

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 19, 2019

The Honorable Mike Pompeo
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Pompeo:

As you travel to Argentina this weekend in commemoration of the 25th anniversary of the tragic bombing of the Asociación Mutual Israelita Argentina (AMIA) building, we write to encourage you to remember the past by looking forward to the future.

This violent attack on the AMIA left 85 innocent people dead and 300 wounded. Two years earlier, the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires was bombed, killing 29 people. Hezbollah operatives carried out both of these attacks. In the second Western Hemisphere Counterterrorism Ministerial this Friday, July 19, the nations that form the Tri-Border Area (TBA) – Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay – will have a unique opportunity to take meaningful strides in the fight against this type of terrorism.

Lebanese Hezbollah is a key player in the nearly \$18 billion-per-year TBA illicit economy, as the area is a significant financial source of the group's terror finance operations. Hezbollah also continues to radicalize individuals in each of the three nations through mosques and the educational system, including schools that teach the group's extremist agenda, and a dedicated Al-Akhbar journalist in Brazil.

We commend Argentina's blacklisting of Hezbollah, and acknowledge its important leadership role as the first Latin American country to do so. It is time for the leaders of Brazil and Paraguay to live up to their tough rhetoric and both recognize and denounce Hezbollah's presence within their borders, designating it as the terrorist organization that it is. These nations should also follow Argentina's suit and create a public registry to enable their governments to track and blacklist terror financing entities.

We encourage you to bring this recommendation to the attention of your Brazilian and Paraguayan counterparts while in Buenos Aires this weekend. Only through addressing Hezbollah's presence can these nations look back on the AMIA bombing and trust that a similar attack will never happen again.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Respectfully,



Marsha Blackburn
United States Senator



Ted Cruz
United States Senator



Kevin Cramer
United States Senator