

Kuwait: Counterterrorism measures introduced amid Iran war endanger fundamental rights, expand death penalty

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A counterterrorism law enacted in Kuwait in the wake of Iranian strikes on the Gulf, following the unlawful US-Israeli attacks on Iran, contains overly broad and vague provisions that threaten the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, association and movement, while significantly expanding the scope of the death penalty, Amnesty International said today.

On 15 March 2026, the Emir of Kuwait issued Decree-Law No. 47 of 2026 on Combating Terrorism Crimes, which adopts an overly broad and vague definition of 'terrorist' acts. The counterterrorism law forms part of a sweeping package of legal and judicial measures introduced in March 2026 shortly after the Iran war began in the name of "countering terrorism". Measures include the establishment of a specialized prosecution branch and specially designated courts for terrorism-related charges, as well as significantly expanding the scope of the death penalty for "terrorist acts."

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