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Justice Commandos for the Armenian Genocide

The second prominent Armenian terrorist organization, the Justice Commandos for the Armenian Genocide (JCAG), is a rightwing, nationalistic group without links to ASALA, other terrorist groups, or patron states. JCAG, like ASALA, demands an Armenian homeland and official Turkish recognition of the 1915 Armenian genocide. [redacted]

We believe the Justice Commandos were created in 1975 by the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF)—also known as the Dashnag Party—the most important and powerful Armenian political organization. The ARF was founded in 1890 by a group of Armenian intellectuals in the Transcaucasus region of Russia, as a response to violence committed against Armenian people under the rule of Turkish Sultan Abdul Hamid. From its inception, the ARF has aligned itself with whoever provided the best opportunity for an autonomous Armenian state. Since the end of World War II, the ARF has held a conservative, anti-Communist ideology and has been involved in violence against both the Turks and the Soviets, whom they hold responsible for the destruction of the Armenian republic in 1920. [redacted]

Our analysis and a large body of evidence indicate that JCAG is the action wing of the ARF. We suspect that the ARF created a military wing to counter the emergence of the Marxist-Leninist ASALA, which was probably drawing the more radical, violence-prone youth away from the ARF. Competition between JCAG and ASALA has been keen during the past few years. Several terrorist attacks against Turkish interests have been claimed by both groups, and the success of one group sometimes seems to spur the other to act. We have also seen a few instances of members defecting from one group to the other, presumably not out of ideological conversion but

simply to have greater opportunities to conduct operations against Turks. The prominent English-language publication Armenian Reporter cites the August 1983 conviction in Los Angeles of an ASALA member—the son of a prominent ARF leader—as evidence of the growing disenchantment and desertion of Dashnag youth to more active radical groups such as ASALA. [redacted]

JCAG has operated predominantly against Turkish targets. Its attacks—usually assassinations of high-ranking Turkish diplomatic personnel conducted in public places during daylight hours—exhibit boldness, professionalism, and meticulous planning and training. JCAG employs surveillance/countersurveillance techniques to ensure the success of its operations. Its infrequent bombings of Turkish facilities, which appear to be conducted as warnings to Turkish diplomats, are followed within two or three months by assassination attempts. [redacted]

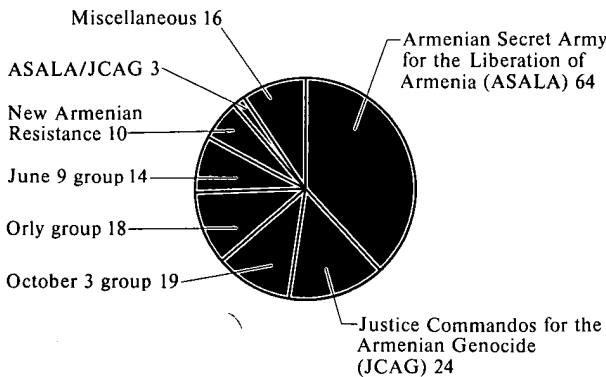
In contrast to ASALA, JCAG has not yet conducted or threatened to conduct reprisal attacks to force the release of captured operatives, who are considered “un-uniformed soldiers” by JCAG. We believe JCAG assassins—only rarely apprehended—are recruited and trained within the ARF Youth Federation on a one-time “kill” basis. After an assassination, the JCAG operative is seldom used again in a terrorist operation. [redacted]

ASALA's headquarters in West Beirut was severely disrupted by the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in June 1982 and the subsequent expulsion of the Palestinians. [redacted]

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Figure 2
Armenian Terrorism: Attacks Claimed by Groups, 1975-83

Number of attacks



Total: 168 attacks

[Redacted]

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share a common reaction to Armenian terrorism—anger, revulsion, and an intransigent unwillingness to accept the Armenian version of history. There is little disagreement across the Turkish political spectrum that Armenian terrorism should be dealt with firmly and directly. [Redacted]

The ASALA attack at Ankara's airport in August 1982—the first significant Armenian terrorist attack inside Turkey since 1979—focused public concern in Turkey on the threat posed by Armenian terrorists. Ankara's twofold public approach to the problem—refuting Armenian charges of genocide and threatening retaliation by Turkish "hit squads"—failed to still Armenian propaganda or halt terrorist attacks. Through diplomatic channels, the Turkish Government attempted to pursue coordinated international efforts to thwart Armenian terrorism. [Redacted]

[Redacted]

Enhanced security precautions at Turkish installations also failed to deter terrorists whose fanaticism had, in some cases, reached "suicide operation"

proportions or whose skill and planning were superior to Turkish defensive measures. [Redacted]

[Redacted]

the Turkish Government has begun exploring more active counterterrorist methods. We believe the training of commandos to strike against Armenian terrorists was initially aimed at defusing criticism within the Turkish Government of Evren's soft approach to terrorism. Although Turkish leaders have approved plans for using these squads, such a move would be politically costly. Turkey's military rulers are already smarting from the intense West European criticism of martial law and human rights abuses. We do not believe the government of Prime Minister Ozal would jeopardize military and economic aid from West European countries by officially and publicly sanctioning such attacks, which will be played up by the Armenian press. [Redacted]

The Armenian community in Turkey is unsympathetic to the terrorist groups. The Patriarch of the Armenian Gregorian Church in Istanbul has consistently spoken out, condemning the violence. Opposition to the terrorists derives principally from the community's fear that further attacks against Turkish interests might induce the Turks—frustrated by their government's inability to deal with the extremists abroad—to retaliate against Armenians in Turkey. [Redacted]

Impact on US Interests

The direct threat to American interests only emerged with the mid-1982 imprisonment of Armenian terrorists in the United States. On 30 May 1982, three ASALA terrorists were arrested for attempting to bomb the Air Canada freight terminal in Los Angeles. The bomb was intended to gain freedom for four Armenians who had been arrested in Toronto and were charged with conspiracy to extort money from wealthy Armenians in Canada. The conviction of the three ASALA members has not resulted in any retaliatory attacks to date, although, given ASALA's past record, attacks might still be conducted in an attempt to force the judge into giving the prisoners light sentences. [Redacted]

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ASALA has made contradictory statements regarding its relations with West European terrorist groups. Claims by some ASALA members of operational ties to the Italian Red Brigades and the Spanish Basque Fatherland and Liberty (ETA) terrorists have been denied by ASALA spokesmen and communiques. ASALA has also claimed an alliance with the Kurdish Worker's Party (KWP) and joint participation, with the KWP, in an attack on the Turkish Consulate in Strasbourg, France, in November 1980. No other claims of joint operations have been issued. [redacted]

Foreign Government Links

Syria. Although Syria has given little assistance to ASALA in the past, we believe that this is changing in the wake of the invasion of Lebanon and the resulting evacuation of some ASALA members to Damascus. [redacted]

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**A Chronology of Armenian Terrorism,
January 1975–December 1983^a (continued)**

Date	Location of Attack	Group/Name Used	Incident Description
15 November	Beirut, Lebanon	Orly Group	Bombing of Air France, Banque Libano-Francaise, Union des Assurance de Paris, and Fransa Bank
	Paris, France	Orly Group	Bombing at McDonalds fast food restaurant
16 November	Paris, France	Orly Group	Bombing at Paris railroad station
20 November	Los Angeles, United States	JCAG	Bombing of the Turkish Consulate
21 November	Tehran, Iran	Orly Group	Bombing of Air France office and French Embassy
15 December	London, England	October 3	Bombing of Swissair office and Swiss Tourist Information Office
1982			
13 January	Switzerland	Group 15	Bombing of a match factory
14 January	Toronto, Canada	ASALA	Bombing of office of Honorary Consulate of Turkey
19 January	Paris, France	Orly Group	Bombing of Air France office
21 January	Paris, France	Orly Group	Bombing in 16th Arrondissement
28 January	Los Angeles, United States	JCAG	Assassination of Turkish Consul General
15 March	Geneva, Switzerland	ASALA	Bombing of a patrol car
16 March	Geneva, Switzerland	ASALA	Bombing of a patrol car
22 March	Cambridge, United States	JCAG	Bombing of Turkish Consulate
8 April	Ottawa, Canada	ASALA and Armenian Liberation Front (probably linked to JCAG)	Attempted assassination of Turkish Commercial Counselor
24 April	Cologne, West Germany	NAR	Attempted bombing of Turkish bank
	Dortmund, West Germany	NAR	Bombing of Turkish bank
4 May	Boston, United States	JCAG	Assassination of the Honorary Turkish Consul
21 May	Toronto, Canada	ASALA	Bombing of two cars of Armenian who was being extorted by ASALA
24 May	Beirut, Lebanon	ASALA in cooperation with radical Palistinians	Car bomb, killing 12 and injuring 25
27 May	Ottawa, Canada	JCAG	Assassination of Turkish military attache
30 May	Los Angeles, United States	ASALA	Bomb discovered at Air Canada freight terminal
7 June	Lisbon, Portugal	JCAG	Assassination of Turkish attache and wounding of wife, who later died
20 July	Paris, France	Orly Group	Bombing of a cafe in the Latin Quarter
21 July	Rotterdam, Netherlands	Red Armenian Army	Attempted assassination of Turkish Consul General
24 July	Paris, France	Orly Group	Bombing of a pub in the Latin Quarter
7 August	Ankara, Turkey	ASALA	Attempted hostage-taking situation at Esenboga Airport, killing 10 and wounding 78
8 August	Paris, France	Orly Group	Bomb discovered in front of a telephone company
9 September	Burgas, Bulgaria	Combat Units of Justice Against Armenian Genocide	Assassination of the Turkish administrative attache

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**A Chronology of Armenian Terrorism,
January 1975–December 1983^a (continued)**

Date	Location of Attack	Group/Name Used	Incident Description
22 October	Boston, United States	JCAG	Bomb found aboard Northwest Orient aircraft
1983			
22 January	Paris, France	ASALA Suicide Group of the Harnicvaharabyan Minas Simonian Commando Martyrs	Bombing of Turkish Airlines office
	Paris, France	ASALA "Chabin Karahissazop"	Attempted bombing of Turkish airlines counter, Orly Airport
28 February	Paris, France	ASALA	Bombing of privately owned travel agency featuring trips to Turkey, in which one woman was killed
9 March	Belgrade, Yugoslavia	JCAG	Assassination of Turkish Ambassador to Yugoslavia
24 May	Brussels, Belgium	ASALA	Bombings of Turkish travel agency and Turkish tourist office
16 June	Istanbul, Turkey	ASALA	Grenade and machinegun attack on bazaar, killing two and wounding 23
14 July	Brussels, Belgium	ASALA, JCAG, and Armenian Revolutionary Army (ARA)	Assassination of Turkish administrative attache
15 July	Paris, France	ASALA	Bomb exploded at Turkish Airlines counter at Orly Airport, killing eight and wounding 55
22 July	Tehran, Iran	Orly Group	Bombing of French Embassy and Air France office
25 July	Tehran, Iran	Orly Group	Bombing of French trade mission
27 July	Lisbon, Portugal	ARA	Takeover of Turkish Embassy, which resulted in killing of hostages and deaths of five terrorists
31 July	Tehran, Iran	Orly Group	Attempted bombing of Egyptian Interests Section offices (under diplomatic protection of France)
7 August	Tehran, Iran	Orly Group	Two bombings at Egyptian Interests Section office
10 August	Tehran, Iran	Orly Group	Car bombing at French Embassy compound
17 August	Tehran, Iran	Orly Group	Shooting of Air France employee

^a The statistics in this chronology are drawn from our file of international terrorism and media reports on targets/victims that meet our criteria for an international event. These statistics are as accurate as the details of events allow. The groups or organizations listed for specific incidents are believed responsible, either by claim

or attribution made by police and security services based on method of operation or target attacked. Some of the names are believed to be cover names for organizations used to mislead police and security investigations or to inflate the number and strength of Armenian terrorist groups.

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**A Chronology of Armenian Terrorism,
January 1975–December 1983^a (continued)**

Date	Location of Attack	Group/Name Used	Incident Description
20 April	Marseilles, France	Black April	Attempted bombing of Turkish Consulate with a rocket
31 July	Athens, Greece	ASALA	Assassination of attache at Turkish Embassy
5 August	Lyon, France	ASALA	Attempted assassination of Turkish Consul
26 September	Paris, France	ASALA	Attempted assassination of Turkish Press attache
3 October	Milan, Italy	ASALA	Bombing of offices of magazine, <i>Panorama</i>
4 October	Milan, Italy	ASALA	Bombing of Turkish Airlines office
	Madrid, Spain	ASALA	Bombing of Alitalia office, injuring 12
6 October	Beverly Hills, United States	JCAG	Firebombing of Turkish Consul General's residence
8 October	Beirut, Lebanon	October 3	Bombing at Swiss Ambassador's house and bombing of Swiss Embassy car
9 October	Beirut, Lebanon	October 3	Bombing of Swissair and Iranian Airlines offices
	Beirut, Lebanon	October 3	Attempted bombing of Swiss Embassy
12 October	London, England	October 3	Bombing of Swiss Center (a restaurant and shopping complex)
	Los Angeles, United States	JCAG	Bombing of Music City Tours
	London, England	ASALA	Bombing of Turkish Airlines office
	New York City, United States	JCAG	Bombing of Turkish mission to the United Nation
	Paris, France	October 3	Bombing of Swiss tourist office
20 October	Interlaken, Switzerland	October 3	Bomb discovered on train from Paris to Interlaken
4 November	Geneva, Switzerland	October 3	Bombing of Palace of Justice
10 November	Strasbourg, France	ASALA and Kurdish Worker's Party	Bombing of Turkish Consulate
	Rome, Italy	ASALA	Bombing of Swissair and Swiss national tourist offices
11 November	Rome, Italy	ASALA	Bombing of Turkish Airlines office

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**The Armenian Secret Army
for the Liberation of Armenia:
A Continuing International Threat** [redacted]

Key Judgments

*Information available
as of 20 December 1983
was used in this report.*

The Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA) poses a growing threat to a number of US policy interests. Although most ASALA attacks have been against Turks, West European and a few US facilities have also been struck. Moreover, an apparent increase in contacts with Libya and Syria may expose the Marxist-oriented ASALA to additional anti-American influences. The rightwing Armenian terrorist group, the Justice Commandos for the Armenian Genocide, has focused almost exclusively on Turkish targets. [redacted]

In a development that has ominous implications for international cooperation against terrorism, several West European nations have apparently reached accommodations with ASALA, allowing the terrorists freedom to pursue Turkish targets in exchange for promises not to attack indigenous citizens. The Turks have responded angrily against what they see as European indifference to or connivance with ASALA terrorism. They are strongly pressing the United States both to put pressure on European governments and to give more direct assistance in combating that threat. [redacted]

Despite some setbacks, the major Armenian terrorist groups retain considerable capability. ASALA and the Justice Commandos have assassinated 50 Turkish officials and private citizens and have conducted over 200 bombings since 1975. ASALA's shift toward indiscriminate violence during the past four years makes large-scale casualties more likely as the group targets commercial aircraft and crowded public places. Recent fragmentation within ASALA and Armenian political groups, in our estimation, increases the risk of terrorist violence, particularly in Western Europe, as the various splinter groups vie for the attention of the Armenian community. [redacted]

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**A Chronology of Armenian Terrorism,
January 1975–December 1983^a (continued)**

Date	Location of Attack	Group/Name Used	Incident Description
19 November	Rome, Italy	ASALA	Bombing of Turkish Airlines office
25 November	Geneva, Switzerland	October 3	Bombing of Geneva office of Union Bank
1 December	Paris, France	JCAG	Bombing of British Airways, Lufthansa, and Sabena Airlines offices
5 December	Marseilles, France	October 3	Bomb discovered at Swiss Consulate
11 December	Rome, Italy	ASALA	Attempted assassination of Turkish diplomat
16 December	London, England	October 3	Bomb discovered at the French tourist and railroad offices
17 December	Sidney, Australia	JCAG	Assassination of Turkish General Consul and bodyguard
25 December	Zurich, Switzerland	October 3	Bombing of Zurich airport radar
29 December	Madrid, Spain	October 3	Bombing of TWA and Swissair offices, injuring seven
30 December	Beirut, Lebanon	October 3	Bombing of Credit-Suisse Bank
1981			
12 January	Paris, France	ASALA	Attempted assassination of Turkish official
19 January	Beirut, Lebanon	ASALA	Bombing of Armenian businessman's vehicle as part of extortion effort
27 January	Milan, Italy	October 3	Bombing of Swissair and the Swiss tourist office, injuring one

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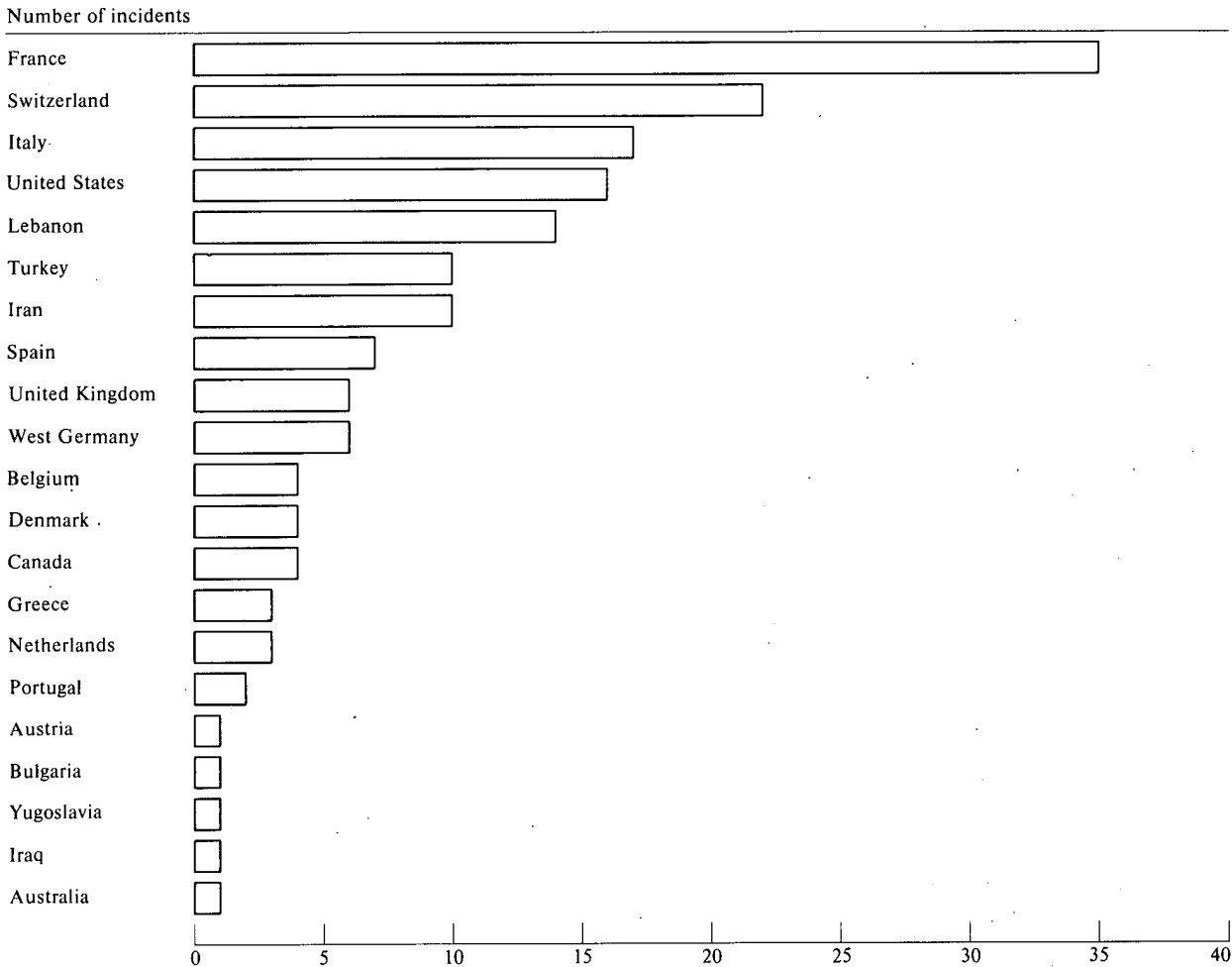
Neither stepped-up enforcement nor intelligence activities have noticeably impaired Armenian terrorist capabilities. Recent attacks show that Armenian terrorists can strike with virtual impunity. We suspect that ASALA's expanded contacts with Libya may eventually increase the group's terrorist potential. We believe Syrian involvement with ASALA may also bolster Armenian capabilities, particularly if Syria is providing training and a base of operations for ASALA terrorists. [redacted]

We expect that future Armenian attacks will increase the pressure on the Turkish Government to take strong action. Armed Turkish retaliation could further damage Ankara's international image and strain relations with other European nations. Any Turkish retaliation against Armenian terrorists would result in sharp Armenian retribution, probably in the form of more frequent and lethal attacks. Ankara will encounter added frustration as it pressures Washington and other NATO members for a unified international approach to terrorism. [redacted]

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Figure 1
Armenian Terrorism: Number of Incidents per Country,
1975-83



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would not conduct attacks in Italy except against Turkish targets. In return, the Italians would close the emigration offices within six months. Although Hagopian later said that the Italians reneged by simply moving the offices and changing their names, there have been no more ASALA attacks in Italy.

The Turkish Response

Armenian terrorism is a serious domestic political issue. Unlike other political issues in Turkey, however, it arouses no significant disagreement along right-left lines. Most Turks, regardless of their political views,

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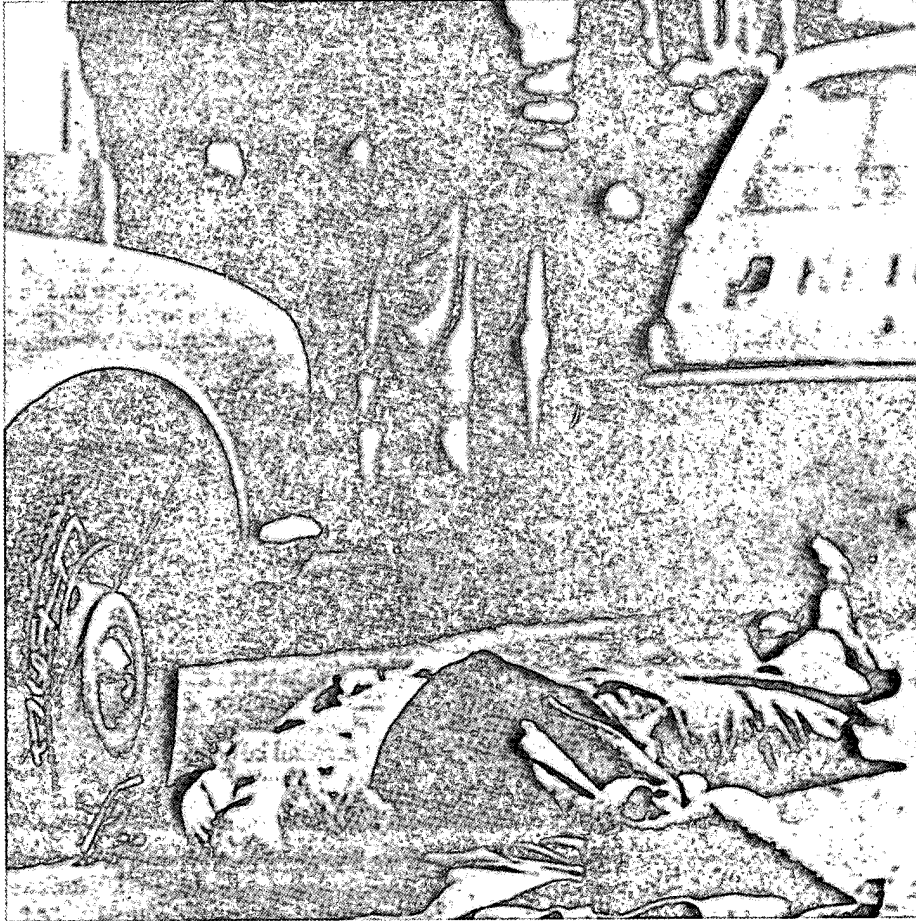
Appendix

**A Chronology of Armenian Terrorism,
January 1975–December 1983^a**

Date	Location of Attack	Group/Name Used	Incident Description
1975			
20 January	Beirut, Lebanon	Prisoner Karekin Yanikian Group	Bomb discovered at World Council of Churches office
8 February	Beirut, Lebanon	ASALA	Bombing of Turkish tourist center
20 February	Beirut, Lebanon	Yanikian Group	Bombing of Turkish Airlines office
22 October	Vienna, Austria	ASALA and JCAG	Assassination of Turkish Ambassador and driver
24 October	Paris, France	ASALA and JCAG	Assassination of Turkish Ambassador
28 October	Beirut, Lebanon	ASALA	Rocket attack on Turkish Embassy
28 December	Beirut, Lebanon	ASALA	Two rockets fired at Turkish Embassy
1976			
16 February	Beirut, Lebanon	ASALA	Assassination of Turkish First Secretary
17 May	Frankfurt, West Germany	ASALA	Firebombing of Turkish Consulate
	Cologne, West Germany	ASALA	Firebombing of Turkish Consulate
	Essen, West Germany	ASALA	Firebombing of Turkish Consulate
28 May	Zurich, Switzerland	JCAG	Bombing of Turkish Consulate and a Turkish bank
1977			
14 May	Paris, France	New Armenian Resistance (NAR) and Youth Action Group	Bombing of Turkish tourism office
29 May	Istanbul, Turkey	28 May 1977 Organization	Bombing of Yesilkoy Airport, killing six; bombing of train station
9 June	Rome, Italy	JCAG	Assassination of Turkish Ambassador to the Vatican
20 October	Athens, Greece	ASALA	Bomb destroyed car of Turkish press attache
1978			
3 January	London, England	NAR	Bombing of Turkish bank
	Brussels, Belgium	NAR	Bombing of apartment of a Turkish Embassy counselor
10 March	Athens, Greece	ASALA	Three bombs exploded under cars owned by Turkish diplomats
2 June	Madrid, Spain	ASALA and JCAG	Assassination of brother, wife, and chauffeur of Turkish Ambassador to Spain
August	Ankara, Turkey	ASALA	Bombing of statue of Ataturk
	Istanbul, Turkey	ASALA	Bombing of public buildings
1 October	Istanbul, Turkey	ASALA	Bomb exploded at a bus stop in front of the Grand Mosque and in a waiting room of a car/passenger ferry landing; another bomb was discovered before it exploded in a railroad station
30 October	Istanbul, Turkey	ASALA	Bombing of a cigarette factory

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*Turkish diplomat slain in Paris
in March 1981.* [redacted]



The activities of Armenian terrorist groups have caused some tension between Ankara and Washington. Implying that Western intelligence agencies are withholding information, the Turks have pressed for specific identities, locations, and plans of Armenian terrorists. The United States does share information with the Turks, but US legal constraints prohibit the passage of information concerning US citizens and subjudice material. Several West European countries are legally limited from providing information on suspected Armenian terrorists who also hold citizenships in those countries. [redacted]

The Turks have requested US training in defensive counterterrorist techniques. A US-Turkish Committee on Armenian Terrorism was formed in 1982 in Ankara to discuss joint cooperation efforts, and the anticipated passage of legislation to fund the protection of foreign consular personnel in the United States may also ease Turkish pressure. [redacted]

Outlook

We believe the fragmentation within ASALA increases the threat of terrorist violence. The splintering of ASALA—as well as the continuing threat from the Justice Commandos—presage a struggle among the groups for support from the Armenian populace. We expect attacks *against Turkish targets* to be the focal point for this struggle. We believe that the failure of the Armenian Congress to renounce terrorist violence may be perceived by the terrorists as a green light to conduct attacks as a means of swaying Armenian public opinion to their cause. US residents, citizens, and property may also be future targets of Armenian terrorist groups, especially if the trend toward indiscriminate violence continues. [redacted]

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Intelligence

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The Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia: A Continuing International Threat

A Research Paper

This paper was prepared by the Terrorism Analysis
Branch, Instability and Insurgency Center, Office of
Global Issues, [redacted] Office of
European Analysis. Comments and queries are
welcome and may be directed to the Chief,
Terrorism Analysis Branch, OGI, [redacted]

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**A Chronology of Armenian Terrorism,
January 1975–December 1983^a (continued)**

Date	Location of Attack	Group/Name Used	Incident Description
6 December	Geneva, Switzerland	NAR	Bombing of Turkish Consulate
12 December	Geneva, Switzerland	ASALA	Bombing of Turkish Airlines office
17 December	Geneva, Switzerland	NAR	Bombing of Turkish Consulate
1979			
January	Madrid, Spain	JCAG	Bombing of British Airways and TWA offices
6 May	Istanbul, Turkey	ASALA	Bombing of a Turkish Airlines trailer
8 July	Paris, France	JCAG	Bombing of Turkish tourism office and Turkish labor attache's office
22 August	Geneva, Switzerland	ASALA	Attempted assassination of Turkish Vice Consul
27 August	Frankfurt, West Germany	ASALA	Bombing of Turkish Airlines office
29 September	Ankara, Turkey	ASALA	Two bombs were found in transit lounge in Esenboga Airport
5 October	Copenhagen, Denmark	ASALA	Bombing of Turkish Airlines office, injuring two
12 October	The Hague, Netherlands	JCAG	Assassination of son of Turkish Ambassador
30 October	Milan, Italy	ASALA	Bombing of Turkish Airlines office
8 November	Rome, Italy	ASALA	Bombing of Turkish Airlines office
18 November	Paris, France	ASALA	Bombing of KLM, Lufthansa, and Turkish Airlines offices, injuring three
26 November	Madrid, Spain	ASALA	Bombing of TWA, Italian airlines, British Airways offices
9 December	Rome, Italy	NAR	Bombing of El Al and British Airways offices, injuring nine
17 December	London, England	ASALA	Bombing of Turkish Airlines office, injuring one
22 December	Amsterdam, Netherlands	JCAG	Bombing of Turkish Airlines office
	Rome, Italy	ASALA	Bombing of a <i>pension</i> housing Armenian emigrants
	Paris, France	Commandos of Armenian Avengers (probably JCAG)	Assassination of Turkish Press attache
23 December	Rome, Italy	ASALA	Bombing of Air France and TWA offices and a small Armenian transit center
December	Istanbul, Turkey	Group not specified	Two bombings at Yesilkoy Airport
1980			
14 January	Paris, France	ASALA	Bombing of Lufthansa Airlines Office
19 January	Spain	JCAG	Bombing of British Airways, TWA, Swissair, and Sabena Airlines offices
1 February	Brussels, Belgium	NAR	Bombing of Aeroflot and Turkish Airlines offices
	Paris, France	NAR	Bombing of Soviet Information Office
6 February	Bern, Switzerland	JCAG	Attempted assassination of Turkish Ambassador
18 February	Rome, Italy	ASALA	Bombing of El Al, Lufthansa, and Swissair offices
10 March	Rome, Italy	ASALA	Bombing of Turkish Airlines office, killing two and wounding 17
17 April	Rome, Italy	JCAG	Attempted assassination of the Turkish Ambassador to the Vatican

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Members of ASALA engaged in
terrorist training in southern
Lebanon. [redacted]



[redacted]

Iran. Although ASALA initially supported Khomeini's revolution, the 1981 execution of two ASALA members in Iran and the recent repression of Armenians there have caused ASALA to reverse its position. According to an Armenian nationalist journal, Khomeini is engaging in religious persecution of Armenians, including the closure of Armenian schools and the imposition of a "non-Islamic" tax on the Armenians. The Armenian Center in Isfahan was attacked by Revolutionary Guards in April 1981—on the anniversary of the genocide observed by Armenians around the world. Since the arrests of 51 Armenians in Paris after the Orly bombing, French installations in Tehran have been the target of several attacks by the Orly Group (an ASALA covername). We suspect these attacks may have been conducted with Iranian approval if not assistance. Franco-Iranian relations have been severely strained in the wake of French Government sanctuary for dissident Iranian hijackers of an Iranian aircraft in July 1983 and the sale of French military equipment to Iraq. [redacted]

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The June 9 Organization began a bombing campaign in Switzerland to free ASALA operative Mardiros Jamgotchian, who was arrested for the murder of a Turkish diplomat in Geneva.

attacks against Switzerland until the trial date of one of the terrorists. Before the expiration of the ASALA deadline, one terrorist was given a suspended sentence, released, and banned from Switzerland for 15 years; shortly after the deadline, the other prisoner was given a suspended sentence and released.

The second Swiss-ASALA confrontation followed the arrest of ASALA operative Mardiros Jamgotchian on 9 June 1981 for the murder of a Turkish consular officer in Geneva. As in the previous case, a group calling itself the June 9 Organization began a bombing campaign against Swiss targets. Shortly after Jamgotchian was sentenced to 15 years in prison on 19 December 1981, ASALA publicly announced that attacks would cease so that it could work out Jamgotchian's release. ASALA indicated that it was declaring the truce in light of "new developments" in the case, presumably the judge's condemnation of the Turkish Government for not officially recognizing the 1915 massacre and his references to the plight of the Armenians.

[redacted] In two subsequent appeals hearings, Jamgotchian's 15-year sentence has been upheld.

The French Connection

France at one time also maintained an informal channel with ASALA. This conduit may have facilitated negotiations after the arrest of the four ASALA members who, on 24 September 1981, seized the Turkish Embassy in Paris and killed a guard in the process. ASALA claimed that the police had promised political asylum for the ASALA members in return for their surrender and publicly gave the French until 22 November 1981 to release the four terrorists. In the absence of French action, ASALA resumed its attacks two days after the deadline. ASALA later announced that it was halting its attacks against French interests because the government had agreed to give the prisoners political status. This "truce" was broken after French authorities arrested Vicken Tcharkhutian in June 1982 for suspected involvement in a bombing in the United States. That summer ASALA conducted two bombings in Paris but halted its attacks once more when the French court refused to extradite Tcharkhutian to the United States. Tcharkhutian was subsequently released from custody and permitted to go to the Middle East. In January 1983 ASALA resumed its activity against Turkish targets in France.

Accommodation With Italy

ASALA has tried to arrange an agreement with Italy to halt the emigration of Armenians from their traditional homelands in the Soviet Union. ASALA called for the closure of all emigration centers in Italy on 22 December 1979 when the group attacked a Rome pension that housed Armenian emigrants. Hagopian claimed in a February 1982 interview that an agreement had been reached under which ASALA

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**Armenian Terrorism:
Types of Attacks**

	Total	Unsuccessful Assassination Attempts	Assassinations	Bombing Incidents	Miscellaneous ^a
Total	203	17	12	161	8
1983	17	2	0	12	3
1982	23	5	2	15	1
1981	53	1	4	44	4
1980	51	2	5	44	0
1979	28	2	1	25	0
1978	14	1	0	13	0
1977	4	1	0	3	0
1976	6	1	0	5	0
1975	7	2	0	5	0

^a Hostage/barricade incidents, grenade/machinegun attacks.

Turks. ASALA's apparent success in working out local accommodations with some European governments and its public statements to this effect may explain Ankara's attitude. The Turkish Government also believes that Armenian assassinations of Turkish diplomats have not received priority police attention. The threat of ASALA reprisals has periodically resulted in suspended sentences or expulsion of the ASALA members from a country. ASALA's public communiques regarding such concessions have heightened Turkish perceptions that some West European governments are sympathetic to the Armenian terrorist cause.

The Swiss Reaction

Swiss authorities may have been influenced by implicit ASALA threats following two separate arrests of ASALA members. On 3 October 1980, two ASALA operatives in Geneva were arrested after a bomb they were assembling detonated. A group calling itself the October 3 Organization immediately began a bombing campaign against the Swiss Government to force the release of the two prisoners. On 1 January 1981, ASALA declared a cessation of

The West European Response

Armenian terrorism has significantly strained Turkey's relations with several West European countries in which Armenian attacks have taken place (see table). In Ankara's view, the West Europeans—particularly the French and the Swiss—are doing far less than they could to thwart Armenian violence against

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**The Armenian Secret Army
for the Liberation of Armenia:
A Continuing International Threat**

Background to Armenian Terrorism

Armenian terrorist groups ostensibly want to create an independent Armenian homeland. Most of the historic Armenian homeland was conquered in the mid-13th century by the Ottoman Turks, who moderated Armenian discontent by the distinctive Ottoman "millet" system. This gave Armenians and other minorities a large measure of independence in exchange for passive political loyalty. Armenians lived in their own communities and practiced their faith and customs under the leadership of the Armenian patriarch. Over time, the ethnic cohesiveness encouraged by the millet system fostered nationalism within the Ottoman Empire. Serbs, Greeks, and Bulgarians, with the assistance of interested Western powers, forged their own identities and agitated for autonomous nation states.

Armenian revolutionary groups at the end of the 19th century sought to establish an independent Armenian state. During World War I, some Armenians in eastern Turkey allied themselves with the Russians in the belief that Russian assistance later would guarantee an independent Armenia. Reported Armenian "fifth column" activities against the hard-pressed Ottoman state led to the deportation of Armenians from eastern Turkey into what is Syria today. Turkish bureaucrats, under imprecise orders, treated local Armenian populations as traitors. During the forced summer march of 1915, tens of thousands of Armenians died en route or were slaughtered by local groups, including Kurdish tribesmen. Estimates of the total death toll range from 600,000 to 1.5 million, providing an emotional rallying point used by Armenian terrorist groups to justify their actions. Today 50,000 of the 60,000 Armenians in Turkey live in Istanbul, which has become the seat of the Armenian Gregorian Church in Turkey and Patriarchate.

Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia

ASALA was formed in January 1975. Its declared goals include "liberation" of traditional Armenian lands—encompassing parts of present-day Turkey, Iran, and the Soviet Union—payment of reparations by the Turkish Government, and public acknowledgment by the Turkish Government of the 1915 genocide. Moreover, in accord with its Marxist-Leninist ideology, ASALA advocates armed struggle to achieve the liberation of Armenia and to further the interests of the exploited classes. ASALA has stated that its revolutionary theory distinguishes it from the other major Armenian terrorist group, the rightwing Justice Commandos for the Armenian Genocide (JCAG).

ASALA appears to be a group of young revolutionaries, most in their twenties and living or having lived in Lebanon. An ASALA terrorist captured in 1982 said that ASALA was organized along military lines into what he called brigades or divisions. Until recently we knew little about the ASALA decisionmaking process or the identities of the leadership core.¹

Apparently a central committee—whose location is unknown—oversees the group's activities.

ASALA originally used support apparatus—overt, legal groups—which, in our view, probably provided surveillance, propaganda, and logistic assistance for ASALA terrorist operations. These support groups—Popular Movements for the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (PMASALA)—were active in Paris, London, and Ottawa.

¹ In 1980 Hagop Hagopian—a common Armenian name, which we believe to be an alias—publicly identified himself as the chief spokesman for ASALA. Although Lebanese press dispatches reported that Hagopian was killed in the Israeli bombing of Beirut on 31 July 1982,

the announcement of Hagopian's death may have been a hoax to allow his escape from Beirut.

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The Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia: A Continuing International Threat

A Research Paper

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A February 1981 press conference with ASALA leader, Hagop Hagopian (hooded figure in center). [redacted]

We believe ASALA did fragment, with some members in France and Syria; however, we suspect a portion of the ASALA membership has remained in Beirut, perhaps in an inactive status. [redacted]

Changing Tactics and Organization

ASALA's tactics—assassinations and bombings—have undergone major changes during the past four years; the most important shift has been ASALA's willingness to attack targets involving non-Turkish victims. In 1979 ASALA began targeting Western interests—especially French and Swiss—in retaliation for arrests of ASALA members. ASALA has also conducted hostage operations—sieges at the Turkish Embassy in Tehran and Paris during 1981—aimed at attracting sustained public attention. A more lethal shift in tactics surfaced in the Orly Airport bombing on 15 July 1983, which killed eight and wounded 55. The bomb, planted in a suitcase, had been intended to explode while the Turkish airliner was in flight, which would have caused scores of casualties. [redacted]

A mid-1982 upsurge in indiscriminate violence by ASALA—using the covername Orly Group—provoked changes within the organization. [redacted]

[redacted] In our view, ASALA jettisoned its support groups because of their reluctance to support ASALA's violent campaign against non-Turkish targets. The discarding of ASALA's support apparatus

resulted in further changes in ASALA's infrastructure. [redacted]

We also believe that there is a parallel Europe-wide effort by ASALA to develop a broad base of support for its political goals. [redacted]

A press release of 28 July announced that the congress had created an Armenian Liberation Organization dedicated to international political efforts to gain an Armenian homeland. Failure by the congress and the new political organization to condemn Armenian terrorist violence may indicate that pro-ASALA delegates control both groups. [redacted]

ASALA's indiscriminate violence has also provoked fragmentation within the terrorist ranks. A new splinter group—the ASALA Revolutionary Movement—was formed in Beirut in August 1983, pledging to continue the armed struggle but only against what they consider legitimate "military targets." We interpret "military targets" to mean Turkish diplomatic and official installations. [redacted]

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**A Chronology of Armenian Terrorism,
January 1975–December 1983^a (continued)**

Date	Location of Attack	Group/Name Used	Incident Description
3 February	Los Angeles, United States	October 3	Bomb discovered at Swiss Consulate
5 February	Paris, France	October 3	Bombing of Air France and TWA offices
22 February	Los Angeles, United States	ASALA	Attempted bombing of Swiss Consulate
	Los Angeles, United States	ASALA	Bombing of carpet store
4 March	Paris, France	ASALA	Assassination of Turkish Economic Counselor
12 March	Tehran, Iran	ASALA	Attempted takeover of Turkish Embassy
2 April	Copenhagen, Denmark	JCAG	Attempted assassination of Turkish Labor Counselor
9 June	Geneva, Switzerland	ASALA	Assassination of Turkish consular officer
13 June	Anaheim, United States	JCAG	Bombing of Anaheim Convention Center
26 June	Los Angeles, United States	June 9	Bombing of Credit-Suisse Bank
28 June	Tehran, Iran	June 9	Bombing of Swissair office
1 July	Baghdad, Iraq	June 9	Bombing of Swissair office
19 July	Bern, Switzerland	June 9	Bombing of Swiss parliament
20 July	Zurich, Switzerland	June 9	Bombing at Zurich International Airport
21 July	Lausanne, Switzerland	June 9	Bombing of a department store
22 July	Geneva, Switzerland	June 9	Bombing at Geneva railway station
	Geneva, Switzerland	June 9	Bombing of Cornavin
11 August	Copenhagen, Denmark	June 9	Bombing of Swissair office
20 August	Paris, France	October 3	Bombing of Alitalia office
	Los Angeles, United States	June 9	Bombing of Swiss watch company
22 August	Paris, France	October 3	Bombing of Olympic Airways
15 September	Copenhagen, Denmark	ASALA	Bombing of Turkish Airlines office (one bomb defused)
16 September	Tehran, Iran	June 9	Bombing of Swiss passport office
24 September	Paris, France	ASALA	Takeover of Turkish Consulate
3 October	Geneva, Switzerland	June 9	Bombing of courthouse and post office
10 October	Hollywood, United States	ASALA	Bombing of the Hollywood Palladium
25 October	Rome, Italy	ASALA	Attempted assassination of Second Secretary at Turkish Embassy
28 October	Paris, France	September France	Bombing of car near Eiffel Tower
29 October	Geneva, Switzerland	June 9	Attempted bombing of United Bank of Switzerland
	Paris, France	September France	Bombing of movie theater
2 November	Madrid, Spain	ASALA	Bombing of Swissair office, injuring four
3 November	Geneva, Switzerland	June 9	Bombing of the Palace of Justice and post office
12 November	Beirut, Lebanon	Orly Group	Bombing of Air France office and French cultural center
13 November	Paris, France	Orly Group	Grenade attack on police car
14 November	Paris, France	Orly Group	Grenade thrown at tourist boats on the Seine

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