

USDOS – US Department of State

Country Report on Terrorism 2020 - Chapter 1 - Tajikistan

Overview: The Tajik government faced constraints in its efforts to improve the capacity of law enforcement agencies to combat terrorism, enhance border security, and detect terrorist financing owing to the outbreak of COVID-19. The government continued to assert that northern Afghanistan was a primary source of terrorist activity, and Tajik security officials continued to allege that thousands of militants, including FTFs, were present in Afghanistan's northern provinces. Tajik officials reported there were approximately 23 confrontations with militia groups along the 843-mile border with Afghanistan in 2020. There were no terrorist incidents reported in Tajikistan in 2020.

The Tajik government cooperates with international organizations such as the EU, the OSCE, and the United Nations, on combating terrorism.

2020 Terrorist Incidents: There were no reported terrorist incidents in Tajikistan in 2020.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Tajikistan's Parliament did not ratify any new security agreements.

The OSCE's Border Management Staff College in February held a roundtable discussion titled "Strengthening the Capacity of Border Security and Management Through Innovation in Education Approaches." Participants from Central Asian countries, including Tajikistan, discussed how education can be used to enhance the capacity of their border security and management agencies.

Travel document security and biographic and biometric screening capabilities were still lacking at ports of entry, particularly land crossings. Major entry points had access to INTERPOL data and other lists, but connectivity issues at smaller border posts remained a standing issue.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Tajikistan is a member of the Eurasia Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism (EAG), and the Financial Monitoring Department is a member of the Egmont Group. In 2020 the government continued to make efforts to improve the capacity of its banking sector to combat terrorism financing.

In February, the OSCE's Transnational Threats Department and UNODC convened a seminar in Dushanbe on disrupting the financing of terrorist networks. The seminar aimed to assist Tajik banking officials in implementing international standards on combating terrorist financing.

The National Bank of Tajikistan (NBT) Department of Financial Monitoring website continued to maintain a list of individuals and entities involved in terrorism, including those sanctioned under relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions. The NBT launched a national money transfer center that centralized the receipt of remittances from abroad. With the addition of this system, the NBT asserted it can monitor and regulate alternative remittances services, collect data on wire transfers, and monitor nonprofit organizations to guard against misuse of financing to sponsor terrorist activities. The NBT sometimes lists names of individuals who are not tied to terrorism but are members of banned political parties functioning outside of Tajikistan.

Countering Violent Extremism: In November the OSCE's Transnational Threats Department arranged a seminar where Tajik representatives from the Prosecutor General's Office presented the country's new draft national strategy and action plan on countering terrorism and violent extremism for 2021-25.

Hedayah, an internationally backed Countering Violent Extremism Center of Excellence, proposed assisting Tajikistan with implementing its Countering Violent Extremism National Action Plan and developing an effective communications strategy to counter radicalization to terrorism and recruitment of FTFs by building strategic communications capacity.

Tajikistan amended its criminal laws in 2015, allowing authorities to pardon Tajik FTFs who voluntarily return home from Iraq or Syria, express remorse for their actions, and renounce ties to foreign militant groups. Tajikistan continues to support the approximately 84 children of FTFs it repatriated from Iraq in 2019.

The Tajik government continued to place heavy restrictions on and imprison groups it classifies as extremist, including those groups’ political and religious expression and activities. Panjakent became the first Tajik city to join the Strong Cities Network. With the addition of Panjakent to the network, the government took a step toward developing, implementing, and coordinating rehabilitation and reintegration initiatives that involve local authorities, communities, and civil society organizations.

International and Regional Cooperation: The government is a strong supporter of the C5+1 framework and serves as co-chair of the C5+1 Security Working Group. On November 12, Tajikistan hosted the most recent security working group, where participants from across Central Asian countries discussed efforts to strengthen border security and repatriate and integrate foreign terrorist fighters. Tajikistan also actively participated in regional security arrangements such as the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. The nation continued bilateral cooperation with other countries related to CT issues, including Russia and the PRC. Additionally, Tajikistan hosts Russia’s largest foreign military base while the PRC maintains a border outpost in the country.

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Austrian Red Cross
Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and
Asylum Research and Documentation (ACCORD)

Wiedner Hauptstraße 32, 1041 Wien
T (Telefon) +43 1 589 00 583
F (Fax) +43 1 589 00 589
info@ecoi.net

Contact
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F.A.Q.
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