For some, the news that Iranian linked operatives came close to perpetrating another terrorist attack in this hemisphere came as a shock. For even more, the mention of Argentina as a secondary target and Mexican drug cartels as an intended conduit was not only shocking but also rather confusing. Is Iran active south of the U.S. border? Are our southern neighbors at risk? The answer to both these questions is a resounding, "Yes!" Prior to the September 11 terror attacks in 2001, the largest terrorist attack on this side of the globe was carried out in Buenos Aires, Argentina when Iran's proxy Hezbollah bombed the Israeli embassy and Jewish community center in 1992 and 1994.These successful terrorist attacks in Buenos Aires that killed a total of 114 people and injured hundreds more, were orchestrated by the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps-Qods Force (IRGC-QF). The IRGC-QF is the same entity that is currently implicated in yesterday's unsuccessful attempt to assassinate the Saudi ambassador residing in Washington D.C. The IRFC-QF or "Qods Force", which is Iran's elite unit within the IRGC and responsible for exporting the Islamic Revolution throughout the world, has engaged in terrorist activity in Latin America for quite some time. The infamous Tri-Border Area (TBA) between Brazil, Argentina and Paraguay has long been considered a safe haven for various Islamic terrorist groups—many of which are funded and supported by the Qods Force of Iran. Of the many Iranians implicated in the attacks during the nineties in Argentina, one individual stands out as having masterminded these attacks—Mohsen Rabbani. Rabbani is the former cultural attaché of the Iranian embassy in Buenos Aires. Rabbani, who now heads the Oriental Thought Cultural Institute in Qom, Iran, currently has an extradition order and red notice from Interpol barring his travel to the region. Yet, Interpol's warnings have not stopped Rabbani from moving in and out of Latin America under false aliases as he visits his brother, who currently resides in Brazil, to help establish recruitment and proselytization operations throughout the region under the guise of "Islamic centers and mosques." In general, Rabbani's recruitment, training and proselytization operations are carried out by Iran's proxy Hezbollah. Through Hezbollah, Rabbani's agenda has been exported throughout Latin America reaching as far north as Mexico. In a recent report by the American Enterprise Institute, former Ambassador Roger Noriega and Jose Cardenas exposed much of Rabbani's network throughout Latin America and tied this to recent reports that Hezbollah was actively engaged with drug cartels in Mexico—sharing technology, tactics and training and most importantly giving Islamic terrorist networks access to the U.S.-Mexican border. As U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder was breaking the news of the foiled terrorist plot from the press office of the U.S. Department of Justice—a few blocks away, the Hudson Institute, a Washington, D.C. based conservative think tank, was holding a small conference on the very timely topic of "Iran and Latin America: What's Next After Chavez?" At this event, former investigative journalist Douglas Farah made the point that the Islamic Revolution in the Middle East and North Africa has gone to bed with the Bolivarian Revolution in Latin

America to take common cause against U.S. hegemony. At this same event, former Ambassador Otto Reich noted that the Iran-Latin America alliance is anchored in the region through a political block known as the "Bolivarian Alliance for the Americas," otherwise known as ALBA, of which Iran (along with Syria) is an observing member. Some may think that an alliance between Iran and ALBA as being odd. However, given the nature of the geopolitical rifts in both the Middle East and Latin America the alliance between Iran and ALBA is not only logical, it has some precedent. In his talk, Farah states that the origins of such a partnership can be traced back to the days of Ilich Ramirez Sánchez, aka "Carlos the Jackal", who had his hand in both pots—radical Islam and Latin American socialism. However, "The Jackal" was not alone as Spain anarchist Jorge Verstringe published a book in Spanish titled "The Peripheral War and Revolutionary Islam" that also captured the common dogma between these two radical anti-American precepts. Verstringe's book was converted into a pocketsize field manual for the Venezuelan armed forces. With such a high volume of terrorist activity taking place in Latin America, it did not come as a shock to those aware of the relationship between Iran and ALBA to hear that the most recent attempt thwarted by U.S. authorities had roots in Latin America and Mexico. For those that have been paying attention to the region, the signs that something was brewing were there for a long time and in fact, this is not the first terrorist attack in recent memory that was neutralized by competent U.S. authorities. While not widely reported in the media, in 2007 the FBI foiled another terrorist plot by an Islamic radical, Kareem Ibrahim, who was arrested for conspiracy to launch a terrorist attack on JFK International airport. He was arrested in Trinidad en route to Venezuela where he was going to board a direct flight to Tehran to meet with none other than Mohsen Rabbani. There is little doubt that Rabbani had a hand in organizing the thwarted attack on JFK International airport. As recently as this past summer senior U.S. security officials and diplomats would have us believe that the threat of Iran's presence in Latin America was overblown. With the news of Tuesday's events, we can no longer afford to be so naïve and must take note that this most recent attempt in Washington D.C. is just a small example of a larger problem blistering in the hemisphere. If the Qods Force was indeed involved in this latest attempt on the Saudi Ambassador to the U.S., than you can be sure that the Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad gave the approval. This calls into question Iran's motives for their rapidly expanding nuclear program, which also has reach into various Latin American countries through a variety of bilateral agreements to conduct mineral exploration, namely in Venezuela, Ecuador and Bolivia. — Three countries that coincidentally have large unexploited uranium deposits that are highly enticing for Iran's nuclear program. We can only hope that the close call that was thwarted and revealed Tuesday afternoon will curb the skeptics and awaken the entire U.S. security and defense community to the lingering threat of the Iran-ALBA axis of terror. For now, we can take pride in the fact that the quiet

professionals of the U.S. law enforcement and intelligence community foiled what could have been the worst terrorist attack in the Western Hemisphere since 9/11. Read original article on Fox News
Opinion: http://www.foxnews.com/opinion/2011/10/12/are-irans-terrorists-finding-safe-haven-in-latin-america/#ixzz2IvhzGqVn