

108TH CONGRESS
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H. CON. RES. 469

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 7, 2004

Received and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Condemning the attack on the AMIA Jewish Community Center in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in July 1994 and expressing the concern of the United States regarding the continuing, decade-long delay in the resolution of this case.

Whereas on July 18, 1994, 85 innocent people were killed and 300 were wounded when the Argentine Jewish Mutual Association (AMIA) was bombed in Buenos Aires, Argentina;

Whereas that attack showed the same cowardice and utter disregard for human life as the attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001;

Whereas the United States welcomes Argentine President Nestor Kirchner's political will to pursue the investigation of the AMIA bombing, as demonstrated by his executive order opening the archives of Argentina's Secretariat for State Intelligence (SIDE), for raising the AMIA cause to national status, and for emphasizing that there is no statute of limitations on those responsible for this attack;

Whereas it is reported that considerable evidence links the attacks to the terrorist group Hizballah, which is based in Lebanon, supported by Syria, and sponsored by Iran;

Whereas the decade since the bombing has been marked by efforts to minimize the international connection to this terrorist attack;

Whereas in March 2003 an Argentine judge issued arrest warrants for four Iranian government officials who are believed to have been involved in planning or carrying out the attack against AMIA and requested that the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) apprehend them;

Whereas the four indicted Iranians are Ali Fallahian, a former minister of security and intelligence; Mohsen Rabbani, a former cultural attache at the Iranian Embassy in Buenos Aires; Ali Balesh-Abadi, an Iranian diplomat; and Ali Akbar Parvaresh, a former minister of education;

Whereas Hadi Soleimanpour, Iran's ambassador to Argentina in the 1990's, also has an international arrest warrant pending against him by Argentine authorities for his suspected primary role in the AMIA bombing;

Whereas it is reported that suicide bomber Ibrahim Hussein Berro, a Lebanese citizen, carried out the attack on AMIA;

Whereas it has been reported that contact was made by the Iranian embassy in Buenos Aires to Ibrahim Hussein Berro, who lived in a mosque in Canuelas, Argentina, in the days before the AMIA bombing;

Whereas Argentine officials have acknowledged that there was negligence in the initial phases of the investigation into the 1994 bombing, including the destruction or disappearance of material evidence;

Whereas the first major criminal trial regarding the bombing did not begin until September 2001, and those who are currently on trial are former policemen and civilians who are accused of playing roles only in the procurement and delivery of the vehicle which was used in the bombing attack;

Whereas the judge who had presided since 2001 over the investigation and trial related to the AMIA bombing was removed in December 2003 due to charges that he bribed a key witness in the AMIA case;

Whereas the new trial judge, Rodolfo Canicoba Corral, deals with many other important cases and has few supporting staff;

Whereas on March 17, 1992, terrorists bombed the Embassy of Israel in Buenos Aires, Argentina, killing 29 people and injuring over 200, and the perpetrators of the attack also remain at large;

Whereas the inability to extradite suspected Islamic militants and Iranian officials has debilitated the efforts of the Ar-

gentine government to prosecute masterminds and planners of the 1994 AMIA bombing;

Whereas evidence indicates that the Tri-Border area where the borders of Argentina, Paraguay, and Brazil meet is suspected of harboring organizations which support terrorism, engage in drug and arms smuggling and an assorted array of other illicit, revenue-raising activities;

Whereas the Government of Argentina supports—

(1) the 1996 Declaration of Lima to Prevent, Combat and Eliminate Terrorism, which refers to terrorism as a “serious form of organized and systematic violence that is intended to generate chaos and fear among the population, results in death and destruction, and is a reprehensible criminal activity”; and

(2) the 1998 Commitment of Mar del Plata which calls terrorist acts “serious common crimes that erode peaceful and civilized coexistence, affect the rule of law and the exercise of democracy, and endanger the stability of democratically elected constitutional governments and their socioeconomic development of our countries”;

Whereas the Government of Argentina actively supports the development of the “Three Plus One” (3+1) Counterterrorism Dialogue with Brazil, Paraguay, and the United States;

Whereas the Government of Argentina was successful in enacting a law on cooperation from defendants in terrorist matters, a law that will be helpful in pursuing full prosecution in this and other terrorist cases; and

Whereas the Second Specialized Conference on Terrorism held in Mar del Plata, Argentina on November 23 and 24, 1998, concluded with the adoption of the Commit-

ment of Mar del Plata, calling for the establishment within the Organization of American States (OAS) of an Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism (CICTE): Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
 2 *concurring), That Congress—*

3 (1) reiterates its strongest condemnation of the
 4 1994 attack on the AMIA Jewish Community Cen-
 5 ter in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and honors the vic-
 6 tims of this heinous act;

7 (2) expresses its sympathy to the relatives of
 8 the victims, who have waited ten years without jus-
 9 tice for the loss of their loved ones, and may have
 10 to wait even longer for justice to be served;

11 (3) underscores the concern of the United
 12 States regarding the continuing, decade-long delay
 13 in the proper resolution of this case;

14 (4) strongly urges the Government of Argentina
 15 to continue to dedicate and provide the resources
 16 necessary for its judicial system and intelligence
 17 agencies to investigate all areas of the AMIA case,
 18 including by implementing Argentine President Nes-
 19 tor Kirchner's executive order mandating the open-
 20 ing of the archives of Argentina's Secretariat for
 21 State Intelligence (SIDE), and to prosecute with due
 22 haste those who are responsible for the bombing;

1 (5) calls upon the international community to
2 cooperate fully with the investigation, including by
3 making information, witnesses, and suspects avail-
4 able for review and questioning by the appropriate
5 Argentine authorities;

6 (6) encourages the President to direct United
7 States law enforcement agencies to provide support
8 and cooperation to the Government of Argentina, if
9 requested, for the purposes of deepening and ex-
10 panding the investigation into this bombing and sus-
11 pected activities in support of terrorism in the Tri-
12 Border area where the borders of Argentina, Para-
13 guay, and Brazil meet;

14 (7) encourages the President to direct the
15 United States Representative to the Organization of
16 American States (OAS) to—

17 (A) seek support from OAS member coun-
18 tries for the creation of a special task force of
19 the Inter-American Committee Against Ter-
20 rorism to assist, as requested by the Govern-
21 ment of Argentina, in the investigation of all
22 aspects of the 1994 AMIA terrorist attack; and

23 (B) urge OAS member countries to des-
24 ignate Hizballah as a terrorist organization if
25 they have not already done so;

1 (8) stresses the need for international pressure
2 on Iran and Syria to extradite for trial individuals
3 and government officials who are accused of plan-
4 ning or perpetrating the AMIA attack, and to imme-
5 diately, unconditionally, and permanently cease any
6 and all assistance to terrorists; and

7 (9) desires a lasting, warm relationship between
8 the United States and Argentina which is built, in
9 part, on mutual abhorrence of terrorism and com-
10 mitments to peace, stability, and democracy in the
11 Western Hemisphere.

Passed the House of Representatives July 22, 2004.

Attest:

JEFF TRANDAHL,

Clerk.