Brazil: Extremism and Terrorism

On December 2, 2021, the U.S. Department of the Treasury designated three men in Brazil as Specially Designated Global Terrorists (SDGTs) for being affiliated with and supporting al-Qaeda. Among those designated was Haytham Ahmad Shukri Ahmad Al-Maghrabi who was one of the initial members of al-Qaeda in Brazil in 2015. According to media reports, Al-Maghrabi reported to and was the Brazil-based contact for the U.S.-designated Ahmed Mohammed Hamed Ali—one of the 22 suspects who plotted the twin U.S. embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998. Also designated was Mohamed Sherif Mohamed Mohamed Awadd and Ahmad Al-Khatib. Both Awadd and Al-Khatib were affiliated with Mohamed Ahmed Elsayed Ahmed Ibrahim, who was also designated as an SDGT in September 2019 for acting on behalf of al-Qaeda. Awadd reportedly received financial bank transfers from al-Qaeda associates in Brazil and was involved in printing counterfeit currency and Al-Khatib provided financial or material support to Ibrahim. (Sources: U.S. Department of the Treasury, U.S. Embassy in Brazil, NBC News)

In the weeks leading up to the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio, Brazil's anti-terrorism police force arrested 12 suspected pro-ISIS operatives who were allegedly plotting to carry out attacks during the games. The suspects—all Brazilian nationals—hailed from 10 states throughout the country and had reportedly met online before attempting to purchase a gun on the Internet. On May 4, 2017, eight of the 12 were sentenced to serve between five and 15 years in prison. (Sources: BBC News, Reuters, CNN, *Telegraph*, U.S. Department of State)

Following the arrests, Brazil's Justice Minister Alexandre de Moraes called the alleged operatives "absolutely amateur," saying that the group had no preparation and did not constitute an organized cell. According to one presidential aide, the anti-terrorism raids involved support from British, French, German, Israeli, and U.S. intelligence agencies. (Sources: Reuters, CNN, *Telegraph*)

Overview

Although Brazil has experienced no major terrorist attacks in recent years, numerous extremist groups have established an active presence within its borders. Multiple neo-Nazi groups operate in southern Brazil, including Carecas do Subúrbio, Carecas do ABC, and White Power. Brazil has also seen a rise in Islamic extremism, with reports of Hezbollah, al-Qaeda, and Hamas recruiting, planning attacks, and fundraising from within the country. (Sources: *Haaretz*, *Brazil Business*, Library of Congress)

Terrorist groups have established extensive smuggling networks in the Tri-Border Area (TBA) that straddles the borders of Brazil, Paraguay, and Argentina. Hezbollah operatives in the TBA have reportedly generated significant revenue from criminal enterprises in the region, which has been used to finance the activities of their counterparts in Lebanon. Brazilian criminal organizations are believed to assist Hezbollah with smuggling weapons into the country and with the attainment of explosives. (Sources: NBC News, U.S. Department of the Treasury, *Jerusalem Post*, *O Globo*)

The Brazilian government has successfully thwarted suspected terrorist attacks and disrupted terrorist finance rings as well as document forgery networks. In September 2015, Brazil's federal police arrested members of a money laundering group suspected of providing financial support to ISIS. In December 2015, Rio's civil police uncovered a document fraud network that had provided 70 authentic Brazilian birth certificates to Syrian nationals, 20 of whom managed to secure Brazilian passports. (Source: U.S. Department of State)

Brazil has ramped up its efforts to counter terrorism during major sporting events. In preparation for the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, Brazilian security forces carried out simulation exercises in bomb defusal and containing riots. Brazil also cooperated with intelligence agencies from five other countries in order to arrest 12 suspected pro-ISIS operatives who were planning to carry out attacks at the event. On May 4, 2017, a Brazilian judge sentenced eight of those arrested to serve between five and 15 years in prison. Brazilian authorities were alerted to the group by the FBI, which said the men were trying to buy weapons and had shared bomb-making videos online. (Sources: U.S. Department of State, CNN, Reuters , CNN, *Telegraph*, U.S. Department of State, BBC News)

Radicalization and Foreign Fighters

The Tri-Border Area (TBA) of South America—an area that straddles the borders of Brazil, Paraguay, and Argentina—is considered by law enforcement to be a concentrated area of criminal and terrorist activity. In 1998, then-director of the FBI Louis Freeh referred to the TBA as a "free zone for significant criminal activity, including people who are organized to commit acts of terrorism." In a July 2003 report updated in 2010, the Library of Congress said that Islamist groups have plotted attacks—as well as fundraised through drug trafficking and money laundering schemes—within the TBA. Egyptian Islamic Jihad and the Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group also operate in Brazil, according to the Brazilian

Federal Police, though there is little publicly available information on their activities. (Sources: NBC News, Small Wars Journal, Library of Congress, *Brazil Business*)

Hezbollah

Hezbollah—a Lebanese-based, Iranian-backed, terrorist group designated by the United States as a Foreign Terrorist Organization—has reportedly operated out of South America's TBA since the mid-1980s. The group is believed to recruit from a sizable local population of Lebanese immigrants, many of whom arrived in South America after the 1948 Arab-Israeli War and the 1985 Lebanese Civil War. U.S. military strategist Edward Luttwak alleged that Hezbollah operates training and recruitment camps in the TBA, and has planned terrorist attacks from the region. (Sources: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, NBC News)

Hezbollah has been implicated in two major bombings in Argentina, which shares a nearly 800-mile long border with Brazil. The terror group claimed responsibility for bombing the Israeli embassy in Buenos Aires in 1992, killing 29 people. The Argentine government later accused Hezbollah of carrying out the 1994 AMIA Jewish community center bombings in the same city that killed 89. In 2013, the late Argentine State Prosecutor Alberto Nisman found that Iranian and Hezbollah agents had planned the AMIA bombing from Brazil and other South American countries. Nisman discovered 12 Hezbollah-linked individuals who reside or resided in Brazil, seven of whom were directly or indirectly involved in the AMIA bombing. (Sources: CNN, BBC News, U.S. Department of State, BBC News, Journal of International Security Affairs, U.S. Department of State, Reuters, Business Insider, Library of Congress)

A 2007 investigation by Telemundo and NBC News found that Hezbollah operatives were running an extensive smuggling network in the TBA and were sending profits to the organization's leaders in Lebanon. According to the U.S. Department of the Treasury, Hezbollah's chief representative in South America, Bilal Mohsen Wehbe, purportedly helped to raise more than $500,000 for Hezbollah from Lebanese businessmen in the TBA following Lebanon's war with Israel in 2006. Luttwak has referred to the TBA as Hezbollah's second most-important financing base after Lebanon. (Sources: NBC News, U.S. Department of the Treasury)

Assad Ahmad Barakat is a U.S.-designated key Hezbollah financier who has operated in the Tri-Border Area (TBA) of South America—the region that straddles the borders of Paraguay, Brazil, and Argentina. Barakat, who has close ties with Hezbollah's leadership, was the group's chief of military operations and fundraising in the TBA in the 1990s. He operated Hezbollah's financial network in the region, and owned several businesses of his own that conducted money laundering activities to generate funds for the group. In August 2018, Brazil's supreme court authorized Barakat's arrest after Paraguay issued an arrest warrant. On September 21, 2018, Brazilian police announced they had arrested Barakat in Foz do Iguaco, Brazil, near the border with Paraguay and Argentina. Barakat was extradited to Paraguay in July 2020. (Sources: U.S. Department of the Treasury, Library of Congress, Reuters, BBC News, ABC)

Highly organized criminal organizations in Brazil have reportedly helped Hezbollah smuggle weapons into the country and have supplied Hezbollah with explosives. The Primeiro Comando da Capital (PCC)—a Brazilian prison gang—is believed to treat imprisoned Hezbollah members well in exchange for international contacts. (Sources: *Jerusalem Post*, Council on Foreign Relations, An-Nahar, *O Globo*)

On March 10, 2021, Eduardo Bolsonaro, a member of the São Paulo Chamber of Deputies, announced that Brazil would begin working on designating Hezbollah as a terrorist organization. According to Bolsonaro, Hezbollah "which had sworn to destroy Israel cannot be considered a normal political body and is comparable to the guerrillas of the FARC [Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia]. They are not a diplomatic weapon…they are criminals and terrorists." (Source: i24 News)

Al-Qaeda

In 2011, *Veja*, a Brazilian news magazine, reported that there were at least 20 individuals affiliated with the global jihadi Salafist network al-Qaeda who were living in Brazil. One of al-Qaeda's chief propagandists, a Lebanese man named Khaled Hussein Ali, has reportedly lived in Brazil since 1998. Although Brazilian police arrested Ali in March 2009, he was released less than a month later. Nuclear physicist Adlene Hicheur—who was involved in a 2009 al-Qaeda terror plot in France—also lived in Brazil after he was released from prison in 2013. Hicheur worked at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro until July 2016, when he was deported back to France. (Sources: Reuters, *Veja*, Reuters)

In July 2016, al-Qaeda-linked extremists on social media reportedly called for lone wolf attacks at the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, which began on August 5. The extremists advised individuals to obtain Brazilian visas, and to purchase weapons in the country's slums. They also called on followers to kidnap members of the Israeli delegation in order to free unspecified Muslim prisoners. (Source: *Jerusalem Post*)

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Hamas

Hamas, a U.S.-designated Palestinian terrorist group whose strength is concentrated in the Gaza Strip and West Bank, operates in Brazil, according to Brazilian Federal Police. The militants are believed to plan attacks, recruit followers, and fundraise in the South American country. According to the Library of Congress, Hamas actively uses the TBA as a "support base" for its operations. (Sources: *Brazil Business*, *Haaretz*, Library of Congress)

In 2008, Brazil's ambassador to the United States, Antonio Patriota, declared that Brazil had not designated Hamas as a terrorist organization because it maintains an active political wing. Brazil has reportedly maintained semi-diplomatic ties with the Palestinian terror group. In February 2015, a Brazilian delegation met with Hamas-affiliated politicians in Ramallah, the West Bank, according to Al-Monitor. A month later, Hamas congratulated former Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff on her reelection. In 2015, the Brazilian magazine *Veja* cited an unnamed Brazilian security official who called an impending Palestinian embassy in Brazil "a sovereign Hamas area now" because diplomats and their vehicles would be exempt from security checks. The embassy opened the following year. (Sources: Brazilian Palestinian National Interest Committee, Al-Monitor, Jewish Telegraphic Agency)

ISIS

In September 2015, Brazil's federal police arrested members of a money laundering group with suspected ties to ISIS. The group had allegedly moved more than $10 million since 2010. Two months later, in November 2015, ISIS foreign fighter and executioner Maxime Hauchard reportedly tweeted: "Brazil, you are our next target." Brazilian Counterterrorism Director Luiz Alberto Sallaberry described the tweet as a credible threat. In April 2016, Brazil's national intelligence agency reported that the threat of Islamist terror attacks at the Olympic Games had increased. ISIS began translating its core propaganda into Portuguese in the weeks leading up to the Olympic Games, according to the *New York Times*. A few months later, in June 2016, Brazilian media sources reported that an individual known as Ismail Abdul Jabbar al-Brazili, or "The Brazilian," was disseminating ISIS propaganda and attempting to recruit Brazilians online. (Sources: U.S. Department of State, Reuters, *New York Times*, PJ Media, U.S. Department of State)

Between July 21-25, 2016, Brazilian authorities arrested 12 ISIS-inspired Brazilian nationals who had reportedly met online. The suspects were allegedly planning to carry out attacks at the August 2016 Olympic Games and had attempted to purchase a gun on the Internet. Justice Minister Alexandre de Moraes referred to the group—which called itself "Defenders of the Sharia"—as "absolutely amateur." Eight of those arrested were sentenced to jail terms ranging from five to 15 years on May 4, 2017. In May 2018, Brazilian authorities arrested 11 people accused of organizing over social media to create an ISIS cell in Brazil and recruit foreign fighters. (Sources: BBC News, BBC News, CNN, *New York Times*, U.S. Department of State, *Guardian*)

Far-Right Extremism

After Germany was defeated in World War II, many Nazis reportedly relocated to southern Brazil, among other South American countries. Today, Brazil is host to a number of Neo-Nazi groups, including Carecas do Subúrbio, Carecas do ABC, and White Power. Although these groups are largely concentrated in the south of country, it appears they are expanding into the country's central-west. Neo-Nazis in Brazil are reported to primarily target Jews, Afro-Brazilians, and gay people, as well as *nordestinos*, or people from northern Brazil. (Sources: Reuters, *Brazil Business*)

In May 2009, Brazilian Federal Police thwarted an attack by neo-Nazis on two synagogues in Porto Alegre, in southern Brazil. The suspects reportedly belonged to a small 50-member neo-Nazi group called Neuland. (Source: *Haaretz*)

In Brazil, YouTube has reportedly become more popular than all but one television channel. As such, it has become a primary medium for far-right radicalization. Members of the Brazilian rightwing and far right, including Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro, credit YouTube for their rising influence. Bolsonaro won Brazil's presidency in October 2018. He gained widespread recognition as a far-right YouTube star posting conspiracy theories and rightwing hoaxes. Since becoming president, he has declared that Brazil must not become "a country of the gay world, of gay tourism. We have families." He has also said he would rather have a dead son than a gay son. A longtime member of Brazil's congress, Bolsonaro had frequently made such remarks, as well as calling for a military coup in 1999 and comparing indigenous reservations in Brazil to chickenpox. In March 2020, YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter all deleted posts by Bolsonaro that they said spread misinformation about COVID-19. An October 2019 *Guardian* analysis found that 42 percent of viral messages spread on WhatsApp by the rightwing during Brazil's election cycle were fake news. Brazilian YouTuber Carlos Jordy has posted videos accusing teachers of indoctrinating students into communism. Jordy credited YouTube for his own success as well as for making Bolsonaro president. (Sources: *New York Times*, Bloomberg News, BBC News, *New York Times*)

Anti-Semitism

The rise of a far-right government in Brazil has led to an increase in anti-Semitic incidents in the country. On January 16, 2020, then-Secretary of Culture Roberto Alvim released a video to announce the creation of a new arts funding program, but the video drew criticism for similarities to a 1933 speech by Nazi Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels. The video's soundtrack also featured Richard Wagner's Lohengrin, a favorite of Hitler's. Bolsonaro fired Alvim the following day after widespread criticism. In February 2020 in São Paulo's Jaguariúna city, a group of men encircled a 57-year-old Jewish man, tore up his yarmulke with a knife, and physically beat him while shouting anti-Semitic slurs. In June 2020, Brazilian Pastor Tupirani da Hora Lores implored his Rio de Janeiro congregation to pray for a second Holocaust. Brazilian Jewish leaders attribute a rise in anti-Semitism to a general lack of knowledge about Jews. (Sources: Forward, Forward, Jewish Telegraphic Agency, *Jerusalem Post*)

Some in Brazil have latched onto Bolsonaro's support of Israel and created conspiracy theories of Jewish power over the government. They allege Jews put Bolsonaro and his far-right government into power and are driving his agenda. For example, a November 2019 issue of *Istoe* magazine included an article titled "Goebbels of the Planalto," referring to Brazil's presidential palace. The article suggested Brazil's Jewish Secretary of Communications Fabio Wajngarten was part of a Jewish conspiracy to promote recent advertising budget cuts to media outlets opposing the government. In May 2020, anti-Semitic comments were posted on the Facebook page of Brazilian Senator Davi Alcolumbre, who had recently become the first Jewish Brazil's National Congress. (Sources: Forward, *Haaretz*, Jewish Telegraphic Agency, *Jerusalem Post*)

Brazil has also witnessed anti-Semitism related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Conspiracy theories on Facebook and other social media platforms alleged that Jews have not been infected or are actively spreading the virus. The station temporarily suspended Morais following outcry from the Jewish community. Brazilian blogger Allan dos Santos wrote on Twitter likened the choice of using controversial drug chloroquine to Jews choosing between a shower and a gas chamber. On April 8, 2020, news host Marcos de Morais on Brazilian TV station SBT declared that people infected with COVID-19 should be taken to "concentration camps of health care, with more sophisticated equipments, with the best professionals." (Source: Forward)

Foreign Fighters

As of July 2015, three Brazilians have gone to fight with Islamist groups in Syria and Iraq, according to the Soufan Group. (Source: Soufan Group)

Major Extremist and Terrorist Incidents

In the months leading up to the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil enacted new legislation and stepped up law enforcement activity. In March 2016, the government passed a counterterrorism bill that criminalizes terrorism, advocacy for terrorism, and terrorist financing. With the help of French, British, Israeli, and U.S. intelligence services, in July 2016 Brazilian authorities arrested 12 Brazilian citizens who were allegedly planning to carry out attacks during the Olympic Games. In September 2016, Brazil began to indict the terror suspects, who allegedly belonged to a local pro-ISIS terrorist cell called "Defenders of Sharia." According to Brazil's Justice Minister Alexandre Moraes, the suspects communicated via encrypted messaging platforms WhatsApp and Telegram. Moraes characterized the cell as "an amateur cell without any preparation." (Sources: Library of Congress, Reuters, CNN, *Telegraph*, U.S. Department of State, Reuters, *New York Times*)

- **February 20, 2020:** Brazil extradites Carlos Garcia Julia to a prison outside Madrid.
  Julia orchestrated the 1977 Atocha massacre, one of Spain's most high-profile political killings. The attack, carried out by a fascist party called Fuerza Nueva, targeted a law firm linked to the Communist Party. The attack killed five people. Julia was sentenced to 30 years in prison in

1980 and was granted temporary parole in 1991 before he fled Spain and spent decades hiding in different countries throughout Latin America. He was eventually detained by Brazilian federal police in Sao Paulo in December 2018. Brazil's Supreme Court granted Spain's request for Julia's extradition in August 2019. Source: *New York Times*

- **May 19, 2019:** A group of armed men open fire at a bar in Para state.
  The attack kills 11 and wounds one other. It is uncertain if the attack had a terror motive. Source: Fox News
- **September 6, 2018:** Brazil's president-elect Jair Bolsonaro is stabbed during a presidential campaign rally.
  Shortly after, the perpetrator is captured and identified as Adelio Bispo de Oliveira, a leftist who had actively condemned Bolsonaro's far-right policies on Facebook. Sources: CNN, BBC News
- **July 21, 2016 - July 25, 2016:** Brazilian authorities arrest 12 ISIS-inspired Brazilian nationals suspected of planning attacks at the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro.
  Sources: BBC News, CNN
- Brazilian Federal Police thwart an attack by neo-Nazis on two synagogues in Porto Alegre, in southern Brazil.
  Source: *Haaretz*
- Khaled Hussein Ali, a Lebanese national living in Brazil, is arrested for disseminating al-Qaeda propaganda.
  He is released from prison after 21 days. Sources: *Veja*, Reuters
- **July 18, 1994:** A car bomb kills 85 people and wounds hundreds more at the Asociación Mutual Israelita Argentina (AMIA) building in Buenos Aires, Argentina.
  In October 2006, the Argentinian government officially charges the Iranian government and Hezbollah with carrying out the attack. Investigations into the attack lead back to TBA-based Hezbollah operatives. Sources: BBC News, U.S. Department of State, Library of Congress, Journal of International Security Affairs
- **March 17, 1992:** Suicide bombers attack the Israeli embassy in Buenos Aires, Argentina, killing 29 people and injuring over 240 others. Hezbollah claims responsibility. Investigations into the attack lead back to TBA-based Hezbollah operatives. Sources: U.S. Department of State, Journal of International Security Affairs
- Hezbollah is believed to begin operating in the TBA.
  Source: Washington Institute for Near East Policy
- **- :** A Brazilian right-wing group, led by a conspiracy theorist named Aladino Felix, carries out terrorist acts to justify repression by the country's military dictatorship.
  According to interrogation reports, group members claim that the attacks were reportedly encouraged by a general close to then-president Arthur da Costa e Silva. Felix led a group of 14 police officers who detonated bombs, stole arms and explosives, and robbed a bank between December 1967 and August 1968. Source: *Guardian*

Domestic Counter-Extremism

Counterterrorism

The Anti-Terrorism Division (DAT) of Brazil's federal police department, the Departamento de Policia Federal (DPF), is the country's lead counterterrorism agency. Under the Ministry of Justice and Citizenship, the DAT is responsible for conducting investigations into extremist groups and protentional terror attacks. The DPF's Tactical Operations Command (TOC), Brazil's state-level military and civil police, its Ministries of Justice and Defense, and its national intelligence agency, Agência Brasileira de Inteligência (ABIN), are also involved in the country's counterterrorism efforts. A 2015 U.S. Department of State assessment indicated that Brazil's law enforcement and security agencies lacked coordination due to inter-service rivalries and that the country would "benefit from consolidated and automatic information sharing." (Sources: U.S. Department of State, U.S. Department of State, U.S. Department of State, Office of the President of Brazil)

As part of the 2015 U.S. Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) program, the United States provided training to Brazilian law enforcement and security agencies "with the goal of enhancing investigative capabilities, building border security capabilities, and supporting Brazil's efforts to prevent terrorist attacks in the 2016 Summer Olympics." In a July 2016 report entitled "Security in the Rio 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games," Brazil's Office of the President wrote that the government was prepared to protect millions of visitors—athletes and attendants—from public safety threats using the "procedures and protocols required." (Source: Office of the President of Brazil)

Legislation

Engaging in an act of terror became a prosecutable offense in Brazil with the passage of the 1980 National Security Law. However, that law was difficult to enforce because the parameters of what constituted an act of terror had not been clearly defined. In March 2016, Brazil enacted Law No. 13.260, which defined terrorist acts as a set of violent activities carried out "for reasons of xenophobia; discrimination; or prejudice in regard to race,

color, ethnicity, or religion" if intending to cause "social or generalized terror" by "exposing persons, property, public peace, or public safety to danger." Under Law No. 13.260, individuals who perpetrate or abet (including via the provision of financial assistance) acts of terror receive a prison sentence of between 12 and 30 years. The first convictions under Law No. 13.260 took place on May 4, 2017, when eight Brazilian citizens were found guilty of having disseminated ISIS propaganda on social media. (Sources: U.S. Department of State, Library of Congress, U.S. Department of State)

Brazil has also addressed terror-financing through its anti-money laundering legislation. The country added financing terrorism to a list of money laundering offenses in 1998. In 2001 and 2003, Brazil introduced new legislation which made it easier for the Council for Financial Activities Control (COAF) to access the financial records of persons under investigation. That legislation also increased the COAF's abilities to share financial intelligence with interested foreign parties. In October 2015, former Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff signed Law No. 13.170, allowing Brazil to freeze assets of individuals and entities in accordance with U.N. Security Council Resolutions. The Ministry of Justice reported in 2017 that "to date Brazil has not reported any convictions for terrorism or blockage of assets" for individuals on U.N. sanctions lists. (Sources: Washington Institute, U.S. Department of State, Brazil Government News)

Despite these laws, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) in 2018 expressed "serious concerns" about Brazil's anti-money laundering/combating the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) efforts. From 2016 to 2019, the FATF issued multiple reports calling on Brazil to remedy multiple deficiencies the agency identified. The FATF has pointed to the Tri-Border Area as a high-risk area for money laundering. The FATF has called on Brazil to enhance the scope of its criminal offenses regarding money laundering, boost its surveillance mechanisms and due diligence, and bolster its international cooperation in AMLF/CTF. (Sources: FCPA Blog, FATF, FATF, FATF)

International Counter-Extremism

Brazil is part of the BRICS alliance, which also includes Russia, India, China, and South America. Brazil assumed the rotating presidency of the alliance in 2019 and identified counter terrorism as a priority during the country's presidency. (Sources: BRICS, Economic Times)

Brazil is a member of the Organization of American States' (OAS) and its Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism (CICTE), which was established in 1999 and holds an annual forum "for discussion and decision-making on counter terrorism issues." In addition, Brazil is part of an association with Russia, India, China, and South Africa (known as BRIC) and has collaborated with those countries in a joint working group on counterterrorism. Brazil continues to work with Argentina and Paraguay to combat terror-related activity in the TBA and in February 2017 participated in a U.S.-sponsored "Practitioner's Workshop on Countering Transnational Terrorist Groups in the Tri-Border Area." (Sources: U.S. Department of State, OAS, OAS)

Brazil has also worked on issues related to terrorism and terrorist financing with countries involved in the Southern Common Market South American trade bloc and the Financial Action Task Force of Latin America (GAFILAT). However, despite these efforts, Brazil has had a "longstanding gap" in its ability to confront terrorist financing, according to the U.S. Department of State. (Sources: U.S. Department of State U.S. Department of State)

Tri-Border Area

Brazil has also specifically worked to coordinate its counterterrorism efforts with Argentina and Paraguay in the TBA. In 1996, the three nations established a joint Trilateral Tri-Border Area Command to better control commerce and the transit of international individuals. Brazil contributed members from several of its intelligence and security agencies. However, the Command has suffered from institutional corruption, inadequate funding and resources, and poor training, hindering its efforts to combat illicit activity in the TBA. (Sources: U.S. Department of State, Library of Congress)

In July 2019, Brazil, Paraguay, Argentina, and the United States formed an alliance to combat terrorism and "illicit activity" in the region, focusing on activity in the TBA. Representatives of the so-called "three plus one" alliance intend to meet twice a year. The countries agreed to the alliance during the Western Hemisphere Counterterrorism Ministerial Plenary in Buenos Aires, Argentina, that month. During the conference, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo singled out Hezbollah and Iran as the leading terrorist threats to the region. (Sources: U.S. Department of State, *Rio Times*)

Public Opinion

Brazil has ramped up its efforts to counter terrorism during major sporting events, including the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro. Though not specifically focused on terrorism-related concerns, a 2016 poll by Brazil's Datafolha Institute found that 63 percent of Brazilians believed the Olympics would result in "more harm than benefit." With Brazil suffering one of its worst recessions in decades, "it becomes a big question about whether [the massive security costs] are really worth the outcome," said David Murakami Wood, a Canadian researcher who has studied Brazilian security agencies. (Source: *Los Angeles Times*, Global News)

According to Marcia Cavallari of Brazil's IBOPE polling institute, a majority of Brazilians supported the preventive national security measures taken before the 2016 Summer Olympics. Cavallari's statements in July 2016 appeared to echo approval ratings for Brazil's national security efforts during the 2014 FIFA World Cup. Following the 2014 games, polling from Brazil's Datafolha Institute showed that 60 percent of respondents rated public safety in Brazil as better than they had expected. (Sources: Datafolha, *Wall Street Journal*)