

Kuwait

Overview: During 2019, the Government of Kuwait participated in or conducted a significant number of training programs to build CT capacity and to counter terrorism financing. Kuwait is a regional leader in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, part of the Defeat-ISIS Coalition Small Group, and co-leads (with Turkey and the Netherlands) the Coalition's Foreign Terrorist Fighters Working Group.

2019 Terrorist Incidents: There were no terrorist incidents reported in Kuwait in 2019.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Throughout 2019, Kuwaiti government officials participated in several CT capacity-building workshops. Several of these were supported by the U.S. Department of State and implemented through the U.S. Department of Justice Overseas Prosecutorial Development Assistance and Training program. In February, the Kuwaiti Public Prosecutor's office participated in a workshop on Best Practices in Cyber Investigations and Prosecutions. In March, the Ministry of Interior and the Kuwait State Security trained on FTF-related investigations. In April, Kuwait hosted the GCC Regional Cyber Investigations Conference with attendees from 26 entities across the Gulf and several domestic Kuwaiti entities, many focused on CFT. In October, the FIU and the National Committee for Combatting Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism participated in a seminar on money laundering and countering the funding of terrorism. Kuwait also concentrated on law enforcement and judicial capacity building across a broad spectrum of government agencies.

In July, the Kuwait state news agency reported that the Ministry of Interior had deported eight Egyptian citizens who were wanted in Egypt for terrorism-related convictions.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Kuwait is a member of MENAFATF. Its FIU, known as the Kuwaiti Financial Intelligence Unit, is a member of the Egmont Group. Kuwait is also a member of the Defeat-ISIS Coalition's CIFG and the TFTC.

In collaboration with other TFFC member states, in 2019 Kuwait imposed one round of sanctions against individuals and entities affiliated with the Iranian regime's terror-support networks in the region.

Countering Violent Extremism: Kuwait's Ministry of Education continued to implement a program to fight what it viewed as extremist ideologies at public schools through teacher-training and student-counseling programs. As part of the government's National Plan to Reinforce Moderation, the Ministry of Information runs a television channel with programming aimed at audiences believed to be at higher risk of radicalization. The Kuwait Moderation Center, which operates under the supervision of the Ministry of Religious Endowments, sponsored a variety of programs designed to promote religious tolerance, including establishing working groups to reduce sectarian conflict, holding symposia on protecting the rights of non-Muslims in a Muslim society, and a program in the school system to promote diversity and tolerance and combat sectarianism. The Moderation Center continued a program to enable social salon (diwaniya) hosts to invite religious scholars to join in discussions with attendees and counter the potential presence of radicalizing influences. The center also sponsored radio programs to promote tolerance among youth. In December, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs sponsored a workshop titled "The Concept of Extremism and its Reflection on Society." More effective measures are needed to prevent charitable donations being routed to regional terrorist groups or support for educational and religious advocacy efforts that encourage discrimination and violence. Kuwait is looking to better monitor charitable donations that might be used to support terrorist elements.

International and Regional Cooperation: During 2019, Kuwait served as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for the second year of its two-year term. Kuwait remained an active member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS Small Group, participating in a number of ministerial-level meetings throughout the year. Kuwait has also long been an active member of the Arab League and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. As a member of the GCC, Kuwait has played a leading role in the effort to mediate the dispute between Qatar and other GCC members.