

Europe Overview

European nations worked in close partnership with the United States in the global counterterrorism campaign and have continued to strengthen their legal and administrative ability to take action against terrorists and their supporters, including freezing their assets. The contributions of European countries in sharing intelligence, arresting members of terrorist cells, and interdicting terrorist financing and logistics continued to be vital elements in the war on terrorism. Allies such as France and the United Kingdom were particularly responsive during periods of heightened security, cooperating with United States officials to monitor airline flights of concern.

The European Union (EU) has been a reliable partner in the war on terrorism and has significantly strengthened its legal and administrative ability, and that of EU member states, to take action against terrorists and their supporters—including freezing their assets—in the past several years. International judicial cooperation advanced in 2003, as EU members changed domestic legislation to incorporate provision of the European Arrest Warrant, which was scheduled to come into effect in early 2004. The EU and United States signed new Extradition and Mutual Legal Assistance Treaties at the G-8 Summit in June 2003 that will expand law enforcement and judicial cooperation. Significant deficiencies remained, however, and some countries have legal impediments to taking firm judicial action against known terrorists, often stemming from asylum laws, inadequate counterterrorism legislation, or high standards of evidence that afford loopholes and limit the ability of authorities to hold suspects. The EU as a whole was reluctant to take steps to block the assets of charities associated with HAMAS and Hizballah.

The United Kingdom continued its longstanding close partnership with the United States, providing the second-largest contingent of forces for the liberation of Iraq, arresting extremists in the United Kingdom on terrorism-related charges, and stepping up efforts to disrupt and prosecute terrorists. The United Kingdom aggressively moved to freeze the assets of organizations and persons with terrorist links and to proscribe terrorist groups. UK overseas interests were attacked in November when suicide bombers struck the British

Consulate and a British bank in Istanbul, killing 25 people. The United Kingdom provided significant counterterrorism assistance and training to foreign governments around the world.

Italy continued its exemplary work against terrorism, deploying forces to Afghanistan and Iraq. Nineteen Italian citizens were killed in a terrorist attack on Italian Carabinieri in Iraq. Italian authorities continued to disrupt suspected terrorist cells linked to al-Qaida and, for the first time, expelled suspects believed to pose a terrorist threat. Members of the Red Brigades—Communist Combatant Party staged a shootout with police, leading to the arrest of the group's leader and subsequent significant progress in dismantling it.

Spain's vigorous investigation of extremist groups continued, with Spanish authorities indicting Usama Bin Ladin and 34 others for complicity in the September 11 attacks. Substantial progress was made against the Basque Fatherland and Liberty (ETA) terrorist organization; more than 100 persons connected to ETA were arrested, and several operational ETA cells were dismantled.

France made many significant terrorism-related arrests, including suspects linked to persons who assisted the September 11 hijackers. Investigations continued into the activities of terrorist cells connected to plots against the US Embassy in Paris. French authorities, working with their Spanish counterparts, put intensive pressure on ETA, arresting top leaders of the Basque terrorist group's military wing in December. France continued to engage numerous non-EU countries in dialogue on counterterrorism issues.

Cooperation among European law-enforcement authorities was a feature of many successes during the past year. For example, France and Spain became the first countries to create "multi-national police investigation teams" under the terms of an EU agreement of 2002.

Germany contributed significantly to international forces in Afghanistan and took a lead role in that country's reconstruction. In February, a German court became the first to convict a terrorist linked to the September 11 attacks. German authorities continued extensive investigations into Islamic extremist-based terrorism and arrested a number

of suspects. In November, Germany extradited suspected al-Qaida financier Sheik Mohammed ali Hasan al Moayad and an associate to the United States.

In Turkey, two separate—but probably coordinated—attacks by suicide bombers on British and Jewish targets in Istanbul in November killed 61 people. Turkey and the United States continued to discuss cooperation against Kongra-Gel (KADEK—the former Kurdistan Workers Party), which, for its part, continued to launch attacks against Turkish targets. Despite progress by Turkish police against the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party (DHKP/C), that group continued its attacks as well.

In December 2003, a Greek court convicted 15 members of Revolutionary Organization 17 November (17N) of hundreds of crimes, sentencing five 17N leaders to multiple life terms and imposing sentences of up to 244 years on others. Four suspects were acquitted.

Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Denmark, and Norway contributed forces and reconstruction assistance to Afghanistan and Iraq. Sweden and Finland also have peacekeepers in Afghanistan and are active in reconstruction in both nations. Norwegian authorities continued to investigate suspected Ansar al-Islam leader (and Norway resident) Mullah Krekar and froze an account linked to that organization.

Despite limited resources, the countries of southeast Europe have actively supported the international Coalition against terrorism. Albania, Serbia-Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Bulgaria cooperated to combat organized crime and various forms of trafficking, enhance border security, and improve training for border security personnel.

The United States and the EU signed extradition and mutual legal assistance agreements in June that, as US Attorney General John Ashcroft noted, will provide “additional tools to combat terrorism, organized crime, and other serious forms of criminality.” The EU and its member states have made significant contributions to the reconstruction of Afghanistan.

Albania

Despite limited resources, Albania has provided considerable support to US and international counterterrorism initiatives. Albania continues to implement its National Action Plan against Terrorism, originally approved in 2002.

The government has frozen the assets of a notorious terrorist financier, curtailed the activities of suspect Islamic NGOs, and detained or expelled individuals suspected of having links to terrorism or attempting to foment religious intolerance. In June 2003, Parliament passed a strong money-laundering law that included antiterrorist financing provisions, bringing Albania's legislation into compliance with international standards. The Bank of Albania has also established a task force to monitor all financial activities of secondary banks and their compliance with client verification. Legislation is pending that would define what constitutes a terrorist act, identify the antiterrorism responsibilities of specific Government agencies, and create an interministerial National Coordinating Committee for the Fight Against Terrorist Acts. Albania continues to cooperate extremely closely with the United States and other governments in sharing information and investigating terrorist-related groups and activities. Albania has also started cracking down on ethnic Albanian extremists, recently convicting a key leader of the ultranationalist Albanian National Army on charges of inciting national and religious hatred and using falsified documents.

Albania has ratified all 12 UN international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism.

Belgium

The Belgian Government continues to participate in the global war on terrorism and cooperates with its European neighbors and the US Government on multiple levels. Brussels remains active in sharing information with the United States regarding terrorist threats to US interests or persons.

The Belgian judicial system effectively applied the rule of law to terrorist conspirators in 2003 when it prosecuted Europe's largest terrorism trial since 11 September 2001. Among the 23 defendants was Nizar Trabelsi, a Tunisian national and al-Qaida

associate arrested by Belgian authorities in September 2001 for plotting against various targets, including an Antwerp synagogue, the Kleine Brogel military air base, and the US Embassy in Paris. Trabelsi was sentenced to 10 years in prison—the maximum permitted under Belgian law at the time of trial. Also sentenced was Tarek Maaroufi, a Tunisian-born Belgian national arrested in December 2001 for providing forged travel documents to the two assassins of Afghan Northern Alliance leader Ahmad Shah Massoud. Maaroufi was sentenced to six years in prison. Despite the absence of terrorism-specific legislation at the time of trial, the Belgian court was able to convict 18 of the other 21 defendants with sentences ranging from two to five years in jail.

In January 2003, Belgium enacted a bill granting law enforcement authorities the power to take “special investigative measures” such as wiretapping and infiltration for the investigation of terrorism and other serious crimes. In December 2003, the Belgian Parliament passed legislation implementing the EU’s Framework Decision of June 2002 on combating terrorism, as well as the European Arrest Warrant. (The King was to sign the legislation into law in January 2004.) The legislation implementing the EU Framework Decision criminalized terrorism and financial contributions to those who commit terrorist acts. The European Arrest Warrant should streamline the process of arresting and extraditing terrorists within the EU.

Belgium has participated in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan since early 2003; 250 Belgian troops under ISAF currently provide security at Kabul International Airport. Belgium sent 5.5 million euros of humanitarian aid to Afghanistan in 2003.

Belgium has signed 11 of the 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism but has ratified only six. In December 2003, two more conventions appeared on the way to ratification in early 2004. The Belgian Senate approved a bill providing for ratification of the UN Convention on the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, and the lower house of Parliament—the Chamber of Deputies—was expected to pass it quickly as well. The Convention on the Punishment and Prevention of Crime against Internationally Protected Persons

was presented to Parliament on 8 December. Its signature and ratification was also expected in early 2004.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

The Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) has continued to condemn acts of international terrorism. Combating terrorism in BiH remains difficult because of the country’s ethnic divisions and the lack of strong central institutions, such as a state-level intelligence agency and law-enforcement authorities with both executive powers and national jurisdiction. BiH also lacks established procedures for dealing with such issues as denaturalization, extradition, deportation, and preventive detention.

The Bosnian Government introduced measures to address some of the administrative and legal challenges it faces in combating terrorism. A state-level intelligence and security agency, as well as an internal security service with significant counterterrorism responsibilities, are planned for 2004. In 2002, the Parliament passed a law creating the State Information and Protection Agency whose mission includes combating terrorism, illegal trafficking, organized crime, and smuggling of weapons of mass destruction. To shore up this agency’s authority and resources, an amended law will be submitted for Parliament’s approval in 2004. Although BiH lacks a financial intelligence unit, comprehensive money-laundering and terrorist-financing laws, and legislation dealing with forfeiture of assets, this amended law is designed to address these weaknesses.

The BiH Government’s commitment to the fight against terrorism and its decisive action in apprehending suspects and shutting down NGOs and bank accounts tied to terrorist organizations slowed with the change of government in October 2002, which brought nationalist parties to power. Moreover, foreign Islamic extremists, who entered Bosnia during the war in 1992-95, remain in the country. Nonetheless, the Federation Financial Police continued to shut down NGOs with terrorist links, and Federation banking authorities continued to freeze accounts of suspected terrorist supporters. In particular, the Government disrupted the operations of the Benevolence International

Foundation (BIF), Al-Haramain Islamic Foundation (including its successor, Vazir), and the Global Relief Fund, which have direct links to al-Qaida and Usama Bin Ladin. Documents seized from the offices of the BIF link its leader directly to Usama Bin Ladin. BIF leader Enaam Arnaout, who—among other things—was charged in US courts with concealing his relationship to al-Qaida, received a 15-year prison sentence.

The Government's investigative proceedings into the role of six former Bosnian Federation officials suspected of operating a terrorist-training camp in BiH with Iran in the mid-1990s concluded at the end of 2003, and indictments—if issued—are expected in 2004.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is a party to 11 of the 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism, ratifying five in 2003.

Bulgaria

To aid in the fight against terrorist financing, the Government of Bulgaria enacted in February 2003 the Law on Measures Against the Financing of Terrorism, which links existing laws against terrorism with the financing of those crimes. The law was drafted in accordance with the Financial Action Task Force's Eight Special Recommendations Against the Financing of Terrorism. The Bulgarian Financial Intelligence Agency has full authority to obtain information without a court order, to share information freely with law-enforcement agencies, and to process and act on allegations of terrorist financing.

In the past year, Bulgarian Ministry of Interior and Customs training has begun to include nuclear, biological, and chemical detection and handling. Customs officers have begun using the TRACKER licensing system as their primary permit-screening tool.

In December 2003, Bulgaria joined the United Nations Convention Against Corruption. Sofia is a party to all 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism.

Czech Republic

The Czech Republic is a stalwart ally in the war against terror and is providing assistance both domestically and abroad. In support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, the Czechs posted a nuclear-biological-chemical (NBC) unit to Camp Doha and a military field hospital to Basra, where it treated more than 10,000 civilians and military personnel. Although both returned home at the end of 2003, a Czech Civilian-Military Cooperation Team, 80 military police, and 13 Czech experts serving in the Coalition Provisional Authority are still in the theater. Per commitments made in Madrid, the Czech Republic provided 10 experts to train Iraqi police in Jordan.

In Afghanistan, the Government of the Czech Republic provided its NBC unit and military hospital before sending them to Iraq. The Government is considering a deployment of up to 150 special forces troops to Afghanistan.

There were no cases of international terrorism within the Czech Republic in 2003, but Czech authorities addressed several domestic cases of extortion involving the use of explosives or poison. Neither bombs nor poison were ever found, but the Czech police made arrests and are prosecuting the cases appropriately.

The Czech Republic is a party to nine of 12 conventions and protocols relating to terrorism. Its main goal in combating terrorism is to ratify the UN Convention on the Suppression of Financing of Terrorism and the amendment of the Measures against Legalization of Proceeds of Criminal Activity. The latter is currently before Parliament.

Denmark

Denmark has actively supported the global war on terrorism. In 2003, the Danish Government froze the assets of the Danish branch of al-Aqsa and arrested a Danish citizen originally from Morocco with alleged ties to al-Qaida and pressed still-pending weapons charges against him.

The Danish Government contributed naval assets to Operation Iraqi Freedom and has more than 500 military personnel deployed in southern Iraq assisting with security and reconstruction efforts. Denmark contributed 50 military personnel to the ISAF in Afghanistan in 2003, in addition to Danish officers deployed with NATO. In December 2003, the Parliament authorized deployment of 40 additional personnel to provide communications and information support to ISAF.

Denmark is a party to all 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism.

Estonia

Estonia has been fully supportive of the war against terrorism. Estonia contributed a demining team in support of the ISAF in Afghanistan. In Iraq, Estonia is contributing a cargo-handling team and 24-man infantry platoon under US command, as well as providing humanitarian assistance.

Estonia is a party to 11 of the 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism.

Finland

In 2003, Finland implemented regulations that allow it to freeze terrorist assets without EU or UN approval in cases when another government presents a legal request for action or the individual or organization is suspected of having committed an offense within Finland's borders. Finland also amended its criminal code to make it possible to sentence leaders of terrorist groups to 15 years in jail, although the group has to have actually committed acts of terrorism in Finland before investigation and prosecution can begin. If the charge also includes murder, the maximum sentence could be life imprisonment. In January 2004, the Finnish Security Police also created a special unit concentrating solely on fighting terrorism, the first of its kind in Finland.

Approximately 50 Finnish Civil-Military Cooperation troops are currently deployed in Afghanistan in support of ISAF. In 2003, Afghanistan was the single-largest country recipient of Finland's foreign aid (10 million euros each year), which included support for the Afghan army and police force.

Finland is a party to all 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism and implemented EU legislation against terrorism.

France

France remains an active and engaged participant in the war against terrorism, exemplified by an aggressive police force and judiciary. French authorities work closely with US and other foreign counterparts to investigate and prosecute terrorist operatives. France is currently changing its domestic legislation to incorporate the provisions of the European Arrest Warrant and to strengthen its procedures for international judicial cooperation. (The Arrest Warrant is expected to enter into force on 1 January 2004 in France and the other 14 EU member states.)

Throughout 2003, France continued to take rapid action in support of US requests under Executive Order 13224 to freeze Taliban, al-Qaida, and other terrorist financial assets. The Ministry of Finance's terrorism financing coordination cell, FINTER, maintains direct coordination with the US Treasury Department's Financial Terrorism Task Force and Office of Foreign Asset Controls.

The year 2003 saw many significant terrorism-related arrests in France. In June, French authorities arrested Moroccan national Karim Mehdi at Paris's Charles de Gaulle airport. Mehdi is suspected of having ties to the al-Qaida cell in Hamburg whose members aided the hijackers of September 11 and for plotting against tourist facilities on Reunion Island. Arrested at the airport several days later was a German convert to extremist Islam, Christian Ganczarski, implicated in the al-Qaida attack on the synagogue in Djerba, Tunisia, and closely associated with al-Qaida in Germany. Both arrested extremists are residents of Germany.

French judicial authorities continued their investigation into the activities of suspected terrorist Djamel Beghal, the leader of an al-Qaida-associated cell in France, for plotting to attack the US Embassy in Paris. Several additional suspects remain in custody in France on charges relating to this conspiracy. One member of Beghal's cell, Algerian national Kamel Daoudi, was sentenced on

4 November to six months in prison for his criminal association with a terrorist network plotting attacks in France.

France has also made significant progress against non-Islamic indigenous terrorist groups, including ETA, the Real IRA, and the Corsican Separatists. In October 2003, a Paris court sentenced presumed ETA militant Alberto Rey-Domecq to six and a half years in prison for participating in a criminal association with terrorist aims. On 4 November 2003, French authorities arrested five French nationals who were suspected of providing support to the Real IRA, a dissident faction of the Irish Republican Army. In late June, French judicial authorities convicted eight Corsican nationalists for the assassination in 1998 of the Corsican Prefect Claude Erignac. Four of the conspirators were given life in prison, and the remaining four received lesser sentences.

France continues to cooperate with its neighbors to combat terrorism, for example, building upon last year's protocol with Spain to include new provisions such as joint investigation teams. This agreement provides the teams with authority to conduct police investigations in each other's countries, subject to the judicial authorities of the country in which they act.

In addition, France has joined numerous other non-EU countries in dialogue on counterterrorism issues, including Turkey, Pakistan, Singapore, and India. France has engaged other European, Mediterranean, and North African countries in dialogue to create an area of security in the Western Mediterranean that will focus on combating Islamic terrorism. US and French authorities enjoyed exemplary cooperation in providing enhanced security for airline flights of concern during a period of heightened threat around the Christmas holidays and beyond.

France has designated as terrorist groups those that appear on the EU list of terrorist organizations. In 2002, France designated HAMAS as a terrorist organization but has yet to designate the related charities. France, along with its EU partners, has not yet designated Lebanese Hizballah as a terrorist organization.

The plot to attack tourist facilities of French overseas department Reunion Island in a manner similar to the Bali nightclub bombings of October 2002 best signifies the continued threat to French citizens or interests posed by Islamic extremist terrorists in 2003, reinforcing the notion that France is both a short- and medium-term target for al-Qaida and associated groups.

This year, France became a party to all 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism by ratifying the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Internationally Protected Persons.

Germany

Germany continues to be a prominent participant in the global Coalition against terrorism, reflecting many German security officials' assessments that Germany is a terrorist target and an important al-Qaida logistic hub. Germany also is an active supporter of the counterterrorism campaign in international forums, including the EU, UN, NATO, OSCE, and the G-8.

Germany continues to contribute significantly to international forces in Afghanistan with approximately 2,700 soldiers deployed on missions in support of the ISAF, Operation Enduring Freedom, and Operation Active Endeavor in the Mediterranean. Germany and the Netherlands were lead nations for ISAF from February until August, when NATO assumed command. In October, the German Parliament extended authorization for Germany's participation in ISAF for another year. German naval forces continue to be a major participant in the antiterrorism naval task forces off the Horn of Africa and in the Mediterranean that are tasked with ensuring the security of shipping routes and cutting off the supply and escape routes used by terrorists.

Germany has taken a lead role in Afghanistan's reconstruction through humanitarian and development assistance. German personnel continue to train and equip a new Afghan police force, and Germany has committed to spend approximately 320 million euros in Afghanistan by 2006.

German bilateral assistance with Iraq's reconstruction has been modest, with aid largely limited to humanitarian assistance, demining, and restoration of the water system, as well as offers to help in training the country's reestablished police force. Berlin's multilateral assistance for Iraq includes 25 percent of the European Commission's 200 million euro pledge for reconstruction.

Germany was the first country to convict a terrorist linked to the attacks of September 11. In February, the Hamburg Higher Regional Court sentenced Moroccan national Mounir el Motassadeq to 15 years in prison—the maximum sentence allowable under German law—for accessory to murder and membership in a terrorist organization. A trial on similar charges against a second suspected terrorist of September 11, Moroccan Abdelghani Mzoudi, took place in Hamburg and ended with his acquittal in February 2004. Germany is still seeking Hamburg cell suspects Said Bahaji, Ramzi Binalshibh, and Zakariya Essabar under international arrest warrants.

German federal and state criminal offices are conducting 177 preindictment investigations into Islamic extremist-based terrorism, and several terrorists have been sentenced to prison. Four members of the Meliani Group were sentenced to 10-to-12 years in prison for plotting an attack on the Strasbourg Christmas market in December 2000. A member of the German "al-Tawhid" cell, which has close ties with al-Qaida, was sentenced to serve four years for passport forgery and membership in a terrorist organization, and charges have been brought against four other al-Tawhid members. A Turkish citizen was sentenced to 18 months in prison for illegal possession of explosives and drug charges, but the prosecution failed in its attempt to convict him of charges of planning a terrorist attack on the US Army's European Headquarters in Heidelberg.

Notable arrests and indictments include the arrest of several extremists affiliated with Berlin's al-Nur Mosque, who were plotting to carry out a suicide operation during anti-Iraq war demonstrations in Berlin, and a suspected former leader in the DHKP-C—a Turkish left extremist organization with cells in Germany that was banned in August 1998.

Germany also agreed in November to extradite to the United States two Yemeni nationals who were wanted for material support to terrorism, after receiving assurances that they would not be tried before a US military commission.

German authorities, however, have failed in some efforts to bring indictments against several prominent al-Qaida suspects, including German national Christian Ganczarski—a contact of the hijackers of September 11 and a suspect in the Djerba bombing in April 2002 in which several German citizens were killed. He and his associate Karim Medhi—who confessed to helping plan a terrorist attack in Reunion Island last spring—were arrested by French authorities in June and are being held in France for prosecution.

Germany has adopted antiterrorism reforms that should enhance its ability to fight terrorism. New and stronger provisions in the German law on associations have been used to ban several foreign extremist organizations in Germany. The Interior Ministry has banned the extremist Islamic association Hizb ut-Tahrir—based outside Germany—from any activity within the country and has seized the association's assets in Germany. The Federal Constitutional Court in October upheld the ban against the Islamic extremist group "Caliphate State," which has now exhausted all appeals. The court has temporarily lifted the ban against the Al-Aqsa Foundation, which is accused of providing financial support to HAMAS, pending a final ruling, but authorities continue to monitor the members' activities.

Germany signed in October a bilateral Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty with the United States in criminal matters—the result of nine rounds of negotiations conducted during the past 20 years. This treaty should streamline and expedite the process of mutual legal assistance between the United States and Germany.

Of the 12 existing UN conventions and protocols relating to combating terrorism, Germany has signed all—and ratified eleven—of the conventions. The UN Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism is still in the process of ratification.

Greece

Greece continues to make progress in the fight against terrorism, particularly against domestic groups. The Greek Ministry of Justice announced in November that it would seek to enact new counterterrorism legislation to comply with a decision made by the European Council in 2002. This law will for the first time in Greek jurisprudence define terrorism as a crime. The law also increases the statute of limitations on terrorist-related killings from 20 to 30 years and increases prison terms for terrorist leaders.

Greece has participated in the ISAF in Afghanistan since 2002. Currently, more than 130 individuals from the Greek Corps of Engineers and other support elements are deployed in Kabul. A Greek navy frigate was stationed in the Arabian Sea until July, and two Greek C-130 aircraft are operating in the Afghan theater.

In December, a Greek court concluded a nine-month trial of 19 accused members of the 17N terrorist group, which was responsible for the deaths of 23 individuals, including five US Embassy employees. A special three-member judiciary panel convicted 15 of the 17N terrorists of hundreds of crimes—five of the terrorists were given multiple life terms, and four were acquitted because of a lack of evidence. The Greek Chief of Police has stated that additional members of the group are at large, and investigations are continuing.

Greek authorities in the spring arrested five members of the Revolutionary People's Struggle (ELA)—the country's oldest, although lesser-known terrorist group—marking Athens's first-ever arrests against the group. The five members were charged with killing a police officer and other crimes, and the trial against them began in February 2004 and is ongoing. ELA has not conducted an attack since 1995, but Revolutionary Nuclei (RN)—widely believed to be the successor to or offshoot of ELA—may be responsible for attacks in July against an insurance company and bank in Athens, on the basis of forensic evidence. RN's few communiques show strong similarities in rhetoric, tone, and theme to ELA proclamations. RN's last confirmed attack was in November 2000.



Suspected members of the 17 November terrorist group sit in the courtroom of the Korydallos high-security prison during their trial, 6 March 2003.

Anarchists and leftwing terrorists continued to conduct arson attacks and some low-level bombings against an array of perceived establishment and so-called imperialist targets, such as banks, courts, and personal vehicles. Between September and late December, more than 50 anarchist attacks took place—mainly conducted in solidarity with imprisoned anarchists and 17N trial defendants. Overall, there were 10 low-level attacks against US businesses and vehicles in 2003, compared to a total of eight such attacks the previous year. Anarchists also were responsible for a “barrage” of low-level bombings of banks in November on the eve of the visit of FBI Director Mueller and claimed them as a “warm welcome” to the US official. These attacks only caused property damage but underscore the lingering nature of leftwing terrorism in Greece.

Athens is enhancing security preparations for the 2004 Olympic Games. The Olympic Security Advisory Group—a seven-state group—is a key forum for assisting this effort. Greece plans to spend \$750 million to counter potential terrorist and other security threats during the Games.

Greece has signed all—and ratified 11—of the UN conventions and protocols relating to terrorism.

Hungary

Hungary has been fully supportive of the war against terrorism and US initiatives against al-Qaida and other terrorist organizations both within its borders and abroad. Throughout 2003, Hungary maintained consistent political support for the war on terror, actively promoting the US position in NATO and the UN and giving high-level endorsement to US policies.

In support of Operation Enduring Freedom, Hungary developed a package of excess weapons, ammunition, and equipment for the Georgia Train and Equip Program and the Afghan National Army training project.

The total amount donated for Afghanistan was 437 tons, valued at \$3.7 million. The Georgia program comprised 8 tons, valued at \$25,000. In 2003, the Hungarian Parliament approved the sending of up to 50 troops to the ISAF in Afghanistan. Also in 2003, Hungary contributed a military medical unit as part of the ISAF. The medical unit was deployed there from March to September. The Government delivered \$1 million in humanitarian aid to Afghanistan in 2003.

Hungary passed a law in December 2001 on money laundering and terrorist financing that brought it into full compliance with EU and Financial Action Task Force norms. Now, however, the Government has put before its Parliament additional legislation that would go well beyond that of most countries in reporting requirements for financial transactions.

Cooperation with US and regional officials on export and border controls continues to be outstanding. In several cases, Hungarian officials have aggressively pursued and developed leads and provided extensive cooperation to US officers that have stopped the transshipment of hazardous goods. Hungary is actively improving its technical ability to track and control dangerous materials, and its imminent accession into the EU is accelerating this process.

Hungary is a party to all 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism.

Iceland

Despite having no indigenous military forces, Iceland has contributed to the war on terrorism efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq. Building on its experience from running Pristina airport in Kosovo on behalf of the Alliance, Iceland is due to take sole responsibility for the operation of the Kabul airport on 1 June 2004. The Government decided in February 2004 to provide chartered airlift for Dutch military assets en route to Afghanistan. Other supportive actions include the deployment during 2003-04 of two bomb disposal experts with Danish forces in southern Iraq and earlier airlift contributions for Operation Enduring Freedom.

Iceland is a party to all 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism.

Italy

Italy has been a staunch ally in the war against terror and has made significant contributions in Afghanistan and Iraq. Italy deployed a 1,000-troop task force in Afghanistan, its first major combat deployment since World War II. The Italian Government also maintains approximately 3,000 troops, civilian personnel, and paramilitary Carabinieri in Iraq. Despite the terrorist bombing of 2 November of the Italian Carabinieri headquarters in Nasiriyah, Iraq, which killed 19 Italian citizens, Italy remains one of the four largest contributors of troops and personnel to ongoing stabilization operations in Iraq.

Italy's law enforcement authorities maintained an ongoing and largely effective initiative against Italy-based terrorist suspects, including investigation, detentions, prosecutions, and expulsions. According to Ministry of Interior data, Italian authorities in 2003 arrested 71 individuals suspected of planning or providing support to terrorist activity. Many of those arrested were suspected al-Qaida operatives and recruiters or facilitators for Ansar al-Islam and other al-Qaida-linked extremist organizations.

In November, Italy's Minister of Interior for the first time exercised ministerial authority to expel seven terrorist suspects who he assessed posed

a serious terrorist threat to Italy's national security. The Italian Government declared that, while there may have been insufficient evidence to arrest the suspects, lengthy investigation had compiled compelling evidence that the seven were Islamic extremists who posed a threat to the national security.

Preventing terrorism financing has also been a key goal of the Italian Government as a part of its war against terrorism. To date, Italy has fully complied with the asset-freezing requirements imposed by UN Security Council Resolutions and EU mechanisms. In January, Italy ratified and brought into effect the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and adopted a number of provisions to adjust Italian legislation accordingly. Under the ratification law, penalties for the crimes of money laundering—if committed during banking or professional activities—are now extended to terrorism financing crimes. The Government of Italy in 2003 also submitted 30 names of individuals suspected of links to al-Qaida to the UN 1267 Sanctions Committee for listing on its consolidated list of individuals and/or entities associated with al-Qaida, the Taliban, or Usama Bin Ladin, making them subject to sanctions. The Italian Government froze their assets in Italy.

The domestic leftwing terrorist group, the new Red Brigades—Communist Combatant Party (BR-CCP), also presents an ongoing terrorist threat to Italian national security. Italian authorities continue their efforts to dismantle and prevent terrorist acts by the BR-CCP, which has used assassination of government officials as a tool of terror during the last several years. In March, two BR-CCP activists engaged police officers in a shootout on a train. One of the group's leaders was arrested and remains in detention; another member was killed. Subsequently, Italian authorities in October arrested several suspected BR-CCP activists using evidence seized from the detained leader, and they assess that they have made significant progress in dismantling the terrorist group.

Italy is a party to all 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism.

Latvia

Latvia has been fully supportive of the war against terrorism. Latvia contributed a medical team in support of the ISAF in Afghanistan. In Iraq, Latvia contributed a 103-man infantry company under Polish command, undertaking patrols, assisting in maintaining public order, and helping efforts to rebuild and reconstruct Iraq; it also deployed cargo-handling and bomb disposal specialists. The Government has offered technical assistance for the reconstruction of Iraq.

The Government takes its terrorist financing responsibilities seriously and has been very responsive in those instances when the United States has shared information on terrorist financing. Drawing on US and other sources, Latvia has compiled a terrorist-financing database that it shares with local banks.

Latvia is a party to all 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism.

Lithuania

Lithuania has been fully supportive of the war against terrorism. Lithuania is implementing the National Security Strategy of May 2002 and the National Counter Terrorism Program of January 2002. These plans include: participation in the international fight against terrorism; expanding and sharing resources; defending possible targets and infrastructure; identifying terrorists, their groups, and supporters; identifying and cutting off sources of terrorist finances; clarifying the procedures for investigating terrorist cases; strengthening rapid reaction and crisis management capabilities; strengthening of counterterrorist intelligence; and strengthening of internal economic and social security in general.

Lithuania has also sent troops and other military personnel to Afghanistan and Iraq. Since November 2002, Lithuanian Special Operation Forces have participated in Operation Enduring

Freedom in Afghanistan. About 100 Lithuanian troops and logistic specialists are operating in Iraq. In October, Parliament voted to extend the missions to Afghanistan and Iraq until the end of 2004. The Government also pledged modest financial assistance to Iraqi reconstruction.

In September, Lithuania and the US Government cooperated in moving 140 kg of irradiated beryllium—a strategic material—to a safe storage facility. Lithuania is a party to 11 of the 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism, including the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. The Government has been very cooperative in investigating and detecting potential terrorist finances.

Netherlands

The Dutch have responded to the global terrorist threat with leadership and energy in the areas of border and shipping security, terrorist financing, and Alliance efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq. However, the Dutch continue to struggle with successfully prosecuting terrorists.

In 2003, the Netherlands assumed joint command over the ISAF with Germany and pledged \$15 million during three years to the Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund. The Netherlands contributed a frigate, fighter aircraft, and reconnaissance planes to Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan but drew down these forces on 1 October. The Netherlands continues to participate with two frigates and one maritime patrol aircraft in the NATO-led naval antiterrorism campaign, Operation Active Endeavor, in the Mediterranean. The Dutch have had a contingent of 1,100 troops in Iraq since summer 2003 (scheduled to remain until summer 2004) and have pledged 21 million euros for reconstruction. In addition, the Netherlands has pledged 300,000 euros to establish the Iraqi Bureau of Missing Persons.

The Dutch have not successfully prosecuted a terrorist case since September 11, 2001. Recent unsuccessful prosecutorial efforts against suspected terrorists, including four men suspected of plotting to bomb the US Embassy in Paris and 12 alleged Muslim extremists suspected of

recruiting for jihad, have highlighted weaknesses in the Dutch legal infrastructure.

Pending changes to Dutch counterterrorism laws from July 2002 would address some of these deficiencies and bring the Netherlands in line with EU-mandated sentences for leading and participating in a terrorist group—and even go beyond EU minimums when a crime was committed with “terrorist intent.” In August 2003, amendments were proposed to the counterterrorism legislation criminalizing recruitment for jihad violence and also conspiracy to commit terrorist crimes. The Second Chamber of Parliament on 9 December approved the Government’s bill of July 2002 on terrorist crimes and the amendments of August 2003. The bill will be considered by the First Chamber and is expected to come into force in mid-2004.

In April 2003, The Second Chamber also authorized the use of “criminal civilian” infiltrators in exceptional situations in terrorism cases. For national security purposes, the Dutch Government agreed in October 2003 to investigate the feasibility of introducing a systemized file comparison between the information from the immigration department and the security agencies.

Dutch officials remain committed to establishing financial protocols to combat terrorism and have cooperated with the United States in freezing the assets of known terrorist organizations. Using national sanctions authority, the Dutch blocked the accounts and financial transactions of a HAMAS fundraiser, the al-Aqsa Foundation, and al-Qaida-affiliated Benevolence International Nederland. Neither the Dutch nor their EU partners, however, have designated Lebanese Hizballah as a terrorist group.

In 2003, the Netherlands continued its commitment to shipping and port security by increasing cooperation with the United States. The first meeting of the bilateral Aviation Security Working Group was held in April, and the inaugural meeting of the Port and Maritime Security Working Group was held in May. In addition, radiological monitors in the port of Rotterdam were expected to be installed and operational by 2004.

There were no international terrorist attacks in the Netherlands in 2003.

The Netherlands has signed and ratified all 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism.

Norway

Norway has been a solid ally in the war on terrorism. Norwegian authorities continue to investigate suspected Ansar al-Islam leader (and Norway resident) Mullah Krekar and have frozen an account linked to that organization. The Norwegian Government has provided Special Operations Forces and Explosive Ordnance Disposal units on a rotating basis to Operation Enduring Freedom and ISAF in Afghanistan since October 2001. Elements of a Mechanized Infantry Company of 180 personnel, the Telemark Task Force, deployed to Afghanistan in December 2003. The unit provided security for the *Loya Jirga* proceedings and is now conducting security missions in and around Kabul as part of the ISAF. Norway contributed more than \$46 million to Afghan reconstruction in 2002 and \$53 million in 2003. In 2003, Norway designated Afghanistan a priority-assistance country, making a long-term commitment to development and reconstruction there. The Royal Norwegian Navy has maintained a near-continuous presence in Operation Active Endeavor with frigates, submarines, or torpedo boats.

Although Norway did not participate in the Coalition to liberate Iraq, they have contributed a 150-man engineering contingent operating with the United Kingdom and six staff officers operating with the Poles to the reconstruction effort in southern Iraq. In 2003, Norway contributed \$42 million to the reconstruction and stabilization effort in Iraq, and at Madrid it pledged more than \$11 million per year through 2006 for this effort.

Norway is a party to all 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism.

Poland

Poland continues to play an important regional role in advancing the war against terrorism, both as a NATO ally and in the broader coalition against terrorism. Members of Poland's special forces took part in Operation Iraqi Freedom, and on 3 September a Polish-led multinational division

assumed control of the Central-South security zone in Iraq. More than 2,000 Polish soldiers currently are serving in Iraq, and the Government of Poland has also offered to assist in training the new Iraqi police force. In Afghanistan, some 100 Polish military personnel are involved in mineclearing operations at Bagram Air Base, and the Polish Government recently conveyed \$100,000 worth of weapons and ammunition to the new Afghan National Army. Poland is providing most humanitarian assistance on an as-available basis.

Poland agreed to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the US Treasury Department's Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) to facilitate information sharing on terrorist financing. The Government of Poland implemented stopgap measures to freeze terrorist assets. In September, Polish law enforcement officials arrested an Algerian citizen wanted in Algeria on terrorist charges, and Polish officials cooperated with US law enforcement in the investigation of other terrorist cases.

Poland is a party to 9 of the 12 conventions and protocols relating to terrorism. The Polish Government has actively promoted the war on terrorism in bilateral and multilateral forums, and Poland continued to make progress in ratifying outstanding antiterrorism conventions. It ratified the Convention on the Suppression of Terrorist Financing, passed legislation authorizing signature of the Convention on the Suppression of Terrorist Bombing, and approved measures to attack the sources of terrorist finances, including amendments to broaden an anti-money laundering law.

Romania

Romania is a staunch ally of the United States in the global war against terrorism, providing full public and diplomatic support for US goals to counter terrorism. In 2003, about 1,200 Romanian troops served at the same time in Iraq and Afghanistan, and Romania has promised to maintain its commitment of troops in 2004. Romania suffered its first casualties in the war against terror in November 2003 when two Romanians were fatally shot in an ambush in Afghanistan. Romania has made its airspace, ground infrastructure, and naval facilities available

to US and NATO forces engaged in the global war against terrorism. Throughout 2003, Romania consistently supported US-led initiatives in the UN and NATO against terrorism.

The Romanian Government has established internal mechanisms to combat terrorism, including adoption of a "National Anti-Terrorism Strategy" and guidelines to prevent the use of the Romanian financial and banking system for the purpose of financing terrorist acts. In 2003, Romania adopted a law establishing a new regime for the control of dual-use items and technologies. Bucharest is the site of the Southeast European Cooperation Initiative, a regional center that provides law-enforcement training and intelligence sharing on transborder criminal activities, including terrorism, for 12 member countries in Southeastern and Central Europe.

Romania has signed all 12 counterterrorism conventions and ratified all but the Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings.

Slovakia

Slovakia has acted as a staunch ally in the global war against terrorism and has made significant contributions in Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as in peacekeeping missions in the Balkans and elsewhere. The Slovaks sent a 75-person NBC contingent to Iraq, integrated into the Czech NBC unit. The Slovak unit was later replaced by an 82-person military engineering unit deployed to the Polish sector. The Parliament in February 2004 approved sending an additional 23 troops to Iraq. Slovakia sent a 40-person engineering unit to Afghanistan, which they have extended twice at the request of the United States. There is a proposal expected to pass Parliament to send an additional 16-person demining unit to Afghanistan to serve under the ISAF.

Slovakia has one of the largest per capita peacekeeping contingents, with more than 800 troops deployed worldwide. Approximately 100 Slovaks are deployed in the joint Czech-Slovak mechanized battalion assigned to the NATO Kosovo Force. Since 1998, the Slovak military has had five officers operating within the command structures of the NATO Stabilization Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Slovak troops also

participate in UN peacekeeping missions in the Golan Heights, Ethiopia and Eritrea, Cyprus, and East Timor.

Shortly after September 11, 2001, terrorism was criminalized in Slovakia. Officials regularly make public statements denouncing terrorism after international events and on anniversaries such as September 11. There is an antiterror police unit within the Organized Crime Bureau, and the expulsion of a group of Real IRA members from Slovakia two years ago is a promising precedent for future cooperation if more such cases arise. Slovakia cooperates fully with US requests to freeze terrorist assets, and joint US-Slovak projects on export and border controls have been extremely successful.

Slovakia is a party to all 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism.

Slovenia

There were no terrorist acts in Slovenia in 2003. Slovenia is planning to deploy special forces to Afghanistan in March 2004 and has made modest humanitarian contributions to Iraq. Slovenia has stepped up its efforts to mentor its non-EU neighbors on border security and enforcement against financial crimes. A very active Slovene NGO, the TOGETHER Center, is working to bring hope to children in the Balkans and in Iraq to prevent them from becoming a disaffected youth, and thus targets for recruitment by terrorists.

Slovenia is a party to 11 of the 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism.

Spain

Spain is a firm ally in the global war against terrorism. Spain has authorized the use of Spanish military bases at Rota and Moron in support of military operations in Afghanistan, provided materiel support to Operation Enduring Freedom, and supported the reconstruction of Afghanistan with humanitarian and developmental assistance. In August, Spain deployed 1,300 troops to southern Iraq.

Spain has arrested and indicted dozens of individuals with possible links to al-Qaida since

September 11. In January, a Spanish judge indicted Usama Bin Ladin and 34 others for complicity in the attacks of September 11; 15 of these individuals are now in Spanish custody. Spain has had some success in prosecuting terrorism cases. Sixteen North African nationals with suspected ties to al-Qaida operatives in the United Kingdom and France were released after their arrest in January. On 7 March, Spanish national police in Valencia arrested four Spaniards and one Pakistani. They were accused of belonging to a financial network involved in laundering money that was then sent to al-Qaida operatives. The Spanish Ministry of Interior also linked these suspects to a terrorist attack that took place in April 2002 in Yerba, Tunisia, in which 19 people were killed. On 12 March 2003, a Spanish judge ordered two of these suspects remanded to prison pending further investigation of the case. The other three suspects were released. In October, a judge cited health reasons for releasing on bail an Al-Jazeera television network journalist with alleged ties to the Spain-based al-Qaida network of Eddin Barakat Yarkas.

Spain made extensive progress in its decades-old campaign to eliminate domestic terrorist groups, including the Basque Fatherland and Liberty (ETA) organization—a radical terrorist group. Spanish police arrested 126 individuals in 2003 for association with or membership in ETA and dismantled several ETA operational terrorist cells, dealing a blow to ETA's logistic, recruitment, and operational capabilities. In December, French police arrested top leaders of ETA's military wing, who were allegedly planning attacks in Spain to coincide with the Christmas season. There are now more than 500 ETA members in Spanish jails and another 100 imprisoned in France.

In March, Spain's Supreme Court upheld a ban passed in 2002 on Batasuna, the political wing of ETA. The ban freezes Batasuna's funds and prohibits ETA supporters from serving on local and regional government seats. These steps have dampened the group's political clout and cut off a major source of financing by depriving ETA members of the benefits of being able to channel funds from local government into pro-ETA activities. The number of ETA attacks and casualties also remained low.

Spanish and French authorities also made joint advances against the domestic terrorist group First

of October Anti-Fascist Resistance Group, all but eliminating the group.

Spain is one of the primary advocates within the EU for enhancing mechanisms to fight terrorism. Spain led the effort in the EU to approve the EU-wide common arrest and detention order, which the EU approved in late 2001.

Spain and France are the first two countries to create "multi-national police investigation teams" under terms of the EU agreement reached in 2002. The agreement allows Spanish and French police forces to work in each other's country investigating cases related to the ETA, Islamic terrorism, and other crimes.

Spain is a party to all 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism and currently chairs the UN Counterterrorism Committee and co-chairs with the United States the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Terrorism Finance Working Group. Spain is pressing to become a standing member of the G-8's Counterterrorism Action Group on the basis of its high level of technical counterterrorism assistance to third countries.

Sweden

Sweden has provided good cooperation and support in the fight against terrorism in 2003. In July, it adopted legislation implementing the EU framework decision on terrorism. The new legislation defines acts of terrorism and imposes penalties beyond those for traditional criminal acts. The Swedish Government has been responsive to US requests for security measures to protect diplomatic and official installations and personnel in response to heightened threats. Sweden has participated in ISAF since its inception with a 45-person rotating unit that has included Special Forces and engineering personnel. In 2004, Sweden assumed chairmanship of the Financial Action Task Force. Sweden also decided on 19 February 2004 to contribute 16 persons to the ISAF in Kabul. This group will consist of staff officers and one domestic logistic unit. Sweden is studying the possibility of contributing to a Provincial Reconstruction Team in Afghanistan.

Sweden is a party to 11 of the 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism.



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Policemen search the compound of the British Consulate in Istanbul, Turkey, following the terrorist bombing of 20 November 2003 that rocked the city, killing 27 persons and injuring 450.



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Firemen comb the rubble of the HSBC Bank building in Istanbul after the terrorist attack, 20 November 2003.



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Men carry Suleyman Aydogan's coffin, draped with the Turkish flag. He was one of the victims of the terrorist attack in Istanbul, 20 November 2003.



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The mother and fiancée of policeman Metin Bostanoglu, who was killed while on duty in a bomb blast at the Beth Israel Synagogue, attend his funeral in Istanbul, 16 November 2003.

Turkey

The Turkish Government is a strong, long-term counterterrorism partner. In addition to dealing with major terrorist attacks on its soil this year, Turkey also combated several domestic terrorist groups that continue to threaten Turkish and US interests.

In November, four suicide bombers attacked Jewish and British targets in Istanbul in two separate but probably coordinated attacks that killed at least 61 people, including the British Consul General. On 15 November, Turkish operatives exploded truck bombs outside the Beth Israel and Neve Shalom synagogues, followed on 20 November by a second wave of attacks against the British Consulate and HSBC Bank.



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Turkish Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul and Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan pray during a policeman's funeral in Istanbul, 16 November 2003.

Turkey maintained support for Operation Enduring Freedom in 2003. From June 2002 through February 2003, Turkey assumed leadership of the ISAF in Afghanistan. As part of this effort, Turkey provided approximately 1,400 peacekeepers to the mission and continues to have a military contingent in Afghanistan of 140 troops. Turkey also continued to permit Incirlik Airbase to be used for refueling for planes flying into Afghanistan.

The United States and Turkey met several times to discuss cooperation against the Kurdistan Freedom and Democracy Congress (KADEK), and in October, Secretary Powell reiterated the US commitment to assist Turkey in eliminating this threat. In October, KADEK—formerly known as the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK)—made yet another name change to the Kurdistan People's Congress (KHK or Kongra-Gel) in an effort to masquerade as a political party. KHK launched several attacks, which it claimed were in retaliation for losses the group suffered from Turkish counterinsurgency operations, and periodically threatened to increase its attacks against Turkish targets.

Turkish police arrested several members of the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party (DHKP/C) during the course of the year. The DHKP/C—a virulently anti-US group that killed two US defense contractors and wounded a US Air Force officer during the Gulf war—continued to launch attacks in Turkey. In May, a DHKP/C female suicide bomber prematurely detonated her explosive belt in Istanbul, killing herself and wounding another. The group struck in June, attacking a bus carrying Turkish prosecutors in Istanbul with a remote-controlled bomb, and it launched several other bombings against official Turkish interests in August.

Turkey has signed and ratified all 12 international conventions and protocols concerning terrorism.

United Kingdom

The United Kingdom has been and remains one of the United States' strongest allies in the global fight against terrorism. It continues to take important political, financial, and law enforcement steps to advance international counterterrorism efforts. The British Government was also a staunch ally in the international effort to enforce UN Security Council

Resolution 1441 in Iraq. The British contributed more than 40,000 troops to the Iraqi conflict and continue to play a critical role in the Coalition's efforts to construct a democratic, market-oriented Iraq that is a model for the region rather than a threat to its neighbors and global security.

Islamist terrorism poses a significant threat to the United Kingdom at home and to its interests overseas. The most dramatic and tragic evidence of this in 2003 came on 20 November when suicide bombers attacked the British Consulate and the offices of the British bank HSBC in Istanbul, Turkey, killing 33 people, including the British Consul General. A UK citizen was also killed in the suicide bomb attacks on 12 May on three residential compounds in Saudi Arabia.

In February, the British Government stepped up security in and around London in response to a terrorist threat. Her Majesty's Government increased police presence around government buildings and London's financial district, but security changes were most visible at Heathrow Airport where the British Government deployed soldiers and additional policemen. Security returned to normal after the threat window passed. British Airways briefly suspended all flights to Kenya in May and to Saudi Arabia in August due to other reports of terrorist threats in those regions. UK authorities cooperated closely with the United States to provide enhanced security for airline flights of concern during a period of heightened threat around the Christmas holidays.

In June, the British Government established the Joint Terrorism Analysis Center (JTAC), which is responsible for assessing and disseminating information about the terrorist threat to UK domestic and overseas interests. JTAC, an interagency body that includes both intelligence producers and consumers, works closely with the US Terrorist Threat Integration Center. The United States and United Kingdom are also planning to conduct a major joint counterterrorism exercise in 2005.

Since the attacks of September 11, British authorities have stepped up their investigative and intelligence collection efforts against Islamic extremists in the United Kingdom. A key objective is to reduce the threat of terrorism by stopping and

disrupting it. Between September 11 and the end of 2003, the police have arrested 537 individuals under the Terrorism Act of 2000. Of these, 94 were charged with terrorism-related offenses under the act, 71 were charged with offenses under other legislation, and 263 were released without charge.

In January 2003, the British Government uncovered a North African network involved in the production and importation of toxins, including ricin, in the United Kingdom. Nine individuals associated with the ricin threat were charged with conspiracy to murder and other related charges, and their trials are slated to begin in May and September 2004.

Between October 2002 and October 2003, more than 50 new terrorism-related cases have been brought to the Crown Prosecution Service. British prosecutors also enjoyed some successful terrorism-related convictions, including 11-year sentences for two al-Qaida fundraisers—the latter marking the first conviction of an al-Qaida member in the United Kingdom. In addition, Islamic extremist Abdullah e-Faisal was convicted for “inciting racial hatred and incitement to murder” and sentenced to a nine-year jail term.

The United Kingdom and United States completed negotiations on a new extradition treaty in 2003 that will streamline the extradition process, but neither country has ratified the new treaty. The United Kingdom continues to assist in extraditing four individuals charged with terrorist acts in the United States or against US citizens, including a key suspect in the African bombings of 1998 and an Algerian suspected of involvement in the “Millennium Conspiracy” to blow up Los Angeles airport in 2000. Although all four individuals have lost appeals with Britain’s highest court, they have all exercised their right to make representations against their surrender to the United States to the Home Secretary, who has the final decision over their extradition. The Home Office is still awaiting a response to some of the queries on these cases it has since sent to the United States.

Training and financial assistance have been in the forefront of the United Kingdom’s bilateral counterterrorism relationships. The United

Kingdom launched a new assistance program in 2003 aimed at increasing international capacity to counter terrorism and other threats in support of its bilateral and multilateral counterterrorism policy objectives. The United Kingdom anticipated spending £3.24 million in UK fiscal year 2003/04 on operational counterterrorism assistance aimed at counterterrorism experts in foreign governments, assistance to support the UN’s counterterrorism committee, and wider capacity-building initiatives.

The United Kingdom continued its vigorous efforts against terrorism in Northern Ireland in 2003. Security officials disrupted terrorist planning for attacks, defusing numerous bombs—including one in June larger than the explosive that went off in the Omagh bombing in 1998. During the course of the year, one suspect was arrested and charged in connection with Omagh. UK officials assisted with the Dublin prosecution of Real IRA (RIRA) leader Michael McKeivitt, who was convicted of directing terrorism, and the Blair government decided to help fund a civil case brought by the families of the victims of Omagh. In April, five RIRA members were sentenced to a total of 100 years for a series of car-bombings in 2001. Sectarian violence persists, but marching season in 2003 was one of the quietest in decades, with only a few reports of violence.

The United Kingdom is a party to all 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism. The United Kingdom actively campaigned in the EU, G-8, NATO, and UN for coordinated counterterrorism efforts and routinely lobbied UN members to become parties to the 12 antiterrorism conventions and protocols. It supported the G-8’s initiative in 2003 to create the Counter Terrorism Action Group (CTAG) and is an active CTAG participant.