

9/11 Litigation

Summary of the Proceedings

In 2003, Cozen O'Connor filed suit in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York on behalf of dozens of insurers who paid out billions in compensation for property damage and other injuries resulting from the Sept. 11 attacks, seeking to hold accountable alleged material sponsors and supporters of the al Qaeda terrorist organization. Several thousand family members of those killed in the attacks and injured survivors also filed parallel suits. The lawsuits were consolidated into a multi-district litigation proceeding captioned *In Re Terrorist Attacks on September 11, 2001*, Civil Action No. 03-MDL-1570. Cozen O'Connor was appointed by the Court to Co-Chair the Executive Committee established to prosecute the litigation on behalf of all plaintiffs.

Among other claims advanced in the sprawling litigation, the 9/11 families and victims have alleged that agents and employees of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia provided assistance to certain of the 9/11 hijackers and plotters. The 9/11 plaintiffs have further alleged that al Qaeda's development into a sophisticated terrorist organization was fueled principally by financial and operational support from "da'wa organizations" established and sponsored by the Saudi government – commonly described as alleged "charities."

The case has been pending for more than a decade. The procedural history is labyrinth. There are more than 3,000 docket entries or court filings, all of which are readily available to the public in the form of PDFs linked to the docket entries at pacer.gov.

After recent months of intense advocacy by the families of the victims, the Senate is nearing a vote on a bill to deter terrorism, provide justice for victims, and for other purposes. The Act, known as the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act or JASTA, would clarify existing law by confirming that foreign states do not enjoy sovereign immunity in cases arising from their alleged involvement in a terrorist attack on U.S. soil, and must instead answer the evidence on the merits.

The purpose of the Act 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. The bill does not determine liability in any way – it merely provides that U.S. courts have jurisdiction to hear the claims.

But, the stakes are high. According to the New York Times, the White House told members of Congress that the Kingdom had to dispose of \$750 billion of its U.S. assets if JASTA becomes law, a threat economists thereafter described as implausible and hollow, and from which the White House then retreated. Pressure is also growing on our government to release the still classified "28 pages" of a 2002 Report of the Congressional Joint Inquiry concerning evidence of possible Saudi involvement in the attacks, as well as documents pertaining to the further investigation of the separate 9/11 Commission into the issue. John Lehman, former Secretary of the Navy under President Reagan and member of the 9/11 Commission in a sworn Affirmation filed in the MDL (#2927-3 on the docket) said: "In my view, the release of those pages would in no way implicate or harm our national security interest. To the contrary, I believe the disclosure of those 28 pages of the Joint Inquiry report would greatly assist policymakers and the public in better understanding many of the threats we now confront."



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Related Practice Areas

2nd Circ. Tosses Sudan's Appeal Over 9/11 Immunity Denial

Sean P. Carter was quoted in the Law360 article "2nd Circ. Tosses Sudan's Appeal Over 9/11 Immunity Denial" by Law360. More

Cozen O'Connor Named Law Firm of the Year by The Legal Intelligencer

The Legal Intelligencer highlighted the firm's many legal victories as its reason for the honor, including our recent victory before the U.S. Supreme Court, closing \$510 million sale of a longtime client, and our win in the Second

▪ [Circuit on behalf of the 9/11 families. More](#)

Judge Rejects Saudi Arabia's Attempt to Toss 9/11 Lawsuits

Sean Carter was quoted in an article discussing a judge's decision to reject Saudi Arabia's motion to end a New York lawsuit seeking to hold it responsible in the Sept. 11 attacks. [More](#)

Cozen Says Release of 28 Pages a Boost for 9/11 Suit

Stephen Cozen spoke with The Legal Intelligencer following Congress's release of the previously classified 28 pages of the 2009 9/11 Commission Report. [More](#)

Congress Releases 28 Classified Pages of its 9/11 Inquiry

On July 15, Congress released 28 classified pages from its 2002 inquiry into the Sept. 11 attacks. Cozen O'Connor is spearheading ground breaking litigation against Saudi Arabia and others, for the events of 9/11. [More](#)

Obstacles in the 9/11 Suit Against the Saudis

Sean Carter discusses some obstacles in the 9/11 case against the kingdom. [More](#)

Sean Carter Discusses the Passing of Bill Letting Americans Sue Saudi Arabia Over 9/11

Sean Carter discusses the recent passing of the Senate bill that expands the ability of U.S. citizens to sue the government of Saudi Arabia for its alleged role in the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. [More](#)

The American Lawyer Discusses U.S. Senate Passing Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act

Sean Carter, a member of Cozen O'Connor, anticipates the bill will pass the house and the president won't veto a "veto-proof bill." Once the law is passed, Sean will seek summary remand from the district court. [More](#)

Cozen O'Connor's Sean Carter on 60 Minutes Discussing 9/11 Case

Cozen O'Connor attorney, Sean Carter, appeared in CBS's weekly news magazine, 60 Minutes in its segment on the "28 pages" concerning classified evidence of possible Saudi involvement in the 9/11 attacks. [More](#)

Sean Carter Speaks on Senate Bill that Makes it Easier For 9/11 Victims to Sue Foreign Governments

Sean Carter discusses the Senate bill aimed largely at the government of Saudi Arabia and Persian Gulf terrorism funders, which makes easier for victims, family members and insurance companies to sue terror attack affiliated entities. [More](#)

Sean Carter Discusses the Issue of 9/11 Documents Being Withheld by

Government Entities in The News & Observer

Sean Carter evaluates the issue of government entities covering up crucial 9/11 documents from the general public including victim's families 14 years after the attack in The News & Observer. [More](#)

Sean Carter Discusses Lawsuit Revealing Secret Saudi Connection to 9/11 in the New York Post

Sean Carter discusses leads tying Saudi officials to some of the Saudi hijackers of 9/11 explaining investigators felt they documented a direct link between the Saudi government and the 9/11 terror plot. [More](#)

Cozen O'Connor's Interview with Al Qaeda Operative Renews Focus on Saudi Arabia and 9/11

Cozen O'Connor attorneys recently interviewed imprisoned former Al Qaeda operative, Zacarias Moussaoui, after Moussaoui wrote to the presiding judge requesting the opportunity to testify in the 9/11 lawsuit against Saudi Arabia. In his sworn statement to Cozen O'Connor attorneys at the "Supermax" prison in Colorado, Moussaoui testified that prominent members of Saudi Arabia's royal family were donors to bin Laden's terrorist organization in the late 1990s. His testimony has sparked renewed interest in the evidence Cozen O'Connor has developed in support of the claims against the desert Kingdom. [More](#)

Appeals Court Revives 9/11 Victims' Case Against Saudi Arabia

As reported by various news outlets including the Chicago Tribune, a U.S. Appeals Court revived the case of the families of victims of 9/11 against Saudi Arabia, reversing a lower court's ruling that dismissed the claims in 2005. The decision in the 2nd Circuit follows 2011 decision that allowed similar claims to proceed against Afghanistan. [More](#)

9/11 Case Back In the News

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Special Report: Suing the Saudis - How Cozen took on a kingdom for 9/11 liability [Philadelphia Inquirer]

Special Report: Suing the Saudis - How Cozen took on a kingdom for 9/11 liability - Philadelphia Inquirer - On the morning of Sept 11, 2001, Stephen Cozen huddled with expert witnesses in a seventh-floor conference room of his Center City law firm preparing for what promised to be a bare-knuckle trial over a string of soured movie deals. [More](#)