

## Ban OKd on peaceful aid to terror groups

WASHINGTON – Americans can face potential criminal charges for supporting the political and humanitarian efforts of foreign groups listed as terror organizations, the Supreme Court ruled yesterday.

The court decided 6-3 that the government has the power to ban all forms of aid to more than 40 groups on the State Department's list of terror organizations, even if the "material support" involves peaceful and legal activities.

In his majority opinion, Chief Justice John Roberts wrote that "such support frees up other resources within the organization that may be put to violent ends."

The law was challenged by individuals who wanted to help the Kurdistan Workers Party in Turkey and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam in Sri Lanka.

Justices Sonia Sotomayor, Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Stephen Breyer dissented, and Breyer took the unusual step of reading his dissent aloud.

The Obama administration supports the law. Solicitor General Elena Kagan – President Obama's next choice for the Supreme Court – argued the government's case.

Civil liberties groups objected to the ruling. "In the name of fighting terrorism, the court has said that the First Amendment permits Congress to make human rights advocacy and peacemaking a crime," said David Cole, a lawyer with the [Center for Constitutional Rights](#).

**Richard Sisk**

