



Committee supports terrorist listings and declaration of Mosul district, Iraq

Parliament's Intelligence and Security committee has today tabled reports supporting the declaration of Mosul district in Iraq and the re-listing of four terrorist organisations under the Criminal Code.

Mosul District in Iraq is the second area to be declared by the Foreign Minister following that of al-Raqqa province in Syria in December last year.

Section 119.2 of the Criminal Code makes it an offence to enter, or remain in, a declared area of a foreign country. There are exceptions to this offence for persons entering declared areas solely for one or more of the 'legitimate purposes' listed in the Code, including for the purposes of humanitarian aid or visiting family members.

Like al-Raqqa, the declaration of the Mosul district arose from the hostilities of Da'esh (also known as Islamic State or ISIL) in the area. The Committee was informed that Da'esh has a significant and enduring presence in Mosul, which is its main base of operations in Iraq. Mosul is also a central location for foreign extremists engaging in the conflict in Iraq.

Atrocities committed by Da'esh in Mosul have included, among others, the execution of 13 teenage boys for watching a sports match, the mass execution of around 600 mainly Shia inmates at a prison, the torture and execution of a women's rights activist, and the destruction of historical and religious sites.

In a separate report, the Committee reviewed the re-listing of four terrorist organisations.

Originally listed in 2003, this is the fifth time Ansar al-Islam, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, Lashkar-e Jhangvi and Jaish-e-Mohammad have been proscribed by the Australian Government.

The Committee was satisfied Ansar al-Islam, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, and Lashkar-e Jhangvi continue to be involved in and advocate terrorist acts. For Jaish-e-Mohammad, the Committee recognised that this is the first time that an organisation has been proscribed solely on the basis of 'advocating the doing of a terrorist act'.

Chair of the Committee, Mr Dan Tehan MP said "While noting that the group has not be associated with an attack for over five years, the Committee accepted that Jaish-e-Mohammad is engaged in advocating terrorist acts and supports ongoing proscription of the group on this basis."

The listings makes it an offence to direct the activities, become a member of, recruit, train or receive training, get funds to, from or for these organisations, provide support or associate with them.

Mr Tehan said "The Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security forms an important oversight function for Australia's anti-terrorism laws. The Committee closely examined the evidence presented and fully supports declaration of Mosul District, as well as the re-listing of these four terrorist organisations."

Full copies of the reports are available on the Committee's website at: <http://www.aph.gov.au/pjcis>.

For media comment, please contact the Office of the Chair, Dan Tehan MP, on 6277 4393 (Parliament House) or 03 5572 1100 (Electorate).

For inquiry information, please contact the Committee Secretariat on 02 6277 2360 or email pjcis@aph.gov.au.