



# ARGENTINA

## Quick Facts

Population: 45,479,118 (July 2020 est.)

Area: 2,780,400 sq km

Ethnic Groups: European (mostly Spanish and Italian descent) and mestizo (mixed European and Amerindian ancestry) 97.2%, Amerindian 2.4%, African 0.4% (2010 est.)

Religions: Nominally Roman Catholic 92% (less than 20% practicing), Protestant 2%, Jewish 2%, other 4%

Government Type: Presidential republic

GDP (official exchange rate): \$637.6 billion (2017 est.)

*Source: CIA World FactBook (Last Updated July 2020)*

## INTRODUCTION

*Argentina is home to one of the largest Muslim populations in Latin America.<sup>1</sup> A growing percentage of this community is made up of Argentine converts to Islam, a significant number of whom have been recruited and radicalized by Islamist operatives working throughout the country.*

*The Argentine Muslim community has gone largely unnoticed since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, significant financial investments in the 1990s, such as those from Saudi Arabia, brought it into the national spotlight. Since then, the community has been stigmatized in particular for its connection to radical Islamist networks tied to Iran and its proxy, Hezbollah. Via these networks, Iran has used intelligence operatives to infiltrate Muslim society and recruit members from a community that shows signs of increasing radicalization who can operate independent of one another.*

*These networks can pose a danger to Argentina, whose policy toward Iran and other Arab states has often been ambivalent and inconsistent. Moreover, Argentina's failing economy and its strained relationships with Western allies during the presidency of Cristina Fernández de Kirchner made it even more vulnerable to Iranian advances and activities in the region. Successive Argentine governments since then, however, have taken progressively more drastic domestic counterterrorism measures to respond to modern threats.*

## ISLAMIST ACTIVITY

Radical Islamist activity has been growing throughout Argentina since at least the early 1980s, when the Iranian Revolution was “exported” to the Americas.<sup>2</sup> After the 1979 Islamic Revolution, Iran broke ties with the United States, and its focus eventually shifted toward Latin America, particularly countries that were antagonistic to “American Imperialism.”<sup>3</sup> According to Alberto Nisman, the special prosecutor for the AMIA attack (discussed below), Iran and Hezbollah saw Argentina as a land of opportunity for

spreading radical Islam due to the large number of Muslim communities in the region, particularly in the so-called “Tri-Border Region” at the crossroads of Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay.<sup>4</sup> Nisman cited documents seized from Iranian operatives identifying high-density areas of Muslim population to be used “as centers of penetration of Islam” throughout South America.<sup>5</sup> In the years since, Argentina has served a hub for Shi’ite radicals and their networks of terrorists, clergymen and recruiters, money launderers, and other operatives, all dedicated to “exporting the revolution” throughout the region.<sup>6</sup>

According to Nisman, Iran’s terrorist network in Argentina was first established in 1983 with the arrival of Iranian operative Mohsen Rabbani. Originally sent to Argentina under the guise of a commercial representative of the Iranian meat industry, Rabbani quickly established himself as a leader within the country’s Shi’ite Muslim community and began leading prayers at the At-Tauhid mosque in the Floresta neighborhood of Buenos Aires.<sup>7</sup> In his role as a prayer leader, Rabbani was able to address believers at will, inserting radical political rhetoric into his sermons and developing relationships with young “disciples” who would later become operatives in his evolving terror network.

The network Rabbani established throughout the Shi’ite Muslim community in Buenos Aires grew to include more than 40 Islamic associations, including schools, media outlets, and charity organizations that are used today as backdoor channels through which the Islamic Republic and Hezbollah perform intelligence and covert operations.<sup>8</sup> This network stretches across state borders, allowing Iran and its proxies to pursue various terror operations in the region as a part of their political expansion.

A product of this growing network was Latin America’s most infamous Islamist terrorist attack: the July 18, 1994 bombing of the Asociación Mutual Israelita Argentina (AMIA), which killed 85 civilians and injured hundreds more. Two years earlier, on March 17, 1992, a similar attack had been carried out against Israel’s embassy in Buenos Aires, murdering 29 people and injuring over two hundred.<sup>9</sup> These twin attacks jolted Argentina awake to the presence of radical Islamist groups within its borders.

Rabbani was identified as “the mastermind” behind the 1994 AMIA attack.<sup>10</sup> Though he escaped justice in Argentina by leaving the country in 1997, Interpol has since placed Rabbani on a “red alert” list, barring his travel to the region. Nevertheless, the Islamist terror network he established continues to grow under the supervision of his numerous disciples.

According to a 2016 report by the Center for a Secure Free Society (SFS), Rabbani’s Argentine connections can be broken down into three different types of actors: shadow facilitators, “super-fixers,” and “fixers.”<sup>11</sup> While prohibited from entering Argentina, Rabbani still acts as a shadow facilitator from Iran, providing guidance and funding to various Islamist activities in Argentina.<sup>12</sup> His disciples act as “super fixers,” moving across countries throughout Latin America and acting as point persons for the “fixers,” or local Argentine agents who have access to or knowledge of targeted communities in the country. Rabbani’s two most infamous disciples and “super fixers” are Abdul Karim Paz and Edgardo Ruben “Suhail” Assad.

According to Nisman, Karim Paz was Rabbani’s first convert and has been described as his “right-hand man” and immediate successor as the *imam* of the At-Tauhid mosque.<sup>13</sup> Similarly, Suhail Assad is a prominent leader in the local Shi’a community, who had strong connections to the government of former Argentine president and current Vice President Cristina Fernández de Kirchner.<sup>14</sup> Some of these connections stemmed from Assad’s cousin, Jorge Alejandro “Yussuf” Khalil. Khalil, who is currently the General Secretary of the At-Tauhid Mosque,<sup>15</sup> was accused by Nisman of conspiring with the Fernández de Kirchner regime to help cover up Iran’s involvement in the AMIA attack as part of a controversial agreement signed between the two countries in 2013.<sup>16</sup>

Together, Yussuf Khalil, Abdul Karim Paz and Suhail Assad serve as Iran’s “informal ambassadors” in Argentina, continuing to recruit and radicalize Islamic communities to join the revolution.<sup>17</sup> Under their supervision, the radical Islamist network in Argentina continues to grow stronger and more expansive. The network attempts to blend in with legitimately moderate Muslim community and religious centers, cultural associations, and diplomatic and trade relations with Argentine leaders.

Rabbani and his disciples, in turn, have paved the way for other extremist groups to exploit Argentina. In September of 2016, Secretary of National Security Eugenio Burzaco mentioned the possibility of ISIS operatives in Corrientes. While he later announced that national security forces had investigated and found no evidence of an ISIS cell in the region, he nevertheless maintained that the Argentine government remains worried that Argentines who travelled to Syria and Iraq to join ISIS might return to form terrorist cells within Argentina.<sup>18</sup> Then-President Mauricio Macri also received threats from individuals possibly linked to ISIS, implying that Argentina is under danger of attack.<sup>19</sup> In 2017, the Argentine army's website was briefly hacked by unknown individuals who displayed a pro-ISIS message that claimed the organization was present in the country.<sup>20</sup> Argentine World Cup matches and high-profile players have also been the targets of ISIS propaganda.<sup>21</sup> However, would-be actors and plotters appear to be acting largely independent of one another, and an organized threat has so far not materialized.

## ISLAMISM AND SOCIETY

The date of Islam's first appearance in Argentina is unknown. Early records remain unreliable, since Muslims – along with Jews – were listed as “other,” and did not receive a special religious category. Some believe the first Muslims to arrive in Argentina were descendants of the Moors who came to the Americas with the Spanish conquistadors, though this theory has not been verified.<sup>22</sup> The first mention of Arabs in Argentina occurred in 1887, when 17 “Ottomans” were listed as arrivals at the port of Buenos Aires. Later records indicate a wave of Arab/Islamic migration to Argentina during the mid- to late-19<sup>th</sup> century. This population continued to grow through the 20<sup>th</sup> century and reached roughly 700,000 Muslims, mainly of Arab descent.<sup>23</sup> In 2017, the Pew Forum estimated Argentina's Muslim community to be roughly 784,000 or 1.9 percent of the population as of 2009, although Pew also estimated that the Muslim population would grow to over 1.2 million in Argentina by 2030.<sup>24</sup> Approximately 70 percent of this total is Sunni, with the Shi'ite community making up the remaining 30 percent.<sup>25</sup> However, within the Muslim community itself, the size of its Arab cohort is starting to shrink as immigration from Arab countries decreases while immigration from West Africa increases.<sup>26</sup>

Islam's spread to populations beyond the Arab community can be credited to the proliferation of Islamic centers and schools. Although the Arab immigrant community originally established organizations and centers focused on preserving cultural rather than religious identity (Jews and Christians of Arab origin also participated in these groups), certain centers were devoted to religious instruction. The foundation of the Centro de Estudios Islámicos (Center of Islamic Studies), headed by *imam* Mahmoud Hussein, initiated the “diffusion of Islam” in 1973 and began to attract converts of non-Arab origin.<sup>27</sup> Though the Islamic community is overwhelmingly concentrated in Buenos Aires, several mosques and Islamic centers have since emerged throughout Argentina.

The Muslim population went largely unnoticed by the rest of Argentine society until the presidential election of Carlos Menem in 1989. Though Menem maintained his identity as a Catholic convert, his Arab background and family's continued ties to Islam brought the Muslim community into the public eye. As Menem elevated members of the Muslim community, including his own family, to high-ranking positions within his cabinet, scandal and controversy also dominated his administration; the Muslim community was rejected by some sectors of Argentine society.<sup>28</sup>

Until the Buenos Aires bombings of the early 1990s, however, Argentina considered itself safe from international terrorism. In the aftermath of the incident, Argentine public sentiment turned significantly against the country's Muslim population.<sup>29</sup> Muslims and Arabs were stigmatized for their community's ties to the perpetrators of the AMIA attack.<sup>30</sup> Muslims in Argentina also faced considerable public discrimination following the September 11, 2001 attacks, according to Alexis El-Sayer of the Centro Islámico de la República Argentina (CIRA).<sup>31</sup> As a result, Muslims often hesitated to identify themselves publicly, though by 2012 the community had largely overcome this challenge and continued to practice Islam in

peace despite widespread ignorance about the Islamic faith and community in Argentina.<sup>32</sup>

Though the Islamic community remains a small minority within larger Argentine society, its leaders hope that the proliferation of Islamic/Arab cultural centers and increased Islamic influence on society, particularly in Buenos Aires, will help “create a new bond between Islam and Latin America” and spread a positive, unbiased image of Islam.<sup>33</sup> The Argentine government also aids the Muslim community in terms of integration into society at large. The Secretariat of Worship under the Office of Foreign Affairs maintains a close relationship with Islamic community leaders and seeks to promote religious harmony by sending government officials to religious celebrations of all faiths.<sup>34</sup> The Islamic community has seen the attendance of government officials, including ex-President Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, at Muslim celebrations and events as “recognition...of our existence within Argentine society.”<sup>35</sup>

The Fernández de Kirchner administration treated the Muslim community with familiarity, which can be attributed to the influence of a major cultural organization known as the Federación de Entidades Arabes, or FEARAB. Originally founded in 1972 to represent Muslim immigrant communities in Latin America, FEARAB has offices throughout the region. Its leaders maintain strong relationships with local governments.<sup>36</sup>

FEARAB’s leadership was successful in developing relationships with the federal government during the Fernández de Kirchner era.<sup>37</sup> Over time, the organization exceeded its original social and cultural mission and became a political entity because of its access to high-ranking Argentine officials. This expansion should be cause for concern, because at least some of the leaders of FEARAB, the ranks of which include Abdul Karim Paz and Yussuf Khalil, maintain connections with Mohsen Rabbani’s Islamist network.<sup>38</sup> A series of Argentine government wiretaps reveal that these individuals took advantage of the organization’s access to top Argentine officials to implement Iran’s political agenda and further extend Iranian influence in national politics, including the Fernández de Kirchner administration introducing a controversial Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in 2013 under which the two countries agreed to work together to investigate the perpetrators of the 1994 AMIA attack.<sup>39</sup>

## ISLAMISM AND THE STATE

Argentina’s policy toward Arab or Middle East states has historically been seen as rather ambivalent. However, tacit support for the Arab World among Peronistas goes back decades. Many scholars interpret Argentina’s decision to abstain from voting on the UN resolution to partition Palestine in 1947 as unwillingness to pick a side in the conflict. But Argentina’s position won it acclaim from Middle Eastern audiences. Syria’s leadership, for example, awarded Perón the Grand Order of the Umayyads during an Argentine delegation visit to Syria in 1950, and renamed a main street in Damascus after Argentina, explaining that “when Arabs lost friends in the east and the west, Argentina was the first state to answer the call of duty... by sticking to the Arab side in the United Nations.”<sup>40</sup>

Yet neutrality in Middle East issues remained a fairly consistent position after the 1950s, with only intermittent support for Palestinian issues. Argentina enacted policies in favor of the Palestinians in order to avoid oil embargos from OPEC nations, but subsequently adopted a more moderate stance toward Israel after public outcry from the Argentine Jewish community. Since then, Argentina has typically sought to balance support for the Palestinians with its backing of Israel.<sup>41</sup>

This duality became even more pronounced during the presidency of Carlos Menem, despite his ties to the Arab/Muslim community both in Argentina and abroad. Official attitudes toward Arab and Islamic elements were further confused when it was revealed that Libyan leader Muammar Gadhafi had contributed \$4 million to Menem’s electoral campaign,<sup>42</sup> who then in turn donated state property valued at \$10 million to the Saudi Arabian Islamic Affairs Department for the construction of what is today the Fahd center in Buenos Aires.<sup>43</sup> Meanwhile, Menem terminated Argentina’s cooperation with Iran’s nuclear program in 1992, the same year the Israeli embassy in Buenos Aires was bombed by a group linked to Iran and

Hezbollah. Hezbollah claimed the attack was a response to Israel's assassination of Hezbollah Secretary General Sayed Abbas al-Musawi in February of that year.<sup>44</sup>

Argentina's relationship with Iran is one of the longest-standing in Latin America, and dates back to 1902. But the 1992 and 1994 terror attacks in Buenos Aires resulted in a cooling of diplomatic relations between the two countries, as Argentina sought the extradition of high-ranking Iranian officials linked to the attacks.<sup>45</sup> With the advent of the Fernández de Kirchner administration (2007-2015), however, Argentine policy shifted dramatically, abandoning its traditional pro-Western, pro-United States orientation in favor of warmer ties with anti-U.S. regional governments such as Cuba, Venezuela and other "Bolivarian" states, as well as with Iran.

Energy deficits and mounting debt alienated Argentina from its former Western allies, nudging the Fernández de Kirchner administration toward "friendlier" governments in Venezuela and Cuba. The Chávez administration in Caracas, in turn, served as a new political ally and source of economic support to Argentina, providing further incentive for Fernández de Kirchner to distance herself from the U.S.<sup>46</sup>

Iran took this shift as an opportunity to re-open relations with Argentina. In 2007, then-Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad allegedly asked Venezuela's Hugo Chávez to reach out to Fernández de Kirchner with the aim of "changing Argentine policy and allowing Iran access to Argentine nuclear technology."<sup>47</sup> The result was a gradual re-establishment of diplomatic ties between Argentina and Iran, a development that allowed Iran to increase its trade opportunities in the region and build its proxy network in the country.<sup>48</sup>

As part of this process, then-Foreign Minister Héctor Timerman broke with the Argentine Jewish community in 2012 to pursue ties with Iran, and Fernández de Kirchner offered to freeze the longstanding federal investigation into the AMIA bombing in exchange for expanded bilateral trade with the Islamic Republic.<sup>49</sup> This move was partly motivated by Argentina's increasing political and economic desperation, and its growing dependence on alternative sources of trade.<sup>50</sup> It made Argentina one of Iran's largest trade partners in the hemisphere, providing the Islamic Republic with long sought-after agricultural commodities.<sup>51</sup> Meanwhile, Argentina's dependence on oil and gas, which make up 90 percent of the country's primary energy sources, intensified its reliance on imports from Iran.<sup>52</sup> The warmed ties between Argentina and Iran generated the 2013 MOU, which further normalized relations.<sup>53</sup>

This improvement in relations was short lived, however. Just half a year later, Argentina voted against Iran at the UN Human Rights Council, and in 2014 Fernández de Kirchner announced the abrogation of the Memorandum due to lack of progress and internal opposition.<sup>54</sup> A series of back and forth maneuvers followed; Fernández de Kirchner alternated between courting the country's Jewish community and contesting a decision by the country's Federal Criminal Appeals Court that declared the MOU unconstitutional.<sup>55</sup> This inconsistent attitude toward Iran remained in place until the end of her tenure in 2015.

Under Fernández de Kirchner's leadership, Argentina continued to develop relationships with other anti-Western Arab nations. In 2010, Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad visited Buenos Aires and was warmly received by the President, who never acknowledged him as a dictator.<sup>56</sup> In the years that followed, Foreign Minister Timerman would make various trips to Aleppo to meet with Syrian officials.<sup>57</sup> Argentina's reluctance to denounce the Syrian civil war in late 2012 demonstrated an effort to maintain a positive relationship with a government closely allied to Iran.<sup>58</sup>

The election of Mauricio Macri to the Argentine presidency in late 2015 signaled yet another change in Argentina's disjointed policy toward Iran. Macri expressed disgust at Iran's involvement in the AMIA case and the relationship that Fernández de Kirchner's administration had developed with the Islamic Republic.<sup>59</sup> In the first weeks of his presidency, he ordered the withdrawal of the appeal filed by his predecessor's government regarding the federal ruling of the MOU's unconstitutionality.<sup>60</sup> Additionally, Macri called for the use of Mercosur's Democracy Clause to expel Venezuela from the economic bloc for its human rights abuses, thus striking another blow to Iranian influence in the region.<sup>61</sup> Both steps signaled a clear break

from the previous administration's policies towards Iran and its anti-Western allies, setting a precedent for Argentina's realignment with the United States, Europe, and Israel.

However, Macri's attitude toward other Middle Eastern and Arab states, particularly the Gulf States, was not as clear. In late 2016, for example, he signed a controversial commercial treaty with Qatar aimed at encouraging and protecting bilateral investment, and subsequently announced that Argentina would accept at least 3,000 Syrian refugees in cooperation with the European Union.<sup>62</sup>

In the last decade, the Argentine government has enacted aggressive anti-terror legislation. In 2011, it passed Decree 1642/11, creating the National Program for Monitoring the Implementation of Policies for the Prevention of Money Laundering and the Financing of Terrorism. This new legislation criminalized financing terrorist organizations, individuals, and acts, and is an overall reform of Argentina's 2007 Anti-Terrorism Law. In 2017, Argentine customs re-established its Trade Transparency Unit (TTU) with the support of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.<sup>63</sup> The TTU is empowered to freeze any financial assets associated with terror funding.

Nevertheless, the country's anti-terror policy decisions have at times been controversial. In 2018, the Macri government issued Decree 683, which allows the national military to respond to any suspected domestic drug trafficking or terror activity with origins outside the country.<sup>64</sup> The policy decision upends Decree 227, which previously limited the mission of the national Argentine armed forces to only responding to aggressive foreign state actions.<sup>65</sup>

The year 2018 ended on a positive note for Argentina's anti-terror efforts with the arrest of Hezbollah financier Assad Ahmad Barakat by Brazilian authorities. Argentine authorities accused the Tri-Border-based criminal of money laundering on behalf of Hezbollah. The United States had previously designated Barakat a global terrorist who managed a "major financial artery" for Hezbollah in the tri-border region.<sup>66</sup>

Refugee acceptance reflected a continuation of the previous administration's policy toward the Syrian conflict, which had entailed the creation of Program Siria (Syria Program) through which Syrians affected or displaced by the country's civil war were granted residency in Argentina for up to two years. Palestinian nationals residing in Syria were also eligible to participate in this program. Under Macri's administration, the refugee acceptance program was augmented by the Gabinete Nacional del Programa Siria (National Cabinet for the Syria Program), an inter-departmental entity whose main goal is establishing guidelines for the country's reception of refugees and facilitating their social integration.

Fernández de Kirchner's questionable dealings while in office, including its meddling in the still-unresolved murder of Nisman, came to a head in December 2017, when an Argentine judge issued an arrest warrant for the former President, who had recently won a seat in the Senate. In January 2015, authorities had discovered Nisman dead in his apartment from an apparent gunshot wound to the head, just hours before his scheduled testimony to the Argentine parliament regarding a plan by government officials to cover up Iran's participation in AMIA bombing. Nisman's 300-page dossier contained years of damning wiretap transcripts that revealed "Kirchner and several of her governmental colleagues [had] whitewash[ed] Iranian involvement, in order to secure much-needed oil deliveries."<sup>67</sup>

Macri's September 2018 address to the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the attack, called on allies not to protect or extend diplomatic immunity to those Iranian officials listed in the international arrest warrant issued for the 1994 bombing.<sup>68</sup>

Macri's renewed emphasis on resolving the AMIA attack led to investigations that found Nisman had been drugged with ketamine before being brutally assaulted and shot on the eve of his testimony about his explosive findings concerning the AMIA attack.<sup>69</sup> Evidence stemming from those broader inquiries led in March 2019 to suspended two-year prison sentences against ex-prosecutors Eamon Mullen and Jose Barbaccia for failing to execute their investigative duties in the AMIA bombing. Former judge Juan Jose Galeano was found guilty of embezzlement and covering up evidence, while Former President Carlos Menem escaped charges of conspiracy to undermine the investigation into the attack.<sup>70</sup>

Peronistas returned to power in December 2019 under the Alberto Fernandez-Cristina Kirchner administration. The victory extended Kirchner's legislative protection against indictments issued against her in 2018 for allegedly covering up Iran's role in AMIA bombing.<sup>71</sup> Meanwhile, Fernandez used the 26<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the AMIA bombing to condemn the AMIA attack and expressed his hope to bring those responsible to justice.<sup>72</sup> He has also defended Kirchner, claiming she was not involved in undermining the long-stagnant case and resurrected weak theories from the Kirchner administration that Nisman committed suicide. These statements were an about-face from his statements in 2015, where he accused Kirchner of covering up Iran's involvement.<sup>73</sup>

Fernandez latest position, while less favorable to Iran than that of previous administrations, certainly indicates that Iran will not face much scrutiny from the Fernandez government, especially as it remains preoccupied with the COVID-19 pandemic and the country's debt negotiations with creditors. Yet Fernandez did pull Argentina closer to Iranian surrogates in Latin America, such as Venezuela, by calling for the revival of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) - established in 2010 by then-President Hugo Chavez as a regional political bloc to counter the Organization of American States (OAS) and the United States. He also joined the inaugural meeting of the so-called *Grupo Puebla*, a recent conglomerate of left-leaning, regional political leaders, such as Ecuador's Rafael Correa, Bolivia's Evo Morales, and Brazil's Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, and Dilma Rousseff.<sup>74</sup>

## ENDNOTES

1. The Argentine national census does not record religious data, so statistics vary by source, with some reports citing Argentina as home to the largest Muslim population in Latin America (1,000,000 members) and others citing Brazil (35,000 to 1.5 million members). For more information, see the U.S. Department of State, *International Religious Freedom Report for 2015, 2016*, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/religiousfreedom/index.htm#wrapper>.
2. As described in the so called 2013 Nisman Dictum, the "export of the revolution" is Iran's official policy of extending its political-religious view beyond its borders. Alberto Nisman, *Report on Terrorist Networks in Latin America*, May 2013, 10, <http://albertonisman.org/nisman-report-dictamina-on-sleeper-cells-full-text/>.
3. Stephen Johnson, *Iran's Influence in the Americas* (Center for Strategic and International Studies, February 2012), [http://csis.org/files/publication/120223\\_Johnson\\_IranInfluence\\_ExecSumm\\_Web.pdf](http://csis.org/files/publication/120223_Johnson_IranInfluence_ExecSumm_Web.pdf).
4. Nisman, *Report on Terrorist Networks in Latin America*, 59, 72, 180-181; Marcelo Martinez Burgos and Alberto Nisman, *Office of Criminal Investigations: AMIA CASE*; Investigations Unit of the Office of the Attorney General (Argentina), October 25, 2006, <http://www.peaceandtolerance.org/docs/nismanindict.pdf>.
5. Matthew Levitt, "Exporting Terror in America's Backyard," *Foreign Policy*, June 14, 2013, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2013/06/14/exporting-terror-in-americas-backyard/>.
6. Ibid.
7. Nisman, *Report on Terrorist Networks in Latin America*, 56, 58-59. Nisman's report indicates that this role was merely a front; Rabbani was already a member of Iran's intelligence bureau upon his arrival in Argentina.
8. Douglas Farah, *Back to the Future: Argentina Unravels* (Inter-American Institute for Democracy, 2013), 75.
9. US Department of State, "Patterns of Global Terrorism: 1992," 1993, [http://fas.org/irp/threat/terror\\_92/chron.html](http://fas.org/irp/threat/terror_92/chron.html).
10. Nisman, *Report on Terrorist Networks in Latin America*.
11. Douglas Farah, *Fixers, Super Fixers and Shadow Facilitators: How Networks Connect*, (International Assessment and Strategy Center, April 23, 2012), [http://www.strategycenter.net/docLib/20120423\\_Farah\\_FixersSuperFixersShadow.pdf](http://www.strategycenter.net/docLib/20120423_Farah_FixersSuperFixersShadow.pdf).
12. Joseph Humire, *After Nisman: How the death of a prosecutor revealed Iran's growing influ-*

- ence in the Americas* (Center for a Secure Free Society, 2016), 17.
13. Alberto Nisman, *Complaint of Criminal Plot*, 2015, 96, <http://albertonisman.org/nisman-complaint-denuncia/>.
  14. Humire, *After Nisman*, 19-20.
  15. Ibid.
  16. Harriet Alexander, "Nisman Successor Formally Accuses Kirchner," *Telegraph* (London), February 13, 2015, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/southamerica/argentina/11412236/Nisman-successor-formally-accuses-Kirchner.html>.
  17. Humire, *After Nisman*, 17.
  18. "Eugenio Burzaco descartó presencia de miembros de Isis en Argentina," *El Día*, September 11, 2016, <http://www.eldia.com/el-pais/el-gobierno-detecta-argentinos-formados-por-el-estado-islamico-164431>.
  19. Jerry Nelson, "ISIS to Argentina: We're Coming to See You," *Huffington Post*, September 19, 2016, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/isis-to-argentina-were-coming-to-see-you\\_us\\_57dfb7d0e4b0d5920b5b3054](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/isis-to-argentina-were-coming-to-see-you_us_57dfb7d0e4b0d5920b5b3054).
  20. "Argentine Army's website hacked – by ISIS?" *MercoPress*, June 20, 2017, <https://en.merco-press.com/2017/06/20/argentine-army-s-website-hacked-by-isis>.
  21. Marissa Payne, "Pro-ISIS poster threatening World Cup terrorist attack depicts Lionel Messi crying blood," *Washington Post*, October 24, 2017, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/early-lead/wp/2017/10/24/pro-isis-poster-threatening-world-cup-terrorist-attack-depicts-lionel-messi-crying-blood/?utm\\_term=.26c5f5426bff](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/early-lead/wp/2017/10/24/pro-isis-poster-threatening-world-cup-terrorist-attack-depicts-lionel-messi-crying-blood/?utm_term=.26c5f5426bff).
  22. Pedro Brieger, "Muslims in Argentina," *ISIM Newsletter*, June 2000, 33, [https://openaccess.leidenuniv.nl/bitstream/handle/1887/17433/ISIM\\_6\\_Muslims\\_in\\_Argentina.pdf?sequence=1](https://openaccess.leidenuniv.nl/bitstream/handle/1887/17433/ISIM_6_Muslims_in_Argentina.pdf?sequence=1).
  23. Chris Moss, "Latin America's First Mega-Mosque," *Islam Online*, n.d., <http://hispanicmuslims.com/articles/other/openseyes.html>.
  24. Pew Center, "Interactive Data Table: World Muslim Population by Country," November 17, 2017, <https://www.pewforum.org/chart/interactive-data-table-world-muslim-population-by-country/>; Pew Center, "Table: Muslim Population by Country," January 27, 2011, [http://www.pewforum.org/2011/01/27/table-muslim-population-by-country/?utm\\_exp=53098246-2.Lly4CFSVQG2lphsg-KopIg.0](http://www.pewforum.org/2011/01/27/table-muslim-population-by-country/?utm_exp=53098246-2.Lly4CFSVQG2lphsg-KopIg.0); The World Bank cites Argentina's population at 44,494,502 people as of 2018. For more information, please see World Bank, "Population, total – Argentina," n.d., <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL?end=2010&locations=AR&start=2010&view=bar>.
  25. U.S. Department of State, "International Religious Freedom Report—Argentina," November 17, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2010/148731.htm>.
  26. "Ramadan Mubarak: Observing the Month-Long Fast in Buenos Aires," *The Argentina Independent*, July 20, 2012, <http://www.argentinaindependent.com/life-style/ramadan-mubarak-observing-the-month-long-fast-in-buenos-aires/>.
  27. Brieger, "Muslims in Argentina," 33.
  28. Ibid.
  29. Moss, "Latin America's First Mega-Mosque."
  30. Brieger, "Muslims in Argentina," 33.
  31. "Ramadan Mubarak."
  32. Brieger, "Muslims in Argentina," 33.
  33. Moss, "Latin America's First Mega-Mosque."
  34. U.S. Department of State, "Argentina," in *International Religious Freedom Report 2010* (U.S. Department of State, November 27, 2010), <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2010/148731.htm>.
  35. "Ramadan Mubarak."
  36. Jose R. Cardenas and Roger Noriega, *The Mounting Hezbollah Threat in Latin America* (American Enterprise Institute, October 6, 2011), <http://www.aei.org/publication/the-mounting-hezbollah-threat-in-latin-america/>.

37. For more information on the FEARAB relationship with the Argentine government, see Humire's special report, *After Nisman*.
38. Ibid.
39. Ibidem.
40. Abdel Latif Yunes, as quoted in *Campodónico to Paz*, July 4, 1950, División de Política, Syria, 1950, Box 7, Folder "Política Interna," AMREC.
41. Cecilia Baeza, "América Latina y la cuestión palestina (1947-2012)," *Araucaria Revista Iberoamericana de Filosofía, Política y Humanidades* 14/28 (2012), 111-131.
42. Brieger, "Muslims in Argentina," 33.
43. Moss, "Latin America's First Mega-Mosque."
44. Cardenas and Noriega, *The Mounting Hezbollah Threat in Latin America*; U.S. Department of State, "The Year in Review," *Patterns of Global Terrorism: 1992*, April 30, 1993, [https://fas.org/irp/threat/terror\\_92/review.html](https://fas.org/irp/threat/terror_92/review.html); William Long, "Islamic Jihad Says It Bombed Embassy; Toll 21," *Los Angeles Times*, March 19, 1992, <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1992-03-19-mn-5905-story.html>
45. Ilan Berman and Joseph M. Humire, *Iran's Strategic Penetration of Latin America* (London: Lexington Books, 2014), 35, 81.
46. Ibid., 82.
47. Roger F. Noriega, "Argentina's Secret Deal with Iran?" American Enterprise Institute *blog*, July 20, 2011, <https://www.aei.org/publication/argentinas-secret-deal-with-iran/>.
48. Berman and Humire, *Iran's Strategic Penetration of Latin America*, 86.
49. Jaime Darenblum, "How Argentina and Brazil Help Iran," *The Weekly Standard*, November 1, 2012, <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/weekly-standard/how-argentina-and-brazil-help-iran>.
50. Berman and Humire, *Iran's Strategic Penetration of Latin America*, 82.
51. Johnson, *Iran's Influence in the Americas*.
52. Berman and Humire, *Iran's Strategic Penetration of Latin America*, 82.
53. Ibid.
54. "Argentina supports UN investigation on human rights violations in Iran," *MercoPress*, March 23, 2013, <https://en.mercopress.com/2013/03/23/argentina-supports-un-investigation-on-human-rights-violations-in-iran>
55. Michael Lipin and Carolina Valladares, "Argentine Judge Who Accused Officials of Covering Up Iran Role in 1994 Attack Dies," *Voice of America*, February 9, 2020, <https://www.voanews.com/middle-east/voa-news-iran/argentine-judge-who-accused-officials-covering-iran-role-1994-attack-dies>
56. Pepe Eliashev, "El Gobierno negocia un pacto secreto con Irán para 'olvidar' los atentados," *Perfil*, March 26, 2011, <https://www.perfil.com/noticias/politica/el-gobierno-negocia-un-pacto-secreto-con-iran-para-olvidar-los-atentados-20110326-0004.phtml>.
57. Humire, *After Nisman*, 22.
58. Eliashev, "El Gobierno negocia un pacto secreto con Irán para 'olvidar' los atentados."
59. Dana Chocron, "Argentina: A New Foreign Policy?" *Young Diplomats*, March 29, 2016, <http://www.young-diplomats.com/argentinas-promised-foreign-policy/>.
60. Uki Goñi and Jonathan Watts, "Argentina president-elect pledges radical policy changes in shift to right," *Guardian* (London), November 23, 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/nov/23/argentina-president-elect-mauricio-macri-iran-venezuela>.
61. Eamonn MacDonagh, "Analysis: Macri Victory in Argentina Marks Setback for Iranian Ambitions in Latin America," *The Tower*, November 23, 2015, <http://www.thetower.org/2600-macri-victory-in-argentina-election-marks-setback-for-iranian-ambitions-in-latin-america/>.
62. Ramón Indart, "Qué dice el polémico memorándum que firmó el gobierno de Macri con Qatar," *Perfil*, November 17, 2016, <https://www.perfil.com/noticias/politica/que-dice-el-polemico-memorandum-que-firmo-el-gobierno-de-macri-con-qatar.phtml>; Amanda Blohm, "Argen-

- tina Will Accept 3,000 Syrian Refugees,” *PanAm Post*, July 8, 2016, <https://panampost.com/amanda-blohm/2016/07/07/argentina-will-receive-3000-syrian-refugees/>.
63. U.S. Department of State, “Argentina” in *Country Reports on Terrorism 2011*, July 2012, <https://www.refworld.org/docid/501fbcc423.html>.
  64. Livia Peres Milani, “North American Congress on Latin America,” North American Congress on Latin America, January 3, 2019, <https://nacla.org/news/2019/01/03/remilitarizing-argentina>.
  65. “Argentina: El Derecho a La Protesta En Riesgo.” CELS, March 1, 2018, <https://www.cels.org.ar/web/publicaciones/argentina-el-derecho-a-la-protesta-en-riesgo/>.
  66. ‘Hezbollah treasurer’ Barakat arrested in Brazil border city,” BBC, September 22, 2018, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-45610738>.
  67. Jonathan Gilbert and Simon Romero, “Argentine Phone Calls Details Efforts to Shield Iran,” *New York Times*, January 21, 2015; Harriet Alexander, “Argentine prosecutor who accused Cristina Kirchner over 1994 bombing found dead,” *Telegraph* (London), January 19, 2015.
  68. “Argentina Asks Friendly Countries Not to Shelter Iran Suspects,” *Radio Farda*, September 27, 2018, <https://en.radiofarda.com/a/argentina-asks-countries-not-to-shelter-iran-suspects-/29512998.html>.
  69. Mark Dubowitz and Toby Dershowitz, “Iranian Terror. Argentinian Cover Up. Justice at Last?” *New York Times*, December 11, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/11/opinion/argentina-kirchner-iran-nisman.html>.
  70. “Argentine court clears ex-President Menem in Jewish bombing cover-up case,” Reuters, February 28, 2019, <https://af.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idAFKCN1QH2TB>.
  71. Marcy Oster, “Former Argentina pres. under fire for ‘Israeli oranges’ remark,” Arutz Sheva, March 9, 2019. <https://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/268360#:~:text=Cristina%20Fernandez%20de%20Kirchner%2C%20the%20former%20president%20of,fire%20from%20a%20Jewish%20group%20in%20her%20country>.
  72. JTA Staff, “Argentina’s President Alberto Fernandez condemns the AMIA bombing,” *Jerusalem Post*, July 17, 2020, <https://www.jpost.com/diaspora/argentinas-president-alberto-fernandez-condemns-the-amia-bombing-635374>.
  73. Ben Cohen, “‘No Evidence It Was a Murder’: Argentine President Fernandez Reverses Position on Killing of AMIA Bombing Investigator Alberto Nisman,” *Algemeiner*, January 2, 2020.
  74. David Grantham, “Why Texas Should be Wary of Mexico’s AMLO,” *Transregional Threat Journal*, Texas Series 1, iss. 2, June 1, 2020.