

## FINDINGS AND PURPOSE

Pub. L. 114-222, §2, Sept. 28, 2016, 130 Stat. 852, provided that:

“(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

“(1) International terrorism is a serious and deadly problem that threatens the vital interests of the United States.

“(2) International terrorism affects the interstate and foreign commerce of the United States by harming international trade and market stability, and limiting international travel by United States citizens as well as foreign visitors to the United States.

“(3) Some foreign terrorist organizations, acting through affiliated groups or individuals, raise significant funds outside of the United States for conduct directed and targeted at the United States.

“(4) It is necessary to recognize the substantive causes of action for aiding and abetting and conspiracy liability under chapter 113B of title 18, United States Code.

“(5) The decision of the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia in *Halberstam v. Welch*, 705 F.2d 472 (D.C. Cir. 1983), which has been widely recognized as the leading case regarding Federal civil aiding and abetting and conspiracy liability, including by the Supreme Court of the United States, provides the proper legal framework for how such liability should function in the context of chapter 113B of title 18, United States Code.

“(6) Persons, entities, or countries that knowingly or recklessly contribute material support or resources, directly or indirectly, to persons or organizations that pose a significant risk of committing acts of terrorism that threaten the security of nationals of the United States or the national security, foreign policy, or economy of the United States, necessarily direct their conduct at the United States, and should reasonably anticipate being brought to court in the United States to answer for such activities.

“(7) The United States has a vital interest in providing persons and entities injured as a result of terrorist attacks committed within the United States with full access to the court system in order to pursue civil claims against persons, entities, or countries that have knowingly or recklessly provided material support or resources, directly or indirectly, to the persons or organizations responsible for their injuries.

“(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this Act [enacting section 1605B of Title 28, Judiciary and Judicial Procedure, amending this section and section 1605 of Title 28, and enacting provisions set out as notes under this section, section 1 of this title, and section 1605B of Title 28] is to provide civil litigants with the broadest possible basis, consistent with the Constitution of the United States, to seek relief against persons, entities, and foreign countries, wherever acting and wherever they may be found, that have provided material support, directly or indirectly, to foreign organizations or persons that engage in terrorist activities against the United States.”

## EFFECT ON FOREIGN SOVEREIGN IMMUNITIES ACT

Pub. L. 114-222, §4(b), Sept. 28, 2016, 130 Stat. 854, provided that: “Nothing in the amendment made by this section [amending this section] affects immunity of a foreign state, as that term is defined in section 1603 of title 28, United States Code, from jurisdiction under other law.”

## SPECIAL RULE RELATING TO CERTAIN ACTS OF INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

Pub. L. 112-239, div. A, title XII, §1251(c), Jan. 2, 2013, 126 Stat. 2017, provided that: “Notwithstanding section 2335 of title 18, United States Code, as amended by subsection (a), a civil action under section 2333 of such title resulting from an act of international terrorism that occurred on or after September 11, 2001, and before the date that is 4 years before the date of the enact-

ment of this Act [Jan. 2, 2013], may be maintained if the civil action is commenced during the 6-year period beginning on such date of enactment.”

## § 2334. Jurisdiction and venue

(a) GENERAL VENUE.—Any civil action under section 2333 of this title against any person may be instituted in the district court of the United States for any district where any plaintiff resides or where any defendant resides or is served, or has an agent. Process in such a civil action may be served in any district where the defendant resides, is found, or has an agent.

(b) SPECIAL MARITIME OR TERRITORIAL JURISDICTION.—If the actions giving rise to the claim occurred within the special maritime and territorial jurisdiction of the United States, as defined in section 7 of this title, then any civil action under section 2333 of this title against any person may be instituted in the district court of the United States for any district in which any plaintiff resides or the defendant resides, is served, or has an agent.

(c) SERVICE ON WITNESSES.—A witness in a civil action brought under section 2333 of this title may be served in any other district where the defendant resides, is found, or has an agent.

(d) CONVENIENCE OF THE FORUM.—The district court shall not dismiss any action brought under section 2333 of this title on the grounds of the inconvenience or inappropriateness of the forum chosen, unless—

(1) the action may be maintained in a foreign court that has jurisdiction over the subject matter and over all the defendants;

(2) that foreign court is significantly more convenient and appropriate; and

(3) that foreign court offers a remedy which is substantially the same as the one available in the courts of the United States.

(e) CONSENT OF CERTAIN PARTIES TO PERSONAL JURISDICTION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), for purposes of any civil action under section 2333 of this title, a defendant shall be deemed to have consented to personal jurisdiction in such civil action if, regardless of the date of the occurrence of the act of international terrorism upon which such civil action was filed, the defendant—

(A) after the date that is 120 days after the date of the enactment of the Promoting Security and Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act of 2019, makes any payment, directly or indirectly—

(i) to any payee designated by any individual who, after being fairly tried or pleading guilty, has been imprisoned for committing any act of terrorism that injured or killed a national of the United States, if such payment is made by reason of such imprisonment; or

(ii) to any family member of any individual, following such individual's death while committing an act of terrorism that injured or killed a national of the United States, if such payment is made by reason of the death of such individual; or

(B) after 15 days after the date of enactment of the Promoting Security and Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act of 2019—

(i) continues to maintain any office, headquarters, premises, or other facilities or establishments in the United States;

(ii) establishes or procures any office, headquarters, premises, or other facilities or establishments in the United States; or

(iii) conducts any activity while physically present in the United States on behalf of the Palestine Liberation Organization or the Palestinian Authority.

(2) APPLICABILITY.—Paragraph (1) shall not apply to any defendant who ceases to engage in the conduct described in paragraphs (1)(A) and (1)(B) for 5 consecutive calendar years. Except with respect to payments described in paragraph (1)(A), no court may consider the receipt of any assistance by a nongovernmental organization, whether direct or indirect, as a basis for consent to jurisdiction by a defendant.

(3) EXCEPTION FOR CERTAIN ACTIVITIES AND LOCATIONS.—In determining whether a defendant shall be deemed to have consented to personal jurisdiction under paragraph (1)(B), no court may consider—

(A) any office, headquarters, premises, or other facility or establishment used exclusively for the purpose of conducting official business of the United Nations;

(B) any activity undertaken exclusively for the purpose of conducting official business of the United Nations;

(C) any activity involving officials of the United States that the Secretary of State determines is in the national interest of the United States if the Secretary reports to the appropriate congressional committees annually on the use of the authority under this subparagraph;

(D) any activity undertaken exclusively for the purpose of meetings with officials of the United States or other foreign governments, or participation in training and related activities funded or arranged by the United States Government;

(E) any activity related to legal representation—

(i) for matters related to activities described in this paragraph;

(ii) for the purpose of adjudicating or resolving claims filed in courts of the United States; or

(iii) to comply with this subsection; or

(F) any personal or official activities conducted ancillary to activities listed under this paragraph.

(4) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Notwithstanding any other law (including any treaty), any office, headquarters, premises, or other facility or establishment within the territory of the United States that is not specifically exempted by paragraph (3)(A) shall be considered to be in the United States for purposes of paragraph (1)(B).

(5) DEFINED TERM.—In this subsection, the term “defendant” means—

(A) the Palestinian Authority;

(B) the Palestine Liberation Organization;

(C) any organization or other entity that is a successor to or affiliated with the Pal-

estinian Authority or the Palestine Liberation Organization; or

(D) any organization or other entity that—  
(i) is identified in subparagraph (A), (B), or (C); and

(ii) self identifies as, holds itself out to be, or carries out conduct in the name of, the “State of Palestine” or “Palestine” in connection with official business of the United Nations.

(Added Pub. L. 102–572, title X, §1003(a)(4), Oct. 29, 1992, 106 Stat. 4522; amended Pub. L. 115–253, §4(a), Oct. 3, 2018, 132 Stat. 3184; Pub. L. 116–94, div. J, title IX, §903(c)(1), Dec. 20, 2019, 133 Stat. 3083.)

#### REFERENCES IN TEXT

The date of the enactment of the Promoting Security and Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act of 2019, referred to in subsec. (e)(1)(A), (B), is the date of enactment of section 903 of div. J of Pub. L. 116–94, which was approved Dec. 20, 2019.

#### AMENDMENTS

2019—Subsec. (e)(1). Pub. L. 116–94, §903(c)(1)(A), added par. (1) and struck out former par. (1). Prior to amendment, text read as follows: “Except as provided in paragraph (2), for purposes of any civil action under section 2333 of this title, a defendant shall be deemed to have consented to personal jurisdiction in such civil action if, regardless of the date of the occurrence of the act of international terrorism upon which such civil action was filed, the defendant—

“(A) after the date that is 120 days after the date of enactment of this subsection, accepts—

“(i) any form of assistance, however provided, under chapter 4 of part II of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2346 et seq.);

“(ii) any form of assistance, however provided, under section 481 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2291) for international narcotics control and law enforcement; or

“(iii) any form of assistance, however provided, under chapter 9 of part II of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2349bb et seq.); or

“(B) in the case of a defendant benefiting from a waiver or suspension of section 1003 of the Anti-Terrorism Act of 1987 (22 U.S.C. 5202) after the date that is 120 days after the date of enactment of this subsection—

“(i) continues to maintain any office, headquarters, premises, or other facilities or establishments within the jurisdiction of the United States; or

“(ii) establishes or procures any office, headquarters, premises, or other facilities or establishments within the jurisdiction of the United States.”

Subsec. (e)(2). Pub. L. 116–94, §903(c)(1)(B), inserted at end “Except with respect to payments described in paragraph (1)(A), no court may consider the receipt of any assistance by a nongovernmental organization, whether direct or indirect, as a basis for consent to jurisdiction by a defendant.”

Subsec. (e)(3) to (5). Pub. L. 116–94, §903(c)(1)(C), added pars. (3) to (5).

2018—Subsec. (e). Pub. L. 115–253 added subsec. (e).

#### EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2019 AMENDMENT; ABROGATION; CONSTRUCTION; SEVERABILITY

Amendment by Pub. L. 116–94 applicable to any case pending on or after Aug. 30, 2016, with additional rules of construction and abrogation and severability provisions, see section 903(c)(2) and (d) of Pub. L. 116–94, set out in a note under section 2333 of this title.

#### EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2018 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 115–253, §4(b), Oct. 3, 2018, 132 Stat. 3185, provided that: “The amendments made by this section

[amending this section] shall take effect on the date of enactment of this Act [Oct. 3, 2018].”

#### EFFECTIVE DATE

Section applicable to any pending case or any cause of action arising on or after 4 years before Oct. 29, 1992, see section 1003(c) of Pub. L. 102-572, set out as a note under section 2331 of this title.

### § 2335. Limitation of actions

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subject to subsection (b), a suit for recovery of damages under section 2333 of this title shall not be maintained unless commenced within 10 years after the date the cause of action accrued.

(b) **CALCULATION OF PERIOD.**—The time of the absence of the defendant from the United States or from any jurisdiction in which the same or a similar action arising from the same facts may be maintained by the plaintiff, or of any concealment of the defendant’s whereabouts, shall not be included in the 10-year period set forth in subsection (a).

(Added Pub. L. 102-572, title X, §1003(a)(4), Oct. 29, 1992, 106 Stat. 4523; amended Pub. L. 112-239, div. A, title XII, §1251(a), Jan. 2, 2013, 126 Stat. 2017.)

#### AMENDMENTS

2013—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 112-239, §1251(a)(1), substituted “10 years” for “4 years”.

Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 112-239, §1251(a)(2), substituted “10-year period” for “4-year period”.

#### EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2013 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 112-239, div. A, title XII, §1251(b), Jan. 2, 2013, 126 Stat. 2017, provided that: “The amendments made by this section [amending this section] shall apply to any civil action arising under section 2333 of title 18, United States Code, that is pending on, or commenced on or after, the date of the enactment of this Act [Jan. 2, 2013].”

#### EFFECTIVE DATE

Section applicable to any pending case or any cause of action arising on or after 4 years before Oct. 29, 1992, see section 1003(c) of Pub. L. 102-572, set out as a note under section 2331 of this title.

### § 2336. Other limitations

(a) **ACTS OF WAR.**—No action shall be maintained under section 2333 of this title for injury or loss by reason of an act of war.

(b) **LIMITATION ON DISCOVERY.**—If a party to an action under section 2333 seeks to discover the investigative files of the Department of Justice, the Assistant Attorney General, Deputy Attorney General, or Attorney General may object on the ground that compliance will interfere with a criminal investigation or prosecution of the incident, or a national security operation related to the incident, which is the subject of the civil litigation. The court shall evaluate any such objections in camera and shall stay the discovery if the court finds that granting the discovery request will substantially interfere with a criminal investigation or prosecution of the incident or a national security operation related to the incident. The court shall consider the likelihood of criminal prosecution by the Government and other factors it deems to be appropriate. A stay of discovery under this subsection shall con-

stitute a bar to the granting of a motion to dismiss under rules 12(b)(6) and 56 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. If the court grants a stay of discovery under this subsection, it may stay the action in the interests of justice.

(c) **STAY OF ACTION FOR CIVIL REMEDIES.**—(1) The Attorney General may intervene in any civil action brought under section 2333 for the purpose of seeking a stay of the civil action. A stay shall be granted if the court finds that the continuation of the civil action will substantially interfere with a criminal prosecution which involves the same subject matter and in which an indictment has been returned, or interfere with national security operations related to the terrorist incident that is the subject of the civil action. A stay may be granted for up to 6 months. The Attorney General may petition the court for an extension of the stay for additional 6-month periods until the criminal prosecution is completed or dismissed.

(2) In a proceeding under this subsection, the Attorney General may request that any order issued by the court for release to the parties and the public omit any reference to the basis on which the stay was sought.

(Added Pub. L. 102-572, title X, §1003(a)(4), Oct. 29, 1992, 106 Stat. 4523.)

#### REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, referred to in subsec. (b), are set out in the Appendix to Title 28, Judiciary and Judicial Procedure.

#### EFFECTIVE DATE

Section applicable to any pending case or any cause of action arising on or after 4 years before Oct. 29, 1992, see section 1003(c) of Pub. L. 102-572, set out as a note under section 2331 of this title.

### § 2337. Suits against Government officials

No action shall be maintained under section 2333 of this title against—

(1) the United States, an agency of the United States, or an officer or employee of the United States or any agency thereof acting within his or her official capacity or under color of legal authority; or

(2) a foreign state, an agency of a foreign state, or an officer or employee of a foreign state or an agency thereof acting within his or her official capacity or under color of legal authority.

(Added Pub. L. 102-572, title X, §1003(a)(4), Oct. 29, 1992, 106 Stat. 4523.)

#### EFFECTIVE DATE

Section applicable to any pending case or any cause of action arising on or after 4 years before Oct. 29, 1992, see section 1003(c) of Pub. L. 102-572, set out as a note under section 2331 of this title.

### § 2338. Exclusive Federal jurisdiction

The district courts of the United States shall have exclusive jurisdiction over an action brought under this chapter.

(Added Pub. L. 102-572, title X, §1003(a)(4), Oct. 29, 1992, 106 Stat. 4524.)

#### EFFECTIVE DATE

Section applicable to any pending case or any cause of action arising on or after 4 years before Oct. 29, 1992,