

<http://tkb.org/MorePatterns.jsp?countryCd=IR&year=1992>
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US STATE DEPARTMENT REPORT:

■ patterns of global terrorism

Iran: 1992 overview

Iran was the most dangerous state sponsor of terrorism in 1992, with over 20 acts in 1992 attributable to it or its surrogates. Iran's intelligence services continue to support terrorist acts--either directly or through extremist groups--aimed primarily against Iranian opponents of the regime living abroad and Israeli targets. Although Iran did not carry out direct attacks on US targets in 1992, Iranian agents regularly surveilled US missions and personnel. Tehran's leaders view terrorism as a valid tool to accomplish the regime's political objectives, and acts of terrorism are approved at the highest level of government in Iran. Hizballah, Iran's most important client, was responsible for the deadliest act of terrorism in 1992, the bombing of the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires in March, which killed 29 people and wounded 242. Indications are that Iran at least had foreknowledge of this act and was probably involved.

Despite Iran's attempts to distance itself publicly from direct involvement in terrorist acts during the past year, Tehran has been tied to several bombings and assassinations in the Middle East, Europe, and Latin America.

Iranian intelligence continues to stalk members of the Iranian opposition, especially in the United States, Europe, and the Middle East. There are strong indications that Iran was responsible for the assassination of the leader of the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran (KDPI) and three of his followers in Berlin in September. The killing closely resembled the murder of the previous head of the KDPI in Vienna in 1989. The fatal stabbing of an Iranian dissident poet in Bonn in August 1992 was reminiscent of the stabbing of former Prime Minister Bakhtiar in Paris in 1991.

In March 1992 a French court sentenced two Iranians in absentia to five years imprisonment on illegal weapons charges stemming from 1986. The two had been waiting outside the home of Abdal Rahman Barumand, an ally of former Prime Minister Bakhtiar. Barumand was assassinated in April 1991 and Bakhtiar in August 1991, both in Paris. Two Iranians were arrested in Paris in November 1992 and held for extradition to Switzerland for the murder of Mujahedin-e Khalq (MEK) leader Kazem Rajavi in 1990.

The death sentence for Salman Rushdie, British author of *The Satanic Verses*, was upheld in 1992 by both the Iranian parliament and Iran's Chief Justice, and the reward for killing him was raised to more than \$2 million. The Iranian Government has tried to carry out the death threat. The United Kingdom expelled three Iranian officials who were attempting to organize Rushdie's murder.

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Iran is also the world's principal sponsor of extremist Islamic and Palestinian groups, providing them with funds, weapons, and training. Turkish Islamic Jihad, believed to be backed by Iran, claimed responsibility for the March car-bomb murder of an Israeli diplomat in Ankara, as well as a grenade attack on an Istanbul synagogue a few days earlier. These attacks came within weeks after the killing of Hizballah chief Musawi in southern Lebanon by the Israelis. Both Iran and Hizballah had vowed revenge against Israel and the United States for his death.

Iran also supports other radical organizations that have resorted to terrorism, including the Palestine Islamic Jihad (PIJ), the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC), and HAMAS. In August, Iran's first vice president met with the chiefs of Hizballah and the PFLP-GC while visiting Damascus. In October, Tehran hosted a series of high-profile meetings with Hizballah and HAMAS with the stated goal of coordinating their efforts against Israel and bringing the Arab-Israeli peace talks to a halt. In the aftermath of these talks, Hizballah increased its operations against Israel, including its repeated use of rockets to attack villages in northern Israel.

Iran has become the main supporter and ally of the fundamentalist regime in Sudan. Members of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps provide training for the Sudanese military. The current Iranian Ambassador to Khartoum was involved in the takeover of the US Embassy in Tehran in 1979 and served as Iranian Charge in Beirut, where he played a leading role in developing the Hizballah terrorist infrastructure in the 1980s. Khartoum has become a key venue for Iranian contact with Palestinian and North African extremists of the Sunni branch of Islam.

Tehran continues to support and provide sanctuary for the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), which has been responsible for hundreds of deaths in Turkey this year.