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# Patterns of Global Terrorism: 1996

By

U.S. Department of State

[The following is a reprint of selections from the annual report on international terrorism which was released on 30 April 1997 by the Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, U.S. Department of State. The selections include the introduction to the report, the summary of the year in review, and an overview of state-sponsored terrorism. The full report is available on the world-wide web <<http://www.state.gov/www/global/terrorism/1996report/1996index.html>> and may also be obtained from the Government Printing Office. In addition to the material included below, the full report provides regional overviews of terrorism, a chronology of significant 1996 terrorist incidents, and background information on terrorist groups.]

## INTRODUCTION

Terrorism in 1996 continued to cause grave concern and disruption in scores of countries. Combating this menace remains a very high priority for the United States and many other nations. But finding clear "patterns" in this form of political violence is becoming more difficult.

The Department of State's annual *Patterns of Global Terrorism* [report] focuses primarily on international terrorism involving citizens or territory of two or more states. It also describes but does not provide statistics on domestic terrorism abroad, which is an even more widespread phenomenon. The number of international terrorist incidents has fallen, from a peak of 665 in 1987, to 296 in 1996, a 25-year low. Moreover, about two-thirds of these attacks were minor acts of politically motivated violence against commercial targets, which caused no deaths and few casualties.

Yet while the incidence of international terrorism has dropped sharply in the last decade, the overall threat of terrorism remains very serious. The death toll from acts of international terrorism rose from 163 in 1995 to 311 in 1996, as the trend continued toward more ruthless attacks on mass civilian targets and the use of more powerful bombs. The threat of terrorist use of materials of mass destruction is an issue of growing concern, although few such attempts or attacks have actually occurred. Finally, domestic terrorism, in countries such as Algeria, India, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan, appears to be growing and is more serious, in gross terms, than international terrorism.

It is clear, in any case, that the damage to society from terrorism is very high, and not just in terms of the dead and wounded. Terrorism, by definition, is aimed at a wider audience than its immediate victims. Terrorists proved again in 1996 that they can command a worldwide audience for their crimes and cause great disruption, fear, and economic damage. A dramatic truck bombing of the Al Khubar apartment complex near Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, in June killed 19 U.S. airmen, wounded 240 other U.S. citizens, and resulted in many other casualties. A series of suicide bombings in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem by extremist groups aiming to destroy the Middle East peace process killed more than 60 and led to early elections and a change of government in Israel. And at the year's end, Marxist terrorists in Lima, Peru, grabbed the spotlight by seizing the Japanese Ambassador's residence and hundreds of hostages.

Terrorism by religious fanatics and groups manipulating religion, especially Islam, for political purposes continued to dominate international terrorism in 1996. Organized groups

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Aviv and Jerusalem, and the al-Gama'at al-Islamiyya, which continued acts of terror in Egypt, remained active and dangerous. And freelance, transnational terrorists, many of whom were trained in Afghanistan and are backed by international terrorist financiers such as the Saudi dissident Usama Bin Ladin, are a growing factor. Ethnic terrorism in such places as Chechnya, Tajikistan, and Sri Lanka took a heavy toll, and the Kurdistan Workers' Party maintained its campaign of terror against Turkey.

Although the variety and complexity of terrorism and its dynamic quality are challenges to defining clear patterns, there has been a heartening trend among governments to condemn terrorism absolutely, irrespective of motive. One positive result of this growing policy of zero tolerance for terrorism is a decline in state-sponsored terrorism, although Iran, the primary state sponsor, has not been deterred. As terrorism becomes more global, cooperation among states is indispensable. President Clinton has given high priority to counterterrorism in our diplomatic agenda, and the United States consults with dozens of governments and participates in a growing variety of multilateral initiatives against terrorism.

Six international counterterrorist meetings were held in 1996:

— The Philippines and Japan both hosted Asia and Pacific conferences on terrorism, the first of their kind in Asia. The United States participated in both.

— In March at the "Summit of Peacemakers," held at Sharm ash Shaykh, Egypt, and co-hosted by President Clinton and President Mubarak, 29 delegations pledged to fight terrorism and to support the Middle East peace process. A follow-up Working Group of experts from these countries met thereafter in Washington.

— In April Peru hosted the Inter-American Specialized Conference on Terrorism in Lima, which confirmed the principle that terrorism, regardless of political motive, is a serious crime.

— In July 1996, ministers of the G-7 and Russia met in Paris in response to a request from the G-7 summit in Lyon the previous year and endorsed 25 specific measures to improve security, prosecute and punish terrorists, tighten border controls, and prevent terrorist fundraising. They also called for a new international treaty outlawing terrorist bombings. The ministers also adopted further steps to protect mass transportation (both air and ground) and enhance law enforcement and counterterrorist capabilities in many areas.

The counterterrorist policy of the United States stresses three general rules:

— **First**, make no deals with terrorists and do not submit to blackmail.

— **Second**, treat terrorists as criminals, pursue them aggressively, and apply the rule of law.

— **Third**, apply maximum pressure on states that sponsor and support terrorists by imposing economic, diplomatic, and political sanctions and by urging other states to do likewise.

The United States took several steps in 1996 to sharpen our tools against terrorism in this country and abroad. In April the President signed into law the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996. Among its many sections are a ban on fundraising in the United States by terrorist organizations to be designated by the Secretary of State, and improved means for excluding and deporting terrorists from the United States. Last August the President signed the Iran and Libya Sanctions Act of 1996, which imposes sanctions on foreign companies that invest in the development of Iran's or Libya's petroleum resources. The purpose is to help deny revenues that could be used to finance international terrorism.

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The United States has trained more than 19,000 foreign law enforcement officials from more than 80 countries in such areas as airport security, bomb detection, maritime security, VIP protection, hostage rescue, and crisis management. We also conduct a research and development program to use modern technology to defeat terrorists.

We can be proud of the successes we have achieved, but we cannot be complacent. Terrorism is a dynamic, moving target. Our defenses and deterrence mechanisms must be aggressive and flexible. As President Clinton declared in April: "We will never surrender to terror. America will never tolerate terrorism. America will never abide terrorists. Wherever they come from, wherever they go, we will go after them. We will not rest until we have brought them all to justice."

## LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

This report is submitted in compliance with Title 22 of the United States Code, Section 2656f(a), which requires the Department of State to provide Congress a full and complete annual report on terrorism for those countries and groups meeting the criteria of Section (a)(1) and (2) of the Act. As required by legislation, the report includes detailed assessments of foreign countries where significant terrorist acts occurred, and countries about which Congress was notified during the preceding five years pursuant to Section 6(j) of the Export Administration Act of 1979 (the so-called terrorism list countries that have repeatedly provided state support for international terrorism). In addition, the report includes all relevant information about the previous year's activities of individuals, terrorist organizations, or umbrella groups known to be responsible for the kidnapping or death of any U.S. citizen during the preceding five years, and groups known to be financed by state sponsors of terrorism.

In 1996 Congress amended the reporting requirements contained in the above-referenced law. The amended law requires the Department of State to report on the extent to which other countries cooperate with the United States in apprehending, convicting, and punishing terrorists responsible for attacking U.S. citizens or interests. The law also requires that this report describe the extent to which foreign governments are cooperating, or have cooperated during the previous five years, in preventing future acts of terrorism. As permitted in the amended legislation, the Department is submitting such information to Congress in a classified annex to this unclassified report.

## DEFINITIONS

No one definition of terrorism has gained universal acceptance. For the purposes of this report, however, we have chosen the definition of terrorism contained in Title 22 of the United States Code, Section 2656f(d). That statute contains the following definitions:

— The term "terrorism" means premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant<sup>1</sup> targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience.

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<sup>1</sup> For purposes of this definition, the term noncombatant is interpreted to include, in addition to civilians, military personnel who at the time of the incident are unarmed and/or not on duty. For example, in past reports we have listed as terrorist incidents the murders of the following US military personnel: Col. James Rowe, killed in Manila in April 1989; Capt. William Nordeen, US defense attache killed in Athens in June 1988; the two servicemen killed in the La Belle discotheque bombing in West Berlin in April 1986; and the four off-duty US Embassy Marine guards killed in a cafe in El Salvador in June 1985. We also consider as acts of terrorism attacks on military installations or on armed military personnel when a state of military hostilities does not exist at the site, such as bombings against US bases in the Persian Gulf, Europe, or elsewhere.

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— The term “international terrorism” means terrorism involving citizens or the territory of more than one country.

— The term “terrorist group” means any group practicing, or that has significant subgroups that practice, international terrorism. The U.S. Government has employed this definition of terrorism for statistical and analytical purposes since 1983.

Domestic terrorism is probably a more widespread phenomenon than international terrorism. Because international terrorism has a direct impact on U.S. interests, it is the primary focus of this report. However, the report also describes, but does not provide statistics on, significant developments in domestic terrorism.

## NOTE

Adverse mention in this report of individual members of any political, social, ethnic, religious, or national group is not meant to imply that all members of that group are terrorists. Indeed, terrorists represent a small minority of dedicated, often fanatical, individuals in most such groups. It is those small groups-and their actions-that are the subject of this report.

Furthermore, terrorist acts are part of a larger phenomenon of politically inspired violence, and at times the line between the two can become difficult to draw. To relate terrorist events to the larger context, and to give a feel for the conflicts that spawn violence, this report will discuss terrorist acts as well as other violent incidents that are not necessarily international terrorism.

Ambassador Philip C. Wilcox, Jr.  
Coordinator for Counterterrorism

## THE YEAR IN REVIEW

During 1996 there were 296 acts of international terrorism, the lowest annual total in 25 years and 144 fewer than in 1995. In contrast, the total number of casualties was one of the highest ever recorded: 311 persons killed and 2,652 wounded. A single bombing in Sri Lanka killed 90 persons and wounded more than 1,400 others.

Two-thirds of the attacks were bombings or firebombings. Only about one-sixth of the total number (45) resulted in fatalities. Approximately one-fourth (73) were anti-U.S. attacks, and most of those were low-intensity bombings of oil pipelines in Colombia owned jointly by the Government of Colombia and Western companies but seen as U.S. targets by Colombian terrorists.

Approximately one in four attacks (76) recorded last year were part of an ongoing terrorist campaign being waged by the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) in Germany. Most of these attacks were minor bombings that produced no casualties and caused little damage. The level of PKK attacks during 1996 was significantly lower than in previous years.

Among the significant attacks during the year:

— On 25 June a large fuel truck exploded outside the U.S. military's Khubar Towers housing facility near Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, killing 19 U.S. citizens and wounding some 500 persons.

— On 17 December terrorists belonging to Peru's Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA) took over the Japanese Ambassador's residence in Lima during a diplomatic reception, taking some 500 persons hostage, including eight U.S. officials who were released after

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five days. The group's primary demand was the release of convicted MRTA terrorists from prison. At year's end, 81 hostages remained in captivity, and attempts to resolve the siege peacefully were ongoing.

— There were several deadly bombings in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem by the Islamic Resistance Movement (HAMAS). On 25 February a suicide bomber blew up a bus in Jerusalem, killing 26 persons, including three U.S. citizens, and injuring at least 80 others, including another three U.S. citizens. On 3 March a suicide bomber detonated an explosive device on a bus in Jerusalem, killing 19 persons, including six Romanians, and injuring six others. On 4 March a suicide bomber detonated an explosive device outside Dizengoff Center, a large shopping mall in Tel Aviv, killing 20 persons and injuring 75 others, including two U.S. citizens.

— The deadliest attack of the year occurred in Sri Lanka on 31 January, when terrorists belonging to the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) rammed an explosives-laden truck into the Central Bank in the heart of downtown Colombo, killing 90 persons and wounding more than 1,400 others. Among the wounded were two U.S. citizens, six Japanese, and one Dutch national. The explosion caused major damage to the Central Bank building, an American Express office, the Intercontinental Hotel, and several other buildings.

— On 9 February a bomb detonated in a parking garage in the Docklands area of London, killing two persons and wounding more than 100 others, including two U.S. citizens. The Irish Republican Army claimed responsibility for the attack.

Twenty-four U.S. citizens died in international terrorist attacks last year, more than twice the number that died in 1995. Nineteen were killed in the 25 June truck bombing of the U.S. military housing facility near Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. This was the highest number of U.S. citizens killed in a single act of international terrorism since the 1988 bombing of Pan Am 103, in which 189 U.S. citizens died. Five U.S. citizens died in bus bombings and drive-by shootings in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. Two hundred and fifty U.S. citizens were wounded in acts of terrorism around the world last year, five times the number injured in 1995.

There were no international terrorist attacks in the United States during the year.

On 19 July a U.S. district court in Washington, DC, convicted Omar Mohammed Ali Rezaq of air piracy in connection with the 1985 terrorist hijacking of Egypt Air Flight 648. The Athens-to-Cairo flight was diverted to Malta by Rezaq and two other hijackers. On the plane, Rezaq separated U.S. and Israeli passengers from the others and shot them in the head at point blank range. One U.S. citizen and one Israeli died; two U.S. citizens and one Israeli survived their wounds. When Egyptian commandos stormed the plane, dozens more died. Rezaq, the sole surviving hijacker, was tried and convicted in Malta on various charges and sentenced to 25 years in prison, but he was released after serving only seven years. With cooperation from the Governments of Nigeria and Ghana, FBI agents arrested Rezaq in Nigeria in 1993 and brought him to the United States to be tried for air piracy. Rezaq, a member of the Abu Nidal organization, claimed at his trial that he had suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder and was therefore insane at the time he hijacked the airplane. He further claimed that, because of his insanity, he could not be held criminally liable for his conduct. The jury found Rezaq guilty and rejected his claim that he was insane at the time he committed the crime. In October Rezaq was sentenced to life imprisonment.

On 5 September, Ramzi Ahmed Yousef, Abdul Hakim Murad, and Wali Khan Amin Shah were convicted of a terrorist conspiracy to plant bombs aboard a number of U.S. passenger airliners operating in East Asia. Yousef also was found guilty of placing a bomb aboard a Philippine airliner bound for Tokyo in December 1995 that exploded in midair, killing one person and injuring several others. This bombing was intended as a "trial run" for the planned

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multiple attacks against U.S. aircraft, which were to take place over two days. Yousef is awaiting trial on charges that he was involved in the bombing of the World Trade Center in 1993.

On 22 September an Asian country turned over to U.S. custody suspected Japanese Red Army terrorist Tsutomu Shirosaki to stand trial for a 1986 mortar attack against the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta, Indonesia.

## OVERVIEW OF STATE-SPONSORED TERRORISM

The United States actively promotes international cooperation in condemning state sponsorship of terrorism and in bringing maximum pressure to bear against state sponsors. The Secretary of State has designated seven countries as state sponsors of terrorism: Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Sudan, and Syria.

Although U.S. and international pressure has led to a decline in active state sponsorship of terrorism in recent years, more can and should be done to restrain those states that engage in terrorism themselves, or assist terrorists by providing sanctuary, arms, training, logistic support, financial backing, or diplomatic facilities. A range of bilateral and multilateral sanctions are in place to discourage these countries from continuing their support for international terrorism.

Cuba no longer is able to support actively armed struggle in Latin America or other regions of the world because of its severe economic problems. Although there is no current evidence that Cuba was directly involved in sponsoring specific acts of terrorism in 1996, it continues to provide safehaven for several international terrorists and maintains close ties to other state sponsors.

Iran, the most active state sponsor of terrorism today, continues to provide direction and support to terrorist groups, including Hizballah in Lebanon. Iran continues to assassinate dissidents abroad and also provides support to other terrorist groups that oppose Israel and the Middle East peace process. Iran has not withdrawn the fatwa against the life of Salman Rushdie.

Iraq's ability to carry out terrorism abroad has been curbed by UN sanctions. As events during 1996 clearly demonstrated, however, Saddam Hussein's regime continues to murder dissidents throughout Iraq and target foreign and local relief personnel in the northern part of the country.

Terrorism by Libya has been sharply reduced by UN sanctions imposed after the bombings of Pan Am Flight 103 (1988) and UTA Flight 772 (1989). Libya still evades its obligation to hand over those indicted for these crimes.

Although North Korea cannot be conclusively linked to any international terrorist attacks since 1987, it continues to provide sanctuary to Japanese Red Army members.

Sudan was not directly involved in any acts of international terrorism in 1996 and took some positive steps to distance itself from its past support for terrorism. At the same time, Sudan continued to serve as a sanctuary and training center for several international terrorist groups. Moreover, it has not complied with the UN Security Council's demand that it turn over the three suspects implicated in the 1995 assassination attempt against President Mubarak.

There is no evidence of direct Syrian Government involvement in acts of international terrorism since 1986. The United States continues to urge Syria to banish terrorist groups that

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maintain a presence in Syria or in Syrian-controlled territory in Lebanon. Until Syria does so, it will remain on the list of state sponsors.

## CUBA

Cuba no longer actively supports armed struggle in Latin America and other parts of the world. In earlier years the Castro regime provided significant levels of military training, weapons, funding, and guidance to numerous leftist extremists. Havana's focus now is to forestall an economic collapse; the government actively continued to seek the upgrading of diplomatic and trade relations with other nations.

Although there is no current evidence that Cuban officials were directly involved in sponsoring specific acts of terrorism last year, Cuba is still a safehaven for several international terrorists, maintains close relations with other state sponsors of terrorism, and remains in contact with numerous leftist insurgent groups in Latin America.

A number of Basque Fatherland and Liberty (ETA) terrorists who sought sanctuary in Cuba several years ago continue to live on the island. Some of the more than 40 Chilean terrorists from the Manuel Rodriguez Patriotic Front (FPMR) who escaped from a Chilean prison in 1990 also probably still reside in Cuba. Colombia's two main guerrilla groups, the revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN), reportedly maintain representatives in Havana.

Cuba also provides safehaven to several nonterrorist U.S. fugitives.

## IRAN

Iran remained the premier state sponsor of terrorism in 1996. It continued to be involved in the planning and execution of terrorist acts by its own agents and by surrogates such as Lebanese Hizballah and continued to fund and train known terrorist groups.

Tehran conducted at least eight dissident assassinations outside Iran in 1996. In May 1996 Reza Mazlouman, a government official under the Shah, was murdered in Paris by an Iranian resident of Germany with alleged ties to Iran's Ministry of Intelligence and Security (MOIS). The suspect was extradited to France by Germany. Seven other dissidents were assassinated by Iran in 1996 in Turkey and northern Iraq. Iran's primary targets are members of the regime's main opposition groups, the Mujahedin-e Khalq (MEK) and the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran (KDPI), as well as former officials of the late Shah's government who speak out against the clerical regime.

Iran continued to provide support-including money, weapons, and training-to a variety of terrorist groups, such as Hizballah, HAMAS, and the Palestine Islamic Jihad (PIJ). It continued to oppose any recognition of Israel and to encourage violent rejection of the Middle East peace process. For example, Iranian Vice President Habibi met with HAMAS leaders in Damascus and praised their successful efforts immediately following the February bombings in Israel. HAMAS claimed responsibility for two more bombings in Israel the following week.

During a routine customs inspection of an Iranian vessel in Antwerp in March, Belgian authorities discovered a disassembled mortar-like weapon hidden in a shipment of pickles. The shipment was consigned to an Iranian merchant living in Germany. Iranian dissidents claim that the mortar was intended for use in an assassination attempt against Iranian exiles in Europe.

Testimony in the three-year-long trial of an Iranian and four Lebanese for the Iran-sponsored killing of Iranian Kurdish dissidents in Berlin's Mykonos restaurant in 1992 concluded in

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late 1996. German authorities issued an arrest warrant in March for Ali Fallahian, Iran's Intelligence Minister. In the fall, former Iranian President Abolhassan Bani Sadr and two other witnesses testified against Iran. In final statements in late November, German prosecutors charged Iranian Supreme Leader Khamenei and Iranian President Rafsanjani with approving the operation. (Guilty verdicts for four of the accused were announced in April 1997.)

Iranian leaders have consistently denied being able to revoke the *fatwa* against Salman Rushdie's life, in effect for nearly eight years, claiming that revocation is impossible because the author of the fatwa is deceased. There is no indication that Tehran is pressuring the 15 Khordad Foundation to withdraw the \$2 million reward it is offering to anyone who will kill Rushdie.

In addition, Iran provides safehaven to elements of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), a Turkish separatist group that has conducted numerous terrorist attacks in Turkey and throughout Europe. Although Turkey and Iran agreed to a joint operation in mid-October to remove the PKK from the border region, Iran reportedly failed to cooperate in a meaningful way.

Iran's terrorist network in the Persian Gulf remained active in 1996. The Government of Bahrain announced in June the discovery of a local Hizballah group of Bahraini Shiites who had been trained and sponsored by Iran in an effort to overthrow the ruling al-Khalifa family.

## IRAQ

Iraq has not managed to recover its pre-Gulf war international terrorist capabilities, but it is slowly rebuilding its intelligence network. Acts of political violence continued in northern Iraq, and intra-Kurdish fighting in August led to an increased number of operatives there under Baghdad's control. At the time of its military attack on Irbil, Iraq reportedly murdered more than 100 Iraqis associated with the dissident Iraqi National Congress (INC). Later, Baghdad renewed its threat to charge foreign relief personnel and other Iraqi staff with "espionage," a crime punishable by death.

Iraq continues to provide safehaven to a variety of Palestinian rejectionist groups, including the Abu Nidal organization (ANO), the Arab Liberation Front (ALF), and the former head of the now defunct 15 May Organization, Abu Ibrahim, who masterminded several bombings of U.S. aircraft. The Mujahedin-e Khalq (MEK), a terrorist group that opposes the current Iranian regime, also is based in Iraq.

In mid-November a Jordanian diplomatic courier was murdered in Iraq on the road from Amman to Baghdad, and his diplomatic pouch stolen. The perpetrators of the act have yet to be identified. The diplomatic bag contained 250 new Jordanian passports, which could be used by terrorist operatives for travel under cover.

The terrorist Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) continues to attempt to use northern Iraq as a safehaven and base for attacks on Turkey.

## LIBYA

The end of 1996 marked the fifth year of the Libyan regime's refusal to comply with the demands of UN Security Council Resolution 731. This measure was adopted following the indictments in November 1991 of two Libyan intelligence agents for the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 in 1988. UNSCR 731 ordered Libya to turn over the two Libyan bombing suspects for trial in the United States or the United Kingdom, pay compensation to the victims, cooper-

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ate in the ongoing investigations into the Pan Am 103 and UTA Flight 772 bombings, and cease all support for terrorism.

UN Security Council Resolution 748 was adopted in April 1992 as a result of Libya's refusal to comply with the demands of UNSCR 731. UNSCR 748 imposed sanctions that embargoed Libya's civil aviation and military procurement efforts and required all states to reduce Libya's diplomatic presence. In November 1993 UNSCR 883 was adopted, imposing additional sanctions against Libya for its continued refusal to comply with UNSC demands. UNSCR 883 included a limited assets freeze and a ban on sales of some oil technology to Libya and strengthened existing sanctions in other ways.

By the end of 1996 Qadhafi had yet to comply in full with the UNSC demands. He did, however, allow a French magistrate to visit Libya in July to further his investigation of the 1989 bombing of UTA 772. As a result of that investigation, France has issued a total of six arrest warrants—two in 1996—for Libyan intelligence officers, who are still at large.

Tripoli continues to deny any involvement in Pan Am 103 and has made no attempt to comply with the UN resolutions. Most significantly, it still refused to turn over for trial in the United States or the United Kingdom the two Libyan agents indicted for the Pan Am bombing. In response to continued Libyan and Iranian support for terrorism, the U.S. Congress passed the Iran and Libya Sanctions Act of 1996. This Act imposes new sanctions on companies that invest in the development of either country's petroleum resources. The law is intended to help deny revenues that could be used to finance international terrorism.

In addition to the Pan Am and UTA airliner bombings, Libya continues to be held responsible for other terrorist acts of the past that retain current interest. In October 1996 warrants were issued by German authorities for four Libyans who are suspected of initiating the 1986 Berlin discotheque bombing that killed two U.S. citizens. The four are believed to be in Libya. Also, Libya is widely believed to be responsible for the 1993 abduction of prominent Libyan dissident and human rights activist Mansur Kikhia. The current whereabouts of Kikhia, a U.S. green card holder, remains unknown.

Libya also continued in 1996 to provide support to a variety of Palestinian terrorist groups, including the Abu Nidal organization (ANO), the Palestine Islamic Jihad (PIJ), and Ahmed Jabril's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC). The ANO maintains its headquarters in Libya, where the group's leader, Sabri al-Banna (a.k.a. Abu Nidal) resides.

## **NORTH KOREA**

North Korea has not been conclusively linked to any international terrorist attacks since 1987. North Korea is best known for its involvement in the 1987 midair bombing of KAL Flight 858 and the 1983 Rangoon bombing aimed at South Korean Government officials. A North Korean spokesman in November 1995 stated that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) opposed "all kinds of terrorism" and "any assistance to it."

There is no conclusive evidence the DPRK conducted any act of terrorism since 1987. The Republic of Korea, however, suspects that North Korean agents were involved in the murder of a South Korean official in Vladivostok on 1 October 1996, which shortly followed a North Korean warning that it would retaliate if Seoul did not return the bodies of several North Korean infiltrators killed in South Korea.

The DPRK provides asylum to a small group of Japanese Red Army members—the "Yodo-go" group—who hijacked a JAL airliner to North Korea in 1970. The senior surviving

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Yodo-go member, Yoshimi Tanaka, in late March was arrested in Cambodia on counterfeiting charges. Tanaka was captured while carrying a North Korean diplomatic passport and in the company of several North Korean diplomats. P'yongyang admitted publicly that Tanaka was a Yodo-go member, did not dispute the counterfeiting charges, and refused to take up his defense.

## SUDAN

Sudan in 1996 continued to serve as a refuge, nexus, and training hub for a number of international terrorist organizations, primarily of Middle East origin. The Sudanese Government also condoned many of the objectionable activities of Iran, such as funneling assistance to terrorist and radical Islamic groups operating in and transiting through Sudan.

Following the passage of three critical UN Security Council resolutions, Sudan ordered the departure of terrorist financier Usama Bin Ladin from Sudan in May. Sudan failed, however, to comply with the Security Council's demand that it cease support to terrorists and turn over the three Egyptian al-Gama'at al-Islamiyya (IG) fugitives linked to the 1995 assassination attempt of President Mubarak. Khartoum continued to deny any foreknowledge of the planning behind the Mubarak attempt and claimed not to know the whereabouts of the assailants.

Since Sudan was placed on the list of state sponsors of terrorism in August 1993, the Sudanese Government has continued to harbor members of several international terrorist and radical Islamic groups, including the Abu Nidal organization (ANO), Lebanese Hizballah, the Palestine Islamic Jihad (PIJ), the Islamic Resistance Movement (HAMAS), and the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) of Algeria. The National Islamic Front, which is the dominant influence within the Sudanese Government, also supports opposition and insurgent groups in Uganda, Tunisia, Ethiopia, and Eritrea.

In April 1996 the Department of State expelled a Sudanese diplomat at the Sudanese UN Mission who had ties to the conspirators planning to bomb the UN building and other targets in New York in 1993. A Sudanese national, who pleaded guilty in February 1995 to various charges of complicity in the New York City bomb plots foiled by the FBI, indicated two members of the Sudanese UN Mission had offered to facilitate access to the UN building in support of the bombing plot.

## SYRIA

There is no evidence that Syrian officials have been directly involved in planning or executing international terrorist attacks since 1986. Nevertheless, Syria continues to provide safehaven and support for several groups that engage in such attacks. Though Damascus has stated its commitment to the peace process, it has not acted to stop anti-Israeli attacks by Hizballah and Palestinian rejectionist groups in southern Lebanon. Syria also permits the resupply of arms for rejectionist groups operating in Lebanon via Damascus. On the positive side, Syria took action to prevent specific terrorist acts, continued to restrain the international activities of some terrorist groups in Syria, and has been a member of the Israel-Lebanon Monitoring Group—established by the 12 April 1996 Understanding—helping to enforce its provisions. After King Hussein of Jordan raised the issue of individuals infiltrating into Jordan from Syria with plans to attack Jordanian and Israeli targets, Damascus conducted an arrest campaign against the infiltrators' backers.

Several radical terrorist groups maintain training camps or other facilities on Syrian territory. Ahmed Jibril's PFLP-GC and the Palestine Islamic Jihad (PIJ), for example, have their headquarters near Damascus. In addition, Damascus grants basing privileges or refuge to

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a wide variety of groups engaged in terrorism in areas of Lebanon's Bekaa Valley under Syrian control. These include HAMAS, the PFLP-GC, the PIJ, and the Japanese Red Army (JRA). The Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) continues to train in Syria-controlled areas of Lebanon, and its leader, Abdullah Ocalan, resides at least part-time in Syria. In 1996 the PKK executed numerous terrorist attacks across Europe and continued—with limited success—its violent campaign against Turkish tourist spots.

Syria also suffered from several terrorist attacks in 1996, including a string of unresolved bombings in major Syrian cities.