN declarations and international conventions and protocols that the Libyan Government had signed in the past. Libya also pledged to cooperate in good faith with any further requests for information in connection with the Pan Am Flight 103 investigation. In response, the Security Council voted on 12 September to permanently lift sanctions that it had imposed against Libya in 1992 and suspended in 1999.

In August, the Qadhafi Foundation pledged to compensate victims wounded in the bombing in 1986 of La Belle Discotheque, a Berlin nightclub, after a German court issued its written opinion finding that the Libyan intelligence service had orchestrated the attack. The original trial had concluded in 2001 with the conviction of four individuals for carrying out the attack, in which two US servicemen and a Turkish woman were killed and 229 persons wounded. Leaders of the Qadhafi Foundation indicated, however, that their compensation was a humanitarian gesture that did not constitute Libyan acceptance of responsibility. In September, the German Government indicated that it was engaged in talks with Libyan representatives, but at the end of the year, no announcement had yet been made regarding a final compensation deal.

On 19 December, Colonel Qadhafi announced that Libya would eliminate its weapons of mass destruction programs and MTCR-class missiles and took immediate steps to implement this public commitment with the assistance of the United States, United Kingdom, and relevant international organizations. The Libyan decision to reveal its programs to the international community shed important light on the international network of proliferators intent on subverting nonproliferation regimes.

Libya is a party to all 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism.

North Korea

The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) is not known to have sponsored any terrorist acts since the bombing of a Korean Airlines flight in 1987.

Following the attacks of September 11, Pyongyang began laying the groundwork for a new position on terrorism by framing the issue as one of “protecting the people” and replaying language from the Joint US-DPRK Statement on International Terrorism of October 2000. It also announced to a visiting EU delegation that it planned to sign the international conventions against terrorist financing and the taking of hostages and would consider acceding to other antiterrorism agreements.

At a summit with Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi in Pyongyang in September 2002, National Defense Commission Chairman Kim Jong Il acknowledged the involvement of DPRK “special institutions” in the kidnapping of Japanese citizens and said that those responsible had already been punished. Pyongyang has allowed the return to Tokyo of five surviving abductees and is negotiating with Tokyo over the repatriation of their family members remaining in North Korea. The DPRK also has been trying to resolve the issue of harboring Japanese Red Army members involved in a jet hijacking in 1970—allowing the repatriation of several family members of the hijackers to Japan.

Although it is a party to six international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism, Pyongyang has not taken substantial steps to cooperate in efforts to combat international terrorism.

Sudan

Sudan in 2003 deepened its cooperation with the US Government to investigate and apprehend extremists suspected of involvement in terrorist activities. Overall, Sudan’s cooperation and information sharing has improved markedly, producing significant progress in combating terrorist activity, but areas of concern remain.

Domestically, Khartoum stepped up efforts to disrupt extremist activities and deter terrorists from operating in Sudan. In May, Sudanese authorities raided a probable terrorist training camp in Kurdufan State, arresting more than a dozen extremists and seizing illegal weapons. The majority of the trainees captured were Saudi citizens and were extradited to Saudi Arabia to face charges in accordance with a bilateral agreement. In June, the Sudanese Government detained

several individuals linked to the publication of an alleged “hit list” attributed to the terrorist group al-Takfir wa al-Hijra. The list called for the killing of 11 prominent Sudanese Christian and leftist politicians, jurists, journalists, and others. In September, a Sudanese court convicted a Syrian engineer and two Sudanese nationals of training a group of Saudis, Palestinians, and others to carry out attacks in Iraq, Eritrea, Sudan, and Israel. A court statement said the Syrian was training others to carry out attacks against US forces in Iraq.

There were no international terrorist attacks in Sudan during 2003. Khartoum throughout the year placed a high priority on the protection of US citizens and facilities in Sudan. In November, the authorities stepped up their efforts to protect the US Embassy, which temporarily suspended operations in response to a terrorist threat that was deemed credible. Earlier in the year, Sudanese authorities closed a major Khartoum thoroughfare to enhance the Embassy’s security and further upgraded security measures during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The Sudanese Government also took steps in 2003 to strengthen its legislative and bureaucratic instruments for fighting terrorism by ratifying the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. Sudan also ratified the African Union’s Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism and the Convention of the Organization of the Islamic Conference on Combating Terrorism. In June, Sudanese Minister of Justice Ali Mohamed Osman Yassin issued a decree establishing an office for combating terrorism. In 2003, Sudan signed a counterterrorism cooperation agreement with the Algerian Government, which during the 1990s accused Sudan of harboring wanted Algerian terrorists. Sudan also signed a counterterrorism agreement with Yemen and Ethiopia.

In response to ongoing US concern over the presence in Sudan of the Islamic Resistance Movement (HAMAS) and the Palestine Islamic Jihad (PIJ), Foreign Minister Mustafa Osman Ismail in June said the Sudanese Government would limit HAMAS to conducting political activities. Visiting Sudanese peace talks in Kenya in October, Secretary Powell said Sudan had yet to shut down the Khartoum offices of HAMAS and the PIJ.

President Umar al-Bashir in an interview with Al-Arabiya television maintained that the Sudanese Government could not expel HAMAS because it has a political relationship with the group and stated there was no PIJ office in Sudan.

Responding to press reports that its Sudan office had closed, HAMAS officials in Khartoum and Gaza in November said that the office remained open but that the main representative had been replaced.

Sudan also has participated in regional efforts to end its long-running civil war—a US policy priority that complements the US goal of denying terrorists safehaven in Sudan.

Sudan is a party to all 12 of the international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism.

Syria

The Syrian Government in 2003 continued to provide political and material support to Palestinian rejectionist groups. HAMAS, the PIJ, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine—General Command, and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine operate from Syria, although they have lowered their public profiles since May, when Damascus announced that the groups had voluntarily closed their offices. Many of these groups claimed responsibility for anti-Israeli terrorist acts in 2003; the Syrian Government insists that their Damascus offices undertake only political and informational activities. Syria also continued to permit Iran to use Damascus as a transshipment point for resupplying Hizballah in Lebanon.

Syrian officials have publicly condemned international terrorism but continue to make a distinction between terrorism and what they consider to be the legitimate armed resistance of Palestinians in the Occupied Territories and of Lebanese Hizballah. The Syrian Government has not been implicated directly in an act of terrorism since 1986.

During the past five years, there have been no acts of terrorism against US citizens in Syria. Despite tensions between the United States and Syria about the war in Iraq and Syrian support for terrorism, Damascus has repeatedly assured the United States that it will take every possible measure to protect US citizens and facilities. Damascus has cooperated with the United States and other foreign governments against al-Qaida, the Taliban, and other terrorist organizations and individuals; it also has discouraged signs of public support for al-Qaida, including in the media and at mosques.

In 2003, Syria was instrumental in returning a sought-after terrorist planner to US custody. Since the end of the war in Iraq, Syria has made efforts to tighten its borders with Iraq to limit the movement of anti-Coalition foreign fighters into Iraq, a move that has not been completely successful.

Syria is a party to seven of the 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism.