

VENEZUELA

Overview: In May 2017, for the twelfth consecutive year, the U.S. Department of State determined, pursuant to section 40A of the Arms Export Control Act, that Venezuela was not cooperating fully with U.S. counterterrorism efforts. The country's porous borders offered a permissive environment to known terrorist groups.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: The Venezuelan criminal code and other Venezuelan law explicitly criminalize terrorism and dictate procedures for prosecuting individuals engaged in terrorist activity. The government routinely levies accusations of "terrorism" against its political opponents. Some Venezuelan military and civilian agencies perform counterterrorism functions. Within the Venezuelan armed forces, the General Directorate of Military Counterintelligence and the Command Actions Group of the National Guard have primary counterterrorism duties. The Bolivarian National Intelligence Service and the Division of Counterterrorism Investigations in the Scientific, Penal, and Criminal Investigation Corps within the Ministry of Interior, Justice, and Peace have primary civilian sector counterterrorism responsibilities. The degree of interagency cooperation and information sharing among agencies is unknown due to a lack of government transparency.

Border security at ports of entry was vulnerable and susceptible to corruption. The Venezuelan government routinely did not perform biographic or biometric screening at ports of entry or exit. There was no automated system to collect advance Passenger Name Record data on commercial flights or to cross-check flight manifests with passenger disembarkation data.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Venezuela is a member of the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force, a Financial Action Task Force-style regional body, and its National Financial Intelligence Unit is a member of the Egmont Group. Venezuela's existing anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism legal and regulatory framework criminalizes the financing of terrorism and includes requirements to report transactions that qualify as suspicious under the statute. Significant deficiencies remained in the terrorist asset-freezing regime, including a lack of adequate procedures to identify and freeze terrorist assets. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): Venezuela had no CVE program in 2017.

International and Regional Cooperation: Previously, the Venezuelan government participated as official observers in peace negotiations between the Colombian government and the FARC. However, in 2017, President Maduro's rhetoric was at times bellicose (on one occasion he referred to Colombia as a "failed state") and served to heighten tensions between the two countries.