

112TH CONGRESS
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H. RES. 429

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Western Hemisphere should be included in the Administration's 2012 National Strategy for Counterterrorism's "Area of Focus", with specific attention on the counterterrorism threat to the homeland emanating from Iran's growing presence and activity in the Western Hemisphere, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 11, 2011

Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Western Hemisphere should be included in the Administration's 2012 National Strategy for Counterterrorism's "Area of Focus", with specific attention on the counterterrorism threat to the homeland emanating from Iran's growing presence and activity in the Western Hemisphere, and for other purposes.

Whereas Iran is using the Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), the IRGC's Qods Force, and Hezbollah as tools of statecraft to further its geostrategic and geopolitical objectives in the Western Hemisphere, specifically in Venezuela; the Tri-border area of Paraguay, Argentina, and Brazil; Bolivia; Ecuador; Nica-

ragua; Chile; Cuba; and Mexico. Hezbollah has also established a presence in the United States and Canada;

Whereas officials from the IRGC's Qods Force have been working in concert with Iran's chief global terrorist proxy, Lebanese Hezbollah, since the 1990s;

Whereas a 2009 Department of State Country Report on Terrorism found that Hezbollah is the most technically capable terrorist group in the world with thousands of supporters, several thousand members, and a few hundred terrorist operatives;

Whereas Iran has opened 6 embassies in South America over the last 5 years;

Whereas the IRGC's Qods Force stations operatives in foreign embassies, charities, and religious and cultural institutions to build relationships with local populations, often building on existing socioeconomic ties with the Lebanese Diaspora;

Whereas these networks operated by Hezbollah and the IRGC's Qods Force encompass more than 80 operatives in at least 12 countries throughout the region;

Whereas Hezbollah's chief sponsors, Iran and Syria, have been forging relationships with the governments in Latin America to achieve state cover and effective immunity for their activities, and Hezbollah has established a working relationship with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC);

Whereas in August 2010, Jamal Yousef, a member of the Syrian military, was charged in New York for his alleged involvement in a narco-terrorism conspiracy to sell weapons to FARC in exchange for between 7,000–8,000 kilograms of cocaine;

Whereas the indictment stated that the “weapons were stolen from Iraq and being stored in Mexico at the home of Yousef’s relative, who according to Yousef, is a member of Hezbollah.”;

Whereas Iran has used Hezbollah in Latin America to engage in fundraising, money laundering, recruitment, training, drug and arms trafficking, counterfeiting, forging travel documents, pirating software and music, assessing global banking facilities, ports and airports, mining rare earth minerals and other materials in support of its nuclear objectives;

Whereas Iran seeks to use its base in Latin America to undermine United States interests;

Whereas the Bolivarian states (Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Nicaragua) have expressed their intention to assist Iran in breaking international sanctions by announcing at a 2010 joint press conference in Tehran their determination to “continue and expand their economic ties to Iran” with confidence that “Iran can give a crushing response to the threats and sanctions imposed by the West and imperialism.”;

Whereas the Bolivarian states’ relationship to Hezbollah in Latin America is bound by a common aim to asymmetrically defeat the United States;

Whereas the doctrine of Asymmetrical Warfare adopted by these groups explicitly embraces the use of weapons of mass destruction, massive civilian casualties as acceptable collateral damage, and the underlying belief that the acquisition of nuclear weapons to destroy the United States is a moral or religious imperative;

Whereas Iran’s presence in Latin America through its proxy Hezbollah presents incalculable risk to the security of the United States because Hezbollah is the most effective, well-structured, and militarily proficient terrorist group in existence with a host of skills and abilities to support their objectives;

Whereas Hezbollah’s 1980 fatwa explained its rationale for engaging in drug production and trafficking: It explicitly stated that it was “making these drugs for Satan—America and the Jews. If we cannot kill them with guns we will kill them with drugs.”;

Whereas in 2009, Dutch authorities on the Caribbean island of Curacao arrested 17 suspects on drug-trafficking charges;

Whereas the authorities accused the suspects of funneling part of their profits directly to Hezbollah through informal banking mechanisms like the Hawala system;

Whereas there is an established connection between Iran and Mexican drug cartels: In 2008, El Universal reported that the Mexican Sinaloa drug cartel was sending elite assassins to train on weapons and explosives with Islamic radicals in Iran;

Whereas Hezbollah has demonstrated its ability to cooperate with Mexican drug cartels to utilize smuggling techniques and routes in order to bring drugs and people into the United States;

Whereas sophisticated narco-tunneling resembling the types used by Hezbollah in Lebanon have been found along the United States-Mexican border, and arrested Mexican gang members entering the United States with Farsi tattoos also support a Hezbollah influence;

Whereas in 2008, Salim Boughader Mucharraffille was sentenced to 60 years in prison after being arrested in 2002 by Mexican authorities on charges of organized crime and immigrant smuggling;

Whereas Salim Boughader Mucharraffille was a Mexican of Lebanese descent who reportedly smuggled 200 people, including Hezbollah supporters into the United States;

Whereas in 2005, a Lebanese man named Mahmoud Youssef Kourani pled guilty to providing material support to Hezbollah after crossing the Mexican border illegally into the United States and driving his car all the way to Dearborn, Michigan;

Whereas since the fall of 2008, at least 111 suspects of a Hezbollah-linked international network of drug traffickers and money launderers have been arrested in Drug Enforcement Administration operations;

Whereas the Administration's 2011 Strategy for Counterterrorism did not include the Western Hemisphere in its "Area of Focus"; and

Whereas in October 2011, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Drug Enforcement Administration disrupted a plot involving Iranian-American, Manssor Arbabsiar, the IRGC, and a member of the Zetas Mexican drug cartel to assassinate the Saudi Arabian ambassador to the United States with a bomb and subsequent bomb attacks on the Saudi and Israeli embassies in Washington, DC and in Buenos Aires: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That—

2 (1) it is the sense of the House of Representa-
3 tives that there exists significant cause for concern

1 and further investigation of potential counterter-
2 rorism threats from Iran’s growing presence and in-
3 fluence in the Western Hemisphere;

4 (2) in order to effectively assess the risk to the
5 United States homeland, the Administration
6 should—

7 (A) include the Western Hemisphere in the
8 Administration’s 2012 National Strategy for
9 Counterterrorism’s “Area of Focus” with spe-
10 cific attention on the counterterrorism threat to
11 the homeland emanating from Iran’s growing
12 presence and activity in the Western Hemi-
13 sphere; and

14 (B) utilize an existing counterterrorism
15 taskforce to be led by the Department of Home-
16 land Security and ensure that representatives of
17 the Department of Homeland Security, the De-
18 partment of State, the Federal Bureau of In-
19 vestigation, the Drug Enforcement Administra-
20 tion, the Central Intelligence Agency, the Na-
21 tional Counterterrorism Center, and the appro-
22 priate intelligence agencies are members of the
23 taskforce; and

24 (3) the taskforce referred to in paragraph
25 (2)(B)—

1 (A) should examine—

2 (i) the presence and activities of Iran,
3 the Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guard
4 Corps (IRGC), the IRGC's Qods Force,
5 and Hezbollah in the Western Hemisphere,
6 including within the United States;

7 (ii) the relationship of Iran, the
8 IRGC, the IRGC's Qods Force, and
9 Hezbollah with the governments in the
10 Western Hemisphere;

11 (iii) the relationship of Iran, the
12 IRGC, the IRGC's Qods Force, and
13 Hezbollah with drug trafficking organiza-
14 tions; and

15 (iv) the fundraising efforts of Iran,
16 the IRGC, the IRGC's Qods Force, and
17 Hezbollah in the Lebanese Diaspora in
18 Latin America; and

19 (B) should submit to Congress not later
20 than 120 days after the date of the adoption of
21 this resolution a report that contains a com-
22 prehensive counterterrorism and counter-
23 radicalization strategy to defend United States

- 1 geostrategic interests and defeat Iranian inter-
- 2 ests in the Western Hemisphere.

