

SYRIA

Definition and Prosecution of Terrorist Acts

The Syrian Penal Code imposes severe penalties for all acts of terrorism committed by any person, whether principal, accomplice, accessory or abettor. Terrorism is defined as “any act intended to create a state of fear which is committed by means such as explosives, inflammable materials, poisonous or burning products or epidemic or microbial agents likely to cause public danger.” Syria adopted the 1998 Arab Convention for the Suppression of Terrorism - a convention that distinguishes between terrorism and legitimate struggle against foreign occupation.

Every act of terrorism is punishable by 15 – 20 years hard labor. A sentence of death is warranted for any terrorist act that results in the destruction (even partial) of a building or transportation vessel or if the act causes the death of a person. Conspiracy to commit said acts is punishable by term of hard labor. Any accomplice to an act of terrorism is held to the same sentencing guidelines as a principal.

Prevention and Prosecution of Financing of Terrorism

The Syrian Penal Code provides that anyone who finances terrorist acts is deemed an accessory to the crime and is tried under the same sentencing guidelines as a principal. All charitable and social associations operating in Syria are subject to government supervision of their activities, accounts and resources. Supervision is carried out by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor. Prior government approval is required for any overseas donations.

The Syrian government is currently studying possible legislation to prevent money-laundering. Under this legislation, acts of money-laundering would include concealing the true source of illegal funds, transferring funds in full knowledge of their illegality for the purpose of concealing or distorting their origin, or possessing, obtaining or investing illegal funds while fully aware the funds are illegal. Potentially, the scope of said legislation could include money-laundering as it relates to terrorism offenses, theft or illegal trafficking of nuclear material, or illegal trafficking of microbial and poisonous substances.

There is no system in place for the freezing of accounts in Syria. Occasionally, the Ministry of Finance issues decisions for freezing funds in order to protect public finance or pursuant to a request from an investigative body. Courts also have the power to freeze accounts on an ad-hoc basis.

Information Sharing

Syria adopted the Arab Convention for the Suppression of Terrorism which provides that States shall exchange information with one another related to the activities and crimes of terrorist groups and of their leaders, their headquarters and training facilities, means of communication used by terrorist groups, their movements, and any travel documents they are using. Syria has also entered into several international conventions that combat terrorism, including the International Conventions for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, Financing of Terrorism, Prevention of Taking Hostages, and the Suppression of Unlawful Acts. Syria cooperates with some Arab States, with European countries and with several international organizations such as ICPO-Interpol in the exchange of information concerning terrorist acts.

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SYRIAN LAWS

Definition and Prosecution of Terrorist Acts

- Penal Code of the Syrian Arab Republic, Articles 278, 280, 298, 299, 300, 304, 305, 212, 247, 306, 199

Financing of Terrorism

- Penal Code of the Syrian Arab Republic, Articles 212, 305,

Money-laundering – Prevention and Prosecution

- Penal Code of the Syrian Arab Republic, Articles 325, 326, 304, 305

Information Sharing

- Arab Convention for the Suppression of Terrorism, Article 4