

111TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 4728

To authorize assistance to promote counter-extremism efforts in the Balkan region, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 2, 2010

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN (for herself, Mr. McCOTTER, Mr. GALLEGLY, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. INGLIS, Mrs. MYRICK, and Mr. MASSA) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To authorize assistance to promote counter-extremism efforts in the Balkan region, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Balkan Counter-Extre-
5 mism and Security Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) The National Commission on Terrorist At-
9 tacks Upon the United States, also referred to as

1 the “9/11 Commission”, found the region of Central
2 and Eastern Europe to be potentially vulnerable to
3 terrorists.

4 (2) In 1996, the Central Intelligence Agency
5 issued a report which identified approximately 16 Is-
6 lamic charities in countries of the Balkan region
7 that were connected to Islamist extremist organiza-
8 tions such as al-Qaeda, the Egyptian Jamaah al-
9 Islamiyah, Hamas, and Hezbollah.

10 (3) In 1999, the Saudi Joint Relief Committee
11 for the Relief of Kosovo and Chechnya (SJCRKC)
12 reportedly brought to Kosovo almost 400 mission-
13 aries of the Wahhabi interpretation of Islam.

14 (4) The United States Department of State list-
15 ed the organization known as the “Active Islamic
16 Youth” (AIO), as a terrorist organization in 2001,
17 and that organization is reported to be active in
18 Bosnia-Herzegovina and several other European
19 countries.

20 (5) The Benevolence International Foundation
21 charity, which in 2002 was listed as a front for ter-
22 rorist financing by the United States Department of
23 the Treasury, was headquartered in Croatia and
24 highlighted in its documentation that its mission was
25 to provide humanitarian aid and assistance to the

1 “Jihad in Bosnia-Herzegovina”, and urged people to
2 “contribute to your brothers in order to block the
3 Jewish-Crusader assault on Islamic soil”.

4 (6) In June 2004, the Egyptian Islamic Jihad
5 claimed that it had individuals working for three Is-
6 lamic charities in Albania, including the al-
7 Haramain Islamic Foundation and the Revival of Is-
8 lamic Heritage Society.

9 (7) The United States Department of State’s
10 2005 Annual Country Report on Terrorism stated
11 that Bosnia and Herzegovina’s State Border Service
12 did not fully control all border crossing points and
13 that many official border posts were understaffed,
14 and also that the service lacked the funds, resources,
15 and qualified personnel necessary to be effective.

16 (8) The International Crisis Group research or-
17 ganization reported on April 8, 2005, that there are
18 believed to be extremists of the Wahhabi interpreta-
19 tion of Islam now residing in the Sandzak region of
20 Serbia.

21 (9) In March 2006, a special Bosnian Govern-
22 ment investigatory commission known as
23 “Oslobodjenje” revoked the fraudulent citizenship of
24 over 600 naturalized Bosnians who had not met ei-
25 ther of the two criteria for Bosnian citizenship: pres-

1 ence in Bosnia or documentation to show a connec-
2 tion to Bosnia.

3 (10) The actions taken by the Bosnian inves-
4 tigatory commission included the revocation of a
5 passport that had been issued to Osama bin Laden,
6 leader of the al-Qaeda terrorist organization.

7 (11) The United States Department of State's
8 2007 Annual Country Report on Terrorism stated
9 that, "As a result of weak interagency communica-
10 tion, competing security structures, and political in-
11 terference in law enforcement, Bosnia is vulnerable
12 to exploitation as a potential staging ground for ter-
13 rorist operations in Europe."

14 (12) In March 2007, Bosnian police found
15 weapons in an apartment occupied by a group that
16 had planned to blow up the British Embassy in Sa-
17 rajevo.

18 (13) On March 19, 2007, Serbian police report-
19 edly raided a camp near the town of Novi Pazar in
20 the Sandzak region of Serbia suspected of being
21 used by extremists and discovered weapons, ammu-
22 nition, and explosives with detonators.

23 (14) According to various reports, including
24 those in Shaul Shay's 2007 book entitled, "Ter-
25 rorism in the Balkans", 75 percent of the drugs

1 smuggled into Europe transit the countries of the
2 Balkan region and profits from drugs trafficked
3 through parts of the region have bankrolled global
4 terrorist groups such as Hezbollah and Islamic
5 Jihad.

6 (15) In May 2007, six Kosovar Albanians resid-
7 ing illegally in the United States were arrested and
8 subsequently convicted for plotting to use automatic
9 weapons to kill United States soldiers at the Fort
10 Dix Army Base in New Jersey.

11 (16) Several moderate Bosnian Islamic leaders
12 have issued stern warnings to extremist groups in
13 that country. In May 2007, Mustafa Ceric, the lead-
14 ing Islamic cleric in Bosnia, stated in response to
15 demands by some Wahhabi groups that Bosnian
16 Muslims follow their extremist ideology that, “The
17 Islamic Community regulations rule here. Those who
18 cannot accept this did not have to come here and
19 don’t need to stay.”.

20 (17) In June 2007, the Albanian newspaper,
21 “Shqip”, reported that a “Wahhabi sect” within the
22 Islamic Community in Albania benefitted from
23 monthly “salaries” paid for dressing and behaving in
24 accordance with Wahhabi fundamentalism.

1 (18) In 2007, the North Atlantic Treaty Orga-
2 nization (NATO) Commander in Bosnia, General
3 John Sylvestar, stated, “In fact, there are inter-
4 national terrorist organizations which have individ-
5 uals in Bosnia, including al Qaeda. What we have to
6 determine is whether or not the individuals involved
7 are here for the purpose of planning operations, or
8 are here for something else, being supported, being
9 provided documentation, seeking respite or what-
10 ever”.

11 (19) In August 2007, Mr. Raffi Gregorian, a
12 senior United States diplomat in Bosnia, stated that
13 the al-Qaeda terrorist organization was using Bosnia
14 as a transit point, and utilized supporters among
15 former Islamic fighters who had arrived to fight in
16 the Balkans during the Bosnian war in the 1990s,
17 and later remained under fraudulently obtained citi-
18 zenship papers.

19 (20) In January 2008, former Deputy High
20 Representative and former chief of the United Na-
21 tions police mission in Bosnia, Mr. Jacques Paul
22 Klein, said, “I know that there are al Qaeda cells
23 . . . in Bosnia . . .”.

24 (21) Two insurgents who were killed when they
25 joined in a January 2008 attack on coalition forces

1 in Iraq were found to have carried Bosnian pass-
2 ports.

3 (22) In May 2008, the Imam Bekir Halimi of
4 the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia was ar-
5 rested for facilitating illegal funding by a pro-ter-
6 rorist organization. Since January 2007, Halimi had
7 allegedly been receiving over 4.5 million Euros per
8 year through monthly payments from the Kuwaiti
9 Organization known as the “Revival Islamic Herit-
10 age Society”, which was designated as a front for
11 terrorist financing by both the United States De-
12 partment of the Treasury and the United Nations in
13 January 2002.

14 (23) On January 28, 2009, Svetlana Lukic, the
15 B92 radio station host of the popular liberal talk
16 show “Hourglass” which advocates for democratic
17 reforms in Serbia, reported that extremist Serbian
18 ultranationalist groups had hacked into the show’s
19 website, vandalized her car, broken into the radio
20 station and physically attacked the participants on
21 her panels, claiming that the program was “anti-
22 Serb”.

23 (24) On February 28, 2009, the Serbian
24 Human and Minority Rights Ministry announced its
25 request that the Serbian Prosecutor’s Office inves-

1 tigate the constitutionality of an extremist group
2 called “Obraz” that was listed in 2005 by the Ser-
3 bian Interior Ministry as a clero-fascist organization
4 and had posted on its website a list of perceived en-
5 emies, including “Zionists, Ustasha, Muslim extrem-
6 ists, and Shiptar terrorists” and issued violent ral-
7 lying calls that “Serb enemies will be eradicated and
8 punished”.

9 (25) The Bosnian government lacks the capac-
10 ity to adequately monitor individuals awaiting depor-
11 tation, even while they are in prison, as was dem-
12 onstrated in the case of Tunisian-born former
13 Islamist fighter Kamel bin Ali (also known as Abu
14 Hamza), who was imprisoned in 2008 for armed
15 robbery and domestic violence, was due to be de-
16 ported at the end of his sentence because the gov-
17 ernment had determined that his citizenship was
18 fraudulent and that bin Ali was “a threat to na-
19 tional security”, was given a “good behavior” short
20 term holiday from prison and then had failed to re-
21 turn as scheduled on July 31, 2009, spurring a
22 country-wide police hunt resulting in his re-arrest in
23 Zenica on August 8, 2009.

24 (26) On September 22, 2009, in response to
25 certain ultra-nationalist extremist groups that in-

1 cited violent attacks at football matches which re-
2 sulted in the death of one French national and the
3 hospitalization of several others, the Serbian Govern-
4 ment announced it would investigate and outlaw ex-
5 tremist organizations, as Serbian President Boris
6 Tadic stated, “All extremists, left or right, will be
7 tried before our courts.”.

8 (27) On October 13, 2009, Albanian authorities
9 arrested imam Artan Kristo, aka Muhamed
10 Abdullah (who had worked in 2002 for the El-
11 Haramain Foundation which had been listed on the
12 United States Department of State’s Terrorist
13 Watch List for its alleged ties to al-Qaeda) on
14 charges of “publically inciting and propagating ter-
15 rorist acts” and for calling for jihad in an online
16 forum.

17 (28) It has been reported that the Islamic mis-
18 sionary group “Tablighi Jamaat” or “Group of
19 Preachers”, which has been linked to people who
20 have committed terrorist offenses, such as John
21 Walker Lindh, Richard Reid, and Zacarias
22 Moussaoui, has been increasingly active in the
23 Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

24 (29) Extremist movements in the countries of
25 the Balkan region pose a threat to the security of

1 all moderate people in the region who support the
2 ideals of freedom, democracy, tolerance, and the rule
3 of law.

4 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

5 It is the sense of Congress that—

6 (1) the countries of the Balkan region face
7 challenges presented by the presence of extremist
8 groups;

9 (2) vulnerabilities in governance structures and
10 the enforcement of the rule of law in many of the
11 countries of the Balkan region have allowed extre-
12 mism to take root there;

13 (3) the United States, the European Union and
14 its Member States, and the Republic of Turkey
15 should coordinate their efforts to combat extremism
16 in the countries of the Balkan region, with the Euro-
17 pean Union taking the lead in assisting the countries
18 of the Balkan region to strengthen their law enforce-
19 ment and border security capabilities; and

20 (4) the Secretary of State should seek agree-
21 ments with the governments of the countries of the
22 Balkan region under which such governments would
23 work in partnership with the United States to
24 strengthen their efforts to combat extremism, ter-
25 rorism, and illicit activities that may provide finan-

1 cial and operational support to extremism and ter-
2 rorism movements.

3 **SEC. 4. STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

4 It shall be the policy of the United States to—

5 (1) to continue to provide assistance to the
6 countries of the Balkan region through previously
7 authorized counter-terrorism, counter-drug, border
8 security, and law enforcement assistance programs;

9 (2) prohibit travel to the United States by any
10 individuals who incite and recruit people of the Bal-
11 kan region to engage in violent jihad or to commit
12 acts of terrorism; and

13 (3) encourage and support all countries of the
14 Balkan region to—

15 (A) ratify and fully implement the commit-
16 ments included in the United Nations Inter-
17 national Convention for the Suppression of the
18 Financing of Terrorism (1999);

19 (B) adhere to the United Nations Security
20 Council Resolution 1373 (2005), regarding the
21 prohibition of incitement to commit a terrorist
22 act or acts;

23 (C) adhere to the standards contained in
24 the Financial Action Task Force's (FATF's)
25 "40 Recommendations" and "9 Special Rec-

ommendations”, particularly in the areas of policing donations to charitable fronts for terrorist organizations; and

(D) ratify and fully implement the Council of Europe’s Warsaw Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism.

**SEC. 5. ASSISTANCE TO COUNTER MILITANT EXTREMIST
ACTIVITIES IN THE BALKAN REGION.**

(a) ASSISTANCE AUTHORIZED.—The President is authorized to provide assistance to countries of the Balkan region to facilitate cooperation between the United States and such countries on counter-extremism and counter-terrorism efforts. Such assistance shall be made available in addition to assistance otherwise provided under chapter 8 of part I and chapter 8 of part II of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2291 et seq. and 2349aa et seq.).

(b) PURPOSES OF ASSISTANCE.—Assistance under this section shall be provided as an incentive for countries of the Balkan region to more actively cooperate with the United States to achieve the purposes specified in section 572 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2349aa–1).

1 (c) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—Funds made available
2 for assistance under this section to countries of the Balkan
3 region shall be provided as follows:

4 (1) TIER I COUNTRIES.—

5 (A) IN GENERAL.—A country that meets
6 the requirements of subparagraph (B) shall be
7 eligible to receive an allocation of funds under
8 this section in an amount equal to 25 percent
9 of the total amount of funds provided to the
10 country in the prior fiscal year under chapter 8
11 of part I and chapter 8 of part II of the For-
12 eign Assistance Act of 1961. Such a country
13 shall be known as a “Tier I country” for pur-
14 poses of this section.

15 (B) REQUIREMENTS.—The requirements
16 of this subparagraph are the following:

17 (i) The country, in conjunction with
18 the United States Department of State’s
19 Office of the Coordinator for Counterter-
20 rorism, shall conduct a review of its
21 counter-terrorism infrastructure, including
22 a review of—

23 (I) the foundation of the coun-
24 try’s laws for the adequate criminal-

1 ization of incitement to violent ex-
2 tremist acts and terrorist activities;

3 (II) anti-radicalization outreach
4 efforts;

5 (III) law enforcement training
6 and effectiveness;

7 (IV) independent and consistent
8 judicial processes; and

9 (V) border security.

10 (ii) The country shall sign a Memo-
11 randum of Understanding with the United
12 States to establish country-specific
13 counter-terrorism program benchmarks
14 based on recommendations derived from
15 the review required under clause (i).

16 (2) TIER II COUNTRIES.—

17 (A) IN GENERAL.—A country that meets
18 the requirements of subparagraph (B) shall be
19 eligible to receive an allocation of funds under
20 this section in an amount equal to 50 percent
21 of the total amount of funds provided to the
22 country in the prior fiscal year under chapter 8
23 of part I and chapter 8 of part II of the For-
24 eign Assistance Act of 1961. Such a country

1 shall be known as a “Tier II country” for pur-
2 poses of this section.

3 (B) REQUIREMENTS.—The requirements
4 of this subparagraph are the following:

5 (i) The country shall meet the re-
6 quirements applicable to a Tier I country
7 under paragraph (1).

8 (ii) The country shall be certified by
9 the United States Department of State
10 that it has continued to meet the require-
11 ments of the Memorandum of Under-
12 standing described in paragraph (1)(B)(ii)
13 and has implemented fully the initial stage
14 of reforms as identified in the Memo-
15 randum of Understanding.

16 (iii) The country shall be certified by
17 the United States Department of State as
18 fully cooperating with any appropriate war
19 crimes tribunals.

20 (3) TIER III COUNTRIES.—

21 (A) IN GENERAL.—A country that meets
22 the requirements of subparagraph (B) shall be
23 eligible to receive an allocation of funds under
24 this section in an amount equal to 100 percent
25 of the total amount of funds provided to the

country in the prior fiscal year under chapter 8 of part I and chapter 8 of part II of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961. Such a country shall be known as a “Tier III country” for purposes of this section.

(B) REQUIREMENTS.—The requirements of this subparagraph are that the country shall be certified by the United States Department of State that it has implemented fully the final stage of reforms as identified in the Memorandum of Understanding described in paragraph (1)(B)(ii).

SEC. 6. REPORT.

(a) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on the status of extremist and terrorist organizations and movements in the countries of the Balkan region, and the capacity of countries of the Balkan region to address such extremist and terrorist organizations and movements.

(b) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—The report required under subsection (a) shall specifically address the following:

1 (1) Any trend toward increased extremist influ-
2 ence over the people of the Balkan region, including
3 any indications of a spread of extremist influence
4 over the people of the Balkan region through the fi-
5 nancing of religious institutions and the establish-
6 ment of scholarships to study abroad by countries
7 and organizations outside the Balkan region.

8 (2) The capability of countries of the Balkan
9 region to properly secure their borders against arms
10 proliferation, human trafficking, and drug smug-
11 gling.

12 (3) The capability of the countries of the Bal-
13 kan region to maintain appropriate controls over
14 citizenship and official documentation for the citi-
15 zens of such countries.

16 (4) A summary of funding amounts and a de-
17 scription of associated programs for United States
18 assistance made available to combat terrorism in
19 each of the countries of the Balkan region.

20 (5) A summary of funding amounts and a de-
21 scription of associated programs for assistance pro-
22 vided by the European Union and its Member-States
23 and the Republic of Turkey to the countries of the
24 Balkan region to combat the rise of extremism and
25 improve the capacities of such countries to secure

1 their borders, properly enforce laws, and take other
2 steps to combat financing of extremists and their op-
3 erations.

4 (6) A summary of efforts by the United States,
5 the European Union and its Member-States, and the
6 Republic of Turkey to coordinate their assistance
7 and programs described in paragraphs (4) and (5)
8 toward the objectives of this Act.

9 (c) FORM.—The report required under subsection (a)
10 shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may contain
11 a classified annex if necessary.

12 **SEC. 7. DEFINITIONS.**

13 In this Act:

14 (1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-
15 TEES.—The term “appropriate congressional com-
16 mittees” means—

17 (A) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and
18 the Committee on Appropriations of the House
19 of Representatives; and

20 (B) the Committee on Foreign Relations
21 and the Committee on Appropriations of the
22 Senate.

23 (2) COUNTRIES OF THE BALKAN REGION.—The
24 term “countries of the Balkan region” means Alba-
25 nia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia,

1 Kosovo, Macedonia (Former Yugoslav Republic of
2 Macedonia), Montenegro, Romania, and Serbia.

3 **SEC. 8. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

4 (a) INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS CONTROL ASSIST-
5 ANCE.—There are authorized to be appropriated such
6 sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years 2011
7 through 2015 to carry out the provisions of chapter 8 of
8 part I of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C.
9 2291 et seq.) for programs and activities in the countries
10 of the Balkan region in support of the objectives of this
11 Act.

12 (b) ANTITERRORISM ASSISTANCE.—There are au-
13 thorized to be appropriated such sums as may be nec-
14 essary for each of the fiscal years 2011 through 2015 to
15 carry out the provisions of chapter 8 of part II of the For-
16 eign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2349aa et seq.)
17 for programs and activities in the countries of the Balkan
18 region in support of the objectives of this Act.

19 (c) ASSISTANCE TO PROMOTE COUNTER-EXTREMISM
20 AND COUNTER-TERRORISM.—

21 (1) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be
22 appropriated such sums as may be necessary for
23 each of the fiscal years 2011 through 2015 to carry
24 out the provisions of section 5 of this Act.

1 (2) AVAILABILITY.—Amounts appropriated pur-
2 suant to the authorization of appropriations under
3 paragraph (1) for a fiscal year are authorized to re-
4 main available through September 30 of the suc-
5 ceeding fiscal year. Such amounts that are unobli-
6 gated beginning on October 1 of the succeeding fis-
7 cal year are authorized to be made available to carry
8 out the provisions of chapter 8 of part I and chapter
9 8 of part II of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961
10 (22 U.S.C. 2291 et seq. and 2349aa et seq.) for pro-
11 grams and activities in the countries of the Balkan
12 region in support of the objectives of this Act.

13 **SEC. 9. TEMPORARY INCREASE IN FEE FOR CERTAIN CON-**
14 **SULAR SERVICES IN COUNTRIES OF THE BAL-**
15 **KAN REGION.**

16 (a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provi-
17 sion of law, not later than 120 days after the date of the
18 enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall in-
19 crease by \$1.00 the fee or surcharge assessed under sec-
20 tion 140(a) of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act,
21 Fiscal Years 1994 and 1995 (Public Law 103–236; 8
22 U.S.C. 1351 note) over the amount of such fee or sur-
23 charge as of such date for processing nonimmigrant visas
24 for applicants from countries of the Balkan region.

1 (b) DEPOSIT OF AMOUNTS.—Notwithstanding sec-
2 tion 140(a)(2) of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act,
3 Fiscal Years 1994 and 1995, the additional amount col-
4 lected pursuant to the fee increase under subsection (a)
5 shall be deposited in the Treasury of the United States.

6 (c) DURATION OF INCREASE.—The fee increase au-
7 thorized under subsection (a) shall terminate on January
8 1, 2015.

○