



Argentina and Paraguay Designate Hamas and Hezbollah as Terrorist Organizations

OE Watch Commentary: On 19 August, the Paraguayan government officially designated Hamas and Hezbollah as terrorist organizations. The designation came a month after the Argentinian government had done the same, making Argentina and Paraguay the first and second Latin American governments to designate the two groups as terrorist organizations. The accompanying passages from local sources discuss the designations, Hamas's reaction to them and Israel's praise for the decisions.

As the accompanying passage from the official twitter account of the President of Paraguay points out, "The President of the Republic @MaritoAbdo, through Decree No, 2,307, recognized as an international terrorist organization, Hamas and Hezbollah." Similarly, as the second passage from Israeli nationalist newspaper *Arutz Sheva* reports, "The Argentine government's Financial Information Unit ordered the freezing of assets of members of Hezbollah and the organization." The passage discusses that the designation by the Argentinian

government came on the 25th anniversary of a bombing on a Buenos Aires Jewish community center where 85 people died. The Argentinian government holds Hezbollah responsible for the bombing. Along with Brazil, Argentina and Paraguay joined together to form the "Triple Frontier Area" where Hezbollah is under suspicion of drug trafficking and money laundering. The Paraguayan Interior Minister Juan Ernesto Villamayor during a press conference on 19 August said, "all institutions have an important role in the prevention of terrorism," while also outlining the goal of the Paraguayan government to restrict financial resources going to terrorist organizations.

As the third passage from a Hamas press release shows, Hamas called on Paraguay to "immediately revoke the decision." The Hamas statement says, "The Movement affirms that such resolutions do not serve security and stability in the region and even harm the good relations between our two peoples. It also contravenes international laws, which have guaranteed the right of peoples to resist occupation and aggression by all means available, including the armed struggle, as affirmed by the United Nations in its resolution A/ RES/37/43."

On the other hand, as the passages from Israeli sources demonstrate, the designation received much praise from Israeli government officials such as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Israel Katz. The Foreign Minister offered praise by saying, "I welcome #Paraguay Pres @MaritoAbdo's important decision to designate Hezbollah & Hamas as terrorist orgs. This decision contributes to the global battle against these Iranian proxies. We will continue working to get more countries to designate these orgs as terrorist orgs." Meanwhile, Prime Minister Netanyahu tweeted, "I applaud the decision of Paraguayan President Mario Abdo Benítez to define Hezbollah and Hamas as terrorist organizations." **End OE Watch Commentary (Fesen)**



Hezbollah fighters at a ceremony.

Source: Khamenei.ir, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hezzzbollah.jpg>, CC BY 4.0

“The President of the Republic @MaritoAbdo... recognized the appointment [of]... Hamas and Hezbollah... [as] international terrorist organization[s].”

Source: Presidencia Paraguay (Paraguayan Presidency) Twitter Feed, 19 August 2019. <https://twitter.com/PresidenciaPy/status/1163452950737502211>

The president of the Republic @MaritoAbdo, through Decree No. 2,307, recognized the appointment as a global terrorist organization, ISIS and Al Qaeda and as an international terrorist organization, Hamas and Hezbollah. It was announced by the minister of @minteriorpy.

Source: Elad Benari, "Argentina designates Hezbollah a terrorist organization," *Arutz Sheva*, 19 July 2019. <http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/266181>

Argentina on Thursday officially designated Hezbollah, which it blames for two attacks on its soil, a terrorist organization and ordered the freezing of its assets in the country, Reuters reports.

The Argentine government's Financial Information Unit ordered the freezing of assets of members of Hezbollah and the organization a day after the country created a new list for people and entities linked to terrorism.

The designation of Hezbollah as a terrorist group was the first by any Latin American country.

"At present, Hezbollah continues to represent a current threat to security and the integrity of the economic and financial order of the Argentine Republic," the unit said in a statement.

There was no immediate comment from Hezbollah on the move.



Continued: Argentina and Paraguay Designate Hamas and Hezbollah as Terrorist Organizations

Source: The Islamic Resistance Movement- Hamas, “Press release on President of Paraguay’s decisions to designate Hamas as terrorist organization,” *Hamas Press Release*, 22 August 2019. <https://hamas.ps/en/post/2268/>

The Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas condemns with the strongest terms the decision of the President of the Republic of Paraguay to designate the movement as an international terrorist group.

The Movement affirms that such resolutions do not serve security and stability in the region and even harm the good relations between our two peoples. It also contravenes international laws, which have guaranteed the right of peoples to resist occupation and aggression by all means available, including the armed struggle, as affirmed by the United Nations in its resolution A/ RES/37/43.

Therefore, we in Hamas demand Paraguay to immediately revoke this decision and take the necessary decisions and actions to support the struggle of our people for their freedom and independence. We call upon Paraguay to pursue the Israeli war criminals, given our people show respect and appreciation towards the Paraguay and its people.

Source: Michael Bachner, “Paraguay recognizes Hamas, Hezbollah as terror groups, drawing Israeli Praise,” *Times of Israel*, 20 August 2019. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/paraguay-recognizes-hamas-hezbollah-as-terror-groups-drawing-israeli-praise/>

Paraguay on Monday said it had officially recognized the military wings of Palestinian group Hamas and Lebanon’s Hezbollah as terrorist organizations drawing praise from Israel’s prime minister and foreign minister.

Hezbollah runs much of its financial operations in South America. Villamayor said Paraguay would now be obliged to take action against the money flow to terror groups through local banks, Paraguayan media reported.

Israel has pushed for the international community to blacklist Hezbollah and Hamas. While many countries outlaw the movements’ armed wings, most have balked at also blacklisting their politburos.

Source: Israel Kats Twitter Feed, 19 August 2019 https://twitter.com/Israel_katz/status/1163480186773495809

I welcome #Paraguay Pres @Marito Abdo’s important decision to designate Hezbollah & Hamas as terrorist orgs.

This decision contributes to the global battle against these Iranian proxies.

We will continue working to get more countries to designate these orgs as terrorist orgs.

Source: Benjamin Netanyahu Twitter Feed, 19 August 2019. <https://twitter.com/netanyahu/status/1163511250229374976>

I applaud the decision of Paraguayan President Mario Abdo Benítez to define Hezbollah and Hamas as terrorist organizations. We are working to ensure that other countries also take this important step.