Country Reports on Terrorism 2017

September 2018

United States Department of State Publication
Bureau of Counterterrorism
Released September 2018

Country Reports on Terrorism 2017 is submitted in compliance with Title 22 of the United States Code, Section 2656f (the "Act"), which requires the Department of State to provide to Congress a full and complete annual report on terrorism for those countries and groups meeting the criteria of the Act.

COUNTRY REPORTS ON TERRORISM 2017

Table of Contents

Foreword

Chapter 1 – Country Reports on Terrorism

AFRICA
Overview
Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership
Partnership for Regional East Africa Counterterrorism
Burkina Faso
Cameroon
Chad
Djibouti
Eritrea
Ethiopia
Kenya
Mali
Mauritania
Niger
Nigeria
Senegal
Somalia
South Africa
Tanzania
Uganda

EAST ASIA and PACIFIC
Overview
Australia
China
Indonesia
Malaysia
Philippines
Singapore
Thailand

EUROPE
Overview
Albania
Austria
Azerbaijan
Belgium

Bosnia and Herzegovina
Bulgaria
Cyprus
Denmark
France
Georgia
Germany
Greece
Italy
Kosovo
Macedonia
The Netherlands
Norway
Russia
Serbia
Spain
Sweden
Turkey
United Kingdom

THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA
Overview
Algeria
Bahrain
Egypt
Iraq
Israel, Golan Heights, West Bank, and Gaza
Jordan
Kuwait
Lebanon
Libya
Morocco
Oman
Qatar
Saudi Arabia
Tunisia
United Arab Emirates
Yemen

SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA
Overview
Afghanistan
Bangladesh
India
Kazakhstan
Kyrgyz Republic

Maldives
Nepal
Pakistan
Sri Lanka
Tajikistan
Turkmenistan
Uzbekistan

WESTERN HEMISPHERE
Overview
Argentina
Brazil
Canada
Colombia
Mexico
Panama
Paraguay
Peru
Trinidad and Tobago
Venezuela

Chapter 2 – State Sponsors of Terrorism
Democratic People's Republic of Korea
Iran
Sudan
Syria

Chapter 3 – The Global Challenge of Chemical, Biological, Radiological, or Nuclear (CBRN) Terrorism

Chapter 4. Terrorist Safe Havens **(Update to 7120 Report)**
Terrorist Safe Havens
- Africa
- Southeast Asia
- Middle East and North Africa
- South Asia
- Western Hemisphere

Countering Terrorism on the Economic Front
Multilateral Efforts to Counter Terrorism
Long-Term Programs and Initiatives Designed to Counter Terrorist Safe Havens
- Countering Violent Extremism
- Civilian Counterterrorism Capacity Building Programs

Support for Pakistan
Counterterrorism Coordination with Saudi Arabia
Broadcasting Board of Governors Initiatives: Outreach to Foreign Muslim Audiences
Visas for Participants in United States Programs

Basic Education in Muslim Countries
Economic Reform in Muslim Majority Countries

Chapter 5 – Foreign Terrorist Organizations

Abdallah Azzam Brigades (AAB)
Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG)
Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade (AAMB)
Ansar al-Dine (AAD)
Ansar al-Islam (AAI)
Ansar al-Shari'a in Benghazi (AAS-B)
Ansar al-Shari'a in Darnah (AAS-D)
Ansar al-Shari'a in Tunisia (AAS-T)
Army of Islam (AOI)
Asbat al-Ansar (AAA)
Aum Shinrikyo (AUM)
Basque Fatherland and Liberty (ETA)
Boko Haram (BH)
Communist Party of Philippines/New People's Army (CPP/NPA)
Continuity Irish Republican Army (CIRA)
Gama'a al-Islamiyya (IG)
Hamas
Haqqani Network (HQN)
Harakat ul-Jihad-i-Islami (HUJI)
Harakat ul-Jihad-i-Islami/Bangladesh (HUJI-B)
Harakat ul-Mujahideen (HUM)
Hizballah
Hizbul Mujahedeen (HM)
Indian Mujahedeen (IM)
Islamic Jihad Union (IJU)
Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU)
Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)
Islamic State's Khorasan Province (ISIS-K)
ISIL-Libya
ISIS Sinai Province (ISIS-SP)
Jama'atu Ansarul Muslimina Fi Biladis-Sudan (Ansaru)
Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM)
Jaysh Rijal Al-Tariq Al-Naqshabandi (JRTN)
Jemaah Ansharut Tauhid (JAT)
Jemaah Islamiya (JI)
Jundallah
Kahane Chai
Kata'ib Hizballah (KH)
Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK)
Lashkar e-Tayyiba (LeT)
Lashkar i Jhangvi (LJ)

Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE)
Mujahidin Shura Council in the Environs of Jerusalem (MSC)
Al-Mulathamun Battalion (AMB)
National Liberation Army (ELN)
Al-Nusrah Front (ANF)
Palestine Islamic Jihad (PIJ)
Palestine Liberation Front – Abu Abbas Faction (PLF)
Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)
Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC)
Al-Qa'ida (AQ)
Al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP)
Al-Qa'ida in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS)
Al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)
Real IRA (RIRA)
Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC)
Revolutionary People's Liberation Party/Front (DHKP/C)
Revolutionary Struggle (RS)
Al-Shabaab (AS)
Shining Path (SL)
Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP)

Chapter 6 – Legislative Requirements and Key Terms

Foreword

The United States and our international partners made major strides to defeat and degrade international terrorist organizations in 2017. We succeeded in liberating nearly all of the territory ISIS once held in Iraq and Syria. We increased pressure on al-Qa'ida to prevent its resurgence. We amplified efforts to expose and curtail Hizballah's malign activities inside Lebanon, in the Middle East, and across the globe. We worked with allies and partners around the world to expand information sharing, improve aviation security, enhance law enforcement and rule of law capacities, and prevent terrorist recruitment and recidivism.

Despite our successes, the terrorist landscape grew more complex in 2017. ISIS, al-Qa'ida, and their affiliates have proven to be resilient, determined, and adaptable, and they have adjusted to heightened counterterrorism pressure in Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, Libya, Somalia, Yemen, and elsewhere. They have become more dispersed and clandestine, turning to the internet to inspire attacks by distant followers, and, as a result, have made themselves less susceptible to conventional military action. Further, the return or relocation of foreign terrorist fighters from the battlefield has contributed to a growing cadre of experienced, sophisticated, and connected terrorist networks, which can plan and execute terrorist attacks.

As ISIS lost territory, it continued to shift away from a centralized command and control structure toward a more diffuse model. It has experimented with and employed small unmanned aerial systems and has used rudimentary chemical weapons. The group encouraged sympathizers to use whatever weapons were at hand – such as large vehicles – against soft targets and public spaces. Increasingly, the responsibility for deciding where, when, and how to attack has devolved to homegrown terrorists inspired or enabled by ISIS to conduct operations far from the war zone. In 2017, we saw such attacks in Manchester, UK; Barcelona, Spain; Sinai, Egypt; Marawi, Philippines; New York City; and elsewhere.

Al-Qa'ida quietly expanded its membership and operations in 2017. Its global network includes the remnants of its core in Afghanistan and Pakistan, al-Nusrah Front (in Syria), al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula, al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb, al-Shabaab (in Somalia), and al-Qa'ida in the Indian Subcontinent. Nusrah's formation of Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, drawing in other hardline Syrian opposition groups, exemplified its effort to rebrand itself to appeal to a wider segment of the Syrian population. Al-Qa'ida affiliates also conducted major attacks, such as in October 2017, when al-Shabaab detonated a truck bomb in the heart of Mogadishu, killing over 300 people, the deadliest terrorist attack in Somali history. Al-Qa'ida leader Ayman al-Zawahiri continued to publicly call for supporters to attack the U.S. government and citizens globally.

Iran remained the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism and continued to support attacks against Israel. It maintained its terrorist-related and destabilizing activities through the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) Qods Force and the Lebanon-based terrorist group Hizballah. Iran is responsible for intensifying multiple conflicts and undermining the legitimate governments of, and U.S. interests in, Afghanistan, Bahrain, Iraq, Lebanon, and Yemen. In particular, Iran and Hizballah are emerging from the Syria conflict emboldened and with valuable battlefield experience that they seek to leverage across the globe. IRGC leader Qasem Soleimani recruited and deployed Shia militias from diverse ethnic groups across the Middle

East and South Asia to fight in defense of the Assad dictatorship in Syria. Beyond the Middle East, Iran and its terrorist affiliates and proxies posed a significant threat and demonstrated a near-global terrorist reach. Notably, in June 2017, the FBI arrested two suspected Hizballah operatives in Michigan and New York who allegedly were conducting surveillance and intelligence gathering on behalf of the organization, including in the United States.

Regionally-focused terrorists groups remained a threat in 2017. For example, Hamas continued to rebuild its military infrastructure and capabilities to support terrorist attacks against Israel. Additionally, Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammed and Lashkar e-Tayyiba continued to pose a regional threat in the subcontinent. Some regional and local terrorist groups have avoided greater international attention by remaining independent from ISIS and al-Qa'ida while others may have concluded that the benefits of greater expertise, resources, and prominence outweighed the risks of a formal connection with a notorious transnational terrorist network.

In short, the nature of the terrorist threat confronting the United States and our allies around the world evolved in 2017. While the immediate dynamics that led terrorists to flock to Iraq and Syria since 2014 have diminished, other factors that terrorists exploit to recruit new followers remained a challenge, such as sectarianism, failing states, and conflict zones. More than ever, it remains a critical priority for the United States and our allies to defeat our terrorist adversaries.

*****

In 2017, the United States led efforts to enhance the international community's law enforcement and other civilian capabilities that are increasingly essential in the next phase of global counterterrorism. In December, with U.S. leadership, the UN Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2396, with 66 co-sponsors. UN Security Council resolution (UNSCR) 2396 requires member states to collect airline reservation data to block terrorist travel, to develop watchlists of known and suspected terrorists, and to use biometrics to spot terrorists who might be trying to cross their borders. The resolution also calls on UN members to enact serious criminal offenses that will enable them to prosecute and penalize terrorists who have returned from the battlefield.

In addition, throughout 2017, the State Department led bilateral diplomatic efforts with key countries to improve border and aviation security and information sharing. We increased the number of Homeland Security Presidential Directive 6 (HSPD-6) arrangements to share information about known and suspected terrorists by almost 15 percent in 2017. Our total number of HSPD-6 partners now stands at 69, including all 38 members of the Visa Waiver Program. The United States also deployed the latest border security systems to key counterterrorism partners, provided screening technology and training, and worked to expand global engagement on transportation-related threats. Border security support through the Personal Identification Secure Comparison and Evaluation Systems (PISCES) expanded to 260 ports of entry in 23 countries.

We also used foreign assistance resources to enable our partners to better identify, deter, disrupt, apprehend, prosecute, and convict terrorists and their supporters. Our goal is for partners to be able to confront the terrorist threats they face themselves without turning to the United States for

assistance. We placed special emphasis on helping partner countries enact appropriate legal frameworks to bring criminal charges against terrorist offenders. At the end of 2017, 70 countries had laws in place to prosecute and penalize foreign terrorist fighters, and 69 had prosecuted or arrested foreign terrorist fighters or their facilitators.

The United States also worked to stanch the flow of money to terrorist networks by designating 30 organizations and individuals as Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTOs) and/or Specially Designated Global Terrorists (SDGTs). This included top ISIS and al-Qa'ida leaders and operatives. The State Department also continued to expose and sanction states that back terrorism. We designated the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as a State Sponsor of Terrorism in 2017, and also designated key Hizballah figures as SDGTs as we pushed back on Iranian support for terrorism across the globe.

These efforts are only a snapshot of our ongoing work to protect the United States, our allies, and interests from terrorism. *Country Reports on Terrorism 2017* provides a more detailed review of last year's successes and challenges so we can consider how to strengthen our counterterrorism efforts going forward. As we look to the rest of 2018 and beyond, the United States remains committed to working with our allies and partners to confront the shared threat of global terrorism. I hope this report will serve as a useful resource for those seeking to better understand this threat and our efforts to defeat it.

Ambassador Nathan A. Sales
Coordinator for Counterterrorism

Chapter 1 – Country Reports

AFRICA

Overview

African countries expanded their efforts to develop regional counterterrorism solutions while they struggled to contain the expansion of terrorist groups, affiliates, and aspirants involved in attacks or other activities in 2017. In East Africa, the Somalia-based terrorist group al-Shabaab continued to threaten regional security. It retained safe haven, access to recruits and resources, and de facto control over large parts of Somalia through which it moves freely. Similar to 2015 and 2016, however, al-Shabaab did not claim any attacks outside of Somalia and northeastern Kenya in 2017. In October, the group was blamed but did not claim responsibility for the deadliest terrorist attack in Somalia's history, despite having lost a number of operatives to counterterrorism operations in the months prior. Northeastern Kenya experienced a significant increase in activity attributed to al-Shabaab, primarily in the form of improvised explosive device attacks targeting Kenyan security forces and vehicles transporting civilians. Al-Shabaab maintained its allegiance to al-Qa'ida, remaining intent on limiting the influence and reach of the northern Somalia-based group of ISIS-linked fighters responsible for local suicide bombings and other attacks against Somali security forces.

The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and Somali security forces increased cooperation with the United States to exert pressure on al-Shabaab, primarily through coordinated counterterrorism operations in southern Somalia. The United States continued to support East African partners in their efforts to build counterterrorism capacity, including in the areas of aviation and border security, advisory assistance for regional security forces, training and mentoring of law enforcement to conduct investigations and manage crisis response, and advancing criminal justice sector reforms. East African partners undertook efforts to develop and expand regional cooperation mechanisms to interdict terrorist travel and other illicit activities.

In the Lake Chad region, Boko Haram and its offshoot ISIS-West Africa (ISIS-WA) increased asymmetric attacks against civilians, government, and security forces, which resulted in deaths, injuries, abductions, and destruction of property. Nigeria, along with its neighbors Cameroon, Chad, and Niger – often through the Multinational Joint Task Force – worked to counter these threats. These countries also responded to the ongoing and devastating humanitarian crisis, protected civilians, and restored governance and rule of law in the affected areas. The United States continued to provide advisors, intelligence, training, logistical support, and equipment to Lake Chad region countries and supported a wide range of stabilization efforts. Continued attacks by Boko Haram and ISIS-WA have caused nearly 2.5 million displaced people in Nigeria. Approximately 8.5 million people in Nigeria alone require humanitarian assistance.

In the Sahel, terrorist groups – including affiliates and adherents of al-Qa'ida and ISIS – have expanded their operations in central Mali and the Tri-Border Region of Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger. In response, the African Union Peace and Security Council authorized a new G-5 Sahel Joint Force in April 2017, comprising military and police forces from Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali,

Mauritania, and Niger. The Joint Force began operations in late 2017 along the shared border to interdict the flow of terrorist groups and criminal trafficking.

TRANS-SAHARA COUNTERTERRORISM PARTNERSHIP

Established in 2005, the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP) is a U.S.-funded and -implemented, multi-faceted, multi-year effort designed to build the counterterrorism capacity and cooperation of military, law enforcement, and civilian actors across North and West Africa. TSCTP partners include Algeria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, and Tunisia. TSCTP has built capacity and cooperation despite setbacks caused by a restive political climate, terrorism, ethnic rebellions, and extra-constitutional actions that interrupted work and progress with select partner countries.

Regional cooperation, a strategic objective of U.S. assistance programming globally, continues to improve in West and Central Africa among most of the partners of the TSCTP. Lake Chad region governments in Cameroon, Chad, Niger, and Nigeria remained actively engaged in countering Boko Haram and ISIS-West Africa, including coordinating forces with Benin to form the Multinational Joint Task Force. In the Sahel, regional partners Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger formed the G-5 Sahel Joint Force to combat al Qa'ida and ISIS elements operating primarily in northern Mali and in the Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger Tri-Border Region. The United States added four Sahel states to the Counterterrorism Partnerships Fund in 2016 – Cameroon, Chad, Niger, and Senegal – which provided comprehensive assistance to targeted partners. This funding is also complementary to the efforts of TSCTP and seeks to produce tangible results in a range of counterterrorism-related fields.

PARTNERSHIP FOR REGIONAL EAST AFRICA COUNTERTERRORISM

First established in 2009, the Partnership for Regional East Africa Counterterrorism (PREACT) is a U.S.-funded and -implemented framework designed to build counterterrorism capacity and cooperation between military, law enforcement, and civilian actors across East Africa. PREACT serves as a coordination mechanism for the U.S government's regional counterterrorism programming to help partners enhance criminal justice, defense, and financial sector reform. PREACT programming complements the U.S. government's assistance by promoting collaborative training environments and mentorship initiatives that emphasize respect for human rights, the rule of law, and good governance.

Through PREACT, the United States supports joint training exercises for Kenyan, Tanzanian, and Ugandan first responders and law enforcement professionals as part of a broader effort to encourage regional coordination and cooperation, protect shared borders, and respond to terrorist incidents responsibly and effectively. Active PREACT partners include Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Tanzania, and Uganda. Inactive members of PREACT are Burundi, Comoros, Rwanda, Seychelles, South Sudan, and Sudan; they did not receive PREACT assistance in 2017.

BURKINA FASO

Overview: Burkina Faso experienced a slow but steady increase in terrorist activity in 2017, including numerous cross-border attacks in its northernmost region bordering Mali. The Government of Burkina Faso has made numerous arrests of terrorist suspects, augmented the size of its special terrorism detachment *Groupement des Forces Anti-Terroristes* (GFAT) in the country's north, and joined the newly-created G-5 Sahel Joint Force to fight terrorism and criminal trafficking groups with regional neighbors Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger.

In 2017, the Sahara Branch of al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb, al-Murabitoun, Ansar al-Dine, and the Macina Liberation Front came together to form Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM). JNIM and other groups like Ansarul Islam and ISIS in the Greater Sahara are all known to operate in Burkina Faso.

The French military's Operation Barkhane continued its integrated counterterrorism mission for the Sahel region. Cooperating with Malian forces, Barkhane sought to degrade terrorist elements in northern and central Mali, particularly JNIM.

Terrorist organizations successfully recruited marginalized, poor, and historically disadvantaged Fulani inhabitants. Burkinabe security forces have been accused of torture, extrajudicial killings, burning of property, and arbitrary detention in their response to terrorism in the north. The Government of Burkina Faso has opened an investigation into these allegations, which was ongoing at year's end. We refer you to the State Department's *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* and *Report on International Religious Freedom* for further information.

The United States was in the process of implementing USAFRICOM's U.S. $5.6 million program to build upon a previously Trans Sahara Counter Terrorism Partnership (TSCTP)-funded Gendarmerie border security program in the northern region of Burkina Faso. In 2017, the United States pledged US $30 million for the Burkinabe military to equip its security components of the G-5 Sahel Joint Force and another US $30 million for the other G-5 countries for a total of US $60 million.

Additionally, TSCTP funded US $6 million in other security assistance programs to reinforce security at the airbase in Ouagadougou and equip the Gendarme Special Intervention Unit with radios, body armor, and ballistic shields. It will also make improvements to the peacekeeping training center in Loumbila.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: Approximately 50 attacks that took place mainly in Burkina Faso's northernmost region along the border with Mali were believed to be terrorist-related. Attacks have included targeted killings, kidnappings, improvised explosive devices (IEDs), and attacks on security outposts, police stations, and barracks. Attacks using IEDs were witnessed for the first time in 2017 and targeted Burkinabe security forces and civilians. The deadliest attack occurred on August 17, when an IED detonated under a military vehicle patrolling the Djibo area, causing three deaths and seriously injuring two. Attacks have also targeted Burkinabe government officials, schools, and markets. On November 17, in the village of Taouremba, six heavily armed individuals on motorcycles conducted a targeted attack on a municipal councilor in the town market that resulted in the death of 10 individuals.

The largest attack in Burkina Faso took place on August 13 in Ouagadougou at the Aziz Istanbul Café, a Turkish-owned restaurant frequented by expatriates. Two armed gunmen wounded 25 and killed approximately 19 people, including 10 Burkinabe and nine foreigners. Two of the foreigners were Kuwaiti – one of whom was imam of the Kuwaiti Great Mosque, Dr. Waleed Al-Ali. Both were in Burkina Faso for a charitable mission.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: In 2017, Burkina Faso began making changes to its legal framework. In January, lawmakers created a Special Judicial Interagency working group based on best practices across the region that will have jurisdiction over terrorism-related legal cases. However, it was not fully operational by the end of 2017.

Approximately 22 judicial investigations linked to attacks committed against civilians and security forces were ongoing at the end of 2017. Some of the cases started on the basis of citizen claims that someone was a terrorist or suspected of belonging to terrorist groups. Many cases stagnated while awaiting information from neighboring countries. Burkina Faso has not yet brought to trial any of the approximately 150 alleged terrorists detained in Burkina Faso's High Security Prison, opened in 2014.

Burkinabe security and law enforcement officials continued to cite border security as a major area of concern. Burkina Faso's Counterterrorism Strategy, Mission de Securitization du Nord, strives to address terrorist activities along its northern border. To accomplish this, Burkina Faso operationalized and deployed a joint Army-Gendarmerie-Police counterterrorism task force known as the Groupement des Forces Anti-Terroristes (GFAT) in January 2013. This force's level has increased from 500 troops in 2016 to 1,600 troops in 2017 in an effort to counter the growing terrorist threat.

Burkina Faso relies on the Terrorist Interdiction Program's Personal Identification Secure Comparison and Evaluation System (PISCES), and uses International Organization for Migration-provided screening equipment and software to conduct traveler screening and watchlisting.

The Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance program provided workshops on cross-border security, crisis management, criminal justice procedures, and prosecution of terrorists. This included an Advanced Rural Border Patrol course and Border Unit mentorship to assist Burkina Faso in securing its borders. The United States partnered with the UN Office for Drugs and Crime for a program on Burkina Faso's legal framework to counter terrorism.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Burkina Faso is a member of the Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA), a Financial Action Task Force-style body. Burkina Faso's financial intelligence unit (*Cellule Nationale de Traitement des Informations Financières* – CENTIF) tracks terrorist financing, but had not tried any cases by year's end. In 2017, the Minister of Territory Office of Public Freedoms and Associations took responsibility for terrorism financing from the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 2017, CENTIF required non-profit organizations to declare their funding sources. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018*

International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): The Burkinabe government launched the Sahel Emergency Plan in 2017 to strengthen the role of government, enhance community law enforcement, and generate economic opportunities in its Sahel region. Burkina Faso did not have programs to rehabilitate or reintegrate terrorists into mainstream society.

The U.S. Agency for International Development's CVE programming included a regional messaging project, called Voices for Peace, which counters terrorist narratives through radio programs and social media. It also includes an effort called Partnerships for Peace to strengthen the capacity of the national government, civil society organizations, and regional organizations – G-5 Sahel and the Economic Community of West African States – to counter violent extremism and a research initiative to identify the conditions terrorists exploit for recruitment in local communities.

Regional and International Cooperation: Burkina Faso participates in the G-5 Sahel Joint Force and provides forces to improve security along shared borders to interdict the flow of terrorist groups and criminal trafficking. Burkina Faso maintains two peacekeeping battalions in Mali as part of the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali.

CAMEROON

Overview: In 2017, Cameroon experienced significant terrorist activity in the Far North Region. The Government of Cameroon attributed the violence to Boko Haram as opposed to ISIS-West Africa (ISIS-WA). Lake Chad region governments and media rarely make a distinction between Boko Haram and ISIS-WA and instead generally refer to both groups as Boko Haram. Boko Haram continued to regularly carry out attacks in Cameroon, primarily through the use of suicide bombers, while ISIS-WA attacked less frequently, targeting military outposts and generally refraining from killing civilians.

Countering terrorist threats remained a top security priority for the Government of Cameroon. It continued its cooperation with the international community, remained a member of the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership, contributed significantly to operations of the Multinational Joint Task Force, and continued to work with the United States to improve the capacity of its security forces.

The Cameroonian government began formulating a reintegration plan for former Boko Haram fighters for the first time in 2017. On October 20, four ex-terrorists who claimed to have defected from Boko Haram were allowed to return to their village in Tolkomari. Although local residents expressed skepticism, the government declared it was the state's duty to protect them and treat them with respect. Although efforts to institutionalize formal defections and reintegration policies were nascent, the government announced that a permanent location for ex-combatants in Zamai would serve as a de-radicalization and re-socialization center.

Cameroon joined the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS in 2017.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: Boko Haram continued to take advantage of weaknesses in Cameroon's border security to conduct terrorist attacks in the country's Far North Region, including suicide bombings, targeted killings, kidnappings, and raids in search of supplies. Boko Haram perpetrated multiple and indiscriminate killings against civilians – Muslim and Christian alike – but also against government officials and military forces. Although Cameroonian forces have become more effective at combatting Boko Haram, dozens of attacks, often suicide bombings, occurred in 2017. These included an attack in February that killed three soldiers, one in April that killed four vigilance committee members (vigilance committees are groups of ordinary residents who help protect the area from Boko Haram attacks), one in July that killed 14 people and wounded 32 others, and one in August that left 15 dead and eight abducted. In the very far northern area of the country, ISIS-WA conducted a few attacks, targeting military outposts, and generally refrained from killing civilians.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: There were no significant changes since the 2016 report. In 2017, the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance program delivered two Explosive Incident Countermeasures trainings, an Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Commanders Workshop, and a mentorship program with Cameroonian EOD personnel to build Cameroon's counter-improvised explosive device capacity.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Cameroon is a member of the Task Force on Money Laundering in Central Africa (GABAC), a Financial Task Force-style regional body, and its financial intelligence unit, the National Agency for Financial Investigation, is a member of the Egmont Group. There were no significant changes since the 2016 report. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): The Government of Cameroon does not have a national CVE action plan, but officials at all levels acknowledged radicalization to violence as a significant concern and said they integrate it into their work and planning. The government partnered with faith-based organizations, such as the Council of Imams and Religious Dignitaries of Cameroon (CIDIMUC), to educate citizens on the dangers of radicalization to violence, to promote religious tolerance, and to present religion as a factor for peace. Programs furthered these objectives through targeted messaging in mosques, special prayer sessions, press releases, and through roundtable discussions and conferences bringing together people from various religious backgrounds. One of CIDIMUC's strategies has been to improve the living conditions of imams.

In 2017, the U.S. Agency for International Development expanded the scope of a community resilience and peace-building program it launched in December 2015. Using a network of community radio stations, the program focused on strengthening the resilience of communities through radio programs focused on peace building, which were transmitted in 26 languages in the north and far north regions.

Cameroonian cities Yaounde II, Kolofata, Kousseri, Meri/Diamare, and Mokolo are members of the Strong Cities Network.

International and Regional Cooperation: There were no significant changes since the 2016 report.

CHAD

Overview: The Government of Chad continued to focus on counterterrorism efforts at the highest level, however, the worsening financial crisis affected its ability to meet even basic financial commitments, such as paying police and military salaries. Although financial hardships have limited the country's ability to provide external counterterrorism assistance, Chad engaged in external military operations in neighboring countries. Chad provided approximately 2,000 combat forces to the Lake Chad Region's Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF), which also includes Benin, Cameroon, Niger, and Nigeria, but drew down some of those troops in mid-2017 to focus on other issues such as insecurity along Chad's northern border with Libya. Chad continued to host the French government's Operation Barkhane, France's integrated counterterrorism mission for the Sahel region that has partnered with forces in the Sahel to launch numerous operations to degrade terrorist groups in the region. Chad had 1,450 soldiers supporting the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali at year's end.

Chad joined the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS in 2017.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: The Government of Chad updated its Penal Code in April 2017. Penalties for lesser terrorist offenses were increased to life imprisonment. Some civil society organizations expressed concern that the law was overly restrictive, required little evidence to prosecute individuals, and could be used to curtail freedoms of expression and association. We refer you to the State Department's *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* for further information.

While Chadian law enforcement units displayed basic command and control capacity, the Director General of the Chadian National Police requested training in investigations, crisis response, and border security capacity. Law enforcement leadership publicly acknowledged the requirement for all law enforcement officers to respect human rights. In practice, however, there were reports the government or its agents committed arbitrary and unlawful killings, including by torture, and impunity was an issue. The Director General of the Police has improved the Chadian National Police's performance by fostering more efficient and effective communication across bureau lines. Its forensics unit has opened its files to the Regional Security Office for passage of photo and fingerprint records of suspected Boko Haram terrorists imprisoned in Chad.

The Chadian government operated at a heightened level of security and has instituted screenings at border-crossings to prevent infiltration by members of Boko Haram, ISIS-West Africa (ISIS-WA), and Central African militias, as well as transit of illegal arms, drugs, and other contraband. Border patrols were provided by a combination of border security officials, gendarmes, police, and military. Chad screened travelers using the U.S.-provided Personal Identification Secure Comparison and Evaluation System (PISCES) at major ports of entry.

Chad participated in the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) program in 2017. It received ATA training in support of its Crisis Response Team and received deliveries in support of its participation in the multilateral Flintlock 2017 exercise.

The U.S. Embassy's Special Programs for Embassy Augmentation and Response (SPEAR) team continued its training and development. This team is composed of Chadian National Police and Groupe Mobile d'Intervention Police and is expected to be on call to respond to emergencies at the embassy and affiliated facilities.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Chad is a member of the Task Force on Money Laundering in Central Africa, a Financial Action Task Force-style regional body. Chad's financial intelligence unit, the National Agency for Financial Investigation (ANIF), is a member of the Egmont Group.

Chad criminalized terrorist financing through the 2003 adoption of an anti-money laundering/countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) law drafted by the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa. The law allows immediate freezing and confiscation of terrorist assets and requires a variety of organizations involved in financial transactions to monitor money/value transfers and report any anomalies. The law does not appear to list non-profit organizations specifically within the list of organizations required to comply. The government also requires know-your-customer standards enforcement for both foreign and domestic transactions.

ANIF, which falls under the authority of the Ministry of Finance and Budget, is tasked with ensuring public and private financial institutions in Chad implement the AML/CFT law. It investigates suspicious transactions brought to its attention by financial institutions and refers cases to the Attorney General's office in the Ministry of Justice for further action and prosecution.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): The Government of Chad adopted a national strategy and action plan to "Counter Violent Extremism and Radicalization" in December 2017. Prior to the strategy and action plan, the government used its five-year development strategy as its primary tool to prevent and counter radicalization to violence.

The number of Chadians joining terrorist organizations remained low in 2017. Chadians who joined Boko Haram or ISIS-WA came primarily from the Buduma ethnic group who reside on Lake Chad islands. Separately, there was evidence that a few individuals had become radicalized to violence through propaganda accessed on social media platforms.

Efforts to encourage defections and returnees among the Buduma people around Lake Chad were informal. Moderate messaging was broadcast over 12 community radio stations and one state-

operated radio station under a U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) project. Additionally, USAID committed to a multi-year CVE program.

International and Regional Cooperation: Chad remained active in the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership. Chad is a member of the G-5 Sahel Joint Force, which also includes Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger. As a member of the Lake Chad Basin Commission, Chad participated in efforts to develop the MNJTF. Chad cooperated actively with Cameroon, Niger, and Nigeria in operations to counter the threat of Boko Haram and ISIS-WA on its borders.

DJIBOUTI

Overview: Djibouti offered a vital platform for regional counterterrorism and countering violent extremism (CVE) efforts in 2017. Since 2002, Djibouti has hosted Camp Lemonnier, the headquarters of AFRICOM's Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa and the only enduring U.S. military installation in Africa. Djibouti's Armed Forces also participated in the U.S.-funded Africa Contingency Operations Training and Assistance program and deployed soldiers to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) campaign. Djibouti hosts the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Center of Excellence for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism, which serves as a regional CVE hub and resource for CVE research, development, and training. IGAD positions Djibouti as a regional leader on counterterrorism and CVE.

In 2017, the Government of Djibouti hosted several conferences:

- A Ministry of Islamic Affairs-led conference with Muslim religious leaders from the Horn of Africa on strategies to address "extremist" messaging directed at youth;
- A Ministry of Justice-led conference with the international organization of La Francophonie and the Association of Francophone Prosecutors on counterterrorism prosecutions; and
- A Central Bank-led conference with the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa on anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism.

As in previous years, Djiboutian government officials, particularly law enforcement and members of the High Islamic Council, worked closely to identify and address terrorist activity.

Djibouti joined the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS in 2017.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Djibouti has a legal framework for prosecuting terrorism-related crimes and can try terrorists in criminal courts using its penal code. As such, there were no significant changes on terrorism-related legislation in 2017. The Djiboutian government continued to use counterterrorism legislation to suppress criticism by detaining and prosecuting opposition figures and other activists. We refer you to the State Department's *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* for further information.

In 2017, the Djiboutian government made structural and judicial counterterrorism-related changes. The Minister of Justice appointed a new State Prosecutor, who reorganized the

Prosecutor's office to allow deputy prosecutors to specialize in terrorism-related cases. Djibouti also passed a comprehensive refugee law and two implementing decrees to ensure refugees have freedom of movement, education, work, and access to public services, including those related to criminal justice, which were not *de jure* rights for refugees prior to their passage. Recognizing that refugees account for more than three percent of the population, the government's decision to provide them access to the criminal justice system serves as an effective long-term response to address the risk of any vulnerable population, including this one, to recruitment, radicalization to violence, and other terrorist-related activity.

Djiboutian law enforcement entities continued to prioritize counterterrorism due to Djibouti's geographic location and an al-Shabaab attack in Djibouti City in May 2014. Djibouti maintained a system of checkpoints and conducted cordon-and-search operations within the capital, Djibouti City, and concentrated security forces at border control points to screen for potential security threats. Government officials enhanced the protection of soft targets, including hotels and grocery stores, measures first implemented after the May 2014 attack. Djiboutian law enforcement also extended vehicle searches throughout the capital in an effort coordinated through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Djibouti's law enforcement organizations include the Djiboutian National Police (DNP), the Djiboutian National Gendarmerie, the National Security Judiciary Police (NSJP), and the Djiboutian Coast Guard. In 2017, the DNP, National Gendarmerie, and NSJP received training from both the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) program and the International Law Enforcement Academy in Gaborone. ATA assistance focused on building technical capacity for improved crisis response and border security capabilities. The DNP, National Gendarmerie, and the NSJP also received training through the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation's Legal Attaché office in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Djibouti's law enforcement organizations routinely interacted with U.S. government counterparts and frequently sought U.S. input to identify potential terrorist suspects.

Djiboutian law enforcement personnel acknowledged the difficulty of securing their land and sea borders. The DNP controls border checkpoints and Djibouti's armed forces are responsible for patrolling land borders in remote locations, with support from the Gendarme patrolling between border posts. Djibouti continued to process travelers on entry and departure at its international airport and seaport with the Personal Identification Secure Comparison Evaluation System (PISCES). While the airport and seaport remain important entry points, the vast majority of travelers cross into Djibouti by land at one of three land border points, one of which is the Loyada crossing at the Somali border, which was refurbished with U.S. funding.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: In 2017, Djibouti applied for membership to the Middle East and Northern Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF)), a Financial Action Task Force-style regional body. Its application is under consideration by MENAFATF members. The Central Bank of Djibouti houses a financial intelligence unit known as the Financial Information Service (SRF). Due to limited financial and human resources, the SRF has been unable to perform the core functions of a financial intelligence unit and has focused instead

on banking supervision. The SRF referred no cases to law enforcement involving suspected terrorist financing in 2017.

Djibouti's Central Bank places the responsibility for staying updated on sanctions lists with the financial institutions themselves. Many of the financial institutions operating in Djibouti have software packages that include links to UN sanctions lists, lists of designated terrorists, or terrorist entities provided by the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control and the European Union. The Central Bank monitors compliance with these lists through routine supervision and audits of the financial institutions.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): Law enforcement agencies worked with the High Islamic Council to identify and monitor activity that promoted terrorist ideology. Djibouti continued to host and provide oversight for the operation of the IGAD Center of Excellence for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and has also prioritized economic growth to address the high unemployment among youth.

International and Regional Cooperation: Djibouti hosts the IGAD's headquarters offices and Secretary General. The Djiboutian military continued its participation in AMISOM, which includes military forces from Burundi, Kenya, Ethiopia, and Uganda.

ERITREA

Overview: The Government of Eritrea continued to make regular public statements about its commitment to fighting terrorism. Eritrea also continued and broadened its support for the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen, and it allowed military elements of the coalition to base in Eritrea.

In May 2017, the United States recertified Eritrea as "not cooperating fully" with U.S. antiterrorism efforts under Section 40A of the Arms Export and Control Act, as amended. In considering this annual determination, the Department of State reviewed Eritrea's overall level of cooperation with U.S. efforts to counter terrorism, taking into account U.S. counterterrorism objectives and a realistic assessment of Eritrean capabilities.

Eritrea has been subject to UN Security Council (UNSC) sanctions since December 2009 due to past evidence of support for al-Shabaab and other activities that have contributed to regional instability. UN Security Council resolutions (UNSCR) 1907 (2009) and 2011 (2013) established and consolidated a two-way arms embargo on Eritrea, most recently renewed in UNSCR 2385 (2017). The sanctions regime on Eritrea also includes provisions for a travel ban and asset freeze measures with regard to individuals or entities designated by the UN Sanctions Committee for Somalia and Eritrea. At present, there are no UN listings for the sanctions regime as it relates to Eritrea. While the Somalia and Eritrea Monitoring Group's (SEMG) 2017 report did not find conclusive evidence that Eritrea is supporting al-Shabaab, the Government of Eritrea continued to refuse to allow the SEMG inspectors to visit Eritrea, limiting the scope of its investigations.

The SEMG did not find evidence of continued Eritrean support to armed groups intent on destabilizing Ethiopia and Djibouti.

Due to the Government of Eritrea's lack of transparency, there was no clear picture of the methods it used to track terrorists or safeguard its citizens. For a number of years, members of the police have refused to meet with security officials from western nations to discuss policy matters, although the United States had informal contact with some law enforcement counterparts in 2017.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: There were no significant changes since 2016.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Eritrea is not a member or observer of a Financial Action Task Force-style regional body or a member of the Egmont Group. Eritrea is a member of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, which has a maritime security program that focuses on building the capacity of law enforcement agencies to combat money laundering and terrorist financing. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): There were no significant changes since 2016.

International and Regional Cooperation: In December, Eritrea co-sponsored UNSCR 2396 on returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters.

ETHIOPIA

Overview: The continuing al-Shabaab threat emanating from Somalia dominated the Government of Ethiopia's security posture and the Ethiopian National Defense Force's (ENDF) 2017 counterterrorism efforts. Ethiopia also focused its counterterrorism strategy on pursuing potential threats from armed opposition groups often based in neighboring countries. The Ethiopian Federal Police (EFP) and the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) shared information on counterterrorism matters pursuant to a memorandum of understanding. The Ethiopian government contributed to FBI cases related to al-Shabaab and other U.S.-designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations by providing information, evidence, and access to witnesses.

Ethiopia joined the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS in 2017.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: The Government of Ethiopia uses the 2009 Anti-Terrorism Proclamation (ATP) to prosecute crimes associated with terrorist activity. Ethiopia convicted 23 individuals in 2017 for planning to conduct terrorist attacks in Ethiopia after making contact with al-Shabaab and al-Qa'ida.

Ethiopia also continued to use the ATP to suppress criticism by detaining and prosecuting journalists, opposition figures – including members of religious groups protesting government interference in religious affairs – and other activists. The Ethiopian government released some,

but arrested several others during the year. These arrests peaked under the State of Emergency the Ethiopian government imposed in October 2016 in the wake of anti-government protests and violence that resulted in tens of thousands of arrests and several hundred deaths. We refer you to the State Department's *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* and *Report on International Religious Freedom* for further information.

In late August, the International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law conducted a workshop in Addis Ababa for judges handling ATP cases. Ethiopian judges are often overwhelmed with hundreds of ATP-related cases because Ethiopian prosecutors often seek to bring the highest charges for cases that they cannot resolve with plea agreements. With U.S. support, the Attorney General's Office is working on revising Ethiopia's Criminal Procedure Code to include plea agreements.

The ENDF, the EFP, Ethiopian intelligence, and regional special police worked to detect and deter al-Shabaab attacks in Ethiopia. The National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS), which has broad authority for intelligence, border security, and criminal investigation, is responsible for overall counterterrorism management in coordination with the ENDF and EFP. The three security organizations comprise the Ethiopian Task Force for Counterterrorism, a federal-level committee to coordinate counterterrorism efforts. The NISS facilitated some coordination with the United States to include several domestic counterterrorism cases.

Border security was a persistent concern for Ethiopia, which worked to tighten border controls with Eritrea, Kenya, Somalia, and South Sudan. Ethiopia employed the Terrorist Interdiction Program's Personal Identification Secure Comparison and Evaluation System (PISCES) to conduct traveler screening and watchlisting at airports and other ports of entry.

Ethiopia is East Africa's only last point of departure to the United States, one of only a few on the African continent. The U.S. Transportation Security Administration continued to conduct semi-annual inspections of Ethiopia's national carrier and of Bole International Airport, including one that occurred in early December. Inspectors reported implementation of all recent enhanced security measures and that cooperation with Ethiopian aviation security officials remains strong.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Ethiopia is a member of the Eastern and Southern Africa Anti-Money Laundering Group, a Financial Action Task Force (FATF)-style regional body. In October, the FATF and the European Commission listed Ethiopia as one of 11 high-risk and non-cooperative jurisdictions with strategic deficiencies in its anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) regimes and recommended that any financial flows from the country be subject to additional counter checks and know-your-customer rules. Ethiopia is one of eight countries named on both the FATF and European Commission lists.

Following the completion of the National Risk Assessment for money laundering and terrorism finance in early 2017, Ethiopia approved and began implementing a National Risk Mitigation Action Plan.

Ethiopian law enforcement handles low-end money laundering investigations but is ill equipped to expand to larger AML/CFT investigations. Law enforcement lacks the forensic tools, human resources, and training to focus on these types of cases. In addition, the Financial Intelligence Centre (FIC) and law enforcement did not appear to coordinate their efforts fully. The FIC processes and submits suspicious transaction reports to the police for money laundering and to the NISS for terrorist financing cases. However, there appeared to be a lack of follow-up on AML/CFT investigations.

Ethiopia has made no apparent attempt to investigate and prosecute cases on suspicious or fraudulent mobile money transactions. This is especially significant since it appears that a large number of mobile money transactions occur within the Somali region of Ethiopia, an area where the Ethiopian government has concentrated much of its counterterrorism efforts. The two mobile money platforms in Ethiopia reported growth in its revenues, especially from transactions originating in rural areas, and have expressed interest in cooperating with law enforcement on investigations under certain conditions.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): Ethiopia has not yet developed a CVE strategy. In 2017, the U.S. Agency for International Development provided assistance through a local Ethiopian civil society organization to undertake research on the existing potential vulnerabilities to extremism in Ethiopia. This research was conducted in communities across eight of the nine regional states as well as in Dire Dawa and Addis Ababa, cities deemed at risk of radicalization to violence and terrorist recruitment. The findings of this research were presented and validated by Ethiopian government (federal and regional state) officials and non-government interlocutors (religious leaders) in November.

The government's continued restrictions on funding to civil society and non-governmental organizations under the Charities and Societies Proclamation limited the activity of non-governmental organizations, including CVE programming targeting at-risk youth and engaging communities and credible leaders.

International and Regional Cooperation: There have been no significant changes since the 2016 report. The ENDF continued its participation in the African Union Mission in Somalia, which includes military forces from Burundi, Djibouti, Kenya, and Uganda. Ethiopia joined the UN Security Council (UNSC) as an elected member in January 2017 and served as a vice chair of the UNSC 1373 Committee on Counterterrorism. In December, Ethiopia co-sponsored UNSC Security Council resolution 2396 on returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters.

KENYA

Overview: Kenya saw a significant increase in al-Shabaab terrorist attacks in the region bordering Somalia during 2017, particularly through improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and ambushes. Kenya is a strong U.S. partner in counterterrorism investigation, prosecution, and

incident response, and continued to play an important role in regional counterterrorism cooperation. The Kenya Defense Forces (KDF) continued to participate in the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and supported border security and counter-IED efforts within Kenya. Kenyan security services responded to numerous terrorist incidents, while also disrupting al-Shabaab and ISIS attack planning, recruitment, and travel. Reports of human rights violations by security forces during counterterrorism operations continued, including allegations of extra-judicial killings, disappearances, and torture. We refer you to the State Department's *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* and *Report on International Religious Freedom* for further information.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: Al-Shabaab increased its attacks against Kenyan security forces inside the country, primarily along the border with Somalia. Terrorist incidents included:

- On January 27, al-Shabaab fighters – including Somalis and Kenyans – attacked a KDF camp at Kolbio, on the Somali border, using vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices (VBIEDs), mortars, and small arms. The KDF claimed nine Kenyan service members and 70 al-Shabaab terrorists died, while media reported at least 20 KDF soldiers had been killed. Al-Shabaab employed numerous IEDs and ambushes targeting police patrols in Kenya's northeastern counties and Lamu County.
- In four attacks from May 16 to 25, police reported approximately 30 security officials and civilians died, including five police officers in an attack on the Mandera County Governor.
- On July 8 and September 6 in attacks in Lamu County, al-Shabaab militants killed at least 13 civilians, beheading the victims.
- On July 13, al-Shabaab militants in Lamu County attacked the vehicle of, and attempted to abduct, the Principal Secretary of the national Ministry of Public Works, who later died. According to police and media, at least six police officers died in the ambush and subsequent rescue operation.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Kenya's government used the Prevention of Terrorism Act (amended in 2014) to aggressively investigate and prosecute terrorism, but it has fallen short in implementing initiatives to improve access to justice among terrorism suspects in 2017. In August, the government launched a National Legal Aid Action Plan but has not funded a public defender service envisioned by law. The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions worked to finalize national plea-bargaining rules, which awaited publication in the Kenya Gazette at year's end. The judiciary supported a rule of law-based approach to prosecutions, applying equal legal and evidentiary standards to terrorism cases as in other criminal cases. In a January ruling, the High Court overturned five convictions for attempted terrorist travel to Somalia, as the Kenyan government had not followed legal procedures designating Somalia as a prohibited destination.

Counterterrorism functions were divided among the three branches of the National Police Service – the Kenya Police's paramilitary General Service Unit, the Directorate of Criminal Investigations (including the investigative Anti-Terrorism Police Unit, the Bomb Disposal Unit, and the Cyber Forensics Investigative Unit), and the Administration Police (including the Rural Border Patrol Unit). The National Intelligence Service and elements of the KDF. Interagency

also shared responsibility. Coordination was uneven, with improved information sharing in some cases and failure to appropriately pass threat information in others. Overall, resource constraints, insufficient training, corruption, and unclear command and control hindered effectiveness. Kenya's National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) expanded outreach to private security companies and key sectors on soft target attacks. Kenya's security agencies focused on soft target threats in major cities and tourist areas, primarily universities, shopping malls, hotels, and resorts.

Terrorists exploited Kenya's sparsely populated border regions and largely uncontrolled land borders to conduct attacks and move operatives in and out of the country. The Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) program trained and equipped rural Border Patrol Unit personnel in tactical ground sensor operations and border security operations. Other ATA programs included law enforcement training to respond to active shooter threats.

Kenyan officials continued efforts to draft a coordinated interagency border control strategy. In April, Kenya signed an agreement with the United States to implement the Automated Targeting System-Global to facilitate sharing of Advance Passenger Information for air travelers. Kenya worked to improve aviation safety and security at Nairobi's Jomo Kenyatta International Airport. Kenya established an interagency Joint Operations Centers at several ports of entry and border crossings to promote information sharing and maintained its traveler screening partnership with the United States using the Personal Identification Secure Comparison and Evaluation System (PISCES) at major ports of entry. Immigration officers employed government watchlists. Watchlist screening and basic equipment at smaller ports of entry was generally lacking.

The Kenyan government worked to prevent the transit of foreign terrorist fighters, including Kenyans attempting to join al-Shabaab or ISIS, and those returning from abroad. In March, police arrested three alleged ISIS travel facilitators in Malindi. In May, South Sudanese and Kenyan police cooperated in the repatriation of three Kenyans and a Somali, who were arrested in South Sudan after the Malindi group allegedly recruited them to travel to join ISIS-Libya. Kenyan security services also detected and deterred terrorist plots and responded to dozens of terrorism-related incidents. The Kenyan government or its agents continued to face allegations that they committed arbitrary and unlawful killings, particularly of known or suspected criminals, including terrorists.

Court trials in terrorism cases often proceeded slowly. At the end of 2017, trials continued in the cases of four Kenyans accused of providing support for the 2013 Westgate Mall attack and of four Kenyans and one Tanzanian in connection with the 2015 Garissa University College attack. The Tanzanian defendant was found competent to stand trial in January after previously being found unfit in late 2016. The trial on explosives charges against British terrorism suspect Jermaine Grant, who was serving a nine-year sentence from a separate conviction in 2015, was pending a verdict at year's end.

The Kenyan government cooperated with the United States regarding threat information and security at the U.S. Embassy in Nairobi, including through a dedicated General Service Unit counterterrorism response team funded by U.S. assistance. Kenya's national elections required

additional resources and personnel to conduct security operations, compelling the Kenyan government to limit certain counterterrorism-related training and redeployments.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Kenya is a member of the Eastern and Southern Africa Anti-Money Laundering Group, a Financial Action Task Force-style regional body. In July, the Kenyan government appointed the first permanent Director General of its financial intelligence unit, the Financial Reporting Center (FRC), since its establishment in 2012. The FRC remained hampered by a lack of essential resources and faced challenges meeting minimum staffing, physical security, and information technology requirements. The FRC also lacked an electronic reporting system for analyzing suspicious transactions. The use of unregulated informal financial mechanisms, including *hawalas*, continued. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): Kenya's government worked in 2017 to implement its 2016 National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism, primarily through county-level action plans. Kenya's NCTC worked with county governments, security actors, and civil society to launch action plans in Kwale, Mombasa, Lamu, and Kilifi Counties. The NCTC also led Kenya's Country Support Mechanism for the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF), which began awarding grants for community initiatives to counter violent extremism. Kenya is also a GCERF beneficiary country. Police in Nairobi, coastal, and northeastern counties participated in community policing, dialogues on post-traumatic stress, and early warning and early response programs. Prison officials improved their handling of terrorist offenders. Other small-scale efforts to rehabilitate and reintegrate former terrorists, facilitators, and sympathizers continued, but these lacked a clear legal framework and supportive public messaging. Kenya's second-largest city, Mombasa, is an active member of the Strong Cities Network.

International and Regional Cooperation: Kenya continues to host the United Nations (UN) Office in Nairobi, serving as a hub for regional coordination against transnational threats. The KDF continued its participation in the African Union Mission in Somalia, which includes military forces from Burundi, Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Uganda. In December, Kenya cosponsored UN Security Council resolution 2396 on returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters.

MALI

Overview: The Government of Mali remained a willing U.S. counterterrorism partner in 2017, despite serious challenges. Widespread terrorist activity continued in Mali's largely ungoverned northern regions and in the country's center and Tri-Border Region with Burkina Faso and Niger. Slow implementation of the June 2015 peace accord between the Malian government and two coalitions of armed groups hampered the return of public services and security to the north and parts of the center. Mali continued to rely heavily on the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) and French forces to help stabilize and secure the northern regions. Terrorist groups increased their attacks on all accord signatories, including former rebel groups with whom they had briefly allied. Terrorist activities also increased in number and severity in the central and southern regions.

The French military's Operation Barkhane continued its integrated counterterrorism mission for the Sahel region. Cooperating with Malian forces, Operation Barkhane sought to degrade terrorist elements in northern and central Mali, particularly Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM), the umbrella group that formed after the Sahara Branch of al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), al-Murabitoun, Ansar al-Dine, and the Macina Liberation Front merged to form the group.

MINUSMA maintained its northern presence in 2017, particularly in the Gao, Kidal, and Timbuktu regions. It continued its work with the Malian government and various militia groups to facilitate the redeployment of government administrators and security forces to the north as part of implementing the 2016 Peace Accord.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: AQIM and JNIM continued to conduct terrorist attacks, primarily targeting Malian and international military forces. The terrorist groups launched attacks against civilians, security forces, peacekeepers, and others they reportedly perceived as not adhering to their interpretation of Islam. Attacks by terrorist groups expanded beyond the traditional conflict zone in the north to Mali's center and south. Malian Security Forces continued to suffer the largest number of casualties resulting from terrorist attacks. An estimated 138 Malian soldiers were killed in numerous incidents. Terrorist incidents included:

- On June 18, an attack at Le Campement Kangaba resort northeast of Bamako left nine dead including four guests, a Malian Counterterrorist Force member, and four terrorists. Three people were wounded. JNIM claimed responsibility.
- On October 31, an attack between Dia and Diafarabé, against a convoy of Member of Parliament and President of the High Court of Justice Abdramane Niang, caused at least six deaths, including five Malian soldiers and one civilian. JNIM claimed responsibility.
- On November 24, an attack against a MINUSMA convoy in Indelimane, Menaka region killed three Nigerien United Nations (UN) peacekeepers and wounded many others. JNIM claimed responsibility.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: In June, the Malian Gendarmerie Crisis Response Team, trained by the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) program, responded to the Campement Kangaba terrorist attack and aided Malian forces in killing four assailants. At least 50 people were at the hotel at the time, and the fact that more patrons were not killed is evidence of the improvement of Malian first responders at the tactical level since the November 2015 Radisson Blu Hotel attack, which killed 20 people. In 2017, ATA provided additional advanced training and mentoring to the Malian Gendarmerie Crisis Response Team.

The Malian Armed Forces under the Ministry of Defense (MOD) remained the primary entities responsible for securing Mali against terrorist threats. The General Directorate of State Security under the Ministry of Security and Civil Protection (MOS) had the authority to investigate and detain persons for terrorism offenses. Combined counterterrorism missions involving law enforcement and military units lacked delineation and coordination.

Although Mali has basic border security, law enforcement units lacked the capacity, training, and necessary equipment to secure Mali's porous borders, which extend approximately 4,500 miles and touch seven countries. The United States worked with Malian security forces at Bamako's Senou International Airport to expand the U.S.-funded Personal Identification Secure Comparison and Evaluation System program (PISCES). The gendarmerie, which reports to both the MOD and the MOS – and the national border police, which reports to the MOS – both provide paramilitary support to prevent and deter criminal activity at borders. Customs officials under the Ministry of Economy and Finance monitor the flow of goods and enforce customs laws at borders and ports of entry. Mali receives INTERPOL notices, but the INTERPOL database is unavailable at some of Mali's points of entry. The UN International Organization for Migration is managing a project with the Malian Border Patrol to provide portable biometrics systems for scanning at primary border crossing areas to counter trafficking of persons, but this system lacks connection to a central database. The information is not centralized or searchable and is largely inaccessible and unusable. Exit and entry stamps used by border officials have inconsistent size and shape, which undermines efforts to authenticate travel documents.

Malian passports, including diplomatic and official versions, incorporate security measures including ultraviolet features and a full-color digital photo. Unfortunately, imposters can obtain fraudulent documents, such as birth and marriage certificates, with relative ease.

In 2017, the government opened 69 terrorism-related cases and detained 30 people for terrorism-related crimes. Resource constraints, a lack of training in investigative techniques, and inexperience with trying terrorism cases plagued a weak judicial system. The Malian government has never investigated, prosecuted, and sentenced any terrorists from start to finish. Mali has taken steps to improve its institutional capacity to fight terrorism, passing laws that create new terrorism-related offenses and allow for the use of special investigative techniques. This includes setting up a Special Judicial Interagency Work Group against terrorism and its equivalent for law enforcement – the specialized judicial brigade – and working with international partners to build the capacity of these units, including the UN Office of Drugs and Crime.

Mali worked cooperatively with the United States to prevent acts of terrorism against U.S. citizens. The Malian judicial system continued its cooperation with U.S. law enforcement agencies in the investigation into the November 2015 Radisson Blu Hotel attack, which killed one U.S. citizen.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Mali is a member of the Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa, a Financial Action Task Force-style regional body. Mali's financial intelligence unit, the Cellule Nationale de Traitement des Informations Financières (CENTIF-Mali), is a member of the Egmont Group. There were no significant changes since 2016. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): In June, the Government of Mali adopted a national strategy for the prevention of radicalization to violence and terrorism. The Ministry of Religious

Affairs is responsible for developing and monitoring the national strategy and for working with the High Islamic Council and other religious associations to promote moderate Islam and maintain a secular state. Considerations to counter violent extremism were integrated into Mali's "Program for Accelerated Development in the Northern Regions," as was a draft decentralization policy.

Mali is a Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund beneficiary country.

The government launched the Integrated Central Region Security Plan in August, which aims first to secure and then re-establish government services across the Mopti region and the neighboring Segou region, which also experienced increasing insecurity.

International and Regional Cooperation: Mali remained active in regional organizations and international bodies, including the Economic Community of West African States, the UN, the African Union, and the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership. Mali also participated in Global Counterterrorism Forum events.

The Malian military participated in multinational border security operations under the G-5 Sahel mandate. Following a December U.S.-led Joint Combined Exchange Training event, Malian units deployed to the center sector of the G-5 Sahel Joint Force.

MAURITANIA

Overview: Mauritania was an excellent U.S. security and regional counterterrorism partner in 2017. Since 2011, when U.S. engagement with Mauritanian security forces greatly increased and Mauritanian forces defeated al-Qa'ida elements in three separate battles, Mauritania has not suffered a terrorist attack, despite continuing terrorist violence in neighboring Mali.

The Government of Mauritania continued to oppose terrorism effectively, building on an approach that hinges on community outreach, improving the capacity of security forces, and securing the country's borders. The government has continued its counterterrorism cooperation with the United States and seized opportunities to participate in U.S.-sponsored training on counterterrorism tactics and techniques.

Mauritania Armed Forces and Law Enforcement Services worked with the United States to track, monitor, and counter terrorist groups, which include al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), ISIS, and Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM) – the group that formed after the Sahara Branch of al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb, al-Murabitoun, Ansar al-Dine, and the Macina Liberation Front came together in 2017.

Through the support of the United States and other partners such as France, Mauritania deployed 20,000 soldiers, divided between seven military regions around the country. Despite these efforts, regions in the interior of Mauritania remained imperfectly monitored, owing to their geographic isolation from population centers and inhospitable desert conditions. AQIM elements and like-minded terrorist groups were present in the region, particularly along the southeastern border with Mali, which remained the leading terrorist threat to Mauritania in 2017.

On November 6, Mauritanian press reported that AQIM released a new video in which it warned Mauritania of consequences for its cooperation with the so-called "crusaders' forces."

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Border security remained inadequate due to a standing policy that accords responsibility for different sections of the country's land borders to different formations of the security forces. Owing to their geographic isolation from population centers, hard-to-access areas of the Sahara Desert further complicated efforts to monitor and secure borders.

On November 12, Mauritania declared its border with Algeria a military "Red Zone," forbidden to civilians. This decision was motivated by the increased and diverse trafficking of prohibited goods through this region.

In collaboration with Mauritanian authorities, the Senegalese security forces arrested two suspected Algerian terrorists from ISIS on October 6 at the Mauritanian border crossing of Rosso. The two suspects were wanted by the Government of Algeria.

The Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance program, in cooperation with host nation partner forces, provided training for 160 police officers and gendarmerie in topics including facilities protection, border security, interviewing terrorist suspects, crisis incident management, weapons of mass destruction, and border security and interdiction.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Mauritania is a member of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force, a Financial Action Task Force-style regional body. In 2017, Mauritania applied for membership within the Egmont Group. There were no other significant changes since 2016. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): The Mauritanian government continued to support CVE programs and offer alternatives to at-risk individuals. During 2017, the Ministry of Islamic Affairs and Traditional Education (MIATE) hosted a two-day regional workshop in Nouakchott to share the Mauritanian CVE experiences with representatives from the Maghreb countries and the G-5 Sahel countries. The workshop was organized in cooperation with the American Friendship Project.

The MIATE collaborated with independent Islamic religious groups to counter radicalization to violence in a series of workshops in all 15 provinces. The MIATE organized an international conference on "Violence and Extremism from Sharia's Perspective," held on March 19, 2017.

In coordination with two University of Nouakchott professors, a think tank, and some society leaders, the U.S. Embassy organized a two-day awareness training workshop for university students on violent extremism, how to recognize possible recruitment activities, and strategies to counter them.

The southern Mauritanian city of Kiffa is a member of the Strong Cities Network.

Mauritanian political and religious personalities periodically condemned ISIS's aims, methods, and activities in public statements.

International and Regional Cooperation: Nouakchott serves as host to the headquarters of the G-5 Sahel, which includes Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger. Mauritania will be responsible for the western sector of the G-5 Sahel Joint Force located along the border between Mauritania and Mali.

Under the auspices of the G-5 Sahel, Mauritania, the European Union, and the German Agency of International Cooperation, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime organized a meeting of experts on mechanisms and standards for information exchange within the Security Cooperation Platform of the G-5 Sahel in Nouakchott on October 24-25, 2017.

NIGER

Overview: Terrorist groups active in Niger included the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO), ISIS in the Greater Sahara (ISIS-GS), Boko Haram, ISIS-West Africa (ISIS-WA), and Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM), the group that formed after the Sahara Branch of al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb, al-Murabitoun, Ansar al-Dine, and the Macina Liberation Front came together in 2017.

Terrorists freely crossed many of Niger's borders. In the southeast, Boko Haram and ISIS-WA profited from porous borders with Chad and Nigeria to attack civilian and security targets in Niger's Diffa region. Al-Qa'ida (AQ) and ISIS affiliates transited the Mali and Burkina Faso borders in the west to attack security targets in the Tillabery region and crossed the Libyan and, to a lesser extent, the Algerian borders in the Agadez region in the north. Terrorists, weapons, and contraband transited freely through the vast northern part of Niger.

Niger remained a strong opponent of terrorism in the region, continued to cooperate with international partners, and received substantial international counterterrorism assistance. From 2012 to the end of 2017, the Departments of Defense and State executed approximately US $240 million in security assistance, counterterrorism, and countering violent extremism (CVE) programming. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is programming an additional US $30.9 million, including US $16 million for USAID/Office of Transition Initiatives for CVE programs. Foreign assistance has helped the Nigerien military increase its capability to patrol, collect information, and interdict terrorists.

Niger is standing up the Central Sector Command Post in Niamey for the G-5 Sahel Joint Force. Niger conducted joint patrols with Chad and Nigeria as part of its increased cooperation with Lake Chad Basin Commission member countries in the fight against Boko Haram and ISIS-WA. Niger has increased its number of border control facilities and is working with the international community to construct and equip these facilities.

Niger joined the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS in 2017.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: Numerous terrorist attacks occurred in the Diffa and Tillabery regions, leading to dozens of deaths and injuries. Terrorist organizations frequently stole military vehicles and equipment that they then used in later attacks. Terrorist attacks in western Niger focused almost exclusively on security forces, while Boko Haram and ISIS-WA attacked both civilian and military targets in the southeast. Attacks included:

- On June 28, two suspected Boko Haram suicide bombers attacked a refugee camp in Kabelewa, Diffa, killing three refugees and wounding 11 others. This was the first suicide attack in Diffa in more than one year.
- On July 2, Boko Haram terrorists kidnapped 39 women and killed nine civilians in N'Galewa village in Diffa region.
- On October 4, suspected ISIS-GS terrorists attacked U.S. and Nigerien Special Operations Forces in Tongo Tongo, Tillabery, killing four U.S. soldiers and five Nigerien soldiers and wounding two U.S. soldiers and four Nigerien soldiers.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Niger's laws criminalize acts of terrorism consistent with international instruments. Nigerien law enforcement and security services were actively engaged in detecting, deterring, and preventing acts of terrorism on Nigerien territory, but they suffered from insufficient manpower, funding, and equipment. Counterterrorism investigations in Niger are primarily the responsibility of the Central Service for the Fight against Terrorism (SCLCT), an interagency body comprising representatives from Niger's National Police, National Guard, and Gendarmerie. Information sharing occurred among the law enforcement agencies of SCLCT.

Niger's long borders and vast areas of harsh terrain made effective border security a challenge. Through the U.S. Global Security Contingency Fund, a joint interagency program between the U.S. Departments of Defense, Justice, and State, Niger developed a Draft National Border Security Strategy and corresponding Implementation Plan. Niger continued to use rudimentary terrorism watchlists that it shared with the security services and at border checkpoints. The Government of Niger continued to screen travelers using the U.S.-provided Personal Identification Secure Comparison and Evaluation System (PISCES). Niger is one of six African countries participating in the Security Governance Initiative to strengthen coordination among Niger's military and law enforcement services.

In 2017, the SCLCT arrested 250 terrorist suspects on charges that included planning acts of terrorism, association with a terrorist organization, recruitment, and terrorist financing. Courts tried or dismissed approximately 550 terrorism cases. Approximately 1,100 terrorism suspects remained in detention awaiting trial at year's end. While the law prohibits torture and degrading treatment, there were indications that security officials were sometimes involved in abusing or harming detainees suspected of terrorist activity.

The United States provided counterterrorism assistance to Nigerien law enforcement – including through the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) program and a Resident Legal Advisor from the Department of Justice. ATA training included improvised explosive

device awareness and command and control in support of Niger's participation in the multilateral Flintlock exercise.

As part of a broader counterterrorism strategy, the United States is working with the Government of Niger to improve its capacity to employ forensic investigative tools. From April to May, the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Department of Defense collected the biometric information of more than 1,300 terrorism detainees and digitized more than 600 terrorism-linked paper fingerprint records. Niger is the only country in the region where terrorist suspects are identified systematically in a biometric enrollment initiative.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Niger is a member of the Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa, a Financial Action Task Force-style regional body. There were no significant changes since 2016. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): The Government of Niger, through the High Authority for the Consolidation of Peace and the Ministry of Interior, increased its focus on CVE programs, although international partners and non-governmental organizations drove most of Niger's programming. In May, the University of Diffa hosted an international Symposium on De-radicalization and Reintegration. The Ministry of Interior organized a high-level national conference, "Violent Extremism and Youth in Niger."

In late December 2016, the Minister of Interior announced an amnesty policy for Boko Haram and ISIS-WA fighters who wished to defect. In 2017, 172 former fighters and affiliated non-combatants officially defected, with 167 housed in a government-run camp in the Diffa region. The Government of Niger had not put forth a formal reintegration plan for former combatants by the end of 2017.

International and Regional Cooperation: In early 2017, Niger, Burkina Faso, and Mali signed an accord creating the Liptako-Gourma authority to direct security operations in the Tri-Border Region where ISIS-GS and AQ are active. In mid-2017, the Liptako-Gourma authority was folded into the G-5 Sahel Joint Force, a military effort fielded by Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger, to address security threats in the region. Niger was standing up the Central Sector Command, based in Niamey.

On a rotational basis, Niger deploys an infantry battalion to the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali.

Niger conducted joint patrols with Chad and Nigeria and increased its cooperation with Lake Chad Basin Commission member countries to fight Boko Haram and ISIS-WA. Nigerien officials hosted and attended multiple international meetings on countering the two groups. Niger is a member of and contributes troops to the Multinational Joint Task Force along with Benin, Cameroon, Chad, and Nigeria.

Niger is a member of the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership. Nigerien officials continued to participate actively in regional programs organized by the Global Counterterrorism Forum's Sahel Region Capacity-Building and Criminal Justice/Rule of Law working groups. Niger participates in a judicial cooperation organization, the Sahel Judicial Platform, with other countries in the region.

NIGERIA

Overview: Boko Haram and its offshoot, ISIS-West Africa (ISIS-WA), carried out killings, bombings, and attacks on civilian and military targets in northern Nigeria, resulting in thousands of deaths, injuries, and significant destruction of property.

Nigeria continued to work with other terrorism-affected neighbors in the Multinational Joint Task Force, including Benin, Cameroon, Chad, and Niger to counter-Boko Haram and ISIS-WA, regain control over territory previously held by these groups, and launch efforts to rebuild civilian structures and institutions in cleared areas.

Terrorist activity accounted for the internal displacement of nearly two million persons in the states of Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe, and the external displacement of more than 200,000 Nigerian refugees to neighboring countries, principally Cameroon, Chad, and Niger. The Nigerian government negotiated with Boko Haram for the May 6 release of 82 of the 276 female students abducted by Boko Haram in Chibok in 2014. According to the *Bring Back Our Girls* campaign, 113 students remained missing at the end of 2017.

Nigeria is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS.

An interdisciplinary assistance team composed of personnel from the Department of State, the Department of Defense, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the U.S. Agency for International Development continued to coordinate efforts with the Nigerian military at the Defense Intelligence Agency, with daily military-to-military engagement at the Joint Combined Fusion Cell and the Joint Coordination Planning Committee.

In its response to Boko Haram and ISIS-WA attacks, and at times in response to crime and insecurity in general, Nigerian security service personnel perpetrated extrajudicial killings and engaged in torture, sexual exploitation and abuse, arbitrary detention, mistreatment of detainees, use of children by some security elements, looting, and destruction of property. We refer you to the State Department's *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* and *Report on International Religious Freedom* for further information

2017 Terrorist Incidents: Boko Haram and ISIS-WA carried out hundreds of attacks in Nigeria using suicide bombers, improvised explosive devices (IEDs), vehicle-borne IEDs, raids, ambushes, and kidnappings. The following list details only a fraction of the incidents that occurred:

- On June 7, suspected Boko Haram militants launched an attack on Maiduguri, Borno State, and engaged Nigerian forces in a gunfight. In coordination, three suicide bombers

detonated explosives on civilian targets in the Muna Garage neighborhood of Maiduguri. The attack killed at least 17 civilians and injured 34 others.

- On July 25, an ISIS-WA attack on the Nigerian National Petroleum Company (NNPC) surveying project resulted in the deaths of at least 69 people. Victims included 19 soldiers, 33 civilian militia, and 17 NNPC and University of Maiduguri staff. Three university faculty were also abducted.
- On November 21, a Boko Haram suicide bomber detonated explosives at a mosque in the town of Mubi, in Adamawa State, killing at least 50 people.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Nigeria's 2011 counterterrorism law was amended in 2013 and was strengthened by the 2014 National Security Strategy and the 2016 National Counter Terrorism Strategy.

The Nigerian Office of the National Security Advisor is responsible on paper for coordinating all security and enforcement agencies. The Nigerian military has primary responsibility for combating terrorism in the Northeast. Several government agencies also perform counterterrorism functions, including the Nigerian Police Force (NPF), Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corps (NSCDC), and the Ministry of Justice. The NPF has a Counterterrorism Unit and a Terrorist Investigation Branch. Both units are responsible for investigating acts of terrorism and conducting proactive measures to prevent terrorist attacks. Interagency cooperation and information sharing was limited. Due to their knowledge of the local context, community-based security groups, often collectively referred to as the Civilian Joint Task Force, provided critical and necessary responses to the terrorism threat in the Northeast.

In October, the Government of Nigeria began closed-door hearings in front of civilian judges for more than 1,600 suspected supporters of Boko Haram and ISIS-WA. According to a government statement, 600 suspects were arraigned in the initial proceedings. Of these, 45 pled guilty to various charges and were sentenced to between three and 31 years in prison, 468 persons were ordered to undergo a de-radicalization and rehabilitation program before being released, 34 cases were dismissed, and 28 cases were remanded for trial in civilian courts elsewhere in the country. Some human rights groups alleged terrorist suspects detained by the military were denied their rights to legal representation, due process, and to be heard by a judicial authority.

On December 8, the government said it adopted a new strategy for the screening of suspected Boko Haram members and other terrorists. This involved developing a national terrorism database and providing training in investigative interviewing techniques and evidence collection.

Border security responsibilities are shared between NPF, NSCDC, Customs, Immigration, and the military. Coordination among agencies was limited.

The Nigerian government continued to participate in U.S. capacity-building programs, worked with the FBI to investigate specific terrorism matters, and provided IED components to the FBI for analysis at the Terrorist Device Analysis Center. The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission and NPF also received crime scene training relevant to counterterrorism investigations.

In 2017, the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) program continued to mentor Nigeria's explosive ordnance disposal personnel. ATA also delivered a Crisis Intervention Seminar, Senior Leadership Seminar, and an IED awareness seminar in support of Nigeria's participation in the Flintlock multilateral exercise.

The Nigerian government actively cooperated with the United States and other international partners to assist with counterterrorism investigations. On April 12, Nigeria's state security agency said it had thwarted plans by terrorists they believed affiliated with Boko Haram to attack the British and U.S. embassies.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Nigeria is a member of the Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa, a Financial Action Task Force-style regional body. On July 5, the Egmont Group suspended Nigeria for its failure to restructure its financial intelligence unit to make it operationally autonomous and isolated from possible political control, a requirement the Egmont Group places on all of its members. To rectify this deficiency, the Nigerian Senate, in November, passed the Nigerian Financial Intelligence Agency Bill. At the end of 2017, this legislation was awaiting passage by the Nigerian House. Additionally, the Money Laundering Prevention and Prohibition Bill of 2017, amending and strengthening the 2011 Money Laundering Act, was under active review in the Nigerian Senate and House. Other active, but not yet passed, legislation with a nexus to terrorist financing includes the Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Bill and the Proceeds of Crime Bill. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): In August, Nigeria, with direct support from the British Department for International Development, adopted a Policy Framework and National Action Plan for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism. The framework was in accordance with relevant UN policy and developed in coordination with various ministries and civil society organizations. In December, under this framework, the government launched an Action Plan for Demobilization, Disassociation, Reintegration, and Reconciliation in Nigeria. Nigeria is a Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund beneficiary country. Kaduna state and Kano state are members of the Strong Cities Network.

International and Regional Cooperation: Nigeria continued its high-level participation in regional security and counterterrorism conferences. This included President Buhari's participation in the Aqaba Conference on countering terrorism and radicalization in West Africa (sponsored by Jordan in December) and the AU-EU Summit held in Cote d'Ivoire in November. Nigeria is a member of the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership, a founding member of the Global Counterterrorism Forum, and part of the Security Governance Initiative between the United States and six African partners.

SENEGAL

Overview: Senegal experienced no terrorist attacks in 2017. Security forces did, however, arrest three individuals suspected of having ties to ISIS. In light of its deep concerns about terrorist activity in the region, the Government of Senegal worked closely with U.S. military and law enforcement officials to strengthen its counterterrorism capabilities.

The risk of terrorist activity in Senegal arises from external and internal factors. Externally, transnational threats arose due to the Senegalese military presence in several theaters of operation in the region and the activities of terrorist groups in neighboring countries. Internally, the promotion of fundamentalist ideologies by a small number of religious leaders constituted the chief concern, however, these ideologies are outside the Islamic norms that predominate in Senegal.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: The Government of Senegal enacted no important changes to its counterterrorism laws in 2017. However, Senegal did make fully operational its specialized Inter-Ministerial Framework for Intervention and Coordination of Counterterrorism Operations (CICO) during the year. The CICO, which is intended to fully coordinate the government's response to terrorism, was initially formed in 2016.

Senegal's gendarmerie and national police have specialized units to detect, deter, and prevent acts of terrorism. Effective interagency cooperation and information sharing challenged the various governmental bodies that have counterterrorism functions in Senegal, but the advent of the CICO is leading to steady improvement in these areas. Senegal works to develop specific plans and capabilities to prevent and respond to terrorist attacks against soft targets and held a major exercise in 2017 in Dakar to test the ability of security forces to respond effectively.

Senegalese officials identified a continued lack of border resources and regional cooperation as security vulnerabilities. These vulnerabilities were exacerbated by the absence of systems to ensure travel document security, the effective use of terrorist screening watch lists, and the collection of biographic and biometric screening capabilities beyond those deployed at major ports of entry. The southern and eastern portions of the country have far fewer resources to detect and deter terrorists who might travel through those areas.

Senegal is working to improve its law enforcement capacity by participating in multilateral efforts, such as the Border Security Initiative of the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), programs of the African Union (AU), and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Additionally, Senegal has been working with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to promote cooperation and coordination between border agencies, including creating three new joint points of entry, funded by the European Union (EU) and the Government of Japan, on the border with Mauritania. With U.S. funding, the IOM implemented a complementary program to enhance institutional capacities in securing and managing national borders. This included developing and emphasizing stronger community engagement and more coherent approaches to border management; interagency cooperation and coordination; cross-border interoperability; and trust between border communities and security officials that contributes to establishing open, but well-controlled and secure borders that guarantee the full respect of human rights of persons on the move. Senegal also participated in the Department of

State's Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) program, which provided courses and consultations directly focused on soft target identification and protection.

Significant law enforcement actions in 2017 included the February arrest of two Malian nationals suspected of involvement in terrorism and the September arrest of two Algerian nationals on similar charges. The trial of Imam Alioune Badara Ndao and 31 other individuals charged in 2015 with criminal conspiracy in connection with terrorist groups, money laundering for terrorist activities, and terrorist financing, continued through the end of 2017. Imam Ndao has been associated with the Diokhane terrorist network and its links to Boko Haram and ISIS.

In November, when reporting indicated a possible terrorist plot to attack certain soft targets, the Senegalese government responded professionally and appropriately by increasing its security posture in Dakar.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Senegal is a member of the Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa, a Financial Action Task Force-style regional body. Its financial intelligence unit, the National Financial Intelligence Processing Unit, is a member of the Egmont Group. While Senegal criminalizes the offense of terrorist financing, it does not criminalize the provision of funds to terrorist organizations or to individual terrorists in the absence of a link to a specific terrorist act. Senegal also lacks specific measures to criminalize the provision of support to foreign terrorist fighters. Additionally, while Senegal has a framework in place to carry out its obligations under the UN Security Council (UNSC) ISIL (Da'esh) and al-Qa'ida sanctions regime, the procedures for accessing and freezing assets of listed individuals is not clarified in existing regulations. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): There have been no significant changes since 2016. The Senegalese government did not have a national CVE strategy or plan of action, although Senegalese civil society groups were active in this field. The government was reportedly working on a strategy document built around the pillars of prevention, protection, intervention, and resilience, but it had not been completed at the end of 2017, and the draft had not been made public.

International and Regional Cooperation: Senegal is a member of the UN, the AU, ECOWAS, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership. In December, Senegal ended a two-year term as an elected member of the UNSC. Senegal co-sponsored UNSC resolution 2396 on returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters.

Although not a member of the GCTF, Senegal participated in the GCTF's Sahel Region Capacity Building working group. The French and the EU provided financial support and training to reinforce Senegal's counterterrorism and border security capabilities. In November, the Government of Senegal hosted the Fourth Dakar International Forum on Peace and Security in Africa, which included a strong focus on terrorism.

SOMALIA

Overview: Through the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), Somali National Army (SNA), and U.S. and partner military actions, al-Shabaab experienced significant military pressure during 2017, but the group still maintained control over large portions of the country. Al-Shabaab retained the ability to carry out high-profile attacks using vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices (VBIEDs), suicide bombings, mortars, and small arms. Al-Shabaab was believed responsible for an October bombing in Mogadishu that killed more than 500 people and wounded several hundred more. An ISIS-linked group in Puntland was unable to expand its territory beyond a handful of camps in the mountains.

Despite several law enforcement actions in Mogadishu and other major cities to disrupt plots, many leading to prosecutions and convictions, Somalia remained a terrorist safe haven. Terrorists used their relative freedom of movement to obtain resources, recruit fighters, and plan and mount operations within Somalia and in neighboring countries, mainly in Kenya. Following the February presidential election, the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) in May launched a Comprehensive Approach to Security (CAS) in partnership with the international community. The CAS includes military, law enforcement, and countering violent extremism-specific "strands" to address Somalia's security challenges at the federal, state (Federal Member State or FMS), and local levels.

The FGS increased efforts to encourage defections from terrorist groups as part of its broader counterterrorism strategy and made progress in promoting high-level reconciliation with disengaged terrorists, namely former al-Shabaab leader Mukhtar Robow.

Somalia is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: Al-Shabaab used a range of asymmetric tactics in its targeted campaign against AMISOM and Somali security forces, members of parliament, and other government personnel, as well as soft targets with less security measures, such as hotels, restaurants, and cafes. The group launched multiple, often coordinated attacks, on a weekly or monthly basis throughout the country, using suicide bombers, VBIEDs, ambush-style raids, targeted killings, and mortar attacks. Al-Shabaab also continued to use its tactic of amassing fighters to overrun AMISOM or SNA bases, allowing the group to capture weapons, ammunition, uniforms, and other equipment to replenish its supplies. The ISIS affiliate in Puntland also carried out a number of suicide bombings, targeted killings, and small arms attacks in Bosasso and smaller towns, including one in May that killed at least five security officers.

Other notable incidents included:

- On January 2, al-Shabaab employed two VBIEDs to attack a perimeter checkpoint at Mogadishu International Airport, which additionally houses the United Nations and AMISOM headquarters as well as numerous diplomatic missions. Police reported and U.S. mission personnel confirmed at least seven security personnel and civilians dead, with approximately 17 injured.

- On June 7, al-Shabaab fighters using VBIEDs, small arms, and mortars attacked and overran an SNA base in Puntland. Security forces reported approximately 70 soldiers and civilians killed.
- On October 14, a VBIED exploded at a major traffic crossing in Mogadishu, killing more than 500 people and injuring approximately 300 more, according to an FGS investigative committee. Al-Shabaab did not claim responsibility but is believed responsible.
- On October 28-29, al-Shabaab fighters attacked a Mogadishu hotel with a VBIED and small arms, followed by a lengthy standoff with police. At least 29 police and civilians were killed, according to police.
- On December 14, an al-Shabaab suicide bomber attacked the Somali Police Force Academy. Police reported at least 18 officers were killed and 15 injured.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: There are no significant updates to the 2016 report, with the exception of border management. Somalia's porous borders contributed to regional insecurity as al-Shabaab and others continued to move throughout the region mostly undetected. Most countries do not recognize Somali identity documents, leaving Somalia with few options for travel document verification and regional partners unable to properly vet Somali travelers. Somalia has a national immigration screening watchlist and uses Migration Information and Data Analysis System (MIDAS) screening equipment and software provided by the International Organization for Migration at 15 ports of entry. MIDAS provides biographic and biometric screening capabilities but procedural and network connectivity deficiencies limited its effectiveness. There was little law enforcement cooperation between the FGS and FMS governments, which hampered U.S. law enforcement's ability to investigate suspected terrorists, kidnappings, and other terrorism incidents.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Somalia is an observer to the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force, a Financial Action Task Force-style regional body. There have been no significant changes since the 2016 report. The Government of Somalia continued to work towards strengthening anti-money laundering and countering the finance of terrorism bodies, including the Financial Reporting Center, the country's financial intelligence unit. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): Within the CAS process, the Somali government re-launched Somalia's 2016 National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism in September, and federal ministries and FMS counterparts agreed on a revised National Strategy to Prevent and Counter Violent Extremism in November. With support from the European Union, three FMS governments developed regional action CVE plans, and three others were underway at year's end. The FGS supported CVE research, including a study published in December based on interviews with 70 former al-Shabaab members. The FGS also funded counter-messaging efforts and supported religious and secular curriculum development.

Following the February presidential election, the FGS announced its intent to offer amnesty to any al-Shabaab members willing to denounce terrorism and support the FGS. At the London Conference in May, the FGS stated its intent to develop new amnesty legislation as part of the

CAS, and subsequently continued messaging encouraging al-Shabaab members to defect. A donor-supported effort to reintegrate former al-Shabaab combatants continued to expand, primarily through reintegration centers that have been operating in Mogadishu, Kismayo, Baidoa, and Beletweyne for more than three years. Although exact estimates were difficult to verify given limited government oversight of these programs, officials have attributed higher defection rates to ongoing counterterrorism pressure from U.S. airstrikes as well as funding shortfalls that often strain al-Shabaab payments to low-level fighters. In August, former senior al-Shabaab commander and co-founder Muktar Robow publicly denounced al-Shabaab and pledged his support to FGS reconciliation efforts. The FGS welcomed Robow's announcement and reiterated its call for al-Shabaab members to leave the group.

International and Regional Cooperation: There are no significant updates to the 2016 report. The Somali National Army partners with AMISOM, which includes military forces from Burundi, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda.

SOUTH AFRICA

Overview: Following the September 2013 Westgate Mall attack in Kenya, the South African Police Service (SAPS) began improving its counterterrorism cooperation with the United States to increase its preparedness for similar terrorist attacks in South Africa. The Crimes Against the State (CATS) unit within the SAPS Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (DPCI) and the SAPS Crime Intelligence Division (SAPS CI), along with other South African agencies, productively collaborated with U.S. law enforcement and exchanged best practices to enhance risk management efforts and better identify challenges at its borders. Since publicly acknowledging the presence of ISIS facilitation networks and cells in 2016, the South African government has not publicly provided estimates of the number of South African nationals who have immigrated or returned from ISIS-controlled territories. South Africa is a major international transit hub that has proven an appealing location for terrorists and other criminal networks to facilitate illicit travel abroad.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: South Africa's law enforcement and judiciary used existing legislation to respond to an increased level of terrorism activity. The Protection of Constitutional Democracy Against Terrorist and Related Activities Act (POCDATARA) criminalizes acts of terrorism, as well as the financing of terrorism, and sets out specific obligations related to international cooperation. The Regulation of Foreign Military Assistance Act of 1998 applies to nationals who attempt to or who have joined ISIS. The CATS, DPCI, and South Africa's State Security Agency (SSA) are tasked with detecting, deterring, and preventing acts of terrorism within South Africa. The SAPS Special Task Force is specifically trained and proficient in counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, and hostage rescue. The National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) is committed to prosecuting cases of terrorism and international crime. The South African Revenue Service (SARS) protects South African borders from illegal smuggling of goods.

Border security is challenging in South Africa due to its numerous land, sea, and air ports of entry for international travelers. South Africa has multiple law enforcement agencies policing its borders, but they are often stove-piped and inadequate communication limits their border control

ability. Counterterrorism measures at the international airports include screening with advanced technology x-ray machines, but land borders do not have advanced technology and infrastructure. Trafficking networks made use of these land borders for many forms of illicit smuggling. Citizens of neighboring countries are not required to obtain visas for brief visits. Regulation of visa, passport, and identity documents remained a challenge within South Africa. The SAPS internal affairs office investigated allegations of corruption within the Department of Home Affairs concerning the sale of passports and identity documents, but the use of illegitimately obtained identity documents continued.

In January, twin brothers Brandon Lee Thulsie and Tony Lee Thulsie, both arrested in 2016 for planning to attack the U.S. embassy and Jewish institutions in South Africa, appeared in court to face charges on three counts of contravening the POCDATARA. As of December, the cases against the Thulsie twins and siblings Ebrahim and Fatima Patel, both charged for having links to ISIS, were ongoing. The Thulsie case is an important test of the POCDATARA and interagency cooperation.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: South Africa is a member of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and the Eastern and Southern Africa Anti-Money Laundering Group, a FATF-style regional body. South Africa's financial intelligence unit, the Financial Intelligence Centre (FIC), is a member of the Egmont Group. Since FATF published its mutual evaluation report on South Africa in 2008, the country's legal and institutional frameworks for terrorist financing issues have improved, including bank supervision capacity and criminalization of money laundering and terrorist financing activities. In June 2017, President Zuma signed the FIC Act Amendment Bill. The Minister of Finance subsequently amended the Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Control Regulations and withdrew exemptions made under the Financial Intelligence Centre Act, 2001 (FICA), effective October 2, 2017. The amendments addressed "threats to the stability of South Africa's financial system posed by money laundering and terrorist financing." Among the amendments, the bill assigns responsibility to the FIC to freeze the assets of persons on UN sanctions lists. The implementation of FICA regulations led FATF to determine South Africa had made enough progress on customer due diligence standards and will no longer be identified by FATF as requiring follow-up. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): There have been no significant changes since 2016.

International and Regional Cooperation: South Africa is a member of the African Union, the Global Counterterrorism Forum, and the Southern African Development Corporation.

TANZANIA

Overview: The Government of Tanzania cooperates with the United States and regional partners on select security and counterterrorism initiatives. In 2017, Tanzania experienced a series of suspected terrorist attacks in the coastal region of Pwani, primarily on police and low-level ruling party officials. Tanzanian security services led the counterterrorism response,

mainly through an increased presence in affected areas and a broad exercise of police power. The police's heavy-handed approach in Pwani may have helped deter further attacks in the region in 2017, however, the Tanzanian government failed to adopt a whole-of-government approach to address the underlying dynamics of such attacks. We refer you to the State Department's *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* and *Report on International Religious Freedom* for further information.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: Between April and July, masked gunmen killed more than 30 police and local political officials in the Pwani region in a series of small-scale attacks, largely at night. The perpetrators, who did not claim allegiance to a terrorist group, used weapons and ammunition captured from the police in subsequent attacks and left intimidating notes at the scene warning against cooperation with the authorities. The attacks continued on an almost weekly basis into July despite intense government countermeasures. No subsequent attacks were reported, but the Special Police Zone staffed by the Field Force Unit and other security officers, remained in place at the end of 2017. In August, the Inspector General of Police declared the situation in the outskirts of Dar es Salaam resolved following the killing of more than a dozen suspected perpetrators, including the alleged leader of the attacks. Police arrested and detained hundreds of suspects alleged to have been involved in the attacks under the auspices of the Prevention of Terrorism Act. At year's end, most had not been formally charged and many were held in remand.

Official government statements and the media frequently refer to suspects involved in violent crimes as "bandits," making it unclear whether additional incidents are the result of terrorism.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Tanzania's counterterrorism legal framework is governed by the Prevention of Terrorism Act of 2002. There were no significant changes to the legislation in 2017. In November, the Department of Justice's State Department-funded Resident Legal Advisor facilitated a week-long workshop with 29 participants from 15 key governmental agencies to assess Tanzania's counterterrorism laws, guide stakeholders in drafting recommendations for legislative and procedural amendments, and modernize laws regarding the prosecution of foreign terrorist fighter cases. The workshop is part of a larger initiative to strengthen the country's counterterrorism legislative framework.

Tanzania's National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) is an interagency unit composed of officers from the intelligence, police, defense, immigration, and prison sectors who coordinate regularly on counterterrorism issues. The organization struggles to operate effectively due to a weak mandate, a limited budget, and uneven interagency cooperation. The NCTC has participated in capacity-building efforts including training. In 2017, seven senior law enforcement officials, including representatives from the NCTC, attended the International Law Enforcement Academy Executive Policy and Development Symposium on Countering Violent Extremism and Crisis Leadership to develop deeper knowledge of leadership principles and violent extremism. The U.S. National Counterterrorism Center also led crisis management training in October for security and emergency personnel.

The Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance program delivered a Senior Crisis Management Seminar to bolster senior law enforcement's ability to function during a crisis.

Securing Tanzanian borders is a chronic challenge for the government. The use of temporary or emergency identity and travel documents is widespread and complicates immigration security efforts. Additionally, border management systems are fragmented, with some crossings using the U.S.-provided Personal Identification Secure Comparison and Evaluation System (PISCES), some using International Organization for Migration (IOM) or other unknown systems, or in some cases border officials do not use an electronic records systems at all.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Tanzania is a member of the Eastern and Southern Africa Anti-Money Laundering Group, a Financial Action Task Force-style regional body. The Tanzania Financial Intelligence Unit is a member of the Egmont Group. Tanzania continued to make progress on strengthening anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism including through regulatory oversight of foreign exchange bureaus and money remitters. In January and March, the United States co-sponsored workshops for Tanzanian stakeholders to improve Tanzania's mutual legal assistance procedures and increase international cooperation in the investigation of transnational crimes, including terrorist financing and money laundering. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): Tanzania's NCTC continued to lead CVE efforts and is the UN Development Program's partner in a multi-year project to prevent violent extremism that began in the spring of 2017. Efforts were underway to draft a national preventing violent extremism strategy and action plan.

In general, the Government of Tanzania views terrorism as primarily an external threat to Tanzanian security and continued to focus on law enforcement and intelligence services with little engagement or coordination with civil society.

International and Regional Cooperation: Tanzania is a member of the African Union, the Southern African Development Community (SADC), and the East African Community, all of which implemented counterterrorism initiatives. Tanzania hosted a counterterrorism-focused SADC Special Forces Exercise in Tanga in August. Special Forces units from all SADC countries participated, and the exercise included a hostage rescue scenario.

UGANDA

Overview: The Government of Uganda continued to make important contributions toward countering terrorism in East Africa and the Horn of Africa in 2017 and demonstrated strong and sustained political will to apprehend suspected terrorists and disrupt terrorist activity in its territory. The Government of Uganda at times labeled conventional criminal acts as terrorism and leveled terrorism charges against journalists, public officials, and others the government deemed were acting against its interests, potentially diverting attention and resources from core counterterrorism goals. As the largest troop contributing country to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), Uganda remained a key partner in regional efforts to neutralize al-Shabaab.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: In May 2017, the Ugandan government enacted an Anti-Terrorism Amendment Bill that expands the definitions of "terrorism" and "act of terrorism" to better align with international standards and broadens prohibitions on terrorist financing.

The Uganda Police Force (UPF) Directorate of Counterterrorism is the lead law enforcement entity charged with investigating, disrupting, and responding to terrorist incidents. Resource and training gaps, as well as corruption, affected the UPF's overall capacity to detect, deter, and respond to terrorist incidents. Interagency coordination among Ugandan security and intelligence organizations also remained a significant challenge.

The United States continued to provide some capacity-building assistance to the UPF through the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance program. Border security remained a persistent concern for the Ugandan government, with especially porous borders between Uganda and both South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Uganda used the U.S.-provided Personal Identification Secure Comparison and Evaluation System (PISCES) to conduct traveler screening at the country's major ports of entry.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Uganda is a member of the Eastern and Southern Africa Anti-Money Laundering Group, a Financial Action Task Force (FATF)-style regional body. In November, the FATF Plenary Meeting approved a recommendation from the International Cooperation Review Group to remove Uganda from the FATF Compliance Document, noting that the Ugandan government had made significant progress in addressing the strategic deficiencies previously identified. Notably, Uganda signed and ratified all relevant UN conventions relating to money laundering and terrorism finance, passed the Anti-Money Laundering (Amendment) Act to address deficiencies in the principal Act, amended the Anti-Terrorism Act, conducted a money laundering and terrorism finance national risk assessment, and established an anti-money laundering/countering terrorist finance National Task Force.

A significant portion of financial transactions in Uganda are in the form of "mobile money" or payments and electronic funds transfers initiated through mobile phones, which are vulnerable to exploitation by criminals and terrorists. While Uganda's Anti-Money Laundering (Amendment) Act requires financial institutions to conduct comprehensive customer due diligence, it does not put the same requirements on mobile money transfers. Banking institutions do not monitor mobile money payments and transfers in Uganda; mobile money transactions are instead under the purview of the individual telecommunications company that facilitates the specific transaction.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): The Government of Uganda does not have a CVE National Action Plan, as recommended by the UN Secretary-General's Preventing Violent

Extremism Plan of Action, but has committed to putting one in place in 2018. The Ministry of Internal Affairs, at the direction of the prime minister, appointed a lead to oversee this process.

International and Regional Cooperation: Uganda is a member of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the East African Community, the Partnership for Regional East Africa Counterterrorism, and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region. Uganda is the largest troop contributing country to AMISOM, which also includes military forces from Burundi, Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Kenya.

EAST ASIA AND PACIFIC

Overview

Governments in East Asia and the Pacific continued to work to strengthen legal frameworks, investigate and prosecute terrorism cases, increase regional cooperation and information sharing, and address critical border and aviation security gaps throughout the year. Regional cooperation between domestic law enforcement and judicial authorities within countries throughout Southeast Asia resulted in high numbers of terrorism-related arrests and, in many cases, successful prosecutions. Despite these efforts, Southeast Asia remained a target for terrorist recruitment.

The threat posed by transnational terrorism was particularly prominent when ISIS-affiliated domestic groups in the southern Philippines occupied parts of Marawi City for five months before finally succumbing to Philippine counterterrorism forces. Several countries – including Australia, Japan, and the United States – provided counterterrorism and reconstruction assistance to the Philippines as its government began to develop a plan to rebuild the city. Southeast Asian governments remained concerned about foreign terrorist fighters returning from Iraq or Syria and using their operational skills, connections, and experience to launch domestic attacks.

East Asian countries actively participated in regional and international efforts to counter terrorism. Australia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, and Taiwan are partners in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. In September, Australia and Indonesia became the co-chairs of the Global Counterterrorism Forum's Countering Violent Extremism working group.

The Japanese government continued to participate in international counterterrorism efforts in global, regional, multilateral, and bilateral fora. It followed up on the G-7 counterterrorism action plan adopted during its 2016 presidency and completing its second and final year as an elected member of the United Nations Security Council. Japan, with several other countries across the globe – including Australia and New Zealand – is a donor to the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund.

In May in Jeju, the Republic of Korea – with the UN Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate and the ICT4Peace Foundation – sponsored a regional workshop that focused on use of the

internet for terrorist purposes, the "Asia Information and Communication Technology and Counter-Terrorism Dialogue."

China's counterterrorism efforts remained focused primarily on "extremists" that Beijing ascribes to the so-called East Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM). China continued to state that ETIM has influence in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR) and was responsible for at least one domestic attack. China continued to express concerns that Chinese citizens have traveled to Syria and Iraq to fight with ISIS. A message posted by ISIS in March calling for action against unspecified Chinese targets lent credence to China's concern.

AUSTRALIA

Overview: Australia strengthened counterterrorism laws, investigated and disrupted suspected terrorist plots, and maintained high levels of cooperation with U.S. and international partners. Australia played a major role in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS in 2017 and was a leading contributor to coalition military support, humanitarian assistance, and efforts to disrupt foreign terrorist fighters. At the end of 2017, Australia's National Terrorist Threat Advisory System remained at "Probable."

On December 20, Australia established the Home Affairs Department, its most significant domestic security and law enforcement reform in decades. Home Affairs combined the existing Department of Immigration and Border Protection with relevant elements of existing departments of Prime Minister and Cabinet, Attorney-General, Social Services, and Infrastructure and Regional Development. It also drew in the Australian Border Force, Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission, Australian Federal Police, and Australia's financial intelligence agency, the Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (AUSTRAC). Agencies falling under the Home Affairs portfolio will maintain their operational independence while the Department provides strategic leadership and consistent policy coordination.

Australia is focused on counterterrorism threats in Southeast Asia. In October, Australia announced enhanced counterterrorism assistance to the Philippines, featuring closer intelligence-sharing, increased bilateral maritime reconnaissance, and facilitation of post-conflict rehabilitation efforts across military and civil spheres.

Foreign terrorist fighters returning to Australia and the role of social media in inspiring domestic radicalization to violence were also chief concerns. Australian security agencies believe approximately 110 Australian citizens remain with terrorist groups in Iraq and Syria. Approximately 40 fighters have returned, and the government estimates between 68 and 85 Australian foreign fighter fatalities. The government is also aware of about 70 children who either traveled with their parents to or were born in ISIS-controlled areas.

Since September 2014, Australian counterterrorism authorities disrupted 14 terrorism plots domestically, and have cautioned that a major terrorist event in Australia is "inevitable."

The United States worked closely throughout the year with Australia to identify and develop new capabilities that meet a wide variety of requirements for countering terrorist threats. Through a cost-sharing bilateral relationship, both countries advanced their technical ability to defeat or mitigate the evolving capabilities of terrorists and criminal organizations.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: Australia experienced one terrorist-related attack and two disrupted plots. A Somali-born man, who proclaimed allegiance to ISIS and al-Qa'ida, shot one woman to death and took another hostage before police killed him in a standoff.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Australia continued to apply its comprehensive counterterrorism legislation against domestic threats and passed additional legislation to strengthen national security protections. In July, Prime Minister Turnbull announced the implementation of a new Department of Home Affairs by mid-2018, calling it "the most significant reform" in four decades. The Office of Prime Minister and Cabinet stood up a task force to manage ministerial portfolio and statutory realignments of several entities, including the Department of Immigration and Border Protection, the Attorney General's Department, and the Australian Security and Intelligence Organization.

In August, the Australia-New Zealand Counterterrorism Committee released its Strategy for Protecting Crowded Places from Terrorism, drawing on expertise from the Crowded Places Advisory Group, comprising representatives from law enforcement, intelligence, and business sectors.

Coordination among states and territories and between agencies is strong and cooperative. In October, Australia released its fourth National Counterterrorism Plan, outlining national, state, and territory responsibilities. Almost simultaneously, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) committed to a raft of national counterterrorism measures, including nationwide leveraging of state biometric information, expansion of the national emergency warning system, and increasing the pre-charge detention hold period to 14 days for suspected terrorists. COAG also agreed to develop new Commonwealth criminal penalties for those possessing "terrorist material" and perpetrating terrorist hoaxes, such as false online warnings of impending threats.

Significant law enforcement actions in 2017 included:

- In February, an Australian man in New South Wales was arrested for assisting ISIS to develop laser missile technology.
- In July, police charged four Lebanese men in an ISIS-linked plot to bring down a commercial airliner with an improvised explosive device.
- In November, police arrested a Somali-Australian man for attempting to obtain an automatic rifle to kill holiday revelers in Melbourne.

Australia's border security remained robust. Australia is a leader in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum (ARF), in which it raised concerns about traveler data, cargo and aviation security, developed mitigation strategies, and expanded regional information sharing on threats. Australia announced in November that Australian citizens would no longer face penalties for traveling to or remaining in Raqqa without a legitimate purpose, but

emphasized that providing support to any listed terrorist organization remains a punishable offense. Approximately 219 Australian passports have been cancelled in relation to the Iraq and Syria conflict.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Australia is a member of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), co-chair of the Asia/Pacific Group (APG) on Money Laundering, and a member of the APG's Mutual Evaluation Working Group. Its financial intelligence agency is a member of the Egmont Group. Australia also chairs or co-chairs the Egmont Group's Information Exchange Working Group and the FATF Risks, Trends, and Methods Group.

Australia remained a regional and global leader in countering terrorist financing. During the Australian fiscal year (July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017), AUSTRAC (Australian Reports and Analysis Centre) reported 3,255 exchanges of financial intelligence with international partners. AUSTRAC attributes the nearly doubling of exchanges over the previous fiscal year to terrorist finance concerns. AUSTRAC also applied rigorous detection, monitoring, and alerting to triage over 74,000 Suspicious Matter Reports, an amount comparable to the previous year. In August, AUSTRAC published a 600-page report accusing Australia's largest bank of breaching anti-money laundering and terrorist finance laws nearly 54,000 times between 2012 and 2015. On December 15, AUSTRAC expanded its regulatory probe by filing 100 new allegations against the bank, saying that the alleged breaches reflect "systematic non-compliance" stemming from at least three years of failure to report anonymous cash deposits exceeding US $7,800.

On December 18, days after passing the Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing Amendment Bill 2017, to close gaps in e-currency regulation and investigatory reach, Australia announced it would also dedicate an additional US $33.7 million to help AUSTRAC strengthen its non-compliance enforcement. The following day, Australia redirected US $4.3 million retrieved from proceeds of crime to expand AUSTRAC's overseas presence from Indonesia and the Philippines to China, Malaysia, Singapore, the Middle East, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

In November, Australia co-hosted the third Counterterrorism Financing Summit with Indonesia and Malaysia, attended by 445 representatives from 32 countries. Australia will assist a resultant multilateral financial intelligence exercise to jointly analyze suspicious financial activities of individuals operating outside their ordinary countries of residence.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): The Australian Attorney General's Department (AGD) remained the lead coordinator for national CVE efforts. The AGD continued to focus on four overlapping streams that build strength in diversity and social participation, target work with vulnerable communities and institutions, address online terrorist propaganda, and assist diversion and de-radicalization. Additionally, Australia is a donor to the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund.

International and Regional Cooperation: Australia is a member of the United Nations, ASEAN, ARF, the Pacific Island Forum, the East Asia Summit, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the Global Counterterrorism Forum, and the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism. Australia is the chair of the APEC Counter-Terrorism working group for 2017-2018.

Australia remains focused on counterterrorism threats in Southeast Asia and in October committed the Australian Federal Police to help rebuild Philippine counterterrorism capabilities post-Marawi with training and joint maritime patrols. Australia will also add 20 staff to its embassy in Manila.

In November, Australia hosted the United States and Japan at the Trilateral Strategic Dialogue Counterterrorism Consultations. Outcomes included coordinated support to Southeast Asian countries on expanding INTERPOL connectivity and border security, and support for Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund expansion to the Philippines. In December, Australia co-sponsored UN Security Council resolution 2396 on returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters.

CHINA (HONG KONG AND MACAU)

Overview: Referring to "terrorism, separatism, and extremism" as "three evil forces" that threaten domestic stability, China continued enhancing domestic counterterrorism efforts and called for greater regional cooperation to combat terrorism. During March-April, China initiated a major security campaign in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR) that targeted Uighur and other Muslim ethnic groups and was reportedly aimed at rooting out what officials describe as "separatist, extremist, and terrorist activity." The campaign included detentions widely reported to number in the thousands, along with intensified use of traditional policing measures, the deployment of high-tech surveillance and monitoring systems, the involuntary collection of DNA and other biometric data, and the closure of mosques.

China's primary counterterrorism focus remained on ethnic Uighur extremists Beijing ascribes to the East Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM). China maintains that ETIM is responsible for much of the violence in the XUAR, despite a lack of independent information that ETIM is active in China. China's response to the threat of terrorism remained difficult to distinguish from its suppression of activities its leadership deems separatist in nature or politically subversive to the Chinese Community Party. In response to alleged separatist or subversive concerns, China intensified its security and surveillance in the XUAR, including the implementation of stricter security controls, restrictions on travel, and curbs on religious practice.

There were signs that ISIS posed a threat to China and its interests abroad, and the Chinese government reported that some Chinese citizens have joined ISIS and other terrorist organizations in the Middle East. China also issued public statements warning of growing threats to Chinese nationals abroad. In March, ISIS released a half-hour video in which it pledged to attack unspecified Chinese targets.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: The Chinese government claimed its escalated security and surveillance policies reduced the number of what it considered terrorist-related incidents in the XUAR. Details about alleged terrorism-related incidents inside China were difficult to verify due to a lack of transparency and information from the Chinese authorities. China also impeded third party efforts to independently verify state media accounts, which are often the only source of reporting on incidents on Chinese territory. In addition, requests by U.S. law enforcement officials for information on terrorist incidents from Chinese officials went largely unanswered.

Incidents described by the government as terrorism-related included:

- In February, three attackers alleged to be Uighurs detonated a homemade explosive device and killed five residents outside a government compound near Pishan County in the XUAR.
- In June, Islamic State's Khorasan Province executed two Chinese nationals who had been kidnapped in May in southwestern Pakistan.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: China continued to enhance surveillance and security throughout the country, sometimes citing the Counterterrorism, National Security, Counter-Espionage, and Cyber-Security laws. The 2017 Supreme People's Court report departed from past practice by not reporting the number of individuals convicted in 2016 on terrorism-related charges. Nevertheless, publicly available verdicts related to terrorism prosecutions in 2016 indicate that efforts to implement the Counterterrorism Law have focused on punishing the possession or distribution of materials that authorities deemed "fake terrorism information" or "terrorist" or "extremist" in nature. Specifically, the individuals in these cases were convicted of possessing, accessing, and distributing terrorism-related video or audio material. The implementation of the Counterterrorism Law has also focused on punishing hotels and courier services for failing to comply with "real name registration" requirements.

Lawmakers in XUAR passed a regional Anti-Religious Extremism Law in March. The law prohibits advocating or propagating what it considers "extremist" thoughts and publishing, downloading, sharing, or reading articles and audio-video material containing "extremist" content. The law also criminalizes the wearing of long beards and other practices. There were also reports that authorities compelled Uighurs and other minorities to return to the locality listed on their identification documents and that authorities confiscated the passports of members of ethnic minorities and restricted them from leaving the country. Citing terrorism concerns, authorities required some vehicles in the XUAR to install mandatory satellite tracking and required all residents there to install a surveillance "app" that automatically detects "terrorist and illegal" religious videos, images, e-books, and electronic documents on smart phones. The app reportedly has the capability to remotely delete this content. The government's broad definitions of "terrorism" and "extremism" and its unclear definition of "fake terrorism information" continued to raise human rights concerns. We refer you to the State Department's *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* for further information.

Beyond China's borders, China pursued security and counterterrorism cooperation with countries that drew a similarly broad definition of "extremism" and raised human rights concerns. For example, Egyptian authorities arrested and deported at least 34 Chinese-nationality Uighurs in

July, reportedly following a Chinese government order that Uighur students in Egypt return to China. Those Uighurs who returned were reportedly sent to re-education camps, where at least two have died. Also, Chinese authorities confirmed in December they were monitoring some international Twitter accounts allegedly linked to ETIM. In another incident, Italian authorities detained a Uighur activist with German citizenship, preventing him from delivering a scheduled speech about human rights in the XUAR. This detention was allegedly responding to an INTERPOL Red Notice.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: China is a member of the Financial Action Task Force, the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering, and the Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing. Based on current law enforcement investigations, the United States is concerned that China does not adequately control terrorist financing. Chinese law enforcement claims to have limited ability to freeze funds and investigate banking transactions. Additional concerns include: a lack of guidance for designated non-financial businesses and professions, underdeveloped procedures for individuals and groups who seek to be delisted from domestic sanctions, and inadequate regulations defining the rights of bona fide third parties in seizure and confiscation actions.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): China continued to implement broad campaigns in the XUAR under the rubric of countering what the Chinese government considered "extremism." The XUAR government also mandated "re-education" programs for members of ethnic minority communities and students who study overseas. The government implemented a number of other programs aimed at "stability maintenance," many of which promote cultural assimilation in the XUAR and place restrictions on the practice of Islam. For further information, please see the Department of State's *Report on International Religious Freedom for 2016*.

Regional and International Cooperation: China continues to promote the United Nations as the primary international fora for counterterrorism while increasing its engagement in other multilateral, regional, and bilateral fora. In June, China and other members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) signed the SCO Convention on Combating Extremism. In August, China participated in the 2nd High-level Military Leaders' Meeting on Quadrilateral Cooperation and Coordination Mechanism in Counterterrorism with Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Tajikistan in Dushanbe, and the four parties signed agreements to coordinate counterterrorism efforts. More than 80 countries sent representatives to attend China's Forum on International Cooperation in Countering the Use of Cyberspace for Criminal and Terrorist Purposes in December.

Beijing pursued the return of ethnic Uighurs and others in Malaysia and other countries to China in the name of counterterrorism cooperation, although evidence of these individuals' connection to terrorism was not made public.

Hong Kong

Hong Kong continued its effective security and law enforcement partnership with the United States through the Hong Kong Customs and Excise Department's joint implementation of the Container Security Initiative and participation in U.S.-sponsored training in port and border security.

Counterterrorism remained an operational priority for the Hong Kong Police Force. The Police Security Wing coordinates potential terrorist threat information with relevant counterterrorism units. The Police Counterterrorism Response Unit provides a strong deterrent presence. It assists police districts with counterterrorism strategy implementation and complements the tactical and professional support of existing police specialist units, such as the Explosive Ordnance Disposal Bureau, the Special Duties Unit, the Airport Security Unit, and the VIP Protection Unit.

Hong Kong is a member of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering, a FATF-style regional body. Hong Kong's Joint Financial Intelligence Unit is a member of the Egmont Group. Terrorist financing is a criminal offense in Hong Kong, and financial institutions are required to search continuously for terrorist financing networks. They must also screen accounts using designations lists provided by the United States under relevant authorities, as well as the UNSC ISIL (Da'esh) and al-Qa'ida and 1988 (Afghanistan/ Taliban) Sanctions Committees' lists. In June, the Legislative Council passed a bill on the cross-border transportation of large quantities of currency and bearer negotiable instruments to combat terrorist financing. At year's end, the Secretary for Security had not yet designated the date when the bill would go into force.

In June, Hong Kong introduced the United Nations (Anti-Terrorism Measures) (Amendment) Bill 2017 to update the ordinance to adequately comply with UNSC resolution 2178 (2014) on Foreign Terrorist Fighters. Filing suspicious transactions reports irrespective of transaction amounts is obligatory, but because the bill passed in June 2017 and had not gone into force, Hong Kong did not require mandatory reporting requirements for cross-border currency movements in 2017. In advance of its 2018 FATF Mutual Evaluation, the Hong Kong government in June 2017 introduced in Legislative Committee two bills to bring its regulatory regime fully in line with FATF recommendations.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Hong Kong law enforcement officers attended U.S. government-sponsored capacity-building training at the International Law Enforcement Academy on personnel and facility security, law enforcement techniques to counter terrorism, and financial investigations.

Macau

Macau's counterterrorism cooperation with the United States included information sharing. The Police Intervention Tactical Unit (UTIP), which falls under the Macau Public Security Police Force, is responsible for protecting important installations and dignitaries and conducting high-risk missions, such as improvised explosive device deactivation. UTIP's Special Operations Group's mission is counterterrorism operations. Macau cooperated internationally on counterterrorism efforts through INTERPOL and other security-focused organizations. Macau law enforcement officers attended U.S. government-sponsored capacity-building training at the International Law Enforcement Academy on personnel and facility security, financial and crime scene investigations, computer investigations, and evidence protection.

Macau is a member of the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering, a FATF-style regional body. Macau's Financial Intelligence Office is a member of the Egmont Group. In response to FATF recommendations, the Macau government enacted a new law on the cross-boundary transportation of large quantities of currency and bearer negotiable instruments in June. The law went into effective in November. Two amended laws on anti-money laundering and counterterrorist financing, which widen the scope of identifiable criminal offences and strengthen customer due diligence measures, became effective in May.

Terrorist financing is a criminal offense in Macau. Banks and other financial institutions are required to search continuously for terrorist financing networks and screen accounts using designations lists provided by the United States under relevant authorities and UNSC ISIL (Da'esh) and al-Qa'ida and 1988 (Afghanistan/Taliban) Sanctions Committees' lists. Filing suspicious transactions reports irrespective of transaction amounts is obligatory.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*

INDONESIA

Overview: Indonesia applied sustained pressure to detect, disrupt, and degrade terrorist groups operating within its borders and deny them safe haven. ISIS-affiliated Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD) and its offshoots continued to target police and other symbols of state authority. The capability of terrorist groups to launch coordinated mass casualty attacks was assessed as low, but the intent remained high. Failed plots included attempts by terrorist groups to use low-grade radioactive material for bombs and recruit female suicide bombers. Returning foreign terrorist fighters with new operational training, skills, experience, networks, and access to funding could help launch more sophisticated attacks against Indonesian government personnel or facilities, Western targets, and other soft targets and public spaces. While not a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, the Indonesian government and Muslim civil society leaders forcefully and repeatedly denounced ISIS and actively promoted a "soft approach" to countering violent extremism to complement "hard" law enforcement counterterrorism efforts.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: JAD targeted police throughout the year, including May 24, when two JAD suicide bombers fatally detonated pressure cooker bombs at a busy bus station in East Jakarta that killed three police officers and injured seven civilians. The police were the target of

multiple other JAD-linked attacks, including a June 25 stabbing at a police post in North Sumatra that killed one police officer and injured another, and a June 30 stabbing at a mosque in Jakarta that injured two police officers.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Since 2002, Indonesia has successfully used a civilian-law-enforcement-led, rule-of-law-based approach to counterterrorism. Relevant legislation includes the Law on Combating Criminal Acts of Terrorism (15/2003), the Law on Prevention and Eradication of Terrorist Financing (9/2013), and the 1951 Emergency Law; and Indonesia's Criminal Code. An amendment to CT Law 15/2003, first proposed in February 2016, would strengthen provisions against foreign terrorist fighters by criminalizing extraterritorial fighting, preparatory acts, and material support for terrorism. In 2017, the Indonesian legislature continued to discuss edits to the draft amendment. The Indonesian government also passed legislation enabling the banning of groups that seek to undermine Indonesian national unity and also banned the non-violent, pro-caliphate group Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia.

The elite police counterterrorism force, Detachment 88, leads counterterrorism operations and investigations. Law enforcement was increasingly able to detect, deter, and prevent most terrorist attacks. On August 18, police re-arrested JAD's Aman Abdurrahman, who was due for an early release from a nine-year sentence, and charged him for his involvement in the January 14, 2016, central Jakarta attack of a police post and a U.S.-franchise coffee shop with small arms and homemade bombs. Three Indonesian citizens and a dual national Algerian-Canadian were killed and at least 23 others were injured in the attack.

Terrorism case conviction rates were high. Sentences tended to be short, with some exceptions. Recidivist JAD member Juhanda received a life sentence for an attack on a church in East Kalimantan in November 2016. Indonesia's first female would-be suicide bomber, Dian Yulia Novi, received a seven-and-a-half year sentence for her role in a December 2016 plot to attack the presidential palace.

Corrections officials took steps to improve terrorist prisoner management and implemented a new risk assessment and classification tool. On August 28, Indonesia designated Pasir Putih prison on the island of Nusa Kambangan in Central Java as a specialized prison for high-risk terrorist prisoners.

Border security remained a challenge for this vast archipelagic nation. Advanced Passenger Information and Passenger Name Record systems were not fully in use. Customs continued to struggle with targeting, analysis, management systems, and high-level management turnover. Police maintained a watchlist of suspected terrorists, but lines of communication and coordination among stakeholder agencies were not always clear. Immigration officials at major ports of entry had access to biographic and biometric domestic-only centralized databases. In November, Indonesia began systematic border screening against INTERPOL's Stolen and Lost Travel Document and nominals databases at three major airports.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Indonesia is a member of the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering (APG), a Financial Action Task Force (FATF)-style regional body.

Indonesia's financial intelligence unit, the Indonesian Financial Transaction Reports and Analysis Center (PPATK), is a member of the Egmont Group. Indonesia's Counterterrorist Financing Law 9/2013 criminalizes money laundering and terrorist financing and authorizes terrorist asset freezing pursuant to UN Security Council resolution 1373, the UN Security Council (UNSC) ISIL (Da'esh) and al-Qa'ida sanctions regime, and the 1988 Afghanistan/Taliban sanctions regime. In February, Indonesia issued a presidential regulation to strengthen a FATF-driven risk-based approach to limit terrorism finance within the non-profit and charity sector. The APG conducted a Mutual Evaluation Review peer assessment of Indonesia's anti-money laundering/countering terrorist financing regime (AML/CFT) in November. Indonesia was removed from APG's monitoring list due to progress in its AML/CFT framework in 2017.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): Government and civil society leaders promoted a moderate and tolerant practice of Islam as an alternative to terrorist teachings. They also reinforced the national ideology of Pancasila (five principles that form the philosophical foundation of the Indonesian state).

The National Counterterrorism Agency (BNPT) began developing a national CVE action plan. A variety of civil society organizations is active in CVE programming, but there was minimal coordination with BNPT programs.

In 2017, the process for a nationwide reorganization of the police began with the goal of a community-focused police service that can better identify the early warning signs of radicalization to violence.

The BNPT managed de-radicalization programs for terrorist convicts. In February, it opened a de-radicalization center in Sentul, south of Jakarta.

Indonesians deported from third countries for attempting to travel to Iraq and Syria were enrolled in a one-month de-radicalization program at a Ministry of Social Affairs shelter in East Jakarta. The BNPT used former terrorists for outreach campaigns and helped establish religious boarding schools for the children of former terrorists.

International and Regional Cooperation: Indonesia participated in counterterrorism efforts in several international, multilateral, and regional fora, including the United Nations, the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). Indonesia remained active in the ASEAN Regional Forum Inter-Sessional Meetings on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime and the APEC Counter-Terrorism working group. Indonesia was co-chair of the former GCTF Detention and Reintegration working group until September. Beginning in September, Indonesia and Australia co-chaired the GCTF Countering Violent Extremism working group. Indonesia formalized trilateral counterterrorism cooperation with Malaysia and the Philippines and

co-hosted a sub-regional meeting with Australia in Manado, North Sulawesi. Indonesia continued to use the Jakarta Center for Law Enforcement Cooperation as a regional training center.

MALAYSIA

Overview: Although Malaysia did not experience ISIS-related attacks in 2017 and the overall number of foreign terrorist fighters from Malaysia decreased, the country remained a source, transit, and, to a lesser extent, a destination country for suspected ISIS supporters. This included suspected ISIS supporters who were deported from Turkey and those planning to travel to the southern Philippines. Malaysia monitored, arrested, deported, and tried suspected ISIS supporters throughout the year. Malaysia also cooperated with the United States and others to increase border security capacity at airports and in the Sulu Sea and to counter terrorist messaging on social media. Malaysia is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: On April 4, the House of Representatives re-authorized the maximum 28-day detention-without-charge period for national security suspects contained in the 2012 Security Offenses (Special Measures) Act for another five years, or until July 2022. Opponents of the extension cited the misuse of national security legislation to arrest critics.

During the year, Malaysian authorities continued to broaden INTERPOL connectivity at air, land, and sea ports of entry, but lacked legislation to authorize the collection of Advance Passenger Information.

In August, police arrested eight Philippine citizens suspected of planning an attack on the closing ceremony of the Southeast Asia Games. The lead suspect was believed to be a member of the Abu Sayyaf Group and to have participated in combat operations, kidnappings for ransom, and beheadings in the Philippines prior to his arrest.

Malaysian law enforcement continued to participate in the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) program. Training and equipment focused on enhancing Malaysian border security and investigative capabilities.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Malaysia is a member of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and of the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering, a FATF-style regional body. In its annual National Risk Assessment for 2016 (published in 2017), the National Coordination Committee to Counter Money Laundering did not consider terrorism financing to be a high risk in Malaysia. The Committee did note, however, that a small but growing number of "self-financed" terrorists have sought to raise funds through family, friends, and the internet to support their travel to Syria and Iraq to fight with ISIS.

Between 2016 and April 2017, 29 terrorist finance prosecutions were brought to court and 11 convictions were secured. The increase in convictions over the previous year was due to closer public-private partnership in detecting terrorist financing-related activities in Malaysia and greater coordination within the law enforcement community.

Although the general risk was low for the use of cryptocurrencies in terrorist financing, Malaysia's central bank (BNM) announced during the year that it had begun drafting a framework to regulate the exchange of cryptocurrencies to fiat currencies to ensure that all such exchange entities and their transactions were registered with the central bank.

According to a 2017 regional not-for-profit sector risk assessment (unique from the National Risk Assessment) co-published by BNM, the terrorism finance risk facing not-for-profit organizations (NPOs) in Malaysia was rated medium. The report highlighted the potential for Malaysia to be used as a transit country for recruits joining terrorist groups because its porous borders were vulnerable to terrorists moving funds and other material support into neighboring countries. Malaysia was the only country commended in the regional assessment for having significant regulatory oversight, terrorist financing-focused outreach, national and international mechanisms for coordination, and regulatory powers to remove and revoke NPO-status and enforce actions against NPOs. However, the existence of four different registrars for NPOs and the absence of requirements for NPOs to register and file suspicious transaction reports created limitations to detecting and combating terrorist financing.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): The Ministry of Youth's Institute for Youth Research published a set of guidelines in 2017 to educate the public on "the dangers of radicalism and involvement in extremism." The guidelines were based on government-sponsored research on ISIS ideology.

The government also announced two new counter-messaging initiatives during the year, including the King Salman Center for International Peace, a partnership with the Government of Saudi Arabia; and the ASEAN Center for Islam, Peace, and Non-Violence, a center that would be based at the Universiti Sultan Azlan Shah. The ASEAN center was not operational by the end of 2017.

Police engaged in extensive community outreach activities during the year and enhanced security partnerships with communities in Eastern Sabah.

International and Regional Cooperation: Malaysia continued to support counterterrorism efforts in regional and multilateral organizations and participated in numerous counterterrorism events hosted by the United Nations, the Global Counterterrorism Forum, ASEAN, and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). In 2017, Malaysia hosted an ARF workshop on countering online extremism, a regional workshop on handling returning foreign terrorist fighters and ISIS External Operations, and a regional counterterrorism financing summit. In cooperation with Indonesia and the Philippines, Malaysia announced the commencement of joint maritime patrols in June to "maintain stability in the region in the face of non-traditional real threats such as piracy, kidnapping, terrorism, and other transnational crimes in regional waters." The three

governments also announced the commencement of joint air patrols in October to counter the movement of violent extremists and terrorists across the borders of the three countries.

Malaysia is also a member of the Saudi-led Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition. In November, Malaysian officials joined representatives from 41 other Muslim-majority states to formally launch the coalition and coordinate their counterterrorism efforts.

PHILIPPINES

Overview: The Philippines improved its counterterrorism capabilities in the face of an evolving and increasingly robust terrorist threat. The Philippine government consistently acknowledged the dangers from ISIS-affiliated terrorist groups and welcomed assistance from the United States and a range of international partners. In addition to exchanges and U.S. materiel and advise-and-assist support, the September 2017 Tempest Wind drill showcased whole-of-government U.S.-Philippine cooperation with more than 1,200 civilian and military participants simulating a hostage rescue scenario.

From May to November, terrorist organizations pledging support to ISIS – including a faction of the Abu Sayyaf Group, the Maute Group, and others – occupied and held Marawi City. When the siege began, President Duterte declared martial law over the entire Mindanao region – approximately one-third of the country's territory – and Congress granted an extension of martial law until the end of 2018. Security forces ultimately cleared the city and eliminated much of the terrorist leadership, but suffered many casualties during the siege.

Political settlements to long-running insurgencies remained elusive, thereby driving recruitment and fueling terrorist activities among certain groups. The Bangsamoro Basic Law, intended to implement the previous administration's 2014 peace agreement with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), was awaiting action in Congress at the end of 2017. Delays in passing the Law have provided recruitment propaganda for former MILF fighters and commanders who formed more extreme breakaway groups, including the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF), Ansar al-Khalifa, and the Maute Group.

The Government of the Philippines and the Communist Party of the Philippines/New People's Army (CPP/NPA) ended their six-month unilateral ceasefires in February, and the CPP/NPA increased its attacks against security forces following the failure of the most recent round of peace talks in May. On December 5, President Duterte signed a presidential proclamation to formally designate the CPP/NPA a terrorist group, but the courts must still rule on the designation.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: During the Battle of Marawi City, radical groups aligned with ISIS attacked, occupied, and destroyed several key public buildings and held dozens of civilians hostage as human shields. They also reportedly massacred and beheaded captive civilians. Beyond Marawi, Philippine media observed that kidnapping-for-ransom cases declined from previous years. Armed attacks against civilians and security forces continued, however. The press reported that on June 22, security forces rescued at least 60 civilians held hostage after a BIFF attack in North Cotabato. Suspected members of the Abu Sayyef Group attacked a village

in Basilan on August 21, killing at least nine civilians and wounding a dozen more. The December 3 attack on a police station in Misamis Oriental by approximately 100 CPP/NPA members exemplified the group's frequent strikes at military, police, and local government official targets.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: President Duterte identified amending the Human Security Act of 2007, the country's principal counterterrorism legislation, as a priority in both of his state of the nation addresses. Efforts to revise the legislation, thereby enabling more effective investigation and prosecution of terrorism as a crime, were ongoing at the end of 2017.

Interagency information sharing continued to improve among Philippine law enforcement units, despite the country lacking a fully operational 24/7 joint fusion center to monitor and address terrorist threats and activities. The Joint Terrorist Financing Investigation Group is the only multi-agency "center" in Manila that routinely meets and exchanges counterterrorism intelligence.

The Philippines increased its aviation security capacity by procuring updated x-ray technology and more widely using explosive trace detection units, but it faced understaffing challenges at security checkpoints and lacked a comprehensive national aviation security strategy. Four Japanese-donated maritime rescue and response vessels allowed the Philippine Coast Guard to extend its maritime security capabilities in key areas of their Exclusive Economic Zone and the Sulu Sea. In the area of identity tracking, collection of high value target biometric attributes expanded to include the Philippines' largest prison.

Key counterterrorism law enforcement actions included the National Bureau of Investigation's October 2017 arrest of a woman suspected of using the internet to spread terrorist propaganda and recruit foreign terrorist fighters to the Philippines. The Philippine Department of Justice charged the Maute clan matriarch, the former Marawi mayor, and nine other individuals with rebellion in June. Additionally, the Philippines effectively exercised its capabilities to protect the 2017 Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Summit and related events from terrorist attacks.

In 2017, the Philippine National Police participated in the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) program. It received training and equipment on crisis response, border security, and investigations – including cyber investigations.

The Philippine justice system made progress on past instances of terrorism, including the November 2017 conviction of a man responsible for the 2007 bombing of the Philippine House of Representatives. Meanwhile, hearings continued on the 2009 landmine attack that killed two U.S. Army Special Forces soldiers in Jolo Province.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: The Philippines is a member of the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering, a Financial Action Task Force (FATF)-style regional body. Its financial intelligence unit, the Anti-Money Laundering Council, is a member of the Egmont Group. The Philippines amended its Anti-Money Laundering Act to include gambling and

casinos, a critical step to avoid placement on the FATF "grey" list. The Philippines continued to make efforts to bring its banking controls up to international standards.

The Joint Terrorist Financing Investigation Group continued to work with the United States to investigate suspected terrorist finance cases. Notably, the Philippines seized US $1 million from the Maute family during the 2017 Marawi siege.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): At year's end, the Anti-Terrorism Council was working to finalize a National Action Plan for Countering Violent Extremism that will outline a whole-of-government strategy.

International and Regional Cooperation: The Philippine Navy began joint patrols with its Indonesian and Malaysian counterparts under a June 2017 trilateral arrangement to combat piracy, terrorism, and the illegal drug trade. In November, regional partners also founded the Southeast Asia Counter Terrorism Financing working group, an information-sharing mechanism that comprises regional financial intelligence units co-led by Australia and the Philippines. As the 2017 chair of ASEAN, the Philippines hosted key leadership summits that facilitated dialogue and coordination on counterterrorism issues.

SINGAPORE

Overview: Singapore identified counterterrorism as a top policy priority and has developed a comprehensive counterterrorism strategy based on global and regional trends. This strategy includes vigilant security measures, regional and international law enforcement cooperation, counter-radicalization efforts, and strategies to prepare the populace for eventual attacks. As such, Singapore remained a committed, active, and effective counterterrorism partner in 2017. Counterterrorism remained a pillar of the civilian sector security relationship between Singapore and the United States. The highly productive levels of counterterrorism cooperation developed in recent years continued as did expanded information sharing. Singapore's domestic counterterrorism apparatus and its ability to detect, deter, and disrupt threats remained effective. Singapore has been a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS since 2014 and expanded its support in 2016 beyond military assets to also include medical teams in Iraq.

The United States worked closely throughout the year with Singapore to identify and develop new capabilities that meet a wide variety of requirements for countering terrorist threats. Through a cost-sharing bilateral relationship, both countries advanced their technical ability to defeat or mitigate the evolving capabilities of terrorists and criminal organizations.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Singapore uses its Internal Security Act (ISA) to arrest and detain suspected terrorists. The ISA authorizes the Minister for Home Affairs (MHA), with the consent of the president, to order arrest and detention without warrant if it is determined that a person poses a threat to national security. The initial detention may be for up

to two years and the MHA may renew the detention for an unlimited period – in increments of up to two years at a time – with the president's consent. Alternatively, the government can issue a restriction order limiting a person's international travel and changes of residence or employment without government approval. ISA cases are subject to review by the courts to ensure strict compliance with procedural requirements under the act.

Singapore's existing legal framework, in conjunction with the ISA, provides the government with the necessary tools to support the investigation and prosecution of terrorism offenses. In October, Singapore passed the "Infrastructure Protection Act" that mandates enhanced counterterrorism security measures for public buildings and sensitive sites. Law enforcement agencies displayed coordination, command, and control in responding to threat information affecting Singapore's security.

The Government of Singapore has a "not if, but when" stance regarding the likelihood of terrorist attacks within the city-state. The government's SGSecure public awareness campaign was launched in 2016 to improve emergency preparedness, promote security awareness, and build national resiliency. The campaign continued in 2017 with a broad advertising campaign and public information sessions with local police.

To better detect possible terrorist movements via air into or transiting through Singapore, the Immigration and Checkpoints Authority worked with the United States to improve its passenger screening system by integrating both Advanced Passenger Information and Passenger Name Record data transmitted from air carriers into its border screening processes. Implementation of this program by Singapore will help its government safeguard international travel and supply chains against terrorism by analyzing traveler data and developing targeting rules and methodologies.

Singapore issued at least four detention and two restriction orders to Singaporeans under the ISA in 2017. With these arrests, Singapore has issued detention or restriction orders to at least 19 Singaporeans for terrorism-related activities since 2015. In 2017, Singapore expelled several radicalized foreign domestic workers, fined and expelled a foreign Muslim teacher for reciting an inflammatory prayer, and banned three foreign Muslim preachers from entering the country due to the preachers' "divisive" comments that were contrary to Singaporean policies of racial and religious harmony and inclusion. We refer you to the State Department's *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* for further information.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Singapore is a member of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering, a FATF-style regional body. Singapore's Suspicious Transaction Reporting Office is a member of the Egmont Group. In April 2017, Singapore announced the creation of an Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism Industry Partnership (ACIP). The ACIP is a joint initiative between the Monetary Authority of Singapore and the Commercial Affairs Department of the Singapore Police Force, with the goal of bringing together relevant government agencies and private sector participants to strengthen Singapore's capabilities to combat money laundering and terrorist financing. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018*

International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): Through entities such as the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR) and the Religious Rehabilitation Group (RRG), Singapore serves as a regional CVE hub. The ICPVTR conducts research, training, and outreach programs aimed at understanding the causes of radicalization to violence and formulating practical rehabilitation programs. The government also encourages inter-religious and inter-ethnic dialogue through Interracial and Religious Confidence Circles, local community fora that bring leaders from Singapore's religious and ethnic communities together to discuss issues of concern and build trust.

The government believes in building regional capacity to counter violent extremism and has highlighted opportunities for constructive engagement, such as promoting legitimate charities working to ease suffering in Syria and Iraq. The Islamic Religious Council of Singapore, the Islamic authority in charge of Muslim affairs, maintains a Facebook presence and holds outreach and educational events to counter terrorist propaganda and recruitment efforts.

The RRG, a volunteer organization, has had success in counseling detainees held under the Internal Security Act. The comprehensive program includes religious and psychological counseling and involves the detainee's family and community. In 2016, the RRG launched a smart phone app designed to counter terrorist voices by providing users with opportunities to ask questions and have conversations with RRG imams and counselors.

International and Regional Cooperation: Singapore is an active participant in counterterrorism cooperation efforts in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the ASEAN Regional Forum, and Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation, and has prioritized regional counterterrorism cooperation as ASEAN chair. In December, Singapore hosted Philippine forces at its new urban conflict training center and participated in its first counterterrorism tabletop exercise with Indonesian forces in November. In March, Singapore co-hosted, with Turkey and the United States, the First Regional Workshop of the Global Counterterrorism Forum's Protection of Soft Targets in a Counterterrorism Context Initiative.

THAILAND

Overview: Thailand's principle vulnerability to international terrorism is its status as a transit and facilitation country. Thailand is an attractive facilitation hub for illicit activity given the high volume of travelers through Bangkok's main airport, coupled with an available market of illegal goods and relatively weak banking oversight. Domestic terrorist incidents were largely confined to Thailand's four southernmost provinces, the scene of a longstanding separatist conflict between ethno-nationalist Malay Muslim insurgent groups and the central Thai government. Although Thai security officials have expressed moderate concern about the threat to Thailand from ISIS, security authorities continued to assert there was no confirmed evidence of Thai citizens joining the group or of operational linkages between the southern insurgent groups and international terrorist networks. Thailand remained a productive counterterrorism

partner, even as the Thai government continued to focus on domestic political challenges as its primary security priority.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: Ethno-nationalist Malay Muslim insurgents carried out hundreds of attacks in the southernmost provinces of Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat, and parts of Songkhla, known as Thailand's Deep South. Methods included shootings, arson, improvised explosive devices (IEDs), and vehicle-borne IEDs (VBIEDs). Since the conflict surged in 2004, insurgents have largely confined their attacks to the four southernmost provinces. Terrorism-related attacks included:

- On April 6, a series of at least 20 near-simultaneous bomb and arson attacks were carried out in Thailand's southern provinces, causing widespread blackouts. The attacks occurred a day after the country enacted the new constitution, and many political analysts believed the attacks were likely intended to undermine the military government. A second string of attacks occurred in 11 districts of Thailand's Deep South on April 19.
- On May 9, two bombs exploded at a supermarket in Pattani, injuring 61 people, including 13 children, but caused no fatalities. A small bomb was triggered inside the store before a VBIED was triggered outside the store approximately 15 minutes later. While violence and bombings in the Deep South are common, the use of a VBIED on civilian targets is rare. Many analysts believe the incident was not intended to cause high civilian casualties, as the initial smaller bomb was likely intended to evacuate the area prior to the VBIED's explosion. Although no group took responsibility for the bombing, it was believed the work of the southern separatist movement. The lack of a claim of responsibility is not unusual, as the various ethnic Malay insurgent groups generally do not publicly claim responsibility for attacks.
- On May 22, a small bomb exploded in Bangkok's Phra Mongkut Hospital, injuring 24 people. The hospital is military-run and the blast took place on the third anniversary of the 2014 military coup. A suspect arrested in June allegedly confessed to planting the bomb and claimed to despise the military regime.
- On August 16, a group of seven armed men stole six pick-up trucks from a used car dealership in Songkhla, took four people hostage, and killed one dealership employee. The men subsequently drove five of the cars south to Pattani. The men planted two of the cars with bombs that later exploded, injuring four soldiers in the first explosion and one police officer in the second. One car contained an IED that the police safely defused. Police found the two other vehicles abandoned in Pattani and the sixth vehicle abandoned in Songkhla.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Thailand's law enforcement authorities demonstrated some capacity to detect, deter, and respond to terrorist incidents. Multiple entities – including the Royal Thai Police (RTP), Department of Special Investigation, and components of the Thai military – have law enforcement responsibilities on counterterrorism cases. Interagency cooperation and coordination was sporadic, information sharing was limited, and the delineation of duties between law enforcement and military units with counterterrorism responsibilities was unclear. Annual routine reassignments of senior government and military officials hampered continuity in leadership.

Throughout the year, officers from Thailand's Anti-Money Laundering Office, the Ministry of Justice, the RTP, and the National Intelligence Agency participated in regional workshops focused on counterterrorism threats including Hizballah and ISIS. The regional workshops also covered investigative techniques, countering the financing of terrorism, and legal reforms.

Thailand hosted and participated in the International Law Enforcement Academy in Bangkok, which conducted courses on post-blast investigations, border interdictions, law enforcement techniques to counter terrorism, and financial investigative techniques.

Thailand's borders are relatively porous. The market in fraudulent documents remained active despite government efforts to crack down on criminal counterfeit networks. Information sharing within Thailand and with neighboring countries appeared limited. Beginning in 2016, Thailand began to collect and analyze Advanced Passenger Information And Passenger Name Record data on commercial flights at all international airports. Although the Royal Thai Police in May signed an agreement with the INTERPOL National Central Bureau to gain access rights to INTERPOL's 16 databases, including the Stolen and Lost Travel Document database, Thai immigration systems at border crossings still lacked the capability for real-time connectivity with these INTERPOL databases.

Thailand participated in the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance program and received training in border security and investigations.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Thailand belongs to the Asia-Pacific Group on Money Laundering, a Financial Action Task Force-style regional body. Thailand's financial intelligence unit, Anti-Money Laundering Office Thailand, is a member of the Egmont Group. Thailand does not have a significant unregulated informal banking and money transfer system that could aid terrorism financing activities. In cases where the central bank has discovered unauthorized remittances, the central bank has coordinated with the police to arrest the offenders. An estimated two-thirds of Thailand's non-government organizations operate as unregistered entities and therefore represent a high risk for terrorist financing. Thailand continues to implement UN Security Council 1373 obligations, especially in the banking and insurance sectors. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): Thailand lacked a national CVE action plan, although the draft national counterterrorism strategy includes elements of CVE. The government's Internal Security Operations Command continued to organize outreach programs to ethnic Malay-Muslims in southern Thailand to counter radicalization to violence. The government also worked with Muslim leaders to promote the teaching of moderate Islam and to improve interfaith dialogue between Muslims and Buddhists. Non-governmental organizations continued to reach out to communities in the southern provinces to provide services, identify the underlying causes of the area's violence, and provide outlets for peaceful political expression. Civil society and academic leaders received training through State Department-funded programs.

In July, the State Department, Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and the Thai National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission, co-sponsored a conference in Bangkok on best practices to counter radicalization to violence.

International and Regional Cooperation: Thailand participated in international counterterrorism efforts, including through the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and the ASEAN Regional Forum.

EUROPE

Overview

Europe faced a number of ongoing terrorist threats and concerns in 2017, including from foreign terrorist organizations operating out of Iraq and Syria, foreign terrorist fighters returning to Europe to conduct attacks, and homegrown terrorists who were inspired or remotely directed by ISIS. Despite increased military pressure in 2017, ISIS inspired and took credit for terrorist attacks against European symbolic targets and public spaces. Within Europe, ISIS inspired self-directed terrorists primarily in France, Spain, Turkey, and the United Kingdom, at times adopting the tactic of ramming large motor vehicles into crowds of civilians.

Many European countries remain concerned about returning foreign terrorist fighters. Concurrently, terrorist groups espousing left-wing and nationalist ideologies, such as the Kurdistan Workers' Party and the Turkey-based Revolutionary People's Liberation Party/Front, respectively, continued strikes against police and military targets in Turkey and fundraising activity throughout the rest of Europe.

European countries contributed immensely to worldwide counterterrorism efforts in 2017. Thirty-nine European countries, the European Union, and INTERPOL collaborated within the force-multiplying framework of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. As a result, the Coalition, which had already liberated Fallujah, Ramadi, and Tikrit, successfully completed military campaigns to liberate Mosul, Iraq and Raqqa, Syria. European officials and civil society members participated in counterterrorism and countering violent extremism policies and programs within multilateral and regional fora, such as the United Nations, the Global Counterterrorism Forum, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), and the Council of Europe. North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies agreed to a Counterterrorism Action Plan in May, enhancing the Alliance's counterterrorism role by: joining the Defeat-ISIS Coalition, increasing information sharing, forming a new terrorism intelligence cell at NATO Headquarters, and appointing a coordinator to oversee NATO's counterterrorism efforts.

A number of European governments also participated in the U.S.-Europol Law Enforcement Coordination Group (LECG), which was established in 2014 to improve international cooperation in countering Hizballah's terrorist and illicit activities. The LECG met twice in 2017, in Washington in May and in Europe in December. Almost 30 governments participated in the December meeting, including representatives from Europe, the Middle East, South

America, Southeast Asia, and Africa, along with Europol and INTERPOL. This is a growing recognition of the need to cooperate on efforts to counter Hizballah's global terrorist networks.

NATO and the EU launched the European Center of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats in April 2017. The Center serves as a major facilitator among individual nations and key organizations to bolster resilience and ability to counter hybrid threats by working with academia, the private sector, and governments.

The OSCE's annual counterterrorism conference in May focused on rehabilitation, reintegration, and the prevention of radicalization to violence. Moreover, the OSCE has developed and implemented a methodology for counterterrorism tabletop training seminars as a contribution to regional security. In November, the Committee of Experts on Terrorism of the Council of Europe held a plenary meeting in Strasbourg to agree on guidelines to prevent lone actor terrorist attacks and enhance cooperation on countering use of the internet for terrorist purposes by establishing a platform for governments, internet companies, and non-governmental organizations to exchange information while respecting human rights and the rule of law.

ALBANIA

Overview: Albania was a strong supporter of counterterrorism efforts in 2017 and continued its participation in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, making significant donations of weapons and ammunition.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Albania criminalizes terrorist acts, financing of terrorism, conducting transactions with persons on United Nations (UN) sanctions lists, recruiting and training people to commit terrorist acts, incitement of terrorist acts, and establishing, leading, and participating in terrorist organizations. Albania is establishing and sustaining a port security oversight system to more fully comply with requirements under the International Maritime Organization's International Ship and Port Facility Security Code.

Albanian law enforcement increased its efforts to counter potential terrorist threats. The recently expanded Albanian State Police Anti-Terrorism Unit (ATU) worked closely with the U.S. Department of Justice's (DOJ's) International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (ICITAP) and the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) program to match Albanian government requirements for equipment and training with U.S. expertise and resources. As a result, the ATU developed its own plans and programs for improving equipment, training, and development, and renovated the central ATU facility. Through participation in the ATA Program, the ATU received training on interviewing terrorist suspects. Other Department of State funding provided counter-surveillance training, vehicles, intelligence analysis training, surveillance equipment, and computer workstations for investigators. Despite a scarcity of resources, the ATU also participated in several successful interdictions of known or suspected terrorists.

DOJ's Office of Overseas Prosecutorial Development Assistance and Training Program, funded by the Department of State, continued to provide mentorship, assistance, and training to prosecutors, law enforcement officials, financial investigators, intelligence analysts, and judges

from Albania, Bosnia, Kosovo, Macedonia, and Serbia. These officials work on foreign terrorist fighter and terrorism-related cases through the Balkan Regional Counterterrorism program located in Tirana.

Corruption and barriers to information sharing among government agencies, insufficient intra-agency coordination, and a poorly functioning judicial system continued to hinder Albania's law enforcement efforts at all levels. Recent constitutional and legal reforms to the judiciary are underway, beginning with the vetting of Albania's 800 judges and prosecutors for corruption, proficiency, and ties to organized crime. As of December 2017, the vetting commission and international monitoring operation began work on the first 57 personnel files. Other reforms will begin after this first group is vetted.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Albania is a member of the Council of Europe's Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism (MONEYVAL), a Financial Action Task Force (FATF)-style regional body. The General Directorate for the Prevention on Money Laundering, Albania's financial intelligence unit, is a member of the Egmont Group.

Albania continued to work with the FATF and MONEYVAL to address identified weaknesses in its anti-money laundering/countering the financing of terrorism regime. As a result, Albania made major improvements to its legal framework for identifying, tracing, and freezing terrorist assets; enhanced international cooperation; extended customer due diligence; and required the filing of suspicious transaction reports and currency transaction reports.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): The Government of Albania implemented a "Schools for Safer Communities" program aimed at educating teachers throughout Albania about the risks of radicalization to violence among youth. It included processes for teachers to recommend interventions for students on the path to radicalization to violence. The Albanian cities of Cerrik, Elbasan, Librazhd, and Tirana are members of the Strong Cities Network.

Regional and International Cooperation: Albania is a member of the UN, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Regional Cooperation Council for Southeast Europe, the Council of Europe, and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. Albanian criminal justice actors participated regularly in various regional associations, conferences, and other counterterrorism information sharing exchanges. In December, Albania co-sponsored UN Security Council resolution 2396 on returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters.

AUSTRIA

Overview: Austria continued to prioritize counterterrorism measures throughout 2017. U.S.-Austrian law enforcement cooperation remained strong. Austria's Office for State Protection

and Counterterrorism (BVT) – the key counterterrorism agency within the Ministry of the Interior – reported ongoing radicalization to violence efforts by terrorist groups.

The BVT estimated the number of Austrian foreign terrorist fighters fighting in Syria and Iraq, or wanting to travel to the conflict zone for terrorist purposes, at 300 between 2014 and 2017. During this period authorities prevented 50 persons from leaving the country to go to conflict zones, including 22 women. Forty-four men who had traveled from Austria to Syria and Iraq are presumed dead. The BVT monitored an estimated 80 persons who had returned to Austria, and officials believed approximately 110 could still plan to return. Overall, the BVT noted that terrorist mobilization substantially declined after 2015. As of August 2017, there were 64 foreign terrorist fighters in Austrian prisons; 20 percent of them were aged 16 to 21.

Austria made the fight against terrorism a key priority for its 2017 chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). Austria is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and a member of the Defeat-ISIS foreign terrorist fighters and stabilization working groups. Throughout the year, the Ministries of Interior, Justice, and Foreign Affairs increased efforts to counter radicalization to violence and to address the problem of foreign terrorist fighters. Law enforcement agencies focused on intelligence gathering and investigations, as well as sharing information with international partners.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Austria has an extensive legal structure to counter terrorism. Relevant statutes criminalize training in terrorist camps abroad and allow wiretapping of individual suspects or small groups with the permission of an independent judge or ombudsman. Specific regulations prohibit the use and distribution of symbols attributable to ISIS or al-Qa'ida. Regulations allow border authorities to prevent minors from leaving Austria upon suspicion they will participate in fighting activities abroad. Authorities are allowed to withdraw citizenship from an Austrian dual national citizen who voluntarily and actively participates in fighting in a terrorism-related armed conflict.

Austrian law enforcement and BVT officials routinely cooperated with U.S. law enforcement in a range of investigative areas, including joint, multilateral investigative projects and enforcement operations. Border security forces made effective use of security measures, including biographic and biometric screening capabilities at ports of entry and information sharing internally and with other European Union (EU) countries. Border security officials at ports of entry have discretion when determining which documents and passengers will be subject to screening on arrival.

Austria has taken a whole-of-government approach to implementing UN Security Council resolutions (UNSCRs) related to counterterrorism as well as Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) good practices on foreign terrorist fighters.

In a series of high-profile trials in 2017, Austrian courts sentenced convicted terrorists to what were considered by local standards to be unusually long prison terms.

Austria has rigorous processes in place to register and screen individuals applying for asylum, lawful residence, and citizenship. Applicants' fingerprints are checked against the EU's asylum fingerprint database (Eurodac), and in select cases, against criminal databases as

well. Individuals are again screened against national and international law enforcement databases before citizenship is approved.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Austria is a member of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). Austria's financial intelligence unit, located in the Federal Criminal Police Office, is a member of the Egmont Group. Austria has a comprehensive legislative and regulatory framework for anti-money laundering/combating the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT). FATF approved of regulatory changes implemented in 2017, leading to a significant upgrade in Austria's AML/CFT technical compliance rating.

Austria criminalizes the financing of terrorism in line with international standards and freezes terrorist assets in accordance with UN Security Council resolutions implemented through EU legislation. Austria has a national listing mechanism for terrorist financing, which is faster than the EU mechanism. Money or Value Transfer Services, dealers in precious stones and metals, real estate agents, and exchange houses are monitored and regulated in Austria. The number of terrorist financing cases successfully prosecuted in Austria has increased due to improved monitoring and prosecution capabilities.

Austria implements the collection of Know Your Customer data for wire transfers through implementation of the Fourth EU Anti-Money Laundering Directive. This requires identification of clients who want to establish a business relationship with a financial institution, who perform a transaction of 15,000 euros (US $18,300) or more, or where there is suspicion of money laundering or terrorist financing.

While Austria has taken measures to require closer monitoring of non-profit organizations (NPOs), they are still not required by law to file suspicious transaction reports (STRs). As a consequence, STRs from NPOs are rare.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): Austria continued its CVE efforts largely in response to the foreign terrorist fighter phenomenon. In addition, the Austrian government undertook or continued several other initiatives. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in cooperation with the Islamic Faith Community, continued its information campaign in mosques, Islamic organizations, community centers, and prisons. The initiative included education outreach to encourage Austrians to differentiate between Islam and what Austria describes as violent extremism. In an effort to counter radicalization to violence and improve integration in the newly arrived refugee population, the Integration Office within the Foreign Ministry developed an educational program focused on German language acquisition and education on Austrian values, such as equality and democratic principles. The Austrian government maintained a counseling center and a de-radicalization hotline aimed at friends and family members of potential terrorists.

International and Regional Cooperation: Austria is a member of various international and regional security platforms, including the UN, EU, OSCE, the Salzburg Forum, and the Central European Initiative. Austria regularly leads law enforcement training programs with Salzburg Forum countries and the Balkan states. In its role as OSCE chairman in 2017, Austria organized an OSCE Counterterrorism Conference in May with a focus on rehabilitation, reintegration, and prevention of radicalization to violence. Austria also focused on engaging and empowering youth in preventing radicalization to violence. In December, Austria co-sponsored UNSCR 2396 on returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters.

AZERBAIJAN

Overview: In 2017, Azerbaijan was a strong counterterrorism partner to the United States. Azerbaijan's government actively worked to detect and defeat terrorist efforts to move people, money, and materials across its land and maritime borders and within the South Caucasus. Azerbaijani law enforcement and security services conducted operations to disrupt and prevent terror attacks, arrested and prosecuted suspected terrorists, and prosecuted returning Azerbaijanis who had joined terrorist groups fighting outside Azerbaijan. Azerbaijani counterterrorism cooperation significantly reduced the risk of terrorist attacks against tourist locations frequented by U.S. citizens and U.S. economic interests in Azerbaijan.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: In 2017, Azerbaijan expanded the legal definition of terrorists and terrorism. According to the amended law, "A terrorist is one who, directly or indirectly, takes part in a terrorist activity as an organizer, instigator, assistant, or actor, or one who masterminds a terrorist act or attempts to carry it out or assists an organized criminal group with carrying out terrorist acts." The law previously described a terrorist as "one who takes part in the carrying out of a terrorist activity in any way." The amended law provides that "a terrorist organization is an organization created for the purpose of carrying out terrorist acts or considering the option of terrorism probable in carrying out its activities. If a structural unit of an organization engages in terrorist activities with the permission of management, the organization is considered to be a terrorist organization."

Azerbaijani law enforcement and security services have demonstrated the capacity to detect, deter, and prevent acts of terrorism in Azerbaijan's territory. Responsibility for counterterrorism is vested in several government agencies. The Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) is Azerbaijan's primary law enforcement agency, and its Organized Crime Unit is tasked with leading the Ministry's counterterrorism efforts. The MIA cooperates closely with the State Security Service (SSS), Azerbaijan's domestic intelligence and counterterrorism service. The SSS is responsible for identifying and preventing criminal activities by terrorist groups, and countering international terrorism and transnational crimes. The State Border Service (SBS) and State Customs Committee (SCC) jointly manage border security, and interdict terrorist efforts to move people, money, and materials – including weapons of mass destruction – across Azerbaijan's land and maritime borders. The SBS is responsible for defending oil platforms against terrorism. The Prosecutor General's Office is responsible for prosecuting suspects accused of terrorism, conspiracy to commit and aid terrorism, and other terrorism-related crimes. The government continued to cite "countering violent extremism" as a justification for incarcerating members of the secular and religious political opposition whom it alleges are "religious extremists." We

refer you to the State Department's Country Reports on Human Rights Practices and Report on International Religious Freedom for 2016 for further information.

Azerbaijan used terrorist and criminal watchlists and biographic/biometric screening at some ports of entry. Azerbaijan's law enforcement and security services shared information among themselves, and with regional and international partners.

In 2017, Azerbaijani law enforcement and security services reported preventing several potential terrorist attacks, including:

- On January 27, Azerbaijani SSS officers killed suspected "religious extremist" Jeyhun Ojagov. The SSS reported Ojagov had resisted arrest.
- On February 1, the SSS conducted a raid and killed four members of a group the SSS said was linked to terrorist organizations operating in foreign countries planning terrorist acts in Azerbaijan.
- On August 28, the SSS reported its officers killed terrorist suspect Yashar Javadov while trying to arrest him. The SSS reported Javadov bought weapons and explosives with funds received from a foreign terrorist organization.
- On October 27, the SSS detained Azerbaijani citizens Hasrat Aliyev, Emil Nasrullayev, Elshad Dadashov, and Zaur Eynalov on suspicion of fighting in Syria and Iraq.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Azerbaijan is a member of the Council of Europe's Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism (MONEYVAL), a Financial Action Task Force-style regional body. The government's Financial Monitoring Service is a member of the Egmont Group. In 2017, Azerbaijan continued implementing its "National Action Plan for 2017-2019 on combatting criminally acquired money, legalization of other properties, and financing of terrorism."

On June 29, Azerbaijan's Parliament ratified the Council of Europe's Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure, and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime and on the Financing of Terrorism.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes.*

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): Azerbaijan does not have a formal national CVE strategy, but state bodies such as the State Committee for Work with Religious Associations and the Caucasus Muslim Board work to prevent radicalization to violence in Azerbaijan's religious communities. The State Committee conducts informational campaigns around the country on the dangers of terrorist recruitment. In 2017, the Azerbaijani government cooperated with a U.S. government assessment of the level of risk posed by terrorist organizations and the potential for terrorist ideologies to gain ground in Azerbaijan.

International and Regional Cooperation: Azerbaijan maintained membership in the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation,

and other international bodies. Azerbaijan hosted the 4th Annual World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue, aimed at building societies based on equal opportunities as well as an inclusive framework of tolerance and respect for diversity. Azerbaijan also continued supporting North Atlantic Treaty Organization counterterrorism initiatives as one of the Alliance's Partnership for Peace countries.

Azerbaijan continued efforts to improve Afghan security and stability by co-chairing the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process; as its co-Chair, Azerbaijan hosted senior officials' meetings and a Ministerial Conference. Azerbaijan also hosted a working group meeting that highlighted the role of narcotics traffickers in financing terrorism.

BELGIUM

Overview: Policy reforms, improved information sharing, and additional resources for counterterrorism efforts enhanced Belgian authorities' ability to investigate and prevent terrorist attacks. Belgium's complex, highly-decentralized government structure continues to be a challenge for internal information sharing and cooperation. The greatest terrorism threat in Belgium comes from ISIS-inspired homegrown terrorists. The large number of Belgian foreign terrorist fighters in Syria and Iraq led to concern about attacks by returned fighters, although fewer have returned than anticipated. Belgium is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. Belgium also assumed leadership of the European Union (EU) Training Mission in Mali in 2017, which aims to support and rebuild Malian armed forces to better counter local al-Qa'ida-linked terrorists

2017 Terrorist Incidents:

- On June 20, soldiers shot and killed an attempted suicide bomber at Brussels Central train station after the attacker's bomb failed to detonate. There were no additional casualties.
- On August 25, a man with a knife attacked and injured two soldiers near Brussels' Grand Place. The attacker was shot and killed at the scene.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Belgium plays a significant role in international efforts to disrupt, prevent, detect, and punish acts of terrorism. The United States and Belgium maintained a close, cooperative counterterrorism partnership through two ongoing Joint Investigative Teams. Belgium's legal system does not permit plea agreements or provide a witness protection program; lack of plea agreements contributes to an overburdened court system. The primary actors in Belgian law enforcement are the Belgian Federal Police and its multiple counterterrorism units, the Civilian and Military Intelligence Services, Office of the Federal Prosecutor, and the Crisis Center. The interagency Coordination Unit for Threat Analysis plays an analytic threat assessment role, particularly with regard to foreign terrorist fighters, and advises the government on setting the national threat level. The Belgian National Security Council also plays a significant role in the intelligence and security structure. Belgian law enforcement and intelligence services disrupted a number of terrorist plots in 2017.

In 2017, Belgium approved a constitutional amendment to extend the amount of time a terror suspect can be detained before being charged from 24 hours to 48 hours. Belgium also passed legislation to expand the definition of "terrorist activities," and facilitate terrorism-related

deportations of legal residents. Belgium partially implemented the EU Passenger Name Record (PNR) directive into Belgian law, and has been a proponent for extending PNR to international, rail, bus, and maritime travel.

In May, the federal government announced 28 security measures it plans to enact; 14 directly relate to counterterrorism. These measures were in addition to the 30 counterterrorism measures proposed by the Government of Belgium in 2015, which the government was still working to implement. Some of the new proposals included allowing the use of civilian informants, issuing stronger sentences for certain crimes, developing biometric identification, and including homegrown terrorists in the dynamic database of foreign terrorist fighters.

On October 24, a Parliamentary Investigative Commission concluded an 18-month investigation into the March 22, 2016 Brussels terrorist attacks. The investigation produced three reports in 2017 on topics including assistance to victims of the attacks, Belgium's security architecture, and radicalism in Belgium. The reports contained many recommendations, including increasing funding for intelligence services, improving information sharing between agencies, and requiring imams to be trained in Belgium and to speak either Dutch or French.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Belgium is a member of the Financial Action Task Force and Belgium's financial intelligence unit, the Cellule de Traitement des Informations Financieres, is a member of the Egmont Group. On September 18, Belgium passed a law to implement EU Directive 2015/849. This Directive aims to prevent money laundering and terrorist financing, and allows for sanctions to be imposed on institutions that assist in either. This law replaces the January 1993 anti-money laundering law. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): The Parliamentary Investigative Commission's final report on radicalism suggested Islamist fundamentalism was among the key drivers of terrorism in Belgium's Muslim community. The report recommended greater federal oversight of mosques, new requirements for imam training, and increased intelligence sharing between law enforcement, immigration, and social services.

Belgium's federal, regional, and local governments remained engaged in CVE efforts. In June, the regional government of Flanders approved a new action plan aimed at early detection and prevention of radicalization to violence. The plan called for additional training for front-line practitioners, establishing a network of Islamic experts to support practitioners, a telephone hotline for concerned parents, and additional funding for community projects aimed at promoting social cohesion. The government of the French Linguistic Community created two new agencies to train front-line practitioners and provide individualized assistance for victims of terrorism. Local municipal governments began to exchange best practices on developing and managing local integrated security cells. In December, the federal government's Coordination Unit for Threat Analysis expanded access to its database of hate preachers and terrorist suspects to judicial, regional, and local partners.

Prisoners charged or convicted with terrorism-related offenses are transferred to prisons with specialized sections for radicalized inmates. Although prison de-radicalization remained a priority in 2017, the Parliamentary Investigative Commission found little improvement from 2016. Radicalization to violence is a growing challenge in Belgian prisons. The Ministry of Justice is developing e-learning programs for prison staff to help address this issue in the interim.

The Belgian cities of Antwerp and Vilvoorde are members of the Strong Cities Network.

International and Regional Cooperation: The Parliamentary Investigative Commission's Report on Belgium's security architecture called for increased cooperation with international partners, particularly Turkey and other EU member states. Belgium participates in EU, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, and Council of Europe counterterrorism efforts. Belgium is a member of the advisory board of the UN Counterterrorism Center.

Belgium has also been an active proponent of Europol databases and EU-wide information sharing. As an EU member state, Belgium has contributed trainers and capacity-building expertise to EU counterterrorism assistance programs in Sahel countries, and the Belgian Federal Police provided training to counterparts in the Maghreb. From July 2016 to January 2018, Belgium led the EU training mission in Mali (EUTM) to build Malian armed forces' capacity to reduce terrorist threats. In addition to continued troops support to EUTM, Belgium provides troops and overall force command to the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stability Mission in Mali.

Belgium participated in all EU efforts to interdict foreign terrorist fighter travel across land and maritime borders, encouraged efforts to strengthen Schengen zone external borders, actively engaged in the Syria Strategic Communications Advisory Team, promoted the implementation of EU and domestic PNR systems, and participated in EU naval operations against human smugglers in the Mediterranean under Operation Sophia. UN Secretary-General António Guterres appointed Belgium's Michèle Coninsx as Executive Director of the UN Counterterrorism Executive Directoratein August, with Coninsx assuming the post in November. In December, Belgium co-sponsored UN Security Council resolution 2396 on returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Overview: Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) remained a cooperative counterterrorism partner and continued to increase its counterterrorism capacity in 2017. Legislative loopholes and lenient sentencing, however, remained major challenges. Some operational domestic coordination exists, but interpersonal and interagency infighting and stove-piping undermined effective cooperation. Extremist ideology and regional nationalist extremist groups remained potential sources of terrorism in BiH, and little progress was made on rehabilitation and de-radicalization. BiH is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: BiH did not pass any major counterterrorism legislation at the national level in 2017. The sub-state entity Republika Srpska

adopted a new criminal code that aligns terrorism offenses with international standards and criminalizes membership in foreign paramilitary and para-police forces. At the state level, BiH also has laws prohibiting membership in para-military and para-police organizations, but sentencing remained a major challenge. Foreign terrorist fighters frequently received sentences below the minimum prescribed by the BiH criminal code, a result of judges taking mitigating circumstances into account. If sentenced to one year or less of incarceration, a convicted terrorist may opt to pay a fine rather than serve time in custody.

Although the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) proposed a draft list of amendments to strengthen foreign terrorist fighter/counterterrorism legislation in 2017, there was little political will, including in the MoJ, to secure buy-in. The amendments have been stalled since June. A proposal to remove the option for convicted foreign terrorist fighters and terrorists to pay a fine in lieu of jail time, or to secure early release (both of these amendments were included in the MoJ draft), was under consideration in parliament at the end of 2017.

A member of parliament proposed increasing foreign terrorist fighter minimum sentencing from five to eight years, although this would not address the mitigating circumstances issue. A Ministry of Security working group was in the preliminary stage of developing comprehensive amendments to the criminal code on these issues, but there was little political will to proceed given an upcoming election in October 2018.

The State Investigation and Protection Agency (SIPA) is the lead law enforcement unit performing counterterrorism functions. With approximately 25 officers working on counterterrorism cases, its effectiveness is limited. In 2017, the BiH Ministry of Security proposed legislation to increase the number of counterterrorism-focused SIPA officers to approximately 50 by upgrading the relevant unit to a department.

Law enforcement cooperation continued to suffer from interpersonal and institutional infighting. A BiH Prosecutor's Office-led task force met only two times in 2017, and public disagreements between the Acting Chief Prosecutor, Minister of Security, and SIPA leadership undermined strategic progress on counterterrorism initiatives. At the operational level, law enforcement and prosecutors meet and work jointly on certain cases. However shortages of counterterrorism investigators and interagency cooperation often led to investigative disruptions and the release of suspects after a brief detention.

There were no significant changes since 2016 on border security.

BiH continued its efforts to disrupt terrorist activity in 2017 through arrests:

- On November 29, police arrested Emir Hodzic – who previously served a one-year sentence for a foreign terrorist fighter conviction – for possession of illegal weapons, including a rocket launcher.
- In June, police arrested Enes Mesic when he attempted to illegally cross the border to Serbia where police suspected he planned to conduct a terrorist attack. Mesic had been sentenced to three years in prison two months earlier in April for terrorist activities, but was not immediately incarcerated, highlighting another problem with the BiH justice

system. In addition to Mesic, six other convicted terrorists were rearrested or returned into custody after the State Court did not imprison them immediately after sentencing.

BiH continued to cooperate with the United States on counterterrorism. For example, the BiH government worked with the United States on the extradition of Mirsad Kandic, an ISIS facilitator living in Sarajevo.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: BiH is a member of the Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism, a Financial Action Task Force (FATF)-style regional body. BiH's financial intelligence unit, the Financial Intelligence Department, is a member of the Egmont Group. BiH completed its FATF Action Plan in September, which included making progress on customer due diligence and suspicious transaction reporting, as well as increasing regulation on financial and non-financial institutions. During the FATF plenary in October, FATF was granted an on-site visit to ensure implementation of these reforms. This is the next step in removing BiH from the FATF "grey list." For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): In 2017, the main religious communities in BiH (Catholic, Islamic, Jewish, and Orthodox) worked together through the Interreligious Council to promote tolerance and confront acts of bigotry or violence directed at any of these communities. The BiH Ministry of Security named its first state-level coordinator for international and domestic efforts to prevent violent extremism, largely in response to an increasing number of international programs and resources targeting violent extremism in BiH. Working in close partnership with the International Organization for Migration and other well-known international organizations, BiH supported efforts to strengthen resiliencies within identified at-risk communities, developed the capacity of religious leaders and civil society actors to counter expressions of intolerance, and piloted comprehensive community-led intervention procedures at the local and municipal level. The BiH cities of Bihac, Bijeljina, Doboj, Jablanica, Prijedor, Srebrenik, and Tuzla – and the municipality of Centar (Sarajevo) – are members of the Strong Cities Network.

International and Regional Cooperation: BiH's criminal code and related legal framework are generally consistent with United Nations (UN) and European Union counterterrorism standards. The State Prosecutor's Office also works frequently with counterparts in Serbia and Montenegro. BiH is a member of the UN, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the Regional Cooperation Council for Southeast Europe, and the Council of Europe.

BULGARIA

Overview: The United States and Bulgaria strengthened counterterrorism cooperation through the Bilateral Counterterrorism working group established in 2015. In addition, Bulgaria is in the process of completing an update to its 2015-2020 National Strategy for Countering Radicalization and Terrorism. Bulgaria is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and has repeatedly responded to requests for assistance.

Bulgaria worked with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to improve its biometric screening of individuals entering and transiting the country.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Bulgaria prosecutes terrorism under several general provisions of the penal code, which has been amended multiple times since it was first enacted in 1968. In 2015, the National Assembly adopted amendments to the penal code that provide for the prosecution of individuals, including foreign terrorist fighters, who support and plan the commission of terrorist acts in Bulgaria and abroad. In 2016, the Bulgarian National Assembly approved new counterterrorism legislation, which provides a legal mechanism for a whole-of-government response to terrorist threats. The bill defines three levels of terrorist threats and four levels of response readiness. The bill also regulates the role of the military in counterterrorism activities and delineates the cooperation between the central and local governments. Amendments to the legislation provided the military with powers to search individuals, private property, check identification, enter homes in the owners' absence, and arrest or use physical force and arms if needed to prevent or manage the consequences of a terrorist act. In 2017, Bulgaria implemented new legislation directing that public buildings, including schools, transportation hubs, tourism sites and facilities, and houses of worship develop counterterrorism risk assessments and prevention and response measures in the event of a terrorist attack. The Council of Ministers provides overall guidance on counterterrorism activities, and has adopted a counterterrorism strategy and a national plan.

The Ministry of the Interior (MOI) has operational units responsible for deterring, detecting, and responding to terrorist incidents, including the specialized unit for combating terrorism, security police, and special police forces, which successfully completed a multi-year training mission with a U.S. special operations liaison element. The State Agency for National Security (DANS) has intelligence-gathering units responsible for counterterrorism. DANS also houses the National Counterterrorism Center, which is designed as an interagency body during crisis incidents. Specialized law enforcement units are generally well equipped and supported with relevant training, but their focus has been primarily on Sofia, while other regional centers lack resources. In 2015, the specialized court for organized crime and its prosecutors' office received jurisdiction to prosecute and try all terrorist cases in the country. The court is working to develop expertise in handling such cases. The court is hearing the case against two suspected accomplices in the 2012 Burgas airport bombing, although procedural issues have caused multiple delays in the trial with the most recent delay occurring in November 2017.

After the migrant crisis in 2014-2015 and the spate of terrorist attacks in Europe in recent years, Bulgaria tightened its border control rules and began screening all travelers at its border crossings. Within the European Union (EU), Bulgaria shares advanced passenger information appearing on the biographical data page of passports and has begun collecting and using passenger name record data in air traveler screening. Based on bilateral police cooperation agreements, Bulgaria also shares this data with non-EU countries for law enforcement purposes on an as-needed basis.

In October 2017, the Government of Bulgaria apprehended a dual Bulgarian-Syrian national and three accomplices for suspected ties to ISIS and for taking part in terrorist and terrorism-related activities.

U.S. government agencies continued to work closely with Bulgarian counterparts through a variety of counterterrorism programs aimed at enhancing Bulgaria's capacity and capabilities. The Department of State partnered with Bulgaria to implement key programs in the areas of border security, aviation security, and interagency cooperation. Through participation in the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) program, Bulgaria received training on interviewing terrorist suspects, critical incident management, and integrating counterterrorism strategies at the national level. In 2017, the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation provided a post-blast investigations course to Bulgaria's Special Counterterrorism Force and a big data analytics course to DANS.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Bulgaria belongs to the Council of Europe's Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism, a Financial Action Task Force (FATF)-style regional body. Bulgaria's Financial Intelligence Directorate (FID) has primary responsibility for anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) measures for all reporting entities and is a member of the Egmont Group. The Bulgarian National Bank also has a special supervision directorate to investigate banks for compliance with AML/CFT requirements.

In 2016, the parliament passed amendments to the Measures against Financing of Terrorism Act, introducing direct application of United Nations (UN) lists, as well as mechanisms to increase the efficiency of Bulgaria's national list of persons subject to the anti-terrorist financing measures. Bulgaria criminalizes terrorism financing in accordance with international standards. Since there is no publicly available information on terrorist-related assets frozen or seized, it is hard to assess the effectiveness of Bulgaria's process. Thirty-one reporting entities, including banks, real estate brokers, and financial and exchange houses, are required to file regularly with FID currency transaction reports for all transactions valued at more than US $17,000. There are penalties for non-compliance (administrative sanctions), and enforcement is generally effective. Bulgaria requires the collection of know-your-customer data for wire transfers. All non-governmental organizations are obliged to report suspicious transactions.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): At the end of 2015, a new government strategy and action plan on countering radicalization to violence and terrorism was approved by the Council of Ministers. At the end of 2017, the Bulgarian government was conducting an update of this strategy with a greater emphasis on providing prevention tools and resources to frontline practitioners such as teachers and police officers. The strategy spells out mechanisms for improved cooperation with civil society, business organizations, local communities, and religious leaders. It also aims to strengthen existing government counterterrorism efforts by involving all possible agencies and by optimizing interagency coordination.

The Grand Mufti of Bulgaria has been a voice of tolerance and moderation and has stressed that government efforts must complement CVE community efforts.

International and Regional Cooperation: Bulgaria is a member of and active contributor to counterterrorism initiatives at the UN, the EU, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, and the Organization for Black Sea Economic Cooperation. In December, Bulgaria co-sponsored UN Security Council resolution 2396 on returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters.

CYPRUS

Overview: The Republic of Cyprus collaborated closely with the United States, the European Union (EU), and other countries – bilaterally and multilaterally – in international counterterrorism efforts in 2017.

Since 1974, Cyprus has been divided de facto into the Republic of Cyprus government controlled area, composed of the southern two-thirds of the island, and the northern third not under the effective control of the Republic of Cyprus, which is administered by the Turkish Cypriots. The United Nations (UN) peacekeeping force in Cyprus patrols the UN buffer zone, also called "the Green Line," which separates the two sides. The buffer zone is largely open to civilian traffic and remains a significant route for the illicit transit of people, narcotics, and other contraband.

The division of the island has impeded counterterrorism cooperation between the two communities and between the Republics of Cyprus and Turkey, which do not maintain diplomatic relations.

Cyprus is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and regularly participates in the Coalition's Foreign Terrorist Fighters and Counter-ISIS Finance working groups.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: In April 2017, Cyprus signed the Additional Protocol to the Council of Europe Convention for the Prevention of Terrorism. Draft laws regulating the use of surveillance of private communications by law enforcement and undercover activities by police officers were submitted to the House of Representatives.

The Cyprus National Police Service increased patrols of identified soft targets and critical infrastructure. The police have proactively engaged owners and managers of soft targets and representatives of the tourist industry to raise awareness about potential terrorist threats, as well as provide specialized training to private security guards.

Cyprus was preparing for implementation of the EU Directive on Passenger Name Record (PNR) data. A draft law was being finalized at year's end and the government had begun discussions on the technical implementation of the PNR directive. Cyprus also started the process to implement EU directive 2017/541 on combatting terrorism, which will require amendments to national counterterrorism laws.

Cypriot officials participate in regular European Commission meetings on aviation security to ensure implementation of security measures required of all EU member states. Cyprus has also deployed new passenger screening technology that exceeds the current EU requirement.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Cyprus is a member of the Council of Europe's Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism, a Financial Action Task Force (FATF)-style regional body. In July, the country enacted an amendment to its national counterterrorism laws to address recommendations by the 2015 FATF Fact Finding Initiative.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism: In addition to continuing activities cited in prior iterations of this report, Cyprus provided all secondary school directors with training on identifying radicalized behavior. The Ministry of Justice and Public Order also trained the staff of the Cyprus Youth Board.

International and Regional Cooperation: There were no significant changes since the 2016 report.

DENMARK

Overview: The Kingdom of Denmark (which includes the autonomous constituent countries of Greenland and the Faroe Islands) devoted significant assets to counterterrorism programs and initiatives to counter violent extremism, domestically and abroad. Denmark cooperates closely with the United States, the United Nations (UN), and the European Union (EU) on counterterrorism initiatives, including within the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) and the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS.

According to the Danish Security and Intelligence Service (PET), at least 145 Danish citizens and residents voluntarily left Denmark to fight in Syria and Iraq since the summer of 2012. PET remained concerned that Danish fighters returning to Denmark with terrorist training would seek to radicalize others. PET was also concerned about the potential for small groups or individuals to commit terrorist acts. Danish security agencies worked together to prevent terrorist attacks and counter ISIS's attempts to recruit foreign terrorist fighters in its territory. According to the PET-administered Center for Terror Analysis (CTA), up to 10 percent of foreign terrorist fighters from Denmark are female.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Denmark continued to use its 2006 terrorism legislation that allows information sharing between its agencies responsible for counterterrorism and foreign terrorist fighters – the PET and the Danish Defense Intelligence Service (DDIS). This year the government began to implement its National Action Plan to Prevent and Counter Extremism and Radicalization, approved in October 2016. Efforts to counter terrorism are also shared among the Danish National Police, the Public Prosecution

Service, and the Danish Prison and Probation Service. Danish security and law enforcement agencies share information via the CTA, which – as the Danish government's intelligence fusion center – constitutes the focal point for reporting from the Danish National Police, PET, DDIS, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Danish Emergency Management Agency. The Danish police and the Danish defense forces share responsibility for preventing terrorist attacks in Copenhagen and on the borders.

Denmark implemented electronic passport checks at its points of entry for individuals arriving from outside of Schengen countries. Checkpoints for identity documents at Denmark's border with Germany were established in response to Sweden's decision to impose document checks at its border with Denmark in January 2016. Random checks for identity documents at many border crossings remained in place.

To free up police resources for anti-gang efforts, the military supplemented the police at the borders and as security for the Jewish synagogue in Copenhagen. In May, the government banned six religious figures, who had been deemed a threat to public order due to their alleged role in promoting "hate speech," from entering the country for two years, including one U.S. citizen.

Counterterrorism-related actions by law enforcement included:

- In March, Hamza Cakan (aka Enes Ciftci) was stripped of his Danish citizenship and sentenced to six years in prison for joining a terrorist group in Syria. He will be returned to Turkey after serving his prison term.
- In September, PET and the Danish police arrested and charged a man and a woman for purchasing and sending materials to support ISIS.
- In November, a court sentenced a 17-year-old woman to eight years' imprisonment for plotting to bomb two schools, one of which was a private Jewish school in Copenhagen. The woman was originally arrested in January 2016.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Denmark is a member of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). Its financial intelligence unit (FIU), the Money Laundering Secretariat, is a member of the Egmont Group and cooperates closely with other Nordic FIUs. Denmark has a robust legal framework to combat the financing of terrorism. PET is the lead organization for investigation in this area.

The Danish government continued anti-money laundering and counterterrorist financing initiatives in East Africa and Yemen as a part of its foreign assistance. Denmark continued its efforts to counter illicit financial flows with national banks and other financial institutions in Jordan, Iraq, and Lebanon. In June, parliament passed a law to strengthen efforts to prevent the Danish financial system from being involved in money laundering and terrorist financing. The law dictates that companies and financial institutions must increase their focus on the risk associated with currency trading and conduct a risk analysis annually.

According to an evaluation conducted by the FATF in August, Denmark has a legal system in place to apply targeted financial sanctions, but "implementation has technical and practical

deficiencies in large part due to delays at the EU level...and the absence of any specific measures to freeze the assets of EU internals."

In January, the Minister of Employment announced it was stopping payment of unemployment benefits to identified ISIS foreign terrorist fighters. In December, the media reported that Danish aid money may have been used to support the Nour al-Din al-Zinki extremist group through a program the government coordinated with the Free Syrian Police. The foreign minister suspended support for the program while the case is being investigated.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): The Danish Parliament continued funding its CVE Action Plan. The plan calls for a multi-level approach that includes information sharing between schools, social services agencies, municipalities, and the police. The coordination between these entities takes place in "info-houses" throughout the 12 police districts that act as storehouses of knowledge regarding radicalized behavior among youth. A national hotline was established where residents can seek advice and guidance if they know of someone on the path to terrorism.

In May, the City of Aarhus and the East Jutland Police Department partnered with the Strong Cities Network (SCN) to host a three-day training event for 500 stakeholders from 50 countries. Through SCN, Denmark helped launch a prevention network in six municipalities in Jordan and Lebanon. The Danish cities of Aarhus, Copenhagen, Viborg, Guldborgsund, and Gentofte are all SCN members.

In June, the government presented its new foreign and security policy strategy for 2017-2019. The strategy includes policies to block websites with terrorist propaganda and design programs to discourage continued radicalization of persons involved in gangs or showing signs of extremism.

International and Regional Cooperation: The Danish government is committed to working within the UN framework, through the EU, and with other international and regional organizations. Denmark is a member of and actively participates in the GCTF, the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, INTERPOL, the Bern Club, and the European Counterterrorism Center.
In December 2015, voters rejected a proposition to end the country's opt-out from the EU's Justice and Home Affairs area, which would have permitted Denmark to continue to cooperate with Europol after May 2017. However, through a cooperation agreement, Denmark maintains its access to Europol's databases and will have observer status at board meetings. In December, Denmark co-sponsored UN Security Council resolution 2396 on returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters. Denmark also implemented programs to support national strategies to combat terrorist finance and to counter violent extremism in the Middle East, North Africa, the Horn of Africa, and Southeast Asia.

FRANCE

Overview: France remained an important counterterrorism partner of the United States in 2017. It is a longstanding and important member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. France continued to conduct counterterrorism operations in Iraq, Syria, Libya, Mali, other parts of the Sahel region, and the Lake Chad region.

The terrorist threat in France remained high and terrorists allegedly inspired by or affiliated with ISIS perpetrated multiple small-scale attacks in 2017. As first observed in 2016, the profile of realized attacks has shifted from the large-scale, externally directed plots of 2015 to more modest attacks perpetrated by solitary local actors with little, if any, direct guidance from established terrorist organizations. French law enforcement and intelligence thwarted a number of attacks in 2017 and arrested scores on terrorism-related charges, but government officials emphasized that self-radicalized lone actors using rudimentary weapons present a threat much more difficult to detect and disrupt.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: Multiple small-scale suspected terrorist attacks took place in 2017. Most targeted French security forces, although a knife attack in Marseille killed two civilians. Assailants used firearms in one attack. For example:

- On February 3, a 29-year-old Egyptian citizen wielding a machete was shot and seriously wounded by a French army patrol near the Louvre Museum in Paris after he attacked and lightly wounded one of the soldiers. Despite having posted several tweets indicating support for ISIS, the attacker told investigators he had no links to the group and "acted on his own will."
- On April 20, a 39-year-old French citizen used an automatic rifle to fire on a police van stationed on the Champs-Elysées in Paris, killing one officer and wounding two others and a tourist before being shot dead. ISIS claimed responsibility for the attack. Police found a note on the attacker's body praising ISIS.
- On June 19, a 31-year-old French citizen deliberately rammed his car containing two gas canisters and ammunition into a convoy of gendarmerie vehicles on Champs-Elysées. The perpetrator died but caused no other casualties. He reportedly sent a letter pledging allegiance to ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and the organization later claimed responsibility for the attack in July.
- On August 9, a 36-year-old Algerian citizen drove his vehicle into a domestic military detachment patrolling a suburb west of Paris, injuring six soldiers. French authorities pressed charges for "attempted murder of security forces in connection with a terrorist enterprise," claiming the attacker "had radical beliefs and showed interest in the Islamic State group."
- On October 1, a Tunisian citizen stabbed two women to death at Marseille's main train station before being shot and killed by security forces. ISIS claimed responsibility for the attack.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: New counterterrorism legislation enacted October 31, 2017, replaced and codified certain aspects of the expired state of emergency that had been initiated in the wake of the November 2015 attacks in Paris and

Seine-Saint-Denis. The law grants expanded powers to conduct searches, restrict and monitor the movements of suspected extremists, close religious institutions for disseminating extremist ideas, enhance security measures at public events, and expand identity checks near France's borders. The core provisions of the bill will expire at the end of 2020 unless renewed by parliament. The law also formalized France's passenger name record system, as required by a 2016 European Union (EU) directive, and increased the maximum sentence for adults convicted of encouraging minors to commit a terrorist act or join a terrorist organization to 15 years in prison, among other measures.

President Macron announced several security-related reforms since taking office in May. Macron reinforced and expanded the authorities of the National Intelligence Council (CNR), a DNI-like body established in 2008. President Macron appointed a former chief of domestic intelligence to head the CNR and plans to double its staff from 15 to 30 analysts and advisors. In September, the Ministries of Interior and Defense announced a reorganization of Operation Sentinelle, which includes the domestic deployment of approximately 7,000 French army personnel to bolster security at high-threat sites after the January 2015 terrorist attacks in Paris. These changes aim to make Sentinelle a more flexible and reactive force, rather than a static deterrent. In October, the interior ministry announced details of a community policing program proposed by President Macron during his presidential campaign. Also in October, France extended border controls in place since November 2015 with its Schengen neighbors for an additional six months.

French authorities made multiple terrorism-related arrests and claimed to have thwarted at least 20 specific plots in 2017. France's domestic intelligence and security agency and judicial police antiterrorism unit were responsible for most significant arrests. Police discovered two plots after neighbors reported suspicious behavior to authorities. Most of the arrests involved individuals and groups with direct or indirect links to ISIS. In October, authorities arrested 10 far-right terrorists suspected of planning an attack against politicians, migrants, and mosques.

In November, Abdelkader Merah, brother of the al-Qa'ida-linked terrorist Mohamed Merah, who was responsible for the 2012 Toulouse attacks, was sentenced to 20 years in prison for criminal terrorist conspiracy. Prosecutors had sought a life term. The court found that Abdelkader Merah indirectly supported the attack and contributed to his brother's radicalization, but that he was not directly responsible for the deaths.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: France is a member of the Financial Action Task Force and its financial intelligence unit is a member of the Egmont Group. There are no significant changes to the information provided on countering the financing of terrorism in the 2016 report.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): A critical senate report on France's de-radicalization efforts released in July led to greater scrutiny of the service providers contracted by the

government to implement its prevention and reintegration programs. The Inter-Ministerial Committee for the Prevention of Delinquency and Radicalization refocused its efforts on disengagement, reintegration, and prevention as opposed to de-radicalization. It continues to employ multidisciplinary social service teams to provide counseling and support to individuals at risk of radicalization to violence as well as their families. In June, after all participants left the program, the Committee closed the voluntary residential Citizenship and Reintegration Center it had opened nine months earlier. President Macron called for an inter-ministerial committee to meet in December to begin designing a new comprehensive government plan to counter radicalization to violence. In November, Macron pledged additional resources for economically disadvantaged neighborhoods throughout France to address conditions that terrorists exploit for recruitment. The French cities of Bordeaux, Montreuil, Paris, and Sarcelles are members of the Strong Cities Network.

International and Regional Cooperation: France is a founding member of the Global Counterterrorism Forum. Sworn in in 2013, France's Jean-Paul Laborde's tenure ended as Executive Director of the UN Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate in July. France plays a strong role on the UN Security Council ISIL (Da'esh) and al-Qa'ida Sanctions Committee. In December, France co-sponsored UN Security Council resolution 2396 on returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters. In September, France co-led with the United Kingdom and Italy a UN General Assembly high-level side event on "Preventing Terrorist Use of the Internet" focused on technology industry engagement. The French government undertook joint counterterrorism operations with several EU partners and played an active role in counterterrorism capacity building in other countries, particularly in the Sahel region, both bilaterally and through the EU.

GEORGIA

Overview: Georgia, a longstanding member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, continued its strong engagement with the United States across a range of counterterrorism-related issues. It participated in numerous bilateral exercises and remained a solid U.S. security partner. In May, U.S. and Georgian leadership signed the Agreement of the United States of America and the Government of Georgia Concerning Security Measures for the Protection of Classified Information, establishing a legal foundation for bilateral intelligence sharing that will strengthen counterterrorism cooperation and enhance the Georgian military's interoperability with North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) member states.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Georgia continued to enhance its counterterrorism legislation in 2017. Georgia introduced legislation with a view to reform and increase management oversight of covert investigative operations and the use of electronic surveillance. The parliament adopted other amendments in 2017, including granting authority to law-enforcement bodies to request electronic communications directly from the agency conducting the surveillance and strengthening security protections for individuals involved in criminal cases. The government also implemented a new law on international protection. The law was designed to allow the government to refuse refugee, asylum, or other international protection to persons reasonably considered to be involved in acts of terrorism and/or have connections to terrorist organizations or groups the government deemed "extremist."

Overall, the Georgian government is generally capable of detecting, deterring, and responding to terrorist incidents. The State Security Service of Georgia (SSSG) has the lead in handling terrorism-related incidents and is generally well equipped and well trained. In 2017, Georgia's law enforcement bodies signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Improving the Efficiency of Interagency Cooperation in the Law Enforcement Sphere and created the Operational Headquarters on Management of Extreme Situations, in the event of a terrorist act.

Georgia rebuilt five border crossing structures (four along the Azerbaijani border and one along the Turkish), and added four along the Turkish border. Georgia also established the Risk and Threat Assessment Unit, which operates in line with the European Common Integrated Risk Analysis Model, and signed the Tactical Memorandum with the NATO Maritime Command, promoting cooperation and information sharing between NATO and Georgia's Joint Maritime Operations Center. This makes Georgia a non-operational partner of the NATO-led Operation Sea Guardian, one of NATO's activities to counter terrorism. The government passed additional safety measures in the aviation sector as the State Program on Safeguarding Civil Aviation Security Against Acts of Unlawful Interference legislation was adopted, in conformity with the Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation, and standards and recommended practices established by International Civil Aviation Organization. Finally, the government approved and implemented the Joint Action Plan on the Management of Crisis – Extreme Situations in the Field of Civil Aviation.

On November 21-22, the SSSG's counterterrorism unit led an operation in a residential building in Tbilisi, intending to detain four suspected terrorists who opened fire on the Special Forces. One member of the terrorist group was detained, two were killed, and a fourth suspect detonated an explosive, killing himself. The Georgian government later identified one of the dead as international terrorist Akhmet Chataev. One Georgian officer was killed and four others were wounded. On December 26, the SSSG counterintelligence department launched an early-morning counterterrorism raid in Pankisi Gorge. Authorities detained four individuals based on their alleged connection to Chataev. One man was critically wounded in the raid and later died. As of late December 2017, investigations into both raids were ongoing.

In July, Georgia launched an investigation and subsequent criminal proceedings against a Georgian citizen who was allegedly fighting with ISIS.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Georgia is a member of the Council of Europe's Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism, a Financial Action Task Force (FATF)-style regional body. Georgia's financial intelligence unit, the Financial Monitoring Service of Georgia, is a member of the Egmont Group. Georgia's anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism legal framework remains largely in compliance with international standards, in particular with updated FATF recommendations.

In late 2017, the Government of Georgia adopted the *Rules of Providing Information and Filling the Illegal Income Legalization and Terrorism Financing Risk Supervisory Reports by the Commercial Banks*, with the intent to improve reporting forms.

Based on reports provided by Georgia's Financial Monitoring Service, the SSSG launched an investigation into a potential terrorism financing case involving a foreign citizen attempting to open an account in a local private bank who is suspected of having links with an entity operating in Syria. The investigation was ongoing at the end of 2017. Three terrorism-financing cases from 2016 remained ongoing in 2017.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): In 2017, the Georgian government continued its CVE efforts in vulnerable populations by focusing on initiatives in equality and integration, education, civic and political participation, media and access to information, gender equality, and preserving minority culture and identity.

The Georgian government launched a three-month internship pilot program for ethnic minority students that included over 65 students interning in 20 state agencies and local self-government bodies. Another project initiated in 2017 was the "Young European Ambassadors" program, aimed at providing various minority target groups with information on Georgia's Euro-Atlantic aspirations in their native languages. The Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection organized multiple cultural events in both the Pankisi Gorge and Akhaltsikhe, promoting cultural diversity through various fora. The Ministry of Internal Affairs launched a pilot program focusing on community policing in one district in Tbilisi with the hope of identifying gaps and implementing the program on a broader scale.

International and Regional Cooperation: Georgia is actively engaged on counterterrorism issues at the international, regional, and bilateral levels. Georgia also cooperates closely with NATO; participates in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, including its Foreign Terrorist Fighters working group; the Council of Europe Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism, and the Organization of Black Sea Economic Cooperation. In December, Georgia co-sponsored UN Security Council resolution 2396 on returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters.

In 2017, Georgia signed the Operational Strategic Cooperation Agreement with Europol, an agreement with Germany on the Exchange and Mutual Protection of Classified Information, and an agreement with the European Union on Security Procedures for Exchanging and Protecting Classified Information. Separately, Georgia signed bilateral treaties focused on further law enforcement cooperation with Greece and Sweden. Georgia has similar cooperation agreements in place with 28 countries. In 2017, more than 150 representatives from the SSSG and other relevant law-enforcement agencies participated in more than 30 counterterrorism-related trainings, seminars, conferences, and capacity-building exercises organized with the support of their international partners.

GERMANY

Overview: In 2017, Germany significantly increased the number of its terrorism-related investigations, arrests, and prosecutions, and to a lesser extent, increased prosecutorial and law enforcement resources to handle the increased caseload. Law enforcement targeted a range of terrorist groups including violent Islamist extremists (approximately 90 percent of cases, and the greatest threat according to German officials), the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), the Turkish Revolutionary People's Liberation Party/Front (DHKP-C), and domestic left-wing and right-wing actors. The government increased monitoring of *Gefaehrder* (i.e., dangerous persons who have not been accused of crimes but have come to the attention of law enforcement), began deportations of foreign terror suspects, and actively investigated returning foreign terrorist fighters. Terrorism was a major issue for all political parties in the September national elections, and counterterrorism will continue to be a top priority. Germany is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and continued its counterterrorism cooperation with the international community.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: On July 28, a United Arab Emirates-born Palestinian refugee who had been denied asylum allegedly killed one and injured five others with a machete while shouting *Allahu akhbar* in a Hamburg grocery store. Reportedly radicalized shortly before the attack, the defendant was known to the police and assessed to be mentally unstable rather than a security risk. The incident sparked widespread calls for stronger enforcement of deportation laws and discussion of the difficulty of identifying threats.

On November 27, the Mayor of Altena in North-Rhine Westphalia was seriously injured in a knife attack. His attacker said the mayor's refugee-friendly policies were the motive for the attack.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Germany bolstered its existing counterterrorism laws with several pieces of legislation, including: expanded use of mobile license plate reading systems to assist police and border security personnel; legalization of electronic ankle bracelet monitors; implementation of European Union (EU) Directive 2016/681 concerning Passenger Name Record (PNR) data; implementation of EU regulations to strengthen EU-wide law enforcement data sharing and align data protections with Europol regulation 2016/794; authorization of online search and source telecommunication surveillance; and enhanced prosecution tools for hate crimes and online propaganda posted by terrorist organizations. In August, the Constitutional Court upheld a law permitting expedited deportations of persons on the *Gefaehrder* list.

Counterterrorism investigations are conducted by both federal and state-level law enforcement agencies and coordinated through the Joint Counter-Terrorism Center, which is composed of 40 internal law enforcement and security agencies. The Ministry of Justice estimates there were 1,119 active terrorism investigations during January to November 2017, a sharp increase from 238 in 2016. Some cases were offshoots of refugee processing (for example, asylum seekers claiming to be threatened by violent Islamist extremists) and many will likely be dropped. Law enforcement agencies significantly expanded use of the *Gefaehrder* designation, used to monitor "extremists," and completed the first deportations of known terrorists. Thirty-six *Gefaehrder* were deported in 2017, the majority to Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Tunisia.

Germany continues to participate in international efforts to enhance border security. In 2017, Germany introduced a new passport with enhanced security features, tested wider biometric collection upon entry in connection with the EU Smart Border pilot, and began preparations to introduce the EU Entry Exit System and EU Travel Information and Authorization System. It is on track to collect and analyze PNR by the May 2018 EU deadline.

Significant law enforcement actions included:

- On October 3, Federal Police arrested a 19-year-old Syrian refugee in Schwerin (in the state of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern) on suspicion of planning an attack using bomb-making components purchased online.
- On November 21, six Syrian refugees were arrested in a series of coordinated raids in four states on suspicion of plotting a terrorist attack. German law significantly limits pre-trial and/or preventative detention, and the six were released two days later.
- Two high profile 2017 cases highlight increased sentences for terrorism convictions. Four defendants associated with the 2012 Bonn Rail Station Bombing Plot were convicted on charges that included founding and/or membership in a terrorist organization, conspiracy to commit murder, and weapons violations. The main defendant received a life sentence with no possibility of parole, which is rare in Germany. The accomplices received between nine years and nine months and 12 years, which are also atypically long sentences.
- In a separate case, prominent Salafist preacher Sven Lau (36) received a five-and-a-half year prison term for providing support to the ISIS-connected terrorist organization, Jamwa ("Army of Emigrants and Supporters"), including providing financial aid to Jamwa's Syrian operations, recruiting foreign fighters, and providing night vision goggles obtained from German Army inventories.

Germany continued to examine the December 19, 2016 Christmas Market terrorist attack, and two state parliaments (North-Rhine Westphalia and Berlin) established special parliamentary inquiry committees into law enforcement's performance in the case. Shortcomings identified by the Berlin inquiry – including lack of law-enforcement coordination among different agencies and states, failure to monitor a known criminal who carried false identification papers, and poor collection of physical evidence – were discussed in a press conference. A state senator called for a formal Federal Bundestag inquiry. In March, the Federal Justice Ministry appointed a temporary victims' representative and at least $1.9 million in compensation was paid to victims and their families.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Germany is a member of the Financial Action Task Force and its financial intelligence unit (FIU) is a member of the Egmont Group. In June, Germany transferred its FIU to the Customs Office. The government adopted legislation implementing EU-Directive 2015/849 against Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing, which establishes a transparency register of beneficial owners, extends anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism laws to all goods traders, adopts the EU High Risk Third Country List, expands the list of sanctionable situations, and raises fines from a maximum of $118,000 to $1.18 million. Germany remained a strong advocate of the UN Security Council ISIL (Da'esh) and al-Qa'ida sanctions regime.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): In 2017, Germany expanded funding for existing CVE programs and earmarked a total of approximately €218 million (US $255 million) for programming targeting all types of violent extremism. The majority of programs are federally funded and implemented locally through non-governmental organizations. Several federal states also have CVE offices. In March, the German Cabinet announced a new €101 million (US $118 million) National Prevention Strategy against Islamist Extremism, part of the€218 million (US $255 million) total CVE funding. The program is led jointly by the Federal Interior and Family Ministries and implemented with the states, remaining federal ministries, Federal Commission for Migration, Refugees and Integration, and other stakeholders. Focusing on local communities, schools, refugee integration centers, and mosques, the program will give special attention to prevention and de-radicalization through the internet, refugee integration, and prisons. In July, the government released the inaugural report of the Federal Extremism Prevention Strategy. In 2017, local research institutions, including universities and private think tanks, began to engage in CVE-related research. As of the end of 2017, the German cities of Augsburg and Dresden were members of the Strong Cities Network.

International and Regional Cooperation: In December, Germany co-sponsored UN Security Council resolution (UNSCR) 2396 on returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters. Besides its memberships in EU, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Germany is also a member of the Global Counterterrorism Forum. In response to UNSCR 2309 on aviation security, the German government was funding initiatives in Egypt, Kenya, and Nigeria aimed at improving aviation security.

GREECE

Overview: The Greek government remained a cooperative counterterrorism partner in 2017, increasing information sharing under auspices of the U.S. Visa Waiver Program and other bilateral agreements, and making arrests of terrorism suspects. Greece experienced intermittent small-scale terrorist attacks. Greece is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: Greece experienced small-scale attacks conducted primarily by domestic terrorist organizations, which targeted government officials and property in Greece as well as European creditors.

- On March 14, Conspiracy of Fire Nuclei claimed responsibility for sending a number of explosive devices in mail parcels to Greek and European leaders, institutions, and multinational companies, including to the offices of German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schaeuble. The German Finance Ministry's mail department intercepted the device before it reached Minister Schaeuble. Police also attributed to the group a March 16 parcel bomb that exploded at International Monetary Fund headquarters in Paris, injuring

one person. In March, Greek police intercepted eight more parcel bombs intended for EU leaders, institutions, and multinational companies.

- On April 19, a bomb left in a bag exploded outside the entrance to a bank situated close to two busy avenues in Athens, causing minor damage to the building but no injuries. An anonymous call to a television station provided advance warning and police evacuated the area before the bomb detonated. The far-left militant Popular Fighters Group claimed responsibility for the attack.
- On May 25, a bomb in an envelope exploded in the car of former Prime Minister Lucas Papademos, injuring Papademos and two others. On October 29, Greek police arrested Konstantinos Giatzoglou, a 29-year-old Greek male suspected of sending the bomb and others to European targets as part of the Conspiracy of Fire Nuclei attacks.
- On November 6, an unknown assailant opened fire on riot police guarding the headquarters of the Panhellenic Socialist Movement political party and fled the scene on a motorcycle with an accomplice. No one was hurt in the attack. Police matched bullet casings from the shooting to past attacks carried out by the far-left Revolutionary Solidarity group, which later claimed responsibility for the attack in an online statement.
- On December 22, a bomb exploded outside one of Greece's main courthouses, damaging the façade and breaking several windows but causing no injuries. Police cleared the area around the court after receiving two anonymous warning calls. The far-left militant Popular Fighters Group later claimed responsibility for the incident in an online statement.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: There were no changes to Greece's legal framework or legislation with respect to countering terrorism since 2016. On November 12, Germany notified the European Commission of temporary internal border controls on flights departing from Greece due to an increased number of passengers arriving without Schengen visas and reports of irregular travel documents. Belgium also reportedly increased checks in December for some passengers on flights from Greece but did not formally implement internal controls. Greece's national identification card remained extremely vulnerable to alteration and photo substitution; it has not incorporated certain security features, such as a digitized photo and biometrics. To mitigate this vulnerability, in 2015 police authorities instituted a system for conducting electronic checks of civil registries and national databases to confirm documents submitted as part of the application for identification cards and passports. The Greek government has committed to address this vulnerability through the introduction of a biometric national identification card.

The porous nature of Greece's borders remained a concern, particularly given the challenge the refugee and migration crisis presents in Greece. Six of the individuals responsible for the 2016 attacks in Paris and Brussels passed through Greece. Greece worked with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to improve its screening of immigrants, asylum seekers, and refugees entering Greece. Personnel from the Hellenic National Police (HNP) and the Hellenic Coast Guard participated in DHS-sponsored training related to border screening, interdictions, and investigations in May. The FBI trained HNP officers on counterterrorism analysis in August and December.

Greek authorities took action against terrorists in high-profile arrests:

- On January 5, authorities arrested convicted member of the terrorist group Revolutionary Struggle, Panagiota (Paula) Roupa. Roupa was first arrested in 2010 for her role in a series of bomb attacks against political, police, and financial targets, including the 2007 rocket attack against the U.S. Embassy but was released from pre-trial custody, having served the maximum 18 months on remand. A condition of her release was to remain in the Attica region, but she absconded in 2012 and was convicted in absentia in 2013 to 50 years in prison.
- On October 29, authorities arrested Konstantinos Giatzoglou, the 29-year-old Greek male suspected of sending parcel bombs to European targets, including in an incident that wounded former Prime Minister Lucas Papademos in May.
- On November 28, authorities arrested nine Turkish nationals suspected to be members of Foreign Terrorist Organization Revolutionary People's Liberation Party/Front. They were charged with a number of terrorism-related offenses, including forming and joining a terrorist organization, acquisition and possession of explosive materials and bombs as an act of terrorism, illegal possession of weapons and explosives, and forgery and use of fake public documents.

Over the objections of the U.S. government, the prison council of Greece's high-security prison for the first time granted convicted terrorist Dimitris Koufontinas a two-day furlough November 9-11. Koufontinas is serving 11 life sentences plus 25 years for the murder of 11 people and his leadership role in the terrorist group November 17 that targeted and assassinated members of the U.S. Mission to Greece, as well as U.K. and Turkish diplomats, Greek politicians, and Greek citizens. Koufontinas stated to the press his intention to apply for another furlough after 60 days, as permitted by law.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Greece is a member of the Financial Action Task Force, and its financial intelligence unit, the Hellenic Anti-Money Laundering and Anti-Terrorist Financing Commission (HAMLC), is a member of the Egmont Group. The Foreign Ministry's Sanctions Monitoring Unit ensured that Greece met its commitments to enforce international sanctions, including terrorism-related sanctions. The HAMLC inspected more than 2,000 suspicious transactions in 2017 but did not report evidence of terrorist financing in Greece. As described in the 2016 report, Greece freezes terrorist assets until completion of judicial proceedings and requires banks to report suspicious transactions of any kind, regardless of the type of entity (for- or not-for-profit). The Greek government directly monitors such entities if necessary. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): There were no significant changes in Greece's CVE efforts since the 2016 report.

International and Regional Cooperation: Greece continued to engage on counterterrorism initiatives in international fora and participated in regional information exchange and seminars through the United Nations, the European Union, the Organization for Security and Co-operation

in Europe, the Southeast European Law Enforcement Center for Combating Trans-Border Crime, and the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation.

ITALY

Overview: Italy aggressively investigated and prosecuted terrorist suspects and dismantled suspected terrorist-related cells within its borders. Authorities continued to implement counterterrorism legislation adopted in 2015 aimed at identifying and disrupting the recruitment and flow of foreign terrorist fighters. Criminal and low-level terrorist acts, such as those involving incendiary devices or small improvised explosive devices, remained a threat. Italy maintained a high level of professional cooperation with the United States and international partners in all areas, including terrorist information sharing and in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. Italy is the second largest contributor of troops, after the United States, to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan, as well as the Defeat ISIS Coalition's efforts to train Iraqi police and security forces in Iraq. There are approximately 1,400 personnel deployed to Iraq from Italy, including about 500 Italian troops providing site security for workers employed by Trevi, an Italian engineering firm engaged in critical repair work on the Mosul Dam. Italy continued to co-chair the Coalition's Counter-ISIS Finance working group with the United States and Saudi Arabia.

Italy has identified approximately 100 foreign terrorist fighters that traveled to Iraq or Syria. Italian authorities are concerned about the risk posed by returning fighters, as well as fighters dislodged from areas formerly under ISIS control in Libya who may try to use migrant flows to reach Italy. In addition, officials are concerned that fighters returning from the Western Balkans could also pass through its territory, given the significant Balkan-origin communities in Italy.

At the conclusion of the G-7 Interior Ministerial at Ischia on October 20, Italy and the United States signed an arrangement to implement a Secure Real Time Platform on data exchange to screen arriving migrants against U.S. terrorism databases.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: On May 18, a homeless man stabbed two army officers and a police officer at a train station in Milan. The man was arrested and later investigated for alleged Facebook posts expressing pro-ISIS views. The investigation was ongoing at the end of 2017. On December 7, two anarchist groups linked to the Informal Anarchist Federation and the International Revolutionary Front claimed responsibility for a rudimentary improvised explosive device that detonated in front of a Carabinieri police station in Rome. There were no injuries.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: In 2017, law enforcement took significant actions against terrorists and terrorist groups, including proactive, well-publicized disruptions, arrests, and prosecutions. The Italian government continued to make use of 2005 legislation that facilitated the detention of terrorist suspects and expedited procedures for expelling non-citizens suspected of endangering national security. As of December 12, Italy had deported 100 individuals on security grounds, up from 60 in 2016. Prominent arrests and expulsions included the following:

- Police arrested one Moroccan and two Tunisian members of an alleged cell in Perugia on March 23, following a Postal Police cyber investigation. The cell allegedly spread terrorist propaganda in Arabic and Italian, posting pictures and video of ISIS attacks on Facebook.
- On August 19, the Ministry of Interior deported one Syrian/Tunisian and two Moroccan nationals, citing national security concerns. On August 28, as part of the same action, the Ministry of Interior deported a 37-year-old Moroccan citizen for the same reason. The man had been incarcerated in an Italian prison for petty crimes.
- On October 7, at the request of French authorities, Italian police in Ferrara arrested Anis Hanachi, a 25 year-old Tunisian who is the brother of Ahmed Hanachi, the attacker who stabbed two women in Marseille on October 1. Investigators believe that Anis, who was a foreign terrorist fighter in Syria and Iraq between 2014 and 2016, indoctrinated his brother and instigated him to commit the attack.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Italy is a member of the Financial Action Task Force, and its financial intelligence unit is a member of the Egmont Group. Italy remained a co-lead of the Defeat ISIS Coalition's Counter-ISIS Finance Group, along with the United States and Saudi Arabia. There have been no significant changes to its policies for countering the financing of terrorism since the 2016 report. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): In February, the government reached an agreement with the Union of Islamic Communities and Organizations in Italy that involved moderate imams working in six prisons to prevent radicalization to violence among prisoners. This was one of the measures recommended by a government commission in September 2016. On July 18, the Chamber of Deputies approved a bill intended to prevent radicalization to violence. Pending final approval in the Senate, the new legislation would establish a National Center on Radicalization within the Ministry of the Interior to implement the national CVE strategy, including training of police and magistrates.

International and Regional Cooperation: Italy continued to support counterterrorism efforts in regional and multilateral organizations, including the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, and the Global Counterterrorism Forum. In September, Italy co-led with the United Kingdom and France a UN General Assembly high-level side event on "Preventing Terrorist Use of the Internet" focused on technology industry engagement. At the October 19-20 Ischia G-7 Interior Ministerial, Italy brought together G-7 members and private information technology and social media companies to sign a declaration of intent to monitor radicalization to violence on the internet and the use of social media as a recruitment tool by terrorists. Italy was a member of the UN Security Council in 2017 and in December co-sponsored UN Security Council resolution 2396 on returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters.

Italy strengthened its counterterrorism capacity building efforts in Libya, focusing on coast guard cooperation, investigative training for law enforcement, and border security measures.

KOSOVO

Overview: Kosovo continued to fight the growing threat of terrorism in 2017. Approximately 403 Kosovo citizens have traveled to Syria and Iraq to fight for or join ISIS or al-Nusrah Front, of which approximately 74 are deceased. Some 133 of these individuals have returned, while approximately 196 remain in these conflict zones. This number includes 40 children born to Kosovo citizens in conflict zones. The government continued to implement its comprehensive strategy and updated its action plan for countering violent extremism (CVE). In 2017, the government drafted its third counterterrorism strategy and action plan. The Minister of Interior took the role of Counterterrorism National Coordinator in November.

The CVE strategy and action plan provide a five-year roadmap for stemming the growing threat of terrorism through a whole-of-government approach, emphasizing the critical role of local stakeholders and civil society. Thus far, implementation has been uneven across government ministries and a lack of capacity and inadequate resources remained challenges. On December 5, the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund approved $2.5 million in CVE program funding that could significantly bolster the government's capacity to implement its CVE action plan. The Kosovo Police (KP) Counterterrorism Directorate continued to enhance its investigative capacities by increasing personnel and developing a cyber-counterterrorism unit.

The security and political situation in northern Kosovo continued to limit the government's ability to exercise its authority in that region, although the government successfully integrated Serbian judges, prosecutors, and staff into Kosovo's judicial institutions in October, extending the country's judicial authority and access to justice for citizens. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization Kosovo Force (KFOR) and European Union Rule of Law Mission (EULEX) continued to work with the KP to maintain a safe and secure environment and strengthen the rule of law, including at the borders.

Kosovo is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and pledged $100,000 in support of the Coalition.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Kosovo's legislative framework is sufficient to prosecute individuals suspected of committing or supporting terrorist activities, but prosecutors lack experience with such cases. Kosovo officials recognize the need to improve interagency cooperation.

Recognizing the threats and consequences of terrorism, the government strengthened its existing counterterrorism provisions and drafted a new counterterrorism strategy in 2017. The new counterterrorism strategy provides a comprehensive approach to preventing and combating terrorism and is one of the government's strategic priorities. On November 30, the Kosovo Assembly held the first reading of the Law on Critical Infrastructure, which passed and aims to identify, preserve, and protect national and European critical infrastructure.

Law enforcement authorities demonstrated adequate capacity to detect and prevent individuals from joining the conflicts in Syria and Iraq. The KP Counterterrorism Directorate, which is

responsible for counterterrorism investigations, increased capacities to track suspects, although they still lacked resources for online investigations and surveillance.

The KP and Border Police successfully interdicted several individuals attempting to join foreign conflicts, although border security gaps remained. On August 11, KP arrested two Kosovo citizens for attempting to join terrorist groups in Syria and Iraq. The individuals left Kosovo on July 25 via the Macedonian border and arrived at the Ataturk Airport in Istanbul on July 26. On July 28, Turkish security forces caught them trying to enter Syria and deported them to Kosovo on August 11. On October 31, they pleaded guilty and were sentenced to 18 months in prison. The Border Police regularly updated their watch list of persons suspected of connections to terrorism or criminal activities; they had 4,481 hits in 2017.

Trials and investigations continued for 51 suspects and 29 cases, which included several imams arrested since 2014 on terrorism charges. In 2017, Kosovo authorities arrested five additional individuals on terrorism-related charges. Authorities issued seven new indictments on terrorism charges involving 17 individuals.

On June 8, a Defeat-ISIS Coalition drone strike in Syria killed Kosovo terrorist leader Lavdrim Muhaxheri and fellow foreign terrorist fighter Bilall Haqifi. On June 9, Kacanik municipality's head imam, Florim Neziraj, offered condolences at the city's main mosque for Muhaxheri.

On June 28, Pristina's Basic Court held the first hearing for nine Kosovo citizens suspected of planning an attack at the November 2016 Israel-Kosovo soccer match in Albania and other attacks against local and international targets in Albania and Kosovo. The KP and the Kosovo Intelligence Agency were instrumental in stopping this attack.

Kosovo continued to demonstrate political will to address threats related to terrorism, and the state possesses the legal framework to do so. Although national institutions continued to strengthen their capacities, limited resources and experience continue to hinder their ability to handle terrorism cases effectively.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: On February 1, Kosovo's financial intelligence unit became a member of the Egmont Group. There are no other significant changes since the 2016 report. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): The government updated its CVE action plan, which corresponds to its 2015 National Strategy. The government appointed its third National Countering Violent Extremism Coordinator on October 30, 2017. The Kosovo Justice Ministry, supported by the U.S. government, continued its implementation of a corrections program aimed at enhancing management of terrorists, and setting up frameworks for the rehabilitation and eventual reintegration of convicted terrorists. The Ministry of Interior established a reintegration department, which aims to integrate returned fighters and their accompanying families into communities. The Kosovo government took proactive steps to prepare a repatriation strategy for its citizens returning from conflict zones. The Kosovo cities of Ferizaj, Gjilan, Gjakova,

Gracanica, Hani I Elezit, Kacanik, Mitrovica South, Peja/Pec, Prishtina, Prizren, Viti, Vushtrri and Zvecan are members of the Strong Cities Network.

Kosovo's CVE strategy includes promoting counter-narratives to challenge terrorist messaging.

International and Regional Cooperation: There have been no significant changes since the 2016 report.

MACEDONIA

Overview: Macedonia cooperated with U.S. counterterrorism efforts and was a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. Macedonia's authorities assessed that ISIS members and sympathizers maintained a presence in Macedonia. Additionally, the Ministry of Interior (MOI) and Intelligence Agency estimated that at least 150 Macedonia nationals traveled to join terrorist groups in Syria and Iraq. Of that number, 30 were killed, 40 remained there, and 80 returned home to Macedonia.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: A Joint Combined Exchange Training with U.S. Special Forces took place in January to improve Macedonia's ability to respond to terrorist incidents. Authorities at the MOI reported they developed operational plans to prevent and respond to terrorist attacks on soft targets including stadiums and hotels.

The MOI International Cooperation Unit upgraded from the Mobile INTERPOL Network Database (MIND) to the Fixed INTERPOL Network Database (FIND), with assistance from partner nations, to systematically screen travelers and documents at border crossings against INTERPOL databases on terrorists, fugitives, and lost and stolen travel documents. Macedonia Border Police used INTERPOL and Europol watch lists that are regularly updated and they have biometric screening capability. The Border Police also shared and received information through alerts via the Joint Contact Centers with neighboring countries (Albania, Bulgaria, and Kosovo) and INTERPOL.

Additionally, the MOI's Bureau of Public Security worked with U.S. authorities to address corruption among border officials, resource constraints, training gaps for border police officers, and issues related to border management.

Macedonia engaged in one terrorist-plot disruption operation. In April, just before the Orthodox Easter observance, Macedonia's authorities, in coordination with a regional partner, detained persons of interest for questioning. No charges were filed as a result of the operation.

Authorities conducted approximately four terrorism investigations into suspected terrorism-related activity of approximately 50 individuals.

On November 2, the Skopje Criminal Court found 33 defendants guilty of terrorism charges and acquitted four in connection with the May 2015 armed incident in Kumanovo, which left eight police officers and 10 members of the armed group dead. The court issued life sentences to seven defendants while another 13 were sentenced to 40 years in prison. An additional 13 were

sentenced to lesser terms ranging from 12 to 20 years in prison. On November 3, another defendant who had been tried separately in connection with the same 2015 incident was sentenced to life in prison.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Macedonia is a member of the Council of Europe's Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism (MONEYVAL), a Financial Action Task Force (FATF)-style regional body. Macedonia's financial intelligence unit, the Financial Intelligence Office (FIO), is a member of the Egmont Group and developed new indicators for financial transactions that could be related to terrorism financing in 2017. Macedonia's anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism legal framework remains largely in compliance with international standards, especially after it incorporated the latest FATF recommendations. The government continued to address deficiencies noted in MONEYVAL's Fourth Round Evaluation Report from 2014 by drafting a new law on restrictive measures. Pending approval in parliament, the draft law will harmonize domestic legislation with United Nations Security Council resolution 1373 as well as with FATF recommendations on targeted financial sanctions related to terrorism and proliferation.

Deficiencies remained in Macedonia's confiscation regime, which remains conviction-based and hinders effective freezing and confiscation of terrorist assets. Macedonia has an agency for the management of seized and forfeited assets, but it has limited capacity and activity. In 2017, Macedonia's FIO received two suspicious transaction reports for terrorist financing and has sent three reports to relevant institutions for further investigation.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): In July, the government created and appointed a 44-member National Committee for Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) and Counterterrorism (CT) as well as a National Coordinator for CT/CVE with a Deputy Coordinator for CT and a Deputy Coordinator for CVE. The government tasked the Committee and Coordinators to revise the 2017-2020 National CT Strategy and to draft a new National CVE Strategy as well as CT and CVE National Action Plans. The National CT/CVE Committee and Coordinator met for the first time in November to map out a plan to draft the National CVE Strategy and Action Plan, however, the government failed to provide funding to implement this plan.

The Islamic Community of Macedonia (ICM) said that it incorporated counter narratives into Friday sermons with Muslim worshipers. The ICM also conducted one CVE training session for approximately 12 imams. Local think tanks continued to research the drivers of terrorism.

The Macedonian municipalities of Aracinovo, Cair (Skopje), Gostivar, Kicevo, Kumanovo, Ohrid, Struga, and Tetovo are members of the Strong Cities Network.

International and Regional Cooperation: Macedonia is a willing regional and international counterterrorism partner. Fourteen members of the National CT/CVE Committee and the

National CT/CVE Coordinator and Deputies participated in a three-day U.S.-funded counterterrorism-themed regional Tabletop Exercise (TTX). During the event, which was co-organized with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, participants read through a foreign terrorist fighter scenario and discussed what the government could do during the prevention, intervention, and rehabilitation phases. Participants in the TTX included delegations from Albania and Kosovo, led by those countries' National CVE Coordinators. The Prime Minister provided opening remarks at the exercise emphasizing a whole-of-society approach to address terrorism.

Macedonia's Border Police and Customs are members of the Southern Border Initiative, whose goal is to establish a cross-border working group consisting of border security agencies from Albania, Kosovo, Macedonia, and Montenegro to combat corruption, illicit cross-border trafficking, transnational crime, and terrorism.

THE NETHERLANDS

Overview: The Netherlands continued to respond effectively to the global terrorist threat in the areas of border and transportation security, counterterrorist financing, countering violent extremism, and bilateral and multilateral counterterrorism cooperation. Since March 2013, the national threat level has been "substantial" (the second highest ranking). The main terrorism threat is Islamist terrorism, with risks posed by both networks and lone actors. The Netherlands has a comprehensive national counterterrorism strategy in which policies are implemented at the local level through multidisciplinary interagency cooperation. In the wake of terrorist attacks in Europe, Dutch authorities reviewed their security measures. Some cities have placed large concrete obstacles on streets to prevent vehicles from driving into soft targets. In October, the government announced an increase of US $15 million (€12.5 million) in the annual counterterrorism budget beginning in 2018.

The Netherlands is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and has liaisons embedded at various operational command centers. The Netherlands previously conducted air strikes against terrorist targets in Iraq and Syria. In 2017, it provided force protection and contributed military personnel and trainers in Iraq. The Netherlands participates in all coalition working groups. Together with Morocco it co-chaired the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) and, until September 2017, also co-chaired its Foreign Terrorist Fighters working group.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: The Netherlands implemented counterterrorism legislation in line with United Nations Security Council resolutions. Within the European Union (EU), the Netherlands pushed for implementation of the road map to improve information exchange. There has been no change in law enforcement structures, capacity, international cooperation, or border security legislation, and there were no cases of terrorism affecting U.S. citizens in 2017. The Dutch government announced it will invest an additional US $180 million in the national police in 2018. On March 1, three new counterterrorism laws entered into force:

- A law enabling the Minister of Justice and Security to revoke without court order Dutch citizenship of dual nationals who have joined a terrorist organization.

- The *Temporary Law Administrative Measures*, which expands the government's toolbox of non-criminal measures to disrupt potential terrorist activities, including a requirement for certain individuals to report to police stations at regular intervals and obey area, contact, and travel bans.
- A change to the passport law that declares passports and ID cards for individuals subject to a travel ban as expired.

Significant law enforcement and judicial actions related to counterterrorism included:

- On November 13, a district court in Rotterdam convicted a Dutch woman for preparing and promoting acts of terrorism but acquitted her of participation in a terrorist organization. She had traveled to Syria in 2015 but returned in 2016. The court concluded her marriage to an ISIS fighter made her guilty of preparatory acts for terrorism, even if she did not personally participate in acts of terrorism. She was sentenced to two years in prison, with 13 months suspended.
- On November 2, a district court in Rotterdam convicted a man for preparing to commit a terrorist attack and sentenced him to four years in prison. Authorities arrested him in December 2016 after hearing of plans to attack the Turkish Consulate in Rotterdam. Police found an AK-47, ammunition, illegal heavy fireworks, and instructions on how to make a bomb in his residence.
- On September 13, the Minister of Justice and Security announced the revocation in absentia of Dutch citizenship for four foreign terrorist fighters. This marked the first time the government used the new legislation that entered into law March 1. All four individuals were presumed to be in Syria.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: The Netherlands is a member of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and is one of the Cooperating and Supporting Nations of the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force, a FATF-style regional body. The Financial Intelligence Unit – Nederland (FIU-NL) is a member of the Egmont Group. On January 1, new legislation entered into force expanding the reach of anti-money laundering regulations to include the possession of stolen goods. Implementation of the Fourth EU Anti-Money Laundering Directive remains ongoing. The Dutch framework for countering the financing of terrorism applies to all EU-designated terrorist organizations and the UN Security Council ISIL (Da'esh) and al-Qa'ida sanctions regime. The Netherlands successfully prosecuted two terrorist financing cases in 2017. The government's national terrorist watch list grew to include 135 individuals and three organizations as of December 2017. In 2016, the latest statistics available, FIU-NL declared more than 4,000 transactions it received as suspicious. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): The Netherlands government's 2016-2020 National Counterterrorism Strategy, released in July 2016, contains measures to strengthen communities, build resilience to radicalization to violence, and prevent persons from becoming foreign terrorist fighters. In November, the new cabinet announced prioritization of five topics: intelligence gathering, prevention, protection of physical objects and persons, preparation for incidents, and prosecution. The Dutch government uses a multi-disciplinary approach and develops tailored

plans of action to intervene with individuals suspected of adhering to or being susceptible to radicalization to violence. Community police officers are the cornerstone of the local approach.

Other stakeholders include local governments, with the support of the Office of the National Coordinator for Security and Counterterrorism, the public prosecutor's office, social workers, child protective services, educators, and community leaders. This approach prioritizes the use of preventive measures, including mentoring, counseling, and access to job-training programs and other social services to steer individuals away from becoming radicalized to violence. Similar programs also rehabilitate former terrorists. To counter terrorist messaging, local governments use outreach efforts with community and religious leaders to amplify credible voices. The government generally views repressive measures, including arrest and prosecution, as steps to take only when preventive measures fail. Returned foreign terrorist fighters undergo a threat assessment by the government; some returnees are prosecuted.

The Dutch cities of The Hague, Rotterdam, and Utrecht are members of the Strong Cities Network.

International and Regional Cooperation: The Netherlands participates in the UN, the GCTF, the EU, the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. As co-chair of GCTF, the Netherlands hosts the GCTF Administrative Unit. The Netherlands has dedicated GCTF officers at four embassies. Under the auspices of the GCTF Foreign Terrorist Fighter working group, the Netherlands and the United States are co-leading the *Initiative on Addressing the Challenge of Retuning Families of Foreign Terrorist Fighters*. The Netherlands is on the governing board of the three GCTF-inspired institutions: the International Center of Excellence for Countering Violent Extremism (Hedayah) in the United Arab Emirates, the International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law in Malta, and the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund in Switzerland. The Netherlands also participates in the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism. In December, the Netherlands co-sponsored UN Security Council resolution 2396 on returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters.

On April 13, the Netherlands signed an agreement with the Kenyan National Coordinator for Counterterrorism on Dutch support for the new Kenyan CVE strategy. The Netherlands will support training of police officers and teachers to identify radicalization to violence and rehabilitate former terrorists. On July 19, the Netherlands signed a memorandum of understanding with the Indonesian National Counterterrorism Agency on sharing best practices and exchanging information.

The Netherlands continued to finance a wide variety of capacity-building projects. The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs appointed regional security coordinators at six embassies who are dedicated to capacity building to identify radicalization. The Netherlands is an active participant in the Counter Terrorism Group (the intelligence services of all EU member states plus Norway and Switzerland) to improve cooperation and information exchange between European counterterrorism services.

NORWAY

Overview: Norway's internal security service continued to assess that Islamist terrorism remains the primary terrorism threat to Norway, although officials expressed concerns about increasing violent right-wing threats. A small but outspoken group of Islamist extremists in and around Oslo remained active, although they did not conduct any attacks. In 2017, authorities convicted several Norwegians for supporting or aiding ISIS. The flow of Norwegian citizens or residents who traveled to Syria and Iraq to fight on behalf of ISIS continued to decrease in 2017. Since the April arrest of the leader of an Islamist extremist group, no known individual has left Norway to join ISIS. Police Security Service (PST) officials continued to assess publicly that approximately 100 individuals have traveled as foreign terrorist fighters in total. Norway and the United States maintained good collaboration on counterterrorism.

Norway is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. The government co-sponsored UN Security Council resolutions 2178 (2014) and 2396 on foreign terrorist fighters and is contributing to the Coalition's five lines of effort, including with military personnel in a capacity-building mission for Iraqi security forces in Anbar. Norway provided approximately US $345 million in assistance in 2017 to address the humanitarian crises in Iraq and Syria.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Terrorism is a criminal offense in Norway. Norway continued to prosecute foreign terrorist fighters and supporters of terrorism under its amended law from 2013. The law increased the maximum prison sentence to 30 years for serious terrorism offenses and made it illegal to conduct or plan to conduct a terrorist attack, receive terrorism-related training, or provide material support to a terrorist organization. In 2016, Norway passed legislation criminalizing traveling, as well as the intent to travel, to fight on behalf of a non-state actor.

The most significant terrorism-related conviction in 2017 was that of Ubaydullah Hussain, leader of the extremist group, the Prophet's Ummah. Hussain was sentenced to nine years in prison for being an ISIS member, recruiting foreign terrorist fighters to the organization, and for providing financial and material support to ISIS. In another trial, one of the few Norwegians to have returned from Syria was sentenced to seven years and six months in prison for terrorist fighting and association.

The PST is responsible for domestic security, including counterterrorism activities. A joint analysis cell called the Joint Counter Terrorism Center became fully operational in 2014. This unit includes participants from the PST and the Norwegian Intelligence Service (NIS), which is the external security service. Both the PST and the NIS have devoted significant resources to identifying, tracking, and taking action against Norwegian citizens intending to travel to and from Syria and Iraq to engage in fighting. The PST and NIS maintain a list of those who have traveled to Syria and Iraq, those who have returned, and those who have expressed an interest in traveling to the two countries. Norway continued to reinforce local PST units across the country that handle counterterrorism and to improve coordination among PST, local police, municipal authorities, and centers for asylum seekers.

In May 2016, Parliament approved an agreement on the sharing of fingerprint information in criminal investigations with the European Union (EU), the parties to the Prüm Convention, as

well as with the United States under the Preventing and Combating Serious Crimes data-sharing agreement. Norway continued to explore an agreement on sharing passenger name recognition (PNR) data with the EU and is simultaneously developing a national PNR system. In November 2016, Norwegian police piloted an automated biometric identification system, which officials aim to implement nationally in 2018. Immigration to Norway is facilitated and regulated by the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration, which processes all applications for asylum, visas, family immigration, work and study permits, permanent residence, and travel documents. The Norwegian police and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs issue passports.

In 2017, Norway implemented security measures on soft targets in the capital, Oslo, such as placing physical barriers in the streets of one of the city's main pedestrian thoroughfares and directly outside the buildings. Additionally, police at Oslo's Gardermoen Airport have been armed on a trial basis.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Norway is a member of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). Norway's financial intelligence unit (FIU), which operates within the National Authority for the Investigation and Prosecution of Economic and Environmental Crime, is a member of the Egmont Group. Norwegian law incorporates FATF standards and recommendations, but the government faces challenges in effective implementation, particularly regarding United Nations (UN)-targeted financial sanctions without delay. Norway is a member of the Defeat ISIS Coalition's working group to Counter Terrorist Financing. The government also continued to operate a domestic interagency group, which included the Ministries of Justice, Finance, and Foreign Affairs to counter money laundering and the financing of terrorism. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): Norway continued to implement its National Action Plan against Radicalization and Violent Extremism, published in 2014, which is a whole-of-government CVE approach. Priorities include strengthening CVE research, improving national and local cooperation on counter-radicalization efforts, helping to promote reintegration of former terrorists, and preventing recruitment and radicalization to violence online.

In 2017, Norway improved coordination among authorities responsible for managing the release from prison and reintegration of those convicted of terrorism-related offenses. PST assesses that several municipalities around Oslo fjord are home to communities and individuals most vulnerable to radicalization to violence. These municipalities have increased their efforts, including passing action plans and increasing budgets for countering violent extremism and counter-radicalization activities. The national government also hosts an annual conference on radicalization and violent extremism. Participants at the 2017 conference discussed how best to use dialogue as a method of preventing radicalization.

Norway continued to support the Youth Civil Activism Network and the Strong Cities Network (SCN). Two Norwegian cities, Oslo and Kristiansand, are members of the SCN.

Regional and International Cooperation: Norway is active in multilateral fora in efforts to counter terrorism, including the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the EU's Radicalization Awareness Network, and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). As Chair of the OSCE Security Committee in 2017, Norway actively supported the CVE agenda, including the role of women. Although not a member, Norway has been an active participant in Global Counterterrorism Forum working group meetings, through which it coordinates projects related to counterterrorism and countering violent extremism. Norway continued to support implementation of the UN Secretary General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. Norway provided support to phase two of The Prevention Project, which focuses on localized interventions. In 2017, Norway, together with Jordan, established the Group of Friends at the UN on preventing violent extremism and supported the publication of the UN study on foreign terrorist fighters. Norway supports the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund. In December, Norway co-sponsored UN Security Council resolution 2396 on returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters.

RUSSIA

Overview: The Russian Federation remained a target of international terrorist groups, particularly ISIS. The majority of Russian domestic counterterrorism activities conducted in 2017 targeted armed groups in the North Caucasus. Russian officials noted that Russia encountered increased ISIS-related activity in its domestic law enforcement activities.

In 2017, the Russian military intervention in Syria factored heavily in public counterterrorism messaging. Moscow regularly cited the threat posed by terrorists fighting in Syria to help justify its military operations there. As of October 2017, the Russian government estimated that over 3,400 Russian citizens had fought with ISIS in Syria and Iraq. Russia also continued to pursue counterterrorism cooperation with foreign partners. On December 6, President Vladimir Putin announced that Russia's counterterrorist operation in Syria had come to an end "with a complete victory and defeat of the terrorists"; the Russian military, however, remained active in Syria for the rest of the year. Moscow has also expressed concern about the Islamic State's Khorasan Province threat in northern Afghanistan, calling it one of the most significant threats to the Russian homeland. U.S. counterterrorism cooperation remained limited due to a number of factors, including repeated false claims that the United States supports ISIS, Russia's targeting of civilians and civilian infrastructure through indiscriminate bombings in Syria, and concerns about Russian anti-terrorism/anti-extremism legislation that could permit the prosecution of peaceful protesters, the political opposition, independent media, and certain religious groups.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: The highest profile terrorist attack in Russia in 2017 occurred on April 3 in St. Petersburg, where a bomb detonated by a suicide bomber on the city's metro system killed 15 people and injured 60 others. Katiba Al Imam Shamil, an alleged al-Qa'ida affiliate primarily active in the North Caucasus, claimed responsibility for the attack. Additional representative attacks included:

- On March 24, a group of eight alleged ISIS-affiliated militants attacked a Russian National Guard outpost near Grozny in Chechnya, resulting in the deaths of six soldiers and six attackers.

- On April 4, two Russian police officers were killed in a shooting in the southern city of Astrakhan; ISIS claimed responsibility. Two days later, Russian National Guard troops killed four men suspected of involvement in the attack.
- On August 19, a 19-year-old resident of the Siberian city of Surgut attacked and injured seven people with a knife before he was shot and killed by police. ISIS claimed responsibility for the attack.
- On November 5, two attackers shot and killed one police officer and injured two others in the Nazran district of Russia's North Caucasus. Firearms, ammunition, and a homemade explosive device were found at the scene after the operation.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Russia continued to build a comprehensive counterterrorism legal framework that includes provisions of the Criminal Code and various federal laws. Throughout 2017, however, the Russian government continued to use its "anti-extremism" legislation to prosecute peaceful individuals and organizations, including the political opposition, independent media, and certain religious organizations. On July 29, President Putin signed a law revoking Russian citizenship from those convicted of terrorism and extremism who became citizens through naturalization. On November 16, the State Duma passed a bill calling for life sentences for terrorist recruiters who incite a person to commit a terrorist attack, provide training on committing a terrorist attack, organize a terrorist cell, or join a terrorist group. Additionally, the Chairman of the Investigative Committee suggested introducing further legislation to block extremist materials, including internet sites.

Terrorism-related law-enforcement activities continued apace in 2017. The majority of operations occurred in the North Caucasus regions of Dagestan and Chechnya, but several high profile cases took place in major Russian cities. Significant events include:

- On August 14 outside Moscow, the Federal Security Service (FSB) arrested four people on suspicion of plotting attacks on public transportation and shopping centers in Moscow using suicide bombers and explosives. According to the FSB, those arrested included two would-be suicide bombers, an expert in explosives, and an ISIS member.
- On August 31, the FSB detained two individuals in the Moscow region for plotting terrorist attacks planned for September 1. According to the FSB, one suspect pledged allegiance to ISIS, while the other claimed to be carrying out ISIS instructions. The FSB seized a powerful makeshift explosive device and bomb-making components intended for use in a suicide bomb attack.
- On September 26, Russia's Interior Ministry, the FSB, and the National Guard arrested a member of ISIS, for whom an INTERPOL Red Notice had been issued, in Irkutsk, East Siberia. The suspected terrorist was a 30-year-old native of a former Soviet republic.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Russia is a member of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and two FATF-style regional bodies: the Council of Europe's Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism, and the Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism (EAG), for which it is a primary funding source. Through the EAG, Russia provides technical assistance and other resources towards improving legislative and regulatory frameworks and operational capabilities in the region. Russia's financial intelligence unit, the Federal Service for Financial

Monitoring (Rosfinmonitoring), is a member of the Egmont Group. In July, Russia ratified the 2005 Council of Europe Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure, and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime and on the Financing of Terrorism (aka the "Warsaw Convention").

In December 2017, Rosfinmonitoring's list of persons and entities tied to "extremist activities" or terrorism increased nearly fourfold over the previous year to include almost 9,000 individuals and legal entities.

Russian financial regulators continued efforts to reduce persistently high capital outflows and fictitious transactions. The primary regulator is the Central Bank of Russia, which has revoked a large number of banking licenses over the past several years, often citing the existence of dubious transactions.
For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): In May, Russia participated in the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) conference in Vienna on "Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism." The Russian government's CVE work focuses on enforcement mechanisms and program administration through governmental agencies or organizations controlled by the government. The Russian government refused to cooperate in this area with independent non-governmental organizations, including Russian-based ones. We refer you to the State Department's *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* and *Report on International Religious Freedom for 2016* for further information.

International and Regional Cooperation: Russia is a founding member of the Global Counterterrorism Forum. Russia participated in numerous regional counterterror exercises, including the Collective Security Treaty Organization's November 2017 *Combat Brotherhood* exercise held in Tajikistan. Russia also advanced counterterrorism agendas in several multilateral groups, including the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the OSCE, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' Regional Forum, and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum. In 2017, Russia held consultations, participated in joint counterterrorism exercises, or signed formal counterterrorism agreements with Belarus, China, India, the Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Tajikistan, Turkey, and Uzbekistan.

SERBIA

Overview: With no terrorist attacks in 2017 and low levels of ISIS recruitment activities, the main terrorism threats in Serbia remained the potential movement of money and weapons through its territory, returning foreign terrorist fighters, and radicalization to violence. The government took steps to improve its ability to fight terrorism with the adoption of the *National Strategy for the Prevention and Countering of Terrorism for the Period 2017-2021*, and continued cooperation with international partners particularly focused on law enforcement and cyber-security efforts. A member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, Serbia pledged

donations of medical supplies in May. However, inexperience as a donor and internal red tape have delayed delivery of these donations and will likely limit additional financial or material contributions to the Coalition.

Serbia continued to benefit from U.S. government training to build counterterrorism capacity. As a result of multiple study visits with the Joint Terrorism Task Force, Serbia adopted a similar interagency counterterrorism task force. The Office of Defense Cooperation and the Special Operations Command Europe conducted two Joint Combined Exchange Trainings with the Ministry of Interior's Counterterrorism Unit. The Office of Defense Cooperation also sponsored 13 military officers, ministry of defense officials, and security officials to attend Counter Terrorism Fellowship Program courses. The Export Control and Related Border Security (EXBS) program provided training and equipment to Customs and Border Police. EXBS works extensively with a Tri-Border Initiative that brings Serbian, Croatian, and Bosnian agencies together for regular training, consultations, and meetings. The U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Overseas Prosecutorial Development Assistance and Training Program and International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program provided numerous law enforcement and judicial training programs.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: In 2017, Serbia passed the *Law on Organization and Jurisdiction of State Authorities Combatting Organized Crime, Terrorism and Corruption.* The law mandates each state body have a liaison officer to assist in criminal investigations and establishes four specialized anti-corruption prosecutorial units and judicial courts.

Serbia's law enforcement capacities need improvement, but progress is steady. The Service for Combating Terrorism and Extremism (TES), a part of the Criminal Police Directorate, proactively works on terrorism detection, deterrence, and prevention. The Government of Serbia has also established interagency working groups to handle security at both the strategic and operational levels. The Operational working group consists of TES, the Security Information Agency, and the Prosecutor's Office. Soft targets such as hotels, stadiums, tourist resorts, and shopping centers are required to have their own terrorism contingency plans in place, with TES officers providing consultation and oversight.

The Serbian Border Police use a national border management information system called "System to Check Persons and Vehicles" to screen passengers and vehicles at all border crossing/check points and other ports of entry. This system verifies the validity of travel documents, collects biographic and biometric data, checks visa status, searches national and international databases, and stores information for future use, although the transmission of this data to the central system can sometimes take several days.

Serbia's criminal code outlaws unauthorized participation in a war or armed conflict in a foreign country consistent with United Nations Security Council resolution (UNSCR) 2178 (2014) and prescribes a sentence of six months to 10 years' incarceration. Advance Passenger Information and Passenger Name Record programs are not yet legally authorized, although adoption of UNSCR 2396 in December 2017 now makes both obligatory for all UN member states. Serbia's Civil Aviation Directorate is working toward integration with the European Common Aviation

Area and has been cooperating with international partners to enhance capacities in accordance with UNSCR 2309 on aviation security.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Serbia is a member of the Council of Europe Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism (MONEYVAL). The Serbian Administration for the Prevention of Money Laundering (APML) is a member of the Egmont Group. The APML participates in trainings organized by MONEYVAL, the United Nations, the European Union, and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

The Serbian Government has a "National Strategy for the Fight Against Money Laundering and Terrorism Funding" and existing laws to comply with the UNSC ISIL (Da'esh) and al-Qa'ida sanctions regime. In October, amendments were submitted to the National Assembly aimed at better aligning the *Law on Freezing Assets with the Aim of Preventing Terrorism* and *the Law on Prevention of Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing* to international standards as recommended in a 2016 MONEYVAL report.

The Organized Crime Prosecutor's Office is prosecuting a case in which seven individuals are accused of criminal offenses related to terrorism and terrorism financing. The case has been ongoing since September 2014.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): Serbia's National Counterterrorism Strategy and accompanying Action Plan outline planned CVE activities aimed at identifying early factors leading to radicalization to violence, enhancing the security culture of citizens, and intercepting threats from social media messaging. The Action Plan identified 22 CVE activities and directed several ministries to develop their own strategies for implementation, including the Ministries of Culture and Information, Education, Youth and Sports, and Interior, among others. Serbia's Interior Minister advocated for a regional center for de-radicalization that would cooperate with other Western Balkan countries. According to government officials, the threat of radicalization to violence in Serbia's prisons is minimal, and de-radicalization is handled on a case-by-case basis through the Administration for Enforcement of Penal Sanctions.

The Serbian cities of Bujanovac, Novi Pazar, Presevo, and Tutin are members of the Strong Cities Network.

Regional and International Cooperation: Serbia is engaged in limited regional and international cooperation on counterterrorism issues. Elements of the government, including the Ministry of Interior and the Security Information Agency, cooperate with INTERPOL and Europol on counterterrorism activities, including watch lists. Serbia is a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Partnership for Peace program and assisted in NATO training of Iraqi military medical personnel. Serbia routinely participates in law enforcement training from a variety of international partners. The United Kingdom is funding a large CVE

research and youth engagement program in five Serbian municipalities. In November, the Serbian gendarmerie participated in a terrorist response exercise with the Canadian Embassy. In December, Serbia co-sponsored UNSCR 2396 on returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters.

Serbia has well-developed bilateral border security cooperation programs with Bulgaria, Hungary, and Romania, and a Tri-Border partnership with Bosnia and Croatia. Serbian agencies also routinely engage with Albania, Kosovo, Macedonia, and Montenegro.

SPAIN

Overview: Spain experienced its first major terrorist attack since 2004 on August 17-18, 2017, when two vehicular attacks claimed 16 lives, including one U.S. citizen. Spanish authorities arrested 75 terrorist suspects in 2017, including terrorist financiers. Spanish counterterrorism cooperation with the United States was excellent. After a two-year delay, Spain launched implementation of its national plan to counter violent extremism. Spain expanded its contribution to the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS (Defeat ISIS Coalition), with more than 500 personnel deployed to Iraq in military and police training missions. Spain continued to exercise leadership in regional and global counterterrorism fora, including the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) and the 5+5 Defense Initiative. Central government law enforcement agencies worked to improve information sharing and coordination with the Catalan region's autonomous police force.

On April 8, Basque terrorist group ETA announced its intent to disarm fully. ETA has observed a unilateral ceasefire since 2011, following a decades-long campaign of violence that claimed more than 800 victims.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: On August 17-18, two vehicular attacks in Barcelona and nearby Cambrils left 16 dead, including a U.S. citizen, and more than 100 injured. ISIS subsequently claimed credit for the attacks. On August 21, Catalan police shot and killed the suspected driver, Younes Abouyaaqoub, in the August 17 vehicular attack in the Las Ramblas area of Barcelona. In addition to killing 14 in the vehicular attack, Abouyaaqoub killed another person in a carjacking as he fled the scene of the attack. Abouyaaqoub was part of a cell believed to have been radicalized and led by Abdulbaki Es Satty, an imam in the Catalan town of Ripoll. Es Satty had spent extensive time in Spanish prison on drug trafficking and other charges; he was killed along with one other cell member in an August 16 house explosion while attempting to produce explosives for use in the attacks. Five other members of the cell were killed by police following an August 18 vehicular attack in the Catalan town of Cambrils that killed one Spanish civilian.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Spain's terrorism alert level remained at four (high) on a five-point scale throughout 2017. In the aftermath of the August attacks, Spanish authorities considered raising the level to five, which would have enabled deploying military forces to secure civilian areas, but Spain opted to adopt a series of enhanced level four measures instead. These measures included intensified border controls, increased police presence in heavily trafficked areas, and heightened counterterrorism cooperation with local police. The Spanish criminal code punishes any act of "collaboration with the activities or

purposes of a terrorist organization," including glorification of terrorism on social media, self-radicalization on the internet, training remotely, operating without clear affiliation, or traveling in support of non-state terrorist actors.

In 2017, Spanish authorities arrested 75 individuals on terrorism-related charges in 52 separate police operations. According to the Ministry of Interior, 36 Spanish citizens and residents traveled to Syria and Iraq in 2017 to support ISIS and other terrorist organizations as of November.

Spanish authorities have identified 222 Spanish foreign terrorist fighters, including 47 who are believed to be deceased. On December 1, Spain adopted a new National Security Strategy, which states that "jihadist terrorism is one of the principal problems confronting the international community." The Strategy identified ISIS as the leading terrorist threat but noted terrorist groups' "rapid mutability and adaptation to change and to the strategies pursued against them."

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Spain is a member of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and has observer or cooperating status in the following FATF-style regional bodies: the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force, the Financial Action Task Force of Latin America, and the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force. Spain maintained funding levels for its financial intelligence unit, the Executive Service for the Prevention of Money Laundering and Monetary Offenses, which is a member of the Egmont Group. Spain is a member of the Defeat ISIS Coalition's Counter ISIS Financing working group. In June, the new European Union (EU) Funds Transfer Regulation entered into effect in Spain. Spanish authorities made multiple arrests on terrorist finance charges, including the June 1 arrest of an alleged ISIS fundraiser on the outskirts of Madrid and the June 23 arrest of a Danish ISIS financier in the North African enclave of Melilla. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): Spain began implementation of its national CVE plan, led by the Intelligence Center for Countering Terrorism and Organized Crime. The plan was developed in 2015 but lacked funding and high-level political support for most of the last two years. It seeks to build partnerships at the local level between civil society leaders from vulnerable communities and representatives of law enforcement and other public agencies.

Separately, in October the Ministers of Interior and Justice launched a campaign supported by Google and the Spanish government called #SomosMás (We Are More), highlighting the role of minority youth leaders in countering discrimination and extremism. In the aftermath of the August 17-18 vehicular attacks, a coalition of 150 civic and religious groups organized a large rally in Barcelona to condemn terrorism and declare the solidarity of Spain's Muslim community with the victims.

The Spanish cities of Fuenlabrada and Malaga are both members of the Strong Cities Network.

International and Regional Cooperation: Spain is a founding member of the Global Counterterrorism Forum and supports counterterrorism initiatives in the United Nations, the

Council of Europe, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. Spain maintained forces throughout 2017 in EU training missions in Mali and Somalia. Spanish officials participated in meetings of the Law Enforcement Coordination Group on disrupting Hizballah's activities. Spain continues to support the 5+5 Defense Initiative bringing together European (France, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Spain) and North African (Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia) countries to build capacity on counterterrorism, maritime and aviation security, and disaster management. In December, Spain co-sponsored UN Security Council resolution 2396 on returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters.

SWEDEN

Overview: Sweden experienced its deadliest terrorist attack in decades in April 2017 when an Uzbek national with ISIS sympathies used a stolen truck to overrun pedestrians on a major shopping street in Stockholm, killing five people and wounding several others. The Swedish Security Service (SÄPO) estimated the number of terrorists to have increased significantly from 200 in 2010 to about 3,000 in 2017, of which two-thirds are violent Islamist extremists. The National Center for Terrorism Threats stated that the biggest danger to Sweden is terrorist attacks inspired by radical ideology, such as those promoted by ISIS and al-Qa'ida. SÄPO reported that returning foreign terrorist fighters posed one of the most significant threats to Sweden's security. There is broad political unity to strengthen Sweden's defenses against terrorism.

Sweden continued its counterterrorism cooperation with the international community. At the end of 2017, the national alert level was a three (elevated threat, no evidence of planning) on a scale of five (attack imminent, evidence of planning). The national alert level has been graded a three since 2010, except for when it was temporarily raised to a four (high threat, evidence of planning) for several months following the November 2015 attacks in Paris. Sweden is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and made humanitarian contributions to ISIS-impacted populations in Iraq (US $23.5 million in 2017). In October, Sweden doubled the number of military trainers deployed in northern Iraq in support of Coalition efforts from 35 to 70 servicemen until the end of 2018.

Johan Gustafsson, a Swedish citizen who was kidnapped by al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb when visiting Mali in November 2011, was released in June 2017 and returned to Sweden.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: On April 7, Rakhmat Akilov, a citizen of Uzbekistan who was illegally in Sweden after having his request for asylum denied, rammed a stolen truck into pedestrians in Stockholm, killing five people and injuring 10. Akilov had expressed sympathies with ISIS before the attack. He was in Swedish custody at the end of 2017.

On July 7, three men with ties to the neo-Nazi Nordic Resistance Movement were sentenced to up to eight-and-a-half years in prison for a series of bomb attacks in western Sweden to protest the government's refugee policy, including a January 2017 attack against an asylum center where one man was seriously wounded. Two of the men were reported to have received paramilitary training in Russia.

On December 9, an estimated 10 to 20 persons threw Molotov cocktails at a synagogue in Gothenburg. The incendiaries did not ignite the building, and nobody was hurt. The prosecutor stated that "our theory is that this is connected to the Israel-Palestinian conflict." The police investigation is ongoing.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Sweden's legislation criminalizes the incitement of terrorist acts, recruiting on behalf of terrorist organizations, travel to support terrorist organizations, and providing terrorism training. After the terrorist attack in central Stockholm April 7, the government and the opposition agreed to several additional counterterrorism measures, such as facilitating information exchange between authorities, reviewing security in public spaces, broadening close circuit television monitoring, and promoting the use of electronic monitoring on suspects. The new legislation will go into effect in 2018.

The Swedish government increased SÄPO's budget for countering terrorist threats and violent extremism by US $9.5 million for 2017, US $20.2 million for 2018, US $23.7 million for 2019, and US $23.7 million for 2020.

Sweden is party to the European Union's (EU's) identity verification and border management tools such as the Schengen Information System and the Visa Information System, which results in traveler information exchanges with other member states on irregular immigration and border control. Sweden was updating legislation at year's end to implement the EU Passenger Name Recognition Directive.

On November 12, the temporary border controls justified by the massive influx of asylum seekers in 2015 ended as the EU Commission declared it will no longer extend border controls with respect to the refugee crisis. Sweden instead prolonged unilaterally the temporary border controls until mid-May 2018 using a national security justification, permitted under the Schengen Border Code if a "serious threat to public policy or internal security" exists.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Sweden is a member of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and has observer or cooperating status in the following FATF-style regional bodies: the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force, the Financial Action Task Force of Latin America, and the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force. Sweden's financial intelligence unit, the National Financial Intelligence Service, is a member of the Egmont Group. The FATF's assessment of Sweden's anti-money laundering and counterterrorist financing controls in April concluded that Sweden has a strong regime to tackle money laundering and terrorist financing, but needs to improve its national policy coordination.

A report from Sweden's National Defense University showed that a majority of the 300 confirmed foreign terrorist fighters who traveled from Sweden to Iraq and Syria between 2012 and 2016 received some form of welfare benefits and government grants, many under false pretenses, during their time outside of the county.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International*

Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): Sweden's CVE strategy is to address the factors underlying radicalization to violence. In 2014, the government appointed a temporary National Coordinator for Safeguarding Democracy from Violent Extremism, who reported to the Ministry of Culture. The new team at the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention will coordinate its efforts with national-level authorities, municipalities, and civil society. Local authorities will obtain support in developing CVE-focused risk assessments and action plans. The government tasked the Defense Research Agency with gaining better insight into terrorist propaganda and the National Agency for Education with giving teachers better tools to address CVE in the classroom. The Swedish cities of Malmo and Stockholm are both members of the Strong Cities Network.

International and Regional Cooperation: Sweden is a member of the EU and supports counterterrorism efforts in regional and multilateral organizations, including the European Commission's Radicalization Awareness Network, the EU-9 (focusing on foreign terrorist fighters), the Counter-Terrorism Group, the Police Working Group on Terrorism, and Europol.

Sweden continued to contribute to counterterrorism capacity-building projects through the development assistance work carried out by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, and also via funding to the United Nations (UN) Office on Drugs and Crime-Terrorism Prevention Branch and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. Sweden supported the EU's work with capacity-building projects in prioritized countries and regions, such as Pakistan, Yemen, the Horn of Africa, the Maghreb, and the Sahel. Sweden provided trainers to the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali. Sweden is a member of the UN Security Council for 2017-2018 and in December, co-sponsored UN Security Council resolution 2396 on returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters.

TURKEY

Overview: Turkey continued its intensive efforts to defeat terrorist organizations both inside and outside its borders, including the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and ISIS, respectively. Turkey's eight-month military operation, referred to as Operation Euphrates Shield, to clear ISIS from a 98-kilometer segment of the Turkey-Syria border concluded in March 2017. Turkey remained an active contributor in international counterterrorism fora, including the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF).

Turkey is a source and transit country for foreign terrorist fighters seeking to join ISIS and other terrorist groups fighting in Syria and Iraq. Turkey is also an active member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and continued to provide access to its airspace and facilities for operations in Iraq and Syria. The United States and Turkey continued sharing comprehensive counterterrorism information. According to government authorities, as of October 23, Turkey's "Banned from Entry List" included 53,781 individuals from 145 countries. Turkey deported 5,446 individuals from more than 100 countries for suspected terrorism ties.

The PKK continued to conduct terrorist attacks in Turkey. Turkey's security forces conducted operations domestically along with airstrikes against PKK leadership positions in northern Iraq. The Ministry of National Defense claimed that, as of April, the government had killed, wounded, or captured more than 11,300 PKK terrorists since July 2015, when a two-year ceasefire between the government and the PKK ended. Turkish authorities reported more than 1,000 government security personnel have died in clashes with the PKK since the end of the ceasefire. Detentions and arrests of individuals suspected of aiding the PKK increased in 2017.

According to interior ministry data, law enforcement forces detained more than 15,000 suspects for allegedly aiding and abetting the PKK during the January 2 to October 30 timeframe. The PKK also targeted Turkish elements operating in northern Iraq. Turkish authorities in October announced that PKK elements in northern Iraq had kidnapped two Turkish National Intelligence Organization (Millî İstihbarat Teşkilatı or MİT) officers.

As a counterterrorism partner of the United States, Turkey continued to receive U.S. assistance to address the terrorist threat posed by the PKK in 2017.

Turkey's counterterrorism efforts were impacted in the aftermath of the July 2016 coup attempt due to the government's investigation into the religious movement of self-exiled Islamic cleric Fethullah Gulen, which Turkey refers to as the "Fethullah Terrorist Organization" ("FETO"). This resulted in detentions, arrests, and dismissals of military, security, and civil servants from public office. Turkey designated "FETO" as a terrorist organization in May 2016 and later accused it of perpetrating the attempted coup. The state of emergency instituted by the Turkish government July 21, 2016, remained in effect at the end of 2017. As of November, the government had dismissed approximately 150,000 civil servants from public service for alleged "FETO" or terrorism-related links, often on the basis of scant evidence and minimal due process. Detentions of "FETO" suspects continued at year's end, with 35,145 detained in the January 2 to October 30 timeframe, according to interior ministry data.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: Representative attacks included:

- On January 1, an ISIS gunman killed more than 35 people, including 27 foreigners, and wounded 65 others, including a U.S. citizen, in a nightclub shooting in Istanbul. Police captured the attacker, Uzbek national Abdulkadir Masharipov, in Istanbul January 16.
- On January 20, the Revolutionary People's Liberation Front attacked the Istanbul police directorate and the Justice and Development party's provincial office with rocket-propelled grenades. No casualties were reported.
- On February 17, a PKK vehicle-borne improvised explosive device attack near a housing complex for judges in Sanliurfa province killed two people and wounded 17 others.
- On July 8, a PKK attack against a construction convoy in Hakkari province killed four people and wounded two others.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Turkey has a broad definition of terrorism that includes crimes against constitutional order and internal and external security of

the state, which the government regularly used to criminalize what the United States would consider the legitimate exercise of freedom of expression and assembly. According to the Ministry of Interior, from April 24 to October 30, authorities suspended over 28,500 social media accounts and detained over 2,000 individuals affiliated with these accounts for alleged terrorist-related propaganda.

Turkey has advanced law enforcement capacity to combat terrorism, and efforts continue to streamline interagency information sharing. Detentions and arrests of suspected foreign terrorist fighters and Turkish nationals with links to ISIS increased in 2017. According to interior ministry data, from January 2 to October 30, authorities detained over 2,090 individuals for links to ISIS. In March, the justice ministry reported that more than 1,100 ISIS members were incarcerated and another 310 convicted. Turkey will sometimes deport suspected foreign terrorist fighters to countries without advance notice.

On March 29, Turkey's National Security Council announced the completion of the eight-month Operation Euphrates Shield, which authorities say secured the Turkey-Syria border against threats emanating from ISIS-controlled territory in Syria. On March 9, Turkish General Staff reported the operation neutralized 3,060 ISIS members.

On August 25, the Government of Turkey issued a decree pursuant to the state of emergency that placed the MİT under the Presidency. The MİT is one of several agencies involved in counterterrorism activities in Turkey. This decree increased the threshold for external oversight of MİT and its activities.

On October 6, authorities announced the completion of construction of a 911-kilometer modular wall along the entirety of the Turkey-Syria border. According to Turkish General Staff data, during the January to October timeframe, Turkish Land Forces apprehended more than 330,000 individuals, mostly irregular migrants, attempting to illegally cross Turkey's borders.

On October 28, four individuals believed to be ISIS sympathizers were arrested in possession of firearms and explosives outside Istanbul's Forum Shopping complex. One of the alleged ISIS individuals was wounded by police gunfire; no other casualties were reported.

The United States continued to provide bilateral and regional training programs in the areas of border, aviation, and sea-based security and investigations, in partnership with Turkish law enforcement authorities and counterparts.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Turkey is a member of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), and its financial intelligence unit, the Financial Crimes Investigation Board, is a member of the Egmont Group. Turkey was subject to a review of its compliance with FATF's recommendations related to the criminalization of terrorist financing as well as targeted financial sanctions. There have been no significant changes to the country's counterterrorism financing regime since 2016. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): The Turkish National Police (TNP) undertake social projects, activities with parents, and in-service training for officers and teachers. Programs prepare medical, community, and religious officials to intervene to undermine terrorist messaging and to prevent recruitment. The Ministry of Justice implements rehabilitation and reintegration programs for convicts and former criminals.

Turkey's Religious Affairs Presidency (Diyanet), tied to the Prime Ministry, also works to undermine terrorist messaging by promoting a moderate and inclusive version of Islam. All Sunni imam preachers in Turkey are employees of the Diyanet.

Turkey co-hosted the fourth annual International Countering Violent Extremism Research Conference in Antalya October 30-November 1. The Turkish city of Antalya is a member of the Strong Cities Network.

International and Regional Cooperation: Turkey is an active member of the United Nations (UN), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and the Committee of Experts on Terrorism of the Council of Europe. Turkey is a founding member of the International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law and provides expert support to assist training for judges and prosecutors handling terrorism cases. Turkey participates in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) expert meetings on the Prevention of Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism organized by the OSCE Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and the OSCE Secretariat.

Turkey has bilateral security cooperation agreements with more than 70 countries. The TNP contributes to counterterrorism capacity-building programs of partner countries and offers specialized international law enforcement training. During the 1997-2017 timeframe, TNP provided training to approximately 26,000 law enforcement officials from more than 60 countries. Turkey's military has trained more than 30,000 foreign military personnel from more than 55 countries in a range of subjects, including counterterrorism operations.

In 2017, Turkey and the United States co-led the GCTF's Soft Target Protection Initiative. The resulting good practices document, the Antalya Memorandum on the Protection of Soft Targets in a Counterterrorism Context, was endorsed at the Eighth GCTF Ministerial Meeting in September 2017. Turkey concluded its co-chair responsibilities (with the European Union) to the GCTF's Horn of Africa Capacity Building working group in September 2017. In December, Turkey co-sponsored UN Security Council resolution 2396 on returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters.

UNITED KINGDOM

Overview: In 2017, the United Kingdom (UK) suffered five major terrorist attacks and the UK government briefly raised its terrorism threat level to the highest rating (critical) twice, remaining the second-highest rating (severe) the remainder of the year. The UK continued its military efforts against ISIS as a partner in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, and worked alongside the United States on operations in Iraq, Libya, Syria, and Yemen. In Iraq, the UK has worked to deepen its counterterrorism relationship, pledging to invest approximately

US $13.5 million over the next three years to build Iraq's counterterrorism capability to meet the evolving threat. Programs will include training and advising Iraqi agencies and deploying law enforcement resources to develop an effective judiciary. More broadly, the UK is working with regional partners to develop border infrastructure, watchlists, and biometric capabilities to counter foreign terrorist fighter movement.

An updated UK counterterrorism strategy, known as CONTEST, was slated for release in April, but was delayed as a result of terrorist attacks and the call for a general election. While the UK law enforcement agencies have not specified the exact number of terrorism plots they disrupted in 2017; the Metropolitan Police said they have foiled at least 10 plots in the past two years.

The UK separately assesses the Northern Ireland-related terrorism threat level for Northern Ireland and for Great Britain (England, Scotland, and Wales). The threat level in Northern Ireland from Northern Ireland-related terrorism remained severe, while the threat level for Northern Ireland-related terrorism in Great Britain remained substantial. Northern Ireland's 2016 action plan sought to eliminate residual paramilitary structures. To this end, in 2017, a new four-member Independent Reporting Commission was formed to provide progress reports on efforts to eradicate paramilitaries. Additionally, in 2017, the government launched a new Paramilitary Crime Taskforce to provide greater investigative and law enforcement capabilities to address the problem.

The United States worked closely throughout the year with the UK to identify and develop new capabilities that meet a wide variety of requirements for countering terrorist threats. Through a cost-sharing bilateral relationship, both countries advanced their technical ability to defeat or mitigate the evolving capabilities of terrorists and criminal organizations.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: Major terrorist incidents in 2017 included:

- In March, 52-year-old Khalid Masood drove a vehicle into pedestrians on Westminster Bridge, near British Parliament, and then stabbed a police officer. Five people were killed and more than 50 injured.
- In May, 22-year-old Salman Abedi detonated a homemade shrapnel bomb at Manchester Arena. More than 110 people were hospitalized and 23 died, including Abedi.
- In June, three attackers drove a van into pedestrians on London Bridge then exited the vehicle to stab bystanders in nearby Borough Market, killing eight people and injuring 48.
- Later in June, 47-year-old Darren Osbourne drove a van into pedestrians gathered outside Finsbury Park Mosque in north London. At least eight people were injured and one man died.
- In September, 18-year-old Ahmed Hassan partially detonated a bomb at London's Parsons Green tube station during morning rush hour. Although 30 people suffered injuries, authorities believe if the bomb had exploded as planned, fatalities would have been certain.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: The UK structures counterterrorism policing efforts through a network of regional counterterrorism units and counterterrorism intelligence units comprised of MI5, the Metropolitan Police Service, and regional police. Counterterrorism efforts are managed through National Counter Terrorism Policing Headquarters, which is responsible for unified counterterrorism policy and strategy. The central operational command for regional counterterrorism units is the National Counter Terrorism Policing Operations Center, which consists of specialized teams responsible for all ports, intelligence, and operational coordination.

The UK has advanced biometric screening capabilities at some points of entry, but at others, such as ferry ports, there is no biometric screening. The UK requires international airlines to collect advance passenger information. In April, the government demonstrated strong leadership in successfully encouraging the Council of the European Union (EU) to approve a directive regulating the use of passenger name record data. All major airports in the UK use e-gate technology (for passengers presenting UK, EU, European Economic Area, or Swiss passports), which incorporates facial recognition technology to match travelers with data recorded in the e-chip of eligible passports.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: The UK is a member of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and has observer or cooperating status in the following FATF-style regional bodies: the Eastern and Southern Africa Anti-Money Laundering Group; the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force; Asia Pacific Group on Money Laundering; and the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force. The UK Financial Intelligence Unit is a member of the Egmont Group.

The UK's Criminal Finances Act, elements of which came into force in July and October, expands UK law enforcement's authority to investigate terrorist financing by permitting law enforcement to request more information in relation to a suspicious activity report (SAR) and allowing more time to investigate SARs. The UK is improving its ability to share terrorist financing information between the financial sector, law enforcement, and regulators through the Joint Money Laundering Intelligence Task Force. The UK implements the EU Fourth Money Laundering Directive.

The UK actively prosecutes those involved in terrorist financing. Since 2001, 63 individuals have been charged under "fundraising"-related sections of the Terrorism Act 2000, and of those, 30 individuals were convicted. Additionally, individuals suspected (but not charged) of funding terrorism were convicted of related offenses, such as fraud and money laundering.

The UK complies with obligations under the United Nations (UN) Security Council ISIL (Da'esh) and al-Qa'ida sanctions regime. Like other members of the EU, the UK implements UN listings by way of EU regulation, which involves a delay between UN adoption and listings taking legal effect. Following the passing of the Policing and Crime Act 2017 in January and associated secondary legislation in April, the UK immediately began implementing all new UN sanctions listings on a temporary basis until the EU regulations can be amended. Action was taken immediately for domestic asset freezes under UN Security Council resolution 1373.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): The Prime Minister announced the creation of a Commission for Countering Extremism that would "promote and defend Britain's pluralistic values." The commission had not been formed by the end of 2017. Birmingham and London are both members of the Strong Cities Network.

International and Regional Cooperation: The UK continued to support counterterrorism efforts in regional and multilateral organizations. The UK develops its international counterterrorism strategy through the Joint International Counterterrorism Unit, which is partially responsible for the international recommendations in the new strategy. The UK is a founding member of the Global Counterterrorism Forum and co-chaired its CVE working group until September 2017. It contributes to an international task force that assists countries with development of CVE plans. In December, the UK supported and co-sponsored UN Security Council resolution 2396 on returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters.

THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Overview

While significant terrorist activities and safe havens continued to persist in the Middle East and North Africa throughout 2017, the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and its partners experienced success against ISIS in Iraq and Syria. By the year's end, the Coalition and its partners had successfully liberated nearly all of the territory ISIS once controlled in Iraq and Syria, including the group's so-called capital Raqqa. With the loss of territory in Iraq and Syria, however, ISIS began to convert to more insurgent tactics toward the end of 2017.

Beyond Iraq and Syria, ISIS branches, affiliates, and sympathizers across the Middle East remained active in 2017, including in Libya, Saudi Arabia, the Sinai Peninsula, and Yemen. In Egypt, ISIS continued its terrorist campaign in the Sinai through its affiliate, ISIS-Sinai Province (ISIS-SP, formerly Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis). On November 24, suspected ISIS-SP terrorists conducted the deadliest terrorist attack in Egypt's history when they attacked a mosque in Al-Rawdah village in North Sinai, killing 312 people.

ISIS's presence and capabilities in the Maghreb were significantly reduced in 2017 by U.S. airstrikes in Libya and the counterterrorism efforts of the Algerian, Moroccan, and Tunisian governments. In Libya, the Government of National Accord (GNA) led by Prime Minister Fayez al Sarraj remained a determined partner to the United States and cooperated with U.S. and international counterterrorism efforts during the year.

Along with ISIS, al-Qa'ida (AQ) and its affiliates continued to maintain safe havens amidst the fragile political and security climate across the region, particularly in Yemen and Syria. In January, Syrian AQ affiliate al-Nusrah Front (ANF) merged with other terrorist groups to

create Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS). While the emergence of HTS has been described in various ways, ANF dominated and operated through HTS to pursue its objectives. In July, HTS effectively defeated other major opposition groups in Idlib province in northwest Syria; the group held a safe haven there through the rest of 2017.

In Yemen, the ongoing conflict between the Government of Yemen and Houthi forces continued to create a security vacuum for al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and ISIS's Yemen branch to exploit. AQAP used its tribal connections to continue to recruit, conduct attacks, and operate in areas of southern and central Yemen with relative impunity, although counterterrorism operations eliminated key leaders and pressured the group's networks. AQAP also released several videos reiterating its intent to attack the West. Although significantly smaller than AQAP, ISIS's Yemen affiliate conducted large-scale attacks targeting security forces and government targets in Aden.

Beyond Yemen, countries in the Persian Gulf region continued to take important steps to combat terrorism, including through its financing with commitments made during the U.S.-Gulf Cooperation Council summit in Riyadh in May. An unexpected break in ties with Qatar by Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and Egypt in June had a negative impact on regional counterterrorism cooperation. The United States signed a counterterrorism Memorandum of Understanding with Qatar to increase bilateral cooperation in July 2017.

In the Levant, Jordan and Lebanon both remained committed Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS partners. Jordanian security forces thwarted several plots and apprehended numerous terrorists in 2017; the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) expelled ISIS militants along the Lebanese-Syrian border near Aarsal. Still, several terrorist groups continued to operate in Lebanon throughout the year, most notably Hizballah. The terrorist group remained the most capable terrorist organization in Lebanon, controlling areas across the country.

Hizballah's presence in Lebanon and Syria continued to pose a threat to Israel throughout the year. Although Palestinian terrorist groups in Gaza and the West Bank continued to threaten Israel, Israeli and Palestinian Authority security forces continued their coordination in an effort to mitigate violence. After the United States announced its intention to move its embassy to Jerusalem, Gaza-based Palestinian terrorist organizations launched rockets into Israeli territory; Israel responded with strikes against terrorist positions inside Gaza. Terrorists continued their arms and dual-use smuggling efforts through the Sinai into Gaza via tunnels, although the Government of Egypt undertook efforts to prevent such smuggling from its side.

Iran's state sponsorship of terrorism worldwide remained undiminished through the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Qods Force, its Ministry of Intelligence and Security, and Tehran's proxy Hizballah, which remained a significant threat to the stability of Lebanon and the broader region. (See Chapter 3, State Sponsors on Terrorism, for more information about Iranian activities.)

ALGERIA

Overview: Algeria continued significant efforts to prevent terrorist activity within its borders. Figures published by the Algerian armed forces show continued pressure on terrorist groups as indicated by the numbers of terrorists killed, captured or surrendered, as well as weapons seized and hideouts destroyed. Some analysts assess that continuing losses have substantially reduced the capacities of terrorist groups to operate within Algeria. Nevertheless, al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), AQIM-allied groups, and ISIS elements, including the Algerian affiliate locally known as Jund al-Khilafah in Algeria (JAK-A or Soldiers of the Caliphate in Algeria), remained in the country. These groups aspired to impose their interpretations of Islamic law in Algeria and to attack Algerian security services, local government targets, and Western interests. Terrorist activity in Libya, Tunisia, and Mali contributed to the overall threat.

Algeria is not a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, although it observed some coalition meetings. Algeria actively supported the effort to counter ISIS in other ways, such as counter-messaging, capacity-building programs with neighboring states, and co-chairing the Global Counterterrorism Forum's (GCTF's) West Africa Capacity Building working group.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: JAK-A claimed responsibility for attacks on security forces. Within the region, AQIM continued attacks using improvised explosive devices (IEDs), bombings, false roadblocks, and ambushes. The Algerian government maintained a strict "no concessions" policy with regard to individuals or groups holding its citizens hostage. Attacks in 2017 included:

- In February 26, a man wearing a suicide belt attempted to enter a police station in Constantine, in eastern Algeria. Police shot his belt, causing it to explode and killing the attacker. Two police officers were injured. ISIS claimed responsibility for the attack in a statement posted on the internet.
- On August 31, a man wearing an explosive belt blew himself up, killing two police officers, at the entrance to the Tiaret police station, about 270 kilometers southwest of Algiers. ISIS claimed responsibility for the attack via its propaganda arm, the AMAQ News Agency. AQIM also claimed responsibility and denounced the ISIS claim as a lie.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: On September 29, a new law entered into effect making significant changes to Algerian criminal procedure. While increasing the number of jurors in many serious criminal cases, the amendments specify that in cases involving terrorism, trials, and appeals will be heard before judges only. The new law provides for greater prosecutorial control of judicial police, including judicial police within the armed forces.

Military forces and multiple law enforcement, intelligence, and security services addressed counterterrorism, counter-intelligence, investigations, border security, and crisis response. These included under the Ministry of Interior the various branches of the Joint Staff, the National Gendarmerie, Border Guards under the Ministry of National Defense (MND), and approximately 210,000 national police, or General Directorate of National Security. Public information announcements from the MND provided timely reporting on incidents during which MND forces captured or eliminated terrorists and seized equipment, arms, ammunition caches, and drugs.

Border security remained a top priority. Algerian and Tunisian customs officials continued to coordinate along their shared border. Algeria created a ditch and berm along the southern part of its border with Tunisia, deployed 3,000 additional troops to the Libyan border, and placed surveillance equipment and a concrete wall along the Moroccan border. According to media, Algeria sought to increase use of aerial surveillance technologies. The Government of Algeria closely monitored passenger manifests of inbound and outbound flights. Government officials reported that all border posts had access to INTERPOL databases.

In 2017, six disciplines at the Gendarmerie's forensics laboratory were accredited to International Organization for Standardization standards, a first in the region. Algerian law enforcement agencies participated in training and exchanges offered by the U.S. government and by third countries. Algerian participants attended numerous workshops conducted under the aegis of the GCTF. A U.S.-Algeria Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty entered into force April 20, facilitating cooperation in transnational terrorism cases and other criminal matters.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Algeria is a member of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force, a financial action task force-style regional body. Its financial intelligence unit, known as the Financial Intelligence Processing Unit (CTRF), is a member of the Egmont Group. The CTRF regularly publishes administrative orders signed by the Minister of Finance, directing the immediate freezing and seizure of the assets of persons and entities on the United Nations (UN) sanctions list under UN Security Council resolution (UNSCR) 1267 (1999) and its successor resolutions. In implementing UNSCR 2178 (2014), the Algerian Penal Code specifies liability for foreign terrorist fighters and those who support or finance them.

Foreign exchange restrictions and distrust of banks push Algerians to cash transactions and informal currency-exchange markets. Media reports suggest the scale of the informal market grew, partly in response to government import limitations. Multiple fiscal initiatives by the government have failed to motivate illegal traders to formalize their businesses.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): Algeria emphasized a whole-of-government CVE approach, including rehabilitation and reintegration programs for repentant terrorists. Stressing the importance of an inclusive society, the foreign ministry published a booklet on *The Role of Democracy in the Fight Against Violent Extremism and Terrorism*. Regulation of mosques to ensure they are "de-politicized" and "de-ideologized" is a key aspect of the Algerian approach. The foreign minister recently lauded the "crucial role" of women in CVE efforts, highlighting the *mourchidates*, female clerics who work with young girls, mothers, and prisoners. The Algerian government monitors mosques for possible security-related offenses and prohibits the use of mosques as public meeting places outside of regular prayer hours. Government officials publicly affirmed Algeria's Sunni Maliki tradition of Islam, which the Algerian government believes provides a moderate religious vision for the country. There have been complaints that the government imposes restrictions on other variants of Islam.

International and Regional Cooperation: Algeria is an active member in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Arab League and is a founding member of the GCTF. In 2017, the African Union (AU) named Algeria coordinator of its counterterrorism efforts. Algeria is a founding member of the Institute for International Justice and the Rule of Law and participated in counterterrorism-related projects implemented by the UN Office on Drug and Crime's Terrorism Prevention Branch. Algeria also participates in Comité d'État-Major Opérationnel Conjoint (CEMOC), a cooperative body between Algeria, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger created to fight AQIM activities in the Sahel; and hosts CEMOC's Liaison and Fusion Center for information sharing.

Algeria sits on the UN Counter-Terrorism Center's Advisory Board and hosts the headquarters AU Mechanism for Police Cooperation (AFRIPOL), a pan-African organization to foster police training and cooperation. Algeria hosts the AU's counterterrorism center of excellence, the African Center for the Study and Research on Terrorism. As co-chair of the GCTF's West Africa Capacity Building working group, Algeria hosted that group's plenary meeting in October 2017.

On a bilateral basis, Algeria continued strong diplomatic engagement to promote regional peace and security. Algeria chaired the implementation committee for the peace accord in Mali and continued to press stakeholders to support the UN political process in Libya. Algeria also participated in various Sahel-Saharan fora to discuss development and security policies, the evolution of regional terrorism, and donor coordination. Political disagreement between Algeria and Morocco over the status of Western Sahara remained an impediment to bilateral and regional counterterrorism cooperation in 2017.

BAHRAIN

Overview: Terrorist activity in Bahrain increased in 2017. Bahraini Shia militants remained a threat to security forces and attacks in 2017 resulted in the death of four police officers. During the year, the Bahraini government made gains in detecting and containing terrorist threats from violent Bahraini Shia militants, often backed by Iran, and ISIS sympathizers. The government offered diplomatic support to the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS's efforts and supported its military operations through hosting the Fifth Fleet and Naval Central Command. The closure of an independent newspaper and two opposition political societies along with government suppression of peaceful protests have combined to exacerbate political tensions, which could increase the risk of radicalization to violence.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: Suspected Bahraini Shia militants continued to instigate low-level violence against security forces using real and fake improvised explosive devices (IEDs). Bahrain regularly experienced low-level violence between Bahraini Shia youth, using Molotov cocktails and other homemade devices, and predominantly Sunni security forces in mostly-Shia villages. The most prominent attacks in 2017 included:

- On January 29, unidentified assailants killed an off-duty police officer in Bilad Al-Qadeem.

- On June 19, a Bahraini Shia militant died in Al Hajar when an IED he allegedly attempted to plant detonated.
- On October 1, the Shia militant group Wa'ad Allah (God's Promise Brigades), a suspected al-Ashtar Brigades affiliate, detonated an IED targeting a Ministry of Interior (MOI) checkpoint in Daih, injuring five police officers.
- On October 27, Shia militants detonated an IED along a major highway targeting an MOI police bus killing one officer and injuring eight others.
- On November 10, an oil pipeline exploded in the village of Buri. MOI officials asserted Bahraini Shia militants trained in Iran conducted the attack.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: There were no changes to counterterrorism legislation or border security procedures in 2017.

In April, Bahrain approved a constitutional amendment granting military courts the right to try civilians accused of threatening state security. On December 25, military courts sentenced six Bahrainis to death and seven to seven years in prison in the first trial since the amendment was ratified.

In January, Bahrain restored the Bahrain National Security Agency's (BNSA) arrest authority for suspected terrorists. BNSA lost its arrest authority after torture allegations amid unrest in 2011. In April 2017, the Bahrain Defense Force established a Counterterrorism Center combining five special operations entities in a new crisis-response mechanism. In December, those forces conducted a mock terrorist attack exercise at a Manama shopping mall.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Bahrain is a member of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF), a Financial Action Task Force (FATF)-style regional body, and its financial intelligence unit is a member of the Egmont Group. In December, Bahrain did not issue visas for a Qatari representative to participate in MENAFATF's plenary meeting, held in Manama, likely due to Bahrain's ongoing political dispute with Qatar. Bahrain is also a member of the Defeat ISIS Coalition's Counter ISIS Finance Group and participates in the Egmont Group's Counter ISIS project. In November, a FATF evaluation team conducted an onsite visit to Bahrain to gather information for its second Mutual Evaluation Report. The team found that Bahrain has progressed in terrorism finance investigations and prosecutions.

Bahrain criminalizes terrorist financing in accordance with international standards and can immediately freeze suspicious financial assets. The government obliges non-profit organizations to file suspicious transaction reports and monitors them to prevent misuse and terrorist financing. The government routinely distributes UN sanctions lists under relevant UN Security Council resolutions to financial institutions.

On October 25, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs imposed sanctions on several individuals and two entities linked to ISIS and al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) for their support for or funding of terrorism, blocking their assets and banning transactions in Bahrain. These actions were announced under the newly established U.S.-Saudi Arabia co-chaired Global Terrorist

Financing Targeting Center, which acts as an information sharing and coordinating body for the Gulf Cooperation Council countries' terrorism financing efforts.

Bahrain's politicization of anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism issues can lead to politically motivated actions against the mainstream opposition disguised as legitimate prosecutions of terrorists. In May, the government convicted Shia cleric Isa Qassim on money-laundering charges related to his collection of *khums*, alms giving unique to the Shia sect, without proper authorization. Activists and opposition-aligned clergy claimed that increased scrutiny of *khums* is part of a wider crackdown on the political opposition, whereas the Bahraini government has argued that some *khums* collections directly and indirectly support Bahraini militants.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): The Bahraini government continued its efforts to adopt a National CVE strategy in line with the UN Secretary-General's Preventing Violent Extremism Plan of Action. Additionally, numerous officials from the government, legislature, and non-governmental organizations have developed programming targeting youth and other vulnerable populations.

Within the Bahraini Sunni community, a limited circle of individuals became radicalized to violence in the past several years and joined local terrorist factions or traveled to Syria and Iraq to fight with ISIS and other terrorist groups. A small number of extremist religious preachers helped radicalize these individuals.

The government attempted outreach through initiatives such as the community police, which recruits Shia Bahrainis to bridge the divide between predominantly Shia villages and the mostly Sunni (and largely non-Bahraini origin) police force. The government has not published statistics on the force's composition or track record.

There is no overall strategic messaging campaign to counter terrorist narratives, although government leaders often publicly speak about tolerance and reducing sectarian rhetoric. However, the government also dissolved secular opposition political group Waad and closed independent opposition-leaning newspaper Al Wasat, limiting the space for opposition voices in the country.

International and Regional Cooperation: Bahrain's air, land, and sea forces participated in Saudi-led coalition operations against AQAP and Houthis in Yemen. As of November 2017, there were approximately 170 members of the Bahrain Defense Forces deployed in Yemen. Bahrain is an active member of the Gulf Cooperation Council, Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and the Arab League. The Bahraini government frequently attends conferences related to multilateral counterterrorism cooperation. In December, Bahrain co-sponsored UN Security Council resolution 2396 on returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters.

EGYPT

Overview: In 2017, Egypt suffered numerous deadly terrorist attacks. Despite efforts by President Abdel Fatah Al Sisi's government and the Egyptian Security Forces (ESF), especially in North Sinai, terrorist attacks remained persistent. ISIS affiliates, including ISIS-Sinai Province (ISIS-SP) and a distinct group calling itself Islamic State Egypt (IS Egypt), posed the most significant threat , as did groups such as Harakat Sawa'd Misr (HASM) and Liwa al-Thawra.. For much of the year, these attacks primarily targeted Egyptian security personnel; however, on November 24, terrorists likely affiliated with ISIS killed more than 312 civilians at a Sufi mosque in North Sinai, resulting in the worst terrorist attack in Egypt's history.

In April, the Egyptian government passed legislation facilitating the prosecution of terrorist cases. Coordination among the various components of the ESF remained problematic. Some experts and press blamed the severity of an October 20 attack in the Western Desert on failure to coordinate between the Egyptian military and Egyptian police. Egypt continued its efforts to combat the financing of terrorism and is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and its Counter-ISIS Finance working group.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: ISIS affiliates and other terrorist groups carried out numerous attacks throughout Egypt, particularly in the Sinai. Methods included complex assaults involving dozens of terrorists, improvised explosive devices (IEDs), vehicle-borne IEDs, ambushes, kidnappings, and targeted assassinations. The following list details only a fraction of the incidents that occurred, particularly against Egyptian civilian and military security forces.

- Between late January and late February, terrorists threatened and targeted Copts in North Sinai, killing at least seven people and displacing more than a hundred Coptic families.
- On April 9, an IS Egypt suicide bomber killed 30 people and injured at least 70 during Palm Sunday services at a Coptic Church in Tanta. In a coordinated attack on the same day, another IS Egypt suicide bomber killed 16 people and injured 66 outside Saint Mark's Church in Alexandria.
- On May 26, ISIS operatives killed 28 people and wounded 25 after gunmen opened fire on a bus carrying Coptic Christians near Minya.
- On July 7, suspected ISIS operatives detonated a car bomb at a police checkpoint and then engaged in heavy gunfire, killing 26 people and wounding more than 20 others in the village of al-Barth near Rafah.
- On October 16, terrorists robbed a local bank of approximately US $1 million in local currency and traded gunfire with security forces in Al Arish, North Sinai, killing seven, including three civilians.
- On October 20, Ansar al-Islam, a new group with assessed links to al-Qa'ida, claimed responsibility for ambushing an ESF convoy near al-Bahariya Oasis in the Western Desert, killing at least 16 police officers and injuring 15, according to official statistics. Some press reports put the number of fatalities at more than 50 police officers.
- On November 24, in the deadliest terrorist attack in Egypt's history, suspected ISIS-Sinai terrorists attacked a mosque in Al-Rawdah village in North Sinai, killing 312 people, including 27 children, and wounding 128. The attackers detonated explosives around the mosque when worshipers came out after Friday prayers and then engaged in gunfire.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: In April, parliament approved and the president ratified legislation eliminating some standard legal procedures and allowing for swifter prosecution in terrorism-related cases. The changes allow the detention of suspects without charge for a 14-day period, which is renewable once. Multiple media outlets and human rights groups criticized the government for using counterterrorism measures to crack down on political dissent.

The National Security Sector of the Ministry of Interior (MOI) is primarily responsible for counterterrorism functions in the Nile Valley but also works with other elements of the MOI, the Egyptian General Intelligence Service, and the Egyptian Armed Forces (EAF). There appeared to be limited interagency cooperation and information sharing among the relevant Egyptian government entities in 2017. Lack of coordination between MOI police forces and the EAF was widely considered a major factor in the Western Desert ambush.

At border crossings and airports, Egyptian authorities checked for the presence of security features within travel documents. They also scanned and cross referenced documents with criminal databases containing derogatory information. Egypt maintains a terrorist watchlist with a simple listing for Egyptian immigration officials at the ports of entry and detailed information maintained by the security services.

Egypt's most significant physical border security concerns were along the borders with Gaza and Libya, although smuggling remained a problem along the border with Sudan. There have been several attacks against ESF checkpoints in Upper Egypt, likely due to smugglers or terrorist groups moving through the area. The ESF continued to maintain the de-populated, 1.5-kilometer buffer zone along the border with Gaza. Egypt maintained an increased military presence along the Libya border.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Egypt is a member of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force, a Financial Action Task Force-style regional body. Egypt's Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Combating Unit is a member of the Egmont Group.

The Egyptian government continued to improve its legal framework for countering terrorist financing. Egypt remains vulnerable to terrorist financing because of its large, informal, cash-based economy and proximity to several terrorist organizations. The Central Bank of Egypt and the Federation of Egyptian Banks have taken steps to encourage Egyptians to enter the formal financial sector. Despite legislative efforts, exploitation of banking technologies and social media for terrorism funding also remained an issue.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes.*

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): Egypt's Dar Al-Iftaa, an official body that issues religious edicts, has taken the lead in CVE messaging via religious channels. Dar Al-Iftaa sends scholars to engage communities considered vulnerable to terrorist messaging. It also trains new

muftis, organizes international outreach and speaking tours throughout Muslim majority countries and the West, publishes books and pamphlets to challenge the alleged religious foundations of terrorist ideology, runs rehabilitation sessions for former terrorists, and confronts terrorists in cyberspace. Dar Al-Iftaa also held an international conference in October on regulating fatwas as part of the government's efforts to improve religious discourse against terrorist ideology. On November 15, the Supreme Council for Media Regulation, in coordination with Egypt's religious institutions, issued a list of 50 religious scholars authorized to issue fatwas to curb aberrant fatwas and to counter extremist and radical ones.

Al-Azhar University continued to publish short posts related to tolerance and coexistence via its online platforms and co-sponsored a series of CVE conferences.

The Ministry of Islamic Endowments (Awqaf) is legally responsible for issuing guidance to which all imams throughout Egypt must adhere, including a weekly theme for Friday sermons. The Ministry also licenses all mosques in Egypt; however, many continued to operate without licenses. The Ministry has trained up to 250 female preachers as part of its outreach program to women who may be susceptible to terrorist recruitment. These preachers have teamed up with Christian nuns to promote religious dialogue. The government appoints and monitors the imams in licensed mosques and pays their salaries. In 2017, Awqaf published and translated numerous books on violent extremism and the protection of minorities, and it launched new initiatives to foster Muslim-Christian dialogue.

International and Regional Cooperation: Egypt continued to participate in the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), co-chairing the Criminal Justice and Rule of Law working group through September 2017. Egypt held a UN Security Council (UNSC) seat through the end of 2017 and presided over the UNSC Counter-Terrorism Committee. It is also a member of the African Union, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and the Arab League. Starting in September 2017, Egypt served as the co-chair of the GCTF Capacity Building in the East Africa Region working group.

IRAQ

Overview: By the end of 2017, Iraqi Security Forces (ISF), with the support of the U.S.-led Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, had reclaimed all of the territory that ISIS had captured in 2014 and 2015. As ISIS retreated from Mosul and other cities, its fighters used improvised explosive devices, homemade mines, and mortars to booby-trap homes, public spaces, and critical infrastructure to impede the movement of Iraq's security forces and terrorize returning residents. Despite Iraqi progress on the battlefield, ISIS maintained the capability to conduct deadly terrorist attacks. U.S.-designated Foreign Terrorist Organization Kata'ib Hizballah continued to operate in Iraq during 2017, exacerbating sectarian tensions. Along with its nefarious activities, Kata'ib Hizballah continued to combat ISIS alongside the Iraqi military, police, and other Popular Mobilization Force units during the year. Iraq expanded its cooperation with the United States and other members of the international community to counter terrorism, including taking steps to dismantle ISIS's financial activity. Iraq passed 31 resolutions aimed at stopping terrorist financing and made significant progress implementing its

2016 Anti-Money Laundering/Countering Terrorism Finance law, including establishing a committee that designated at least 30 individuals in 2017.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: According to the United Nations (UN), acts of terrorism, violence, and armed conflict with ISIS killed more than 3,000 civilians and injured more than 4,600 in 2017. ISIS's continued ability to use captured and improvised military equipment allowed it to employ sophisticated methods including the use of armored vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices and chlorine gas. ISIS continued to commit atrocities involving the use of child soldiers, mass murder, and enslavement of ethnic and religious minorities, rape, forced marriage, and executing civilians, including women and children, attempting to flee its rule. As the ISF recaptured territory, ISIS killed thousands of Iraqi civilians, forcing residents to remain as human shields to discourage airstrikes and shooting those attempting to flee. ISIS continued to carry out suicide and hit-and-run attacks throughout the country, the most significant being the coordinated attack on a security checkpoint and restaurant on the outskirts of Nasariyah on September 14 that killed more than 80 Iraqis. Other prominent ISIS attacks included:

- On February 28, two suicide bombers detonated explosives in a market in Sadr City, Baghdad, killing at least 60 people.
- On June 9, a suicide bomber detonated his explosive belt at a crowded market in Musaiyab, Babylon, south of Baghdad, killing 30 people.
- Also on June 9, a female suicide bomber detonated her explosives belt in the market east of the city of Karbala, killing 30 people.
- On November 21, a powerful truck bomb exploded in Tuz Khurmatu, Kirkuk, killing at least 32 people.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Iraq improved its ability to detect and prevent terrorist threats and continued to disrupt terrorist activities, detaining, arresting, and trying thousands of suspected terrorists in 2017. A lack of centralized databases hindered its ability to track the number of terrorism suspects it detained and arrested in 2017. Iraq has multiple security, law enforcement, and intelligence organizations with overlapping responsibilities, including the Counterterrorism Service, National Security Service, Iraqi National Intelligence Service, military intelligence, and assorted Ministry of Interior units including national and local police. Lack of interagency cooperation is a vulnerability that Iraq has identified through its security sector reform program. During the campaign to liberate Iraq, many Iraqi counterterrorism and law enforcement personnel also acted as front-line soldiers, which degraded their organizations' ability to carry out their intended roles. Additionally, ISIS destroyed large portions of the law enforcement infrastructure, including prisons. Suspected terrorists are often detained in overcrowded facilities for extended periods.

Iraq re-established control over its border crossings with Syria in 2017 but border security remained a critical capability gap, as the ISF has limited capability to prevent smuggling across the Iraq-Syria border. Iraq conducted biographic and biometric screening at multiple land and air ports of entry and announced plans to begin issuing biometric passports in early 2018. It shared biometric information on known and suspected terrorists and exemplars of its identity documents with the United States, INTERPOL, and other international partners.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Iraq is a member of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force, a Financial Action Task Force (FATF)-style regional body. Iraq is under review by the FATF, due to a number of strategic deficiencies in its anti-money laundering/countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) regime.

Iraq has improved this regime, including issuing a set of regulations in accordance with its 2016 law, to help bolster its compliance with the FATF recommendations. In 2017, FATF postponed an evaluation on Iraq's AML/CFT regime due to uncertainty about the continued applicability of the Federal AML/CFT Law in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region (IKR) following the IKR's September 2017 referendum on independence.

In 2017, the Government of Iraq, including the Central Bank of Iraq, law enforcement, and the judiciary, continued to dismantle ISIS's financial activity and safeguard its financial institutions from exploitation by ISIS. Iraq enforced a national directive to prohibit financial transactions with banks and financial companies located in ISIS-controlled areas. It cut off salary payments to government employees to prevent those salaries from being "taxed" by ISIS and prohibited exchange houses and transfer companies located in ISIS-held areas and those suspected of illicit activity from accessing U.S. banknotes in the central bank's currency auctions. It also shared a list of banned exchange houses and money transfer companies with regional regulators and took judicial action against more than a dozen individuals and companies suspected of illicit financial activity. These actions ranged from business closures to the arrest of suspects. Iraq also barred ISIS financial facilitators Salim Mustafa Muhammad al Mansur and Umar al-Kubaysi, as well as al-Kubaysi's company, the Al Kawthar Money Exchange, from Iraq's financial system and froze all of their assets under Iraq's jurisdiction.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): Iraq remained active in its strategic messaging to discredit ISIS and was finalizing its 2018 CVE strategy at the end of 2017. In November, it organized, planned, and held the Third International Conference to Counter ISIS Media, which focused on sharing information to combat terrorist ideology.

Many foreign terrorist fighters are in Iraqi custody and Iraq has detained a large number of foreign women and children with family affiliations to ISIS fighters. Additionally, displaced Iraqis, whose extended family members are suspected of supporting ISIS, remain vulnerable to revenge attacks or retribution killings, or are denied access to services. Consequently, ISIS-affiliated families are often unwilling or unable to return to their place of origin. Iraq acknowledged that the return and reintegration of family members of suspected ISIS supporters is important to prevent future radicalization to violence.

In June, Iraq signed a bilateral agreement with Saudi Arabia that aims to combat violent extremism and terrorism through means like eliminating the financing of terrorism and combating sectarian discrimination.

International and Regional Cooperation: Iraq continued to work with multilateral and regional organizations including the United Nations, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and the Arab League to support counterterrorism efforts. In May, the UN Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee held a meeting on Iraq's counterterrorism assistance needs.

ISRAEL, GOLAN HEIGHTS, WEST BANK, AND GAZA

Israel and the Golan Heights

Overview: Israel was a committed counterterrorism partner in 2017, closely coordinating with the United States on a range of counterterrorism initiatives. For instance, Israel and the United States held numerous interagency counterterrorism dialogues to discuss the broad array of threats in the region and determine areas of collaboration to address these challenges.

Israel faced threats on its northern border from Lebanese Hizballah (LH) and along the north-eastern frontier from LH and other groups in Syria. Israeli security officials and politicians expressed concerns that Iran was supplying LH with advanced weapons systems and technologies as well as assisting the group in creating infrastructure that would permit it to indigenously produce rockets and missiles to threaten Israel from inside of Lebanon and Syria.

Along its southern border with Egypt and Gaza, Israel faced threats from terror organizations including Hamas, Palestine Islamic Jihad (PIJ), and ISIS-Sinai Province. Israel continued to be concerned about Hamas and PIJ tunneling activities, and in October and December destroyed tunnels it found under the Israel-Gaza boundary. Israel suffered numerous rocket attacks originating from Gaza and the Sinai during 2017, none of which resulted in Israeli fatalities. In addition, while the number of terrorist attacks declined since 2015, Israel still experienced numerous terrorist attacks, including those committed by lone actors with no clear affiliation to terrorist organizations.

The United States worked closely throughout the year with Israel to identify and develop new capabilities that meet a wide variety of requirements for countering terrorist threats, including those posed by unmanned aerial systems and underground tunnels. Through a cost-sharing bilateral relationship, both countries advanced their technical ability to defeat or mitigate the evolving capabilities of terrorists and criminal organizations.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: Israelis experienced numerous terrorist attacks in 2017 involving weapons ranging from rockets and mortars to small arms and knives. The wave of violence that began in late 2015, termed the "knife intifada," continued to decrease in 2017. Stabbing attacks by Palestinians resulted in numerous Israeli injuries and fatalities. These attacks comprised the majority of terrorist attacks inside Israel. Many perpetrators of these attacks were neutralized during their acts of terrorism. The following is a partial list of the terrorist incidents that occurred during the year:

- On February 10, a Palestinian from the West Bank opened fire on a group of Israeli soldiers at a bus stop in Petah Tikva. Sadeq Nasser Abu Mazen, an 18-year-old man from a village near Nablus, fled the scene after local residences attempted to apprehend

him. He entered a shop and opened fire until his weapon malfunctioned. He then used a screwdriver to stab an Israeli man in the shop. Local residents subdued the gunman and Israeli authorities took him into custody. The gunman wounded at least five people in the attack.

- On July 14, two Israeli Druze border police officers were killed and two more wounded after three male Arab-Israeli citizens opened fire near the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif. Israeli police shot and killed the three attackers, whom authorities identified as Mohammed Ahmed Mafdal Jabrin, Mohammed Hamed Abed Eltif Jabrin, and Mohammed Ahmed Mohammed Jabrin. All were Arab citizens of Israel from the town of Umm al-Fahm, with apparent ties to the northern branch of the Islamic Movement in Israel.
- In December, several rockets launched from Gaza struck inside Israel. Israeli authorities confirmed that at least two rockets hit the city of Sderot, which resulted in damage to a kindergarten and several vehicles. Another rocket fell in an open area near the city of Ashkelon, with no reported casualties or significant damage. The Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) responded with strikes against Hamas and PIJ positions in Gaza.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: In 2017, the Israeli government made no notable changes to the 2016 Combatting Terrorism Law, although the Knesset began action on an amendment during the year.

Israeli security forces took numerous significant law enforcement actions against suspected terrorists and terrorist groups in 2017. The examples below represent only a fraction of the law enforcement actions taken throughout the year.

- On February 7, the Israel Security Agency (ISA) arrested Valentin Vladimir Mazalevsky, an Israeli citizen residing in Shibli, for supporting ISIS and attempting to travel to Syria to join the terrorist organization. Israeli courts convicted Mazalevsky and sentenced him to 32 months' imprisonment.
- On February 12, the ISA, with the assistance of the Israel National Police (INP), arrested Gaza resident Muhammad Murtaja, Gaza coordinator of a Turkish humanitarian aid organization, for attempting to provide Hamas with satellite photos to improve the precision of its rocket attacks against Israel. A subsequent investigation also uncovered Murtaja's alleged diversion of the aid organization's funds to the Hamas military wing.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Israel is an observer to the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and is subject to evaluation by the Council of Europe's Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism, a FATF-style regional body. Israel's financial intelligence unit, the Israeli Money Laundering and Terror Finance Prohibition Authority, is a member of the Egmont Group.

The Knesset approved a first reading of an amendment to the 2016 Combatting Terrorism Law on October 30, 2017. If passed, this amendment would transfer terrorism designation authority from the Ministers' Committee for Security to the Minister of Defense and would ensure that Israel enforces United Nations (UN) sanctions on foreign terrorist organizations and individuals until it can complete a domestic review process of the designation.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): Israel's national program, "City without Violence," supported municipalities and local authorities in conducting programs to counter violence, crime, and violent extremism. Civil society supported this initiative.

The Arab-Israeli media portal, "Bokra," sought to reduce tension through a social initiative using Facebook and videos featuring prominent figures who discouraged racism and violence such as sheikhs, rabbis, and priests.

International and Regional Cooperation: Israel continued its counterterrorism cooperation with a range of regional and international institutions, including the UN, the Organization of American States (OAS), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. In December, Israel co-sponsored UN Security Council resolution 2396 on returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters. Israel cooperated with numerous countries bilaterally on counterterrorism initiatives and programs of mutual benefit, in addition to those aimed at thwarting terrorist attacks and plots specifically against Israelis or Israeli interests abroad.

The West Bank and Gaza

Overview: The Palestinian Authority (PA) continued its counterterrorism and law enforcement efforts in the West Bank, where Hamas, PIJ, and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine remained present. The PA Security Forces (PASF) constrained the ability of those organizations to conduct attacks, including through arrests of Hamas members planning attacks against Israelis. Per Oslo-era agreements, the PA exercised varying degrees of authority over the West Bank. Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) and Shin Bet arrested members of terrorist organizations operating in the West Bank.

The United States assisted the PA's counterterrorism efforts by providing training, equipment, and infrastructure support to the PASF. U.S. training and support assisted in the PA's continued development of professional, self-sufficient, and capable security forces. The United States also assisted the PA with criminal justice investigations and prosecutions of terrorist financing and terrorist-related activity.

Palestinians committed acts of violence and terrorism in the West Bank in 2017. The heightened period of violence from October 2015 to April 2016 decreased in 2017. However, Palestinians continued to commit stabbings, shootings, and vehicular attacks against Israelis.

Israelis, including settlers, committed acts of violence, including "price tag" attacks (property crimes and violent acts by extremist Jewish individuals and groups against Palestinians) in the West Bank in 2017.

Hamas maintained security control of Gaza. Several militant groups launched rocket attacks against Israel from Gaza. The primary limitation on PA counterterrorism efforts in Gaza remained Hamas' control of the area and the resulting inability of the PASF to operate there.

The PA and PLO continued to provide "martyr payments" to the families of Palestinian individuals killed carrying out a terrorist act. The PA and PLO also provided payments to Palestinians in Israeli prisons, including those convicted of acts of terrorism against Israelis. Israeli government officials criticized this practice as incentivizing acts of terror. These payments and separate canteen stipends that the Israeli government allows for prisoners were first initiated by the PLO in 1965 and have continued under the PA since the Oslo Accords with Israel.

2017 Terrorist Incidents:

- In January, four Israeli soldiers were killed and approximately 13 others wounded when a Palestinian man used a heavy truck for a vehicular attack in Jerusalem. Soldiers and a civilian who were at the scene shot and killed the attacker.
- In July, a Palestinian resident of a nearby village stabbed and killed three Israeli civilians in their family home in the West Bank Israeli settlement of Halamish. Another member of the family sustained injuries. Police and IDF arrested the attacker after an off-duty soldier shot and wounded him.
- In September, a Palestinian man from the West Bank village of Beit Surik shot and killed an Israeli Border Police officer and two Israeli security guards outside the West Bank settlement of Har Adar, northwest of Jerusalem. Israeli security officials shot and killed the attacker at the scene.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: The PA lacked comprehensive legislation specifically tailored to counterterrorism, although existing Palestinian laws criminalize actions that constitute terrorist acts. Presidential decrees prohibit incitement to violence, illegal associations, providing financial support to terrorist groups, and acts against PLO agreements with other states (an indirect reference to the Oslo Accords with Israel). Other decrees also criminalize armed militias and assistance to such militias as well as carrying unlicensed weapons and explosives. The Palestinian parliament, the Palestinian Legislative Council, has not met since 2007 and is thus unable to pass new legislation.

The Preventive Security Organization (PSO) is the key PA institution that works to prevent internal terrorist attacks and investigates security-related criminal conduct. In practice, the General Intelligence Organization also plays a critical role in this effort as does, to a lesser extent, the Military Intelligence Organization. The United States assisted the PSO and the Security Forces Justice Commission to help the PA move the prosecution of all civilian cases – including those involving terrorism and security-related offenses – to the exclusive jurisdiction of the civilian courts. The United States also helped enhance cooperation between security service investigators and public prosecutors.

The PA advanced its forensic capabilities with the opening of the Palestinian Civil Police (PCP) forensic laboratory in November 2016 and continued its operation throughout 2017. The laboratory conducted basic manual analyses and examinations of firearm evidence, document examination, and drug and chemical analysis. The PA also augmented its ability to examine and

compare unknown fingerprints with the delivery by the U.S. government of 40 fingerprint scanners, which are now used by law enforcement across the West Bank.

Per the Oslo-era Accords, Israel controlled border security in the West Bank.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: The PA is a member of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force, a Financial Action Task Force-style regional body. The Palestinian Financial Follow-Up (FFU) Unit is the PA's financial intelligence unit. Banks file suspicious transaction reports and currency transaction reports electronically through the FFU computer system. In 2017, banks filed 118 STRs compared to 117 in 2016.

The Palestinian Monetary Authority (PMA) increased regulations and restrictions on the more than 300 money changers in the West Bank. For example, the PMA increased the capital requirement from US $250,000 to US $500,000 for money changers to register with the PMA before they are allowed to operate. Additionally, the PMA imposed reporting requirements in 2017 on money changers for amounts over US $7,000. The PMA also required that money changers have US $1 million in capital before the PMA will authorize international transactions. Money changers in Gaza were licensed and regulated by Hamas. According to business contacts in Gaza, Hamas does not impose reporting requirements on Gaza-based money changers.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): The PA's Palestinian Broadcasting Company's code of conduct states it does not allow programming that encourages "violence against any person or institution on the basis of race, religion, political beliefs, or sex." Some official PA media channels, as well as social media accounts affiliated with the ruling political movement Fatah, have featured content praising or condoning acts of violence. Palestinian leaders did not always publicly condemn individual terrorist attacks nor speak out publicly against members of their institutions who advocated for violence. PA President Abbas maintained a public commitment to non-violence, however.

The PA maintains control over the content of Friday sermons delivered in approximately 1,800 West Bank mosques to ensure that they do not endorse incitement to violence. Weekly, the PA Minister of Awqaf and Religious Affairs distributed approved themes and prohibits incitement to violence.

International and Regional Cooperation: The Palestinian Authority is an active member of the Arab League and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. In September 2017, the "State of Palestine" acceded to INTERPOL despite Israeli objections. PA justice and security leaders continued to participate in regional conferences and meetings to combat terrorism. PASF personnel attended a variety of international training courses related to counterterrorism at training facilities in Jordan, Europe, and the United States.

JORDAN

Overview: Jordan remained a committed partner on counterterrorism and countering violent extremism in 2017. As a regional leader in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, Jordan played an important role in Coalition successes in degrading the terrorist group's territorial control and operational reach. Although Jordan experienced a decrease in terrorist activity in 2017 compared to the previous year, the country faced a continued threat posed by terrorist groups, both domestically and along its borders. Jordanian security forces thwarted several plots and apprehended numerous terrorists. Following several high-profile attacks in 2016, Jordan took important steps to improve coordination among the security services for terrorism response capabilities and prevented several terrorist attacks.

Jordan remained a target for terrorist groups (including ISIS and al-Qa'ida) for several reasons, including its proximity to regional conflicts in Iraq and Syria, the state's official rejection of Salafi-Jihadi interpretations of Islam, and its membership in the Defeat-ISIS Coalition. Terrorist entities continued to express interest in attacking soft targets, such as high-profile public events, hotels, tourist sites, places of worship, restaurants, schools, and malls.

In June, the Border Guard Force engaged and killed three attackers on motorcycles attempting to enter Jordan from Syria near the Rukban border camp.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: There were no significant changes since 2016 on counterterrorism legislation, law enforcement capacity, or the State Security Court (SSC).

During 2017, Jordanian authorities took legal action against numerous individuals accused of terrorism under Jordanian law, including rulings on previous years' cases of terrorism. State Security Court verdicts related to terrorism are published almost daily in local media. Among the most notable cases is the conviction of several terrorists arrested in a preemptive 2016 raid on a suspected ISIS safe-house in Irbid. The operation lasted 12 hours and resulted in the death of one JAF officer and seven suspected terrorists. Some of the more prominent cases follow:

- On September 13, the SSC convicted 17 defendants of attempting to join terrorist organizations including ISIS and al-Nusrah Front, and promoting the ideology of a terrorist group. The sentences ranged between three and 15 year prison terms.
- On October 4, the SSC sentenced 11 people to hard labor ranging between three and five years for promoting terrorist ideology and attempting to join terrorist groups. The court also convicted two women of terrorist recruiting and promoting ISIS ideologies.
- On December 4, the SSC convicted five Syrians of aiding ISIS to carry out a 2016 car bomb attack near the Rukban border camp, which killed seven Jordanian border guards. One was sentenced to the death penalty, three to lifetime sentences of hard labor, and the fifth was cleared of terrorism-related charges, but sentenced to two years imprisonment for illegal entry and exit into the country. Four admitted receiving monthly payments from ISIS. The defendant sentenced to death filmed the attack on his mobile phone and shared the footage with ISIS.

- The SSC prosecuted several other individuals in 2017 for propagating ISIS ideology and affiliation with a terrorist organization. Sentences for such cases typically ranged from two- to 15-year prison terms.

There were no significant changes on border security since 2016. The Jordan-Iraq border crossing at Karama/Treybil reopened on August 30, 2017. Jordan conducts official screening of travelers at Ports of Entry, including at airports, and uses biometric systems in line with international standards.

Throughout 2017, Jordanian security services disrupted a number of terrorist plots in various stages of operational planning. Examples included a proposed attack at the Marka Military Airport in Amman with a suicide belt, a plot to down a U.S. aircraft at Marka with a rocket-propelled grenade, proposed attacks on a military bus and tourist sites, and plans to kidnap tourists at the Roman theater in downtown Amman.

A U.S. criminal complaint was unsealed in March charging Ahlam Aref Ahmad Al-Tamimi, a Jordanian national in her mid-30s, with conspiring to use a weapon of mass destruction against U.S. nationals outside the United States resulting in death. The charge is related to her participation in an August 9, 2001, suicide bomb attack at a restaurant in Jerusalem that killed 15 people, including two U.S. nationals. Four other U.S. nationals were among the approximately 122 others injured in the attack. Also unsealed was a warrant for Al-Tamimi's arrest and an affidavit in support of the criminal complaint and arrest warrant. Jordan's courts have ruled that their constitution forbids the extradition of Jordanian nationals.

The Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) program provided four mentors for a three-year program to support enhancing the Government of Jordan's law enforcement capabilities. One mentor was assigned to the Public Security Directorate's Criminal Investigation Department, one to its Forensics Lab, and two to its K-9 Unit.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Jordan is a member of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force, a Financial Action Task Force-style regional body, and also a member of the Coalition's Counter-ISIS Finance Group. Jordan's financial intelligence unit, the Anti Money Laundering and Counter Terrorist financing Unit (AMLU Jordan), is a member of the Egmont Group. There were no significant changes in Jordan's countering the financing of terrorism regime since 2016. The number of suspicious transaction reports received by AMLU Jordan in 2017 was on track to exceed 2016, with 590 suspicious transaction reports through November 29, compared to 602 in all of 2016. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): King Abdullah II continued to promote his "Amman Message" of 2004, calling for tolerance and peace within the Islamic community and rejecting "wanton aggression and terrorism." The Jordanian government's CVE efforts included counter-messaging and religious education, awareness-raising, and rehabilitation support for former terrorists. Jordan worked with the UN Development Program to create a National Strategy on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism, with the goal of establishing roles

and responsibilities for government entities and promoting the involvement of non-governmental organizations, civil society, and the private sector. The Jordanian government took steps to centralize training of imams and messaging for Friday prayers in an effort to forestall what it viewed as radical versions of Islam. The Jordanian cities Karak and Zarqa are members of the Strong Cities Network.

International and Regional Cooperation: Jordan is a major non-North Atlantic Treaty Organization ally and founding member of the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), is part of NATO's Mediterranean Dialogue, and is a member of the Arab League and the Organization for Islamic Cooperation. Jordan co-chairs the GCTF Foreign Terrorist Fighter working group with the United States.

In 2017, King Abdullah hosted international leaders for two sessions of the Aqaba Process, a forum he launched in 2015 to maintain international and regional cooperation in the fight against terrorism. These meetings focused on Southeast Asia and West Africa.

Jordan hosted the meeting of the Small Group of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS on November 15.

Jordan hosted and conducted training for Palestinian Authority Security Forces and Civil Defense, in addition to other police forces from around the region.

KUWAIT

Overview: During 2017, the Government of Kuwait initiated new lines of effort as part of its multi-agency endeavor to foster moderation and address violent extremism. New initiatives included imam training and school outreach programs as well as a new TV channel targeting demographics thought more susceptible to radicalization to violence. Kuwait took important steps to implement the United Nations (UN) Security Council ISIL (Da'esh) and al-Qa'ida sanctions regime, and joined both the Egmont Group and the Terrorist Financing Targeting Center (TFTC), a U.S.-Gulf Cooperation Council(GCC) initiative announced during President Trump's May visit to Saudi Arabia. Despite continued efforts by ISIS to target Kuwait, there were no terrorist incidents in its territory in 2017. Kuwait was an active partner in post-ISIS stabilization and reconstruction efforts in Iraq. Kuwait also co-chaired and participated in numerous meetings for the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. During the second U.S.-Kuwait Strategic Dialogue, held in Washington, D.C. in September, Kuwait signed a counterterrorism information-sharing arrangement aimed at deterring terrorist attacks and enhancing the bilateral security partnership with the United States.

In July, the Kuwaiti Higher Authority for Communication established a new Directorate for Cybersecurity, which it tasked, inter alia, with "fighting violent extremism."

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: There were no substantial changes in counterterrorism legislation since 2016.

In April, authorities in the Philippines arrested and extradited to Kuwait a 40-year old Kuwaiti ISIS foreign terrorist fighter. The Kuwaiti Public Prosecutor pressed charges of manufacturing explosives and attempting to carry out terrorist attacks in Kuwait.

In June, a criminal court sentenced to life an Egyptian expatriate for the attempted murder of three U.S. military servicemen in October 2016. In the same month, the Court of Cassation (Kuwait's highest appeal's court) upheld lower court imprisonment verdicts against three ISIS members, including the group's leader in Kuwait.

In June, the Court of Cassation issued appeal verdicts for the 26 suspects convicted of amassing a large cache of ammunition, weapons, and explosives at a farm near the Iraqi border in August 2015. The court commuted one of the two death sentences issued by the lower court. It increased the sentences issued by the lower court against 19 defendants and upheld the acquittals of the remaining appellants. In August, after weeks of speculation that 16 of the 19 appellants in the case had escaped to Iran, Kuwaiti authorities announced their re-arrest and remand to prison to begin serving their sentences.

In September, the Court of Appeals reduced the sentence from seven to five years imprisonment of a 19-year-old Kuwaiti man convicted of plotting to bomb a Shia mosque and a police station in 2016.

In October, the Public Prosecutor filed terrorism finance charges against three Syrian expatriates in Kuwait for allegedly transmitting collected charitable donations to ISIS in Syria. Also in October, the Appeals Court rejected a petition from UN-designated Kuwaiti terrorism financer Jaber al-Jalahmah to unfreeze his assets.

During the course of 2017, the Ministry of Interior sent 35 of its law-enforcement personnel to the United States to complete several short-term training programs as part of Kuwait's efforts to build its counterterrorism capacity.

In September, as part of the bilateral Strategic Dialogue, Kuwait and the United States expressed their intent to expand their partnership in counterterrorism, including through the creation of a security committee focused on improving the information exchange on foreign terrorist fighters.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Kuwait is a member of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force, a Financial Action Task Force (FATF)-style regional body, and served as its president in 2017. Kuwait's Financial Intelligence Unit became a member of the Egmont Group in July 2017. Kuwait is also a member of the Defeat-ISIS Coalition's Counter-ISIS Finance Group.

In October, Kuwait joined the United States and GCC member countries in announcing 13 designations under each country's respective domestic authorities of individuals and entities affiliated with AQAP and ISIS-Yemen. This was the first such cooperative measure under the newly established TFTC, which acts as an information sharing and coordinating body for the Gulf countries' terrorism financing efforts. Kuwait's National Committee on Combating Money

Laundering and Terrorist Financing finalized its National Risk Assessment with the help of the World Bank at the end of 2017.

The Central Bank of Kuwait implemented a "same business-day" turnaround policy for implementing new UN terrorist financing-related sanctions, which has proven difficult for local bank compliance departments to achieve. Banks are now required to monitor UN sanctions lists proactively as well those made domestically by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): In October, the Ministry of Education started implementing an eight-month program to fight "extremist ideologies" at all public schools through teacher training and student counseling programs. As part of the government's National Plan to Reinforce Moderation, the Ministry of Information launched a youth-dedicated TV channel with programming targeting audiences believed to be at higher risk of radicalization to violence. The Ministry of Islamic Affairs started a training program for imams and sent teams to social salons (*diwaniyas*) to engage attendees and detect the potential presence of radicalizing influencers and recruiters.

The Kuwaiti government founded a dedicated bureau in the Ministry of Information to engage youth on social media platforms. The bureau has established a presence on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and SnapChat.

International and Regional Cooperation: In March, Kuwait hosted and co-chaired the Defeat-ISIS Coalition's Foreign Terrorist Fighters working group. More than 100 counterterrorism experts and diplomats from more than 40 coalition partners participated. Kuwait went on to participate in nine meetings for various working groups of the Coalition in Amman, Berlin, Copenhagen, London, Rome, Vienna, and Washington, D.C., throughout the year. Additionally, Kuwait joined the International Cooperation Review Group meeting in Rome in September to explore ways to stabilize the Syrian city of Raqqa after its liberation from ISIS. Kuwait participated in two meetings for the FATF in Valencia, Spain and Buenos Aires, in addition to hosting a third one in December. In July, the Kuwaiti government announced that it would host an international donor conference for Iraq in early 2018. Kuwait is an active member of the Arab League and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. As a member of the GCC, Kuwait has been playing a lead role in mediating the GCC dispute between Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates over claims of Qatari support to terrorism.

LEBANON

Overview: Lebanon was a committed ally in the defeat-ISIS fight during 2017, and its ground forces represented one of the most effective counterterrorism partners in the region. The United States provided security assistance and training to the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF), and worked with Lebanon's defense and law enforcement organizations, such as the Internal Security Forces (ISF), to build its counterterrorism capabilities.

Terrorist groups operating in Lebanon included U.S. government-designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations Hizballah, ISIS, Hamas, and the Abdullah Azzam Brigades. Hizballah remained the most capable terrorist organization in Lebanon, controlling areas in the Bekaa Valley, southern Lebanon, and south Beirut. Even though the Lebanese government reaffirmed its official policy of disassociation in 2017, Hizballah continued its military role in Syria in support of the Syrian regime and admitted that it has a military presence in Iraq. Lebanon's 12 Palestinian refugee camps, particularly the largest, Ain el-Helweh, remained outside the jurisdiction of local security forces and posed a security threat due to potential militant recruitment and terrorist infiltration.

In 2017, the Lebanese security forces sought to impede Sunni foreign terrorist fighter flow to and from Syria and Iraq via border security and counterterrorism operations, including increased security measures at airports, border crossings, and ports to prevent the flow of ISIS and al-Nusrah Front (ANF) fighters to Syria and Iraq. In August, the Lebanese government was involved in an arrangement that led to the departure of 4,800 al-Qa'ida-affiliated Syrian fighters from Aarsal, Lebanon to Idlib, Syria, and 670 ISIS fighters from Raas Baalbek, Lebanon into Syria. Lebanese President Michael Aoun declared "victory over terrorism" following an August 2017 LAF campaign to expel ISIS militants along the Lebanese-Syrian border near Aarsal. It was the LAF's largest and most successful military operation in over a decade. Lebanon is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, and participates in all four of the Coalition's civilian working groups.

2017 Terrorist Incidents:

- On January 21, Lebanese security forces thwarted an attempted suicide bomber at a coffee shop in Beirut.
- On May 26, an ISIS-affiliated suicide bomber detonated an explosive vest, wounding several Lebanese soldiers during a raid by Lebanese soldiers in Aarsal.
- On June 30, five suicide bombers and a sixth militant killed one civilian and wounded seven Lebanese soldiers during a LAF raid on two Syrian refugee camps near Aarsal.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Lebanon does not have a comprehensive counterterrorism law, but several articles of Lebanon's criminal code are used to prosecute acts of terrorism. Lebanon's confessional power-sharing system and Hizballah's restriction of access to areas under its control hinders implementation of these articles. Hizballah's political power make consensus on any anti-Hizballah legislation impossible.

The LAF, ISF, Directorate of General Security, and General Directorate of State Security are the primary government agencies responsible for counterterrorism. The law enforcement capacity of these agencies was overstretched due to the magnitude of terrorism-related threats. Although inter-service cooperation was inconsistent, services took steps to improve information sharing and were receptive to additional capacity building.

Department of State Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) in 2017 focused on border security and building law enforcement's investigative and leadership capabilities. The Department of State also provided assistance to improve ISF capabilities through a program that includes construction of training facilities, establishment of a secure radio communications system, and the provision

of vehicles and protective gear. In 2017, the Department of State's Counterterrorism Partnerships Fund program planned to build on the ATA program and provide ISF with assistance to further enhance its digital investigative capabilities.

The LAF has primary responsibility for securing Lebanon's borders and worked collaboratively with other Lebanese security services to do so. Security services increased border security measures to prevent the flow of ISIS and ANF fighters to Syria and Iraq, with an emphasis on detecting counterfeit passports. The Directorate of General Security, under the Ministry of Interior, controls immigration and passport services and collects biographic data for travelers at the airport, but it does not collect biometric data at land borders. Lebanon collects and disseminates Passenger Name Record data for commercial flights, and in 2017, began collecting Advanced Passenger Information.

In addition to the major military victory in August to clear ISIS militants from the Syrian-Lebanese border, the Lebanese security services disrupted multiple terrorist networks and made several high profile arrests in 2017. On April 22, the LAF killed an ISIS leader and detained 10 other suspected militants in Aarsal. On November 15, the army arrested Mustafa al-Hujeiri, a senior Sunni extremist figure and cleric involved in the 2014 kidnapping of 30 Lebanese soldiers and policemen.

The United States maintained close ties with the Lebanese security services, both receiving and providing support. Several individuals on the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation's most wanted list and the Department of State's Rewards for Justice are reportedly located in Lebanon.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Lebanon is a member of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF), a Financial Action Task Force-style regional body. The Central Bank of Lebanon's financial intelligence unit, the Special Investigation Commission (SIC), is a member of the Egmont Group. The SIC Secretary is the Vice-Chairman worldwide of the Egmont Group. Lebanon is a member of the Counter-ISIS Finance Group (CIFG), a working group of the Defeat-ISIS Coalition.

The Central Bank of Lebanon and members of the Association of Lebanese Banks reasserted their commitment to fully implement the U.S. Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act (HIFPA) of 2015, in accordance with Central Bank directives. They met frequently with U.S. government officials to understand compliance and potential new auditing and reporting requirements related to the proposed 2017 amendments to HIFPA.

Cooperation between the SIC and local enforcement authorities on terrorist financing cases improved in 2017. During the first nine months of 2017, the SIC received 12 terrorism and terrorism financing cases from local sources. During the same period, the SIC referred seven terrorism financing cases to the General Prosecutor.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): Several government institutions and civil society organizations conducted CVE programs and messaging platforms. The UN Special Coordinator for Lebanon continued to work with the prime minister's office on advancing a "National Action Plan to Prevent Violent Extremism." The LAF developed a comprehensive counter-messaging strategy that amplifies moderate voices and uses television spots, social media, billboards, and SMS texts to counter terrorist narratives. The Lebanese cities Madjal Anjar, Saida, and Tripoli are members of the Strong Cities Network.

International and Regional Cooperation: Lebanon supported counterterrorism efforts in regional organizations and participated in counterterrorism finance programs as a member of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Arab League, and the Union of Arab Banks. In the framework of MENAFATF and the Egmont Group, Lebanon offered training to regional peers in international standards to combat terrorist financing. Lebanon voiced its commitment to fulfilling relevant UNSCRs, including 1559 (2004), 1680 (2006), and 1701 (2006). The Special Tribunal for Lebanon, an international body investigating the 2005 assassination of former Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri, received Lebanon's annual contribution of approximately $32.5 million in June. The LAF also partnered on security assistance initiatives with several nations, most regularly with the United Kingdom.

LIBYA

Overview: Libya's Government of National Accord (GNA) proved a reliable counterterrorism partner in 2017, and worked closely with the United States to counter the spread of terrorist groups such as ISIS-Libya and al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). While Libya has made considerable progress against ISIS, including dislodging ISIS fighters from its stronghold of Sirte in 2016, terrorist groups have taken advantage of political instability and limited government presence in other parts of the country. Through coordination with the GNA, the United States conducted periodic precision airstrikes on ISIS-Libya desert camps and AQIM cells, degrading their numbers and displacing remaining elements to other areas both inside and outside Libya. Toward the end of 2017, ISIS elements were in a position to carry out only local-level operations. The GNA has also cooperated with the United States on the investigation of suspected terrorists.

While Sirte had previously served as ISIS-Libya's center of governance in Libya, ISIS-Libya cells also existed in other areas of the country, including the eastern Libyan cities of Benghazi and Darnah. The eastern Libya-based "Libyan National Army" (LNA) drove groups of ISIS and other extremist fighters out of Benghazi as part of its campaign to gain control of Benghazi. The LNA, led by General Khalifa Haftar and not aligned with the GNA, has expressed the desire to rid Libya of terrorist groups.

Other terrorist organizations, including AQIM, maintained a presence in Libya. These groups continued to take advantage of the political instability throughout the country, but efforts by GNA-aligned forces, international partners, and the LNA have degraded terrorist capabilities in some areas. AQIM has sought to establish a longer-term presence in Libya.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: ISIS-Libya and al-Qa'ida-aligned terrorists carried out dozens of attacks throughout 2017. Methods included suicide bombers, vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices (VBIED), ambushes, kidnappings, and targeted assassinations. The following list details only a small fraction of the terrorist incidents that occurred.

- On August 23 in al-Jufra, ISIS fighters killed 11 individuals and injured one during an attack on a road checkpoint. The victims were either shot or beheaded.
- On October 4 in Misrata, two suicide bombers detonated explosives inside the Misrata Courthouse killing four civilians and injuring dozens. Authorities discovered an unexploded VBIED. ISIS claimed responsibility.
- On October 25 in Ajdabiya, two LNA soldiers were killed and four injured at a roadside checkpoint. One victim was burned in his car and the other beheaded. ISIS claimed responsibility.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Libya lacks a comprehensive counterterrorism law, although the Libyan penal code (under Title 2, Section 1, Chapter 1, Article 170 and Title 2, Chapter 2, Article 207) criminalizes offenses that may threaten national security, including terrorism, the promotion of terrorist acts, and the handling of money in support of such acts. Libya has ratified the African Union's (AU) Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism, which requires states to criminalize terrorist acts under their national laws.

The GNA has continued to support and seek international cooperation to combat ISIS. Neither the GNA, nor factions in the east associated with the House of Representatives in Tobruk, has produced a strategy to combat the terrorist threat. The GNA conducted internal consultations to develop a counterterrorism strategy, but had not passed any legislation as of December 31, 2017. In November 2017, the Presidency Council appointed a new counterterrorism coordinator, who sits in the office of the prime minister, to coordinate among Libyan counterterrorism stakeholders and with the international community.

A multitude of organizations under the GNA claimed counterterrorism responsibilities, such as the Counterterrorism Unit, the Presidential Guard, the Central Investigations Division, General Investigations Division, and the Libyan Intelligence Service. Due to the limited reach of these organizations, however, they were not effective in deterring or reducing terrorist activities beyond their localized areas of control. Libyan law enforcement personnel lacked clear mandates and the capacity to detect, deter, respond to, or investigate terrorist incidents due to continued political and security force fragmentation.

There were no reported terrorism-related prosecutions in 2017. In many parts of Libya, security and law enforcement functions, including detention of terrorist elements, are provided by armed groups rather than state institutions. National police and security forces are fragmented, inadequately trained and equipped, and lack clear reporting chains and coordination mechanisms. Security and law enforcement officials, including prosecutors and judges, have been targeted in kidnappings and assassinations. Libya's military forces are similarly weak and fragmented. Formal security structures are often overmatched by non-state armed groups.

The Libyan government lacked a comprehensive border management strategy and was unable to secure the country's thousands of miles of land and maritime borders, enabling the illicit flow of fuel, goods, weapons, antiquities, narcotics, migrants, and foreign terrorist fighters that pose serious security challenges to the region. Libyan border security forces were generally poorly trained and underequipped, and participated in illicit cross-border trade. Border security infrastructure has not been repaired or replaced in nearly a decade. Ongoing conflicts since 2011 have affected border security infrastructure along Libya's border with Tunisia.

Security at Libya's airports is minimal, with limited document screening, use of Passenger Name Record systems, or biometric technology. Existing legislation outlining the responsibilities of various government agencies in border management is vague and often contradictory, resulting in ad hoc and poorly coordinated efforts. In November 2017, the International Organization of Migration estimated there were more than 700,000 migrants in Libya.

Libya lacked the resources, manpower, and training to conduct sufficient maritime patrols to interdict or dissuade illicit maritime trafficking and irregular migration, although Italy and the European Union (EU) began training members of the Libyan Naval Coastguard to increase the effectiveness of the organization.

In 2013, the Libyan Ministry of Justice signed a Declaration of Intent to facilitate law enforcement cooperation with the United States on investigations, including that of the 1988 Pan Am Flight 103 bombing. The GNA has cooperated in the investigation of terrorist attacks against U.S. citizens and interests, including the September 2012 killing of Ambassador Christopher Stevens and three other Americans at U.S. government facilities in Benghazi.

The Department of State provided training in securing airports against the threat of terrorism, which included preventive security measures consisting of access control, passenger and cabin baggage screening, hold baggage screening, and air and mail cargo handling.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Libya is a member of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force, a Financial Action Task Force-style regional body. Libya is also a member of the Counter-ISIS Finance Group, a working group of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. Libya adopted an Anti-Money Laundering and Combating the Financing of Terrorism Decree-Law on October 24 and a regulation to implement UN Security Council resolutions related to Terrorism and the Financing of Terrorism on November 1. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): There were no significant changes since 2016.

Regional and International Cooperation: Many international organizations and diplomatic missions are reestablishing a presence in Tripoli after nearly all evacuated in 2014. Many other countries and organizations maintain a permanent presence in Tunis, Tunisia, to conduct diplomacy and outreach to Libya. The political conflict and limitations on the international presence in Libya hindered counterterrorism cooperation. International assistance increased in

2017, including U.S. government-provided training on airport security and land border management. Other border security initiatives, through the EU Border Assistance Mission, the UN Development Program, and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime focused on improving policing and criminal justice functions and counterterrorism legislation and legal frameworks. Libya is an active member of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Arab League.

MOROCCO

Overview: Morocco has a comprehensive counterterrorism strategy that includes vigilant security measures, regional and international cooperation, and counter-radicalization policies. In 2017, Morocco's counterterrorism efforts effectively mitigated the risk of terrorism, although the country continued to face sporadic threats, largely from small, independent terrorist cells, the majority of which claimed to be inspired by or affiliated with ISIS. During the year, authorities reported a decrease in the number of terrorist-related arrests (186) for the first time since 2013.

Following the August attacks in Barcelona, Morocco assisted the Spanish investigation and promised to expand cooperation to track terrorists of Moroccan origin radicalized abroad. The government remained concerned about the threat posed by the return of Moroccan foreign terrorist fighters (estimated at approximately 1,660) and their families. Morocco participates in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and, in September, renewed its term as co-chair of the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) with the Netherlands.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Morocco effectively investigates, prosecutes, and sentences defendants charged under its comprehensive counterterrorism legislation enacted in 2003 and expanded in 2015. The legislation is in line with UN Security Council resolution (UNSCR) 2178 (2014).

Moroccan law enforcement units, coordinating with the Ministry of Interior, aggressively targeted and effectively dismantled terrorist cells by leveraging intelligence collection, police work, and collaboration with international partners. The Central Bureau of Judicial Investigation (BCIJ), which reports to the General Directorate for Territorial Surveillance and operates under the supervision of the public prosecutor of the Court of Appeals, is the primary law enforcement agency responsible for counterterrorism law enforcement.

The General Directorate for National Security has primary responsibility for conducting border inspections at ports of entry such as Casablanca's Mohammed V Airport. Law enforcement officials and private carriers worked regularly with the United States to detect and deter individuals attempting to transit illegally and to address watchlisted or mala fide travelers. Moroccan airport authorities have excellent capabilities in detecting fraudulent documents, but lacked biometric screening capabilities. In addition, police, customs officers, and Gendarmerie Royal operate mobile and fixed checkpoints along the roads in border areas and at the entrances to major municipalities. Moroccan naval and coast guard units monitor and patrol Morocco's extensive coastal waters, including the Strait of Gibraltar, to interdict illicit traffickers.

Morocco participated in a wide range of U.S.-sponsored programs to improve its technical and investigative capabilities, including financial investigation, intelligence analysis, and

cybersecurity. Through the Trilateral Initiative funded by the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance program, Morocco and the United States continued to deliver critical incident management training to African partners. In partnership with the Department of Defense and the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, Morocco's Royal Armed Forces are taking tangible steps to protect critical infrastructure from cyber-attacks, control and protect logistical hubs, and ensure readiness to prevent or respond to a catastrophic chemical, biological or nuclear terrorist attack.

Moroccan authorities reported disrupting a number of alleged terrorist cells throughout the year, announcing that they had arrested 186 individuals and broken up nine cells planning to attack a range of targets, including public buildings and tourist sites.

- In March, BCIJ dismantled a 15-person cell dispersed amongst 10 cities, which planned to perpetrate attacks using explosives on soft targets and assassinate public and military officials.
- In August, cooperating with Spanish counterparts, Moroccan authorities arrested two suspects related to the Barcelona and Cambrils attacks, including one who was allegedly planning to attack the Spanish Embassy in Rabat.
- In October, BCIJ dismantled a cell linked to ISIS in Fes, arresting 11 suspects and uncovering a cache of guns, ammunition, knives, and explosive material at the alleged leader's house in Khouribga.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Morocco is a member of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force, a Financial Action Task Force (FATF)-style regional body. Its financial intelligence unit (FIU), the Unité de Traitement du Renseignement Financier (UTRF), is a member of the Egmont Group. Morocco criminalizes money laundering and terrorist financing in accordance with international standards. Through November 2017, UTRF received 350 suspicious transaction reports. It has signed memoranda of understanding facilitating information exchange with regional FIUs, is working to update current legislation to better implement the UN Security Council ISIL (Da'esh) and al-Qa'ida sanctions regime, and is preparing a national risk assessment to inform more effective counter measures against terrorist financing. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): Morocco has a comprehensive CVE strategy that prioritizes economic and human development in addition to oversight of the religious sphere and messaging. Morocco has accelerated its creation of education and employment initiatives for vulnerable youth. To counter religious extremism, Morocco promotes its moderate interpretation of the Maliki-Ashari school of Sunni Islam. The Ministry of Endowments and Islamic Affairs has developed an educational curriculum for Morocco's nearly 50,000 imams, as well as the hundreds of African and European imams studying at Morocco's international imam training center in Rabat, which expanded its capacity to 1,800 students in 2017. In Fes, Morocco hosts the Institute for African Islamic Religious Scholars, which brings together religious scholars from more than 30 African countries to promote scholarship and to counter terrorist ideology. Domestically, the royal Mohammedan League of Ulema (Rabita Mohammedia) counters

radicalization to violence by producing scholarly research, ensuring conformity in educational curricula, and conducting youth outreach on religious and social topics.

In the prisons, the Department of State has supported General Delegation for Prison Administration and Reintegration (DGAPR) efforts to modernize prison management, develop prisoner classification tools that keep terrorists segregated from the mainstream prison population, and construct new more secure facilities. To rehabilitate returning foreign terrorist fighters, the DGAPR worked closely with National Center for Human Rights and religious leaders from Rabita Mohammedia. In August, the King pardoned 14 detainees following their renunciation of terrorist views after their successful completion of the DGAPR's rehabilitation program.

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) continued to address youth marginalization in areas known for recruitment by terrorist organizations by helping youth stay in school, develop skills, and become active in their communities. In addition, USAID's Community Oriented Policing Activity provided opportunities for dialogue that has resulted in greater trust and a freer flow of information between police and communities.

International and Regional Cooperation: Morocco rejoined the African Union in 2017. Morocco is a founding member of the GCTF and is a current co-chair. In 2017, Morocco was a co-chair of the GCTF Foreign Terrorist Fighters working group with the Netherlands. The United States and Morocco were co-leading the *Initiative on Addressing Homegrown Terrorism* in partnership with the International Institute for Justice and Rule of Law (IIJ). Morocco is a member of the Global Initiative to Counter Nuclear Terrorism and the Proliferation Security Initiative. In December, Morocco co-sponsored UN Security Council resolution 2396 on returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters. Morocco is an active member of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Arab League.

Morocco, a Major Non-North Atlantic Treaty Organization ally, is a stable security-exporting partner that trains security, military, and law enforcement officials from sub-Saharan Africa and participates actively in the 5+5 Defense Initiative to address Mediterranean security issues. Morocco hosts the annual multilateral AFRICAN LION exercise and participates in multilateral regional training exercises, such as the maritime-focused PHOENIX EXPRESS and OBANGAME EXPRESS and the FLINTLOCK special operations exercise. Morocco is also an active member of the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership. Political disagreement between Morocco and Algeria over the status of Western Sahara remained an impediment to bilateral and regional counterterrorism cooperation in 2017.

OMAN

Overview: Oman is an important regional counterterrorism partner that actively worked in 2017 to prevent terrorists from conducting attacks or using the country as a safe haven. The Omani government remains concerned about the conflict in Yemen and the potential for al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula and ISIS-Yemen to threaten Oman's land and maritime borders. Omani officials regularly engaged with U.S. officials on the need to counter violent extremism and terrorism, but rarely broadcast their counterterrorism efforts publicly. The Government of Oman

sought training and equipment from the U.S. government, commercial entities, and other countries to support its efforts to control Omani land, air, and maritime borders. Oman also used U.S. security assistance to improve its counterterrorism tactics and procedures. Oman is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, the Saudi-led Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition, as well as the Riyadh-based Terrorist Finance Targeting Center. The Government of Oman issued a series of official statements condemning terrorist attacks in 2017.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Royal Decree 8/2007 outlines specific penalties, including the death penalty and life imprisonment, for various terrorist acts, including establishment or leadership of a terrorist group, attempts to join a terrorist group, attempts to recruit for a terrorist group, development of an explosive or weapon, or takeover of any mode of transportation for purposes of terrorism.

Counterterrorism investigations, crisis responses, and border security capabilities were limited by local capacity and a challenging operating environment due to Oman's extensive coastline and long, remote borders with Saudi Arabia and Yemen. Nevertheless, Oman had good interagency communication and coordination among its many agencies that have counterterrorism jurisdiction. The Sultan's Special Forces and the Royal Oman Police (ROP) Special Task Force are Oman's primary counterterrorism response forces. The Omani Internal Security Service and Royal Office also play key roles in securing Oman from terrorist threats. Omani authorities have developed specific plans to prevent or respond to terrorist attacks against soft targets.

The Government of Oman recognized the need to improve its capabilities and took advantage of U.S. counterterrorism and law enforcement training and assistance. In 2017, the ROP, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Transportation and Communication, and Ministry of Commerce and Industry participated in U.S. Export Control and Related Border Security (EXBS) programs designed to enhance the government's interdiction capabilities at official ports of entry on land and at sea. A 10-week EXBS training program helped the Government of Oman establish a port control unit at the Port of Sohar. The port control unit, which will serve as a model at other Omani ports of entry, improves Omani interagency collaboration by placing representatives from Omani agencies responsible for interdiction into single units at each port.

Oman participated in the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance program, which included training on border security, exercise development, interdicting terrorist activities, maritime security, fraudulent documents, medical skills, and crisis response. Omani security officials representing the ROP, the Public Authority for Civil Defense and Ambulance, and a number of civilian agencies participated in the training.
The Omani government sent senior military and civilian leaders to the Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies and the George C. Marshall Center for counterterrorism study and training.

The major deterrents to more effective law enforcement and border security are limited resources, nascent Omani interagency coordination, and the need for continued training to develop advanced law enforcement skills. Oman's border with Yemen, which features rugged, mountainous terrain, further challenges border security efforts. Despite these significant hurdles,

Omani authorities continued to make progress on the construction of a fence along the border with Yemen to prevent illegal entry into Oman, and the Omani and U.S. governments continued to engage in frequent border security-related training.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Oman is a member of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force, a Financial Action Task Force-style regional body. Royal Decree 30/2016, Oman's countering the financing of terrorism (CFT) law, requires financial institutions, private industry, and non-profit organizations to screen transactions for money laundering or terrorist financin and requires the collection of know-your-customer data for wire transfers. The CFT law also consolidates CFT authority within the National Center for Financial Information and establishes the Center as an independent government entity. While progress has been made, a number of gaps remain. These include completing the drafting and implementation of certification procedures for anti-money laundering (AML) and CFT, issuing directives for the immediate freezing and seizure of the assets of persons and entities on the UN sanctions list under UN Security Council resolution 1267 (1999) and its successor resolutions, and designating wire transfer amounts for customer due diligence procedures. In May, Oman joined the Riyadh-based Terrorist Finance Targeting Center, along with all other Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the United States. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): Radicalization to violence in Oman was not considered a significant threat during 2017. The full nature and scope of Oman's initiatives to address domestic radicalization and recruitment to violence were unclear, but it is believed that Oman maintains tightly controlled and non-public initiatives to counter terrorist recruitment.

As he has done in prior years, the Grand Mufti of Oman, Sheikh Ahmed al-Khalili, called on all Muslims to reject terrorism and promote tolerance in his popular and widely broadcast weekly television program. The government also continued to promote an advocacy campaign titled "Islam in Oman," designed to encourage tolerant and inclusive Islamic practices. The project highlighted the commonalities between Islam's sects and between Islam and other religions. A Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs program, "Tolerance, Understanding, Co-existence – Oman's Message of Islam," was part of the government's effort to enhance interfaith dialogue.

International and Regional Cooperation: Oman participates in the U.S.-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Strategic Cooperation Forum, participated in the U.S.-GCC Riyadh summit in May, and attended the Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition meeting in November. Oman regularly votes in favor of counterterrorism measures in the UN General Assembly, the Arab League, and the Organization for Islamic Cooperation.

QATAR

Overview: The United States and Qatar significantly increased counterterrorism cooperation in 2017, under the Counterterrorism Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by the Secretary of State and Foreign Minister Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani in July. In the

MoU, Qatar and the United States set forth mutually accepted means of increasing information sharing, disrupting terrorism financing flows, and intensifying counterterrorism activities. At the November 8, 2017, U.S.-Qatar Counterterrorism Dialogue, the two governments affirmed the progress made on implementing the MoU and committed to expand bilateral counterterrorism cooperation. Qatar is an active participant in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, is active in all Defeat-ISIS Coalition working groups, and has provided significant support in facilitating U.S. military operations in the region. Qatar hosts approximately 10,000 U.S. servicemen and women on two military installations critical to coalition efforts. Security services capable of monitoring and disrupting terrorist activities have maintained the status quo. In June, Bahrain, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates unexpectedly severed diplomatic ties with and imposed sanctions on Qatar, alleging the government supported terrorist groups in the region, among other purported grievances.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: In July, the Qatari government promulgated Decree 11 of 2017, which amended the 2004 Law on Combating Terrorism. The amendment set out definitions of terrorism-related activities, penalties for terrorism-related offenses, and the establishment of a national designations list. In October, the U.S. government led a workshop for relevant Qatari authorities on the planned establishment of a domestic designations regime.

The State Security Bureau maintains an aggressive posture toward monitoring internal extremist and terrorism-related activities. The Ministry of Interior (MOI) and Internal Security Force are well positioned to respond to incidents with rapid reaction forces that routinely engage in structured counterterrorism training and exercises. The Office of Public Prosecution is tasked with prosecuting all crimes, including any related to terrorism, and plays a significant role in terrorism investigations. Qatar maintains an interagency National Anti-Terrorism Committee (NATC) composed of representatives from more than 10 government agencies. The NATC is tasked with formulating Qatar's counterterrorism policy, ensuring interagency coordination, fulfilling Qatar's obligations to counter terrorism under international conventions, and participating in multilateral conferences on terrorism. U.S. officials met regularly with the chairman of the NATC to discuss implementation of the counterterrorism MoU and overall counterterrorism cooperation.

As a result of the counterterrorism MoU, the United States and Qatar significantly increased information sharing, including on identities of known and suspected terrorists. Aviation security information sharing also increased, as new protocols were agreed to and established. During 2017, MOI authorities cooperated with DHS officials to enhance screening capabilities of the approximately 50 million travelers that pass through Hamad International Airport each year. U.S. technical assistance to Qatari law enforcement and judicial agencies increased, a result of the counterterrorism MoU. The Departments of Justice, State, and the Treasury led a workshop on domestic designations, while the FBI provided training on watchlists and terrorism financing investigations and the Department of Justice provided two advisors for capacity building within the Office of Public Prosecution. In February 2017, the Department of State and relevant Qatar agencies established a framework for ATA program security-related training in 2017-2019.

In June, Qatar expelled six Hamas members, including Saleh al-Arouri, one of the founders of the Izz al-Din al Qassam Brigades. Israel, in the past, has accused al-Arouri of plotting attacks in the West Bank.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Qatar is a member of the Middle East North Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF), a Financial Action Task Force-style regional body. In 2017, Qatar commenced preparations for the 2019 MENAFATF Mutual Evaluation, including establishing an interagency task force, formalizing cooperation with the International Monetary Fund, and intensifying coordination with U.S. counterparts. Qatar's financial intelligence unit, the Qatar Financial Information Unit, is a member of the Egmont Group. Qatar is a member of the Defeat-ISIS Coalition's Counter-ISIS Finance Group and the Terrorist Financing Targeting Center (TFTC), a U.S.-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) initiative announced during President Trump's visit to Saudi Arabia in May 2017.

In 2017, Qatar passed updated terrorism financing legislation. Decree 11 of 2017 defined terrorism financing-related activities, laid out penalties, and established a domestic designations list. Qatari legislation requires the Office of Public Prosecution to freeze the funds of individuals and organizations included on the UN Security Council ISIL (Da'esh) and al-Qa'ida sanctions list. The Qatar Central Bank works with financial institutions to confirm asset-freezing compliance with respect to these UN obligations.

Qatar deepened cooperation with the United States on combatting terrorism financing during 2017. In October, Qatar joined the United States and other TFTC countries in coordinated domestic designations of individuals and entities associated with AQAP and ISIS-Yemen.

Two UN-designated financiers who were acquitted in a 2015-2016 trial were placed under arrest and imprisoned in July 2017. The Qatari Attorney General initiated proceedings to appeal the prior acquittals. Additionally, Qatari authorities also placed under arrest two other terrorism financiers previously convicted in the 2015-2016 trial.

In July, Qatari authorities took sweeping measures to monitor and restrict the overseas activities of Qatari charities, requiring all such activity to be conducted via one of the two approved charities. Authorities also significantly increased procedures to monitor private donations. The sector is overseen by the Regulatory Authority for Charitable Activities, in coordination with the Central Bank and law enforcement agencies.

While the Government of Qatar has made progress on countering the financing of terrorism, terrorist financiers within the country are still able to exploit Qatar's informal financial system.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes.*

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): The core of Qatar's CVE strategy remained intensive investment in education through the 45 entities comprising the Qatar Foundation. This includes Qatar campuses of six U.S. universities, as well as through its national university and the public

K-12 school system. The government is undertaking a review of its K-12 education system and sought the input of U.S. academic institutions. The growing Qatar Foundation school system follows an International Baccalaureate curriculum, which is grounded in liberal education principles.

Qatar Foundation International (QFI), headquartered in Washington, DC, remained a primary vehicle for Qatar's international CVE activities. QFI's *Education Above All* initiative provided educational opportunities to communities stricken by poverty or crisis, primarily in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East – impacting an estimated 10 million children worldwide since 2013. *Reach Out to Asia* provided access to education for youth in that region. QFI's *Al Fakhoora* initiative provided scholarships to Palestinian and Syrian youth. These and other QFI initiatives are designed to facilitate understanding and education, and deter isolationist, xenophobic, and extremist thought and ideology.

Qatar continued its robust financial support for the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund, and in December hosted its seventh annual Board Meeting. Qatar continued to fund the Education for Justice Initiative, a CVE program focused on crime prevention and criminal justice implemented by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime.

International and Regional Cooperation: Qatar is an active participant in the United Nations, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and the Arab League on counterterrorism activities. Qatar is also a founding member of the Global Counterterrorism Forum. Qatar was active in GCC activities, but the Gulf dispute that broke out in June froze most GCC-wide engagements. In December, Qatar co-sponsored UN Security Council resolution 2396 on returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters.

SAUDI ARABIA

Overview: Saudi Arabia continued to maintain a strong counterterrorism relationship with the United States and supported enhanced bilateral cooperation to ensure the safety of both U.S. and Saudi citizens within Saudi territories and abroad. The Crown Prince and Minister of Defense Mohammed bin Salman vowed October 24 to return Saudi Arabia to a country of "moderate Islam." During President Trump's visit to Saudi Arabia in May 2017, the two countries released a Joint Strategic Vision Declaration announcing new initiatives to counter terrorist messaging and disrupt the financing of terrorism. Saudi Arabia remained a key member and active participant in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS.

On November 4, the Saudi government announced a revision of its Counterterrorism and Counter Terror Financing Law (CT Law, detailed below) to reinforce its capacity to counter terrorism. Saudi Arabia implemented the UN Security Council ISIL (Da'esh) and al-Qa'ida sanctions regime. It expanded existing counterterrorism programs and messaging to address returning foreign terrorist fighters and leveraged terrorist finance provisions of the new CT Law to counter the funding of terrorist groups.

Saudi Arabia maintained a high counterterrorism operational tempo, made a number of highly publicized arrests of alleged terrorist suspects, and disrupted active terrorist cells across the Kingdom.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: On October 7, a terrorist conducted a small arms attack at one of the entrances to Al-Salam Palace in Jeddah that resulted in the deaths of two Royal Guards and the attacker. According to an official statement June 23, Saudi security forces thwarted a terrorist plot to carry out a major attack near the Grand Mosque in Mecca, resulting in the death of the suicide bomber near the mosque and the wounding of five security officers and six bystanders when the bomber blew himself up to avoid arrest.

On October 4, security officials released details of a counterterrorism operation targeting three locations in Riyadh that resulted in a raid of a presumed makeshift suicide vest factory and arrests or deaths of members of the suspected ISIS cell, who were reportedly in the final stages of executing a plot against two Ministry of Defense targets.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: King Salman issued major decrees July 20 amending the organizational structure of the Ministry of Interior (MOI) and creating a new independent domestic intelligence and counterterrorism authority called the State Security Presidency (SSP). In October, the Saudi government also established the National Cyber Security Authority to formalize its cybersecurity infrastructure and combat cyber threats. The Saudi government announced an expansive new CT Law November 4, updating its 2014 law. Among the most significant aspects, the new law expands the range of activities defined as "terrorist" crimes and transfers many of the counterterrorism authorities previously held by the MOI to the SSP and the new Public Prosecutor's Office. Human rights organizations have asserted that the new law – like its predecessor – restricts freedom of expression and association by establishing an overly broad definition of terrorism that is applied to nonviolent offenses, including peaceful political or social activism.

On April 30, the Saudi government announced the arrest of 46 alleged militants belonging to a terrorist cell in Jeddah on charges related to the July 2016 attacks near the Prophet's Mosque in Medina and the U.S. Consulate General in Jeddah.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Saudi Arabia is a member of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force, a FATF-style regional body. Its financial intelligence unit, the Saudi Arabia Financial Investigation Unit, is a member of the Egmont Group. In 2017, Saudi Arabia reaffirmed its commitment to countering terrorist financing in the Kingdom and the Gulf region. Saudi Arabia, along with the United States, co-chairs the Terrorist Financing Targeting Center (TFTC), a U.S.-Gulf Cooperation Council initiative announced during President Trump's visit to Saudi Arabia in May. In October, Saudi Arabia joined the United States and the other TFTC member countries in jointly announcing designations against individuals and entities supporting AQAP and ISIS-Yemen. The new CT Law aims to further buttress the government's effort to obtain full membership in FATF.

Earlier in the year, the Government of Saudi Arabia directed domestic authorities to impose financial sanctions on individuals and entities providing support to or acting on behalf of

Hizballah. The Saudi Arabian Monetary Authority (SAMA, the Kingdom's central bank) suspended three leading money service businesses in late-September for deficient anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) controls.

While the Kingdom has maintained strict supervision of the banking sector, tightened the regulation of the charitable sector, and stiffened penalties for financing terrorism, some funds are allegedly collected in secret and illicitly transferred out of the country in cash, sometimes under the cover of religious pilgrimages. To address this issue, the Saudi government continued efforts to counter bulk cash smuggling. Regional turmoil and the sophisticated use of social media have enabled charities outside of Saudi Arabia with ties to terrorists to solicit contributions from Saudi donors, but the government has worked to pursue and disrupt such funding streams.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): Saudi Arabia continued to lay the groundwork for a long-term CVE strategy. In April, the Center for Ideological Warfare, which operates under the auspices of the Ministry of Defense, officially started operations designed to blunt ISIS's ideological appeal and counter terrorist messaging by discrediting "distortions" of Islamic tenets. King Salman inaugurated the Global Center for Combating Extremist Ideology (or Etidal in Arabic) in Riyadh May 21, further expanding efforts to counter terrorist messaging. President Trump attended the Center's inauguration.

Senior Saudi officials reinvigorated outreach with visits, including to the Vatican to meet with Pope Francis September 20 and to the Grand Synagogue in Paris November 20, in an effort to cultivate an image of greater tolerance with followers of other faiths. King Salman issued a royal order on October 17 creating a religious center in Medina to scrutinize the written collections of the Prophet Muhammad's *hadiths* (sayings) for content that could be interpreted as encouraging terrorism. The Saudi government expanded counter-radicalization programs through the King Abdullah Center for National Dialogue to address the rising threat to youth from recruitment efforts by groups like ISIS.

The Saudi government continued to modernize the educational curriculum, including revising textbooks to eliminate teachings that may encourage intolerance of other peoples and religions. While the Saudi government has reported progress, some textbooks continued to contain teachings that promote intolerance. Saudi Arabia has also taken steps to rein in unauthorized religious proselytization since April 2016, including restricting the authorities of the Committee for the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice (the so-called religious police), tightening control over Islamic charities, and restricting the ability of Saudi-based clerics to travel abroad for proselytization without first obtaining Saudi government permission. The Saudi government has also reiterated existing restrictions on the content of Saudi imams' sermons, charitable activities, and media appearances at home.

International and Regional Cooperation: Saudi Arabia continued to encourage greater international coordination on counterterrorism issues. The Saudi government hosted

international conferences on subjects ranging from countering violent extremism to cyber-terrorism. On May 21, participants of the Arab-Islamic-American Summit released the Riyadh Declaration to demonstrate the close partnership between the leaders of the Arab and Islamic countries and the United States to counter terrorism and terrorist ideology. In December, Saudi Arabia pledged $100 million to support the G-5 Sahel force to counter terrorism in West Africa. Saudi Arabia is a founding member of the Global Counterterrorism Forum.

Throughout the year, Saudi security professionals continued to participate in joint military and counterterrorism programs around the world and with partners inside the Kingdom. The Saudi-led Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition (IMCTC), established in December 2015, hosted its Inaugural Meeting of the IMCTC Ministers of Defense Council on November 26 to address the ideological, financial, military, and media aspects of counterterrorism.

TUNISIA

Overview: The risk of terrorist activity in Tunisia remained high in 2017, including the potential for terrorist attacks and the movement of arms and terrorists from neighboring countries. In 2017, al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)-aligned Uqba bin Nafi' Battalion and ISIS-affiliated groups continued small-scale attacks against Tunisian security personnel. Tunisian security forces improved, however, their ability to preempt terrorist activities. There were no major terrorist attacks in Tunisia in 2017. The last terrorist attack on tourists occurred on June 26, 2015.

The government has made counterterrorism a top priority, and Tunisia continued to cooperate with the international community, including the United States, to professionalize its security apparatus. U.S. security assistance to Tunisia grew in 2017, but Tunisia needs more time and international support to complete the overhaul of its military and civilian security forces.

Instability in Libya has allowed terrorist groups, including ISIS, to continue cross-border smuggling operations, although there were no reported terrorist attacks in 2017 originating from Libya. The last major attack came in March 2016 in the border town of Ben Guerdan. The disproportionate numbers of Tunisians who previously travelled to fight in Syria and Iraq – and their potential return – remains a cause for concern.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: Terrorist organizations were active in Tunisia throughout the year but there were no attacks against foreigners or civilians. There were also no large-scale attacks against Tunisian security personnel. The list below highlights the most significant terrorist incidents of 2017.

- On March 12, four motorcyclists attacked a security checkpoint in the Tunisian city of Kebili, killing one guard. Two attackers were killed in the ensuing shootout and the two remaining terrorists were captured. A Tunisian bystander assisted the police during the attack by stopping one of the terrorists from reaching his motorcycle to detonate explosives.

- On November 1, two policemen were attacked by a man wielding a knife outside Parliament. One of the officers died November 2 from his wounds. The attacker was apprehended shortly after the assault. ISIS claimed responsibility for the attack.
- On November 6, three Tunisian soldiers were wounded by explosive devices planted by terrorists on Mt. Chaambi.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: There has been significant improvement in protecting tourism zones. The collaboration and cooperation between security forces, private security, and hotel staff has notably improved with training provided by international partners. As a result of significant improvements in soft target, aviation and maritime security, the United Kingdom and other European governments removed their travel restrictions for Tunisia. In addition, the return of cruise ship tourism and increasing volume at major tourist sites are preliminary indications of the successful application of proactive preventative measures throughout Tunisia.

Border security remained a priority, and interdiction and border security capabilities have improved as a result of international support through training and equipping of Tunisian border forces. Tunisia has received support from Germany and the United States to install electronic surveillance equipment to augment Tunisian-built berms along its border with Libya.

The government's counterterrorism efforts have expanded considerably in the last year, with successful weapons seizures, arrests, and operations against armed groups throughout the country. Significant law enforcement actions and arrests included:

- On April 30, Tunisian security forces killed Algerian terrorist Abu Sufian al-Sufi during an operation in Sidi Bouzid.
- On May 31, weapons and equipment were seized in a terrorist camp during a military operation on Mount Sammama in Kasserine governorate. The armed forces seized a Kalashnikov, 90 cartridges, equipment to manufacture explosives, and six landmines.
- On November 28, Tunisian military units engaged a group of terrorists in the Kasserine Mountains, killing terrorist Yahya Argoubi, alias Abi Talha, whom the Ministry of the Interior described as one of the most wanted terrorists in Tunisia.

Tunisian security personnel continued to participate in the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) program and additional training funded through the Department of State's Counterterrorism Partnerships Fund (CTPF). Ministry of Interior personnel received ATA/CTPF training in the areas of tactical crisis response, counterterrorism investigations, protection of soft targets, the mitigation of improvised explosive devices and other explosive ordnance disposal threats, and command and control. Primary intervention operational units were granted tactical and enabling equipment. Department of State programs supported improved quality and access to justice, training for and implementation of new criminal codes, improved prison functionality, and other training and assistance for the Ministry of Justice. In close collaboration with the MOI, the Department of State is implementing a $12 million new police academy modernization project that includes curriculum development. U.S. programs also provided the Ministries of Interior and Justice with armored vehicles, ambulances, surveillance cameras, and other equipment to enhance internal and border security. The Tunisian Armed Forces consider

counterterrorism and border security their principal mission, and they have successfully employed U.S.-funded patrol craft, vehicles, weapons, and training in border security and counterterrorism operations.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Tunisia is a member of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force, a Financial Action Task Force (FATF)-style regional body, and the country's Tunisian Financial Analysis Committee intelligence unit is a member of the Egmont Group. While Tunisia has endeavored to implement anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) mechanisms, FATF categorized the country as having strategic deficiencies in November. Tunisia developed an action plan to address these gaps, including: (1) implementing risk-based supervision of the financial sector and integrating designated non-financial businesses and professions into the AML/CFT regime; (2) maintaining comprehensive commercial registries and strengthening penalties for transparency violations; (3) increasing the efficiency with which CTAF processes suspicious transaction reports ; (4) establishing a terrorism-related targeted financial sanctions regime; and (5) establishing WMD-related targeted financial sanctions. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): Tunisia made a concerted effort to improve socioeconomic conditions in the country through economic development and education programs to prevent conditions that terrorists can exploit for recruitment. The government also attempted to prevent the radicalization of Tunisians by minimizing their exposure to inflammatory rhetoric in mosques by replacing imams deemed extremist, although local populations in several cases resisted the changes. The National Counterterrorism Strategy reportedly expanded the fight against terrorism to all ministries, including those that focus on culture, education, media, and religious affairs, and assigned each ministry concrete actions to accomplish. Tunisia is a founding member of the Strong Cities Network.

International and Regional Cooperation: Tunisia participates in multinational and regional efforts to counter terrorism, such as those at the United Nations, the Arab League, the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), and the African Union. It is a founding member of the GCTF-inspired International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law (IIJ), and it participated in numerous IIJ trainings and workshops focused on improving criminal justice actors' capacity to prevent and address terrorism-related crimes. In December, Tunisia co-sponsored UN Security Council resolution 2396 on returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters.

Tunisia is an active member of the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership, a U.S. multi-year interagency regional program aimed at building the capacity of governments in the Maghreb and Sahel to confront terrorist threats. Tunisia is also part of the Security Governance Initiative. Tunisian authorities continued their coordination on border security with Algerian counterparts.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Overview: The United Arab Emirates (UAE) did not experience any terrorist attacks in 2017. The UAE government continued to prosecute numerous individuals for terrorism-related offenses.

In line with previous years, the UAE government continued its collaboration with U.S. law enforcement on counterterrorism cases; its membership in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS; and support for counter messaging and countering violent extremism platforms, such as the Sawab and Hedayah Centers, respectively. The UAE government remained co-chair of the Coalition Communications working group along with the United States and the United Kingdom (UK).

The government's security apparatus continued monitoring suspected terrorists in the UAE and foiled potential terrorist attacks within its borders. UAE customs, police, and other security agencies improved border security and worked together with financial authorities to counter terrorist finance. UAE government officials worked closely with their U.S. law enforcement counterparts to increase the UAE's counterterrorism capabilities.

The UAE continued to deploy forces in Yemen to counter al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and ISIS, and support local forces in counterterrorism operations.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: In 2017, the UAE continued to prosecute numerous individuals in terrorism-related cases using existing legislation. There were no changes to counterterrorism legislation in the calendar year. International human rights non-governmental organizations and activists have asserted the UAE uses its counterterrorism and cyber-crime laws as cover to pursue cases against peaceful political dissidents and activists.

The State Security Directorate (SSD) in Abu Dhabi and Dubai State Security (DSS) remained primarily responsible for counterterrorism law enforcement efforts. Local, emirate-level police forces, especially Abu Dhabi Police and Dubai Police, were frequently the first responders in such cases and often provided technical assistance to SSD and DSS, respectively. Overall, the UAE security apparatus demonstrated capability in investigations, crisis response, and border security, and forces were trained and equipped to detect, deter, and respond to terrorist incidents.

According to press reports, the Court of Appeal examined more than a dozen new terrorism-related cases in 2017 and the Federal Appeal Court's State Security Court retried a number of high-profile cases from 2016. The Federal Supreme Court upheld life sentence verdicts issued by the lower Court for two Emiratis convicted of terrorism-related activities in two separate cases, one of which involved the targeting of a U.S. citizen. Most cases involved defendants accused of promoting or affiliating with UAE-designated terrorist organizations, including ISIS, AQAP, al-Nusrah Front, Hizballah, and the Muslim Brotherhood.

As in previous years, the Government of the UAE worked closely with the United States, through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), to improve its border security posture. Law enforcement information sharing between Abu Dhabi Police's Criminal Investigations Division and DHS Homeland Security Investigations helped counter transnational criminal organizations and terrorist groups. UAE points of entry used an internal name-based

watchlist system populated by local immigration, deportation, corrections, and security agencies to identify individuals who were prohibited from entering the country or were sought by UAE authorities. Some human rights organizations claimed that activists, academics, and journalists who had written critically about UAE policy were included on such lists and barred from entry. INTERPOL and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) watchlists were incorporated into the UAE's internal watchlist.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: The UAE is a member of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force, a Financial Action Task Force-style regional body. The UAE's financial intelligence unit, the Anti-Money Laundering and Suspicious Cases Unit, is a member of the Egmont Group. The UAE also participates in the Coalition's Counter-ISIS Finance Group.

The UAE remained a regional and global financial and transportation hub, and terrorist organizations exploited it to send and receive financial support. Operational capability constraints and political considerations sometimes prevented the government from immediately freezing and confiscating terrorist assets absent multilateral assistance. The UAE requires financial institutions and designated non-financial businesses and professions to review and implement the UN Security Council ISIL (Da'esh) and al-Qa'ida sanctions regime on a continuous basis.

Except for free trade zones (FTZs) specifically established for financial activities, which were well-regulated, the UAE's numerous FTZs varied in their compliance with and supervision of anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) international best practices. Exploitation by illicit actors of money transmitters, including licensed exchange houses, *hawalas*, and trading firms acting as money transmitters, remained a significant concern.

The UAE continued its efforts to enhance its regulatory measures to strengthen its domestic AML/CFT regime and was increasingly willing and able to implement its laws and regulations. In May, the UAE joined the United States and other GCC countries to create the Terrorist Financing Targeting Center in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. In October, the UAE jointly designated several individuals and entities associated with AQAP and ISIS-Yemen in coordination with other TFTC members.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): The UAE government continued to support Hedayah, the International Center of Excellence for Countering Violent Extremism, and the Sawab Center, a collaborative partnership with the United States to amplify credible voices to counter terrorist messaging online. The government separately worked to amplify credible alternative narratives by supporting the annual Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies and the Muslim Council of Elders. Through the General Authority of Islamic Affairs and Endowments, the government continued to regulate all mosque sermons and religious publications to "instill the principle of moderation in Islam." In September, the UAE began implementing compulsory

moral education classes for public and private school students in all grades, in an effort to promote religious tolerance and counter violent tendencies in youth.

Prominent UAE officials and religious leaders continued to publicly criticize and highlight the dangers of terrorist narratives. In addition, in an October cabinet reshuffle, the position of Minister of State for Tolerance was elevated to become Minister of Tolerance. Through this ministry, the government continued to promote interfaith engagement and dialogue.

International and Regional Cooperation: The UAE was a vocal and active participant in counterterrorism efforts at both the regional and international levels. The UAE signed a memorandum of understanding with the European Union Parliament expressing the country's commitment to combat terrorism around the world. It also continued to play a role in global counterterrorism efforts through its training of Somali forces and deployment in Yemen, to counter terrorist organizations such as al-Shabaab, AQAP, and ISIS-Yemen. In December, the UAE co-sponsored UN Security Council resolution 2396 on returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters. The UAE is also a founding member of the Global Counterterrorism Forum, and until September, was co-chair with the UK of its Countering Violent Extremism working group.

YEMEN

Overview: Throughout 2017, al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and ISIS-Yemen have continued to exploit the political and security vacuum created by the ongoing conflict between the Yemeni government under President Abd Rabu Mansour Hadi and Houthi-forces. A Saudi-led coalition of 10 member states continued its air campaign to restore the legitimacy of the Republic of Yemen Government (ROYG) that started in March 2015. The ROYG, in partnership with the Saudi-led Coalition, controlled the majority of Yemeni territory at the end of 2017, including the population centers of Aden, Mukalla, Ta'izz, and Al Ghaydah. Houthi forces controlled the capital of Sana'a. AQAP's area of influence has increased since the onset of the civil war.

The ROYG under President Hadi cooperated with the U.S. government on counterterrorism efforts. However, because of the instability and violence in Yemen, the ROYG cannot effectively enforce counterterrorism measures. A large security vacuum persists, which gives AQAP and ISIS-Yemen more room to operate. Counterterrorism gains in 2017 removed several key leaders and decreased AQAP's freedom of movement, but AQAP and ISIS-Yemen continue to carry out terrorist attacks throughout government-held territory. In southern Yemen, UAE forces continued to play a vital role in counterterrorism efforts.

ISIS-Yemen remained considerably smaller in size and influence compared to AQAP, but remained operationally active. ISIS-Yemen attacks increased in late 2017, exploiting the tenuous security environment in Aden. The United States conducted successful airstrikes against two ISIS-Yemen training camps – its first against the group – in October 2017.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: AQAP and ISIS-Yemen terrorists carried out hundreds of attacks throughout Yemen in 2017. Methods included suicide bombers, vehicle-borne improvised

explosive devices (VBIEDs), ambushes, kidnappings, and targeted assassinations. The following list details only a small fraction of the incidents that occurred:

- On March 27, government forces killed an AQAP suicide bomber driving a VBIED directed at a local government compound in al-Houta, southern Yemen. After neutralizing the VBIED, security forces clashed with militants who were dressed in military uniforms and armed with automatic weapons. Six security personnel and five attackers died in the fighting.
- On November 5, ISIS-Yemen launched an attack on the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) building in the Khormaksar district of Aden. An ISIS militant detonated a VBIED outside the building, followed by armed men storming the facility. The car bomb and ensuing clashes killed at least 15 people, mostly Yemeni security personnel.
- On November 14, ISIS-Yemen detonated a car bomb in a suicide mission targeting forces in Aden, Sheikh Othman district, killing at least six people and causing scores of injuries. ISIS-Yemen claimed responsibility for the attack, naming the suicide bomber as Abu Hagar al-Adani, a Yemeni national.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: There have been no significant changes in legislation, law enforcement, or border security in Yemen since 2016. Yemen does not have comprehensive counterterrorism legislation and no progress was made due to the state of unrest and the fact that most of Yemen's government remains in exile outside of Yemen. Due to a lack of resources and organization, police forces throughout the country struggle to exert authority.

Draft counterterrorism legislation has been pending in the parliament since 2008. This legislation has remained at a standstill due to the lack of a legitimate parliament. Prior to the political instability in the capital, the draft was under review by the three parliamentary subcommittees responsible for counterterrorism law issues (Legal and Constitutional Affairs; Security and Defense; and Codification of Sharia Law). This law would facilitate the detention of suspects and include mandatory sentencing for a number of terrorism-related crimes. There have been no clear moves to implement legal structures compliant with UN Security Council resolution (UNSCR) 2178 (2014), relating to countering foreign terrorists, due to the ongoing conflict. There are limited commercial flights operating out of airports in Yemen and the government did not have the capacity or resources to implement UNSCR 2309 mandates on aviation security.

Prior to March 2015, the National Security Agency and President's Office drafted a National Counterterrorism Strategy. This draft was reviewed by a Ministerial Committee, but the committee was unable to finalize its task due to developments in the country. Therefore, Yemen's National Counterterrorism Strategy had not been officially adopted or implemented by the end of 2017.

Yemen employs the U.S.-provided Personal Identification Secure Comparison and Evaluation System (PISCES) in an effort to secure borders and identify fraudulent travel documents. In consultation with the ROYG, the United States relaunched in December 2017 bilateral

discussions to upgrade and expand PISCES in ROYG-controlled areas. In spite of the conflict, Yemen has been able to maintain traveler screening at a limited number of points of entry.

In past years, the Yemeni government's coast guard played a critical role in interdicting weapons and other illegal materials destined for Yemen-based terrorist groups, although Yemen's maritime borders remained extremely porous due to a lack of capacity. The central southern coast remains highly vulnerable to maritime smuggling of weapons, materials, and goods used to sustain AQAP and other terrorist activities. During 2017, the United States planned multiple training courses for coast guard personnel. These courses, funded by the State Department's Export Control and Related Border Security (EXBS) Program, provided hands-on training to conduct illicit weapons interdiction operations at sea and in port, focusing on conventional weapons, explosives, ammunition, MANPADS, ballistic missile components, and WMD materials. U.S. partners provided training and technical assistance in a number of counterterrorism-related areas, although the conflict hampered in-country efforts in 2017.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Yemen is a member of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF), a Financial Action Task Force-style regional body. These measures are the first coordinated effort under the Terrorist Financing Targeting Center (TFTC), co-chaired by the U.S. and Saudi Arabia. Due to a lack of judicial capacity and territorial control, the Yemeni government is unable to unilaterally implement UN Security Council resolutions related to terrorist financing. After Houthi forces occupied the Sana'a-based Central Bank of Yemen in 2015, the government moved the bank's headquarters to Aden in September 2016.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): Due to the conflict in Yemen, the ROYG had no CVE initiatives. Before hostilities escalated in 2014, the government-developed Comprehensive National Counterterrorism Strategy included social measures to raise awareness of the causes and consequences of terrorism and a planned de-radicalization center based on the Mohammed bin Nayef Counseling and Care Center. As noted previously, the Houthi coup halted the implementation of these measures.

International and Regional Cooperation: The ROYG continued to cooperate with and be advised by the Gulf Cooperation Council, the United States, and other donor countries as it focused on working towards a peaceful solution to the conflict. Despite the challenges, the ROYG remained an international partner as it worked to reestablish rule of law within the territory it holds. Along with the United States and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Yemen developed the Yemen Security Working Group in 2017. The working group includes high-level military and diplomatic representatives from the three member states which have developed several cooperative capacity-building initiatives for Yemeni military and security forces, particularly regarding border security and border management. Yemen also belongs to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Arab League.

SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA

Overview

Although al-Qa'ida (AQ) in Afghanistan and Pakistan has been seriously degraded, remnants of AQ's global leadership, as well as its regional affiliate al-Qa'ida in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS), continued to operate from remote locations in the region that historically have been exploited as safe havens. Afghan and Pakistani forces continued to contest AQ's presence in the region, and Pakistan's military operations in the Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA) further degraded the group's freedom to operate. Pressure on AQ's traditional safe havens has constrained its leadership's ability to communicate effectively with affiliate groups outside of South Asia.

Afghanistan continued to experience aggressive and coordinated attacks by the Afghan Taliban, including the affiliated Haqqani Network (HQN) and other insurgent and terrorist groups. A number of these attacks were planned and launched from safe havens in Pakistan. Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) retained full responsibility for security in Afghanistan. In partnership, the ANDSF and Coalition Forces took aggressive action against terrorist elements across Afghanistan, including against ISIS's formal branch in the region, Islamic State's Khorasan Province (ISIS-K).

While terrorist-related violence in Pakistan is down from levels prior to 2014, when Pakistan began its military operations in the FATA, the country continued to suffer significant terrorist attacks, particularly against vulnerable civilian and government targets. The Pakistani military and security forces undertook operations against groups that conducted attacks within Pakistan, such as Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan. The Pakistani government pledged support to political reconciliation between the Afghan government and the Afghan Taliban but did not restrict the Afghan Taliban and HQN from operating in Pakistan-based safe havens and threatening U.S. and Afghan forces in Afghanistan. Pakistan did not take sufficient action against other externally focused groups such as Lashkar e-Tayyiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) in 2017, which continued to operate, train, organize, and fundraise in Pakistan. Pakistan detained Hafiz Saeed, the leader of LeT and its front organization Jamaat-u-Da'wa (JuD) in January 2017, but a Pakistani court ordered Hafiz Saeed released from house arrest in November 2017.

ISIS-K remained active in 2017, although counterterrorism pressure from Afghan and Coalition Forces, and battles with the Afghan Taliban, removed large numbers of fighters from the battlefield and restricted the group's ability to control territory in Nangarhar province in eastern Afghanistan. Nevertheless, the group was able to conduct a number of high-profile, mass-casualty attacks in both Afghanistan and Pakistan and expanded its territory in provinces in eastern and northern Afghanistan.

India continued to experience attacks, including by Pakistan-based terrorist organizations as well as tribal and Maoist insurgents. Indian authorities blamed Pakistan for cross-border attacks in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. Over the course of 2017, the Government of India sought to deepen counterterrorism cooperation and information sharing with the United States, including

through the first-ever Designations Dialogue, held in Delhi in December. The Indian government closely monitored the domestic threat from transnational terrorist groups like ISIS and AQIS.

Bangladesh experienced three terrorist attacks in 2017 claimed by ISIS, a decrease from 2016. Transnational groups such as ISIS and AQIS remained a threat. The Government of Bangladesh may have disrupted dozens of ISIS plots but insisted all terrorists in Bangladesh were from local organizations.

Individuals from Central Asia have traveled to Iraq or Syria to fight with militant and terrorist groups, including ISIS. Central Asians, like Western Europeans, have been drawn to the fighting in Iraq and Syria for many reasons and have fought on several sides. Central Asian leaders remained concerned about their involvement and their return to their home countries, however, more Central Asian nationals were suspected of committing attacks in third countries than returning to attempt attacks in their countries of origin.

Ministers and high-level officials from Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, accompanied by the heads of counterterrorism agencies structures and national security organs, participated in a High-Level UN-Central Asian Dialogue on Implementing the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia held in Ashgabat on June 13. There they reviewed progress on the implementation of the Joint Plan of Action for the Strategy in Central Asia and defined future strategic counterterrorism priorities for the region.

AFGHANISTAN

Overview: Afghanistan cooperates with the United States in a bilateral counterterrorism effort as part of Operation Freedom's Sentinel (OFS), the U.S. operation in Afghanistan. The U.S. military also works with Afghanistan to improve the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces' (ANDSF) ability to combat insurgent groups through Resolute Support (RS), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization "Train, Advise, and Assist" mission. The Taliban, the affiliated Haqqani Network (HQN), and groups claiming affiliation with the Islamic State's Khorasan Province (ISIS-K) increased high-profile terrorist attacks targeting Afghan government officials and members of the international community. Terrorist groups targeting Pakistan, such as Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan, exploit ungoverned spaces in the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region, using them as safe havens to coordinate terrorist attacks inside Pakistan.

President Ghani and the National Unity Government have strongly supported the new U.S. South Asia strategy, which was rolled out by President Trump in August 2017 and seeks to create conditions for a political settlement with the Taliban. The Afghan High Peace Council (HPC) effectively replaced the Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Program in 2017, agreeing with donor nations in July to a new UN Development Program-drafted action plan intended to promote reconciliation with insurgent groups. While the HPC action plan outlines a strategic approach to reintegration and implementation of peace agreements, the HPC's focus was on building the capacity of its Provincial Peace Committees and their subsequent outreach to build a national consensus for the peace process.

The peace agreement signed between the Afghan government and Hizb-e Islami Gulbuddin (HIG) in September 2016 hit some roadblocks, but it has led to party leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's return to Kabul, the removal of UN sanctions against him, and peaceful reintegration of HIG supporters. The parts of the agreement that have not yet been fully implemented include the release of some HIG detainees, the provision of land to HIG returnees, and the disarmament of all HIG members.

Afghanistan is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: Insurgents continued to use vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices (VBIEDs) and complex attacks involving multiple attackers wearing suicide vests to target ANDSF, Afghan government buildings, foreign governments, and soft civilian targets to include international organizations. Kabul remained a focus of high-profile attacks. The following list details a fraction of the incidents that occurred:

- On May 31, a VBIED on the perimeter of the international zone killed more than 150 and wounded at least 400 people. While there was no claim of responsibility, Afghanistan's intelligence service blamed the attack on HQN.
- On July 24, a VBIED detonated in a Kabul neighborhood whose residents were primarily of Hazara ethnicity. The explosion killed 28 and wounded 43. The Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack, which was reportedly targeting a bus carrying government employees.
- On August 1, ISIS-K claimed responsibility for an attack on a Shia mosque in Herat City, which left 29 civilians dead and 64 injured.
- On September 27, ISIS-K insurgents launched more than 30 rockets at the Hamid Karzai International Airport during Defense Secretary Mattis's visit to Kabul. During the attack, ISIS insurgents also directly targeted Camp Sullivan, a U.S. Chief of Mission facility in Kabul, with mortars and heavy weapons fire.
- On October 17, Taliban insurgents used VBIEDs to launch complex suicide attacks on police headquarters in Paktiya and Ghazni provinces. The attacks killed 21 police, including Provincial Chief of Police Toryalai Abdiani and 20 civilians, and wounded more than 150 police and civilians. In Ghazni, more than 30 ANDSF personnel were killed and 25 others injured. The Andar district police headquarters building was destroyed.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: The Afghan Attorney General's Office investigates and prosecutes violations of the laws that prohibit membership in terrorist or insurgent groups, violent acts committed against the state, hostage taking, murder, and the use of explosives against military forces and state infrastructure. These laws include Crimes against the Internal and External Security of the State (1976 and 1987), Combat Against Terrorist Offences (2008), and Firearms, Ammunition, and Explosives (2005).

Notable cases in 2017 included:

Anas Haqqani: In 2016, the Primary and Appellate Courts sentenced him to death for terrorist acts (including recruiting and fundraising), terrorist membership, and forgery. In February, the

Supreme Court remanded the case to the Appellate Court. Anas is the brother of Sirajuddin Haqqani, the operational leader of the Haqqani Network. Anas's co-accused is Hafiz Abdul Rasheed, whose case followed the same path.

Abdul Saboor: The Appellate Court affirmed a 20-year sentence and murder conviction after he shot and killed two U.S. advisors at the Ministry of Interior. The case is pending Supreme Court review.

Abdul Qahir Korasani: One of the earliest prominent Afghans to pledge allegiance to ISIS-K, he served as a mullah and judge for ISIS-K. Korasani used internet videos and publications to recruit and issue fatwas. He was convicted in the Primary and Appellate Courts for terrorist acts and membership. He received a sentence of 16 years in the Primary Court and 20 years in the Appellate Court. Prosecutors are seeking the death penalty in the Supreme Court.

U.S. law enforcement assisted the Ministry of Interior, National Directorate of Security (NDS), and other Afghan authorities with disrupting and dismantling terrorist operations and prosecuting terrorist suspects.

Specialized police units known as Crisis Response Units (CRUs) for Afghanistan's major cities continued to thwart attacks. For example, CRU-222 responded swiftly during the March 2017 Kabul hospital attack, clearing all eight floors of the hospital after entering from both the roof and ground. This same unit responded and killed the attackers during Secretary Mattis' visit and President Ghani aims to double the number of these units.

Twenty-five checkpoints have been established around the international zone, and the Afghan government is standing up a new unit with sole responsibility for security of an expanded perimeter. The new unit will replace a patchwork of police, military, and private security contractors that report to MoI or MoD through different chains of command in order to establish a unity of effort with IZ security.

Afghan civilian security forces continued to participate in the Department of State's Anti-Terrorism Assistance program, receiving capacity-building training and mentorship in specialized counterterrorism-related skillsets such as crisis response, methods of entry, and response to active shooter.

Afghanistan continued to face significant challenges in protecting the country's borders, particularly in the border regions with Pakistan. Afghan and Pakistani officials have agreed in principle to create a mechanism for communication between forces on each side of the border. The means for implementation was still under discussion at the end of 2017.

Afghanistan continued to process traveler arrivals and departures at major points of entry using a U.S.-provided border security system, the Personal Identification Secure Comparison and Evaluation System (PISCES), which has been successfully integrated with INTERPOL's I-24/7 system.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Afghanistan is a member of the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering, a Financial Action Task Force (FATF)-style regional body. In June, FATF removed Afghanistan from the list of "jurisdictions with strategic deficiencies" (the "grey list"). Despite technical compliance, insufficient cooperation and lack of capacity still hamper terrorist finance investigations.

Afghanistan's financial intelligence unit, the Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Center of Afghanistan (FinTRACA), distributes UN sanctions lists under the 1267 and 1988 sanctions regimes to financial institutions via a circular and a link on FinTRACA's website. As of October 31, FinTRACA revoked 49 business licenses and imposed $42,000 in fines on money service businesses for failure to comply with anti-money laundering/countering the financing of terrorism laws.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): Five thousand out of 160,000 mosques are registered with the Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Education. Many mosques and associated religious schools (madrassas) are unregistered and operate independently of the government. The government estimated 370,000 students attend independent madrassas.

Regional and International Cooperation: Other multilateral fora include an Afghanistan-Pakistan-China trilateral on border security and counterterrorism as well as a C5+Russia+Afghanistan forum, which includes the security chiefs of the five Central Asian states, Russia, and Afghanistan. Afghanistan is also an observer state within the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), which revived the long-dormant SCO-Afghanistan Contact Group to focus on enhanced security and counterterrorism.

BANGLADESH

Overview: Bangladesh experienced three terrorist attacks in March 2017. Since then, Bangladesh security forces have foiled dozens of plots by terrorist groups. The Government of Bangladesh continued to articulate a "zero-tolerance" policy towards terrorism and the use of its territory as a terrorist safe haven. While the Government of Bangladesh often attributed terrorist violence to local militants, al-Qa'ida in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS) and ISIS together have claimed responsibility for nearly 40 attacks in Bangladesh since 2015. Terrorist organizations used social media to spread their ideologies and solicit followers from Bangladesh. Bangladeshi militants have been featured in multiple publications, videos, and websites associated with ISIS and AQIS.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: ISIS claimed responsibility for three attacks in March.

- On March 17, a suspected suicide bomber snuck into a temporary facility belonging to the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB), a counterterrorism-focused Special Mission Unit, detonating a suicide vest, killing himself and injuring two RAB officers.

- On March 24, an unidentified adult male self-detonated at a police checkpoint near Dhaka's Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, killing only himself.
- On March 25, eight people were killed and more than 40 injured in two blasts during a raid on a suspected ISIS safehouse in Sylhet.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Bangladesh's criminal justice system is in the process of fully implementing the Antiterrorism Act of 2009 as amended in 2012 and 2013. Although Bangladesh's Antiterrorism Act does not outlaw recruitment and travel in the furtherance of terrorism, the broad language of the Act provides several mechanisms by which Bangladesh can implement UN Security Council resolution (UNSCR) 2178 (2014) on addressing foreign terrorist fighters. Despite lacking laws specific to foreign terrorist fighters, Bangladesh arrested suspected foreign terrorist fighters or facilitators of such fighters on other charges under existing law.

Bangladesh cooperated with the United States to further strengthen control of its borders and ports of entry, as called for by UNSCR 2178 (2014). The international community remains concerned about security procedures at Dhaka's Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, although the International Civil Aviation Organization certified this airport as 77.46 percent effective in "implementation of aviation safety standard compliance," more than 26 percentage points higher than a previous audit in 2012. Bangladesh shared law enforcement information with INTERPOL but does not have a dedicated terrorist watchlist. Bangladesh also does not have an interactive Advanced Passenger Information system.

The Rapid Action Battalion and the Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime Unit of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police, as well as other elements of the Bangladesh Police, continued a campaign of arrests and raids against suspected militants. Many suspects died in these operations, oftentimes described as the result of a "cross-fire," a euphemism for extrajudicial killings by the police. Observers also believe at least some of the raids were staged by law enforcement.

In early November, a pilot with Bangladesh's Biman Airlines pled guilty to a conspiracy to crash a passenger jet into the Prime Minister's residence. The suspect's father was allegedly part of a group of terrorists that killed themselves by detonating explosives when confronted by Bangladesh security forces in early September. Throughout 2017, Bangladesh security forces claimed credit for foiling dozens of terrorist plots, many of which were reportedly in the final stages of planning.

Bangladesh continued to participate in the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance program and received counterterrorism training on building unit capacity in crisis response, evidence collection, crime scene investigation, infrastructure protection, instructional development and sustainment, as well as enhancing cyber and digital investigation capabilities. Bangladesh also received Department of Justice prosecutorial skills training and community policing support. Bangladesh is receiving assistance from the United States in developing an Alert List of militants to better screen for persons of interests at its ports of entry.

The Department of Defense's PACOM Augmentation Team worked to monitor and counter terrorist messaging through television and online media, as well as in workshops with students in various cities.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Bangladesh is a member of the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering. The Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU) is a member of the Egmont Group. The Bangladesh central bank and the BFIU lead the government's efforts to comply with the international anti-money laundering/countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) standards and international sanctions regimes.

The terrorist finance provisions of Bangladesh's Antiterrorism Act make illegal the receipt and collection of money, services, and material support where "there are reasonable grounds to believe that the same has been used or may be used for any purpose by a terrorist entity." The Act prohibits membership in and support of prohibited organizations, i.e., organizations engaged or involved in terrorist activities, including the organizations listed in the UN Security Council ISIL (Da'esh) and al-Qa'ida sanctions regime. The Bangladesh Bank also publishes lists of domestically designated and UN-sanctioned individuals and groups on its website. The Act includes a broad provision providing for mutual legal cooperation on terrorism matters with other nations and a comprehensive forfeiture provision for assets involved in terrorism activities, although there was an absence of significant terrorist financing and money laundering cases.

The judicial sector is under-resourced for carrying out prosecutions and obtaining convictions in complex financial and material support cases. The Evidence and Criminal Procedure Codes date back to the nineteenth century and there is no provision for plea bargaining. Government of Bangladesh counterparts agree that the lack of a career civil service prosecution unit remains a serious problem. Civilian attorneys are appointed *ad hoc* to prosecute cases. There is little coordination between law enforcement and prosecutors. Consequently, the overall conviction rate is approximately 10 percent and a case can take as long as seven years from the filing of charges to sentencing.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): Bangladesh organizations continued cooperative activities through the Country Support Mechanism under the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF), a public-private global fund to support local, grassroots CVE efforts in at-risk communities. The Bangladeshi cities of Dhaka North, Dhaka South, and Narayanganj are members of the Strong Cities Network. The Ministry of Religious Affairs and the National Committee on Militancy, Resistance, and Prevention work with imams and religious scholars to build public awareness against terrorism. The police are engaging religious leaders to counter terrorist propaganda with appropriate scripture-based messages and engaging imams to speak to surrendered militants to explain that the Quran does not support terrorist violence.

The police also are continuing community policing efforts. Law enforcement authorities are working with local universities to identify missing students and curb radicalization to violence

among university students. Local research institutions, including private think tanks and both public and private universities, continued to engage in CVE-related research. However, Bangladesh's lack of a publicly available strategy to counter violent extremism hindered sustained engagement with the United States and the international community.

INDIA

Overview: The parts of India most seriously impacted by terrorism in 2017 included the state of Jammu and Kashmir, the northeast Indian states, and parts of central India in which Maoist terrorists remain active. India continued to apply sustained pressure to detect, disrupt, and degrade terrorist organizations' operations within its borders. Indian leadership expressed resolve to prevent terrorist attacks domestically and to bring to justice the perpetrators of terrorism, in cooperation with the United States and other like-minded countries.

Counterterrorism cooperation between India and the United States increased in 2017. The two pledged to strengthen cooperation against terrorist threats from groups including al-Qa'ida (AQ), ISIS, Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM), Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (LeT), and D-Company. During a June 2017 summit, President Trump and Prime Minister Modi directed officials to establish a new mechanism for cooperation on terrorist designations. The first meeting of the bilateral Designations Dialogue was held in December. India welcomed the U.S. State Department's June designation of Hizbul Mujahideen (HM) senior leader Mohammad Yusuf Shah, also known as Syed Salahuddin, and the August designation of HM as a Foreign Terrorist Organization.

2017 Terrorist Incidents:

- On March 7, ISIS-inspired, self-radicalized terrorists attacked the Bhopal–Ujjain passenger train at Jabri railway station in Shajapur district in Madhya Pradesh state, injuring 10 passengers. Six persons were later arrested and a key suspect was killed when the police tried to arrest him.
- On March 17, Maoists killed 25 security personnel in an ambush in Sukma, Chhattisgarh.
- On July 10, alleged LeT terrorists killed seven Hindu pilgrims near Anantnag in the state of Jammu and Kashmir.
- On August 27, eight security personnel were killed when two JeM terrorists snuck into Pulwama town in the state of Jammu and Kashmir and targeted buildings used by the state Police Special Operation Group.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: India made no major changes to its counterterrorism laws in 2017. The Indian government continued to address terrorism-related activities through existing statutes, including the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) (1967), the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation Convention on Suppression of Terrorism Act (1993), and various state-level laws. The UAPA presumes the accused to be guilty if the prosecution can produce incriminating evidence indicating the possession of arms or explosives or the presence of fingerprints at a crime scene, regardless of whether criminal intent is demonstrated. State governments held persons without bail for extended periods before filing formal charges under the UAPA.

India's state-level law enforcement agencies play a significant role detecting, deterring, and preventing acts of terrorism. These state agencies have varying degrees of capability. After the Mumbai attacks of 2008, state Anti-Terrorism Squads (ATS) were created to handle rapid, first-responder duties. At the central government level, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) is the lead law enforcement investigation agency. The National Security Guard (NSG) retains the mandate for nationwide response. Despite its rigorous training, NSG's rapid response capability is somewhat limited, due in part to its small staff relative to India's large size. Continued weaknesses in intelligence and information sharing negatively impact state and central law enforcement agencies. In 2016, India and the United States signed an arrangement to exchange terrorism screening information, and the Indian Multi Agency Centre/Intelligence Bureau continued work on implementation.

In an example of a significant counterterrorism law enforcement action, police arrested Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) leader Mohammad Idris from a central Kolkata hideout on March 8. Police believe Idris was involved in the July 1, 2016, Holey Artisan Bakery attack in Dhaka, Bangladesh. On November 21, local police arrested two Bangladeshi terrorists belonging to Ansarullah Bangla Team in Kolkata. The police stated the two planned to murder bloggers in Bangladesh and had come to Kolkata to buy arms.

In April, an Indian court sentenced two Indian ISIS financiers to seven years in prison, in the country's first ISIS-related convictions. The two pled guilty to a criminal conspiracy to propagate ISIS ideology, recruit persons, raise funds, and facilitate the travel of those recruited to join ISIS in Syria. India detained an alleged AQIS facilitator in September. The case was pending in court at the end of 2017.

India participated in the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance program and received training in internet, dark web, mobile device, and advanced digital forensics capabilities.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: India is a member of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) as well as two FATF-style regional bodies – the Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism and the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering. India's financial intelligence unit is a member of the Egmont Group. India has formed an interagency committee to conduct its National Risk Assessment in accordance with FATF guidance. Under the chairmanship of the Additional Secretary (Revenue), the committee will form several working groups to examine specific topics, e.g., financial institutions, financial inclusion, and anti-money laundering. Once complete, the committee will present the assessment to the Finance Minister for approval.

India took steps to pass legislation to allow for the confiscation of assets and prosecution of individuals involved in certain third-party transactions. India also took steps to amend its laws related to recovering confiscated property. At year's end, India was in the final process of approving an amendment to bring dealers of precious metals, stones, and other high-value goods under the jurisdiction of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act from 2002.

Between August 2016 and May 2017, India initiated 117 anti-money laundering/countering the financing of terrorism investigations, filed 83 prosecution complaints, arrested 19 individuals, and secured two convictions and two property/asset confiscations.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): Indian CVE programs in 2017 targeted disaffected sectors of Indian society that were at the highest risk of vulnerability for terrorist recruitment. On October 23, the Ministry of Home Affairs appointed a Special Representative to begin dialogue with all stakeholders in the state of Jammu and Kashmir to discuss issues of street violence, cross-border terrorism, and pervasive alienation, particularly among youth.

Indian government officials raised concerns over the use of the internet – including social media – for terrorist recruiting, radicalization to violence, and fomenting inter-religious tensions. In particular, officials expressed concern about ISIS's ability to recruit online, following incidents in which Indians were attracted to join or support the group.

The Maharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad produced four short, high-quality films to counter terrorist recruitment, which were played before movies in theaters in the state.

The city of Mumbai is a founding member of the Strong Cities Network.

International and Regional Cooperation: India is a founding member of the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) and participated in GCTF and other UN fora on counterterrorism in 2017. India also used multilateral fora and bilateral visits to highlight terrorism concerns and their impacts. During the 2017 BRICS Summit (with Brazil, Russia, China, and South Africa) and the 2017 SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organization) Summit, India led efforts on declarations condemning terrorism and calling for joint efforts to counter it. At the 15th ASEAN-India Summit in November in Manila, India pledged to cooperate closely with ASEAN nations to stem terrorism.

India continued to increase bilateral cooperation on counterterrorism. India provided US $500,000 to the Philippines to aid the rehabilitation of inhabitants of Marawi who were affected by fighting between the Philippine military and ISIS-inspired militants.

KAZAKHSTAN

Overview: Kazakhstan continued to express interest in expanding counterterrorism cooperation with the United States, particularly in countering violent extremism. The government has long feared the potential return of foreign terrorist fighters from Iraq and Syria, but two domestic attacks in 2016 refocused government attention on homegrown terrorists. Despite concerns from some outside experts that the government's "law enforcement-first" approach to countering radicalism could backfire absent increased attention to other factors driving "extremism." Kazakhstan has increased restrictions on religious freedom for both minority religious groups

and its Muslim-majority population, for the stated purpose of combating what it considers "extremism."

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Kazakhstan has a comprehensive counterterrorism legal framework. It is illegal for citizens to fight in foreign wars. The government takes a two-pronged approach to the few returning ISIS fighters, pursuing rehabilitation for some while arresting and prosecuting others.

On July 11, the president signed a law that allows the government to deprive Kazakhstanis of citizenship if they are convicted of a range of "grave terrorism and extremism-related crimes," and for other vague crimes like causing 'grave harm to the vital interests of the state.'

Law enforcement units demonstrated a strong capacity to detect, deter, and respond to terrorist incidents. The government's counterterrorism plan allowed for enhanced interagency cooperation, coordination, and information sharing, but the extent to which this actually occurred remained unknown. There were four special counterterrorism detachments under the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and one under the National Security Committee (KNB), the main security and intelligence agency. Before and during EXPO 2017 in Astana, security services bolstered resources and capacity to protect soft targets.

Kazakhstan's Border Guard Service (BGS), part of the KNB, uses specialized passport control equipment, allowing officers to check for fraudulent documents. BGS officers receive risk-profiling training by the U.S. Department of State to identify traffickers and terrorists, as well as K9 unit training for counterterrorism operations. In recent years, Kazakhstan has strengthened security on its southern border by adding radar systems, inspection equipment and vehicles, and specialized mobile inspection groups. The government proactively worked to prevent Kazakhstanis from traveling to fight abroad in Syria and Iraq, in keeping with UN Security Council resolution 2178 (2014). The KNB announced in October that no Kazakhstanis had left for conflict zones in 2017.

Courts delivered numerous sentences for promotion of "extremism" and terrorism, and recruitment and plotting terrorist acts, although few involved allegations or threats of violence. KNB Deputy Chairman Nurgali Bilisbekov announced December 12 that security services had prevented 11 "terrorist attacks" in 2017, although he later clarified this number included plots to travel to conflict zones. While the government does not release annual statistics of counterterrorism-related arrests, media sources routinely reported on the topic. For example, press reports indicated that in November, the KNB arrested four people, alleging they had amassed weapons and had ISIS-propaganda. However, some cases the government identified as "extremism" were unrelated to terrorism, such as the six-year prison sentence handed down to an Almaty man charged only with having Arabic-language songs praising Allah on his cell phone. We refer you to the State Department's Country Reports on Human Rights Practices and Report on International Religious Freedom for 2016 for further information.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Kazakhstan belongs to the Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism, a Financial Action Task Force-style regional body. The government criminalizes terrorist financing in accordance with international

standards and freezes and confiscates known terrorist assets without delay. The government monitors and regulates money/value transfer and other remittance services and requires the collection of data for wire transfers (i.e. requires originator and recipient name, address, and account number). Additionally, authorities routinely distributed the names of organizations listed in the UN Security Council ISIL (Da'esh) and al-Qa'ida sanctions regime to financial institutions. The Prosecutor General's Office Crime Statistics Committee reported nine terrorist financing cases were transferred to the court system, but information is not available on convictions. Kazakhstan's unregulated financial sector is relatively small. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): Kazakhstan is still implementing a five-year state program on fighting religious extremism and terrorism that was adopted in 2013. This program is not the equivalent of a national CVE strategy, and the program relies heavily on the government-affiliated Spiritual Association of Muslims in Kazakhstan to promote what the government calls "traditional Islam."

The Government of Kazakstan's CVE initiatives focused on preventing "radicalization," with efforts to educate and provide alternatives to youth through social programs and economic opportunities. Initiatives to build rule of law are lacking and the government has taken steps to restrict space for independent civil society groups while also funding several CVE-focused non-governmental organizations. Religious experts from the government-controlled Committee for Religious Affairs and regional offices reach out to at-risk youth directly. The government continued rehabilitation and reintegration work with individuals convicted of what the government considered "extremism"-related offenses, and their relatives, although the results of the nascent programs were still unclear. The government focused its prevention efforts on detention and prosecution of recruiters and proselytizers sharing what the government deemed "extremist" ideas. Most convicted recruiters were placed in general-regime penal colonies for three to six years.

The government censors online content in an effort to reduce "extremist" messaging. Religious leaders reached out to youth via official websites such as E-Islam. Government-controlled religious experts created groups on social networks such as Facebook and VKontakte, where they posted information and answered user questions about "religious extremism." Committee for Religious Affairs officials provided training for local imams, non-governmental organizations, and the media.

Regional and International Cooperation: Kazakhstan participates in counterterrorism activities within the Collective Security Treaty Organization, which has established a joint task force for preventing the propagation of terrorist and "extremist" ideas online. Kazakhstan is a member of the Community of Independent States' Anti-Terrorism Center, which hosts a data bank of banned terrorist and extremist organizations accessible to law enforcement and financial intelligence bodies of the member states. The Prosecutor General's Office and the Committee for Religious Affairs cooperated with the OSCE on countering violent extremism and terrorism workshops. In December, Kazakhstan co-sponsored UN Security Council resolution 2396 on returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters.

KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

Overview: The Kyrgyz Republic's counterterrorism efforts continue to focus on rooting out those it considered "extremists," countering the spread of "extremism," limiting the flow of Kyrgyz national foreign terrorist fighters, and preventing those returning from conflicts abroad from engaging in terrorist activities. Terrorist attacks in the country remain rare, but the August 2016 suicide bombing against the Chinese Embassy in Bishkek and a noticeable increase in reports of terrorism-related arrests in 2017 underscored the potential threat facing the country. The Kyrgyz government restricts public information on national security issues, making it very difficult to assess the efficacy of its counterterrorism operations and the true extent of the threat. The country remained vulnerable to transnational threats, especially in the remote south, where ill-defined and porous borders allowed for the relatively free movement of people and illicit goods in and out of the country. According to government statistics, approximately 800 Kyrgyz citizens have left the country to join ISIS or other terrorist groups. Most experts believe the true number is higher.

Legislation, Law Enforcement and Border Security: There were two notable legislative changes in 2017. In May, the president ratified amendments to the "Law on Countering Terroristic Acts" to require the government to publish its list of banned extremist and terrorist organizations. In June, a Bishkek district court ruled to ban the Yakyn Inkar Islamic sect, bringing the total number of banned groups to 21. There were no reports in 2017 of the government using counterterrorism laws to prosecute political opponents.

There have been no changes to the host country's law enforcement capacity related to counterterrorism since 2016, other than that the Ministry of Interior (MVD) 10th Department, which is the lead law enforcement agency on countering "extremism," has been renamed to the "Service for Countering Extremism and Illegal Migration."

The government does not maintain a terrorist screening watch list or have biographic or biometric screening capabilities at ports of entry. Information sharing with other countries occurs rarely and usually only by request in the context of criminal investigations. The government has expressed interest in developing a program to collect and use Advance Passenger Information on commercial flights, but it is still only in the discussion phase. The State Border Service has limited capacity to adequately patrol and control the country's land border due to vast distances, rough terrain, and extremely limited resources.

There was a steady stream of terrorism- and "extremism"-related arrests throughout the year, roughly on par with 2016. Beginning in April there was a noticeable shift in the pattern of reported arrests, with an increase in terrorism-related charges, involving returnees from foreign conflict zones, weapons seizures, and alleged planned attacks. This corresponded with a decrease in small-scale arrests of unarmed members of banned "religious extremist" groups, which were most prevalent in the past. In 2017, law enforcement agencies reported the successful disruption of at least seven planned terrorist attacks, and arrested almost three dozen people on terrorism-related charges, close to a third of whom were reported to be returnees from foreign conflict zones. During a particularly active period from August 29-September 22,

Kyrgyz authorities reportedly broke up three separate alleged terrorist plots, during which time police killed two suspects and arrested another nine. Authorities claimed the perpetrators had links to international terrorist organizations and were planning to carry out attacks using improvised explosive devices during the October presidential elections and the August 31 Independence Day celebrations. Because of the opaque nature of the Kyrgyz government's counterterrorism operations, it is impossible to verify information about these and other incidents.

Kyrgyz police units participated in the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance program. Courses included combating domestic and transnational terrorism and border security.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: The Kyrgyz Republic is a member of the Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism, a Financial Action Task Force (FATF)-style regional body. During 2017, the Kyrgyz Republic underwent its mutual evaluation by the FATF; however, the outcome report from that evaluation has not been finalized at year's end. There were no significant changes to the Kyrgyz government's efforts and capacity to counter the financing of terrorism in 2017, other than the signing of three new international agreements on exchanging information related to money laundering and terrorist financing. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): In 2017, the Kyrgyz government approved its first ever national program and action plan on combatting terrorism and "extremism." The action plan lays out approximately three dozen tasks that relevant government agencies will implement over the next five years, in cooperation with civil society and the international community, in some cases. The bulk of the action plan is focused on a comprehensive approach to preventing "extremism."

The Ministry of Education, in cooperation with the State Commission for Religious Affairs (SCRA), is in its second year of a program to develop a new curriculum for high school-aged students on moderate Islam and identifying terrorist recruitment tactics. This program was expanded to include 56 schools in 2017. The MVD and the SCRA, often in cooperation with local religious leaders, focused much of their engagement activities in 2017 on preventing radicalization amongst youth and women. Additionally, the SCRA and the Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Kyrgyzstan held CVE training and religious education seminars for officers from the military and the State Border Service to reduce their vulnerability to "extremist" recruitment. In 2017, the Kyrgyz government cooperated with the United Nations, the Organization for Security Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and other international organizations and foreign governments, to facilitate CVE training and related assistance programs.

In 2017, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime launched a project with the Kyrgyz Prison Service to develop strategies to manage the spread of "extremism" among prisoners and prevent radicalization. This project will provide training for prison staff, develop a prisoner

classification and risk assessment tool, and help design a pilot rehabilitation program for "extremist" convicts.

In 2017, the GKNB continued its public awareness campaign in the Kyrgyz press to discredit the efforts of ISIS recruiters. The SCRA also conducted activities through television and other forms of mass media to counter "extremist" narratives, with a particular focus on religious women. The Kyrgyz government organized a two-day international conference entitled "Islam in the Modern Secular State," during which the president delivered remarks calling for the harmonious coexistence of the state and religion and tolerance towards all faiths.

Regional and International Cooperation: In 2017, the Kyrgyz Republic participated in counterterrorism activities and trainings organized by the OSCE, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Commonwealth of Independent States, Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). The Kyrgyz Republic participated in five CSTO and two SCO counterterrorism exercises in 2017.

MALDIVES

Overview: The Government of Maldives' counterterrorism efforts concentrate on countering violent extremism and limiting the flow of foreign terrorist fighters. Marginalized Maldivians, especially those within the penal system or involved in criminal gangs, are at heightened risk of radicalization to violence, with some joining terrorist groups. On April 23, assailants stabbed to death blogger Yameed Rasheed, whom some in Maldives perceived to espouse anti-Islamic views. Maldives Police Service (MPS) arrested two Maldivians accused of conspiring with ISIS in a suicide attack plot. MPS investigated 12 cases of Maldivians intending to participate in foreign wars and charged four in two separate cases for leaving to fight in Syria. The government claims 49 radicalized Maldivians were fighting with terrorist organizations, whereas the UN and media estimated approximately 200. These incidents illustrate a pattern of Maldivians transiting through third countries to become foreign terrorist fighters.

MPS reported no confirmed cases of returning foreign terrorist fighters, but it was developing strategies and procedures to monitor, assess, and take actions against any returning fighters.

Social media users continued to spread radical ideologies and target moderate and secular individuals and organizations characterized as "insulting Islam." Maldives participated in the U.S. Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance program training on interview techniques and aviation security.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: On April 23, blogger Yameen Rasheed, a critic of the political establishment who had received repeated death threats for his allegedly anti-Islamic views, was found murdered with multiple stab wounds in the stairwell of his apartment building in Malé. Some suggested Rasheed may have been killed for his criticism of the government, but police asserted that perpetrators believed that Rasheed had "mocked" Islam. Police arrested eight suspects and filed charges against seven. Legal proceedings, which were closed to the public, had not concluded at year's end.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: The Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) is the primary legislation for preventing and prosecuting terrorism. Maldives also continued to use the PTA to suppress criticism by detaining and prosecuting journalists, political opposition figures, and other activists. It released some, but also made new arrests during the year, including of an individual who wrote social media posts critical of President Yameen. The PTA criminalizes joining or fighting in a conflict abroad. MPS reported investigating 17 cases involving 40 Maldivians under the PTA during 2017: five with intent to commit violence in Maldives and 12 with intent to participate in a foreign war. In November, the Prosecutor General's Office (PGO) charged two Maldivians for allegedly conspiring with IS to launch a suicide attack in Malé. In August, the PGO charged four others with possessing improvised explosive device (IED)-related items and conspiring to commit an act threatening national security. Media reported a separate incident in November in which authorities arrested two other men for making bombs. Authorities refused to comment publicly on these reports.

Maldives enacted a new Criminal Procedures Act (CPA), which introduced, codified, and harmonized the practices of the criminal justice system. The Attorney General's Office reported the CPA does not apply in terrorism cases and that the PTA outlines procedures for arrest, detention, search, and seizure in terrorism cases. MPS is responsible for counterterrorism investigations and transfers cases to the PGO for the duration of the trial. The National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) has the mandate to coordinate interagency policy on counterterrorism and countering violent extremism and to liaise with international security partners. The NCTC falls under the MNDF, with participation from MPS, customs, immigration, and other agencies. Responsibility for counterterrorism operations, including investigations, primarily rests with MPS. MNDF, including the marines and coast guard, is responsible for counterterrorism response. Information sharing between agencies remains limited. Resort security managers and diplomats were unaware of specific government plans to prevent or respond to terrorist attacks.

The appointment of partisan personnel to independent institutions impedes interagency cooperation and creates distrust. Similarly, an inadequately trained judiciary unfamiliar with counterterrorism legislation impairs adequate prosecution of terrorism cases. In October, the courts acquitted three men detained in 2016 at the Turkey-Syria border and charged with attempting to travel to Syria to fight with terrorist groups. MPS did not arrest two returned Maldivians charged on suspicion of planning to travel to Syria from Kuala Lumpur. Corruption, lack of political will, and misuse of counterterrorism laws against political opponents obstruct cooperation.

Maldives uses a U.S.-provided border security system, the Personal Identification Secure Comparison and Evaluation System (PISCES), to process passengers at Maldives' main international airport and at Malé seaport.

The Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance program provided Maldivian law enforcement units with training on interview techniques and aviation security best practices.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Maldives is a member of the Asia/Pacific Group (APG) on Money Laundering, a Financial Action Task Force-style regional body.

Maldives has authority to criminalize money laundering and terrorist financing under the Prevention of Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Act, although authorities have not investigated or prosecuted any cases since it became law in 2016. Authorities previously reported that individuals transferred funds through informal money transfer networks (*hawala*) between islands, but they did not report the extent to which these systems were employed to transfer illicit funds. Maldives introduced a new Remittance Business Regulation that prohibits conducting domestic and international money transfer activities without a Central Bank-issued license. The Central Bank's Financial Intelligence Unit was unaware of any *hawala*-type remittance activities in 2017, but it increased terrorist financing-related information sharing with MPS and the NCTC. MPS established an internal financial intelligence unit to collect intelligence on terrorist financing. Maldives implemented the UN Security Council ISIL (Da'esh) and al-Qa'ida sanctions regime, but it did not seize any terrorist assets in 2017. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): In November, the NCTC launched a National Strategy on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism. The NCTC identified islands prone to radicalization through a nationwide study. It intends to launch community-based programs and awareness campaigns throughout the country.

The government launched national campaigns to raise awareness about religious extremism and promote moderation. The campaign targeted schools, Friday sermons, and public fora held at the Islamic Centre in Malé, which is a member of the Strong Cities Network.

Government actions at times led to threats of violence against secularists and activists. We refer you to the State Department's Country Reports on Human Rights Practices and Report on International Religious Freedom for 2016 for further information.

International and Regional Cooperation: The NCTC, with UN support, held a regional counterterrorism conference in Maldives for 46 experts from 16 countries. In December, Maldives co-sponsored UN Security Council resolution 2396 on returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters.

The Ministry of Tourism, with MPS and British counterterrorism experts, held a conference for more than 100 resort security managers to discuss challenges to security planning. MNDF was a member of the Global Special Operations Force network, which collaborates on common security challenges and actively supports multilateral and regional security cooperation efforts, such as global programs focused on counterterrorism and de-radicalization.

NEPAL

Overview: Nepal experienced no acts of terrorism directed against U.S. or Western targets in 2017. However, Nepal did see an increase in incidents of terrorism against domestic targets, largely surrounding elections held in late 2017. The Government of Nepal attributed the majority of the attacks to the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), a Maoist faction also known

as the "Netra Bikram Chand Group" or "Biplav Group" that split from the mainstream Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Center) several years ago. In response to these incidents, Nepal's security organs largely directed their counterterrorism efforts against the Biplav Group, forming special teams to identify and arrest its leaders.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: Nepal experienced an increase in terrorist attacks during the year, primarily in connection with local, provincial, and national elections held around the country in April, June, September, November, and December. None of these attacks were directed against U.S. or Western targets. It was generally believed that these attacks, which resulted in one death and multiple injuries, were intended to intimidate political candidates, convince voters to stay home, and undermine the elections. The incidents initially resulted only in property damage and minor injuries, but they increased in frequency and severity later in the year. By the time elections ended in early December, more than 100 such attacks had occurred throughout Nepal, resulting in one death and numerous injuries. In the lead-up to the various phases of elections, security forces found and defused IEDs before they could explode. For example, the Nepalese Army defused an IED discovered near a voting center in Dhading district on November 25. The attacks increased in sophistication toward the end of the year, with one IED that detonated at an early December election rally held for Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba that resulted in injuries to nine people, four of them critically. On December 7, the Biplav Group publicly claimed responsibility for all of the elections-related IED attacks, but the group later retracted this statement. The Nepal Police announced on December 6 that around 600 Biplav Group cadres had been detained for anti-election activities. The attacks largely ceased as campaigning stopped in the days before the last set of polls opened on December 7.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: There were no significant legislative changes since 2016.

The law enforcement organ directly responsible for counterterrorism activities is the Special Bureau of the Nepal Police. This unit consists of approximately 120 officers. The Special Bureau is supplemented by Nepal Police and Armed Police Force officers when necessary. The Nepalese Army Special Forces units are tasked with incident counterterrorism response and received training in hostage rescue, response to hijackings, and similar terrorism incidents. The Nepal Police and the Armed Police Force participated in the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance program in courses that included Explosive Detection Canine Handlers Course (EDCHC), Combatting Domestic and Transnational Terrorism, Fraudulent Document Recognition – Behavioral Analysis, and Post Blast Investigation. The EDCHC also included the granting of five explosive detection trained canines. In addition, between 300 and 500 Nepali Police, immigration, and airline personnel received a three-day training on travel document security features that included imposter recognition.

Kathmandu's Tribhuvan International Airport – Nepal's only international airport – does not pre-screen passengers, and landing data are not entered into any database. Physical security checks of passengers are rudimentary. There is no travel document security and the airport lacks ultraviolet lights to examine documents. The Special Bureau of the Nepal Police assigns approximately 10 personnel to the airport and approximately 15 officers to its INTERPOL office, which is located at Nepal Police headquarters. The INTERPOL office, however, has no

designated personnel at Tribhuvan International Airport. INTERPOL notices are maintained in a database, but passengers are not routinely screened through this database. Security and immigration officials are generally responsive to U.S. requests for information, but often have little information to provide.

Nepal shares an open border with India. The 1,000-mile border has a few checkpoints, but they lack sufficient security controls and are sometimes manned by as few as one immigration official. Most people crossing the border are neither stopped nor checked, and the crossing points can easily be circumvented to avoid scrutiny. The primary constraint preventing more robust border-control capability is a lack of resources. The security services lack the personnel, technology, databases, basic equipment, and often even electrical power to provide effective border control. Additional constraints include lack of training and widespread corruption.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Nepal belongs to the Asia Pacific Group on Money Laundering, a Financial Action Task Force-style regional body. While the Government of Nepal has made progress in constructing an anti-money laundering/countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) regime, additional work is required to develop expertise in financial crimes investigations, case management, interagency and departmental coordination, and border control. In February, the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate facilitated a workshop in Nepal attended by judges, prosecutors, and investigators and focused on terrorist financing and anti-money laundering. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): There were no significant changes since 2016.

International and Regional Cooperation: The Nepal police sent three officers to the annual regional counterterrorism seminar hosted by INTERPOL. In April, Nepal engaged in a joint exercise with China focused on anti-hijacking. Nepal also engaged in a two-week joint exercise with India focused on counter-insurgency.

PAKISTAN

Overview: Pakistan continued to experience significant terrorist threats in 2017, although the number of attacks and casualties has decreased from previous years. Major terrorist groups focused on conducting attacks in Pakistan included the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), Jamaat-ul-Ahrar, and the sectarian group Lashkar-i-Jhangvi al-Alami (LJA). Islamic State's Khorasan Province (ISIS-K) claimed several major attacks against Pakistani targets, some of which may have been conducted in collaboration with other terrorist groups. Groups located in Pakistan, but focused on conducting attacks outside the country, included the Afghan Taliban, the Haqqani Network (HQN), Lashkar e-Tayyiba (LeT), and Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM). Terrorists used a range of tactics – stationary and vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices (VBIEDs), suicide bombings, targeted assassinations, and rocket-propelled grenades – to attack individuals, schools, markets, government institutions, and places of worship.

The Pakistani government and military continued high-profile efforts to disrupt terrorist attacks and eliminate anti-state militants. Progress, however, remained slow on the government's efforts to implement UN sanctions related to designated entities and enforce anti-money laundering/countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) controls.

The Pakistani government pledged support to political reconciliation between the Afghan government and the Afghan Taliban but did not restrict the Afghan Taliban and HQN from operating in Pakistan-based safe havens and threatening U.S. and Afghan forces in Afghanistan. The government failed to significantly limit LeT and JeM from openly raising money, recruiting, and training in Pakistan – although Pakistan's Elections Commission refused to allow a LeT-affiliated group register as a political party.

In November, a Pakistani court ordered the release of Hafiz Saeed, the alleged mastermind of the 2008 Mumbai bombings.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: Pakistan suffered numerous terrorist attacks throughout 2017. The following examples include some of the more destructive and high-profile attacks and show a variety of methods, targets, and perpetrators.

- On February 16, a suicide bomber killed at least 88 people at the Sufi shrine of Lal Shahbaz Qalandar in Sindh Province and injured more than 300. ISIS-K claimed responsibility for the attack.
- One June 24, twin explosions in Parachinar in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) killed at least 67. LJA claimed responsibility for the attacks. The heavily Shia area suffered several other large attacks in 2017, including a January 21 bombing and a March 31 suicide attack. Each of these two attacks killed at least 25 people and injured many others.
- On July 24, a suicide bomber killed at least 26, including nine policemen, in downtown Lahore, the provincial capital of Punjab. TTP claimed responsibility for the attack.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: The Government of Pakistan continued to implement the Antiterrorism Act (ATA) of 1997, the National Counterterrorism Authority Act (NACTA), the 2014 Investigation for Fair Trial Act, and 2014 amendments to the ATA, all of which allow enhanced law enforcement and prosecutorial powers for terrorism cases. The law allows for preventive detention, permits the death penalty for terrorism offenses, and creates special Anti-Terrorism Courts. On March 31, however, the government renewed for two more years a constitutional amendment allowing military courts to try civilians on terrorism charges. Critics argued the military courts were not transparent and were being used to silence civil society activists.

Military, paramilitary, and civilian security forces conducted counterterrorism operations throughout Pakistan. The Intelligence Bureau has nationwide jurisdiction and is empowered to coordinate with provincial counterterrorism departments. The Ministry of Interior has more than 10 law enforcement-related entities under its administration. The National Counter Terrorism Authority acts as a coordinating body.

Pakistan collects biometric information at land crossings with its International Border Management Security System. Authorities had limited ability to detect smuggling via air travel. The Customs Service attempted to enforce anti-money laundering laws and foreign exchange regulations at all major airports, in coordination with other agencies. Customs' end-use verification managed the entry of dual-use chemicals for legitimate purposes, while attempting to prevent their diversion for use in improvised explosive devices (IEDs). In keeping with UNSCR 2178 (2014), returning foreign terrorist fighters may be prosecuted under Pakistani law. NACTA compiles and verifies data on returning fighters.

In February, Pakistan's military announced the nationwide Radd-ul-Fasaad or "Elimination of Strife" operation to prevent cross-border terrorist attacks and limit militants' access to explosives and weapons. Government and military sources reported scores of military and police operations to disrupt, kill, and apprehend terrorists. Military courts sentenced at least 15 convicted terrorists to death in 2017.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Pakistan is a member of the Asia Pacific Group on Money Laundering, a Financial Action Task Force (FATF)-style regional body. Pakistan criminalizes terrorist financing through the ATA, but implementation remains uneven. FATF continued to note concern that Pakistan's outstanding gaps in the implementation of the UN Security Council ISIL (Da'esh) and al-Qa'ida sanctions regime have not been resolved, and that UN-listed entities – including LeT and its affiliates – were not effectively prohibited from raising funds in Pakistan, nor being denied financial services. Although Pakistan's laws technically comply with international anti-money laundering/countering the financing of terrorism standards, authorities failed to uniformly implement UN sanctions related to designated entities and individuals such as LeT and its affiliates, which continued to make use of economic resources and raise funds. In November, the Lahore High Court refused to extend the detention of LeT founder Hafiz Saeed as it judged the government had not provided sufficient evidence against him nor had it charged Saeed with a crime.

Pakistan's National Action Plan to combat terrorism includes efforts to prevent and counter terrorist financing, including by enhancing interagency coordination on CFT. The law designates the use of unlicensed *hundi* and *hawala* systems as predicate offences to terrorism and also requires banks to report suspicious transactions to Pakistan's financial intelligence unit, the State Bank's Financial Monitoring Unit. These unlicensed money transfer systems persisted throughout the country and were open to abuse by terrorist financiers operating in the cross-border area.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): In November, NACTA finalized a National Narrative to Counter Violent Extremism, which will serve as the basis of the government's future efforts in this area. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and the military's public relations wing shaped media messages to build support for the military's counterterrorism initiatives. The government operated some de-radicalization camps offering "corrective religious education,"

vocational training, counseling, and therapy. A Pakistani non-governmental organization administered the widely-praised Sabaoon Rehabilitation Center in Swat Valley, which was founded in partnership with the Pakistani military and focused on juvenile terrorists. The Pakistani cities of Nowshera, Peshawar, and Quetta are members of the Strong Cities Network.

There were continued reports that some madrassahs taught extremist doctrine. Increasing government supervision of madrassahs is a component of the National Action Plan, and there was evidence of continued government efforts to increase regulation of the sector. Security analysts and madrassah reform proponents observed, however, that many madrassahs failed to register with the government, to provide to the government documentation of their sources of funding, or to only accept foreign students with valid visas, a background check, and the consent of their governments, as required by law.

International and Regional Cooperation: Pakistan participated in the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation meetings on counterterrorism and in other multilateral fora where counterterrorism cooperation was discussed, including the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (as an observer), the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process, and the Global Counterterrorism Forum, of which it is a founding member.

SRI LANKA

Overview: There were no terrorist attacks in 2017. In January, police claimed they disrupted a plot by former Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) members to assassinate a Tamil politician. The government maintained a large military presence in post-conflict areas and continued to voice concern about the possible reemergence of LTTE sympathizers, but it has also begun to shift its focus to emerging threats, amid reports of Sri Lankans joining ISIS and other terrorist groups.

Counterterrorism cooperation and training is a growing part of the U.S. relationship with Sri Lanka. For example, two Sri Lankan naval officers attended an anti-terrorism training in Florida in November and December. Additionally, the Sri Lankan government regularly sends officers to U.S.-sponsored regional counterterrorism workshops and courses such as the Comprehensive Security Response to Terrorism at the Daniel K. Inouye - Asia Pacific Center Security Studies (APCSS).

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: The Government of Sri Lanka continued to use the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA), enacted in 1982 as a wartime measure, which gives security forces broad powers to search, arrest, and detain individuals. The National Police claimed there were no arrests made under the PTA during the year. On February 8, the government announced it had indefinitely suspended making arrests under the PTA, pending the release of a new counterterrorism act, a draft of which remained under consideration at the end of 2017. Significant flaws with that draft remain, according to international and domestic legal experts.

The Special Task Force is a unit of the Sri Lanka Police Service specializing in counterterrorism and counterinsurgency operations and a major security arm of the state charged with ensuring

security of top government and foreign government officials, protecting sensitive terrorist targets, and suppressing activities that pose a threat to national security. There is also a Terrorism Investigation Division within the regular police structure.

Border security remained a significant issue for the Sri Lankan government. The Sri Lankan Immigration and Emigration Department is implementing a new information system to process immigration activity. The new system will connect several relevant departments with INTERPOL databases for criminal investigation and intelligence collection purposes, and it is expected to be fully operational in early 2018. The Sri Lankan government expanded its partnership with the U.S. Departments of State, Homeland Security, Defense, and Energy on securing its maritime border. The U.S. Coast Guard, under the Department of State's Export Control and Related Border Security program, continued to train Sri Lankan Coast Guard and Navy personnel on border and export control matters, and the Government of Sri Lanka continued to cooperate with U.S. Customs and Border Protection and Department of Energy through the container security initiative, megaports, and related initiatives. The Government of Sri Lanka continued to collaborate with the European Union Immigration Department on an Advanced Passenger Information system, which transmits passenger information to Sri Lankan immigration officials upon arrival.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Sri Lanka belongs to the Asia Pacific Group on Money Laundering, a Financial Action Task Force (FATF)-style regional body. Sri Lanka's financial intelligence unit is a member of the Egmont Group. Although it is neither an important regional financial center nor a preferred center for money laundering, Sri Lanka remained vulnerable to money laundering and terrorist financing. On November 3, FATF added Sri Lanka to its Public Statement entitled "Improving Global AML/CFT Compliance: On-going process," also known as the "grey list." Sri Lanka agreed to an action plan to address several vulnerabilities, including improving mutual legal assistance, issuing customer due diligence rules for designated non-financial businesses and persons, and enhancing risk-based supervision. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): Sri Lanka continued to operate a rehabilitation program for persons allegedly linked to the LTTE, participation in which was mandatory for a majority of the prisoners formerly held under the PTA who were released on bail. The number of persons participating in this program has dropped dramatically in recent years, however. Limited access by independent bodies to known rehabilitation camps precluded reliable evaluations of the government's efforts. At the provincial level, Sri Lanka is implementing educational outreach programs to address issues of religious tolerance and non-violent conflict resolution. These programs focus on post-conflict areas of Jaffna, Mannar, Kilinochchi, Mullaitivu, and Vavuniya where the local populations are considered vulnerable to re-radicalization.

International and Regional Cooperation: Sri Lanka continued to cooperate with a number of donor countries to improve its land and maritime border security. Sri Lanka is a partner nation in the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism. In September, Sri Lanka's Ministry of

Defense signed an MOU with Australia's Department of Immigration and Border Protection on enhanced information sharing on methods for investigating, tracking, and intercepting people smugglers. The agreement also furthers cooperation between the two nations on countering human trafficking, stopping the movement of illicit goods, and targeting money laundering and proceeds of crime. In December, Sri Lanka co-sponsored UN Security Council resolution 2396 on returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters.

TAJIKISTAN

Overview: Tajikistan continued to prioritize counterterrorism efforts in 2017. The majority of Tajik domestic counterterrorism activities conducted in 2017 targeted organizations and individuals allegedly linked to violent Islamist extremism in Tajikistan, but the government also arrested terrorist suspects returning from Afghanistan, Iraq, Russia, and Syria. According to public sources, approximately 1,300 Tajik citizens have traveled to Iraq and Syria to join ISIS since 2015. The government viewed northern Afghanistan as the primary potential source of terrorist activity, and continued to take steps to strengthen its border defense capabilities. Tajikistan has been willing to engage with the United States on counterterrorism issues.

Terrorist Incidents:

- On January 30, an explosive device detonated on the outskirts of the city of Qurghon-teppa (now called Bokhtar). The blast damaged a vehicle but the vehicle's owner was not hurt. No one claimed responsibility for the explosion.
- On March 12, four men in the southern city of Bokhtar planted an explosive device near the military prosecutor's office. A 67-year-old man who worked as a guard at the technological lyceum located next door to the military prosecutor's office picked up the device which exploded in his hands, killing him. The perpetrators of this attack were involved in prior terrorism-related incidents including attempted recruiting for ISIS.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Tajikistan adopted the Law on Combating Terrorism in 1999, and has since made a series of amendments, including one in 2017. The government has used this counterterrorism legislation to suppress independent voices, including journalists, opposition figures, and representatives of peaceful religious groups.

In late 2016, Tajikistan published its "National Strategy on Countering Extremism and Terrorism of the Republic of Tajikistan for 2016-2020." The State Committee for National Security (GKNB) and the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) have primary responsibility for counterterrorism in the country and also have the greatest resources. These two organizations are tasked with detection, prevention, and deterrence of terrorist acts, but do not always work well together. Cooperation and information sharing are sometimes hampered by interagency competition to curry favor with the country's leadership, but the published national strategy seeks to improve this situation. The GKNB and MVD both have dedicated special tactical units that handle active counterterrorism actions; both units have received training and equipment from the United States, the Russian Federation, and China.

Tajikistan has developed specific plans for the protection of soft targets, and the U.S. embassy sees frequent evidence of city- and nation-wide drills to exercise these plans. These plans appear

to cover critical national infrastructure, foreign diplomatic missions, and state agencies, but may not be comprehensive enough to cover major hotels, stadiums, or cultural sites.

Travel document security and biographic and biometric screening capabilities are lacking at ports of entry, particularly land crossings. Major entry points have access to INTERPOL data and other lists, but connectivity at smaller border posts is lacking. Although Dushanbe International Airport does have some biometric capability, this is not in full use. A recent Department of State Antiterrorism Assistance program capabilities assessment noted aging equipment in need of repair or replacement, and simple visual matching of face to passport photo by Border Guards officers is the primary method of identity confirmation. The Border Guards database is not yet linked to databases of other law enforcement agencies, and only in Dushanbe International Airport are photos taken of visitors; such capability does not yet exist at land border crossings. Tajikistan does maintain an extensive "wanted" list of citizens believed to have joined ISIS and other terrorist organizations, and this list is readily available online. Tajikistan regularly updates its Red Notice requests with INTERPOL.

On July 21, the Minister of Internal Affairs stated that Tajik law enforcement authorities prevented 12 terrorist acts in the country in the first six months of 2017 and detained 228 Tajik citizens for involvement in terrorist organizations.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Tajikistan is a member of the Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism, a Financial Action Task Force-style regional body. The laws of Tajikistan provide for criminal penalties for crimes associated with money laundering and terrorist financing. Tajikistan's Financial Monitoring Department, is a member of the Egmont Group. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): At the end of 2016 Tajikistan completed its national strategy for CVE. The government's strategy, designed for implementation from 2016 to 2020, is a whole of government approach to combat radicalization to violence in Tajik society. The Tajik government worked closely with the Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe to craft the strategy and called a public meeting in September 2017 to ask for the support of the international community in its funding and implementation. The government has supported the implementation of U.S.-sponsored community-policing programs. Additionally, representatives of Tajikistan's Ulema Council, including the chairman of the council, took part in religious meetings in Russia with Tajik labor migrants to allay fears expressed by the head of the Muslim Spiritual Board (MSB) of Russia, mufti Albir Krganov of Moscow, about the danger of radicalization among Tajik migrants.

Tajikistan amended its criminal laws in 2015, allowing authorities to pardon Tajik fighters who voluntarily return home from Iraq or Syria and renounce foreign militant groups. This is not a blanket amnesty and applies only to those who have not taken part in violence. Some 100 Tajik nationals have since returned from Syria and Iraq. Those pardoned remain on government watch lists but are not legally prevented from applying for jobs, enrolling in universities, or traveling abroad.

In an effort to counter what it considers "extremism," the government has placed multiple restrictions on forms of political and religious expression and groups it classifies as "extremist." In 2016, Tajikistan was designated a "Country of Particular Concern" under the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998.

International and Regional Cooperation: Tajikistan is an active participant in regional security arrangements like the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Tajikistan held military exercises in May with Commonwealth of Independent States Anti-Terrorism Center as part of an event named Dushanbe-Anti-Terror 2017. In October 2017, Russia's 201st Motorized Rifle Division military base (which has garrisons in the cities of Dushanbe and Bokhtar) conducted counterterrorism exercises in Tajikistan that included repelling a simulated terrorists attack on the base's facilities.

TURKMENISTAN

Overview: The Government of Turkmenistan continued its efforts to improve the capacity of law enforcement agencies to combat terrorism, ensure border security, and detect terrorist financing. The government continued to cooperate with international organizations and participated in the C5+1 regional framework to counter violent extremism. Government officials participated in training sessions on combating money laundering, preventing terrorist financing, and strengthening border security. Turkmen authorities continued to maintain close surveillance on its population and borders.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: On November 25, President Berdimuhamedov approved, and the Turkmen Parliament adopted, a new Law on Combating Terrorism. The law defines which crimes are considered terrorist acts by nature. This law is supplemented by Articles 271-273 of the Criminal Code, which pertain to terrorist acts and terrorist financing and are used to prosecute terrorism-related offenses.

The Ministries of National Security, Internal Affairs, and Defense, along with the State Border, Customs, and Migration Services perform counterterrorism functions and share information through an interagency commission. The country's law enforcement capacity still needs further improvement, since law enforcement units do not proactively conduct investigations and have a dismal record of accountability and respect for basic human rights. Prosecutors, however, play a significant role in the investigation phase of a case, and specialized law enforcement units exist to conduct investigations.

The Government of Turkmenistan participated in training programs sponsored by international organizations. These included responding to counterterrorism threats at large public events and passenger screening and baggage x-ray at aviation checkpoints. The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) organized training for trainers on aviation checkpoints and x-ray image interpretation for instructors.

Turkmenistan's State Border Service (SBS) operated frontier garrisons on the border with Iran and Afghanistan. SBS managed eight radiation portal monitors donated by the Department of Energy through its Second Line of Defense program. The monitors help to detect, deter, and

prevent the dissemination of explosives and radioactive materials. The SBS possesses biometric screening capabilities at ports of entry.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Turkmenistan is a member of the Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism, and the government continued to express interest in gaining admission to the Egmont Group.

On July 28, the Governments of Turkmenistan and the United States signed an intergovernmental agreement to implement the provisions of the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act.

The government continued to monitor and regulate alternative remittance services, collected data on wire transfers, and monitored non-profit organizations to prevent misuse of financing to sponsor terrorist activities.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): In 2017, the Government of Turkmenistan cooperated with international organizations and participated in the C5+1 regional CVE framework.

International and Regional Cooperation: Turkmenistan supports some regional and international efforts to fight terrorism. In 2017, law enforcement officials participated in OSCE and UN Office on Drugs and Crime training on border security. Government officials also participated in regional CVE training provided by the UN Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy in Central Asia. Turkmenistan continued to participate in the Central Asia Regional Information and Coordination Center.

UZBEKISTAN

Overview: The Government of Uzbekistan remained concerned about the potential spillover of terrorism from Afghanistan and its Central Asian neighbors and about radicalization of Uzbeks abroad. President Mirziyoyev sought to improve relations with Uzbekistan's neighbors in many areas, including security cooperation. Uzbekistan has actively participated in the C5+1 regional framework with the United States and the Central Asian countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan), which includes a program related to countering violent extremism. Uzbekistan's Ministry of Internal Affairs (MOI) stepped up its law enforcement cooperation with the United States following the October 31 New York City terrorist attack in which an ethnic Uzbek who was a U.S. permanent resident was charged. While Uzbekistan remains concerned about ISIS recruitment of Uzbeks and shares U.S. interests in combating ISIS, it did not formally join the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. The government restricts information on internal matters, making it difficult to analyze the extent of the terrorist threat and the effectiveness of Uzbek law enforcement efforts.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: All of the 2017 terrorist attacks suspected of being committed by Uzbeks or ethnic Uzbeks happened outside of Uzbekistan. A U.S. permanent resident from Uzbekistan is under investigation for driving a rented van into a crowd in New York City on October 31, killing eight people and injuring 12 others. An ethnic Uzbek was arrested in Sweden in April for running a truck into a crowd in Stockholm and killing four people. Another ethnic Uzbek is on trial for committing the Istanbul nightclub attack that killed 39 people and injured 65 others on New Year's Eve. Dozens of Uzbeks were arrested in Russia throughout 2017 in various anti-terrorism investigations.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: The "Law on Combating Terrorism" governs terrorism-related investigations and prosecutions and identifies the National Security Service (NSS) as the lead counterterrorism law enforcement agency. Uzbekistan also criminalizes terrorism under Article 155 of the criminal code. In 2017, President Mirziyoyev announced the National Development Strategy for 2017-2021, Article 2.4 of which targets corruption, extremism, and terrorism.

In September 2017, President Mirizyoyev announced the careful screening and subsequent removal of approximately 16,000 people from a 17,000-person security watch list of suspected Muslim extremists. Despite this positive development, security concerns related to terrorism continued to be commonly used as grounds for detaining people.
Uzbekistan's officials committed to enhanced police and other information sharing and cooperation in specific cases, such as the October 31 New York City attack, when the Ministry of Interior helped arrange witness interviews and shared information on the interviews and record checks conducted by the MOI. However, Uzbekistan does not publicly share operational counterterrorism information. Both the NSS and the MOI have dedicated counterterrorism units. Uzbek law enforcement maintains its own terrorist watchlist and contributed to INTERPOL databases. Most border posts and airports are equipped with biometric data scanners, and Uzbekistan is working to convert all passports to a new biometric version by July 1, 2018, and to introduce international biometric passports for travel abroad starting January 2019.

Uzbekistan has not reported specific actions to implement UN Security Council resolution 2178 (2014). Frequent document checks and resident-list checks seek to identify potential foreign terrorist fighters. In 2017, human rights activists noted an increase in the number of arrests of returning migrant workers on suspicion of involvement in ISIS or religious extremism. In May, Tashkent City Criminal Court sentenced a group of 11 Muslims to prison terms of up to six years for religious extremism. In August, the same court sentenced two Uzbek nationals to 15 years each for trying to join terrorist groups in Syria.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Uzbekistan belongs to the Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism (EAG), a Financial Action Task Force-style regional body. Article 155 of the criminal code criminalizes the financing of terrorism and includes a prison sentence of eight to 10 years. The anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism law provides for freezing of assets and mandates that all financial entities check parties to a transaction against lists of persons involved or suspected of involvement in terrorist activities. An additional regulation establishes a procedure for the

creation of such lists and delisting requests. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): Uzbekistan remains concerned about ISIS recruitment of Uzbeks. Ethnic Uzbeks formerly associated with the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan continued to fight in Afghanistan. Local government organizations strived to educate citizens about the dangers of "religious extremism." President Mirziyoyev requested the creation of an Islamic Cultural Center in Tashkent to "promote Islam's true values." Uzbekistan is developing a draft law "On combating extremism," which should define violent extremism for purposes of Uzbek law. The law bans a number of religious groups as "extremist." We refer you to the State Department's Country Reports on Human Rights Practices and Report on International Religious Freedom for 2016 for further information.

There were few reintegration efforts underway in Uzbekistan. When the President announced the removal of 16,000 people from the blacklist of alleged religious extremists, he said that 9,500 of these individuals had been given jobs and urged Muslim clerics and officials to ensure that the rest of the delisted individuals have employment. Official media and Tashkent Islamic University produced public messages about the dangers of "extremism" and posted them on social media platforms and messaging apps.

International and Regional Cooperation: Uzbekistan is a member of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). In 2017, Tashkent hosted the 30th meeting of the SCO Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) and the fifth SCO RATS Conference on Fighting Terrorism, as well as signed the SCO Convention on Countering Extremism. Uzbekistan has also worked with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime on security issues. In October 2017, Uzbekistan held the first joint Russian-Uzbek military exercise since 2005, which included a simulated counterterrorism operation.

Although Uzbekistan welcomed closer cooperation in fighting terrorism and "extremism" during high level and working meetings with officials from Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Russia, Turkey, and at the Commonwealth of Independent States summit in Sochi, the government does not release detailed information about such efforts.

WESTERN HEMISPHERE

Overview

Foreign terrorist fighter travel from the Western Hemisphere to Iraq and Syria virtually stopped in 2017, as heightened awareness of the threat lead to tightened border security. However, Canada, and to a lesser extent, the Caribbean – particularly Trinidad and Tobago – had previously been significant per capita sources of foreign terrorist fighters and the potential return of these trained individuals remains of great concern. In addition, many Latin American countries have porous borders, limited law enforcement capabilities, and established smuggling

routes. These vulnerabilities offer opportunities to foreign terrorist groups, but there have been no cases of terrorist groups exploiting these gaps to move operations through the region.

As has been the case for decades, transnational criminal organizations posed the most significant threat to the region, demanding the majority of attention from law enforcement and intelligence resources. Corruption, weak government institutions, insufficient interagency cooperation, weak or non-existent legislation, and a general lack of resources likewise remained obstacles to improving security. Nevertheless, some Western Hemisphere countries made significant progress in their counterterrorism efforts in 2017.

In addition to its financial and fundraising activities in the Western Hemisphere, Hizballah also maintained interest in the region during 2017. A Hizballah operative was arrested by the FBI in the United States in June 2017. Among other accusations, he was allegedly involved in surveilling U.S. and Israeli targets in Panama. And according to early 2017 media reporting, the Bolivian security services previously uncovered and disrupted a Hizballah cache of explosive precursors in the La Paz area. The Peruvian government's prosecution of a Hizballah member arrested in 2015 is still ongoing, with the Peruvians successfully appealing a ruling acquitting this operative of terrorism charges.

The Government of Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia continued to make progress in normalizing relations after reaching a historic agreement to end their five-decade conflict in late 2016. In 2017, the Colombian government began formal peace negotiations with the National Liberation Army, agreeing to a ceasefire towards the end of the year. Peru's Shining Path terrorist group remained active, but with reduced strength, and focused mostly on criminal activities in the remote Apurimac, Ene, and Mantaro River Valleys in eastern Peru.

The free trade zones in Panama and the Tri-Border Area of Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay remained regional nodes for money laundering and were vulnerable to terrorist financing.

In 2017, the Organization of American States' Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism (CICTE) focused programs and activities on border security, legislative assistance to combat terrorist financing, and critical infrastructure and resilience. The 17th CICTE Regular Session took place in April in Washington, D.C.; delegations from 28 OAS member states attended to discuss terrorist financing and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Leaders of the 15-member Caribbean Community (CARICOM) adopted a regional arrest warrant treaty, an asset sharing (forfeiture) agreement, and model CARICOM counterterrorism legislation at their July 4, 2017 Summit. Recognizing the potential threat posed by returning foreign terrorist fighters, home-grown terrorism, and the vulnerability of its tourist industry, CARICOM's Implementation Agency for Crime and Security prepared its first-ever counterterrorism strategy, which will be adopted by heads of government after a final review in 2018. Together these efforts raise the profile of terrorism as a security concern in the region and provide a solid base for strengthening the region's ability to combat terrorism.

The United States collaborated with both Canada and Mexico to protect our shared borders through regular exchanges of intelligence and other information.

ARGENTINA

Overview: During 2017, Argentina consolidated plans to redefine its counterterrorism strategy with a focus on its remote northern and northeastern borders, which include the Tri-Border Area where Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay meet, and where suspected terrorism financing networks operate. Robust U.S.-Argentine law enforcement and security cooperation continued in 2017. While no terrorist acts occurred in Argentina during 2017, five Argentine nationals were among the random victims of the October 31 terrorist attack perpetrated by a lone actor in New York.

The UN Executive Director for the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate visited Argentina in 2017 to evaluate Argentina's legislative efforts to combat terrorism.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: In 2017, the Government of Argentina proposed changes to the penal code to reform its counterterrorism legal framework. The proposed legislation would include penal system reforms, a new approach to combating terrorism financing, and a modernization of security and intelligence capabilities. The 1994 bombing of the Argentine Jewish Mutual Association (AMIA) remained in the news and prompted a separate proposal to reform the penal code by incorporating trials in absentia as a mechanism to prosecute fugitives. In December 2017 an Argentine federal judge issued pre-trial detention orders for former Argentine President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner and several former associates accused of treason for allegedly covering up Iran's involvement in the AMIA attack.

Multiple security agencies maintained specialized law enforcement units that have substantial capabilities to respond to criminal activities, including terrorist incidents. The Government of Argentina established a Counter Narcotics Task Force in Salta Province composed of the four Argentine federal law enforcement agencies and provincial forces. As a result of its success, the Ministry of Security (MOS) created a second task force focused on the northeastern provinces covering the Tri-Border Area of Argentina, Paraguay, and Brazil.

Throughout 2017, the Argentine National Directorate for Migration (DNM) improved its capacity to use Advance Passenger Information to identify known or suspected terrorists attempting to enter Argentina via commercial carrier.

By deploying additional technology, personnel, and equipment, the Argentine MOS improved its law enforcement capacity at high-risk ports of entry along its northern border. U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and the Department of State's Export Control and Related Border Security (EXBS) Program further contributed to these efforts through the donation of contraband inspection kits to Argentine Customs officials at the Posadas, Aguas Blancas, and La Quiaca ports of entry. In June, officers from the Argentine Gendarmeria Nacional and Argentine Customs joined their Brazilian counterparts in a four-day International Border Interdiction Seminar sponsored by CBP and EXBS.

Partly in support of the Preventing and Combating Serious Crime agreement signed in 2016 by the MOS and the U.S. Departments of Justice and Homeland Security, MOS and its federal security forces worked to incorporate biometric data into their fight against international terrorism and transnational crime. The MOS incorporated biometrics into its security vetting process to prevent known or suspected terrorists from exploiting its immigration system.

Argentina continued its participation in courses at the International Law Enforcement Academy in San Salvador, El Salvador.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Argentina is a member of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), as well as the Financial Action Task Force of Latin America, a FATF-style regional body. Argentina held the presidency of the FATF from July 2017 through the end of the year; its presidency expires June 30, 2018. Its Financial Information Unit (UIF) is a member of the Egmont Group. Recent reforms have empowered the UIF to act as the lead agency on all financial intelligence matters.

In 2017, Argentine Customs fully re-established its Trade Transparency Unit in partnership with DHS, strengthening Argentina's ability to identify and disrupt trade-based money laundering, smuggling, and other transnational crimes linked to terrorist financing. The Ministry of Security and Homeland Security Investigations co-hosted the country's first-ever Transnational Financial Investigations Seminar, which was attended by 50 participants from more than a dozen Argentine law enforcement, border security, judiciary, and prosecutorial agencies involved in combating money laundering and the financing of terrorism.

Argentina's UIF participated in a June fact-finding mission to gather information on financial activities and illicit finance risks in the Tri-Border Area encompassing Puerto Iguazu, Argentina; Ciudad del Este, Paraguay; and Foz do Iguazu, Brazil. This was a joint project with the U.S. Department of the Treasury, the Argentine, Brazilian, and Paraguayan financial intelligence units, and the Argentine and Paraguayan Central Banks, and supervisory authorities.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): The Government of Argentina has systematically issued statements of condemnation against major acts of terrorism.

International and Regional Cooperation: The Government of Argentina and the United Nations (UN) Office of Counter-Terrorism signed a Memorandum of Understanding in which the UN pledged its support for Argentina's ongoing efforts to adjust its penal code to comply with "international standards on cyberterrorism and terrorist financing." Argentina participated in the Organization of American States Inter-American Committee against Terrorism and the Southern Common Market Special Forum on Terrorism. Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay coordinated law enforcement efforts in the Tri-Border Area via their Trilateral Tri-Border Area Command.

In February 2017, Argentina hosted a Practitioner's Workshop on Countering Transnational Terrorist Groups in the Tri-Border Area. The conference was hosted by the Argentine Federal Intelligence Agency with the sponsorship of the U.S. Departments of State and Justice. The two-day workshop included prosecutors, judges, law enforcement investigators, financial intelligence/sanctions officials, and intelligence officials from the region.

BRAZIL

Overview: Brazil and the United States maintained strong counterterrorism cooperation in 2017, building on collaborative efforts the previous year during the lead up to the 2016 Summer Olympics. Brazilian officials increased public attention to the issue. The Brazilian Federal Police (DPF), Brazil's lead counterterrorism agency, worked closely with the United States and other nations' law enforcement entities to assess and mitigate potential terrorist threats. The Brazilian government continued to support counterterrorism activities, which included third-country technical assistance for controlling sensitive technologies and investigating fraudulent travel documents.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: There were no major changes since 2016 in counterterrorism legislation or in the division of responsibility among agencies tasked with counterterrorism efforts.

On May 4, Brazil handed down its first convictions under counterterrorism Law 13.260, sentencing eight Brazilian citizens to between five and 15 years of imprisonment for "promoting ISIS and terrorist acts" through social media. The convictions were related to 2016's Operation Hashtag, which dismantled a loose, online, pro-ISIS network prior to the Olympics, the first arrests under the law.

On October 10, the DPF made its second counterterrorism arrest, taking into custody an individual with alleged online links to ISIS.

Brazil shares vast international borders with 10 countries and many of its borders are porous. Irregular migration with Brazil often serving as a transit country is a problem, especially by aliens that raise terrorist concerns from areas with a potential nexus to terrorism. Brazil increased its focus on border security in 2017 as part of an overall National Public Security Plan, largely out of concerns about the growing problem of transnational organized crime. On October 30, in the border state of Acre, 20 state governors and the Ministers of Defense, Justice, Institutional Security, and Foreign Relations signed an accord to establish a National Public Security System to address border security in an integrated fashion between state and federal authorities. Brazil also increased cooperation and information sharing with neighboring nations on border issues. A new immigration law took effect in November, but aside from reaffirming the importance of border security it did not have a specific terrorism focus.

All law enforcement agencies, including those tasked with border security and counterterrorism, continued to suffer in 2017 from budget constraints caused by the deepest economic decline in

Brazil's history. These effects were particularly acute at major ports of entry, including air, sea, and land borders.

Brazilian authorities continued to work with other concerned nations – particularly the United States – to counter document fraud. Regional and international joint operations successfully disrupted a number of document vendors and facilitators, as well as related human-smuggling networks. The Department of State provided comprehensive and ongoing counterfeit and fraudulent document recognition training to airline and border police units through its Investigations Program. The Department of Homeland Security's Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Homeland Security Investigations, and Customs and Border Protection have trained Brazilian airline employees on identifying fraudulent documents.

The U.S.-Brazil Container Security Initiative (CSI) in Santos, which began in 2005, operated throughout 2017. The CSI was designed to increase security for container cargo shipped to the United States. Similarly, the National Civil Aviation Agency, DPF, and Brazilian Customs continued to work with the U.S. Transportation Security Administration (TSA) to make modifications to Brazil's National Cargo Security Program to obtain TSA recognition of commensurability for cargo security procedures, training, and operations at Brazil's international airports.

The Brazilian Army continued to implement an Integrated Border Monitoring System to monitor the country's borders using a combination of personnel, cameras, sensors, and satellites. The strategic initiative is underway in the state of Mato Grosso do Sul with intention to cover the entire Brazilian border by 2021.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Brazil is a member of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and the Financial Action Task Force of Latin America, a FATF-style regional body. Its financial intelligence unit, the Council for Financial Activities Control, is a member of the Egmont Group. While it has made progress mitigating the shortcomings identified in its third round mutual evaluation report (MER) from 2010, Brazil continued work to address the remaining deficiencies, most notably its domestic designation framework.

On January 31, 2017, Brazil issued two implementing regulations for Laws 13.170 and 13.260 to address gaps in its countering the financing of terrorism (CFT) regime, specifically allowing for domestic terrorism designations and facilitating international cooperation on terrorism investigations. Despite this progress, in its 14th follow-up report to the 2010 MER, FATF noted deficiencies remained with the CFT regime in terms of full compliance with FATF standards. In response to FATF's observations, Brazil committed to an action plan for addressing the remaining deficiencies. As part of the plan, the Brazilian government has drafted new legislation with a target for adoption by June 2018.

Brazil's financial intelligence unit (FIU) participated in a June fact-finding mission to gather information on financial activities and illicit finance risks in the Tri-Border Area encompassing Puerto Iguazu, Argentina; Ciudad del Este, Paraguay; and Foz do Iguazu, Brazil. This was a joint project with the U.S. Department of the Treasury, the Argentine, Brazilian, and Paraguayan

financial intelligence units, and the Argentine and Paraguayan Central Banks, and supervisory authorities.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): The Government of Brazil consistently issued statements of condemnation for terrorist acts around the world. The Senate and various government agencies, including the DPF and Ministry of Foreign Relations, also organized or participated in numerous conferences addressing international terrorism, with a particular emphasis on countering online radicalization to violence and preventing the use of the internet for terrorist purposes.

International and Regional Cooperation: Brazil participated in regional counterterrorism fora, including the Organization of American States and its Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism (CICTE), the BRICS Joint Working Group on Counterterrorism (with Russia, India, China, and South Africa), and the working group on terrorism and sub-working group on financial issues of the Southern Common Market. Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay coordinated law enforcement efforts in the Tri-Border Area via their Trilateral Tri-Border Area Command.

In February 2017, Brazil participated in a Practitioner's Workshop on Countering Transnational Terrorist Groups in the Tri-Border Area. The conference was hosted by the Argentine Federal Intelligence Agency with the sponsorship of the U.S. Departments of State and Justice. The two-day workshop included prosecutors, judges, law enforcement investigators, financial intelligence and sanctions officials, and intelligence officials from the region.

In September, Brazil hosted an international OAS CICTE training event focused on preventing illegal and terrorist use of the internet in Sao Paulo.

CANADA

Overview: Canada experienced minimal terrorist activity in 2017. The main external terrorist threats to Canada are from terrorist groups such as ISIS and al-Qa'ida and their sympathizers, while the main internal threat is from lone actors inspired by these groups and ideologies. Approximately 180 Canadians have traveled to Syria and Iraq to fight for ISIS and approximately 60 have since returned to Canada. The government has policies and legislation to counter these threats and worked to address the radicalization of its citizens to violence.

The United States worked closely throughout the year with Canada to identify and develop new capabilities that meet a wide variety of requirements for countering terrorist threats. Through a cost-sharing bilateral relationship, both countries advanced their technical ability to defeat or mitigate the evolving capabilities of terrorists and criminal organizations. Canada is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: Canada experienced three terrorist incidents in 2017:

- On January 29, Alexandre Bissonnette entered and opened fire on an Islamic Cultural Centre in Quebec City, killing six people and injuring 19 others. The assailant was charged with six counts of first-degree murder and five of attempted murder. Canada's prime minister classified the mass shooting as a terrorist attack.
- On June 3, Rehab Dughmosh, a Toronto-area Syrian-born Canadian woman, allegedly attacked several people with a golf club at a Canadian Tire store in Scarborough, Ontario and brandished a large knife from her clothes. Police laid terrorist-related charges against Dughmosh (32) in July, including attempted murder for the benefit of or in association with a terrorist group.
- On September 30, Abdulahi Sharif allegedly stabbed one police constable outside a local football game in Edmonton, Alberta and then hit four pedestrians with a truck, in which an ISIS flag was found. A Somalian national and refugee, Sharif (30) was detained by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement in California in 2011 and subsequently released with an "order of supervision." He crossed into Canada in January 2012, where he claimed asylum and was later granted refugee status.

Also, on June 21, Amor Ftouhi, a Tunisian-born Canadian resident of Montreal, Quebec, stabbed a U.S. police officer at Bishop International Airport in Flint, Michigan. During the attack, Ftouhi made reference to killings in Syria and Afghanistan. He was awaiting trial in Detroit, Michigan at the end of 2017.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: In 2017, the following legislative activity impacting the investigation or prosecution of terrorism offenses occurred:

- C-6 ("An Act to Amend the Citizenship Act") was enacted by the Parliament and received Royal Assent (the final legislative stage) in June. The law repealed conviction for a national security offense as grounds to revoke the citizenship of Canadians with dual nationality.
- C-22 ("An Act to establish the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians") was enacted by the Parliament and received Royal Assent in June. The law authorized a new parliamentary oversight body to oversee the activity of federal national security and intelligence agencies across government. The Act also allowed the Parliament to review the legislative, regulatory, policy, administrative, and financial framework for national security and intelligence.
- C-23 ("Preclearance Act, 2016") was passed by the Parliament and received Royal Assent in December. It will not go into force immediately, but at a date to be determined by the cabinet.

Canada conducted numerous law enforcement actions against terrorists and terrorist groups over the past year, the most significant of which were:

- In January, Tevis Gonyou-McLean agreed to the terms of a peace bond, including that he wear a GPS ankle bracelet for 12 months. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police had arrested Gonyou-McLean in August 2016, following a tip-off that he had threatened to

"avenge the death" of ISIS supporter Aaron Driver two days earlier. Gonyou-McLean was subsequently re-arrested in November for breaching the bond's conditions.

- In September, Ismail Habib received a nine-year prison sentence after being found guilty in June of attempting to travel to Syria to participate in terrorist activity. Habib was the first adult in Canada convicted of attempting to leave Canada to join ISIS.
- In October, Kevin Omar Mohamed was sentenced to four-and-a-half years in prison after pleading guilty to one count of terrorist activity in June. Mohamed was arrested and charged with carrying a concealed weapon and for possession of a weapon dangerous to public peace on March 26, 2016; on March 29, 2016 he was charged with participating in the activity of a terrorist group over a two-year period.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Canada is a member of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering, a FATF-style regional body. Canada's financial intelligence unit, the Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre of Canada (FINTRAC) is a member of the Egmont Group. In June 2017, amendments to the Proceeds of Crime (Money Laundering) and Terrorist Financing Act came into force that strengthened Canada's anti-money laundering/counterterrorist finance regime and improved compliance. These amendments expanded FINTRAC's ability to disclose information to police, the Canada Border Services Agency, and provincial securities regulators. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): On June 26, Public Safety Canada officially launched the Center for Community Engagement and Prevention of Violence with a budget of C$35 million (US $428 million) over five years and C$10 million (US $8 million) annually thereafter to counter radicalization to violence. In addition, the city of Montreal is a founding member of the Strong Cities Network.

International and Regional Cooperation: Canada prioritizes collaboration with international partners to counter terrorism and regularly seeks opportunities to lead. Canada makes major contributions to the Global Counterterrorism Forum (in which it co-chairs the Capacity-Building in the West Africa Region), the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF), the Global Initiative to Counter Nuclear Terrorism, and the G-7 Roma-Lyon Group. Global Affairs Canada maintains a Counterterrorism Capacity Building program, which provides training, funding, equipment, and technical and legal assistance to nations, enabling them to prevent and respond to a broad spectrum of terrorist activity.

COLOMBIA

Overview: Colombia experienced a continued decrease in terrorist activity in 2017, due in large part to the November 2016 peace accord with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). The UN ended the disarmament phase of its monitoring and verification mission on September 25, collecting 8,994 arms, 1.7 million rounds, and more than 40 tons of explosives. The Government of Colombia accredited roughly 11,000 ex-combatants for transition to civilian life. There were challenges implementing the peace accord, however, and a small number of

dissident groups rejected the process. Reports confirmed some of these groups continued extortion and illicit activities.

Peace talks between the Colombian government and the other major terrorist organization active in the country, the National Liberation Army (ELN), continued. In an effort to generate trust between parties, the government and ELN agreed to a three-month ceasefire, beginning October 1, which was the first such agreement during the 50-year conflict. ELN kidnappings, forced displacements, and attacks on the military, civilian population, and critical infrastructure dropped dramatically since October, with only one confirmed ceasefire violation. Nevertheless, ELN attacks spiked in rural and border regions prior to the ceasefire, and local communities reported ELN-related extortion and displacement continued even after the ceasefire.

Overall, the number of dissident FARC and ELN individuals who were either killed or captured decreased compared to 2016, while individual desertions increased. Civilian deaths caused by terrorism continued to fall nationwide. Colombian-U.S. counterterrorism cooperation remained strong and Colombia has openly condemned ISIS and its objectives.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: Colombian government statistics showed a 40 percent decrease in terrorist incidents from 2016. This does not include incidents related to organized criminal groups. FARC dissident groups have conducted a small number of attacks on security forces and civilians.[1]

Prior to the October 1 ceasefire, the ELN continued low-cost, high-impact asymmetric attacks. An explosive device was detonated June 17 in the Andino Mall in Bogotá, killing three and injuring 10. The Colombian National Police (CNP) believe the People's Revolutionary Movement – a relatively new violent group with ideological connections to the ELN – was responsible. An investigation led to the capture of nine suspected perpetrators. Among 2017 attacks, several others were notable for their severity or press coverage:

- The ELN claimed responsibility for a February 19 attack in the La Macarena neighborhood in Bogotá in which a police officer was killed.
- On September 30, three police officers were killed in Miranda, Cauca department, in an attack believed to have been conducted by FARC dissidents.
- In September, just before the October 1 ceasefire, the ELN carried out a series of attacks on the Caño Limon-Covenas oil pipeline in Norte de Santander and Arauca departments. In 2017, there were 45 attacks on the pipeline prior to the ceasefire.
- On October 25, members of the ELN claimed responsibility for killing an indigenous leader in Choco department. The ELN later acknowledged it was a ceasefire violation.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: There have been no changes to terrorism-related legislation and investigation procedures since 2016. Colombian authorities

[1] The FARC remains a Foreign Terrorist Organization under the Immigration and Nationality Act. However, the Colombian government classifies FARC dissidents as criminals. While the ideological motivations of such groups and ongoing connections with demobilized FARC are unclear, we have included acts of violence by FARC dissidents in this report.

continued to operate joint police-military task forces to enhance coordination in countering terrorism.

The State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs supported the U.S. Department of Justice, through its International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (ICITAP), to continue to work with the Attorney General's Office and other agencies to improve standards for investigators, forensic experts, and criminal analysts. In 2017, ICITAP trained more than 160 wire communication analysts. In addition, at the request of the CNP criminal investigation unit, ICITAP began working with the National Police Cyber Center to achieve accreditation.

Colombian border security remained an area of vulnerability. Law enforcement officers faced the challenge of working in areas with porous borders and difficult topography plagued by the presence of illegal armed groups and drug trafficking. The CNP lacked the personnel to enforce uniform policies for vehicle or passenger inspections at land crossings. Biometric and biographic screening was conducted only at international airports. The Colombian government uses Advance Passenger Information but does not collect Passenger Name Record data. Of its 184,000 officers, the CNP has 2,202 working on customs enforcement activities.

Colombia remained a transit point for the smuggling of third-country nationals who may seek to enter the United States illegally. In 2017, economic challenges in Venezuela contributed to the migration of 660,000 Venezuelans, roughly half of whom entered Colombia illegally, according to Colombia's immigration authority. While the authority regularly detained third-country nationals who entered the country illegally, it lacked the personnel, enforcement power, and resources to respond to possible threats and repatriate migrants.

There were no significant changes since 2016 in cooperation on border security, evidence sharing, and joint law enforcement operations with neighboring countries. Law enforcement cooperation between Colombia and the United States remained strong.

In 2017, security forces captured or killed a number of high-value dissident FARC and ELN targets wanted for homicide, narcotics trafficking, and forced displacement.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Colombia is a member of the Financial Action Task Force of Latin America, a Financial Action Task Force-style regional body. Colombia's Financial Information and Analysis Unit is a member of the Egmont Group. There were no significant changes in countering the financing of terrorism since 2016. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): The peace accord with the FARC initiated a disarmament, demobilization, and reincorporation process that allowed 11,000 ex-combatants and militia members to disarm. The accord's reincorporation council continues to determine protocols and institutional arrangements for reincorporation of ex-combatants. The Agency for Reincorporation and Normalization (ARN), formerly the Colombian Reintegration Agency (ACR), is the implementing arm of this process. Delays in implementing the program, caused by

the refusal of FARC leadership to permit members to actively and effectively participate, increased the prospects that some ex-combatants would return to engaging in criminal activities.

Colombia continued to employ a modern, multi-agency approach to CVE, with a focus on encouraging individual guerrillas to demobilize. In 2017, the number of ex-combatants successfully graduating from the ARN's individual program (separate from those demobilized as a result of the accord with the FARC) reached more than 18,960. The number of FARC and ELN members who demobilized individually increased from 704 to 827. The city of Medellin is a founding member of the Strong Cities Network.

International and Regional Cooperation: There have been no significant changes to Colombia's international and regional security cooperation since 2016. Colombia is a founding member of the Global Counter Terrorism Forum and continues to lead in providing security training and assistance to other countries in the region. In 2017, Colombia conducted more than 400 security trainings for thousands of non-Colombian individuals on citizen security, crime prevention and monitoring, military and police capacity building, anti-kidnapping, anti-extortion, hostage negotiation, and cyber-security.

MEXICO

Overview: Counterterrorism cooperation between Mexico and the United States remained strong in 2017. Improved information sharing regarding migrant populations constituted a major step forward. At year's end there was no credible evidence indicating that international terrorist groups have established bases in Mexico, worked with Mexican drug cartels, or sent operatives via Mexico into the United States. The U.S. southern border remains vulnerable to potential terrorist transit, although terrorist groups likely seek other means of trying to enter the United States.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: There were no changes since 2016 in Mexico's legal system as it pertains to counterterrorism, other than those described under the terrorist financing section.

Mexico's southern border is porous. Under the Merida Initiative, the Mexican and U.S. governments launched several projects designed to increase border security, including the first stages of construction of a telecommunications system for law enforcement and mentoring and training for immigration officials. The two governments also collaborate to improve airport security at last departure point airports to the United States. The United States partnered with Mexico to create an information-sharing system for Mexico that will vastly improve Mexico's ability to partner with U.S. law enforcement to prevent terrorism and other illegal activity.

Challenges for law enforcement and border security include corruption and insufficient inter-agency communication. Also, many prosecutors and judges have not yet mastered navigation of the new criminal justice system. Improvements in nation-wide police professionalization are occurring through the State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs' program to assess, train, certify, and accredit police officers and institutions at state and federal levels. These efforts aim to improve the likelihood

of criminal prosecutions and convictions. Mexican migration officials' resources are stretched thin and funding for repatriations by air is severely limited.

The Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance training included two iterations of Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience, which focused on securing physical and cyber critical infrastructures against the threats of terrorism and natural disasters. The trainings additionally demonstrated methods of building proactive community partnerships, recognizing pre-attack indications through surveillance detection, and understanding the physical effects of explosives.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Mexico is a member of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), and the Financial Action Task force of Latin America, a FATF-style regional body (FSRB). Mexico has observer or cooperating status in FSRBs: the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force and the Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures. Mexico's financial intelligence unit (FIU), Unidad de Inteligencia Financiera, is a member of the Egmont Group and proactively shares financial intelligence on shared threats with its U.S. counterpart, the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network.

Mexico recently underwent its fourth round FATF mutual evaluation. In October, Mexico's Supreme Court ruled the FIU's freezing of accounts in one specific case violated constitutional protections including due process rights. The ruling only impacted one entity's frozen accounts, but other similarly affected entities have already filed cases in Mexican federal court. Once four more cases reach the same conclusion at the Supreme Court level (or if the entire Supreme Court bench similarly rules on one case) then the initial ruling will become binding precedent. The FIU can continue to freeze accounts under the current legal framework, but that power may end soon barring a legislative fix. Given that law enforcement and judicial authorities have struggled to investigate and prosecute financial crimes, this development may hamper the government's ability to fight potential terrorist financing until a legislative or procedural fix can be implemented. Mexico was in the process in 2017 of drafting an amendment to their domestic sanctions legislation to address the Supreme Court's finding. Mexico's Finance Ministry has emphasized the ruling does not impact its authority to block accounts associated with UN sanctions, nor impact banks that voluntarily comply with the Office of Foreign Asset Control Specially Designated Nationals (SDN) List. Many Mexican banks made progress in 2017 in terms of training on SDN List implementation.

Mexico lacks workable asset forfeiture laws. The lower chamber of Congress passed amendments to improve the legal framework, including an effort to lower high standards for burden of proof, but the amendments remain pending with the Mexican Senate.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): There have been no changes since 2016 other than Mexico's presentation of a successfully adopted resolution at the UN Human Rights Council encouraging protection of human rights while countering terrorism.

International and Regional Cooperation: Mexico participates in the Organization of American States Inter-American Committee against Terrorism and is also a member of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism.

PANAMA

Overview: Panama's air travel infrastructure combined with its financial infrastructure – it is the second largest free trade zone in the world – along with its canal and geographic location, make Panama a key transit hub, but also attracts a fair share of illicit travel. For instance, in 2017 more than 8,000 migrants entered Panama illegally. To ensure domestic and regional security, Panamanian authorities continued to work with the U.S. government to detain and repatriate individuals for whom there were elevated suspicions of links to terrorism.

The Darien jungle is a well-known smuggling route and represents a potential vulnerability that terrorist groups could exploit. Panamanian security, immigration, and intelligence authorities have greatly improved their ability to operate in the Darien region, effectively exercising control over the sparsely populated terrain, and increasing situational awareness and coordination among government agencies.

While the conclusion of the Colombian Peace Process with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) has reduced the threat of the FARC itself in the Darien, transnational criminal organizations still use old FARC routes for illicit transit of travelers that raise terrorist concerns and contraband goods. Building on previous cooperation with its neighbors, Panama conducted a series of targeted operations with Colombia and Costa Rica in an effort to secure its borders against illicit migration and illicit narcotics trafficking.

Panama is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and remained involved in the Coalition's Counter-Finance working group.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Panama does not have comprehensive counterterrorism legislation or a robust counterterrorism legal framework. Officials from the National Security Council, the border service, the immigration service, and the police meet frequently amongst themselves and with U.S. government officials to coordinate and act on migration alerts and detain and deport travelers who may represent a security risk.

In May 2017, President Varela signed Executive Decree 81, which was Panama's first step toward implementing controls over dual-use goods. The decree created a committee and sub-committee charged with its implementation, including a licensing regime, protocols for classification, verification, and end-use analysis. In addition, in April 2017 the president signed Executive Decree 129, which endorsed the National Interagency Plan for the Prevention and Response to Threats or Incidents involving Chemical, Biological, Radioactive, Nuclear, Explosive Weapons and their Delivery Systems under the direction of the National Security Council.

Separately, the lack of funding for maintenance of non-intrusive inspection equipment operated by the National Customs Authority has led to a sharp decrease in cargo scans in 2017. This has

significantly reduced interdiction efforts at key inspection stations, as demonstrated by reduced numbers of inspections and seizures. This reduction in capability limits the government's ability to analyze cargo transiting the country, including at the international airport and entry and exit of the Colon free trade zone.

A key focus of counterterrorism efforts in Panama is the enhanced screening of individuals entering Panama's borders, including through Darien foot routes, airports, and seaports. Panama, through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Biometric Identification Transnational Migration Alert program, collaborates with its regional partners to enhance risk-based traveler screening and migration and criminal databases. Mobile security teams, including those operating under the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Joint Security Program, partnered with Mexican law enforcement officers at Tocumen International Airport to identify air passengers linked to terrorism, narcotics, weapons, and currency smuggling, as well as to intercept fugitives, persons associated with organized crime, and other travelers of interest.

Panama cooperated with U.S. law enforcement on various counterterrorism cases this year, including individuals linked to Hizballah.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Panama served as vice-president of the Financial Action Task Force of Latin America (GAFILAT) in 2017 and will assume the GAFILAT presidency in 2018. Panama's financial intelligence unit, Financial Analysis Unit Panama, is a member of the Egmont Group.

Panama conducted a national risk evaluation in 2017 to identify the sectors most vulnerable to money laundering and terrorist financing. The results of the evaluation were used to prepare a national strategy in conjunction with the International Monetary Fund, the *National Strategy to Combat Money Laundering, Terrorism Financing and WMD Proliferation*. This national strategy recognizes that while the terrorism risk in Panama is relatively low, its financial sector could be vulnerable to terrorist financing without the proper safeguards.

In February 2017, the Securities Market Superintendency implemented stricter Know Your Customer regulations including a requirement for the subscriber to provide identity, bank reference, beneficiary declaration, and origin of funds documentation.

Panama's Merchant Marine Ship Registry de-flagged vessels linked to sanctionable trade as outlined in UN resolutions and the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List. Panama has yet to identify and freeze assets belonging to terrorists or sanctioned individuals and organizations. It has not prosecuted terrorist financing cases.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): There have been no changes since the 2016 report.

International and Regional Cooperation: Panama is an active participant in the United Nations and regional security initiatives such as the Organization of American States Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism (OAS-CICTE). Panama has held the presidency of the OAS-CICTE since March 2017. During the 17th CICTE Session in April 2017, members adopted a declaration to strengthen national financial systems in an effort to prevent terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

PARAGUAY

Overview: In 2017, the Government of Paraguay continued to be a receptive partner on counterterrorism cooperation with the United States. Paraguay's challenges stem from ineffective immigration, customs, and law enforcement controls along its porous borders, particularly the Tri-Border Area (TBA) with Argentina and Brazil, and its dry border with Brazil from the TBA to Pedro Juan Caballero.

Since 2008, persons claiming to be part of the Paraguayan People's Army (known by its Spanish acronym EPP) – a domestic criminal group initially dedicated to a socialist revolution in Paraguay – have been involved in violence meant to extort and intimidate the population and local governments in the northern departments of Concepcion, San Pedro, and Amambay. Paraguayan authorities officially consider the EPP and its offshoots organized criminal groups rather than terrorist organizations, but public discourse of Paraguayan leaders occasionally refers to the EPP informally as a terrorist organization. The Government of Paraguay believes the EPP is a small, decentralized group of between 20 and 50 members. EPP and offshoot groups' activities have consisted largely of isolated attacks on remote police and army posts, or against ranchers and peasants accused of aiding Paraguayan security forces. Ranchers and ranch workers in northeastern Paraguay, including members of the Mennonite community, claimed the EPP frequently threatened both their livelihoods and personal security. As of December 12, authorities believe the EPP held four hostages, while the offshoot Mariscal Lopez's Army (known by its Spanish acronym EML) held one. The longest-held victim has been in captivity since 2014. The EPP released farmer Franz Wiebe on February 25 after 214 days in captivity.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: The EPP continued to conduct kidnappings, killings, and sabotage operations:

- On March 17, EPP members kidnapped a farmer, burned his vehicle, and later released him near Colonia Rio Verde in Santa Rosa del Aguaray.
- On April 17, EPP members kidnapped and killed Estancia Santa Adelia worker, Fabio Ramon Duarte Candia.
- On April 26, authorities found an alleged EPP murder victim, Davalos Galeano at Estancia Ka'aguy Poty, Cuero Fresco, Arroyito.
- On August 21, EPP members ambushed and kidnapped 32-year old Mexican national Franz Hieber Wieler at the Estancia San Eduardo, San Pedro Department. In addition to setting fire to the tractor Wieler was operating, the band of five attackers left behind a pamphlet with EPP propaganda.

- On September 1, alleged EPP members intercepted a vehicle near the La Yeyaa Mennonite colony in Amambay Department and took 22-year old Bernhard Blatz Friessen hostage.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: The Paraguayan government continued to make use of a 2013 counterterrorism law that allows for the domestic deployment of the Paraguayan military to counter internal or external threats. The Paraguayan National Police (PNP) Secretariat for the Prevention and Investigation of Terrorism officially handles counterterrorism functions, although other PNP units and agencies such as the National Anti-Drug Secretariat work such cases as well, particularly when related to drug trafficking. Military forces and police officials continued to operate jointly in the San Pedro, Concepcion, and Amambay departments against the EPP, with limited success.

On September 18, President Cartes signed the Seized and Forfeited Asset Management law. The law establishes a National Secretariat of Seized and Confiscated Assets to administer confiscated property and assets associated with criminal activity, such as terrorist financing.

On October 18, Paraguayan authorities arrested 61-year old Genaro Meza, the alleged EPP caretaker of hostage Franz Wiebe. Prosecutors charged Meza with terrorism, terrorist association, kidnapping, unlawful imprisonment, and aggravated extortion.

On November 24, Brazilian and Paraguayan authorities apprehended two alleged EPP leaders in Brazil and charged them with murder and kidnapping. The suspects had been on the run since 2004. Paraguayan prosecutors continued to work with their Brazilian counterparts to extradite the suspects to Paraguay for trial.

With the help of U.S. counterparts, Paraguayan law enforcement officials arrested multiple Lebanese Hizballah-linked suspects in the Ciudad del Este area who were engaged in money laundering and drug trafficking activities, some with links to the United States.

The TBA has been attractive to individuals engaged in terrorist financing, as the minimal, and often corrupt, police and military presence along these borders allows for a largely unregulated flow of people, goods, and money. Paraguay's efforts to provide more effective law enforcement and border security suffered from a lack of interagency cooperation and information sharing, as well as pervasive corruption within security, border control, and judicial institutions.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Paraguay is a member of the Financial Action Task Force of Latin America (GAFILAT), a Financial Action Task Force-style regional body. Paraguay's Financial Intelligence Unit is a member of the Egmont Group. Paraguay continued its preparations for a GAFILAT mutual evaluation, scheduled for January 2019. Paraguay has counterterrorist financing legislation and the ability to freeze and confiscate terrorist assets immediately. FATF experts noted Paraguay possesses an adequate legal framework but falls short on implementation. In particular, government agencies struggled to coordinate effectively to detect, deter, and prosecute money laundering and terrorism financing.

The Paraguayan government registers and has reporting requirements for non-governmental organizations (NGOs), including non-profit organizations, and mandates that NGOs set up internal monitoring and training to guard against criminal or terrorist financing. Paraguay also requires the collection of data for wire transfers. Despite these mechanisms, government agencies' efforts to enforce anti-money laundering/counterterrorist financing laws were lacking.

Paraguay's Central Bank and financial intelligence unit participated in a June fact-finding mission to gather information on financial activities and illicit finance risks in the Tri-Border Area encompassing Ciudad del Este, Paraguay; Puerto Iguazu, Argentina; and Foz do Iguazu, Brazil. This was a joint project with the U.S. Department of the Treasury, the Argentine and Brazilian FIUs, the Argentine and Paraguayan Central Banks, and supervisory authorities.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): Paraguay had no CVE program in 2017.

International and Regional Cooperation: Paraguay participated in the Organization of American States and its Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism (CICTE). It continued to collaborate with Argentina and Brazil on border security initiatives, regional exchanges, and law enforcement projects. Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay coordinated law enforcement efforts in the Tri-Border Area via their Trilateral Tri-Border Area Command. The Interior Ministers of Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay met on November 27 to discuss cooperation on all these fronts.

In February 2017, Paraguay participated in a Practitioner's Workshop on Countering Transnational Terrorist Groups in the Tri-Border Area. The conference was hosted by the Argentine Federal Intelligence Agency with the sponsorship of the U.S. Departments of State and Justice. The two-day workshop included prosecutors, judges, law enforcement investigators, financial intelligence/sanctions officials, and intelligence officials from the region.

PERU

Overview: The Shining Path (Sendero Luminoso or SL) operated in 2017 in the Apurímac, Ene, and Mantaro River Valleys (VRAEM) – a remote and rugged region slightly larger than Tennessee that accounts for more than two-thirds of the cocaine produced in Peru. Estimates of SL's strength vary, but most experts and the Peruvian security services assess SL to number 250 to 300 members of which 60 to 150 are armed fighters. Deadly SL attacks against Peru's security forces in 2017 held steady compared to the previous year. In some instances, SL may have set ambushes in revenge for successful counternarcotic operations.

SL is involved in all logistical aspects of drug trafficking in its area of influence. It collects "revolutionary taxes" from those involved in the drug trade, and, for a price, provides security and transports narcotics for drug trafficking organizations. SL continued to use Maoist ideology to justify its illegal activities and armed opposition to the Peruvian government.

SL founder Abimael Guzmán and key accomplices remain in prison serving life sentences for numerous crimes committed in the 1980s and 1990s. Many former SL members and leaders have served 25 to 30 year sentences on terrorism charges. Several members were released from prison in 2017 and others are due to be released in the coming months and years. The Peruvian courts are re-trying 12 imprisoned SL leaders, including Guzman, for the 1992 Tarata Street bombing in Miraflores that killed 25 people. Guzmán and other captured SL figures from the 1980s and 1990s are no longer associated with the active SL group in the VRAEM emergency zone.

2017 Terrorist Incidents:

- On March 13, SL snipers killed three Peruvian National Police officers in the VRAEM who were driving from the Palmapampa police base to the VRAEM Special Command base in Pichari.
- On May 31, SL snipers killed two police officers on a rural road in Ayacucho's Huanta province in the VRAEM.
- On July 21, SL ambushed a police convoy in the VRAEM's Llochegua district to free a local drug-trafficking leader. SL injured nine police officers and one prosecutor, but failed to free the captured drug-trafficker.
- On September 6, the Ministry of Interior reported that SL operatives killed three police officers in Huancavelica's Churcampa province, just outside the VRAEM. The police suspect the attack was connected to drug trafficking.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Over the past three decades, Peru has decreed a variety of laws specifically designed to counter terrorism. These measures have broad political and public support. On July 19, the Government of Peru amended its "terrorism apology" law which prohibits making public statements that justify or defend terrorism. The amendments increase the punishment for publicly sympathizing with terrorism and lower the threshold to press charges. On November 4, Congress added a provision to Peru's electoral code to prohibit Peruvians convicted of terrorism or supporting terrorism from running for public office.

The most significant Peruvian government actions against SL this year were:

- On July 26, the police arrested David Bazan Arévalo, the provincial mayor of Tocache, on terrorist financing charges. He allegedly financed a Shining Path operation in June 2007 to assassinate a prosecutor and three police officers, who were investigating his links to drug trafficking.
- In early October, the Government of Peru launched a joint military-police operation, code-named Tenaz, in the VRAEM. The operation resulted in two confirmed Shining Path deaths, eight unconfirmed dead or wounded, and 13 drug traffickers arrested.
- In December, the police and military captured three alleged SL terrorists, one of whom is the son of "Alipio," a SL leader killed in 2013. The MOI believes these three individuals may have carried out ambushes against the PNP in Ayacucho and Huancavelica.

The Minister of Defense announced on August 2 the formation of a 400-strong joint police and military unit focused on targeting the Shining Path and pacifying the VRAEM.

On border security, immigration authorities collected limited biometrics information from visitors. Citizens of South American countries were allowed to travel to Peru by land using only national identification cards. There was no visa requirement for citizens of most countries from Europe, Southeast Asia, and Central America (except El Salvador and Nicaragua).

In October 2014, Peruvian police arrested Muhammad Ghaleb Hamdar, a Lebanese citizen suspected of links to Hizballah. According to reports, there was residue and traces of explosives in Hamdar's apartment. On April 20, a Peruvian court acquitted Hamdar of terrorism charges, but sentenced him to six years in prison for using false documents. On October 20, the Peruvian Supreme Court overturned Hamdar's acquittal. He remains in custody with a retrial scheduled for early 2018.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Peru is a member of the Financial Action Task Force of Latin America, a Financial Action Task Force (FATF)-style regional body. The Financial Intelligence Unit of Peru is a member of the Egmont Group. Under Decree Law 25475, Peru criminalizes any form of collaboration with terrorists, including providing financial support. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): The Government of Peru stressed the importance of heavily investing in the VRAEM as a means of ending the relationship between VRAEM residents and SL. The Government of Peru allocated approximately $523 million in the VRAEM in 2017 for economic development and pacification efforts.

International and Regional Cooperation: Peru participates in counterterrorism activities in international and regional organizations, including the United Nations, the Organization of American States and its Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism, and the Union of South American Nations.

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Overview: In November 2017, the Trinidad and Tobago National Security Council approved a comprehensive counterterrorism strategy. The strategy document focuses on deterring people from participating in or supporting terrorism, enhancing national counterterrorism operational capabilities, and building national resilience in the event of an attack. The Government of Trinidad and Tobago continued its broad counterterrorism cooperation with the United States, which included information sharing. In April, the Governments of Trinidad and Tobago and the United States signed a Memorandum of Intent to provide for the installation of the Personal Identification Secure Comparison and Evaluation System (PISCES) at certain points of entry in Trinidad and Tobago. Preparations for the PISCES installation were ongoing at the end of 2017.

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago has stated that approximately 135 people, including women and minors, have traveled or attempted to travel to Syria and Iraq to fight with ISIS in the past few years. The threat from the possible return of foreign terrorist fighters remains a primary concern.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: In February, the government proposed a bill to amend its existing Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA):

- To criminalize terrorism-related actions both within Trinidad and Tobago and outside the country, the support of terrorism, or joining a terrorist organization or training with one;
- To require citizens of Trinidad and Tobago to give notice of travel to conflict areas; and
- To freeze the assets of those who commit a terrorist act, among other changes. The legislation lapsed before approval at the end of the last parliament session in September 2017, but the current government expects to reintroduce in 2018.

A lengthy judicial process can mean years before criminal prosecutions are resolved, and there has not been a conviction under the ATA to date. A number of new or amended laws and regulations to reform the criminal justice system, including codifying the practice of plea bargaining, improving access to bail, and new rules of criminal procedure, were adopted in 2017 to allow for more timely prosecutions.

In 2017, Trinidad and Tobago's security agencies received increased counterterrorism training and equipment from the U.S. government. As a result, the government's tactical ability to respond to terrorist threats increased significantly.

An interagency task force created in 2017 made progress in gathering terrorism-related intelligence and converting it into evidence that resulted in the designation of persons or entities involved in terrorism under the ATA. A committee was also created to examine issues relating to children and terrorism. Law enforcement agencies and the Trinidad and Tobago Defense Force continue to face resource constraints, however.

In August 2017, pursuant to a proposal by Trinidad and Tobago, Shane Crawford, a Trinidad and Tobago national, was added to the UN Security Council ISIL (Da'esh) and al-Qa'ida Sanctions List. Since November 2015, approximately 350 individuals and entities, including six with a nexus to Trinidad and Tobago, have been designated under the ATA and a small amount of assets have been frozen. Trinidad and Tobago has also requested that other jurisdictions list certain nationals with a nexus to Trinidad and Tobago under their respective domestic regimes, where appropriate.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Trinidad and Tobago is a member of the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force, a Financial Action Task Force (FATF)-style regional body, and the Financial Intelligence Unit of Trinidad and Tobago is a member of the Egmont Group. Following its last FATF mutual evaluation in 2015, Trinidad and Tobago took a number of steps to address the anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) deficiencies identified in the evaluation. The FIU has increased the size of its analytical staff, enhanced its outreach to stakeholders regarding AML/CFT obligations, and participated in the

Egmont Group ISIL project, among other steps. Still, in October 2017, FATF placed Trinidad and Tobago on its list of jurisdictions with strategic deficiencies in their AML/CFT regimes, and will continue to review Trinidad and Tobago's progress under its FATF action plan. With respect to CFT, the FATF-identified deficiencies relate to the need to implement its counterterrorism strategy and address the gaps identified in the ATA. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): The Government of Trinidad and Tobago has not developed a national CVE strategy, although the counterterrorism strategy adopted in November 2017 includes some elements. Much progress has been through programs that address violence and gang prevention at large, which the government sees as a higher priority than terrorist recruitment. One such program is the creation of Police Youth Clubs, where local police engage with at-risk youth after school within their communities. These community engagements assist in addressing youth marginalization and isolation while curbing negative perceptions of law enforcement within at-risk communities.

In March, the city of Chaguanas joined the Strong Cities Network. Other cities, such as Rio Claro and San Fernando, have been eager to work with the United States to implement CVE programs within their communities.

International and Regional Cooperation: As a member of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the lead country with responsibility for crime and security, Trinidad and Tobago is working with other CARICOM member states to develop a regional counterterrorism strategy.

VENEZUELA

Overview: In May 2017, for the twelfth consecutive year, the U.S. Department of State determined, pursuant to section 40A of the Arms Export Control Act, that Venezuela was not cooperating fully with U.S. counterterrorism efforts. The country's porous borders offered a permissive environment to known terrorist groups.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: The Venezuelan criminal code and other Venezuelan law explicitly criminalize terrorism and dictate procedures for prosecuting individuals engaged in terrorist activity. The government routinely levies accusations of "terrorism" against its political opponents.

Some Venezuelan military and civilian agencies perform counterterrorism functions. Within the Venezuelan armed forces, the General Directorate of Military Counterintelligence and the Command Actions Group of the National Guard have primary counterterrorism duties. The Bolivarian National Intelligence Service and the Division of Counterterrorism Investigations in the Scientific, Penal, and Criminal Investigation Corps within the Ministry of Interior, Justice, and Peace have primary civilian sector counterterrorism responsibilities. The degree of interagency cooperation and information sharing among agencies is unknown due to a lack of government transparency.

Border security at ports of entry was vulnerable and susceptible to corruption. The Venezuelan government routinely did not perform biographic or biometric screening at ports of entry or exit. There was no automated system to collect advance Passenger Name Record data on commercial flights or to cross-check flight manifests with passenger disembarkation data.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Venezuela is a member of the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force, a Financial Action Task Force-style regional body, and its National Financial Intelligence Unit is a member of the Egmont Group. Venezuela's existing anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism legal and regulatory framework criminalizes the financing of terrorism and includes requirements to report transactions that qualify as suspicious under the statute. Significant deficiencies remained in the terrorist asset freezing regime, including a lack of adequate procedures to identify and freeze terrorist assets. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): Venezuela had no CVE program in 2017.

International and Regional Cooperation: Previously, the Venezuelan government participated as official observers in peace negotiations between the Colombian government and the FARC. However, in 2017, President Maduro's rhetoric was at times bellicose (on one occasion he referred to Colombia as a "failed state") and served to heighten tensions between the two countries.

Chapter 2
State Sponsors of Terrorism

This report provides a snapshot of events during 2017 relevant to countries designated as State Sponsors of Terrorism. It does not constitute a new announcement regarding such designations.

To designate a country as a State Sponsor of Terrorism, the Secretary of State must determine that the government of such country has repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism. Once a country is designated, it remains a State Sponsor of Terrorism until the designation is rescinded in accordance with statutory criteria. A wide range of sanctions is imposed as a result of a State Sponsor of Terrorism designation, including:

- A ban on arms-related exports and sales;
- Controls over exports of dual-use items, requiring 30-day Congressional notification for goods or services that could significantly enhance the terrorist-list country's military capability or ability to support terrorism;
- Prohibitions on economic assistance; and
- Imposition of miscellaneous financial and other restrictions.

DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA

On November 20, 2017, the Secretary of State designated the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) as a State Sponsor of Terrorism. The Secretary determined that the Government of the DPRK has repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism, as the DPRK has been implicated in assassinations on foreign soil. These terrorist acts are in keeping with the DPRK's wider range of dangerous and malicious behavior, including continued nuclear and ballistic missile testing and development as well as Kim Jong Un's threats against American cities and territories and those of our allies.

The DPRK was previously designated as a state sponsor of terrorism in 1988 primarily on the basis of its involvement in the bombing of a Korean Airlines passenger flight in 1987. The DPRK's designation was rescinded in 2008 after a thorough review found that the DPRK met the statutory requirements for rescission. In 2017, the Secretary of State determined that the DPRK has repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism since the DPRK's state sponsor of terrorism designation was rescinded in 2008.

In addition to the DPRK's support for acts of international terrorism that led to its 2017 designation, the DPRK has continued to violate UN Security Council resolutions and has historically provided support for acts of international terrorism. Four Japanese Red Army members wanted by the Japanese government for participating in a 1970 Japan Airlines hijacking continued to shelter in the DPRK. The Japanese government also continued to seek a full accounting of the fate of the 12 Japanese nationals believed to have been abducted by DPRK state entities in the 1970s and 1980s; only five such abductees have been repatriated to Japan since 2002.

IRAN

Designated as a State Sponsor of Terrorism in 1984, Iran continued its terrorist-related activity in 2017, including support for Lebanese Hizballah (LH), Palestinian terrorist groups in Gaza, and various groups in Syria, Iraq, and throughout the Middle East. Iran used the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Qods Force (IRGC-QF) to provide support to terrorist organizations, provide cover for associated covert operations, and create instability in the Middle East. Iran has acknowledged the involvement of the IRGC-QF in both of the conflicts in Iraq and Syria, and the IRGC-QF is Iran's primary mechanism for cultivating and supporting terrorists abroad. Iran uses regional proxy forces to provide sufficient deniability to shield it from the consequences of its aggressive policies.

In 2017, Iran supported various Iraqi Shia terrorist groups, including Kata'ib Hizballah. It also bolstered the Assad regime in Syria. Iran views the Assad regime in Syria as a crucial ally and Syria and Iraq as crucial routes to supply weapons to LH, Iran's primary terrorist group ally. Through financial or residency enticements, Iran has facilitated and coerced primarily Shia fighters from Afghanistan and Pakistan to participate in the Assad regime's brutal crackdown in Syria. Iranian-supported Shia militias in Iraq have also committed serious human rights abuses against primarily Sunni civilians. Iranian forces have directly backed militia operations in Syria with armored vehicles, artillery, and drones.

Since the end of the 2006 Israeli-Lebanese Hizballah conflict, Iran has supplied LH with thousands of rockets, missiles, and small arms, in direct violation of UNSCR 1701. Iran has also provided hundreds of millions of dollars in support of LH and has trained thousands of its fighters at camps in Iran. Lebanese Hizballah fighters have been used extensively in Syria to support the Assad regime. In Bahrain, Iran has continued to provide weapons, support, and training to local Shia militant groups. In March 2017, the Department of State designated two individuals affiliated with the Bahrain-based al-Ashtar Brigades (AAB), which receives funding and support from the Government of Iran, as Specially Designated Global Terrorists under Executive Order 13224.

Iran continued to provide weapons, training, and funding to Hamas and other Palestinian terrorist groups, including Palestine Islamic Jihad and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command. These Palestinian terrorist groups have been behind a number of deadly attacks originating in Gaza and the West Bank, including attacks against Israeli civilians and Egyptian security forces in the Sinai Peninsula.

The Iranian government maintains a robust offensive cyber program and has sponsored cyberattacks against foreign government and private sector entities.

Iran remained unwilling to bring to justice senior al-Qa'ida (AQ) members residing in Iran and has refused to publicly identify the members in its custody. Iran has allowed AQ facilitators to operate a core facilitation pipeline through Iran since at least 2009, enabling AQ to move funds and fighters to South Asia and Syria.

SUDAN

Sudan was designated as a State Sponsor of Terrorism in 1993 for its support to international terrorist groups, including the Abu Nidal Organization, Palestine Islamic Jihad, Hamas, and Lebanese Hizballah. Sudan does, however, work with the United States on counterterrorism, despite its designation as a State Sponsor of Terrorism. The Government of Sudan continued to pursue counterterrorism operations alongside regional partners, including operations to counter threats to U.S. interests and personnel in Sudan. Sudan's "de-radicalization" program focused on reintegration and rehabilitation of returned foreign terrorist fighters and those espousing terrorist ideologies.

In June 2010, four Sudanese men sentenced to death for the January 1, 2008 killing of two U.S. Embassy staff members escaped from Khartoum's maximum security prison. That same month, Sudanese authorities recaptured one of the escaped convicts; the individual remains in custody serving a life sentence. Two of the escaped convicts were killed in 2011 and 2015 while fighting for terrorist organizations outside of Sudan. In November 2017, the final escaped convict was killed in Somalia during an air strike against an ISIS affiliated terrorist group.

In February 2017, an unidentified group of individuals likely prematurely detonated a bomb in an apartment in the Arkawit neighborhood of Khartoum, causing an explosion. Sudanese officials reported that they had arrested several foreign nationals and seized explosive material, weapons, and foreign passports after a post-blast raid of the apartment. No other terrorist attacks were reported in 2017.

On October 6, 2017, the United States lifted certain economic sanctions on Sudan due to progress the government made through the Five Track Engagement Plan, which includes a process to evaluate Sudan's counterterrorism cooperation with the United States. The Plan calls on Sudan to improve its counterterrorism efforts through enhanced interagency and international cooperation. As part of the government's counterterrorism strategy, Sudanese forces patrol the Sudanese-Libyan border to interdict the flow of suspected terrorists transiting through the region, and to prevent arms smuggling and other illicit activities. Sudan's expansive size, and the government's outdated technology and limited visa restrictions, presented challenges for border security.

SYRIA

Designated in 1979 as a State Sponsor of Terrorism, Syria continued its political and military support to a variety of terrorist groups. The regime continued to provide weapons and political support to Lebanese Hizballah (LH) and continued to allow Iran to rearm the terrorist organization. The Assad regime's relationship with LH and Iran grew stronger in 2017 as the regime became more reliant on external actors to fight regime opponents. President Bashar al-Assad remained a staunch defender of Iran's policies, while Iran exhibited equally energetic support for the Syrian regime. Syrian government speeches and press releases often included statements supporting terrorist groups, particularly LH.

Over the past decade, the Assad regime's permissive attitude towards al-Qa'ida and other terrorist groups' foreign terrorist fighter facilitation efforts during the Iraq conflict in turn fed the

growth of al-Qa'ida, ISIS, and affiliated terrorist networks inside Syria. The Syrian government's awareness and encouragement for many years of terrorists' transit through Syria to enter Iraq for the purpose of fighting Coalition Forces is well documented. Those very networks were among the terrorist elements that brutalized the Syrian and Iraqi populations in 2017. Additionally, Shia militia groups, some of which are U.S.-designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations aligned with Iran, continued to travel to Syria to fight on behalf of the Assad regime.

As part of a broader strategy during the year, the regime portrayed Syria itself as a victim of terrorism, characterizing all of the internal armed opposition as "terrorists." From Syria, ISIS plotted or inspired external terrorist operations. Additionally, the Syrian regime has purchased oil from ISIS through various intermediaries, adding to the terrorist group's revenue.

Syria is not in compliance with its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). The United States assesses that Syria has used chemical weapons repeatedly against the Syrian people every year since acceding to the Convention in 2013, and is therefore in violation of its obligations of the CWC. There have been numerous reports of chemical weapons use by the regime during the current conflict. On April 4, 2017, the Syrian regime attacked the town of Khan Shaykhun with sarin killing up to 100 people. The Joint Investigative Mechanism of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the United Nations has attributed four chemical weapons attacks in 2014, 2015, and 2017 to the Syrian government.

Chapter 3
The Global Challenge of Chemical, Biological, Radiological, or Nuclear (CBRN) Terrorism

The use of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) materials and expertise remained a terrorist threat in 2017. The harm caused by ISIS's repeated use of sulfur mustard in Iraq and Syria over the past three years vividly exemplified this threat. Terrorists' stated intent to acquire, develop, and use these materials has not waned. The United States has continued to work proactively to disrupt and deny ISIS's – and other non-state actors' – CBRN capabilities.

A number of international partnerships have either the explicit or the implicit purpose of countering the CBRN threat from terrorists and other non-state actors. The United States routinely provides technical and financial assistance and training to partner nations, and to international organizations, as necessary, to help strengthen their abilities to adequately protect and secure CBRN-applicable expertise, technologies, and material. U.S. participation within and contribution to these groups is vital to ensuring our continued safety from the CBRN threat.

Nuclear Security: The United States continued to advance the objectives of the 2016 Nuclear Security Action Plans for the United Nations (UN), International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), INTERPOL, the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, and the Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction. The United States also actively participated in the multilateral Nuclear Security Contact Group (NSGC) to sustain high-level attention and momentum for building a strengthened, sustainable, and comprehensive global nuclear security architecture. The United States continued to support the IAEA's Division of Nuclear Security (DNS), whose mandate is to strengthen nuclear security worldwide. Overall U.S. contributions to the IAEA's Nuclear Security Fund for FY 2017 totaled US $15,025,000. The key mission of DNS is to assist member states in preventing, detecting, and responding to threats of nuclear terrorism. This is achieved through the development of guidance as well as the provision of training, technical advice, peer reviews and other advisory services. The Division convened an annual conference that allowed States to share best practices and lessons learned across many aspects of nuclear security.

G-7 Global Partnership: The Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction (GP) was launched at the 2002 G8 Summit in Kananaskis, Canada to prevent terrorists, or states that support them, from acquiring or developing weapons of mass destruction. Today, the GP has expanded beyond its original G-8 (now G-7) membership to 30 countries and the European Union, with Jordan being the newest member in 2017. The GP remains a vital forum for countries to exchange information on national priorities for CBRN programmatic efforts worldwide, and to coordinate assistance for these programs. In 2017, the GP issued statements in support of the Global Health Security Agenda and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention.

The Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI): Launched in 2003, the PSI has increased international awareness and capability to address the challenges associated with stopping the trafficking of WMD, WMD-related components, and their means of delivery. The PSI remains

an important tool in the global effort to combat CBRN material transfers to both state and non-state actors of proliferation concern. Since its launch, 105 states have endorsed the PSI Statement of Interdiction Principles, by which states commit to take specific actions, consistent with their respective national legal authorities and relevant international law and frameworks, to support efforts to prevent the trafficking of WMD, related materials and their delivery systems. In 2017, there were 14 bilateral and multilateral activities designed to promote and exercise the Critical Capabilities and Practices to diminish the likelihood that WMD materials fall into the hands of state and non-state actors of proliferation concern.

UN Security Council resolution 1540: In 2017, the United States was actively engaged in strengthening implementation of UN Security Council resolution (UNSCR) 1540 (2004) through partnerships with other UN member states and international and regional organizations. The 1540 Committee has become a critical part of the international framework to control proliferation of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons and their means of delivery to non-state actors. The Organization of American States used funds the United States contributed to the UN Trust Fund for Global and Regional Disarmament Activities to hire a UNSCR 1540 coordinator to promote increased implementation of the Resolution in the Western Hemisphere.

The Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT): The GICNT is an international partnership of 88 nations and five official observer organizations dedicated to strengthening global capacity to prevent, detect, and respond to a nuclear terrorist event. In 2017, partner nations hosted nine multilateral activities under the auspices of GICNT across the areas of nuclear forensics, nuclear detection, and emergency preparedness and response. These events raised awareness of the threat of terrorist use of nuclear and radioactive materials, and provided opportunities for countries to share information, expertise, and best practices in a voluntary, non-binding framework.

Nuclear Trafficking Response Group (NTRG): The NTRG is the U.S. interagency group charged with coordinating the U.S. government response to foreign requests for assistance with incidents of illicit trafficking of nuclear and other radioactive (R/N) materials. The U.S. Department of State chairs the NTRG, which includes representatives from the U.S. government's nonproliferation, law enforcement, and intelligence communities.

Counter Nuclear Smuggling Program (CNSP): The CNSP advances U.S. national security by enhancing global capacity to prevent, detect, and respond to terrorist acquisition and use of nuclear and other radioactive (R/N) materials. The U.S. Department of State, with support from its U.S. interagency partners, conducts diplomatic and programmatic activities to secure vulnerable radioactive sources, strengthen partner countries' R/N smuggling-related legislation, train prosecutors to support R/N smuggling prosecutions, build nuclear forensics capabilities, and strengthen national-level interagency coordination for responding to R/N smuggling incidents. In 2017, the U.S. Department of State used CNSP funds to conduct or support more than 20 counter R/N smuggling-related activities and strengthened its partnerships with key donor countries and international organizations, such as INTERPOL and the IAEA, to leverage respective efforts.

Export Control and Related Border Security (EXBS) Program: The EXBS Program contributed to U.S. national security by helping partner countries fulfill their international

obligations and commitments, including those related to UN Security Council resolution 1540 and adherence to the guidelines of multilateral export control regimes, and by developing, strengthening, and institutionalizing related border security enforcement best practices. In 2017, EXBS sponsored 400+ activities for 60+ countries, trained 2,000+ officials, provided inspection and detection equipment worth more than US $4 million, and worked on several border security infrastructure development-related projects. EXBS has begun to reorient program focus towards top national security priorities such as the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and disrupting Iran and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's WMD-related procurement networks.

Nuclear Smuggling Detection and Deterrence (NSDD): The U.S. Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration, Office of Nuclear Smuggling Detection and Deterrence (NSDD) collaborates with partner countries to build their capacity to deter, detect, and investigate illicit trafficking of nuclear and other radioactive materials. NSDD's assistance to partner countries' national nuclear detection architecture included deployments of radiation detection technologies for use at official crossing points (land, air, and seaports), unofficial checkpoints (land and sea borders) and interior locations. NSDD coordinates its capacity-building activities with multiple U.S. government agencies as well as other international nuclear security assistance entities such as INTERPOL, the European Commission, and the IAEA. Further information on this program is available here.

Global Threat Reduction (GTR): Through GTR, the Department of State's Office of Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) worked to prevent states and terrorist groups from acquiring or proliferating WMD to attack the United States. In 2017, CTR's nuclear, chemical, and biological security programs implemented capacity-building projects to ensure foreign partners addressed proliferation and WMD terrorism threats emanating from the Middle East, Africa, and South and Southeast Asia.

To counter ISIS, CTR trained and equipped Iraqi counterterrorism forces prior to military operations in Mosul, Tal Afar, and Hawija, and helped secure weaponizable chemical and biological materials in newly-liberated areas. In Syria, CTR organized the provision of chemical weapons detection, sampling, and protective gear for civilian first responders operating in country. CTR programs in 2017 also trained Libyan partners to neutralize weaponizable chemicals and provided medical training for Yemeni first responders on chemical injury diagnosis and treatment protocols.

To prevent bioterrorism attacks, CTR secured dangerous pathogens in Yemen, where critical security upgrades at vulnerable laboratories were completed in 2017. CTR also trained law enforcement personnel to identify potential bioterrorism threats and rapidly detect and respond to potential bioterrorism incidents.

Biological Weapons Convention Inter-Sessional Work Program (BWC): The December 2017 BWC Meeting of States Parties adopted a final document with new language on a program of work for the 2018-2020 intersessional period. This new program of work entails several expert working groups that will meet annually to address topics including national implementation and international cooperation. The United States will continue to press for greater efforts to acquire better information about and promote international cooperation on

BWC States Parties' measures to implement the Convention. The United States advocated a range of efforts to: criminalize and deter malicious use of biological agents; promote sustainable, effective approaches to laboratory biosecurity; raise international awareness of the need for appropriate, balanced oversight of dual-use life science research with significant potential for harm; and identify and address impediments to international coordination and response in the event of a bioterrorism attack or a significant disease outbreak of unknown origin.

Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW): In response to the growing concern about chemical weapons use by state and non-State actors, the OPCW Director-General established a sub-working group on Non-State Actors (SWG) to stimulate discussion and generating specific recommendations that the Technical Secretariat and/or States Parties could implement to address the non-State actor challenge now. Many of these actions were memorialized in the October 2017 OPCW Executive Council decision, "Addressing the Threat Posed by the Use of Chemical Weapons by Non-State Actors." Additionally, the Director-General established a Rapid Reaction and Assistance Mission (RRAM) to provide assistance to states parties impacted by chemical weapons use by both State and non-State actors.

The OPCW Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) continued to investigate credible allegations of chemical weapons use in Syria. In 2017, the JIM confirmed that the Syrian regime was responsible for the April 4, 2017 sarin attack in Khan Shaykhun, in addition to three previous incidents of chemical weapons use in Syria. Further, the JIM confirmed ISIS was responsible for the September 15-16, 2016, use of sulfur mustard in Um Housh, in addition to a previous use on Marea in 2015.

Chapter 4
Terrorist Safe Havens (Update to 7120 Report)

Terrorist safe havens described in this report include ungoverned, under-governed, or ill-governed physical areas where terrorists are able to organize, plan, raise funds, communicate, recruit, train, transit, and operate in relative security because of inadequate governance capacity, political will, or both.

As defined by section 2656f(d) of Title 22 of the U.S. Code, the term "terrorist sanctuary" or "sanctuary" excludes the territory of a country the government of which is subject to a determination under section 4605(j)(1)(A) of Title 50; section 2371(a) of Title 22; or section 2780(d) of Title 22– the state sponsors of terrorism. You can find information regarding the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Iran, Sudan, and Syria in Chapter 3, State Sponsors of Terrorism.

TERRORIST SAFE HAVENS

AFRICA

Somalia. In 2017, terrorists used under-governed areas throughout Somalia as safe havens to plan, conduct, and facilitate operations, including mass-casualty bombings in major urban areas. Somali officials failed to implement critical national security reforms and pass legislation that could help enhance the government's capacity to secure and govern effectively at all levels. Despite these critical gaps in its counterterrorism strategy, the Somali government remained a committed partner and vocal advocate for U.S. counterterrorism efforts.

Despite facing increased pressure from strikes and other counterterrorism operations, al-Shabaab retained much of its safe haven throughout the country, and, in some cases, regained ceded territory after African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) forces continued to consolidate positions throughout southern Somalia in 2017. With the notable exception of targeted operations carried out by U.S. trained and equipped units of Somali commandos, the Somali National Army, as a whole, remained incapable of securing and retaking towns from al-Shabaab independently. This critical gap allowed al-Shabaab to continue to extort local populations and forcibly recruit fighters, some of whom were children.

In northern Somalia, ISIS-linked fighters used the limited safe haven they established in Puntland to launch a suicide attack against regional security forces in May, killing five and wounding several more. In the months that followed, the group failed to expand its foothold in the face of targeted airstrikes and other counterterrorism operations that commenced in the latter part of 2017, as well as fierce opposition from al-Shabaab cells operating in the region. As if to declare itself the more capable and potent threat in Puntland, al-Shabaab launched an attack against Puntland security forces in Af Urur that killed more than 60 soldiers and civilians.

As seen in previous years, al-Shabaab kept much of its safe haven in the Jubba River Valley as a primary base of operations for plotting and launching attacks throughout Somalia and northern Kenya. The group maintained control of several towns throughout the Jubaland region, including Jilib and Kunyo Barow, and increased its base of operations in the Gedo region to exploit the porous Kenya-Somalia border and attack targets in northeastern Kenya. Al-Shabaab also used its safe havens in Somalia to escalate its campaign in northern Kenya, primarily using buried improvised explosive devices and other explosives against Kenyan security forces and civilian passenger vehicles. The Kenyan government increased its presence throughout the border region, including in the Boni forest area best known as one of al-Shabaab's primary facilitation routes, but security officials continued to struggle with border security and crisis response in the more remote areas of northeastern Kenya.

Somalia remained heavily dependent on regional and international partners to support almost all major security functions throughout the country, making little progress on improving interagency coordination to limit terrorist transit through the country.

According to independent sources and non-governmental organizations engaged in demining activities on the ground, there was little cause for concern for the presence of weapons of mass destruction in Somalia.

The Lake Chad Region. In 2017, Boko Haram and its offshoot ISIS-West Africa (ISIS-WA) maintained limited safe havens in parts of Northeast Nigeria and on islands in Lake Chad, and prevented the reestablishment of state administration, service delivery, and humanitarian relief in broader territory surrounding Lake Chad. These safe havens are greatly reduced from the territory Boko Haram controlled in 2014-2015. Forces from Nigeria and other members of the Multinational Joint Task Force (Benin, Cameroon, Chad, and Niger) conducted operations to clear these safe havens, but lacked the capacity and resources to secure borders and hold and administer liberated territory. Both Boko Haram and ISIS-WA continued to conduct asymmetric attacks against civilians, military, and government personnel, including through suicide bombers, vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices, raids, ambushes, kidnappings, and other means. As a result of this insecurity, at year's end over two million people in the Lake Chad Region remained displaced and millions more remain dependent on humanitarian assistance.

No government in the Lake Chad Region was known to support or facilitate the proliferation or trafficking of weapons of mass destruction in or through its territory.

The Trans-Sahara. In 2017, the Sahara Branch of al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb, al-Murabitoun, Ansar al-Dine, and the Macina Liberation Front came together to form Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM). JNIM and other groups like Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa, Ansural Islam, and ISIS in the Greater Sahara continued to stage asymmetric attacks in the Trans-Sahara region. These terrorist groups were able to exercise relatively unimpeded freedom of movement in northern and central Mali and certain border regions of Niger and Burkina Faso.

Following their degrading and scattering in 2013 by combined African and French operations, these terrorist groups took a year to reorganize and began a campaign of asymmetric warfare that

included small raids, soft target attacks, and use of improvised explosive devices, land mines, and suicide bombers.

The groups are no longer able to conduct major military-style campaigns as they did in 2012, but, in 2017, these groups have once again become serious challenges to the security of the Sahel region.

No government in the region was known to support or facilitate the proliferation or trafficking of weapons of mass destruction in or through its territory, although the region remained prone to arms and munitions smuggling, which can have a destabilizing effect on security.

SOUTHEAST ASIA

The Sulu/Sulawesi Seas Littoral. The sheer expanse of the area, its numerous islands, and substantial maritime traffic in the Sulawesi Sea and the Sulu Archipelago make it a difficult region to secure. Traditional smuggling and piracy groups often supported terrorist networks, including through the movement of personnel, equipment, and funds. Kidnapping-for-ransom remained an ongoing threat and a source of funding for terrorist networks based in the southern Philippines.

Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines have made concerted new efforts to control their shared maritime boundaries. In 2016, the three countries signed a trilateral agreement that envisions joint air and maritime patrols, information sharing, and standard operating procedures for "hot pursuit" of criminal and terrorist elements actively conducting attacks. The agreement took effect in June 2017, and the Philippines, Indonesia, and Malaysia began joint patrols to combat piracy, terrorism, and the illegal drug trade.

Southeast Asia serves as a global trade hub, with some of the highest volume transit and transshipment ports in the world. Lack of political will, incomplete legal and regulatory frameworks, weak strategic trade controls, inadequate law enforcement and security capabilities, and emerging and re-emerging infectious disease and burgeoning bioscience capacity, make Southeast Asia an area of concern for weapons of mass destruction proliferation and transit. Malaysia, the Philippines, and Singapore are the only countries in the region with strategic trade control laws, and countries across Southeast Asia struggle with controls over dual-use items, as well as end-use or "catch-all" provisions. Assisting countries in the region to develop strong laws that meet international standards and help to build effective targeting and risk management systems are major goals of the Department of State's Export Control and Related Border Security program.

The Southern Philippines. From May to November 2017, terrorist organizations pledging support to ISIS – including a faction of the Abu Sayyaf Group, the Maute Group, and others – seized and occupied Marawi City. When the siege began, President Duterte declared martial law over the entire Mindanao region – approximately one-third of the country's territory – and Congress granted an extension of martial law until the end of 2018. Security forces ultimately cleared the city and eliminated much of the terrorist leadership, but suffered many casualties during the siege.

While the Philippine government possesses the political will to apply security measures against terrorist threats, and has consistently partnered with the United States and other nations to build the capacity to do so, it struggles to apply a coordinated whole-of-government approach to prevent terrorism. Terrorist organizations' continued ability to operate in the southern Philippines is a reflection of the centuries-long challenge of governing effectively in areas outside of Manila, and establishing consistent security in a region possessing a strong separatist identity, endemic poverty, and religious differences.

THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Egypt. Portions of Egypt's Sinai region remained a safe haven for terrorist organizations in 2017, primarily for ISIS-Sinai Province (ISIS-SP). Throughout the year, ISIS-SP used this under-governed safe haven to plan and carry out attacks against civilian and military targets both in the Sinai and in mainland Egypt. In November, ISIS-SP attacked the Al-Rawad Mosque in northern Sinai, killing 311 people. In December, it attempted to assassinate the Egyptian Minister of the Interior at the El Arish International Airport.

In response to these attacks, the Egyptian Armed Forces began planning a major offensive against ISIS-SP, beginning with a buildup of personnel and equipment in the Sinai.

The United States supported Egypt's efforts to combat ISIS-SP and other terrorist groups in Egypt by providing AH-64 "Apache" helicopters, mine-resistant ambush protected vehicles, counter-improvised explosive devices training, mobile sensor towers, and border security training programs. The United States routinely engages in military-to-military discussions on how it can help Egypt defeat ISIS-SP and other terrorist groups in Egypt. The United States remains concerned about the deteriorating security situation and potential impacts on the Multinational Force and Observers peacekeeping mission in the Sinai.

Through the Department of State's Export Control and Related Border Security Program, the United States worked with the Government of Egypt to enhance its border security capabilities. It provided land, air, and maritime border enforcement and targeting and risk management training for Egyptian Customs, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Transportation, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials. In addition, since 2009, the Department of State's Nonproliferation and Disarmament Fund has assisted Egypt with the provision of passenger and cargo vehicle x-ray detection equipment with the capability to inspect vehicular and truck traffic at fixed transportation checkpoints for weapons of mass destruction-related materials, conventional weapons, and other illicit items.

Iraq. Supported by the 75-member Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, the Government of Iraq retook the remaining territory held by ISIS in 2017. Prime Minister Abadi declared on December 9 that Iraq was fully liberated. The series of successive ISIS defeats included the Iraqi Security Forces' (ISF) liberation of Mosul, Tall Afar, Hawija, and finally al-Qaim and Rawa, in November. As the ISF liberated territory, ISIS killed thousands of Iraqi civilians, forcing residents to remain as human shields to discourage airstrikes and shooting those attempting to

flee. ISIS remained a terrorist threat in Iraq in 2017 and continued to carry out suicide, hit-and-run, and other asymmetric attacks throughout the country.

The terrorist organization Kata'ib Hizballah continued to maintain an active presence in Iraq.

ISIS continued to use the territory under its control in 2017 to produce sulfur mustard and improvised explosive devices filled with chlorine. The United States has proactively worked with our allies to dismantle this chemical weapons capability, as well as deny ISIS access to chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) materials and expertise through interdictions and strengthening the ability of regional governments to detect, disrupt, and respond effectively to suspected CBRN activity.

Due to security conditions in Iraq, the Export Control and Related Border Security program had difficulty implementing its outreach activities from 2015-2017.

The United States and Iraq also continued their bilateral partnership to counter nuclear smuggling under the framework of the 2014 Joint Action Plan on Combating Nuclear and Radioactive Materials Smuggling.

Lebanon. Lebanon remained a safe haven for certain terrorist groups in both undergoverned and Hizballah-controlled areas. Hizballah used areas under its control for terrorist training, fundraising, financing, and recruitment. The Government of Lebanon did not take significant action to disarm Hizballah, even though Hizballah maintained its weapons in defiance of UNSCR 1701. The government was unable to limit Hizballah's travel to and from Iraq or Syria to fight in support of the Assad regime. The Lebanese government did not have complete control of all regions of the country, or fully control its borders with Syria and Israel. Hizballah controlled access to parts of the country and had influence over some elements within Lebanon's security services.

Ungoverned areas along the un-demarcated Lebanese-Syrian border also served as safe havens for al-Nusrah Front, ISIS, and other Sunni terrorist groups in 2017, which operated in mountainous, mostly uninhabited zones where the government had limited reach. In late summer 2017, Hizballah cleared out al-Nusrah Front positions along the Syria-Lebanon border. Separately, the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) later undertook a major military offensive to expel ISIS fighters from Lebanon. Other terrorist groups, including Hamas, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine General Command, Asbat al-Ansar, Fatah al-Islam, Fatah al-Intifada, Jund al-Sham, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and the Abdullah Azzam Brigades, continued to operate within Lebanon primarily inside Lebanon's 12 Palestinian refugee camps. These groups used the Palestinian camps as safe havens to house weapons, shelter wanted criminals, and plan terrorist attacks.

The United States worked closely with the LAF and Internal Security Forces (ISF) to counter terrorist threats within Lebanon and along its border with Syria by providing counterterrorism training, military equipment, and weaponry.

Lebanon was not a source country for weapons of mass destruction (WMD) components, but its porous borders and limited controls on strategic trade made the country vulnerable for use as a transit and transshipment hub for proliferation-sensitive transfers, particularly with the conflict in Syria. The LAF Engineer Regiment partnered with U.S. government agencies to detect and prevent proliferation and trafficking of WMD along the Syrian border.

The Department of State's Export Control and Related Border Security program (EXBS) provided commodity identification training for items that could be used in chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear weapons, to keep these items from transiting through Lebanon. A frontier border security interdiction-training program, in partnership with the Department of Defense, strengthened LAF and ISF border security and interdiction capabilities. In addition, the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Nuclear Smuggling Detection and Deterrence equipped the Port of Beirut with radiation detection equipment to scan cargo for the presence of radiation.

Libya. Libya's vast, undergoverned territories constituted potential safe havens for terrorist organizations in 2017, including Benghazi, Darnah, and the deserts in the south and the west. U.S. airstrikes in cooperation with the GNA successfully targeted ISIS camps and drove remaining ISIS remnants to coastal areas or locations elsewhere. Due to the difficulties of controlling the southern and desert borders in particular, the GNA remained unable to effectively track flows of foreign terrorist fighters in and out of its territory. Rival factions and political stakeholders outside of the GNA, including in the House of Representatives and the "Libyan National Army," had also not stemmed or tracked the flow of foreign terrorist fighters.

The Department of State's Export Control and Related Border Security (EXBS) program provided training to the Libyan Ministries of Defense, Customs, Interior, Foreign Affairs, Libyan Airport Authority, and Libyan Intelligence Service officials. This aimed to enhance Libya's contribution to preventing weapons of mass destruction (WMD) proliferation and diversion of conventional arms and explosives to ISIS and other terrorist organizations. The country's history with WMD, its significant conventional stockpiles, and the continuing strength of armed groups with independent allegiance make these priority engagements. In 2017, targeted technical training included airport security and cargo interdiction training, basic and advanced land border security training, counter-proliferation investigations training, and fraudulent documentation training and counter-improvised explosive device training. These activities encourage interagency cooperation and promote regional and international cooperation to counter illicit trafficking in strategic items.

Yemen. Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), on behalf of the Republic of Yemen Government (ROYG), are fighting to reclaim territory currently held by Houthi forces and al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). The northwest of the country, as well as portions of the southern coast interior are beyond governmental control, severely constraining the Yemeni government's ability to prevent terrorist training, funding, recruitment, and transit. AQAP and ISIS-Yemen continued to benefit from the ongoing conflict with the Houthis, successfully insinuating themselves among elements of the anti-Houthi coalition and exploiting the security vacuum in large parts of the country to increase support. Under President Hadi's leadership, the ROYG has been as cooperative with U.S., Saudi, and UAE counterterrorist operations as its limited capacity will allow. In 2017, counterterrorism operations, led primarily

by UAE-supported forces, targeted AQAP safe havens for clearance in Abyan Shabwah and Hadramawt Governorates.

Yemen's political instability continued to hinder efforts to enact or enforce comprehensive strategic trade controls to counter the flow of weapons and munitions in the region. This left Yemen vulnerable as a transit point for destabilizing weapons. Nonetheless, the Department of State's Export Control and Related Border Security (EXBS) program provided Yemeni authorities with training to reconstitute land border and maritime security capabilities – with a counter-proliferation focus – through a series of training programs for border guards, customs officers, and the coast guard.

SOUTH ASIA

Afghanistan. Terrorist and insurgent groups are active in the border region of Afghanistan and Pakistan. The Government of National Unity (GNU) struggled to assert control over this remote terrain, where the population is largely detached from national institutions. Afghanistan generally cooperated with U.S. counterterrorism efforts, including participation in joint operations against insurgents in districts bordering Pakistan.

The potential for weapons of mass destruction (WMD) trafficking and proliferation remained a concern. In 2017, the United States and Afghanistan worked to finalize a bilateral framework to help Afghanistan enhance its capabilities to prevent, detect, and respond to nuclear and other radioactive material smuggling incidents. The Afghanistan and U.S. governments also continued to work to implement comprehensive strategic trade controls and strengthen Afghanistan's border security.

The United States continued to assist the GNU in building capacity to secure potentially dangerous biological materials and infrastructure housed at Afghan facilities, to promote surveillance capabilities to detect and identify possibly catastrophic biological events, and to engage Afghan scientists and engineers that have WMD or WMD-applicable expertise.

Pakistan. Although Pakistan's National Action Plan calls to "ensure that no armed militias are allowed to function in the country," several terrorist groups focused on attacks outside of the country continued to operate from Pakistani soil in 2017. These groups included the Haqqani Network, Lashkar e-Tayyiba, and Jaish-e-Mohammad. Pakistan continued military operations to eradicate terrorist safe havens in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas, although their impact on all terrorist groups was uneven.

Pakistan is committed to combating the trafficking of items that could contribute to WMDs and their delivery systems. Pakistan was a constructive and active participant in the Nuclear Security Summit process and in the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, and worked to strengthen its strategic trade controls, including updating its national export control list. The State Department's Export Control and Related Border Security Program increased the Government of Pakistan's enforcement capacity by sponsoring training for Pakistani Customs and the Strategic Export Control Division officials on how to properly identify strategic

commodities of concern. These commodity identification and advanced interdiction trainings were implemented by the U.S. Department of Energy.

EXBS also sponsored regional collaboration through nonproliferation fellowships and cross-border coordination with Pakistan and Afghanistan through the UN Office of Drugs and Crime – World Customs Organization's Container Control Program (CCP). Under the CCP, training was provided to enhance the targeting skills of port control unit officials at the Jalalabad border-crossing and encouraged sharing of customs data between countries.

WESTERN HEMISPHERE

Colombia. Rough terrain and dense forest cover, coupled with low population densities and historically weak government presence, define Colombia's borders with Brazil, Ecuador, Peru, and Venezuela. Historically these conditions have allowed for safe havens for domestic terrorist groups, particularly the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN). The peace accord between the Government of Colombia and FARC in 2016 led to a normalization of relations, with the latter even entering the political sphere. Similar negotiations with the ELN stalled in 2017, precipitating a return to violence by the group. The Government of Colombia maintained pressure on the ELN to deny safe haven, disrupt terrorist financing efforts, and degrade its logistics infrastructure. In addition, Colombia conducted operations to counter the ability of the ELN to conduct terrorist attacks. Despite these efforts, the ELN and illegal armed groups continued to use the porous border, remote mountain areas, and jungles to maneuver, train, conduct kidnappings for ransom, cultivate and transport narcotics, operate illegal mines, "tax" the local populace, and engage in other illegal activities.

Improved relations with neighboring Ecuador have led to some increased cooperation on law enforcement issues. Colombia also continued to cooperate and share information with the Panamanian National Border Service. Additionally, Brazil continued implementing its Integrated Border Monitoring System in an effort to monitor its entire border, and along with continued cooperation with the Government of Colombia, addressed potential safe haven areas along their shared borders. The Export Control and Related Border Security program has recently assisted Brazil in making border security improvements to prevent any groups that may potentially seek to export illicit weapons of mass destructor and precursor goods from being able to do so.

Venezuela. Venezuela's porous border with Colombia has made its territory useful to the National Liberation Army and illegal armed groups, who used it to transit in and out of its territory.

COUNTERING TERRORISM ON THE ECONOMIC FRONT

In 2017, the Department of State designated the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) as a State Sponsor of Terrorism, designated one new Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO), and amended three existing FTO designations by adding aliases. In addition, the Department designated 30 organizations and individuals as Specially Designated Global Terrorists (SDGTs)

under Executive Order (E.O.) 13224 and amended an existing E.O. 13224 designation by adding aliases. The Department revoked the FTO and SDGT designation of one entity.

The Department of the Treasury also designated organizations and individuals under E.O. 13224. For a full list of all U.S. designations, see the Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control.

2017 State Sponsor of Terrorism Designation:

- On November 20, the President announced the Secretary of State's designation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) as a State Sponsor of Terrorism based on the determination that the DPRK repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism.

2017 Foreign Terrorism Organization/Executive Order 13224 Group Designations:

- On August 17, the Department of State designated Hizbul Mujahideen (HM) under E.O. 13224 and as an FTO. (See Chapter 6, Foreign Terrorist Organizations, for further information on HM.)
- On June 23, the Department of State amended the E.O. 13224 and FTO designations of Hizballah to add aliases including Lebanese Hizballah as well as the Foreign Relations Department and the External Security Organization, key components of the terror organization. (See Chapter 6, Foreign Terrorist Organizations, for further information on Hizballah.)
- Also on June 23, the Department of State amended the E.O. 13224 and FTO designations of al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) to add aliases Sons of Abyan, Sons of Hadramawt, and National Hadramawt Council, among others. (See Chapter 6, Foreign Terrorist Organizations, for more information on AQAP.)
- On November 2, the Department of State amended the E.O. 13224 and FTO designations of Abdallah Azzam Brigades (AAB) to add aliases, including Marwan Hadid Brigades. The Department has concluded that the group remains active and operates in Syria under the name Marwan Hadid Brigades, which has carried out attacks jointly with the FTO and SDGT al-Nusrah Front and has trained at a terrorist camp in Syria. (See Chapter 6, Foreign Terrorist Organizations, for more information on AAB.)

2017 Executive Order (E.O.) 13224 designations:

- On January 10, the Department of State designated Ibrahim al-Banna, a senior member of FTO and SDGT group AQAP, who served as its security chief and provided military and security guidance to AQAP leadership. He praised the 9/11 attacks in an online magazine and threatened to target Americans domestically and abroad.
- Also on January 10, the Department of State designated Hamza bin Laden, son of Usama bin Laden and member of FTO and SDGT group, al-Qa'ida. Hamza bin Laden repeatedly called for acts of terrorism in western capitals and against U.S. interests.
- On January 12, the Department of State designated Ali Damush and Mustafa Mughniyeh, both members of Hizballah, an FTO and SDGT entity supported by Iran. Damush is a senior Hizballah leader and an aide to overall leader, Hassan Nasrallah. Damush leads

Hizballah's Foreign Relations Department, which engages in covert terrorist operations around the world on behalf of Hizballah, including gathering intelligence and recruiting. Mughniyeh is a commander in Hizballah and once led Hizballah's operations in the Golan Heights, helping organize the group's terrorist infrastructure.

- Also on January 12, the Department of State designated Alexanda Amon Kotey. Kotey is one of four members of an execution cell for ISIS. The notorious cell, dubbed "The Beatles," was responsible for holding captive and beheading approximately two dozen hostages, including several Westerners. As a guard for the cell, Kotey likely engaged in the group's executions and exceptionally cruel torture methods, including electric shock and waterboarding. Kotey acted as an ISIS recruiter and recruited several UK nationals to join the terrorist organization.
- On January 13, the Department of State designated the Indonesia-based Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD). JAD was formed in 2015 and is composed of almost two dozen Indonesian extremist groups that pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of ISIS, an FTO and SDGT-designated group. In January 2016, four people were killed and 25 wounded following a JAD-attributed attack by a suicide bomber and gunmen in central Jakarta.
- On March 29, the Department of State designated Ahmad Hasan Yusuf and Alsayed Murtadha Majeed Ramadhan Alawi, both members of the militant group al Ashtar Brigades (AAB) that receives funding and support from the Government of Iran. AAB has claimed responsibility for numerous terrorist attacks – some of which have resulted in casualties – mainly against police and security targets in Bahrain. Yusuf is an Iran-based senior member of the group. Alawi is based in Bahrain.
- On April 4, the Department of State designated Shane Dominic Crawford and Mark John Taylor, both affiliated with ISIS. Crawford is a citizen of Trinidad and Tobago and is believed to have been a foreign terrorist fighter in Syria carrying out terrorist activity on behalf of ISIS, including acting as an English language propagandist for the group. Taylor is a New Zealand national who began fighting in Syria with ISIS in 2014. Taylor has used social media in support of ISIS, including appearing in a 2015 ISIS propaganda video to encourage terrorist attacks in Australia and New Zealand.
- On April 5, the Department of State designated El Shafee Elsheikh and Anjem Choudary, both affiliated with ISIS. Elsheikh was identified as a member of the ISIS execution cell known as "The Beatles," a group accused of beheading approximately two dozen hostages and said to have earned a reputation for waterboarding, mock executions, and crucifixions. Choudary is a British terrorist with links to convicted terrorists and terrorist networks in the UK. In September 2014, Choudary was arrested by London police for pledging allegiance to ISIS and for acting as a key figure in ISIS's recruitment drive.
- Also on April 5, the Department of State designated Sami Bouras, a Swedish citizen of Tunisian descent, who is a member of AQ and who has been involved in planning suicide attacks.
- On April 12, the Department of State designated Abu Anas al-Ghandour, a military commander for the FTO and SDGT group, Hamas. Al-Ghandour leads a brigade in Gaza, has been involved in many terrorist operations, including the 2006 attack on the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) outpost at the Kerem Shalom border crossing. The attack killed two IDF soldiers and wounded four others, and led to the kidnapping of dual French-Israeli citizen, Corporal Gilad Shalit.

- On April 19, the Department of State designated Tarek Sakr and Farah Mohamed Shirdon. Sakr is a Syrian-born Canadian citizen who has conducted sniper training in Syria, periodically travels to Turkey, and has been linked to al-Nusrah Front, al-Qa'ida's affiliate in Syria. Shirdon is a Canadian citizen who traveled to Iraq and Syria to fight with ISIS; he is a prominent ISIS fighter and recruiter and has been involved in fundraising.
- On April 26, the Department of State designated Mubarak Mohammed A Alotaibi, the Syria-based deputy leader of ISIS-Saudi Arabia, an SDGT-designated branch of ISIS.
- On May 26, the Department of State designated Muhammad al-Isawi, the leader of ISIS-Sinai Province, as an FTO and SDGT group.
- Also on May 26, the Department of State designated Hashem Safieddine, a senior leader in Hizballah. Safieddine is a key member of Hizballah's executive council, which oversees Hizballah's political, organizational, social, and educational activities.
- On June 16, the Department of State designated Marwan Ibrahim Hussayn Tah al-Azawi, an Iraqi ISIS leader connected to ISIS's development of chemical weapons for use in ongoing combat against Iraqi Security Forces. ISIS has repeatedly used sulfur mustard in chemical weapons attacks in Syria and Iraq.
- Also on June 16, the Department of State designated Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI) as an SDGT group. MMI is an Indonesia-based terrorist group formed in 2000 by Abu Bakar Bashir, leader of the FTO and SDGT group, Jemaah Islamiya. The group has conducted attacks in Indonesia. It claimed responsibility for a May 2012 attack at the book launch of Canadian author Irshad Manji; the attack left three attendees hospitalized.
- On June 16, the Department of State designated Mohammad Shafi Armar, Oussama Ahmad Atar, and Mohammed Isa Yousif Saqar Al Binali. Shafi Armar is a leader and head recruiter in India for ISIS. He has cultivated a group of dozens of ISIS sympathizers who are involved in terrorist activities across India, such as plotting attacks, procuring weapons, and identifying locations for terrorist training camps. Atar is a senior leader of ISIS's external operations efforts, has established a network to carry out attacks in Europe, and was a leading coordinator of the November 2015 Paris attacks and March 2016 Brussels attacks. The Belgian-Moroccan national was responsible for recruiting, training, and sending at least some of the individuals to Paris to launch the November 2015 attacks, which killed and injured hundreds, including Americans. Al Binali is also a senior member of ISIS who departed Bahrain to join the terrorist group in 2014 and has since appeared in multiple ISIS propaganda videos calling on Bahrainis, specifically members of Bahrain's security forces, to join ISIS.
- On June 30, the Department of State designated Mohammad Yusuf Shah, also known as Syed Salahuddin, who, as the senior leader for FTO and SDGT-designated HM, vowed to block any peaceful resolution to the Kashmir conflict, threatened to train more Kashmiri suicide bombers, and vowed to turn the Kashmir valley "into a graveyard for Indian forces" in 2016. Under his leadership, HM has claimed responsibility for several attacks.
- On July 26, the Department of State amended the designation of Yarmouk Martyrs Brigade (YMB) to change the group's primary name to Khalid bin Al-Walid Army and to add new aliases. The YMB is allegiant to ISIS, was formed in 2012, and was first designated by the Department of State in 2016. It has staged attacks throughout southern Syria. Near the time of the U.S. designation, the YMB changed its name to Khalid bin Al-Walid Army after merging with groups operating in southern Syria.

- On August 23, the Department of State designated two ISIS leaders – Ahmad Alkhald and Abu Yahya al-Iraqi – as SDGTs. Alkhald is an ISIS bomb-maker responsible for the deaths of numerous civilians, including Americans, in Europe. He is the explosives chief of the terrorist cell that carried out the November 2015 attacks in Paris and the March 2016 attacks in Brussels. Al-Iraqi is a senior ISIS figure who reports to ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. Al-Iraqi oversees ISIS security in Iraq and Syria and reportedly plays a key role in al-Baghdadi's security.
- On September 20, the Department of State designated Tony-Lee Thulsie and Brandon-Lee Thulsie, twin brothers with links to ISIS. In July 2016 at the time of their arrest, the brothers had been plotting attacks targeting Jewish individuals and institutions and foreign embassies, including the U.S. Embassy in South Africa. Both attempted to travel to Syria to fight for ISIS and recruited others to join the terrorist group.

MULTILATERAL EFFORTS TO COUNTER TERRORISM

In 2017, the United States continued to work through multilateral organizations to strengthen regional and international efforts to counter terrorism, including by developing and promoting global norms and building the capacities of states to implement them.

Of particular note is the unanimous adoption of UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2396 on December 21, which obligates member states for the first time to develop and use certain tools to detect and counter returning foreign terrorist fighters and homegrown terrorists. The United States drafted and led the negotiation of UNSCR 2396, which requires all UN members to use Passenger Name Record data to stop terrorist travel. It further directs UN members to collect biometric data and develop watchlists of known and suspected terrorists. Resolution 2396 also calls for stricter aviation security standards and urges UN members to share counterterrorism information both internally and with each other. Other examples of U.S. multilateral engagement include:

The Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF). Since its launch in September 2011, the GCTF has mobilized support for national and regional efforts to strengthen civilian institutions to counter terrorism and to counter violent extremism. This includes support for the development and implementation of GCTF framework documents, such as non-binding international good practices and recommendations related to addressing the full life cycle of radicalization to violence, including the foreign terrorist fighter phenomenon and juvenile justice in a counterterrorism context, and the protection of soft targets, such as malls, restaurants, hotels, and other public spaces, against terrorist attacks. The GCTF is comprised of five thematic and regional Working Groups: Countering Violent Extremism; Criminal Justice and the Rule of Law; Capacity Building in the East Africa Region; Capacity Building in the West Africa Region; and Foreign Terrorist Fighters. The United States and Egypt co-chaired the Criminal Justice and the Rule of Law Working Group until September 2017, when the United States and Jordan became co-chairs of the Foreign Terrorist Fighters Working Group.

With its primary focus on countering violent extremism and strengthening civilian criminal justice, the GCTF aims to diminish terrorist recruitment and increase countries' capacity for

dealing with terrorist threats within their borders and regions. The United Nations (UN) is a close partner of, and participant in, the GCTF and its activities. The GCTF serves as a mechanism for furthering the implementation of the universally-agreed UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and, more broadly, to complement and reinforce existing multilateral counterterrorism efforts, starting with those of the UN. The GCTF also partners with a wide range of regional multilateral organizations, including the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the African Union, and the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development.

In 2017, the GCTF launched three new initiatives:

- **Initiative on Addressing the Challenge of Returning Families of Foreign Terrorist Fighters:** Co-led by the United States and the Netherlands, this initiative has two objectives:
  1) Raise awareness, identify needs, and leverage expertise and experiences to better understand the push and pull factors of family members of FTFs, and tailor the existing tools to deal with the challenge of returning family members potentially radicalized to violence; and
  2) Develop a set of internationally recognized, non-binding good practices.

- **Initiative to Address Homegrown Terrorism:** Co-led by the United States and Morocco, in coordination with the International Institute for Justice and Rule of Law, this initiative will develop new good practices on addressing the challenge of dealing with homegrown terrorists.

- **Nexus between Transnational Organized Crime and Terrorism Initiative:** The Netherlands is leading an initiative to discuss the links between terrorism and transnational crime. The initiative will aim to raise awareness of the nexus, and expand and tailor the tools available to deal with it as it manifests itself in different regional contexts. The initiative will develop a set of internationally recognized, non-binding good practices.

In 2017, the GCTF formally endorsed two new framework documents, the *Antalya Memorandum on the Protection of Soft Targets in a Counterterrorism Context*, and the *Zurich-London Recommendations on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Terrorism:*

- **Antalya Memorandum on the Protection of Soft Targets in a Counterterrorism Context:** The United States and Turkey, co-leads of the *Protection of Soft Targets in a Counterterrorism Initiative*, put forth the *Antalya Memorandum* for formal endorsement at the GCTF Ministerial Meeting in 2017. The Memorandum informs and helps guide governments and the private sector in jointly developing policies, practices, guidelines, programs, and approaches for the protection of their citizens from terrorist attacks on soft targets, such as malls, restaurants, hotels, and other public spaces.

- **Zurich-London Recommendations on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Terrorism:** Switzerland and the United Kingdom, co-leads of the

Strategic Communications and Social Media Aspects in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism Initiative, put forth the *Zurich-London Recommendations* for formal endorsement at the GCTF Ministerial Meeting in 2017. The resulting good practices document, the *Zurich-London Recommendations*, is subdivided into three sections: addressing overall good practices for preventing and countering violent extremism and terrorism online; good practices for content-based responses; and good practices for communications-based responses.

During 2017, the GCTF also continued work on three earlier initiatives:

- The *Initiative to Address the Lifecycle of Radicalization to Violence* Toolkit
- The International Counterterrorism and Countering Violent Extremism Capacity-Building Clearinghouse Mechanism
- The Border Security Initiative

GCTF Inspired Institutions: The following three institutions were developed and supported by GCTF members as mechanisms for supporting strengthening civilian criminal justice responses to terrorism and countering violent extremism.

- **The International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law (IIJ).** The IIJ was created in June 2014. Its mission is to provide rule of law-based trainings to lawmakers, police, prosecutors, judges, corrections officials, and other justice sector stakeholders on how to address terrorism and related transnational criminal activities. With funding from the United States, the IIJ in 2017 trained 749 practitioners on a myriad of issues such as combating prison radicalization, increasing international cooperation in terrorism investigations and prosecutions, improving adjudications of terrorism cases, rehabilitating and reintegrating foreign terrorist fighters, and dealing with juveniles who are charged with terrorism-related offenses.

  Hedayah. On December 14, 2012, ministers and senior officials from the 30 members of the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) inaugurated Hedayah, the first-ever international center of excellence for countering violent extremism (CVE), headquartered in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. Hedayah's mandate focuses on three core areas: capacity building programs, dialogue and communications, and research and analysis. By the end of 2017, Hedayah had hosted counterterrorism-funded training and capacity-building courses on community policing and community engagement, CVE and education, and CVE and communications. Hedayah has organized expert workshops on prison disengagement and reintegration, victims of terrorism, CVE and education, security and development, and the development of national and regional CVE strategies.

  Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF). In September 2013, the GCTF called for the establishment of the GCERF to serve as the first (and only) global fund to strengthen community resilience to violent extremism. Based in Geneva, Switzerland, GCERF focuses on preventing and countering violent extremism by building the capacity of small, local, community-based organizations. In 2017, GCERF

operated in Bangladesh, Kenya, Kosovo, Mali, and Nigeria. Thirteen countries, plus the European Union, have contributed funds to GCERF, totaling over US $50 million.

The International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL). Through its I-24/7 secure global police communications system, INTERPOL connects its member countries' law enforcement officials to its investigative and analytical databases, and its system for sending messages and notices. The United States has been working with INTERPOL's U.S. National Central Bureau (USNCB) to provide technical expertise to a number of member countries to extend their I-24/7 connectivity from their National Central Bureaus to the air, land, and sea ports of entry to increase their ability to screen and interdict the international transit of foreign terrorist fighters and other transnational criminals.

Acknowledging the value of this initiative and the remaining connectivity gaps in countries at risk of foreign terrorist fighter travel, in 2016, the G-7 committed to extending connectivity to I-24/7 to 60 countries by 2021. Since that time, the United States has engaged INTERPOL and USNCB to help fulfill the G-7 commitment by providing funding for projects aimed at extending connectivity in 10 countries.

The United States continued to support the INTERPOL Counter-Terrorism Fusion Centre's Foreign Terrorist Fighter project, which manages an analytical database containing identity profiles of foreign terrorist fighters compiled by connecting various types of available data (biometrics, travel documents, names, etc.). These profiles are effective in supporting law enforcement and border control authorities' abilities to identify and interdict suspected terrorists, ensuring that the right piece of data reaches the right officer on the frontlines. To support this initiative, the United States has also offered seed funding to support an INTERPOL project to improve its analytical capacity to allow the various databases to cross-reference data that links, for example, individual terrorist profiles with lost and stolen travel documents, or fingerprints found on improvised explosive devices. This capability will improve and speed up member states' investigative capacity.

European Union (EU). The 2010 U.S.-EU Agreement on the Terrorist Finance Tracking Program continued to enable the EU and the United States to share information related to financial messaging data for the purpose of identifying, tracking, and pursuing terrorists and their networks.

In 2017, the EU Council adopted a regulation amending the Schengen borders code to strengthen external border checks against the relevant database and a directive on combating terrorism. These two acts strengthen the EU's legal framework to address the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters and prevent terrorist attacks. Europol has officers and personnel in all the migration hotspots (in Italy and Greece) to work alongside border security and immigration officers to assist in screening incoming migrants against Europol databases. In addition, the EU Commission published an Action Plan to support the protection of public spaces, which aims to enhance member states' capacities to protect and reduce the vulnerability of soft targets, such as malls, restaurants, hotels, and other public spaces, against terrorist attacks.

The EU also continued six military and law enforcement capacity-building missions in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel, working closely with U.S. elements in counterterrorism, border security, and stabilization efforts.

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). Under the 2017 Austrian Chairman in Office, the OSCE focused on building support for a comprehensive approach to addressing terrorism-related challenges, in particular with regard to foreign terrorist fighters, information sharing, and countering radicalization to violence. The May 23-24 OSCE Counterterrorism conference in Vienna, chaired by Austria, focused on countering violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism. The conference included interventions and side events on how OSCE countries are dealing with the challenge of returning foreign terrorist fighters. The OSCE continued to address terrorism and violent extremism, including online, in a manner that respects human rights, such as freedom of expression. In 2017, the OSCE, enabled by U.S. support, conducted counterterrorism finance training for the countries of Central Asia, strengthened criminal justice sector responses to terrorism in the OSCE states, and implemented a project on sharing lessons learned from the (U.S.-funded) Good Practices Guide on Non-Nuclear Critical Energy Infrastructure Protection from Terrorist Attacks Focusing on Threats Emanating from Cyberspace. The United States has developed scenario-based, multi-stakeholder seminars to promote collaboration and disseminate good practices among regional, national, and community leaders. In addition, the United States has partnered with the OSCE on several tabletop exercises to build interagency coordination and whole-of-society collaboration.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). NATO's counterterrorism efforts focus on improving awareness of the threat, developing response capabilities, and enhancing engagement with partner countries and organizations. NATO Allies endorsed an Action Plan to increase NATO's role in the fight against terrorism at the May 2017 NATO Senior Leaders Meeting. As part of this plan, allies decided NATO should formally join the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, and expand NATO's Airborne Warning and Control System support to the Coalition.

In addition, NATO members committed to:

- Sustaining the NATO training mission in Afghanistan;
- Continuing defense capacity building and training for Iraqi forces;
- Establishing a new intelligence cell to increase information exchange on terrorist threats;
- Naming the Deputy Secretary General as counterterrorism coordinator within NATO;
- Seek opportunities to increase cooperation between NATO and the European Union on terrorism threats; and
- Providing more counterterrorism-related training and capacity building support for partners.

NATO's Civil Emergency Planning and Resilience efforts complement military efforts to deter or counter potential threats or disruptions to the civil sector, such as critical infrastructure, including from terrorism.

Council of Europe. The Council of Europe develops legal standards to prevent and suppress acts of terrorism through criminal law and other measures while respecting human rights and in

full respect of the rule of law. In November, the Committee of Experts on Terrorism of the Council of Europe held a plenary meeting in Strasbourg to develop guidelines to prevent lone actor terrorist attacks and enhance cooperation on terrorist misuse of the internet. The Council also strengthened its cooperation with the private sector to promote an open and safe internet, where human rights, democracy, and the rule of law are respected. The companies partnering with the Council include Apple, Deutsche Telekom, Facebook, Google, Microsoft, Orange and Telefónica. The associations are Computer and Communications Industry Association, DIGITALEUROPE, the European Digital SME Alliance, the European Telecommunications Network Operators' Association, the GSM Association, and the multi-stakeholder Global Network Initiative.

Group of Seven (G-7). Within the G-7 Roma-Lyon Group meetings on counterterrorism and combatting crime, the United States worked with its counterparts to implement the G-7 Ise Shima Action Plan on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism, including an initiative to generate greater G-7 political and financial support to connect priority countries to INTERPOL's I-24/7 secure global communications system. The G-7 Action Plan also promoted reforms of the UN's counterterrorism architecture and support for greater use of Passenger Name Record systems, which was reflected in UN Security Council resolution 2396. The United States also sought to advance projects through the Roma-Lyon Group's expert groups on counterterrorism, transportation security, high-tech crime, migration, criminal legal affairs, and law enforcement.

Organization of American States' Inter-American Committee against Terrorism (OAS/CICTE). OAS/CICTE, which has 35 member states and 70 observers, seeks to prevent the financing of terrorist activities, increase border controls, strengthen cyber-security efforts, and increase law enforcement efforts across the Western Hemisphere. Working closely with its member states, CICTE establishes policies and implements programs to address these issues and bolsters counterterrorism partnerships, cooperation, and information sharing through promoting counterterrorism policies, training, and capacity building. The 17th OAS/CICTE Regular Session took place April 6-7 in Washington, DC. With participation from 28 delegations, the session addressed the dual themes of terrorism financing and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. In 2017, OAS/CICTE began implementation of a U.S.-funded grant to improve member states' domestic terrorist designation regimes, focused on Paraguay, Panama, and Trinidad & Tobago. OAS/CICTE also began implementation of a grant to research drivers of violent extremism and resiliencies and collect baseline data on high-risk communities in Trinidad and Tobago.

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM). Leaders of the 15-member Caribbean Community adopted a regional arrest warrant treaty, an asset sharing (forfeiture) agreement, and model CARICOM counterterrorism legislation at their July 4, 2017, Summit. Recognizing the potential threat posed by returning foreign terrorist fighters, homegrown terrorism, and the vulnerability of its tourist industry, CARICOM prepared its first-ever counterterrorism strategy. This strategy identifies the threats facing the region and calls for an organized approach to prevent violent extremism, deny terrorists means and opportunities, disrupt terrorist activities, improve preparedness, and respond effectively to a terrorist attack.

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and the East Asia Summit (EAS). Counterterrorism activities of the 10-member ASEAN and 27-member ARF countries included annual meetings on counterterrorism and transnational crime and capacity building through ARF institutions. In 2017, the United States continued to provide technical assistance, equipment, and training to improve and automate ASEAN member state reporting to INTERPOL's I-24/7 secure global communications system. The EAS, which includes the 10 ASEAN members, plus Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Russia, and the United States, issued three statements with a counterterrorism nexus: a U.S.-sponsored statement on chemical weapons; an Australia-sponsored statement on countering terrorist finance/anti-money laundering; and a Russia-sponsored statement on countering ideological challenges of terrorism and terrorist narratives and propaganda.

Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). In 2017, APEC continued to implement its comprehensive Consolidated Counterterrorism and Secure Trade Strategy. The Strategy, adopted in 2011, endorsed the principles of security, efficiency, and resilience and advocated for risk-based approaches to security challenges across supply chains, travel, finance, and infrastructure. In October 2017, APEC member economies endorsed the APEC Counter-Terrorism Working Group Strategic Plan 2018-2022, which set priorities in such areas as the evolving threat of foreign terrorist fighters, terrorist financing, border and critical infrastructure security, and information sharing.

The African Union (AU). The U.S. Mission to the African Union and the AU held the first Countering Violent Extremism Week at the AU Commission October 25-27, 2017. This event brought together professionals from across the world to discuss ways to deepen partnerships to prevent and counter the rise of violent extremism in Africa. The AU High Level Forum on Counterterrorism in December recommended that countries incorporate UN Security Council resolutions into national legislation, improve information sharing, adopt whole-of-government approaches to counter violent extremism, and cut off terrorist financing, including from trafficking in drugs, wildlife and cultural artifacts, and ransom payments.

The Arab League. The Arab League is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and participated in the March 2017 Coalition Ministerial in Washington, DC. In the Amman Declaration following the March Arab Summit, the Arab League's heads of state committed to "dedicate all necessary abilities to eliminate terrorist groups and defeat terrorists in all ideological, security, and military battlefields." On August 21-22, senior officials met to implement the Amman Declaration and established a task force that included Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Mauritania, the Palestinian Authority, and Saudi Arabia.

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). In 2017, the OIC worked with the UN's Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force on ways to promote implementation of the Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. The OIC an important partner in the *Fostering Peaceful Communities in Morocco* pilot program funded by the Department of State. The program identified provincial-level religious and community leaders in targeted Moroccan communities and conducted a series of workshops and trainings to increase their understanding of violent extremism risks in their communities and gain tools to address those risks. The OIC also manages the New York-based "Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers," a

religious scholar network composed of community-level imams, priests, and rabbis who foster problem solving and conflict resolution.

Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). IGAD's Center of Excellence for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism completed its first full year of operations in 2017. Based in Djibouti, the Center held multiple workshops, conducted analysis and research, and established media platforms and networking opportunities for civil society organizations. The Center received support from a host of international donors, including the Turkish government, to furnish its new headquarters, and the Italian government, for human rights training of gendarmerie that support counterterrorism operations in Somalia.

G-5 Sahel. Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger formed the G-5 Sahel in 2014 to focus on the four pillars of security, resilience, infrastructure, and governance. In February 2017, the G-5 announced its intent to stand up a Joint Force of up to 5,000 military, civilian, and police components. The aim of the Joint Force is to disrupt the activities of terrorist operations in trans-border regions of the five member states. Multiple countries and the European Union have pledged donor support to the G-5 Sahel Joint Force, with the United States joining by pledging US $60 million of bilateral security assistance to the G-5 member countries.

The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). In May 2017, the United States and GCC held a summit in Riyadh to examine issues of security and stability. The GCC Terrorist Financing Targeting Center was created and announced during President Trump's May 2017 visit to Saudi Arabia. It is designed to track the financial movement and interdiction of terrorist resources.

The United Nations (UN). Sustained and strategic engagement at the UN on counterterrorism issues is a priority for the United States. Throughout 2017, the UN remained actively engaged in addressing the evolving terrorist threat. The UN Security Council (UNSC) adopted several resolutions to address the threat of terrorism to international peace and security. These included:

- UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2341 to protect critical infrastructure from terrorist attack,
- UNSCR 2354 to counter terrorist narratives,
- UNSCR 2368 to further disrupt ISIS and al-Qa'ida's sources of revenue,
- UNSCR 2370 to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons,
- UNSCR 2395 to reemphasize the importance of Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and extend its mandate, and
- UNSCR 2396 to address the threat posed by returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters.

The United States supported the creation of the UN Office of Counterterrorism in June 2017 as a means of streamlining UN counterterrorism efforts, coordinating an all-of-UN approach to counterterrorism, mainstreaming Preventing Violent Extremism efforts across the UN system, and ensuring a balanced implementation of the Global Counterterrorism Strategy across its four pillars. Other U.S. engagement with UN actors on counterterrorism and countering violent extremism included:

- **The Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED).** The United States supported CTED efforts to analyze capacity gaps of member states to implement UNSCRs 1373, 1624, 2178, 2396, and other relevant counterterrorism resolutions and to facilitate training and other technical assistance to UN member states. This included participating in Counter-Terrorism Committee thematic debates on a range of issues including depriving terrorist groups from accessing, raising, and moving funds; enhancing international law enforcement cooperation on counterterrorism; developing national and regional comprehensive and integrated counterterrorism strategies; and technical assistance needs-identification for Iraq and Afghanistan.

- **The United Nations Office of Counterterrorism (UNOCT).** The United States supported the creation of UNOCT and is working with it to ensure balanced implementation of the UN Global Counter Terrorism Strategy through a whole-of-UN approach.

- In 2016-2017, the State Department contributed over US $13 million to fund a range of UN Office of Drugs and Crime, UN Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, UN Development Program, and International Office of Migration activities including:

    - Strengthening the capacity of the judicial antiterrorism unit and specialized antiterrorism chambers in Niger;
    - Development of counterterrorism rule-of-law Plans of Action in the Sahel;
    - Promoting effective use of alternatives to imprisonment;
    - Supporting Kenyan prisons and probation for counterterrorism cases and the Development of two counterterrorism specific court houses;
    - Work with Mali's Special Judicial Pole;
    - A returning foreign terrorist fighter initiative;
    - Building the capacity of states to obtain digital evidence for terrorism investigations and prosecutions;
    - Development of a counterterrorism prison database in Bangladesh;
    - Border community engagement in Niger and Senegal; and
    - Strengthening community-police partnerships in high risk communities.

- **The UNSC 1267/1989/2253 ISIL (Da'esh) and al-Qa'ida Sanctions Committee.** The United States worked closely with the UN Sanctions Committee and its Monitoring Team in 2017 by proposing listings and de-listings, providing amendments, engaging the Committee's Ombudsperson in petitions for de-listings, and providing input to the Committee to enhance its procedures and implementation of sanctions measures. The United States also assisted the Monitoring Team with information for its research and reports. In 2017, 12 individuals and five entities were added to the 255 individuals and 80 entities listed on the al-Qa'ida Sanctions List. The Committee also worked to ensure the integrity of the list by conducting regular reviews and by endeavoring to remove those individuals and entities that no longer meet the criteria for listing. In 2017, 13 individuals were de-listed, of which seven individuals were de-listed following the submission of a petition through the Office of the Ombudsperson.

- **The UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).** At its annual UN Crime Commission in May 2017, which oversees UNODC including its Terrorism Prevention Branch (TPB), the United States joined other member states to negotiate and adopt an updated resolution on "Technical Assistance for Implementing the International Conventions and Protocols Related to Counter-Terrorism." The UN General Assembly adopted this as Resolution 72/194 in September. The UNODC's TPB continued to provide assistance to countries seeking to ratify and implement the universal legal instruments against terrorism and provided assistance for countering the financing of terrorism in conjunction with the UNODC's Global Program against Money Laundering. The United States has engaged UNODC/TPB as a counterterrorism assistance implementer and supported programming focused on strengthening the criminal justice system's response to terrorism by member states. In 2017, the United States continued to support UNODC/TPB programs designed to strengthen the legal regime against terrorism within a rule of law framework in Africa, the Middle East, and the Central and South Asia regions.

- **The UN Inter-Regional Crime Research Institute (UNICRI).** The focus of UNICRI's work has been on rehabilitation efforts in prisons. The United States has provided assistance support to UNICRI to strengthen the capacity of prison officials to implement the good practices contained in the GCTF's *Rome Memorandum on Good Practices for the Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Violent Extremist Offenders*. For example, in Indonesia, UNICRI worked on helping to create a specialized assessment tool for prison officials to use on terrorist inmates. In addition, UNICRI conducted a pilot program to identify and help juvenile offenders demonstrating signs of radicalization to violence before they commit acts of terrorism.

- **The UN Development Programme (UNDP).** The UNDP engages countries to mitigate and prevent conflicts, including in the Maghreb, by developing national and regional strategies to counter and prevent violent extremism and deepening research on preventing violent extremism (PVE) through its center in Oslo, Norway. In 2017, the United States provided assistance funding to UNDP to help strengthen community-police partnerships in high-risk communities. UNDP sponsored a global conference in Oslo in March, which brought together non-governmental organizations' regional and country directors to discuss PVE approaches. The UNDP later established the position of a global PVE director.

- **The UN Security Council (UNSC) 1540 Committee.** The Committee monitors and facilitates efforts to implement the obligations and recommendations of UN Security Council resolution (UNSCR) 1540, addressing the nexus of proliferation of chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons and their means of delivery, and illicit activities by non-state actors, including terrorist activities. The Committee submitted its annual review on implementation to the UN Security Council in December 2017.

  The Committee's Group of Experts also participates as part of the UN Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, and cooperates with INTERPOL, the UN Office of Drugs and Crime, the Financial Action Task Force, and other counterterrorism bodies. In 2017, as coordinator of the transparency and media outreach working group, the United States

led the revision of the 1540 Committee's website to reflect the findings of the 2016 second comprehensive review of the implementation of UNSCR 1540 (2004) as well as provisions of UNSCR 2325 (2016). In addition to raising public awareness, the Committee website serves as a main source of information and resources relating to UNSCR 1540 for use by member states, committee members, civil society, and industry.

In 2017, the U.S. contribution to the UN Trust Fund for Global and Regional Disarmament Affairs funded a range of UNSCR 1540 activities, including the establishment of a 1540 regional coordinator position in the Organization of American States Inter-American Committee against Terrorism (OAS/CICTE) to promote the full implementation of the resolution in the Western Hemisphere.

- **The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).** In September 2017, ICAO hosted its first aviation security symposium at its headquarters in Montreal. The symposium brought together aviation security professionals from around the world to address the threat posed by terrorists targeting civil aviation by reinforcing, strengthening, and promoting the international framework of aviation security standards. In December 2017, the UN Security Council unanimously adopted UNSCR 2396, which welcomed ICAO's approval of the new Global Aviation Security Plan. The Plan provides the foundation for ICAO, member states, the civil aviation industry, and other stakeholders to enhance aviation security worldwide and to achieve five key priority outcomes. The outcomes are to enhance risk awareness and response, develop security culture and human capability, improve technological resources and foster innovation, improve oversight and quality assurance, and to increase cooperation and support. Member states continued to prioritize UNSCR 2309 implementation, which calls on UN members to ensure that effective, risk-based measures are in place at the airports within their jurisdiction, that such measures reflect the ever-evolving threat picture, and are in accordance with international standards and recommended practices. UNSCR 2309 further calls on all states to strengthen information sharing and requires airlines operating in their territories to provide Advance Passenger Information to appropriate national authorities to track the movement of individuals identified by the UN's counterterrorism committees. It also urges all states to ensure cooperation among their domestic departments, agencies, and other entities and encourages continued close cooperation between ICAO and the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate on identifying gaps and vulnerabilities in aviation security.

- **The Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT).** The United States serves as Co-Chair of GICNT, a voluntary partnership of 88 nations and five international observer organizations committed to strengthening national and global capacity to prevent, detect, and respond to the shared threat of nuclear terrorism. The GICNT conducts multilateral activities that strengthen the plans, policies, procedures, and interoperability of partner nations in technical areas such as nuclear detection, nuclear forensics, national emergency response frameworks, legal frameworks, radioactive source security, and sustainability. In addition to serving as Co-Chair, the United States provides both financial and human resources to support the initiative's multilateral undertakings.

LONG-TERM PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES DESIGNED TO COUNTER TERRORIST SAFE HAVENS AND RECRUITMENT

COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM refers to proactive actions to counter efforts by terrorists to radicalize, recruit, mobilize, and inspire followers to violence and to address specific factors that facilitate terrorist recruitment and radicalization to violence.

State and USAID leverage a range of available diplomatic, development, and foreign assistance tools to prevent and counter radicalization and recruitment to violence, both online and offline.

The following five objectives guide our assistance and engagement:

1. Expand international political will, partnerships, and expertise to better understand the drivers of terrorist radicalization and recruitment and to mobilize effective interventions.
2. Encourage and assist partner governments to adopt more effective policies and approaches to prevent and counter the spread of terrorist ideology, including changing unhelpful practices where necessary.
3. Employ foreign assistance tools and approaches, including development, to reduce specific factors that contribute to community support for terrorism in identifiable areas or put particular segments of a population at high risk.
4. Empower and amplify locally credible voices that can change the perception of terrorist groups and their ideology among key demographic segments.
5. Strengthen the capabilities of government and non-governmental actors to isolate, intervene with, and promote the rehabilitation and reintegration of individuals caught in the cycle of radicalization to violence.

State also works to counter the use of the internet for terrorist purposes, including countering violent extremism online. For more information on this effort, we refer you to the 2016 report.

State and USAID are pursuing a range of programs to assist partners around the world. Key areas of programming include:

- **Supporting the Development and Implementation of National Action Plans to Counter Violent Extremism:** The United States provides technical assistance to governments as they design and implement national action plans to counter violent extremism (CVE), in partnership with civil society and the private sector. To reinforce these efforts, the United States supports Hedayah, the international CVE center in Abu Dhabi, which provides capacity building and technical expertise to interested governments.

- **Researching Drivers of Violent Extremism and Effective Interventions:** The United States supports innovative regional, country-based, and thematic research on the drivers of radicalization and recruitment to violence and on programming approaches. The United States supports the Researching Solutions to Violent Extremism (RESOLVE) Network, which connects academics and researchers to study the dynamics of countering violent extremism in specific local contexts and identify effective interventions. The

United States also works with the Global Counterterrorism Forum to implement an expanded toolkit for addressing the life cycle of radicalization to violence.

- **Building the Capacity of Criminal Justice Actors and Institutions:** The United States is supporting programs, especially in the Horn, Sahel, and Maghreb regions of Africa to strengthen the capacity of law enforcement to counter violent extremism, including police deployed to peace and stabilization operations, prison management, and justice sector actors. The United States also supports programs to train and assist corrections officials to counter radicalization to violence in prison settings and to promote rehabilitation.

- **Strengthening Efforts to Counter Violent Extremism by Sub-National, City, and Local Partners:** The United States supports the Strong Cities Network, a global network of municipal and other sub-national leaders and local government practitioners involved in building community resilience. The United States also contributes to the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund, the first multilateral fund supporting community-based projects that counters local drivers of recruitment and radicalization to violence.

- **Enhancing Civil Society's Role in Countering Violent Extremism:** The United States supports programs that empower youth to prevent radicalization to violence among their peers. The United States also supports programs that elevate the role of women in recognizing and preventing the spread of violent extremism in their families and communities.

Counter-Messaging and Promoting Alternative Narratives: With the leadership of the U.S. Department of State's Global Engagement Center (GEC), the United States supports efforts to help government and non-governmental partners counter ISIS and other terrorist messaging, and to promote alternative narratives. The United States supports a network of messaging centers such as, the Sawab Center, a joint U.S.-United Arab Emirates initiative that exposes, refutes, and counters online terrorist propaganda. These centers harness the creativity and expertise of local actors to generate positive content that challenges the rhetoric of ISIS and its supporters. The United States has worked collaboratively and voluntarily with private sector technology companies to help the companies better identify and address online terrorist content, which many companies choose to remove based on their terms of service. In 2017, counter-ISIS content was more prevalent online and pro-ISIS content continued to decline.

CIVILIAN COUNTERTERRORISM CAPACITY-BUILDING PROGRAMS. As the terrorist threat has evolved and grown more geographically diverse in recent years, it has become clear that our success depends in large part on the political will and capabilities of our partners to counter terrorism. To succeed over the long term, we must have partners who can not only militarily disrupt threats and degrade networks in a way that comports with international laws and norms, but who have strong civilian capabilities, as well. We need partners in law enforcement, the justice sector, and corrections that can disrupt attacks and investigate, arrest, prosecute, and incarcerate terrorists and their facilitation networks.

The United States uses various funding authorities and programs to build the capacity of law enforcement, justice, and corrections officials to counter terrorism. The Department of State's Bureau of Counterterrorism oversees the following capacity-building programs: Antiterrorism Assistance, Countering the Financing of Terrorism, Counterterrorism Engagement with Allies, the Regional Strategic Initiative, the Terrorist Interdiction Program, and the Counterterrorism Partnerships Fund (CTPF).

In FY 2017, CTPF allowed the State Department to significantly expand civilian counterterrorism capacity-building activities with key partner nations in the Middle East, North Africa and the Sahel, the Horn of Africa, South and Central Asia, Southeast Asia, and other regions to mitigate the threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters, prevent and counter terrorist safe havens and recruitment, and counter Iranian-sponsored terrorism. For further information on these programs, we refer you to the 2017 Annual Report on Assistance Related to International Terrorism.

Rewards for Justice

The U.S. Department of State's counterterrorism rewards program, Rewards for Justice (RFJ), was established by the 1984 Act to Combat International Terrorism, Public Law 98-533 (codified at 22 U.S.C. § 2708). RFJ's goal is to bring international terrorists to justice and prevent acts of international terrorism against U.S. persons or property.

Under this program, the Secretary of State may authorize rewards for information that leads to the arrest or conviction of anyone who plans, commits, aids, or attempts international terrorist acts against U.S. persons or property, that prevents such acts from occurring in the first place, that leads to the identification or location of a key terrorist leader, or that disrupts terrorism financing.

Since the inception of Rewards for Justice in 1984, the United States has paid more than $145 million to over 90 people who provided actionable information that put terrorists behind bars or prevented acts of international terrorism worldwide.

In 2017, the RFJ program announced the following reward offers for information.

- March 15: Up to US $5 million for information leading to the arrest or conviction in any country of any individual who committed, conspired to commit, or aided or abetted in the commission of the murder of U.S. citizen Joel Shrum. On March 18, 2012, Shrum, 29, was shot and killed on his way to work in Taizz, Yemen. A few days after the attack, the terrorist organization al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula claimed responsibility for the murder.

- May 10: Up to US $10 million for information leading to the identification or location of Muhammad al-Jawlani, leader of al-Nusrah Front (ANF), al-Qa'ida's branch in Syria. This was the first Rewards for Justice reward offer for a leader of ANF.

- October 10: Up to US $7 million for information on Talal Hamiyah, and up to $5 million for information on Fu'ad Shukr – both Haniyah and Shukr are two key leaders of the Lebanon-based terrorist group Hizballah.

SUPPORT FOR PAKISTAN

The President announced a new South Asia strategy on August 21, 2017, emphasizing Pakistan's role in supporting regional security, the need for Pakistan to address aspects of its nuclear program, and the threat posed by the Haqqani Network and other terrorist groups that operate in Pakistan. The strategy also emphasized that Pakistan, a long-standing and important partner, is critical to the success of the South Asia strategy. Counterterrorism cooperation between the United States and Pakistan continued on the effort to defeat Islamic State's Khorasan Province and Tehreek-e Taliban Pakistan.

From August to December 2017, the Trump Administration placed a pause on spending new Foreign Military Financing for Pakistan, holding these funds until Pakistan addressed key U.S. concerns, including the threat posed by the Haqqani Network and other terrorist groups that enjoyed safe haven with Pakistan. Pakistan did not adequately address these concerns in 2017.

Civilian assistance continued in 2017 and strengthened Pakistan's civilian institutions by fostering trade and growth, building education systems and educational ties, bolstering Pakistan's law enforcement capacity, and helping Pakistan address terrorism, including on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. The United States also fostered commercial cooperation that benefits U.S. businesses by encouraging trade and investment with Pakistan, as well as creating opportunities to forge lasting connections between Americans and emerging Pakistani leaders through educational and cultural exchanges.

U.S. support for civilian law enforcement and rule of law was crucial to helping Pakistan provide security and justice for Pakistani citizens, and to disrupting terrorism and transnational organized crime. Civilian assistance programs also helped Pakistan disrupt terrorist networks that operated within Pakistan's borders.

Account	**FY 2016** *Actuals*	**FY 2017** *Appropriated*	**FY 2018** *Request*
Total Foreign Assistance	**534.7**	**512.4**	**344.6**
Economic Support Fund	200.0	200.0	
Economic Support and Development Fund			200.0
Global Health Programs	22.5	22.5	11.3
Intl. Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement	40.0	38.0	25.0
Nonproliferation, Antiterrorism, Demining	9.9	4.8	4.8
Foreign Military Financing	255.0	242.3	100.0
International Military Education and Training	4.8	4.8	3.5
Food for Peace Title II	2.5	0.0	

*figures in millions, US $

COUNTERTERRORISM COORDINATION WITH SAUDI ARABIA

The United States and Saudi Arabia have a strong bilateral counterterrorism relationship. Multiple high-level visits in 2017 served to advance this relationship at the personal and institutional level and provided senior officials from both countries the chance to discuss means of improving counterterrorism coordination. During the President's May visit to Riyadh, the two countries announced a Joint Strategic Vision Declaration to include new initiatives to counter terrorist messaging and disrupt the financing of terrorism. Crown Prince and Minister of Defense Mohammed bin Salman vowed on October 24 to return Saudi Arabia to being a country of moderate Islam, pledging that the Kingdom would "not spend the next 30 years of our lives dealing with destructive ideas."

During 2017, the Saudi Arabian government, working with the United States, continued to build and augment its capacity to counter terrorism and terrorist ideology, including al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and ISIS. Saudi Arabia maintained its long-term counterterrorism strategy to track and halt the activities of terrorists and terrorist financiers, dismantle the presence or reconstitution of al-Qa'ida (AQ) affiliates, impede the ability of militants to operate from or within Saudi Arabia, and continued to implement laws against supporting terrorist groups and travel to conflict zones. Saudi Arabia reinforced its efforts as a key member and active participant in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. In November, the Saudi government announced an expansive revision of its Counterterrorism and Counter Terror Financing Law (CT Law, detailed below) to reinforce its capacity to counter terrorism and purportedly align with international standards.

The Saudi government conducted operations against ISIS, condemning its activities and participating in the coalition's military action to defeat the group in Syria and Iraq, and pursuing an aggressive campaign against ISIS at home. Saudi Arabia implemented UN Security Council resolutions (UNSCRs) 2178 and 2199, and the UNSC ISIL (Da'esh) and al-Qa'ida sanctions regime; expanded existing counterterrorism programs and messaging to address the phenomenon of returning foreign terrorist fighters; and leveraged terrorist finance provisions of its CT Law and Royal Decree A/44 to counter the funding of terrorist groups in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and elsewhere.

King Salman issued major decrees on July 20 amending the organizational structure of the Ministry of Interior (MOI) and creating a new independent domestic intelligence and CT entity called the State Security Presidency (SSP). In October, the government also established the National Cyber Security Authority to formalize its cybersecurity infrastructure and combat cyber threats. The Government of Saudi Arabia announced an expansive new CT Law on November 4, updating its 2014 law. Among the most significant aspects, the new law expands the range of activities defined as "terrorist" crimes and transfers many of the CT authorities previously held by the MOI to the SSP and the new Public Prosecutor's Office. These recent changes and initiatives instituted by the Saudi government have the stated aim to streamline the fight against terrorism and violent extremism, and to reinforce its capacity to counter terrorism, although human rights groups view the new CT Law as overly sweeping.

Saudi Arabia continued to cooperate with the United States to prevent acts of terrorism both through engagement in bilateral programs and through information-exchange arrangements with the United States. This was particularly evident with Saudi efforts to counter terrorist financing in the Kingdom and the Gulf region. Saudi Arabia, along with the United States, co-chairs the Terrorist Financing Targeting Center (TFTC), a Riyadh-based initiative announced during the President's visit to Saudi Arabia in May. In October, Saudi Arabia joined the United States and the other TFTC member countries in jointly announcing sanctions against individuals and entities supporting AQAP and ISIS-Yemen. The new CT Law is aimed at further buttressing the Saudi government's effort to obtain full membership in the Financial Action Task Force. Earlier in the year, the government directed domestic authorities to impose financial sanctions on individuals and entities providing support to or acting on behalf of Hizballah. The Saudi Arabian Monetary Authority, the Kingdom's central bank, demonstrated strong supervisory authorities when it suspended three leading money service businesses in late-September for deficient anti-money laundering/countering the financing of terrorism controls.

Saudi Arabia also continued to lay the groundwork for a long-term countering violent extremism (CVE) strategy, opening potential new avenues for counterterrorism coordination. The Center for Ideological Warfare, launched in 2016, became operational in April to blunt ISIS's ideological appeal and counter terrorist messages by discrediting what Saudi officials characterized as "distortions" of Islamic tenets used in recruiting and ISIS propaganda. King Salman inaugurated the Global Center for Countering Extremist Ideology (*Etidal* in Arabic) in Riyadh on May 21, which the President attended, further expanding efforts to counter terrorist messaging and promote a culture of moderation.

Senior Saudi officials reinvigorated CVE outreach with visits, including to the Vatican to meet with Pope Francis September 20 and to the Grand Synagogue in Paris November 20, in an effort to cultivate an image of greater tolerance with followers of other faiths. King Salman issued a royal order October 17 creating a religious center in Medina to scrutinize the written collections of the Prophet Muhammed's *hadith*s (sayings) for content that could be interpreted as encouraging terrorism. The Saudi government expanded counter-radicalization programs through the King Abdullah Center for National Dialogue to address the rising threat to youth from recruitment efforts by groups like ISIS.

The Saudi Ministry of Islamic Affairs continued to train and more strictly regulate imams, prohibiting them from inciting violence, and continued to monitor mosques and religious education. The Ministry of Interior continued to operate its flagship de-radicalization program (the Sakina Campaign for Dialogue) to counter internet radicalization. The government continued to improve oversight of proselytization and Islamic charitable activities, especially during Hajj. The Saudi government appointed new leadership in various Islamic organizations to bolster efforts to counter radicalization to violence and streamline these organizations' charitable activities to enhance compliance with counterterrorism finance regulations. The Ministry of Islamic Affairs (MOIA) announced restrictions on foreign travel of Saudi-based clerics for *da'wa* (proselytization) activities, requiring them to obtain the government's permission before traveling. Additionally, the MOIA promulgated regulations restricting Saudi clerics' internal activities, for instance, requiring clerics to obtain permission before making media appearances even on Saudi networks. These are all part of centrally coordinated efforts driven by the Saudi

government's leadership to limit the ability of individuals with questionable credentials or affiliations to propagate extremist messages at home and abroad, and to restrict their ability to interfere in the domestic affairs of other countries.

During 2017, the Saudi government continued its ongoing program to modernize the educational curriculum, including textbooks, although this has not been completely implemented and some textbooks containing derogatory and intolerant references to Shi'a and non-Muslims remained in circulation. Under the rubric of Vision 2030, the Ministry of Education worked to consolidate religious courses, increase the focus on modern educational needs, and improve the quality of instruction, including through the development of teacher training initiatives.

The United States continued to support Saudi Arabia in reforms it is undertaking by facilitating Saudi nationals' study in the United States and promoting educational exchanges; encouraging increased bilateral trade and investment; urging Saudi Arabia to take actions necessary to attract job-creating partnerships with U.S. companies; and supporting programming in such areas as judicial reform and women's entrepreneurship, as well as the Ministry of Interior's well-developed extremist rehabilitation program, the Mohammed bin Naif Counseling and Care Center, to reduce recidivism among former terrorist fighters charged with crimes related to terrorism.

Saudi Arabia cooperated regionally and internationally on counterterrorism issues, including through its status as a founding member of and continuing participant in the Global Counterterrorism Forum. On July 11, Saudi officials participated in the Defeat-ISIS Global Coalition's Working Groups on Counter Finance, Foreign Terrorist Fighters, Stabilization Support, and Communications in Washington, DC. The working groups individually assessed the campaign and discussed ways to intensify pressure on ISIS in each of these critical areas. The following day the full Coalition met for in-depth discussions on how to accelerate Coalition efforts to defeat ISIS in the remaining areas it holds in Iraq and Syria and maximize pressure globally on its branches, affiliates, and networks. Saudi Arabia is also a critical partner for the United States in combating financial support of ISIS and serves as a co-lead, along with the United States and Italy, of the Counter ISIS Finance Group (CIFG). In December, Saudi Arabia pledged US $100 million to support the G-5 Sahel force to combat terrorism in West Africa. Throughout the year, Saudi security professionals continued to participate in joint military and CT programs around the world and with partners inside the Kingdom. The Saudi-led Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition (IMCTC), established in December 2015, hosted its Inaugural Meeting of the IMCTC Ministers of Defense Council November 26 to address the ideological, financial, military, and media aspects of counterterrorism.

BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS INITIATIVES: OUTREACH TO FOREIGN MUSLIM AUDIENCES

This section is provided by the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG)

Four of the five broadcast entities under the supervision of the BBG provided programming for countries with large Muslim populations in 2017. These are the Voice of America (VOA), the

Middle East Broadcasting Networks, Inc. (Alhurra TV, Radio Sawa, and Afia Darfur), Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), and Radio Free Asia (RFA).

- Fifteen of RFE/RL's broadcast languages – approximately two-thirds of its languages – were directed to regions with majority-Muslim populations, including Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, the Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. Additional broadcasting to regions in the Russian Federation included the majority Muslim populations of Bashkortostan, the North Caucasus, and Tatarstan.
- VOA has been particularly successful in reaching non-Arabic-speaking Muslim audiences in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, the Balkans, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Mali, Nigeria, Pakistan, Somalia, and Tanzania, among other places.
- MBN's Alhurra Television, Radio Sawa, and Afia Darfur broadcast to more than 340 million people.
- MBN continued its successful *Raise Your Voice* initiative across television, radio, and digital platforms, which encouraged Iraqis to speak out against terrorism and look for solutions to unite their country.
- VOA and RFE/RL provided news and information to Afghanistan and the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region in Dari and Pashto. Together, RFE/RL and VOA reached 39 percent of Afghan adults each week. (VOA is at 29 percent and RFE/RL at 27 percent.)
- Radio Free Asia broadcasts to the more than 16 million mainly ethnic Uighur Muslims in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region of northwestern China and Central Eurasia.
- In partnership with Radio Free Asia, the online news operation *BenarNews* reached predominantly Muslim audiences in Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand. *BenarNews* countered terrorist narratives by publishing credible domestic news, features, analysis, and commentary in text, video, and pictures, in Bahasa Indonesia, Bahasa Malaysia, Bengali, English, and Thai.

BBG used the latest communications technologies to avoid jamming of its signals, and to reach audiences through digital and other communications tools, such as mobile and messaging apps and social media platforms.

THE MIDDLE EAST

Arabic: Middle East Broadcasting Networks, Inc. (MBN) has seven bureaus/production centers in the region in addition to its main studios in Virginia, and a network of regional correspondents. MBN broadcast to a population that included an estimated 317 million Muslims, 23.2 percent of the world's Muslim population (according to the *2017 CIA World Fact Book*). MBN used three platforms: television (Alhurra TV, Alhurra-Iraq TV), radio (Radio Sawa, Radio Sawa Iraq, and Afia Darfur), and digital (Alhurra.com, RadioSawa.com, and Irfasaatak.com) – and all of their corresponding social media pages. Topics included freedom of speech, religion, and the role of women in society and politics.

To build on the success of the *Raise Your Voice* initiative and to inform and engage with the people of the Maghreb region, MBN launched MaghrebVoices.com and corresponding social media platforms. The website targets nearly 100 million people and focuses on issues such as

terrorism, corruption, human trafficking, including slavery, and minorities' rights. *Maghreb Voices* facilitates dialogue and interaction with its audience through community managers. It goes to the streets of Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, and Tunisia to interview citizens and hear their views. Maghreb Voices has a section of the website dedicated to defectors' stories. This section includes interviews and firsthand accounts of people who joined and then left terrorist groups such as ISIS after they became disillusioned. Audiences also will find video content, polls, question of the day, citizen journalist content, and articles.

In addition to *Maghreb Voices*, MBN launched several new initiatives and programs:

- **Being an Outlet for Independent Voices:** For the first time, MBN launched an op-ed section on the Alhurra.com website. *From a Different Angle* provided a space for free expression on a variety of topics, including terrorism. Articles included commentary by featured writers who are journalists, intellectuals, and human rights advocates from the Middle East and the United States.
- **ISIS Defectors Share Horror Stories of Life under the Rule of ISIS:** Alhurra launched a documentary series, *Exiting ISIS*, in which ISIS defectors provide first-hand accounts of the terrorist group's entrenched culture of deception, intimidation, cruelty, and sexual abuse.
- **Investigative Journalism Exposing Topics Not Addressed in the Arab Media:** In 2017, Alhurra began developing an investigative team to address topics absent from other Arabic television stations, such as Hizballah's growing influence throughout the Middle East and elsewhere.
- **Focus on the Role of Women as an Important Part of Society:** Alhurra Television launched the third season of its program *Sit B'Mit Ragel* (*A Lady is Worth 100 Men*). The series followed four young Egyptian women and their professional aspirations and resilience in overcoming social and culture barriers to succeed and realize their dreams.

Iraq: Every week, 42.6 percent of Iraqi adults – some 6.3 million people – listened to or watched Alhurra TV, Radio Sawa, and VOA Kurdish. One-third (34.5 percent) of Iraqis said they relied on Alhurra-Iraq (TV and digital) for news and information during the past week. Radio Sawa Iraq is one of the top radio stations among adults. VOA Kurdish reached 8.5 percent of Kurdish-speaking Iraqis weekly.

As Iraqi troops pushed out ISIS from Mosul, Alhurra and Radio Sawa provided the latest accounts from the frontlines. They also told the stories of Iraqis living in displacement camps.

MBN continued to increase the audience of the *Raise Your Voice* initiative, a multi-platform campaign for Iraqi audiences across television, radio, and digital, composed of five television programs, one radio program, an interactive website, and a digital team to engage audiences on social media properties. This Arabic-language initiative was designed as a non-sectarian platform to encourage citizens to speak out about the fight against terrorism.

VOA Extremism Watch Desk: In late 2015, VOA launched the Extremism Watch Desk to acquire content in eight languages focused on ISIS and its activities. Since then, the desk has expanded to cover other terrorist groups, including al-Shabaab, Boko Haram, al-Qa'ida, the

Taliban, Hamas, and ISIS's various branches. Content is translated into English and shared with VOA's 47 language services, VOA Central News, and other BBG networks.

The Watch Desk maintains a social media presence on Twitter and YouTube, and has established a blog for VOANews.com. On Facebook, the number of followers has reached nearly one million people with 3.7 million views.

The Desk has added a producer to handle video content for TV and all web platforms. The VOA News Center continues to provide permanent placement on VOANews.com for *Extremism Watch*, where English-language content from the Extremism Watch Desk is disseminated to a worldwide audience. The Extremism Watch Desk has broken news on terrorism and produced special projects such as *Descent into Jihad*, which was translated into more than 20 languages.

In 2017, the Extremism Watch Desk introduced *VOA 60 Extremism*, a daily 60-second video on terrorism around the world. The product is produced in English and shared with language services for adaptation into target languages in South and Central Asia. The Desk also produces short web videos in English from materials provided by VOA stringers in various regions. The short videos are posted on the main VOANews.com page and on Extremism Watch Desk social media pages. Total interactions on the Extremism Watch Desk Facebook page reached 1.57 million in 2017, with average 120,000 monthly interactions (Source: Crowd Tangle).

Kurdish: The VOA Kurdish Service covered ISIS attacks in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region on a daily basis, with interviews, analysis, and stringer reports from the region. VOA Kurdish reports, which featured interviews with people on the ground, including individuals who had escaped ISIS captivity, were shared with the Watch Desk and the VOA newsroom.

Braving significant security risks, VOA Kurdish stringers reported from Mosul as Iraqi forces liberated neighborhoods. VOA interviewed refugees as they fled ISIS and reported on Iraqi soldiers as they liberated the city. A VOA Kurdish stringer in Raqqa also reported on military operations there. The service added hourly news updates during key listening times in Kurdish-speaking areas of northern Iraq as the push to drive ISIS from Mosul and other areas gained momentum.

In Syria's Kurdish region, VOA stringers reported on the local fight against ISIS, generating daily TV coverage. Call-in shows and roundtable discussions focused on ISIS. Many Kurdish TV stations (including NRT TV, Rudaw TV, and Orient TV) conducted Skype interviews with VOA Kurdish Service staffers who discussed events in the region.

To provide context and to explain events, the Kurdish Service regularly interviewed officials and analysts. The Service also covered numerous ISIS-related conferences in Washington, D.C.

Persian: VOA's Persian Service provided global and regional news related to Iran and information about U.S. policy toward Iran and the region. Highlights of VOA Persian interviews and reports in 2017 and recent audience survey research results are below.

Samples of key 2017 interviews conducted by VOA Persian included: Senator Chris Murphy; Behnam Ben Taleblu, Iran analyst with the Foundation for Defense of Democracies; Ambassador Thomas Pickering, Brookings Institution; Anthony H. Cordesman, Strategy Chair, Center for Strategic and International Studies; Michael Pregent, Adjunct Fellow at Hudson Institute; and Ambassador Dennis Ross, counselor and William Davidson Distinguished Fellow, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

- VOA reaches 15.9 percent of adults (age 15+) in Iran at least once a week via a combination of satellite TV and digital platforms (based on July-October 2017 survey). This is approximately 9.6 million people. (VOA's daily audience was 6.3 percent, or 3.8 million people.) This represents a 4 percent increase in VOA audience in Iran since 2015.
- The bulk of VOA's audience in Iran comes from satellite TV broadcasts. More than 15 percent of Iranian adults (15.2 million people) watch one or more VOA TV programs on a weekly basis. Four-and-a-half percent of adults (2.7 million people) access VOA content online weekly. Most of those who consume VOA content online also watch VOA satellite television programs.
- Nearly 60 percent of VOA's weekly audience in Iran – almost six million people – says their understanding of current events is enhanced by VOA programming and 52 percent of VOA's audience in Iran says that VOA helps them understand U.S. foreign policy.
- In 2017, VOA Persian continued to focus on covering the U.S.-led coalition providing training and equipment to Peshmerga units in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region, to help them in their fight against ISIS and the battle in Mosul. VOA Persian's correspondent hosted the weekly show "New Horizon," which focused on Operation Inherent Resolve.
- VOA Persian continued to expose the role that the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps play in supporting Hizballah units in Syria.
- VOA Persian provided in-depth broadcast and digital coverage of U.S. congressional hearings.
- VOA Persian conducted interviews with numerous experts on Saudi Arabia's support of the U.S.-led Defeat-ISIS Coalition.
- VOA Persian observed the 16th anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks by hosting a panel discussion that featured Ronen Bergman, senior correspondent for Military and Intelligence Affairs for *Yedioth Ahronnoth;* and Thomas Sanderson, director of the Center for Strategic and International Studies' Transnational Threats Project.

RFE/RL's Radio Farda features newscasts at the top of the hour, followed by reports, interviews, and segments on youth, women, culture, economics, and politics. Coverage in 2017 included:

- Reporting from Mosul and from Aleppo, Syria.
- *Taboo,* a radio and digital program that provided a forum to discuss such topics as religious extremism and identity.
- Comprehensive monitoring of human rights inside Iran.
- A Facebook page with more than two million followers. Farda increased its social media engagement with audiences on digital media platforms that were not blocked in Iran.

- The Farda website attracted a monthly average of 12.5 million visits and 24.3 million pages views. Approximately two-thirds of all traffic originates from inside Iran despite an official government ban on the website and the need for a proxy to access it.

SOUTH and CENTRAL ASIA

VOA South and Central Asia Division (SCA) has been one of the most active divisions in its terrorism coverage around the world. It covers Syria to Iraq, Turkey, Central Asia, and all of South Asia. During 2017, the division provided news coverage of ISIS activities in Iraq, Syria, Turkey, and the South and Central Asia regions, and U.S. policies and activities to address the threat. Broadcasts spanned radio, television, online, and social media.

Afghan Service: VOA Afghan devoted a significant amount of coverage across all broadcast platforms – TV, radio, web, and social media across all broadcast platforms – to President Trump's Strategy for Afghanistan, and the Afghan Government's efforts to curb terrorist activities.

VOA Afghan reporters were on the scene when ISIS fighters attacked the Shamshad TV station in Kabul. The service interviewed key leaders including the country's acting Defense Secretary and provincial governors. This was complemented by comment and analysis from U.S. military and NATO leaders and other experts.

VOA Dari and VOA Pashto saw an increase in audience engagement as they carried the service's reporting on terrorism on its social media sites. Short videos on the Shamshad attack generated more than 140,000 views on Facebook and hundreds of comments.

The Pakistan/Afghanistan Border Region: VOA Deewa and RFE/RL Radio Mashaal broadcasts go directly to the Pakistan-Afghanistan border regions.

VOA Deewa broadcasts to millions of Pashtuns in the critical northwestern tribal and semi-tribal region of Pakistan, close to the Afghan border. VOA Deewa's daily broadcasts are focused on engaging leading moderate voices, at-risk youth, and women. In 2017, VOA Deewa extensively covered the expanding ISIS network in the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region, its global activities, and the digital caliphate of ISIS. VOA Deewa covered the U.S.-sponsored Defeat-ISIS Coalition summit in Washington, DC.

VOA Deewa enhanced its daily women's show and began using an extra hour of time on Asia Sat 3. The current two-hour women and youth daily *Radio on TV* show has optimized VOA's outreach to those groups. VOA Deewa engaged U.S. members of Congress and covered ISIS and terrorism-specific events with exclusive interviews with representatives from Washington-based think tanks and prominent moderate religious scholars.

Urdu Service: VOA Urdu's coverage has concentrated on terrorism in Pakistan. In 2017, the service provided comprehensive coverage of Pakistani military operations against terrorist groups. Several high-profile interviews with Alice Wells, the Acting Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan for the United States, U.S. members of Congress, and Pakistan and

Afghanistan terrorism experts were conducted live on Urdu's newly launched TV show *View 36*, and on corresponding radio, web, and social media platforms.

Bangla Service: A prime example of VOA Bangla's 2017 programming was the series *Extremism: Conflicts, Concerns & Consensus to Overcome*. In this series, VOA Bangla looked closely at global to regional aspects of terrorism. VOA Bangla examined the definition, scope, and extent of terrorism from various angles.

Following the arrest of an alleged Bangladeshi terrorism suspect in New York, VOA's Bangla Service broadcast several interview-based programs on Bangladeshi terrorists inside and outside Bangladesh and provided audiences with an opportunity to participate in VOA Bangla call-in shows.

RFE/RL's Central Asian Services engaged audiences with fact-based, objective reporting about events in the region. RFE/RL is the only Western media outlet in Central Asia that has a significant reputation for credibility and that operates in all major Central Asian languages (Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Tajik, Turkmen, Uzbek, and Russian), with data showing that audiences find RFE/RL reporting trustworthy (i.e., Kazakhstan: 84.8 percent average (87 percent Kazakh; 82.6 percent Russian)). Each language service has consistently reported on terrorism in the region. In fiscal year 2017, RFE/RL launched two additional programs to engage audiences on this topic:

- **Not in Our Name:** RFE/RL intends to offer an engaging and informative series of anti-terrorism video programs targeted primarily toward youth audiences in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. RFE/RL will report on terrorist activities, facilitate discussions with youth, and then report on these discussions for youth to "hear it in their own words." Using video from these in-person engagements, RFE/RL will produce a documentary, as well as short, popular social media-friendly videos and articles. Reporting on the topic of terrorism and the dangers it poses to individuals, families, and society will increase local awareness of the issue. The goal of the program is to provide people – especially youth aged 16-22 – with the knowledge and tools necessary to resist becoming affiliated with terrorist groups and activities.

- **Raise Your Voice:** In September 2017, RFE/RL launched a *Raise Your Voice* project for Central Asia to engage social media audiences in a dialogue about terrorism-related world events. The project will counter the terrorist narrative by engaging young people in Central Asia on popular social media platforms. Social media community managers in each country will identify a topic or news event of interest for discussion, post related questions to social media, and actively encourage youth to "raise their voice on that topic." Discussion topics will include breaking international or local news, such as terrorist attacks in Europe or a woman in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, being attacked on the street for wearing western-style dress. BBG will adapt *Raise Your Voice* to meet the needs in each country, incorporating multimedia (text, video, and audio).

Kazakhstan: RFE/RL's bilingual Kazakh Service, Radio Azattyq, reports on stories that would receive little or no coverage from local media. It provides a platform for audiences in Kazakhstan to engage and share ideas. The Service focused primarily on digital distribution of

reporting and digital TV programs. The Service covered stories that were otherwise suppressed or did not receive widespread attention, such as recruitment and radicalization to violence of Kazakh youth in ISIS.

Kyrgyz Republic: RFE/RL's Kyrgyz Service, Radio Azattyk, connects Kyrgyz society with informed reporting and debate on such topics as interethnic tolerance, minority rights, terrorism, and government corruption. Sample weekly television programs include the political talk show *Inconvenient Questions* and the youth-oriented *Azattyk+*.

Tajikistan: RFE/RL's Tajik Service, Radio Ozodi, provides professional news and information in a largely government-controlled media environment. Ozodi is one of the most trusted media outlets in Tajikistan, connecting citizens with their political and civil society leaders to support greater pluralism and better governance. The main advantages of the service are its access to important sources of information and that it raises sensitive and relevant issues. The Service's coverage of Tajik youth who were killed while fighting for ISIS featured original interviews with their parents and shed light on ISIS for Tajik society and the government.

Turkmenistan: RFE/RL's Turkmen Service, Radio Azatlyk, offers Turkmen-speaking audiences locally-sourced information about current affairs within their society. It is the only international media broadcaster operating in Turkmenistan with original video reporting and photojournalism on breaking news, human rights and civil society, freedom of the press and expression, and reports on religious and ethnic minorities.

Uzbekistan: VOA's Uzbek Service addressed growing ISIS recruitment in Central Asia with in-depth stories related to radicalization to violence among young males and females in Northern Afghanistan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. VOA Uzbek also covered ethnic and religious tolerance among different U.S. communities. After a New York terrorist attack, the Service conducted exclusive interviews from Uzbek community leaders and religious figures from the United States.

RFE/RL's Uzbek Service is one of the few sources of reliable news and information for people in Uzbekistan. The Service relies on constant innovation and a wide network of local sources to uncover news and engage with audiences. It has thousands of contacts on Skype, Viber, WhatsApp, Telegram, and IMO who act as citizen journalists, sending news, photos, and videos from all corners of Uzbekistan. Contacts also help verify information, since the Service is prevented from having a bureau in Tashkent.

In late 2015, RFE/RL launched an experimental wire service for Central Asia, to provide objective news to media outlets. In 2017, the number of subscribers to the service exceeded 1,200 media professionals and outlets. The service provided news in the Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Russian, Tajik, and Uzbek languages.

EAST ASIA AND PACIFIC

China: VOA delivered news, including coverage of religious and local issues affecting more than 23 million Chinese Muslims via satellite television, radio, internet, social media, and mobile

channels in Cantonese, Mandarin, and Tibetan. Coverage included Chinese government policies and treatment of ethnic Uighurs.

Indonesia: VOA Indonesian broadcasts to the country with the largest Muslim population in the world. It reaches more than 48 million people per week, which is about 28.4 percent of the adult population – a 33 percent increase from 2014. In 2017, the Service increased reporting on Islam in America, giving context and insight to the freedoms of religion and speech in the United States. VOA Indonesian continued to routinely cover terrorist threats in Indonesia as well as the Indonesian government's increased counterterrorism efforts.

Thailand: VOA's Thai Service has 16 affiliate radio stations in every region in Thailand. VOA Thai broadcast more than nine hours of news and information per week to its affiliates. It also produced a weekly video report for placement with Thai News Network (a 24-hour news channel) and VOICE TV. VOA Thai broadcast to south Thailand via three radio affiliates in Songkhla and Pattani province. VOA Thai has also expanded its online platform, sharing its news and content on its website, Facebook, YouTube, and a mobile application.

Radio Free Asia's Uighur language service broadcast two hours daily, seven days a week. It was the only international radio service providing impartial news and information in the Uighur language to the potential audience of more than 16 million Uighur Muslims in northwestern China and Central Eurasia. Consistent with RFA's mandate, the Uighur service acted as a substitute for indigenous media reporting on local events in the region. Its programs included breaking news, analysis, interviews, commentary, a weekly news review, and feature stories.

- RFA launched a web page devoted to the Uighur diaspora in the west, *Between Identity and Integration*. The page charted ethnic Uighur migration since 1949, with interviews, research, and multimedia content.
- The Uighur Service first reported on Chinese authorities in Xinjiang ordering local residents to attend a weekly patriotic flag-raising ceremony and sing the Chinese national anthem, in addition to further controls imposed during the holy month of Ramadan, when officials restricted Uighurs from attending prayers at mosques and observing religious practices.

Radio Free Asia's BenarNews is an RFA-affiliated news portal for Muslim populations in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand, who are exposed to terrorist narratives. BenarNews counters those narratives by publishing credible domestic news, features, analysis, and commentary in multiple formats and languages, including Bahasa Indonesia, Bahasa Malaysia, Bengali, English, and Thai.

In May 2017, BenarNews launched coverage of the Philippines, particularly the southern region. Weeks later, ISIS-linked militants took over the southern city of Marawi. BenarNews provided extensive coverage during the five-month battle that ensued. BenarNews reporters were among the first allowed back into Marawi after the Philippine military liberated the city in October.

BenarNews helped give voice to Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. More than 700,000 fled persecution in Myanmar in 2017; terrorist groups like al-Qa'ida exploited their suffering in recruitment propaganda.

EUROPE AND EURASIA

The Russian Federation and Ukraine: In February 2017, the BBG officially launched the Current Time TV and digital network providing Russian speakers globally with access to balanced, accurate, topical, and trustworthy information. Led by RFE/RL in cooperation with VOA, Current Time TV provides viewers with informed and up-close coverage of major news and events that are not reported, or are misreported, elsewhere.

In fiscal year 2017, Current Time went from providing one hour of daily TV programming to a full-fledged 24/7 channel stream. One year ago, the full Current Time stream was carried by 26 distributors in 11 countries. At year's end, the channel was carried by 76 distributors in 17 countries. In addition to its TV operation, Current Time Digital engages audiences with its content via social media. Current Time is active on multiple social platforms, including Facebook, YouTube, VKontakte, Twitter, Instagram, Odnoklassniki, and Telegram. Current Time Digital doubled total video views on digital platforms in 2017, with well over 300 million views – half of them from inside Russia.

As part of Current Time's "Behind the Scenes" program, RFE/RL journalist Shahida Yakub went to Kabul, Jalalabad, and the remote northern regions outside Mazar-e Sharif, where she spoke to local police and self-organized militias who have found themselves fighting off attacks by both ISIS and the Taliban.

VOA's Russian and Ukrainian Services regularly addressed terrorism-related issues and threats in Europe and the United States, and other areas of interest to the target audience.

VOA Russian Service reporter Roman Mamonov provided exclusive and comprehensive coverage of the October 2017 terrorist attack on a New York City bicycle trail, with live, on-the-scene reports on the *Current Time* network and Facebook. VOA's reports, news updates, and interviews with eyewitnesses garnered more than 100,000 views on Facebook. VOA Russian reporters also visited Uzbek communities in New York and Los Angeles whose members denounced the Uzbek-born terrorist who allegedly carried out the attack.

In 2017, VOA Russian journalists produced more than 250 original reports and exclusive interviews focusing on U.S.-led counterterrorism efforts and terrorism-related threats to U.S. national security. These stories were often picked up by Russian-language media outlets and discussed in social media forums.

South Caucasus: VOA's Georgian Service continued to provide extensive coverage of developments in Georgia's Pankisi Gorge Region. In a series of reports distributed online and through social media, the Georgian Service examined ISIS's propaganda and recruiting efforts and interviewed members of the local community who exposed ISIS's efforts of luring young Georgian recruits with fraudulent promises of jobs and a better life.

Azerbaijani Service: VOA Azerbaijani continued its coverage of issues relating to religious radicalism and efforts to counter terrorism by interviewing current and former officials, as well

as political experts and civil society activists. VOA Azerbaijani closely monitored the political trials of individuals accused of being involved in terrorist activities and sought to inform the public.

The Balkans: During 2017, VOA's Balkan services provided comprehensive and accurate coverage regarding U.S. and Defeat-ISIS Coalition operations. VOA's coverage, reaching more than 4.7 million adults weekly across broadcast and digital platforms, focused on terrorist recruitment of young Muslims; actions taken by local law enforcement against ISIS fighters who returned home; and weapons from the Balkans, which had made it to the hands of ISIS fighters and terrorist attackers in Europe. VOA's Bosnian and Albanian services produced documentary series on the radicalization to violence of traditionally secular Muslims and measures taken by local governments to fight terrorism. VOA Bosnian's documentary series, *Salafis in Bosnia*, prepared by Aldin Arnautovic, was aired on a number of TV stations throughout the Balkans. The series was also published on Facebook, where it was viewed more than 1.6 million times.

VOA's Albanian Service's documentary series included exclusive interviews with Liridon Kabashi and Albert Berisha, returned terrorist fighters from Syria. They revealed the false nature of ISIS propaganda and its utopian promises to those who traveled abroad to join ISIS, as well as the group's brutality. Both are now part of an initiative to set up a charity persuading potential ISIS recruits not to leave and help those that return to re-integrate into society. In June 2017, the VOA Albanian documentary, *Kosovo Foreign Fighters*, was aired during primetime on the influential national TV21. The top Muslim religious leaders, Kosovo and Bosnian muftis, were interviewed by VOA Albanian and Bosnian. VOA Bosnian Service also partnered with the Balkan Investigative Reporters Network to co-produce a series of TV reports concerning problems of corruption and rule of law in Bosnia. One report in the series focused on problems of radicalization to violence in Bosnian prisons.

Additionally, in FY 2017, the Service launched a new title:

- **#notinmyname:** In September, RFE/RL's Balkan Service launched a rubric for Kosovo and Bosnia to counter terrorism by engaging young people in dialogue on popular social media platforms. Social media community managers in each country identified topics or news event of interest for discussion, posted related questions to social media, and actively encouraged youth to "raise their voice on that topic." Discussion topics were drawn from either breaking international or local news, such as terrorist attacks in Europe or families devastated by ISIS.

Tatarstan/Bashkortostan and North Caucasus: The Tatar and Bashkir communities are the two largest Muslim communities in Russia. RFE/RL's Tatar/Bashkir Service was the only major international media organization that produced content in both languages.

Broadcasting in Chechen and Russian, RFE/RL's North Caucasus Service reports news in a region where media freedom and journalists remain under severe threat, and offers audiences reporting and analysis of the insurgency in Chechnya and Dagestan.

In both markets, RFE/RL also operated regional websites in the Russian language to expand audience reach and target areas. These efforts complement the Services' continuing reporting in the Bashkir, Chechen, and Tatar languages while extending their reach to new audiences.

Turkish Service: VOA Turkish coverage of counterterrorism and ISIS operations in Turkey, Europe, and the Middle East continued in 2017. The VOA Turkish Service maintained a strong presence on Turkish television and the internet and is the only foreign broadcaster directly broadcasting on Turkish TV stations, with reporters providing live coverage from the United States on-demand.

VOA Turkish has assumed the role of a reliable news agency for digital and print media. The Turkish Service's Facebook live reports achieved record high audience gains during international and domestic coverage of terrorist attacks and counterterrorism efforts. Many Turkish media outlets have been using VOA Turkish's exclusive live coverage with full attribution.

VOA Turkish produces 2.5 hours of weekly news and a 30-minute weekly magazine show for TGRT Haber TV Channel, a 24-hour nationwide network with a weekly audience share of over 30 percent of Turkey's estimated 25 million regular viewers. VOA Turkish also produces 2.5 hours weekly of "Studio Washington" for Ege TURK TV with an additional 7.5 hours of repeats. "Studio Washington" is a 30-minute program that includes news, interviews, a U.S. press opinion roundup, and health, science, technology, and lifestyle features.

AFRICA

Hausa: VOA's Hausa Service challenged the terrorist ideology of Boko Haram across the Lake Chad Basin with daily multimedia news programming, interactive call-in shows, town hall meetings, and exclusive digital content. In 2017, VOA produced *Boko Haram: Journey from Evil*, a 60-minute television documentary showing the group's brutality in video shot by the terrorists themselves while also presenting the counter-narrative of four women who stood-up to the violence. Those women include an organizer of the Bring Back Our (Chibok) Girls group, a photographer with positive images from Maiduguri, a psychiatrist working to rehabilitate Boko Haram fighters, and a Sambisa Forest hunter who is tracking the terrorists. Produced in cooperation with Creative Associates and the U.S. Agency for International Development, the film premiered at Washington's U.S. Institute of Peace and London's Chatham House before it was shown in full or in parts at public screenings in 13 cities in Nigeria and Niger, as well as on more than 40 broadcast and digital partners in English, Hausa, and French in Cameroon, Chad, Niger, and Nigeria. Leaders of Nigeria's most-populous Muslim state, Kano, are showing the VOA production as part of a campaign to counter violent extremism in more than 900 public schools. The film continues to drive online traffic to the original VOA TV production *Boko Haram: Terror Unmasked*, which has more than 18 million video views in English, French, Hausa, Khmer, Pashto, Persian, Russian, Somali, Swahili, and Urdu.

Offering an alternative to terrorist violence by highlighting stories of entrepreneurial opportunity, VOA Hausa produced a video profile of 14-year-old self-taught cobbler Zainab Mu'azu. At a time when many girls in Northern Nigeria are street hawkers, Mu'azu's small business produces 20 pairs of shoes a day. The video reached more than 1.6 million people and helped raise

donations for Mu'azu to expand her business.

Former Boko Haram fighter Bana Umar says international radio helped convince him to escape. "I listened to these radio stations frequently to the extent that when I lay down to sleep I would be thinking of what I heard. I realized that all our activities were evil," he told VOA Hausa at a military debriefing camp in Maiduguri. "We killed. We stole. We dispossessed people of their properties in the name of religion. But what we are doing is not religion. Finally I got fed up with the group."

Somali Service: VOA Somali broadcast live the election of a new president, Somali-American Mohamed Abdullahi Farmajo, who promised to redouble efforts to build a national army capable of taking over from AMISOM.

On October 14, when a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device exploded at a major traffic crossing in Mogadishu, killing more than 500 people and injuring approximately 300 more, VOA went live with on-the-scene reporting. VOA helped put a face to the toll of the terrorist violence by profiling victim Maryan Abdullahi Gedi, a medical student killed while shopping for her graduation gown. Her father was traveling from London to attend her graduation. Instead, he attended her funeral.

Mohamed Dhere escaped from al-Shabaab when his commander sent him on a training mission. He was profiled as part of a VOA special report on rehabilitating al-Shabaab fighters. "There are clerics who give awareness lectures and hold debates about Islam and extremism," explains Reintegration Director Abdirashid Ibrahim Mohamed. "Normally, when these youngsters defect from al-Shabaab, they already know what they were involved in is wrong, and they come to us to save themselves."

Forced al-Shabaab recruitment in the southwestern Bay and Bakool regions drove hundreds of boys into Baidoa, where VOA broadcast appeals from local lawmaker Abdishakur Yaqub Ibrahim who says militant leaders told local elders that "if a family has two sons, they will draft one as a militant. If they have three, they will take two of them. They are saying they will educate the children, but they are going to turn them into bombs."

French to Africa: VOA's French-to-Africa Service broadcast to Muslims throughout Francophone Africa online, on television, and on 24/7 FM broadcasts in Abidjan, Bamako, Bangui, Dakar, Goma, Lubumbashi, Ndjamena, Niamey, and Ouagadougou.

VOA reporters were the first to interview the mayor of the Nigerien town where four U.S. Green Berets were killed in an ambush. Exclusive VOA reporting was picked up by many American news outlets including The Washington Post, MSNBC, and Buzzfeed.

Swahili Service: VOA's Swahili Service broadcast to large Muslim populations in Kenya and Tanzania, and to smaller Muslim communities in Burundi, Rwanda, and Uganda. VOA Swahili produced a series of multimedia reports from Mombasa about efforts to educate girls about the dangers of radicalization to violence through marriage.

The VOA News Center expanded its terrorism coverage with innovative multimedia projects that focused on the global effort to defeat ISIS in addition to comprehensive daily coverage of related news developments in Washington and around the world. A collaboration with the Africa division produced a documentary and multimedia project that showed Boko Haram's devastating impact on Nigerians.

Multimedia Projects: Middle East Correspondent Heather Murdock presented her extensive multimedia coverage of the battle to reclaim Mosul from ISIS in *Mosul is Falling/Mosul: What's Next After IS*, detailing through first-person accounts, frontline videos, and analysis of the crucial fight to oust ISIS from its Iraqi stronghold and the formidable challenges to keep terrorism from taking hold once again.

Boko Haram documentary: The Boko Haram project is an ongoing collaboration between the News Center and the Africa Division. Journalists have produced compelling content by taking 18 hours of Boko Haram footage and combining it with additional reporting using VOA resources around the world to tell in-depth stories about the group and its victims.

Afghanistan/Pakistan: Correspondent Ayesha Tanzeem reported from remote areas of Afghanistan and Pakistan in late 2017, filing a series of multimedia reports tracking how terrorism and war are shaping communities and how local governments are responding. From an Afghan village coping with the aftermath of forcing out ISIS fighters to widows in Herat to grieving family members killed while fighting in Syria, her stories highlight how vulnerable communities are coping with terrorism. Reporter Ayaz Gul in Islamabad also covered the region's struggle with terrorist attacks and political jockeying by terrorist organizations.

Iraq/Syria: Heather Murdock traveled extensively through northern Iraq and parts of Syria in 2017, with incisive on-the-ground reporting featuring the people directly affected by ongoing violence. Dorian Jones in Istanbul covered Turkey's volatile entry into the conflict and rising tensions with Syrian Kurds.

Europe: Correspondent Luis Ramirez and reporters Henry Ridgwell and Jamie Dettmer filed multimedia reports from Brussels, London, Rome, and elsewhere in Europe on how countries are responding to ISIS attacks. Stories explored de-radicalization efforts, outreach to local Muslims, and tightened security.

VISAS FOR PARTICIPANTS IN UNITED STATES PROGRAMS

The U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs' current visa policies and procedures have two fundamental missions: protecting national security by helping secure U.S. borders against actual or potential threats, while at the same time facilitating legitimate travel and international exchange. Focusing on these two fundamental missions ensures timely adjudications of visa applications for individuals to participate in exchange visitor programs while at the same time protecting our nation's borders.

It is the Bureau of Consular Affairs' policy to facilitate and make a priority visa interviews for all student and exchange visitors for them to arrive in the United States by their program start dates, provided they qualify under the law for the visa. During the interview process, all applicants are screened through a robust, interagency vetting system drawing on both biographic and biometric data elements. This policy is in place at every embassy and consulate worldwide where nonimmigrant visas are processed.

In countries with significant visa interview wait-times, due to high demand, this policy may reduce wait times for students and exchange visitors from weeks to days. Applications may require additional administrative processing after the interview. Because of this, program sponsors and applicants should coordinate to initiate visa applications well in advance of their planned travel. We would advise applicants to obtain passports immediately and visit travel.state.gov for instructions on applying for U.S. visas.

BASIC EDUCATION IN MUSLIM COUNTRIES

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2017, USAID allocated US $384,234 million for basic education in countries with large Muslim populations. Approximate amounts for each region were:

- **Asia:** US $34 million was allocated to Bangladesh, Indonesia, the Kyrgyz Republic, Philippines (Mindanao), and Tajikistan. An additional US $94 million was allocated to Afghanistan and Pakistan.
- **Europe and Eurasia:** USAID has ongoing basic education activities in Kosovo, although there were no FY 2017 funds allocated.
- **Middle East and North Africa:** US $125 million was allocated to Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, the West Bank and Gaza, and Yemen (however, the Administration has placed all funding to Palestinians on hold pending an interagency review and the WBG Mission has yet to receive any of its FY 2017 funds).
- **Sub-Saharan Africa:** US $129 million was allocated to Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, Somalia, and Tanzania, and on regional programs.

ASIA

Afghanistan: USAID/Afghanistan continued to improve access to and quality of education, emphasizing early grade reading. The "Afghan Children Read" program developed, distributed, and tested early grade reading materials in Dari and Pashto to 68,228 students and 1,414 teachers in grades 1 and 2 at pilot schools in Herat and Kabul. United States assistance is part of a multi-donor collaborative effort to implement the "Increasing Access to Basic Education and Gender Equality" program. More than 1,600 community-based education teachers who teach more than 170,000 children received training. USAID's support to UNICEF resulted in nearly 94,000 student enrollments – about half of which were girls – and supported the production and distribution of more than 72,000 teaching and learning materials. The Global Partnership for Education enrolled an additional 42,004 students in community-based schools. Through the "Education Quality Improvement Project," a World Bank-managed Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund program, USAID and other donors funded a teacher-training program for nearly

71,000 teachers to improve education through better classroom instruction. The "Strengthening Education in Afghanistan" program helped prepare girls in 300 secondary schools to improve their learning achievements. The students received tutorials and other related support to help them prepare for the Kankor examination, a test required for admission to public universities. Additionally, USAID distributed 197 tablets and 900 solar panels to public schools to support exam preparation.

Bangladesh: The USAID/Bangladesh basic education program aimed to increase access to education and improve reading skills for children in lower primary grades. Several programs assisted with this goal. The "Innovation for Improving Early Grade Reading" program opened 1,000 new schools reaching 27,301 out-of-school youth; approximately half were girls in urban slums. The "Reading Enhancement for Advancing Development" program expanded its literacy interventions to 2,949 government primary schools in all seven of Bangladesh's states. The program trained 3,912 teachers and provided approximately 1.5 million individuals with teaching and learning materials. One major accomplishment of USAID's literacy activities in Bangladesh was the creation of 2,201 classroom libraries, each with 155 approved supplementary reading materials to complement the national textbook. USAID also continued supporting *Sisimpur*, the early childhood development program that is Bangladesh's version of *Sesame Street*. Through the development and broadcasting of 26 episodes in FY 2017, the program shared pre-reading skill lessons with more than 12 million viewers.

Indonesia: USAID/Indonesia completed the "Prioritizing Reform, Innovation, and Opportunities for Reaching Indonesia's Teachers, Administrators, and Students" initiative with notable achievements. These include a cadre of 3,833 district facilitators ready to conduct training in teaching-and-learning and school-based management, community participation in school-management oversight, and training in participatory and accountable school management for more than 1,585 school supervisors, principals, community members, and teachers. More than 44,300 educators in 11,668 non-partner schools received best practices in improved teaching methods and school governance, leveraging more than US $2.1 million in Government of Indonesia funding. The Ministry of Education and Culture selected nine districts to promote a culture of reading, and local government and technical ministries replicated the project's good practices using their own funds by training 44,332 educators from 11,668 non-project schools in 2017. Approximately US $2.1 million of local funds were spent to replicate USAID's investment to the benefit of 2.8 million students.

Kyrgyz Republic: The USAID/Kyrgyzstan basic education program "Quality Reading Project" continued to focus on improving reading skills for children. USAID developed reading standards and in-service training materials to train and officially certify 10,166 educators. An additional 23 teachers from two Schools for the Blind and Visually Impaired received training on reading instruction and adaptive technologies and materials. Donations were made of more than 419,000 books to primary schools, children's libraries, and students.

The U.S. Embassy's Public Affairs Section also expanded equitable and inclusive education services through the "Book Translation Program," which translated, printed, and distributed children's literature. These books illustrated key American values such as tolerance, diversity, inclusion, and the empowerment of women, girls, and disadvantaged groups. Several

Democracy Commission small grants supported basic education, including a grant to increase school access for disabled students. A Democracy Commission grantee created a Kyrgyz speech synthesizer for Windows and Android platforms, thereby ensuring students' access to secondary and special education in their mother tongue.

Pakistan: USAID/Pakistan supported building and rehabilitating infrastructure and improving the quality of education in several areas of the country. Programs like the multi-sectoral infrastructure program "Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Reconstruction Program" resulted in the completion of four schools, while the government-to-government "Sindh Basic Education Program School Construction Component" resulted in 30 schools. Two hundred forty schools were rehabilitated in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) grant to UNICEF for the "Pakistan Safer Schools Program." This grant provided assistance to 199 schools in targeted districts of Balochistan, Sindh, and KP. The USAID Office of Transition Initiatives' "School Rehabilitation" program rehabilitated 223 schools in the FATA and KP, and its reading program created and distributed more than 5,200,000 teaching and learning materials to students and teachers in Sindhi, Urdu, and English. Thirty-four thousand teachers had training in instructional techniques that have effectively boosted the reading skills of more than 1,300,000 children.

Philippines: USAID/Philippines focused on education service delivery and early-grade reading by bolstering the capacity of educators and administrators, education governance, and community engagement. The Philippines program increased reading activities at an additional 1,700 schools, expanding outreach to more than one million primary students receiving reading interventions. USAID also provided 627,615 units of teaching and learning materials. Five thousand six primary school classrooms received a complete set of essential reading instructional materials. More than 21,281 primary school educators and 5,300 local authorities and school administrators received training to improve their understanding of evidence-based reading instruction.

The "Education Governance Effectiveness" program focused on local government, local school boards, and school governing councils to strengthen fiscal management, transparency, and accountability for education. It trained 2,528 Parent-Teacher Associations and community-based school governance structures while delivering 94,090 textbooks and other teaching and learning materials to 1,804 classrooms.

The "Mindanao Youth for Development" program provided youth susceptible to violent extremism in Mindanao with access to educational opportunities through the Department of Education's Alternative Learning Systems. The program offered pathways for out-of-school youth to gain equivalency certification or re-enter the formal school system. The program trained 6,987 youth in social, life, and leadership skills.

In addition, a USAID and U.S. Peace Corps project engaged youth in a weeklong, life skills training and leadership session, and trained teachers to improve youth management strategies and teaching practices.

In its final year of post-Typhoon Haiyan reconstruction work, the "Rebuild" program built and equipped 164 disaster-resilient classrooms at 25 primary and secondary schools in Leyte province. These classrooms are capable of withstanding winds of up to 224 miles per hour and an 8.5 magnitude earthquake. In total, 24,040 students in primary and secondary schools benefited from the classrooms.

Tajikistan: USAID/Tajikistan supported education programs by supporting revisions of obsolete Soviet training practices. The "Quality Reading Project" closed out its interventions at the end of FY 2017. This project reached more 65 percent of primary schools nationwide (462,000 students and 17,608 teachers in more than 1,800 schools). An Early Grade Reading Assessment conducted in 2017 demonstrated that grade 4 reading comprehension increased by 19.1 percent more than the 2014 baseline for Tajik students and by 37.4 percent more than the baseline for Russian students for the national sample. On July 31, 2017, USAID and the Ministry of Education signed a Memorandum of Understanding to reaffirm the commitment to partnership and investment in the primary education sector through direct programming. As a result, four national-level working groups were established to engage on professional development for teachers; assessment, innovations and public private partnerships; and provision of age-appropriate, curriculum-aligned reading materials.

A Multi-Input Area Development Financing Facility for Tajikistan partnership with the Aga Khan Foundation implemented an approach called "Relevance Pedagogy" in select schools. Education interventions in 48 schools provided mentoring for more than 1,000 teachers and 141 administrators, benefiting more than 12,000 learners.

EUROPE AND EURASIA

Kosovo: USAID/Kosovo was not allocated basic education funding in the FY 2017. It implemented activities with prior year funds. These included a Basic Education Program to develop twenty-first century skills for children in primary school grades 1-9; assisting Kosovo education institutions to undertake reforms such as decentralizing the Municipal Education Directorates, improving the quality of teaching and learning outcomes of primary school students, and improving teacher professional development through school-based training.

MIDDLE EAST

Egypt: USAID/Egypt awarded three new programs ranging from adult literacy and community education to technical support to the Ministry of Education, Professional Academy of Teachers, and Early Grade Learning Unit. USAID continued its support to Egypt's network of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) high schools, expanding its presence to 11 schools in nine governorates, providing equal learning opportunities for 1,292 boys and 1,049 girls. STEM schools participated in international science fairs in the United States and Taiwan and won several awards. One hundred fourteen boys and 64 girls graduated and continued their studies at top-ranked public and private universities in Egypt, Germany, Japan, and the United States.

In support of the government's effort to end illiteracy, USAID/Egypt awarded a four-year literacy program in March 2017. The implementing partner signed a Protocol of Cooperation and formalized a plan with the Adult Education Authority to guide implementation over the next four years. Two major awards were signed at the end of FY 2017 to further support to children in early grades. The first is a US $15 million four-year government-to-government partnership that seeks to enhance the quality of education in primary and middle schools nationwide through improving teaching and learning in grades 1-3. The second, a US $3 million task order for technical assistance, will provide the Ministry of Education with technical capacity to plan and successfully implement the partnership.

Jordan: USAID/Jordan improved the quality of basic education for children in Jordan and ensured equitable access to public schooling. In 2016-2017, the Ministry of Education saw the enrollment of more than 126,000 Syrian children in the public school system, further straining the government's strapped resources. USAID supported a multi-donor pooled funding mechanism to support the enrollment of 126,097 Syrian children in formal education and 1,262 previously unenrolled students in a "catch up" program. In addition, 28 non-formal education centers for out-of-school Jordanian and Syrian youth were established and equipped.

USAID revised, printed, and distributed 95,752 teacher guides for early grade reading and mathematics and trained 11,432 educators on teaching techniques and standards, provided more than 64,000 coaching sessions for trained teachers, established 914 community-reading groups, and held competitions via social media to encourage parents and teachers to read to children. USAID/Jordan has multiple, ongoing school infrastructure activities that expand, renovate, and build schools.

Lebanon: USAID/Lebanon improved the quality of and access to basic education. The program "Quality Instruction Towards Access and Basic Education Improvement" attempts to improve Arabic reading outcomes for public school students in grades 1-4 delivered more than 62,000 Arabic books, established 492 classroom libraries in 117 public schools, provided 359 packs of educational materials to 59 schools, and installed 2,442 sets of classroom technology equipment in 260 schools. It also installed 400 technology resource rooms in 300 public schools and trained teachers to use the technology. As per the international community's pledge to support Lebanon within the context of the Syria refugee crisis, USAID/Lebanon covered the school fees of a total of 110,976 students – 27,532 of whom were non-Lebanese – through UNICEF's Access Program and Retention Support Program. It also provided 18,800 vulnerable students, who were struggling academically, with remedial and homework support activities.

USAID continued to fund the Research4Results two-year grant in partnership with the United Kingdom's Department for International Development and the World Bank to support education research in Lebanon. The research sought to address the issues of school retention, school dropouts, community engagement, and learning measurements, especially in relation to vulnerable Syrian refugees.

Morocco: USAID/Morocco continued its program to improve students' reading skills. The "Reading for Success" project focused on gender equity, inclusiveness, and capacity

development, and experimented with the first "Summer School" to reduce summer learning loss among early graders. The program "Reading for Success – Improving Deaf Children's Reading through Technology" refined computer software to produce reading materials for deaf and hard of hearing children in grades 1-3. The program's most significant change was the Ministry of Education's registration of deaf students in the official school system to grant them the primary education certificate and ability to obtain secondary education. This program also resulted in the Government of Morocco's creation of an office dedicated to inclusive education. Additionally, "Reading for Success – Human and Institutional Capacity Development" – in partnership with the Millennium Challenge Corporation – completed a study on the institutional and human resources of the Ministry of Education.

Syria: Both USAID and the Department of State's Bureau of Near East Affairs (NEA) programs provided basic education programming in Syria. USAID supported light refurbishment of facilities, training, workshops, short-term technical assistance to education directorates, community-based organization capacity building, youth mapping, and assessments. The Department of State (NEA) established child centers throughout Raqqa that provided psychosocial support and remedial literacy and numeracy to vulnerable children. The centers' personnel worked with grassroots organizations and the Raqqa Civil Council Education Committee to provide light rehabilitation to schools, psychosocial support training to teachers, build the capacity of education committees and local education providers, and conduct educational surveys to better assess academic needs. NEA provided education services for children and youth in the northwest in close coordination with other international donors.

West Bank and Gaza: USAID/West Bank and Gaza focused on infrastructure, teacher development, and schools in East Jerusalem and the West Bank. With USAID support, the "Palestinian Community Infrastructure Development Program" constructed and furnished a three-floor building expansion, including classrooms, science and computer labs, staff and administration rooms, a counselor's office, handicap-accessible bathroom facility, ramps, and a small kindergarten. In addition, Braille signage was set up in a marginalized area in the West Bank. The school's total student capacity has increased by about 42 percent, from 170 to 240.

The "School Support Project" supplied 45 school libraries with 50 computers, 45 science labs, internet connectivity, and books. The project also offered expanded youth extracurricular activities during and after school hours. More than US $1 million was leveraged from the Joint Financing Partners for teacher training activities. The "Leadership and Teacher Development Project" provided internet connectivity and equipment to 151 schools and technical expertise to improve classroom assessment policy and plan for management restructuring and decentralization. The Masters of Arts in Teaching enabled nine in-service teachers to receive a joint degree offered by Bard College and Al-Quds University.

Yemen: USAID/Yemen helps to stabilize communities while ensuring that children have access to safe classrooms or remedial education opportunities. USAID supported UNICEF through a Public Institution Organization grant to refurbish schools and school bathrooms, support a Back-to-School campaign, provide recreation kits for psychosocial support, and provide teachers with training to identify children suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. In addition, a "Self-

Learning Program" was developed and provided to children to guide their own learning when school is cancelled. The program reached more than 600,000 youths and more than 160,000 students benefited from school refurbishment and rehabilitation. Additionally, more than 30,000 children received counseling to learn to cope with the trauma of war and to focus on learning.

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Djibouti: USAID/Djibouti focused its activities on designing a new early-grade reading program. USAID/Djibouti completed several reading analyses to inform the development of the program.

Ethiopia: USAID/Ethiopia implemented the "Reading for Ethiopia's Achievement Developed (READ)" Technical Assistance Project. In coordination with the Ethiopian Ministry of Education, results of the project included the revision of Ethiopia's primary-level English curriculum, training of 47,767 teachers, distribution of more than 1.9 million textbooks and supplementary reading materials, and the establishment of 10,582 reading spaces. In addition, teachers in Dolo Ado and Jigjiga refugee camps received training in collaboration with the Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs.

Kenya: USAID/Kenya supported reading and youth development activities. The "All Children Reading *Tusome*" program aims to improve early grade reading comprehension. Tusome reached 3,363,687 pupils and 77,478 teachers in 23,890 schools with interventions that will define how Kenyan children learn to read for decades to come. Tusome also delivered 5,398,194textbooks and learning materials for a textbook to student ratio of one to one, a notable benchmark for the continent. The program also integrated Information and Communication Technology to operationalize Kenya's Education Management Information System via a national training platform.

USAID/Kenya also used the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief funds to provide scholarships and leadership training to Kenyan orphans and vulnerable children mired in extreme poverty. The "Wings to Fly" program mobilized the resources of a local financial institution and engaged other development partners in a Global Development Alliance to help 2,495 children access secondary education and mentoring, counseling, leadership development, and career guidance. Similarly, the "Global Give Back Circle" program partnered with 30 private sector entities to support an employment transition program for 428 disadvantaged girls and boys with scholarships, mentoring, life skills, internships, and job placements.

The "Kenya Youth Employment and Skills" program targeted out-of-school youth aged 18 to 35 who have not completed high school, resulting in 16,309 youth gaining new or better employment. USAID/Kenya also continued to implement the "Young African Leaders Initiative," which builds skills, assets, and competencies for leadership in business and entrepreneurship, civic leadership, and public management for youth age 18 to 35, resulting in 733 young leaders – 48 percent of which are women –completing the program.

Mali: USAID/Mali addressed violence and insecurity from terrorist groups, which led to the closing of 500 schools in conflict-affected regions. The "Selected Integrated Reading Program" benefitted 134,296 learners, provided reading kits to 3,595 schools and trained 10,661 teachers and school directors on balanced literacy. The program also trained 7,503 parents to use the "Does my child know how to read and write?" booklet. The "Equitable Access to Quality Education for Children in Conflict-Affected Regions" project enrolled 417,611 children in accelerated learning programs. USAID launched two new activities to support deaf and blind children: the "Inclusion of Deaf and Blind Children in Mainstream Schools" project, and the "Inclusive Education for Visually Impaired Primary School Children" project in Bamako, Gao, Koulikoro, and Segou.

Nigeria: USAID/Nigeria continued to improve reading outcomes for primary-school-age children and increase access to education. The "Northern Education Initiative," which operates in the northern states of Sokoto and Bauchi, printed and distributed more than two million Hausa language student textbooks and teaching manuals to train more than 12,000 teachers and instruct nearly 400,000 primary school children. The "Education Crisis Response" program supported the needs of internally displaced children in the northeastern states of Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe. The children learned basic literacy, numeracy, and life skills. In addition, displaced children were offered psychosocial services to help them cope with post-traumatic stress. The program funded 746 non-formal learning centers, including 387 co-educational centers and seven centers for people living with disabilities. This reached a total of 80,341 beneficiaries.

Senegal: USAID/Senegal supported reading for early grades through the "Reading for All" program. The program initiated development of the materials that improved reading in subsequent years of the program. Students' classroom tools and take-home reading material were developed and validated in the three national languages: Wolof, Pulaar, and Serer. Teacher guides and training modules were developed and printed in each of the three languages for the start of school in October 2017. The "Our Sisters Read" program mobilized communities in the region of Fatick to improve girls' success in education and in the foundational subject of reading. The program awarded scholarships to 139 elementary students who were in danger of dropping out of school and supported two mobile libraries that reached more than 9,000 children. USAID also worked with several host country institutions to carry out a national study of out-of-school children and youth.

Somalia: USAID/Somalia supported the provision of education in a country where three million children are out-of-school. Al-Shabaab has increasingly focused its recruitment efforts on children under 15, launching an alternative school curriculum in April 2017 and actively recruiting in Gedo and Middle Shabelle. USAID funded a five-year, US $10 million "Alternative Basic Education" program supporting non-formal education that supported 16,000 students in the regions of Bakool, Gedo, and Bay which were acutely affected by the recent drought and where children are particularly vulnerable to al-Shabaab recruitment efforts. Interventions included the creation of safe and sustainable learning spaces, distribution of teaching and learning materials, and training of 371 community teachers.

Tanzania: USAID/Tanzania worked closely with the Government of Tanzania to embed activities within government structures. The "Let's Read Together" – "Tusome Pamoja"

program made significant gains during its second year of implementation, reaching 552,764 and 12,722 students in the four mainland regions and the islands of Unguja and Pemba in Zanzibar. Collaborating closely with the Tanzania Institute of Education, approximately one million teacher and student teaching and learning materials were printed and distributed in FY 2017, and two sets of professional development programs began for more than 1,000 teachers.

The "Let Them Learn" (*Waache Wasome*) program, which aims to address discriminatory gender norms and practices, started in six pilot schools. During this inception phase, USAID reached 1,923 students through "Protect Our Youth" clubs, which were designed to serve as safe spaces in schools for girls to learn to navigate risks and build protective assets. Teachers and heads of school had training in school-related gender-based violence prevention. To round out the socio-ecological model that supports girls as individuals within their household, school, and community, 24 savings and lending groups were created in villages surrounding the pilot schools to build households' resilience to keep their girls in secondary school.

ECONOMIC REFORM IN MUSLIM MAJORITY COUNTRIES

We refer you to https://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/economic-growth-and-trade and https://www.usaid.gov/reports-and-data for information on the U.S. Agency for International Development's programs on Economic Reform.

Chapter 5
Foreign Terrorist Organizations

Designations of Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTOs) expose and isolate the designated terrorist organizations, deny them access to the U.S. financial system, and create significant criminal and immigration consequences for their members and supporters. Moreover, designations can assist or complement the law enforcement actions of other U.S. agencies and other governments.

In 2017, the Department of State designated Hizbul Mujahedeen as a FTO. The Department of State also amended the FTO designations of Hizballah to include the alias Lebanese Hizballah, among others; of Abdallah Azzam Brigades to include the alias Marwan Hadid Brigades; and of al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula to include several additional aliases, among them Sons of Abyan, Sons of Hadramawt, and National Hadramawt Council. Finally, the Department of State revoked the designation of the Abu Nidal Organization.

Legal Criteria for Designation under Section 219 of the INA as amended:

1. It must be a *foreign organization.*

2. The organization must *engage in terrorist activity*, as defined in section 212 (a)(3)(B) of the INA (8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(3)(B)), or *terrorism*, as defined in section 140(d)(2) of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1988 and 1989 (22 U.S.C. § 2656f(d)(2)), *or retain the capability and intent to engage in terrorist activity or terrorism*.

3. The organization's terrorist activity or terrorism must threaten the security of U.S. nationals or the national security (national defense, foreign relations, or the economic interests) of the United States.

U.S. Government Designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations

Abdallah Azzam Brigades (AAB)
Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG)
Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade (AAMB)
Ansar al-Dine (AAD)
Ansar al-Islam (AAI)
Ansar al-Shari'a in Benghazi (AAS-B)
Ansar al-Shari'a in Darnah (AAS-D)
Ansar al-Shari'a in Tunisia (AAS-T)
Army of Islam (AOI)
Asbat al-Ansar (AAA)
Aum Shinrikyo (AUM)
Basque Fatherland and Liberty (ETA)
Boko Haram (BH)
Communist Party of Philippines/New People's Army (CPP/NPA)

Continuity Irish Republican Army (CIRA)
Gama'a al-Islamiyya (IG)
Hamas
Haqqani Network (HQN)
Harakat ul-Jihad-i-Islami (HUJI)
Harakat ul-Jihad-i-Islami/Bangladesh (HUJI-B)
Harakat ul-Mujahideen (HUM)
Hizballah
Hizbul Mujahedeen (HM)
Indian Mujahedeen (IM)
Islamic Jihad Union (IJU)
Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU)
Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)
Islamic State's Khorasan Province (ISIS-K)
ISIL-Libya
ISIS Sinai Province (ISIS-SP)
Jama'atu Ansarul Muslimina Fi Biladis-Sudan (Ansaru)
Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM)
Jaysh Rijal Al-Tariq Al-Naqshabandi (JRTN)
Jemaah Ansharut Tauhid (JAT)
Jemaah Islamiya (JI)
Jundallah
Kahane Chai
Kata'ib Hizballah (KH)
Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK)
Lashkar e-Tayyiba (LeT)
Lashkar i Jhangvi (LJ)
Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE)
Mujahidin Shura Council in the Environs of Jerusalem (MSC)
Al-Mulathamun Battalion (AMB)
National Liberation Army (ELN)
Al-Nusrah Front (ANF)
Palestine Islamic Jihad (PIJ)
Palestine Liberation Front – Abu Abbas Faction (PLF)
Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)
Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC)
Al-Qa'ida (AQ)
Al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP)
Al-Qa'ida in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS)
Al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)
Real IRA (RIRA)
Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC)
Revolutionary People's Liberation Party/Front (DHKP/C)
Revolutionary Struggle (RS)
Al-Shabaab (AS)

Shining Path (SL)
Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP)

ABDALLAH AZZAM BRIGADES

aka Abdullah Azzam Brigades; Ziyad al-Jarrah Battalions of the Abdallah Azzam Brigades; Yusuf al-'Uyayri Battalions of the Abdallah Azzam Brigades; Marwan Hadid Brigades; Marwan Hadid Brigade

Description: Designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on May 30, 2012, the Abdallah Azzam Brigades (AAB) formally announced its establishment in a July 2009 video statement claiming responsibility for a February 2009 rocket attack against Israel. The Lebanon-based group's full name is Ziyad al-Jarrah Battalions of the Abdallah Azzam Brigades, named after Lebanese citizen Ziad al Jarrah, one of the planners of and participants in the September 11, 2001 attacks on the United States.

Activities: After its initial formation, AAB relied primarily on rocket attacks against Israeli civilians. It is responsible for numerous rocket attacks fired into Israeli territory from Lebanon targeting – among other things – population centers, including Nahariya and Ashkelon.

In November 2013, AAB began targeting Hizballah. AAB claimed responsibility for a suicide bombing outside the Iranian Embassy in Beirut, Lebanon, which killed 23 people and wounded more than 140. The group warned it would carry out more attacks if Hizballah did not stop sending fighters to Syria in support of Syrian government forces.

In February 2014, AAB again attacked Hizballah for its involvement in the Syrian conflict, claiming a twin suicide bomb attack against the Iranian cultural center in Beirut, which killed four people. AAB was also believed to be responsible for a series of bombings in Hizballah-controlled areas around Beirut. AAB was also blamed for a suicide bombing in June 2014 in the Beirut neighborhood of Tayyouneh, which killed a security officer and wounded 25 people.

In June 2015, the group released photos of a training camp for its "Marwan Hadid Brigade" camp in Syria, likely located in Homs province. In 2016 and 2017, AAB continued its involvement in the Syrian conflict, and was active in Lebanon's Ain al-Hilwah refugee camp. In December 2017, AAB called for violent jihad by Muslims against the United States and Israel after the announcement recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

Strength: Unknown

Location/Area of Operation: AAB is based in Lebanon but operates in both Lebanon and Syria.

Funding and External Aid: Unknown

ABU SAYYAF GROUP

aka al Harakat al Islamiyya (the Islamic Movement)

Description: The Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on October 8, 1997. The ASG split from the Moro Islamic Liberation Front in the early 1990s and is one of the most violent terrorist groups in the Philippines. The group claims to promote an independent Islamic state in western Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago.

Activities: The ASG has committed kidnappings-for-ransom, bombings, ambushes of security personnel, public beheadings, assassinations, and extortion. In April 2000, an ASG faction kidnapped 21 people, including 10 Western tourists, from a resort in Malaysia. In May 2001, the group kidnapped three U.S. citizens and 17 Philippine citizens from a tourist resort in Palawan, Philippines; several hostages were murdered, including U.S. citizen Guillermo Sobero. A hostage rescue operation in June 2002 freed U.S. hostage Gracia Burnham; her husband, U.S. national Martin Burnham was killed during the operation. In February 2004, the ASG bombed SuperFerry 14 in Manila Bay, killing 116 people, and in July of the same year, ASG militants killed 21 people, including six children, celebrating the end of Ramadan.

In a July 2014 video, senior ASG leader and U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation most-wanted terrorist Isnilon Hapilon swore allegiance to ISIS and ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. Hapilon was considered the leader of all ISIS-affiliated groups in the Philippines.

Throughout 2015, the ASG was responsible for multiple attacks, kidnappings, and the killing of hostages. In September 2016, the ASG abducted two Canadians, a Norwegian, and a Philippine woman from a resort on Samal Island. The ASG set ransom at US $60 million. The ASG beheaded the two Canadian citizens later that year, and in early 2017, the ASG beheaded German citizen Jürgen Kantner when ransom deadlines were not met. The group continued its kidnapping-for-ransom operations in 2017, after collecting approximately US $7.3 million during the first six months of 2016. In August 2017, ASG members killed nine people and injured others in an attack on Basilan Island.

On May 23, 2017, Philippine forces launched an operation attempting to capture Hapilon in the city of Marawi. ASG fighters opened fire on security forces and called on support from the pro-ISIS Maute Group. Together, the ASG and Maute Group militants laid siege over Marawi and clashed with government forces until October, resulting in the deaths of over 150 security forces, more than 800 militants, and 47 civilians. Over 400,000 residents of Marawi were displaced due to the fighting. Hapilon was killed by government forces in the last days of his group's attempted siege of Marawi.

Strength: The ASG is estimated to have 400 members.

Location/Area of Operation: The group is located mainly in the Philippine provinces of the Sulu Archipelago – namely Basilan, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi, the Zamboanga Peninsula, and Mindanao – but has also conducted cross-border operations into eastern Malaysia.

Funding and External Aid: The ASG is funded primarily through kidnapping-for-ransom operations and extortion. It may receive funding from external sources, including remittances from overseas Philippine workers and Middle East-based sympathizers. In the past, the ASG has also received training and other assistance from regional terrorist groups such as Jemaah Islamiya.

AL-AQSA MARTYRS BRIGADE

aka al-Aqsa Martyrs Battalion

Description: Designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on March 27, 2002, the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade (AAMB) is composed of small cells of Fatah-affiliated activists that emerged at the outset of the al-Aqsa Intifada in September 2000. AAMB strives to drive the Israeli military and West Bank settlers from the West Bank to establish a Palestinian state loyal to Fatah.

Activities: During the 2000 Intifada, AAMB carried out primarily small-arms attacks against Israeli military personnel and settlers. By 2002, the group was striking Israeli civilians inside Israel. In January 2002, AAMB claimed responsibility for the first female suicide bombing in Israel. In 2010 and 2011, the group launched numerous rocket attacks on Israeli communities, and in November 2012, AAMB claimed it had fired more than 500 rockets and missiles into Israel during an Israel Defense Forces operation in Gaza.

In 2015, AAMB declared an open war against Israel and asked Iran for funds to help it in its fight against Israel in a televised broadcast. In the same broadcast, an AAMB fighter displayed a new two-mile tunnel crossing the border beneath Gaza and Israel, which the leader claimed would be used in the next rounds of battle. Throughout 2015, AAMB continued attacking Israeli soldiers and civilians.

In March 2016, armed confrontation in Nablus between Palestinian youths and Palestinian security officials broke out following the arrest of an AAMB associate on charges of murder; seven youths and six Palestinian security officials were injured in the unrest. The AAMB claimed responsibility for two rockets fired at Israel from the Gaza Strip in March 2017, although the rockets did not cause any casualties.

Strength: The group is estimated to have a few hundred members.

Location/Area of Operation: Most of AAMB's operational activity is in Gaza but it has also planned and conducted attacks inside Israel and the West Bank. AAMB has members in Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon.

Funding and External Aid: Iran has provided AAMB with funds and guidance, mostly through Hizballah facilitators.

ANSAR AL-DINE

aka Ansar Dine; Ansar al-Din; Ancar Dine; Ansar ul-Din; Ansar Eddine; Defenders of the Faith

Description: The Mali-based group Ansar al-Dine (AAD) was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on March 22, 2013. AAD was created in late 2011 after AAD's leader Iyad ag Ghali failed in his attempt to take over another secular Tuareg organization. Following the March 2012 coup that toppled the Malian government, AAD was among the organizations (that also included al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa) to take over northern Mali, destroy UNESCO World Heritage sites, and enforce a severe interpretation of Sharia law upon the civilian population living in the areas under its control.

Beginning in January 2013, French and allied African forces conducted operations in northern Mali to counter AAD and other terrorist groups, eventually forcing AAD and its allies out of the population centers they had seized. Ghali, however, remained free, and has appeared in AAD videos in 2015 and 2016 threatening France and the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA).

In September 2016, the International Criminal Court (ICC) convicted AAD leader Ahmad al-Faqi al-Mahdi of the war crime of intentionally directing attacks against religious and historic buildings in Timbuktu in 2012. In September 2017, the ICC ordered al-Mahdi to pay more than US $3 million in reparations for his part in the group's 2012 destruction of the Timbuktu World Heritage site.

In 2017, the Sahara Branch of al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb, al-Murabitoun, Ansar al-Dine, and the Macina Liberation Front came together to form Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin.

Activities: In early 2012, AAD received backing from AQIM in its fight against the Government of Mali, including for its capture of the Malian towns of Agulhok, Gao, Kidal, Tessalit, and Timbuktu. In March, AAD members were reportedly among the Tuareg rebels responsible for killing 82 Malian soldiers and kidnapping 30 others in an attack against Agulhok. Before the French intervention in January 2013, Malian citizens in towns under AAD's control who refused to comply with AAD's laws allegedly faced harassment, torture, and death.

AAD was severely weakened by the 2013 French intervention, but increased its activities in 2015 and 2016. In 2016, AAD claimed attacks targeting the Malian army and MINUSMA. In July 2016, AAD attacked an army base, leaving 17 soldiers dead and six missing, and in the following month the group claimed three attacks: two improvised explosive device attacks on French forces and a rocket or mortar attack on a joint UN-French base near Tessalit. In October and November of 2016, AAD claimed responsibility for a series of attacks on UN and French forces.

Strength: The group's exact membership numbers were unknown at the end of 2017.

Location/Area of Operation: AAD is active in Mali and has also threatened to attack Mauritania and the Ivory Coast.

Funding and External Aid: AAD cooperates closely with and has received support from AQIM since its inception. AAD is also said to receive funds from foreign donors and through smuggling.

ANSAR AL-ISLAM

aka Ansar al-Sunna; Ansar al-Sunna Army; Devotees of Islam; Followers of Islam in Kurdistan; Helpers of Islam; Jaish Ansar al-Sunna; Jund al-Islam; Kurdish Taliban; Kurdistan Supporters of Islam; Partisans of Islam; Soldiers of God; Soldiers of Islam; Supporters of Islam in Kurdistan

Description: Ansar al-Islam (AAI) was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on March 22, 2004. AAI was established in 2001 in the Iraqi Kurdistan region with the merger of two Kurdish terrorist factions that traced their roots to the Islamic Movement of Kurdistan. On May 4, 2010, AAI's leader Abu Abdullah al-Shafi'i was captured by U.S. forces in Baghdad; he remained in prison at the end of 2017. On December 15, 2011, AAI announced a new leader: Abu Hashim Muhammad bin Abdul Rahman al Ibrahim. AAI seeks to expel western interests from Iraq and establish an independent Iraqi state based on its interpretation of Sharia law.

Activities: AAI has conducted attacks against a wide range of targets including Iraqi government and security forces, and U.S. and Coalition Forces. AAI has carried out numerous kidnappings, murders, and assassinations of Iraqi citizens and politicians. In 2012, the group claimed responsibility for the bombing of the Sons of Martyrs School in Damascus, which was occupied by Syrian security forces and pro-government militias; seven people were wounded in the attack.

During summer 2014, part of AAI issued a statement pledging allegiance to ISIS, although later reports suggest that a faction of AAI continues to oppose ISIS. In 2016 and 2017, AAI continued to operate in Syria.

Strength: Precise numbers are unknown.

Location/Area of Operation: AAI is active primarily in northern Iraq, but also maintains a presence in western and central Iraq. Since 2011, AAI has operated in Syria.

Funding and External Aid: AAI receives assistance from a loose network of associates in Europe and the Middle East.

ANSAR AL-SHARI'A IN BENGHAZI

aka Ansar al-Sharia in Libya; Ansar al-Shariah Brigade; Ansar al-Shari'a Brigade; Katibat Ansar al-Sharia in Benghazi; Ansar al-Shariah-Benghazi; Al-Raya Establishment for Media Production; Ansar al-Sharia; Soldiers of the Sharia; Ansar al-Shariah; Supporters of Islamic Law

Description: Designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on January 13, 2014, Ansar al-Shari'a in Benghazi (AAS-B) was created after the 2011 fall of the Qadhafi regime in Libya.

It has been involved in terrorist attacks against civilian targets, and assassinations and attempted assassinations of security officials and political actors in eastern Libya.

Activities: Members of AAS-B were involved in the September 11, 2012, attacks against the U.S. Special Mission and Annex in Benghazi, Libya. Four U.S. citizens were killed in the attack: Glen Doherty, Sean Smith, Tyrone Woods, and U.S. Ambassador to Libya J. Christopher Stevens.

During 2016, AAS-B continued its fight against the "Libyan National Army" in Benghazi that resulted in the deaths of both Libyan security forces and civilians. Additionally, AAS-B controlled several terrorist training camps in Libya, and has trained members of other terrorist organizations, some which operate in Syria, Iraq, and Mali.

In May 2017, AAS in Libya announced its formal dissolution due to heavy losses, including the group's senior leadership, as well as defections to ISIS in Libya.

Strength: The group is dissolved.

Location/Area of Operation: AAS-B operated in Benghazi, Libya.

Funding and External Aid: AAS-B obtained funds from al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb, charities, donations, and criminal activities.

ANSAR AL-SHARI'A IN DARNAH

aka Supporters of Islamic Law; Ansar al-Sharia in Derna; Ansar al-Sharia in Libya; Ansar al-Sharia; Ansar al-Sharia Brigade in Darnah

Description: Designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on January 13, 2014, Ansar al-Shari'a in Darnah (AAS-D) was created after the 2011 fall of the Qadhafi regime in Libya. It has been involved in terrorist attacks against civilian targets, and assassinations and attempted assassinations of security officials and political actors in eastern Libya.

Activities: Members of AAS-D were involved in the September 11, 2012, attacks against the U.S. Special Mission and Annex in Benghazi, Libya. Four U.S. citizens were killed in the attack: Glen Doherty, Sean Smith, Tyrone Woods, and U.S. Ambassador to Libya J. Christopher Stevens.

In 2013 and 2014, AAS-D is believed to have cooperated with Ansar al-Shari'a in Benghazi in multiple attacks and suicide bombings targeting Libyan security forces in Benghazi. In 2016, AAS-D continued its involvement in fighting in and around Darnah. In addition to its attacks, AAS-D maintained several terrorist training camps in Darnah and Jebel Akhdar, Libya, and has trained members of other terrorist organizations operating in Syria and Iraq.

In May 2017, AAS in Libya announced its formal dissolution due to heavy losses, including the group's senior leadership, as well as defections to ISIS in Libya.

Strength: The group is dissolved.

Location/Area of Operation: AAS-D operated in Darnah, Libya.

Funding and External Aid: Unknown

ANSAR AL-SHARI'A IN TUNISIA

aka Al-Qayrawan Media Foundation; Supporters of Islamic Law; Ansar al-Sharia in Tunisia; Ansar al-Shari'ah; Ansar al-Shari'ah in Tunisia; Ansar al-Sharia

Description: Designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on January 13, 2014, Ansar al-Shari'a in Tunisia (AAS-T) was founded by Seif Allah Ben Hassine in early 2011. AAS-T has been implicated in attacks against Tunisian security forces, assassinations of Tunisian political figures, and attempted suicide bombings of locations frequented by tourists. AAS-T has also recruited youth in Tunisia to fight in Syria.

Activities: AAS-T was involved in the September 14, 2012 attack against the U.S. Embassy and American school in Tunis, which threatened the safety of more than 100 U.S. Embassy employees. In February and July 2013, AAS-T members were implicated in the assassination of Tunisian politicians Chokri Belaid and Mohamed Brahmi.

Tunisian authorities continued to confront and arrest AAS-T members in 2016 and 2017.

Strength: Unknown

Location/Area of Operation: Tunisia and Libya

Funding and External Aid: Unknown

ARMY OF ISLAM

aka Jaysh al-Islam; Jaish al-Islam

Description: Designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on May 19, 2011, the Army of Islam (AOI), founded in late 2015, is a Gaza-based terrorist organization responsible for numerous terrorist acts against the Israeli and Egyptian governments and British, New Zealand, and U.S. citizens. The group, led by Mumtaz Dughmush, subscribes to an extremist Salafist ideology.

Note: Army of Islam is a separate and distinct group from the Syria-based Jaysh al-Islam, which is not a Foreign Terrorist Organization.

Activities: AOI is responsible for a number of rocket attacks on Israel, and the 2006 and 2007 kidnappings of civilians, including a U.S. journalist. AOI also carried out the early 2009 attacks

on Egyptian civilians in Cairo and Heliopolis, Egypt, and planned the January 1, 2011, attack on a Coptic Christian church in Alexandria that killed 25 and wounded 100. In November 2012, AOI announced that it had launched rocket attacks on Israel in a joint operation with the Mujahidin Shura Council in the Environs of Jerusalem. In August 2013, an Israeli official reported that AOI leader Dughmush was running training camps in Gaza.

In September 2015, AOI reportedly released a statement pledging allegiance to ISIS. In the short post attributed to the group, AOI declared itself an inseparable part of ISIS-Sinai Province. In 2016 and 2017, AOI continued to express support for ISIS. The group released a video in October 2017 in an effort to encourage ISIS fighters defending Mosul. There were no attacks claimed by AOI in 2017.

Strength: Membership is estimated in the low hundreds.

Location/Area of Operation: The group operates in Egypt, Gaza, and Israel.

Funding and External Aid: AOI receives much of its funding from a variety of criminal activities in Gaza.

ASBAT AL-ANSAR

aka AAA; Band of Helpers; Band of Partisans; League of Partisans; League of the Followers; God's Partisans; Gathering of Supporters; Partisan's League; Esbat al-Ansar; Isbat al-Ansar; Osbat al-Ansar; Usbat al-Ansar; Usbat ul-Ansar

Description: Designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on March 27, 2002, Asbat al-Ansar (AAA) is a Lebanon-based Sunni terrorist group composed primarily of Palestinians. Linked to al-Qa'ida and other Sunni terrorist groups, AAA aims to thwart perceived anti-Islamic and pro-Western influences in the country. AAA's base is largely confined to Lebanon's refugee camps.

Activities: AAA first emerged in the early 1990s. In the mid-1990s, the group assassinated Lebanese religious leaders and bombed nightclubs, theaters, and liquor stores. The group has also plotted against foreign diplomatic targets. Between 2005 and 2011, AAA members traveled to Iraq to fight Coalition Forces. AAA has been reluctant to involve itself in operations in Lebanon due in part to concerns of losing its safe haven in the Ain al-Hilwah refugee camp. AAA remained active in Lebanon in 2017.

Strength: The group has at least 650 members.

Location/Area of Operation: The group's primary base of operations is the Ain al-Hilwah Palestinian refugee camp near Sidon in southern Lebanon.

Funding and External Aid: It is likely the group receives money through international Sunni extremist networks.

AUM SHINRIKYO

aka A.I.C. Comprehensive Research Institute; A.I.C. Sogo Kenkyusho; Aleph; Aum Supreme Truth

Description: Aum Shinrikyo (AUM) was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on October 8, 1997. It was established in 1987 by now-jailed leader Shoko Asahara and gained legal status in Japan as a religious entity in 1989. The Japanese government revoked its recognition of AUM as a religious organization following AUM's deadly 1995 sarin gas attack in Tokyo. Despite claims that it has renounced violence and Asahara's teachings, members of AUM continue to adhere to the violent and apocalyptic teachings of its founder.

Activities: In March 1995, AUM members simultaneously released the chemical nerve agent sarin on several Tokyo subway trains, killing 13 and causing up to 6,000 people to seek medical treatment. Subsequent investigations by the Japanese government revealed the group was responsible for other mysterious chemical incidents in Japan in 1994, including a sarin gas attack on a residential neighborhood in Matsumoto that killed seven and injured approximately 500. Japanese police arrested Asahara in May 1995; in February 2004, authorities sentenced him to death for his role in the 1995 attacks, but have yet to carry out the sentence.

Although AUM has not conducted a terrorist attack since 1995, concerns remain regarding its continued adherence to the violent teachings of Asahara. The group consists of two factions, both of which have recruited new members, engaged in commercial enterprises, and acquired property. In July 2000, Russian authorities arrested a group of Russian AUM followers who planned to detonate bombs in Japan as part of an operation to free Asahara from jail. In August 2012, a Japan Airlines flight to the United States turned back after receiving a bomb threat demanding the release of Asahara.

In March 2016, Montenegro expelled 58 people associated with AUM found holding a conference at a hotel in Danilovgrad. One month later, Russian authorities carried out dozens of raids on 25 AUM properties and opened a criminal investigation into an AUM cell. In November 2017, Japanese police raided the offices of a "successor" group to AUM.

Strength: Recent estimates suggest the group has around 1,500 followers. AUM continues to maintain facilities in Japan and Russia.

Location/Area of Operation: The group operates in Japan and Russia.

Funding and External Aid: Funding primarily comes from member contributions and group-run businesses.

BASQUE FATHERLAND AND LIBERTY

aka ETA; Askatasuna; Batasuna; Ekin; Euskal Herritarrok; Euzkadi Ta Askatasuna; Herri Batasuna; Jarrai-Haika-Segi; K.A.S.; XAKI

Description: Designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on October 8, 1997, Basque Fatherland and Liberty (ETA) was founded in 1959 with the aim of establishing an independent homeland based on Marxist principles in the Spanish Basque provinces of Alava, Guipuzcoa, and Viscaya; the autonomous region of Navarre; and the southwestern French territories of Labourd, Lower-Navarre, and Soule.

Activities: ETA has primarily conducted bombings and assassinations. Targets typically include Spanish government officials, businessmen, politicians, judicial figures, and security and military forces; however, the group has also targeted journalists and major tourist areas. ETA is responsible for killing 829 civilians and members of the armed forces and police, and injuring thousands since it formally began its campaign of violence in 1968.

In December 2006, ETA exploded a massive car bomb destroying much of the covered parking garage at Madrid's Barajas International Airport. ETA marked its fiftieth anniversary in 2009 with a series of high profile and deadly bombings, including the July 2009 attack on a Civil Guard Barracks that injured more than 60 men, women, and children.

ETA has not launched any attacks since it announced a "definitive cessation of armed activity" in October 2011.

Authorities seized ETA weapons in 2016, including a cache found in a forest north of Paris, and the top ETA leader was captured. In April 2017, ETA reported that it relinquished its last caches of weapons, although it has not formally dissolved as a group.

Strength: Since 2004, more than 900 ETA militants have been arrested both in Spain and abroad. It is unknown how many ETA members remain but it is likely in the hundreds.

Location/Area of Operation: Primarily in the Basque autonomous regions of northern Spain and southwestern France, and Madrid.

Funding and External Aid: ETA is probably experiencing financial shortages given that the group announced publicly in September 2011 that it had ceased collecting "revolutionary taxes" from Basque businesses. Sources of ETA funding were unknown in 2017.

BOKO HARAM

aka Nigerian Taliban; Jama'atu Ahlus-Sunnah Lidda'Awati Wal Jihad; Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati wal-Jihad; People Committed to the Prophet's Teachings for Propagation and Jihad; Sunni Group for Preaching and Jihad

Description: Nigeria-based Boko Haram (BH) was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on November 14, 2013. The group is responsible for numerous attacks in northern and northeastern Nigeria, and the Lake Chad Basin in Cameroon, Chad, and Niger that have killed thousands of people since 2009.

In March 2015, BH pledged allegiance to ISIS in an audiotape message. ISIS accepted the group's pledge and the group began calling itself ISIS-West Africa. In August 2016, ISIS announced that Abu Musab al-Barnawi was to replace Abubakar Shekau as the new leader of the group. Infighting then led the group to split. Shekau maintains a group of followers and affiliates concentrated primarily in the Sambisa Forest; this faction is known as Boko Haram. The Governments of Cameroon, Chad, Niger, and Nigeria routinely call both groups Boko Haram, with some differentiation on the "Shekau faction" versus the "al-Barnawi faction."

Activities: BH was responsible for the August 26, 2011 bomb attack on the UN building in Abuja that killed at least 21 people and wounded dozens more. The group was also responsible for a series of bomb attacks in 2012 in Kano, Nigeria.

Boko Haram crosses porous Lake Chad region borders to target civilians and military personnel in northeast Nigeria, the Far North Region of Cameroon, and parts of Chad and Niger. The group continued to evade pressure from Lake Chad country forces, including through the regional Multinational Joint Task Force. In 2013, the group kidnapped over a dozen French citizens in northern Cameroon for ransom.

In 2014, BH killed approximately 5,000 Nigerian civilians in various attacks. The kidnapping of 276 female students from a secondary school in Chibok, Borno State, brought global attention to Boko Haram's activities and highlighted its deliberate targeting of non-combatants, including children. The group continued to abduct women and girls in the northern region of Nigeria and the Lake Chad region, some of whom it later subjected to domestic servitude, other forms of forced labor, and sexual servitude, including through forced marriages to its members. For further information, refer to *the 2017 Trafficking in Persons Report*.

Between January 3 and 7, 2015, BH carried out a massacre in Baga, Borno State; reported casualties ranged from 150 to more than 2,000 killed, injured, or disappeared. The January 2015 attacks and other BH operations in surrounding smaller villages in 2015 displaced an estimated 35,000 people and allowed BH to gain control of Borno State. On April 6, BH militants disguised as Islamic preachers killed at least 24 people and wounded several others in an attack near a mosque in Borno State; the attackers gathered people in the village of Kwajafa, offering to preach Islam, then opened fire.

BH continued its operational tempo through 2015 and into early 2016 under the name ISIS-West Africa, with January operations in Cameroon that killed 16 people. In February 2016, the group resumed attacks in Nigeria, killing 30 people on February 13 in a spate of attacks in Borno State that included forcing worshipers into a mosque and killing them. In October, BH released 21 Chibok schoolgirls to Nigerian authorities in exchange for the release of selected BH members; it was the first mass release of Chibok hostages since the 2014 abductions.

In January 2017, around 100 BH fighters attacked a refugee camp in Nigeria, killing over 150 people. BH continued its attacks, mostly concentrated in and around Borno state, throughout early 2017, razing villages, abducting women and girls, and killing Nigerian security forces. In May, BH members released an additional 82 Chibok schoolgirls to the Nigerian government. Between April and September, BH militants killed over 400 people in Nigeria and Cameroon,

and the group increasingly forced abducted women and girls to carry out suicide attacks on civilians. Since 2009, BH has killed approximately 20,000 people and displaced over two million others.

Strength: Membership is estimated to be several thousand fighters.

Location/Area of Operation: BH operates in northeastern Nigeria, northern Cameroon, southeast Niger, and areas of Chad along the Nigerian border.

Funding and External Aid: BH largely self-finances through criminal activities such as looting, extortion, kidnapping-for-ransom, and bank robberies.

COMMUNIST PARTY OF PHILIPPINES/NEW PEOPLE'S ARMY

aka CPP/NPA; Communist Party of the Philippines; the CPP; New People's Army; the NPA

Description: The Communist Party of the Philippines/New People's Army (CPP/NPA) was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on August 9, 2002. The military wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) – the New People's Army (NPA) – is a Maoist group formed in March 1969 with the aim of overthrowing the government through protracted guerrilla warfare. NPA's founder, Jose Maria Sison, reportedly directs CPP/NPA activity from the Netherlands, where he lives in self-imposed exile. Luis Jalandoni, a fellow Central Committee member and director of the CPP's overt political wing, the National Democratic Front (NDF), also lives in the Netherlands. Although primarily a rural-based guerrilla group, CPP/NPA has an active urban infrastructure to support its terrorist activities and, at times, uses city-based assassination squads.

Activities: CPP/NPA primarily targets Philippine security forces, government officials, local infrastructure, and businesses that refuse to pay extortion, or "revolutionary taxes." CPP/NPA also has a history of attacking U.S. interests in the Philippines. In 1987, for example, CPP/NPA killed three U.S. soldiers in four separate attacks in Angeles City. In 1989, the group issued a press statement claiming responsibility for the ambush and murder of Colonel James Nicholas Rowe, chief of the Ground Forces Division of the Joint U.S.-Military Advisory Group.

Over the past several years, CPP/NPA has continued to carry out killings, raids, kidnappings, acts of extortion, and other forms of violence primarily directed against Philippine security forces. In May 2013, the Armed Forces of the Philippines reported that from 2011 through the first quarter of 2013, 383 people – including 158 civilians – were killed in encounters between CPP/NPA and government forces. Despite a ceasefire with the Government of the Philippines in December 2014, CPP/NPA continued to carry out attacks.

Throughout 2016, several attempts were made to establish a ceasefire and peace deal between the CPP/NPA and the Armed Forces of the Philippines. Reported violations from both sides, however, including reports of CPP/NPA's continued recruitment in the Philippines and attacks against government forces and civilians, have stalled any peace efforts.

In February 2017, after several attempts from both parties to establish a bilateral ceasefire in late 2016, the CPP/NPA terminated its unilateral ceasefire after a number of earlier clashes between the group and the Philippine Armed Forces. President Duterte responded with ending its ceasefire and peace talks with the CPP/NPA. Attempts to reach a ceasefire continued in 2017 without success, as a number of conflicts and skirmishes have erupted between the CPP/NPA and the Philippine Armed Forces. President Duterte signed a proclamation declaring the CPP/NPA as a terrorist organization in December, although the decision must obtain court approval.

Strength: The Philippine government estimates the group has approximately 4,000 members. CPP/NPA also retains a significant amount of support from communities in rural areas of the Philippines.

Location/Area of Operation: The Philippines, including Rural Luzon, Visayas, and parts of northern and eastern Mindanao. There are also CPP/NPA cells in Manila and other metropolitan centers.

Funding and External Aid: The CPP/NPA raises funds through extortion and theft.

CONTINUITY IRISH REPUBLICAN ARMY

aka Continuity Army Council; Continuity IRA; Republican Sinn Fein

Description: Designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on July 13, 2004, the Continuity Irish Republican Army (CIRA) is a terrorist splinter group that became operational in 1986 as the clandestine armed wing of Republican Sinn Fein following its split from Sinn Fein. "Continuity" refers to the group's belief that it is carrying on the original goal of the Irish Republican Army (IRA), to force the British out of Northern Ireland. CIRA cooperates with the larger Real IRA (RIRA).

Activities: CIRA has been active in Belfast and the border areas of Northern Ireland, where it has carried out bombings, assassinations, kidnappings, hijackings, extortion operations, and robberies. On occasion, it has provided advance warning to police of its attacks. Targets have included the British military, Northern Ireland security forces, and Loyalist paramilitary groups.

In July 2015, Police Service of Northern Ireland officers narrowly escaped harm when an explosive detonated as they were investigating a concealed device they later described as an "elaborate trap." In February 2016, CIRA claimed responsibility for a shooting at a boxing event in Dublin that left one dead. In June 2017, CIRA released a statement claiming that it would disband and decommission some of its arms in the following three months, describing the conflict as a "futile war."

Strength: Membership is small, with possibly fewer than 50. Police counterterrorism operations have reduced the group's strength.

Location/Area of Operation: CIRA operates in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

Funding and External Aid: CIRA supports its activities through criminal activities, including smuggling.

GAMA'A AL-ISLAMIYYA

aka al-Gama'at; Egyptian al-Gama'at al-Islamiyya; GI; Islamic Gama'at; IG; Islamic Group

Description: Gama'a al-Islamiyya (IG) was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on October 8, 1997. Formed in the 1970s, IG was once Egypt's largest terrorist group. In 2011, it formed the Building and Development political party that competed in the 2011 parliamentary elections and won 13 seats. The external wing, composed mainly of exiled members in several countries, maintained that its primary goal was to replace the Egyptian government with an Islamist state. IG's "spiritual" leader Omar Abd al-Rahman, or the "blind Sheikh," served a life sentence in a U.S. prison for his involvement in the 1993 World Trade Center bombing and died in prison in February 2017.

Activities: In the 1990s, IG conducted armed attacks against Egyptian security, other government officials, and Coptic Christians. IG claimed responsibility for the June 1995 attempted assassination of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The group also launched attacks on tourists in Egypt, most notably the 1997 Luxor attack. In 1999, part of the group publicly renounced violence. IG is not known to have committed a terrorist attack in recent years; the group remained dormant in 2017.

Strength: At its peak, IG likely commanded several thousand core members and a similar number of supporters. Security clampdowns following the 1997 attack in Luxor and the 1999 cease-fire, along with post-September 11, 2001 security measures and defections to al-Qa'ida, have likely resulted in a substantial decrease in what is left of the group.

Location/Area of Operation: Unknown

Funding and External Aid: Unknown

HAMAS

aka the Islamic Resistance Movement; Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiya; Izz al-Din al Qassam Battalions; Izz al-Din al Qassam Brigades; Izz al-Din al Qassam Forces; Students of Ayyash; Student of the Engineer; Yahya Ayyash Units; Izz al-Din al-Qassim Brigades; Izz al-Din al-Qassim Forces; Izz al-Din al-Qassim Battalions

Description: Designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on October 8, 1997, Hamas was established in 1987 at the onset of the first Palestinian uprising, or Intifada, as an outgrowth of the Palestinian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood. The armed element, the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, has conducted anti-Israeli attacks, including suicide bombings against civilian targets inside Israel. Hamas also manages a broad, mostly Gaza-based, network of *Dawa* or ministry activities that include charities, schools, clinics, youth camps, fundraising, and political

activities. After winning Palestinian Legislative Council elections in January 2006, Hamas gained control of significant Palestinian Authority (PA) ministries in Gaza, including the Ministry of Interior. In 2007, Hamas expelled the PA and Fatah from Gaza in a violent takeover. Hamas remained the de facto ruler in Gaza in 2017. The group selected a new leader, Ismail Haniyeh, who is based in Gaza, on May 6, 2017.

Activities: Prior to 2005, Hamas conducted numerous anti-Israeli attacks, including suicide bombings, rocket launches, improvised explosive device (IED) attacks, and shootings. U.S. citizens have died and been injured in the group's attacks. In June 2007, after Hamas took control of Gaza from the PA and Fatah, the Gaza borders were closed, and Hamas increased its use of tunnels to smuggle weapons into Gaza via the Sinai and maritime routes.

Hamas fought a 23-day war with Israel from late December 2008 to January 2009. From November 14 to 21, 2012, Hamas fought another war with Israel during which it claims to have launched more than 1,400 rockets into Israel. Despite the Egypt-mediated ceasefire between Israel and Hamas in 2012, operatives from Hamas and Palestine Islamic Jihad (PIJ) coordinated and carried out a November bus bombing in Tel Aviv that wounded 29 people. On July 8, 2014, Israel launched Operation Protective Edge in Gaza with the intent of preventing rocket fire into the country; rocket fire had increased following Israeli military operations after Hamas kidnapped and murdered three Israeli teenagers in June 2014, including 16-year-old U.S.-Israeli citizen Naftali Fraenkel.

In April 2016, a Hamas member carried out a suicide attack on a bus in Jerusalem, killing 20. The attack came just two months after Hamas released a music video on its al-Aqsa TV and several social media sites encouraging suicide bombings of Israeli buses. The group was also held responsible for several Gaza-based rocket attacks, including a July strike in Sderot that hit a kindergarten and damaged several buildings.

Throughout 2016, Hamas cooperated with ISIS-Sinai Province, providing its members with funding, training, and organizational support.

Since 2007, Hamas and Fatah have made several attempts to reconcile, though all attempts through the end of 2017 have failed. The latest reconciliation attempt began in Cairo in October 2017, yet its implementation has stalled as neither Hamas nor Fatah can agree on security control or governance over Gaza. Throughout 2017, Israel bombed a number of Hamas targets in response to sporadic rocket attacks coming from Gaza.

Strength: Hamas is comprised of several thousand Gaza-based operatives.

Location/Area of Operation: Since 2007, Hamas has controlled Gaza and also has a presence in the West Bank. Hamas also has a presence in the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon.

Funding and External Aid: Historically, Hamas has received funding, weapons, and training from Iran and raises funds in Gulf countries. The group receives donations from Palestinian expatriates as well as its own charity organizations.

HAQQANI NETWORK

aka HQN

Description: Designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on September 19, 2012, the Haqqani Network (HQN) was formed in the late 1970s, around the time of the then-Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan. HQN's founder Jalaluddin Haqqani established a relationship with Usama bin Laden in the mid-1980s, and joined the Taliban in 1995. After the fall of the Taliban in Afghanistan in 2001, Jalaluddin retreated to Pakistan where, under the leadership of Jalaluddin's son Sirajuddin Haqqani, the group continued to direct and conduct terrorist activity in Afghanistan. In July 2015, Sirajuddin Haqqani was appointed Deputy Leader of the Taliban.

Activities: HQN has planned and carried out a number of significant kidnappings and attacks against U.S. and Coalition Forces in Afghanistan, the Afghan government, and civilian targets. In September 2011, HQN wounded 77 U.S. soldiers in a truck bombing in Wardak Province and also conducted a 19-hour attack on the U.S. Embassy and International Security Assistance Force headquarters in Kabul, killing 16 Afghans. In June 2012, a suicide bomb attack against Forward Operating Base Salerno killed two U.S. soldiers and wounded more than 100 others.

In April 2016, HQN was blamed for an attack in Kabul against a government security agency tasked with providing protection to senior government officials, killing 64 people and injuring more than 300 others in what was the deadliest attack in Kabul in 15 years. Afghan officials blamed HQN for being involved in a June 2016 double suicide attack outside of Kabul against Afghan police cadets and first responders; 30 people were killed.

On May 31, 2017, a truck bomb exploded in Kabul, killing over 150 people. Afghan officials blamed HQN for the attack. In October, an American woman and her family were recovered after five years of HQN captivity.

Strength: HQN is believed to have several hundred core members, but it is estimated that the organization is able to draw upon a pool of upwards of 10,000 fighters. HQN is integrated into the larger Afghan Taliban and cooperates with other terrorist organizations operating in the region, including al-Qa'ida and Lashkar e-Tayyiba.

Location/Area of Operation: HQN is active along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border and across much of southeastern Afghanistan, particularly in Loya Paktia, and has repeatedly targeted Kabul in its attacks. The group's leadership has historically maintained a power base around Pakistan's tribal areas.

Funding and External Aid: In addition to the funding it receives as part of the broader Afghan Taliban, HQN receives much of its funds from donors in Pakistan and the Gulf, as well as through criminal activities such as kidnapping, extortion, smuggling, and other licit and illicit business ventures.

HARAKAT-UL JIHAD ISLAMI

aka HUJI; Movement of Islamic Holy War; Harkat-ul-Jihad-al Islami; Harkat-al-Jihad-ul Islami; Harkat-ul-Jehad-al-Islami; Harakat ul Jihad-e-Islami; Harakat-ul Jihad Islami

Description: Harakat-ul Jihad Islami (HUJI) was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on August 6, 2010. The group was formed in 1980 in Afghanistan to fight against the former Soviet Union. Following the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989, the organization redirected its efforts to India. HUJI seeks the annexation of the state of Jammu and Kashmir and the expulsion of Coalition Forces from Afghanistan, and has supplied fighters to the Taliban in Afghanistan.

Since 2001, HUJI has refocused its activities on the Afghanistan-Pakistan front and has established several camps in Pakistan. HUJI is mostly composed of Pakistani terrorists and veterans of the Soviet-Afghan war. In recent years HUJI has experienced a number of internal splits and a portion of the group has aligned with al-Qa'ida.

Activities: HUJI has been involved in a number of terrorist attacks. HUJI claimed responsibility for the September 7, 2011 bombing of the New Delhi High Court, which left at least 11 dead and an estimated 76 wounded. The group sent an email to the press stating that the bomb was intended to force India to repeal a death sentence of a HUJI member. HUJI did not publicly claim any attacks in 2016 or 2017.

Strength: Unknown

Location/Area of Operation: HUJI's area of operation extends throughout South Asia, with its terrorist operations focused primarily in Afghanistan, India, and Pakistan.

Funding and External Aid: Unknown

HARAKAT UL-JIHAD-I-ISLAMI/BANGLADESH

aka HUJI-B; Harakat ul Jihad e Islami Bangladesh; Harkatul Jihad al Islam; Harkatul Jihad; Harakat ul Jihad al Islami; Harkat ul Jihad al Islami; Harkat-ul-Jehad-al-Islami; Harakat ul Jihad Islami Bangladesh; Islami Dawat-e-Kafela; IDEK

Description: Designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on March 5, 2008, Harakat ul-Jihad-i-Islami/Bangladesh (HUJI-B) was formed in April 1992 by a group of former Bangladeshi Afghan veterans wanting to establish Islamist rule in Bangladesh. In October 2005, Bangladeshi authorities banned the group. The leaders of HUJI-B signed the February 1998 *fatwa* sponsored by Usama bin Laden that declared U.S. civilians legitimate targets. HUJI-B has connections to al-Qa'ida and Pakistani terrorist groups advocating similar objectives, including HUJI and Lashkar e-Tayyiba (LeT).

Activities: In December 2008, three HUJI-B members were convicted for the May 2004 grenade attack that wounded the British High Commissioner in Sylhet, Bangladesh. In 2011, Bangladeshi authorities formally charged multiple suspects, including HUJI-B leader Mufti

Abdul Hannan with the killing of former Finance Minister Shah AMS Kibria in a grenade attack on January 27, 2005. In 2013, Bangladeshi police arrested a group of terrorists, including HUJI-B members, who were preparing attacks on public gatherings and prominent individuals. In 2014, HUJI-B continued its operations; reports at the time suggested that some HUJI-B members may have traveled to Pakistan to receive military training from LeT. There were no known terrorist acts carried out by HUJI-B in the last three years.

On April 12, 2017, Bangladeshi authorities executed HUJI-B leader Hannan and two associates for the May 2004 grenade attack.

Strength: HUJI-B leaders claim that up to 400 of its members are Afghan war veterans; its total membership is unknown.
Location/Area of Operation: HUJI-B operates primarily in Bangladesh and India; the group trains and has a network of madrassas in Bangladesh.

Funding and External Aid: HUJI-B funding comes from a variety of sources. Several international non-governmental organizations may have funneled money to HUJI-B.

HARAKAT UL-MUJAHIDEEN

aka HUM; Harakat ul-Ansar; HUA; Jamiat ul-Ansar; JUA; al-Faran; al-Hadid; al-Hadith; Harakat ul-Mujahidin; Ansar ul Ummah

Description: Designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on October 8, 1997, Harakat ul-Mujahideen (HUM) seeks the annexation of the state of Jammu and Kashmir and the expulsion of Coalition Forces from Afghanistan. In January 2005, HUM's long-time leader Fazlur Rehman Khalil stepped down and was replaced by Dr. Badr Munir. HUM operated terrorist training camps in eastern Afghanistan until Coalition air strikes destroyed them in 2001. In 2003, HUM began using the name Jamiat ul-Ansar; Pakistan banned the group in November 2003.

Activities: HUM has conducted a number of operations against Indian troops and civilian targets in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. In December 1999, HUM hijacked an Indian airliner, which led to the release of Masood Azhar – an important leader who later founded Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM). India also released Ahmed Omar Sheik as a result of the hijacking. Sheik was later convicted of the 2002 abduction and murder of U.S. journalist Daniel Pearl.

HUM has conducted numerous attacks targeting Indian interests including the late December 2015 strikes in Handwor and Poonch, which resulted in the deaths of five Indian army personnel.

Strength: After 2000, a significant portion of HUM's membership defected to JeM and only a small number of cadres are reported to be active.

Location/Area of Operation: HUM conducts operations primarily in Afghanistan and in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. It operates from Muzaffarabad in Azad Kashmir, and in other cities in Pakistan.

Funding and External Aid: HUM collects donations from wealthy donors in Pakistan.

HIZBALLAH

aka the Party of God; Islamic Jihad; Islamic Jihad Organization; Revolutionary Justice Organization; Organization of the Oppressed on Earth; Islamic Jihad for the Liberation of Palestine; Organization of Right Against Wrong; Ansar Allah; Followers of the Prophet Muhammed; Lebanese Hizballah; Lebanese Hezbollah; LH; Foreign Relations Department; External Security Organization; Foreign Action Unit; Hizballah International; Special Operations Branch; External Services Organization; External Security Organization of Hezbollah

Description: Hizballah was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on October 8, 1997. Formed in 1982 following the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, the Lebanon-based radical Shia group takes its ideological inspiration from the Iranian revolution and the teachings of the late Ayatollah Khomeini. The group generally follows the religious guidance of the Iranian Supreme Leader, which in 2017 was Ali Khamenei. Hizballah is closely allied with Iran and the two often work together on shared initiatives, although Hizballah also acts independently. Hizballah shares a close relationship with Syria, and like Iran, provides assistance – including fighters – to Syrian regime forces in the Syrian conflict.

Activities: Hizballah is responsible for multiple large scale terrorist attacks, including the 1983 suicide truck bombings of the U.S. Embassy and U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut; the 1984 attack on the U.S. Embassy annex in Beirut; and the 1985 hijacking of TWA flight 847, during which U.S. Navy diver Robert Stethem was murdered.

Hizballah was also implicated, along with Iran, in the 1992 attacks on the Israeli Embassy in Argentina and in the 1994 bombing of the Argentine-Israelite Mutual Association in Buenos Aires.

In 2000, Hizballah operatives captured three Israeli soldiers in the Shebaa Farms area and, separately, kidnapped an Israeli reserve officer in Dubai. In an exchange between Israel and Hizballah in 2004, the Israeli abducted in Dubai as well as the bodies of the three Israeli soldiers were returned to Israel.

Hizballah is believed to have carried out two attacks against UN Interim Force in Lebanon peacekeepers, an attack in late May 2011 that wounded five Italian peacekeepers and a second attack in July 2011 that wounded six French soldiers.

In January 2012, Thai police detained Hizballah operative Hussein Atris on immigration charges as he was attempting to depart Thailand. Atris was convicted of possessing bomb-making materials by a Thai court in September 2013 and sentenced to two years and eight months in prison. He was released in September 2014 and is believed to reside in Lebanon.

In July 2012, a suspected Hizballah operative was detained by Cypriot authorities for allegedly helping plan an attack against Israeli tourists on the island. On March 21, 2013, a Cyprus court found the operative guilty of charges based on his surveillance activities of Israeli tourists. The group was also responsible for the July 2012 attack on a passenger bus carrying 42 Israeli tourists at the Sarafovo Airport in Bulgaria, near the city of Burgas. The explosion killed five Israelis and one Bulgarian, and injured 32 others.

In Iraq, Hizballah assisted Iraq Shia militant and terrorist groups, and in January 2007, attacked the Karbala Provincial Joint Coordination Center, killing five American soldiers. In May 2013, Hizballah publicly admitted to playing a significant role in the ongoing conflict in Syria, rallying support for Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. Hizballah's support for Syria's al-Assad regime continued into 2017. There were reportedly about 7,000 Hizballah fighters in Syria; several senior Hizballah military commanders and hundreds of fighters have died in the Syrian conflict.

In May 2013, Nigerian authorities arrested three Hizballah operatives who had stored anti-tank weapons, rocket propelled grenades and launchers, small arms, and a large quantity of ammunition and explosives.

In October 2014, Peruvian authorities arrested a Hizballah operative who had been planning to carry out attacks against Israeli and Jewish targets. Investigators found traces of explosives in his home.

In May 2015, Cypriot authorities arrested Hizballah member and Lebanese-Canadian national Hussein Bassam Abdallah after finding 8.2 tons of liquid ammonium nitrate in the basement of a residence in Larnaca. Abdallah was charged by the Republic of Cyprus on five offenses, including participation in a terrorist organization and providing support to a terrorist organization. On June 29, 2015, Abdallah was sentenced to six years in prison.

In August 2015, Kuwaiti authorities arrested three Hizballah operatives who had stored 42,000 pounds of ammonium nitrate, 300 pounds of C4, dozens of small arms, and 204 grenades under a residential house.

In 2017, Bolivian authorities identified a Hizballah-affiliated warehouse, seizing enough explosive precursor material to produce a 2.5 ton bomb, as well as a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device.

In June 2017, two Hizballah operatives were arrested in the United States. One operative arrested in Michigan had identified the availability of explosives precursors in Panama in 2011 and surveilled U.S. and Israeli targets in Panama as well as the Panama Canal from 2011-2012. Another operative arrested in New York had surveilled U.S. military and law enforcement facilities from 2003-2017.

Strength: The group has tens of thousands of supporters and members worldwide.

Location/Area of Operation: Hizballah is based in the southern suburbs of Beirut, the Bekaa Valley, and southern Lebanon, but the group operates around the world. Since 2013, Hizballah fighters have assisted Assad regime forces in many areas across Syria.

Funding and External Aid: Iran continues to provide Hizballah with the majority of its funding, training, weapons, and explosives, as well as political, diplomatic, monetary, and organizational aid. Syria has furnished training, weapons, and diplomatic and political support. Hizballah also receives funding in the form of private donations from Lebanese Shia diaspora communities around the world, including profits from legal and illegal businesses. These include smuggling contraband goods, passport falsification, narcotics trafficking, money laundering, and credit card, immigration, and bank fraud.

HIZBUL MUJAHIDEEN

aka HM, Hizb-ul-Mujahideen

Description: Hizbul Mujahideen (HM) was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on August 17, 2017. The group was formed in 1989 and is one of the largest and oldest militant groups operating in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. HM is led by Mohammad Yusuf Shah, also known as Syed Salahuddin, and officially supports the liberation of Kashmir and its accession to Pakistan, although some cadres are pro-independence. The group focuses its attacks on Indian security forces and politicians in Kashmir and has conducted operations jointly with other Kashmiri militants. It reportedly operated in Afghanistan through the mid-1990s and trained alongside the Afghan Hizb-e-Islami Gulbuddin (HIG) in Afghanistan until the Taliban takeover. The group is made up primarily of ethnic Kashmiris.

Activities: Hizbul Mujahideen has claimed responsibility for several attacks in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. On April 17, 2014, HM launched two grenades into an area where preparations were taking place for an election rally in Beerwah of Jammu and Kashmir. The attacks injured 17 people. Later that year, HM killed two and injured 24 others after launching a grenade in a crowded market in south Kashmir. In May 2015, HM claimed an attack on Indian security forces in Kupwara that killed three Indian troops, according to the targeted forces. HM launched additional attacks against Indian security forces in 2015 and 2016. On May 1, 2017, HM killed seven people – including five policemen – when it attacked a bank van carrying cash in the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

Strength: Exact numbers are unknown, but there may be several hundred members in Pakistan and in the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

Location/Area of Operation: HM conducts operations primarily in India, including the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

Funding and External Aid: Unknown, but suspected to receive funding from sources in Pakistan.

INDIAN MUJAHEDEEN

aka Indian Mujahidin; Islamic Security Force-Indian Mujahideen (ISF-IM)

Description: The Indian Mujahedeen (IM) was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on September 19, 2011. The India-based terrorist group is responsible for dozens of bomb attacks throughout India since 2005, and has caused the deaths of hundreds of civilians. IM maintains ties to other terrorist entities including Pakistan-based Lashkar e-Tayyiba, Jaish-e-Mohammed, and Harakat ul-Jihad Islami. IM's stated goal is to carry out terrorist actions against Indians for their oppression of Muslims. IM has also expanded its area of operations into Nepal, which is now the biggest hub for IM operatives.

Activities: IM is known for carrying out multiple coordinated bombings in crowded areas against economic and civilian targets to maximize terror and casualties. In 2008, for example, IM was responsible for 16 synchronized bomb blasts in crowded urban centers, including an attack in Delhi that killed 30 people and an attack at a local hospital in Ahmedabad that killed 38. In 2010, IM bombed a popular German bakery in Pune, India, frequented by tourists; 17 people were killed and more than 60 people were injured in the attack.

In January 2015, the arrest of three IM militants linked the group to the December 2014 low-intensity blast near a restaurant in Bangalore that killed one woman and injured three others. The arrest also uncovered that the group planned to carry out attacks on Republic Day and had provided explosives to carry out attacks in other parts of the country.

In 2016, IM was increasingly linked to ISIS. In May, for example, six IM operatives were identified in an ISIS propaganda video threatening attacks on India. A month later, it was reported that an IM cell linked to ISIS was plotting attacks on multiple targets in Hyderabad and had purchased chemicals to make high-grade explosives for the planned operations. In September 2017, Indian law enforcement uncovered the plans of an IM militant in custody to conduct attacks in India, including targeted killings and bombing a temple in Gaya.

Strength: Unknown

Location/Area of Operation: IM operates in India, Nepal, and Pakistan.

Funding and External Aid: The group is suspected to obtain funding and support from other terrorist organizations, as well as from sources in Pakistan and the Middle East.

ISLAMIC JIHAD UNION

aka Islamic Jihad Group; Islomiy Jihod Ittihodi; al-Djihad al-Islami; Dzhamaat Modzhakhedov; Islamic Jihad Group of Uzbekistan; Jamiat al-Jihad al-Islami; Jamiyat; The Jamaat Mojahedin; The Kazakh Jama'at; The Libyan Society

Description: The Islamic Jihad Union (IJU) was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on June 17, 2005. The group splintered from the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan in the early 2000s. Najmiddin Jalolov founded the organization as the Islamic Jihad Group in March 2002,

but the group was renamed Islamic Jihad Union in May 2005. Although IJU remains committed to overthrowing the Government of Uzbekistan, it also has a global agenda, demonstrated by its attacks on international forces in Afghanistan.

Activities: The IJU primarily operates against international forces in Afghanistan and remains a threat to Central Asia. IJU claimed responsibility for attacks in 2004 in Uzbekistan, which targeted police at several roadway checkpoints and at a popular bazaar, killing approximately 47 people, including 33 IJU members, some of whom were suicide bombers. In July 2004, the group carried out near-simultaneous suicide bombings of the Uzbek Prosecutor General's office and the U.S. and Israeli Embassies in Tashkent. In 2013, two IJU videos showed attacks against an American military base in Afghanistan and an IJU sniper shooting an Afghan soldier.

According to statements and photos released by the group, IJU participated in the April-September 2015 Taliban siege of Kunduz city. At least 13 police officers were killed in the attacks, and hundreds of civilians were killed. In August 2015, IJU pledged allegiance to the then newly appointed Taliban leader Mullah Mansour.

In 2017, IJU released a video showing its militants using assault rifles and rocket-propelled grenades engaging in combat with Afghan troops in late 2016.

Strength: The group consists of 100 to 200 members.

Location/Area of Operation: IJU was last known to operate in Uzbekistan, with members scattered throughout Central Asia and Europe.

Funding and External Aid: Unknown

ISLAMIC MOVEMENT OF UZBEKISTAN

aka IMU

Description: Designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on September 25, 2000, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) seeks to overthrow the Uzbek government and establish an Islamic state. For most of the past decade, however, the group has recruited members from other Central Asian states and Europe. Despite its objective to set up an Islamic state in Uzbekistan, the group operates primarily along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border and in northern Afghanistan, where it fights against international forces. Several IMU members are also suspected of having traveled to Syria to fight with terrorist groups.

The IMU has had a decade-long relationship with al-Qa'ida (AQ), the Taliban, and Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP). Top IMU leaders have integrated themselves into the Taliban's shadow government in Afghanistan's northern provinces.

In August 2015, IMU leader Usman Ghazi publicly announced the group's shift of allegiance to ISIS. Numerous IMU members, including possibly Ghazi himself, were subsequently reported to have been killed as a result of hostilities between ISIS and its former Taliban allies.

Activities: Since the beginning of Operation Enduring Freedom, the IMU has predominantly been focused on attacks against international forces in Afghanistan. In late 2009, NATO forces reported an increase in IMU-affiliated foreign terrorist fighters in Afghanistan. In 2010, the IMU claimed responsibility for the September 19 ambush that killed 25 Tajik troops in Tajikistan. On June 8, 2014, IMU claimed responsibility for an attack on Karachi's international airport that resulted in the deaths of at least 39 people.

Throughout 2015, the IMU actively threatened the Afghan government, specifically in the northern part of the country. In April, the group released a video showing IMU members beheading an individual they claimed to be an Afghan soldier and threatened to behead Hazara (a historically persecuted ethnic group in Afghanistan) hostages, in supposed retaliation for the Afghan security forces capture of several female members of IMU. Also in 2015, Uzbek refugee Fazliddin Kurbanov was convicted and sentenced by a U.S. federal court to 25 years in prison for planning a bomb attack in Idaho. Kurbanov had been in contact with members of IMU online, seeking advice on how to make explosives and discussing attacking U.S. military bases.

In June 2016, a faction of IMU announced its continued commitment to the Taliban and AQ, marking a split with its leader Ghazi and the rest of the group, which announced its loyalty to ISIS in 2015 and has since cooperated with Islamic State's Khorasan Province.

Strength: 200 to 300 members

Location/Area of Operation: Central Asia, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan

Funding and External Aid: The IMU receives support from a large Uzbek diaspora, terrorist organizations, and donors from Europe, Central and South Asia, and the Middle East.

ISLAMIC STATE OF IRAQ AND SYRIA (ISIS)

aka al-Qa'ida in Iraq; al-Qa'ida Group of Jihad in Iraq; al-Qa'ida Group of Jihad in the Land of the Two Rivers; al-Qa'ida in Mesopotamia; al-Qa'ida in the Land of the Two Rivers; al-Qa'ida of Jihad in Iraq; al-Qa'ida of Jihad Organization in the Land of the Two Rivers; al-Qa'ida of the Jihad in the Land of the Two Rivers; al-Tawhid; Jam'at al-Tawhid Wa'al-Jihad; Tanzeem Qa'idat al Jihad/Bilad al Raafidaini; Tanzim Qa'idat al-Jihad fi Bilad al-Rafidayn; The Monotheism and Jihad Group; The Organization Base of Jihad/Country of the Two Rivers; The Organization Base of Jihad/Mesopotamia; The Organization of al-Jihad's Base in Iraq; The Organization of al-Jihad's Base in the Land of the Two Rivers; The Organization of al-Jihad's Base of Operations in Iraq; The Organization of al-Jihad's Base of Operations in the Land of the Two Rivers; The Organization of Jihad's Base in the Country of the Two Rivers; al-Zarqawi Network; Islamic State in Iraq; Islamic State in Iraq and al-Sham; Islamic State in Iraq and Syria; ad-Dawla al-Islamiyya fi al-'Iraq wa-sh-Sham; Daesh; Dawla al Islamiya; Al-Furqan Establishment for Media Production; Islamic State; ISIL; ISIS

Description: Al-Qa'ida in Iraq (AQI) was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on December 17, 2004. In the 1990s, Jordanian militant Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi organized a terrorist group called al-Tawhid wal-Jihad to oppose the presence of U.S. and Western military

forces in the Middle East and the West's support for, and the existence of, Israel. In late 2004, he joined al-Qa'ida (AQ) and pledged allegiance to Usama bin Laden. At this time his group became known as al-Qa'ida in Iraq (AQI). Zarqawi led the group in Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom to fight against U.S. and Coalition forces until his death in June 2006.

In October 2006, AQI publicly renamed itself the Islamic State in Iraq and in 2013 it adopted the moniker ISIS to express its regional ambitions as it expanded operations to include the Syrian conflict. ISIS is led by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, who declared an Islamic caliphate in June 2014. In October 2017, the U.S. military fighting with local Syrian allies announced the liberation of Raqqa, the self-declared capital of the ISIS "caliphate."

Activities: As AQI, ISIS conducted numerous high profile attacks, including improvised explosive device attacks against U.S. military personnel and Iraqi infrastructure, videotaped beheadings of U.S. citizens, suicide bombings against both military and civilian targets, and rocket attacks. ISIS perpetrated these attacks using foreign and Iraqi operatives. In 2014, ISIS was responsible for the majority of the 12,000 Iraqi civilian deaths that year. ISIS was heavily involved in the fighting in Syria, including against other militant opposition groups, and participated in a number of kidnappings of civilians, including aid workers and journalists.

In 2015 and 2016, ISIS conducted several large-scale attacks in Iraq and Syria and across the globe. In February 2016, a series of ISIS suicide and car bombs killed at least 129 people in Homs and Damascus, Syria. In March, ISIS carried out a suicide attack at a crowded park in Iskandariya, Iraq at the end of a football match, killing approximately 29 and wounding more than 60 others.

In early May 2016, two suicide car bombs claimed by ISIS killed 32 and wounded another 75 in Samawa, in southern Iraq. In mid-May, ISIS conducted a series of attacks in and around Baghdad, including suicide bombings and a car bombing at a crowded market in Sadr City that killed at least 88 people – most of them women and children. In July, ISIS claimed a car bombing at a popular shopping center in Baghdad that killed nearly 300 people, making it the single deadliest bombing in Iraq's capital city since 2003. In October, it was revealed that ISIS was using hundreds to thousands of Iraqi civilians as human shields when fighting Iraqi forces.

In February 2017, ISIS killed 48 people in a car bombing in Baghdad, and another four attacks around Baghdad killed an additional eight people on the same day. In early April, the group killed 33 Syrians in eastern Syria, and on the same day, killed another 22 people in Tikrit, Iraq when ISIS gunmen opened fire on police and civilians before detonating explosives they were wearing. On June 7, ISIS gunmen and suicide bombers killed over a dozen people in two separate attacks in Tehran, including an attack inside the Parliament building. In September, ISIS killed over 80 people at a checkpoint and restaurant in Nasiriyah, Iraq, an area frequented by Shia Muslims on pilgrimage. In November, a car bombing in a predominantly Shia area of Salah ad Din province killed at least 36 people, including 11 Iraqi Security Forces personnel.

Since at least 2015, the group has integrated local children and children of foreign terrorist fighters into its forces and used them as executioners and suicide attackers. ISIS has systematically prepared child soldiers in Iraq and Syria using its education and religious

infrastructure as part of its training and recruitment of members. Furthermore, since 2015, ISIS abducted, raped, and abused thousands of women and children, some as young as eight years of age. Women and children were sold and enslaved, distributed to ISIS fighters as spoils of war, forced into marriage and domestic servitude, or subjected to physical and sexual abuse. (For further information, refer to *the 2017 Trafficking in Persons Report*.)

ISIS also directs, enables, and inspires individuals to conduct attacks on behalf of the group around the world, including in the United States and Europe. In November 2015, ISIS carried out a series of coordinated attacks in Paris, France, including at a rock concert at the Bataclan concert hall, killing approximately 130 people and injuring more than 350 others; 23-year-old U.S. citizen Nohemi Gonzalez was among the dead. In March 2016, ISIS directed two simultaneous attacks in Brussels, Belgium – one at the Zaventem Airport and the other at a metro station. The attacks killed 32 people, including four U.S. citizens, and injured more than 250 people. In June 2016, a gunman who pledged allegiance to ISIS killed 49 individuals and injured 53 others at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, Florida. In July 2016, ISIS claimed an attack in which a terrorist driving a cargo truck attacked a crowd in Nice, France, during Bastille Day celebrations, resulting in 86 deaths, including three U.S. citizens. In December 2016, ISIS claimed responsibility for a truck attack on a crowded Christmas market in Berlin, Germany that killed 12 people and injured 48 others.

On March 22, 2017, ISIS claimed responsibility for a terrorist attack on London's Westminster Bridge when a man drove his car into pedestrians and stabbed others, killing five people. In early April 2017 a man who claimed to be a member of ISIS drove a truck into a crowded shopping center in Stockholm, Sweden, killing five and injuring many more. In May, ISIS claimed a suicide bombing in Manchester, England that killed 22 people outside of a live concert.

Strength: Estimates suggest ISIS fighters in Iraq and Syria number between 6,000 and 10,000, although this number was likely reduced further in 2017 military operations.

Location/Area of Operation: ISIS's operations are predominately in Iraq and Syria, but the group has created external ISIS branches and networks. In addition, supporters and associates worldwide inspired by the group's ideology may be operating without direction from ISIS central leadership.

Funding and External Aid: ISIS received most of its funding from a variety of businesses and criminal activities within areas it controls in Iraq and Syria. Criminal activities included robbing banks, smuggling oil, looting and selling antiquities and other goods, as well as extortion, human trafficking, and kidnapping-for-ransom. However, in recent years, ISIS has lost over 98 percent of the territory (including oil and gas fields and population centers) it once controlled in Iraq and Syria, which has directly impacted ISIS's ability to generate revenue. By 2017, ISIS's revenue from oil sales and extortion was significantly lower than in 2015.

ISLAMIC STATE'S KHORASAN PROVINCE

aka ISIL Khorasan; Islamic State's Khorasan Province; ISIS Wilayat Khorasan; ISIL's South Asia Branch; South Asian chapter of ISIL

Description: Islamic State's Khorasan Province (ISIS-K) was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on January 14, 2016. The group is based in Afghanistan, conducts operations in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and is composed primarily of former members of Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan, the Afghan Taliban, and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan. ISIS-K's senior leadership has pledged allegiance to ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, which was accepted in late January 2015. ISIS-K has carried out suicide bombings, small arms attacks, and kidnappings in Afghanistan against civilians and Afghan National Security and Defense Forces. The group has also claimed responsibility for attacks on civilians and government officials in Pakistan.

It was reported that ISIS-K leader Hafiz Saeed Khan was killed in July 2016. Khan's former deputy and the former Taliban Commander from Logar Province, Abdul Hasib, took over leadership for ISIS-K. Abdul Hasib was killed in a joint Afghan and U.S. operation in April 2017. His successor is Abu Sayed, who was reported killed in 2017 although his death was not subsequently confirmed

Activities: In January 2016, the group claimed it carried out a strike on a Pakistani consulate in Afghanistan, resulting in the deaths of seven Afghan security personnel. In July, the group conducted a bomb attack at a peaceful protest in Kabul, Afghanistan that killed approximately 80 people and wounded another 230. In August, ISIS-K claimed it carried out a shooting and suicide bombing at a hospital in Quetta targeting lawyers, which killed 94. It also claimed responsibility in November 2016 for a suicide bombing at the Shah Noorani Shrine in Baluchistan province, Pakistan, killing more than 50 people.

On July 31, 2017, ISIS-K fighters attacked the Iraqi embassy in Kabul, killing two people including a security guard on the compound. The next day, ISIS-K bombed a mosque in western Afghanistan, killing 29 people and injuring 60 others. Between October and December of 2017, ISIS-K claimed responsibility for several deadly attacks in Kabul, including ones targeting a television station, a Shia cultural center, and an Afghan intelligence office near the U.S. embassy.

ISIS-K also claimed multiple attacks in Pakistan in 2017, including an attack on a Sufi shrine in Sindh province in February that killed at least 88 people, and an attack on a church in Quetta that killed at least nine people.

Strength: Estimates of ISIS-K strength ranged from 1,500 to 3,000 fighters in 2017.

Location/Area of Operation: The group operates in eastern and parts of northern Afghanistan and western Pakistan.

Funding and External Aid: ISIS-K receives some funding from ISIS. Additional funds come from taxes and extortion on the local population and businesses.

ISLAMIC STATE OF IRAQ AND THE LEVANT-LIBYA (ISIL-LIBYA)

aka Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant in Libya; Wilayat Barqa; Wilayat Fezzan; Wilayat Tripolitania; Wilayat Tarablus; Wilayat al-Tarabulus

Description: ISIL-Libya was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on May 20, 2016. In 2014, ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi dispatched a group of ISIS operatives from Syria to Libya to establish a branch of the terrorist group. In October 2014, several hundred operatives set up a base in Darnah, and the next month, Baghdadi formally established the branch after announcing he had accepted oaths of allegiance from fighters in Libya.

Activities: Since being established, the group has carried out multiple attacks in the country and has threatened to expand ISIS's presence into other countries in Africa. In January 2015, ISIL-Libya claimed responsibility for a suicide attack on a luxury hotel in Tripoli that killed eight people, including a U.S. contractor. That same month, ISIL-Libya killed 16 people in an attack on a Libyan army checkpoint.

In February 2015, ISIL-Libya released a propaganda video showing the murder of 21 Egyptian Coptic Christians who had been kidnapped in Sirte, Libya, in two separate incidents in December 2014 and January 2015. Also in February, ISIL-Libya claimed responsibility for bomb attacks against a petrol station, a police station, and the home of parliamentary speaker Agila Salah in the town of al-Qubbah. The attacks killed at least 40 people and wounded dozens of others.

Between 2015 and 2016, ISIL-Libya doubled its presence in the country; in early 2016, reports suggested the group counted as many as 6,000 fighters in its ranks. In 2016, ISIL-Libya expanded operations into Libya's oil crescent, launching attacks on some of the country's largest oil installations: burning oil tanks, killing dozens, and forcing facilities to shut down operations. In March, the group attacked a Sirte hospital and kidnapped 20 medical workers. The group attacked other medical facilities and carried out other attacks in Benghazi and Tripoli.

In December 2016, Libyan forces drove ISIL-Libya from its stronghold and main base in Sirte into the desert areas and neighboring cities. In January and September 2017, U.S. air strikes killed an estimated 100 ISIL fighters in Libya.

Strength: In May 2017, ISIL-Libya was reported to have around 500 fighters, fallen from 6,000 members in early 2016.

Location/Area of Operation: ISIL-Libya is no longer in control of any major cities in Libya but continues to operate in rural regions in southern Libya and in the western town of Sabratha.

Funding and External Aid: ISIL-Libya's funding comes from a variety of sources, including criminal activity, such as smuggling and extortion, and external funding. The group also receives support from ISIS.

ISLAMIC STATE-SINAI PROVINCE (ISIS-SP)

aka Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis; Ansar Jerusalem; Supporters of Jerusalem; Ansar Bayt al-Maqdes; Ansar Beit al-Maqdis; ISIL Sinai Province; Islamic State in the Sinai; Jamaat Ansar Beit al-Maqdis; Jamaat Ansar Beit al-Maqdis fi Sinaa; Sinai Province; Supporters of the Holy Place; The State of Sinai; Wilayat Sinai

Description: Originally designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on April 9, 2014, Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis (ABM) rose to prominence in 2011 following the uprisings in Egypt. It is responsible for attacks against Israeli and Egyptian government and security elements, and against tourists in Egypt. In November 2014, ABM officially declared allegiance to ISIS. In September 2015, the Department of State amended ABM's designation to add the aliases ISIL Sinai Province and Islamic State-Sinai Province (ISIS-SP), among others

Activities: ISIS-SP has claimed responsibility for numerous attacks against Israeli interests, including a July 2012 attack against a Sinai pipeline exporting gas to Israel and a September 2012 attack targeting an Israeli border patrol, which killed one soldier and injured another.

In October 2013, ISIS-SP claimed responsibility for a suicide bombing targeting the South Sinai Security Directorate in el Tor, which killed three people and injured more than 45. In January 2014, ISIS-SP successfully downed an Egyptian military helicopter in a missile attack, killing five soldiers on board. ISIS-SP has targeted government officials, including the January 2014 assassination of the head of the Interior Minister's technical office. In February 2014, ISIS-SP claimed responsibility for the bombing of a tour bus in the Sinai Peninsula, killing the Egyptian driver and three South Korean tourists; the attack was ISIS-SP's first against foreign tourists.

In October 2014, ISIS-SP claimed a strike on a security checkpoint that killed 33 Egyptian soldiers and wounded 26 others, including civilians. On November 4, 2015, ISIS-SP released an audio recording in which it claimed responsibility for the October 31 bombing of a Russian passenger plane carrying 224 people from the Egyptian resort town of Sharm el-Sheikh to St. Petersburg, Russia. All 224 passengers and seven crew members were killed.

On August 5, 2015, ISIS-SP claimed responsibility for the July 22 abduction of Croatian citizen Tomislav Salopek, who worked as a topographer for a French energy company. Salopek was kidnapped on October 6 in the western desert, approximately 20 km west of the suburbs of Cairo. ISIS-SP demanded the release of all female Muslims in Egyptian prisons within 48 hours in exchange for Salopek. Salopek was ultimately beheaded and ISIS-SP claimed responsibility for the killing.

Throughout the course of 2016, ISIS-SP carried out numerous attacks in the Sinai, including a January double-bombing that killed two Egyptian policemen and two military officers. The group was also responsible for a July wide-scale coordinated attack on several military checkpoints that reportedly killed more than 50 people.

On September 11, 2017, ISIS-SP attacked an Egyptian police convoy in an ambush that killed 18 soldiers and injured more.

Strength: ISIS-SP is estimated to have between 800 and 1,200 fighters in the Sinai Peninsula and affiliated cells in the Nile Valley.

Location/Area of Operation: ISIS-SP operations are based out of the Sinai Peninsula, but its reach extends to Cairo, the Egyptian Nile Valley, and Gaza.

Funding and External Aid: Although the source of ISIS-SP's funding is largely unknown, there are indications that it may receive funding from external actors.

JAMA'ATU ANSARUL MUSLIMINA FI BILADIS-SUDAN (ANSARU)

aka Ansaru; Ansarul Muslimina Fi Biladis Sudan; Vanguards for the Protection of Muslims in Black Africa; JAMBS; Jama'atu Ansaril Muslimina Fi Biladis Sudan

Description: Designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on November 14, 2013, Jama'atu Ansarul Muslimina fi Biladis-Sudan (Ansaru) publicly splintered from Boko Haram in January 2012. Ansaru's leadership structure is unclear, although Khalid al-Barnawi held a top leadership position until his alleged capture by the Nigerian army in 2016. Since its inception, Ansaru has targeted civilians, including Westerners, and Nigerian government and security officials. Ansaru purportedly aims to defend Muslims throughout all of Africa by fighting against the Nigerian government and international interests. While Ansaru claims to identify with Boko Haram's objectives and struggle, it has criticized the group for killing fellow Muslims.

Activities: In November 2012, Ansaru raided a police station in Abuja, killing Nigerian police officers and freeing detained terrorists from prison. Ansaru has carried out multiple kidnapping operations targeting civilians. In late 2012, Ansaru kidnapped a French engineer allegedly due to French involvement in Mali. In early 2013, Ansaru kidnapped and subsequently killed seven international construction workers.

Ansaru did not publicly claim any attacks between 2014 and 2017. On April 4, 2016, the Nigerian army announced the capture of Ansaru leader Khalid al-Barnawi.

Strength: Total membership is unknown. Given its narrower scope of operations, it is estimated that Ansaru's membership is much smaller than that of Boko Haram.

Location/Area of Operation: The group operates in northern Nigeria.

Funding and External Aid: Unknown

JAISH-E-MOHAMMED

aka the Army of Mohammed; Mohammed's Army; Tehrik ul-Furqaan; Khuddam-ul-Islam; Khudamul Islam; Kuddam e Islami; Jaish-i-Mohammed

Description: Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on December 26, 2001. JeM was founded in early 2000 by former senior Harakat ul-Mujahideen leader Masood Azhar upon his release from prison in India in exchange for 155 hijacked Indian Airlines hostages. The group aims to annex the state of Jammu and Kashmir to Pakistan and expel international forces from Afghanistan. JeM has openly declared war against the United States.

Activities: JeM continues to operate openly in parts of Pakistan, conducting fatal attacks in the region, despite the country's 2002 ban on its activities. JeM has claimed responsibility for several suicide car bombings in the state of Jammu and Kashmir, including an October 2001 suicide attack on the Jammu and Kashmir legislative assembly building in Srinagar that killed more than 30 people. The Indian government has publicly implicated JeM, along with Lashkar e-Tayyiba (LeT), in the December 2001 attack on the Indian Parliament that killed nine people and injured 18 others.

In 2002, Pakistani authorities arrested and convicted a JeM member for the abduction and murder of U.S. journalist Daniel Pearl. In December 2003, Pakistan implicated JeM members in two assassination attempts against then President Pervez Musharraf.

In 2016, Indian officials blamed JeM for a January attack on an Indian Air Force base in Pathankot. One civilian and seven Indian security force personnel were killed. From February through May 2016, both LeT and JeM were suspected of engaging in at least three firefights with Indian security forces in Kupwara district, Jammu and Kashmir, injuring approximately two Indian personnel.

In June 2017, Indian police stated JeM conducted multiple attacks against security forces in five locations across the state of Jammu and Kashmir, injuring over a dozen people. Another attack in October left one Indian Border Security Force personnel and three JeM militants dead.

Strength: JeM has at least several hundred armed supporters.

Location/Area of Operation: JeM operates in India, including the state of Jammu and Kashmir; Afghanistan; and Pakistan, particularly southern Punjab.

Funding and External Aid: To avoid asset seizures by the Pakistani government, since 2007 JeM has withdrawn funds from bank accounts and invested in legal businesses, such as commodity trading, real estate, and the production of consumer goods. JeM also collects funds through donation requests, sometimes using charitable causes to solicit donations.

JAYSH RIJAL AL-TARIQ AL-NAQSHABANDI (JRTN)

aka Jaysh Rijal al-Tariq al-Naqshabandi; Army of the Men of the Naqshbandi Order; Armed Men of the Naqshabandi Order; Naqshbandi Army; Naqshabandi Army; Men of the Army of al-Naqshbandia Way; Jaysh Rajal al-Tariqah al-Naqshbandia; JRTN; JRN; AMNO

Description: Jaysh Rijal al-Tariq al-Naqshabandi (JRTN) was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization in September 2015. The group first announced insurgency operations against international forces in Iraq in December 2006 in response to the execution of Saddam Hussein. Izzat Ibrahim al-Douri, former vice president of Saddam Hussein's Revolutionary Council, leads the group, which consists of former Baath Party officials, military personnel, and Sunni nationalists. JRTN aims to overthrow the Government of Iraq, install a new Ba'athist regime, and end external influence in Baghdad.

Activities: Between its founding in 2006 and the 2011 withdrawal of Coalition Forces from Iraq, JRTN claimed numerous attacks on U.S. bases and forces. JRTN is also known to have used vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices against Iraqi government security forces.

In 2014, elements of JRTN joined military forces with ISIS in opposition to the Iraqi government. The group played a major role in the capture of Mosul from Iraqi security forces in 2014. Elements of JRTN continued cooperating with ISIS in 2016, but did not publicly claim any specific attacks in 2016 or 2017.

Strength: In 2013, the group was estimated to have about 5,000 fighters; membership is almost certainly much lower today.

Location/Area of Operation: The group is based primarily in Iraq.

Funding and External Aid: JRTN historically received funding from former regime members, major tribal figures in Iraq, and from Gulf-based financiers of terrorism.

JEMAAH ANSHORUT TAUHID

aka JAT; Jemmah Ansharut Tauhid; Jem'mah Ansharut Tauhid; Jamaah Ansharut Tauhid; Jama'ah Ansharut Tauhid; Laskar 99

Description: The Department of State designated Jemaah Anshorut Tauhid (JAT) as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on March 13, 2012. Formed in 2008, the Indonesia-based group seeks to establish an Islamic caliphate in Indonesia and has carried out numerous attacks on Indonesian government personnel, police, military, and civilians. In 2011, Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, the founder and leader of JAT, was sentenced to 15 years in prison for his role in organizing a militant training camp in Aceh. Ba'asyir is also the co-founder and former leader of Jemaah Islamiya (JI). JAT maintains ties to JI and other terrorist groups in Southeast Asia.

Activities: JAT has conducted multiple attacks targeting civilians and Indonesian officials, resulting in the deaths of numerous Indonesian police and innocent civilians. In December 2012, four police officers were killed and two wounded in an attack by suspected local JAT members in Central Sulawesi. Since Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's pledge of allegiance to ISIS in 2014, many

JAT members have joined Indonesia's ISIS-affiliated groups, while others have joined al-Qa'ida-affiliated groups. Although JAT did not publicly claim any attacks in 2016 or 2017, JAT members are believed to have been involved in ISIS operations in Southeast Asia.

Strength: JAT is estimated to have several thousand supporters and members, although internal disagreements over aligning with ISIS have likely reduced its membership.

Location/Area of Operation: The group is based in Indonesia.

Funding and External Aid: JAT raises funds through membership donations and legitimate business activities. JAT has also conducted cyber hacking, robbed banks, and carried out other illicit activities to fund the purchase of assault weapons, ammunition, explosives, and bomb-making materials.

JEMAAH ISLAMIYA

aka Jemaa Islamiyah; Jema'a Islamiyah; Jemaa Islamiyya; Jema'a Islamiyya; Jemaa Islamiyyah; Jema'a Islamiyyah; Jemaah Islamiah; Jemaah Islamiyah; Jema'ah Islamiyah; Jemaah Islamiyyah; Jema'ah Islamiyyah; JI

Description: Designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on October 23, 2002, Jemaah Islamiya (JI) is a Southeast Asia-based terrorist group co-founded by Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba'asyir. The group seeks to establish an Islamic caliphate in the region. More than 400 JI operatives have been captured or killed since 2002, including operations chief and al-Qa'ida (AQ) associate Hambali and, in January 2015, bomb-maker Zulfiki bin Hir (aka Marwan).

Activities: Significant JI attacks include the 2002 Bali bombings, which killed more than 200 people, among them seven U.S. citizens; the August 2003 bombing of the J.W. Marriott Hotel in Jakarta; the September 2004 bombing outside the Australian Embassy in Jakarta; and the October 2005 suicide bombing in Bali, which left 26 dead.

On July 17, 2009, a JI faction led by Noordin Mohamed Top claimed responsibility for suicide attacks at the J.W. Marriott and Ritz-Carlton hotels in Jakarta that killed seven people and injured more than 50, including seven U.S. citizens.

In January 2015, 44 Philippines policemen and three civilians were killed when a police counterterrorism squad was ambushed while conducting a raid in Mamasapano in the southern island of Mindanao in an attempt to arrest two JI members. In October 2015, two senior JI leaders – Zarkashi and JI military leader Abu Dujana – were released from prison after serving seven years each in Indonesian jails. There were no reported attacks by JI in 2016 or 2017. JI is believed to be recruiting, restructuring, and strengthening its network and finances.

Strength: Estimates of JI membership vary from 500 to several thousand members.

Location/Area of Operation: In its earlier years, JI focused its operations and presence in Indonesia, and is beginning to regain its strength there. The group has also carried out attacks in Malaysia and the Philippines in the past.

Funding and External Aid: JI fundraises through membership donations and criminal and business activities. It has received financial, ideological, and logistical support from Middle Eastern contacts and illegitimate charities and organizations.

JUNDALLAH

aka People's Resistance Movement of Iran (PMRI); Jonbesh-i Moqavemat-i-Mardom-i Iran; Popular Resistance Movement of Iran; Soldiers of God; Fedayeen-e-Islam; Former Jundallah of Iran; Jundullah; Jondullah; Jundollah; Jondollah; Jondallah; Army of God (God's Army); Baloch Peoples Resistance Movement (BPRM)

Description: Jundallah was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on November 4, 2010. Since its inception in 2003, Jundallah, which operates primarily in the province of Sistan VA Balochistan of Iran, and the Baloch areas of Pakistan and Afghanistan, has engaged in numerous attacks, killing and maiming scores of Iranian civilians and government officials. Jundallah's stated goals are to secure recognition of Balochi cultural, economic, and political rights from the Government of Iran, and to spread awareness of the plight of the Baloch people.

Activities: Jundallah claimed responsibility for an October 2009 suicide bomb attack in the Sistan va Balochistan province that killed more than 40 people and was reportedly the deadliest terrorist attack in Iran since the 1980s. In a statement on its website, Jundallah also claimed the December 15, 2010 suicide bomb attack inside the Iman Hussein Mosque in Chabahar, which killed an estimated 35 to 40 civilians and wounded 60 to 100. In July 2010, Jundallah attacked the Grand Mosque in Zahedan, killing approximately 30 and injuring an estimated 300. Jundallah did not publicly claim any attacks in 2016 or 2017.

Strength: The 2010 execution of Jundallah's leader by Iran and the killing and arrest of many Jundallah fighters seriously diminished Jundallah's capacity to operate.

Location/Area of Operation: Jundallah has traditionally operated throughout the Sistan va Balochistan province in southeastern Iran and the Balochistan area of Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Funding and External Aid: Unknown

KAHANE CHAI

aka American Friends of the United Yeshiva; American Friends of Yeshivat Rav Meir; Committee for the Safety of the Roads; Dikuy Bogdim; DOV; Forefront of the Idea; Friends of the Jewish Idea Yeshiva; Jewish Legion; Judea Police; Judean Congress; Kach; Kahane; Kahane Lives; Kahane Tzadak; Kahane.org; Kahanetzadak.com; Kfar Tapuah Fund; Koach; Meir's Youth; New Kach Movement; Newkach.org; No'ar Meir; Repression of Traitors; State of Judea;

Sword of David; The Committee Against Racism and Discrimination (CARD); The Hatikva Jewish Identity Center; The International Kahane Movement; The Jewish Idea Yeshiva; The Judean Legion; The Judean Voice; The Qomemiyut Movement; The Rabbi Meir David Kahane Memorial Fund; The Voice of Judea; The Way of the Torah; The Yeshiva of the Jewish Idea; Yeshivat Harav Meir

Description: Radical Israeli-American Rabbi Meir Kahane founded Kach – the precursor to Kahane Chai (KC) – with the aim of restoring Greater Israel (Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza). Its offshoot, Kahane Chai (translation: "Kahane Lives"), was founded by Meir Kahane's son Binyamin, following his father's 1990 assassination. Both organizations were designated as Foreign Terrorist Organizations on October 8, 1997. In 1994, the group was banned from running in Israeli elections.

Activities: KC has harassed and threatened Arabs, Palestinians, and Israeli government officials, and vowed revenge for the December 2000 death of Binyamin Kahane and his wife. The group is suspected of involvement in a number of low-level attacks since the start of the Second Palestinian Intifada in 2000. KC was last linked to an attack in 2005, when a member of the terrorist group shot dead four people on a bus in Shfaram, Israel. The group was dormant in 2017.

Strength: Since 2005, KC's core membership has been estimated to be fewer than 100. The group's membership and support networks were overwhelmingly composed of Israeli citizens that lived mostly in West Bank settlements.

Location/Area of Operation: KC is based in Israel and West Bank settlements, particularly Qiryat Arba in Hebron.

Funding and External Aid: KC has received support from sympathizers in the United States and Europe.

KATA'IB HIZBALLAH

aka Hizballah Brigades; Hizballah Brigades in Iraq; Hizballah Brigades-Iraq; Kata'ib Hezbollah; Khata'ib Hezbollah; Khata'ib Hizballah; Khattab Hezballah; Hizballah Brigades-Iraq of the Islamic Resistance in Iraq; Islamic Resistance in Iraq; Kata'ib Hizballah Fi al-Iraq; Katibat Abu Fathel al-A'abas; Katibat Zayd Ebin Ali; Katibut Karbalah

Description: Formed in 2006 and designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on July 2, 2009, Kata'ib Hizballah (KH) is an anti-Western Shia group with a terrorist ideology. Prior to the withdrawal of U.S. troops in 2011, the group conducted attacks against Iraqi, U.S., and Coalition targets in Iraq, and threatened the lives of Iraqi politicians and civilians supporting the legitimate political process in Iraq. The group is notable for its extensive use of media operations and propaganda, including filming and releasing videos of attacks. KH has ideological ties to and receives support from Iran.

Activities: KH has claimed responsibility for numerous terrorist attacks since 2007, including improvised explosive device bombings, rocket-propelled grenade attacks, and sniper operations. In 2007, KH gained notoriety for its attacks against U.S. and Coalition Forces in Iraq. In June 2011, five U.S. soldiers were killed in Baghdad when KH assailants fired multiple rockets at U.S. military base, Camp Victory. The group remained active in 2015, participating in fighting in Syria in support of the Assad regime, and in Iraq against ISIS. In June and July 2015, the group broadcast its recruitment contact information and an appeal for donations on a pro-Iran channel and on YouTube in an effort to recruit fighters to Syria and Iraq.

In 2016, KH continued to fight ISIS alongside the Iraqi Army and participated in the operation to liberate Mosul, though they were only active outside the city. In 2017, the group threatened to fight "American occupiers" in Iraq, in an article published on the group's official website.

Strength: Exact membership numbers are unknown. Estimates range from 1,000 to the group's claim of 30,000 fighters

Location/Area of Operation: Predominately Iraq-based, but the group also fights alongside pro-Assad regime forces in Syria.

Funding and External Aid: KH is heavily dependent on support from Iran.

KURDISTAN WORKERS' PARTY

aka the Kurdistan Freedom and Democracy Congress; the Freedom and Democracy Congress of Kurdistan; KADEK; Partiya Karkeran Kurdistan; the People's Defense Force; Halu Mesru Savunma Kuvveti; Kurdistan People's Congress; People's Congress of Kurdistan; KONGRA-GEL

Description: Founded by Abdullah Ocalan in 1978 as a Marxist-Leninist separatist organization, the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on October 8, 1997. The group, composed primarily of Turkish Kurds, launched a campaign of violence in 1984. The PKK's original goal was to establish an independent Kurdish state in southeastern Turkey.

Activities: In the early 1990s, the PKK moved beyond rural-based insurgent activities to include urban terrorism. Anatolia became the scene of significant violence, with some estimates suggesting at least 40,000 casualties. Following his capture in 1999, Ocalan announced a "peace initiative," ordering members to refrain from violence and requesting dialogue with Ankara on Kurdish issues. The PKK foreswore violence until June 2004, when its hardline militant wing took control and renounced the self-imposed ceasefire. Striking over the border from bases within Iraq, the PKK engaged in terrorist attacks in eastern and western Turkey. In 2009, the Turkish government and the PKK resumed peace negotiations, but talks broke down after the PKK carried out an attack in July 2011 that left 13 Turkish soldiers dead. In 2012, the PKK claimed responsibility for multiple car bombings resulting in the deaths of at least 10 people.

Between January and mid-July 2015, the PKK carried out small-scale armed attacks against Turkey's security forces and military bases. In August 2016, the group claimed a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device strike against Sirnak police headquarters, which killed 11 people and wounded more than 70 others. In January 2017, Turkish officials blamed the PKK for a car bomb and shooting outside of a courthouse that killed two people. In June, the PKK attacked a military convoy in southeastern Turkey, using mortar and machine gun fire to kill over 20 soldiers. Since 2015, the group has been responsible for the deaths of over 1,200 Turkish security officials and civilians.

Strength: The PKK consists of approximately 4,000 to 5,000 members, 3,000 to 3,500 of which are located in northern Iraq.

Location/Area of Operation: The group is located primarily in Turkey and Iraq.

Funding and External Aid: The PKK receives financial support from the large Kurdish diaspora in Europe and from criminal activity.

LASHKAR E-TAYYIBA

aka al Mansooreen; Al Mansoorian; Army of the Pure; Army of the Pure and Righteous; Army of the Righteous; Lashkar e-Toiba; Lashkar-i-Taiba; Paasban-e-Ahle-Hadis; Paasban-e-Kashmir; Paasban-i-Ahle-Hadith; Pasban-e-Ahle-Hadith; Pasban-e-Kashmir; Jamaat-ud-Dawa; JUD; Jama'at al-Dawa; Jamaat ud-Daawa; Jamaat ul-Dawah; Jamaat-ul-Dawa; Jama'at-i-Dawat; Jamaiat-ud-Dawa; Jama'at-ud-Da'awah; Jama'at-ud-Da'awa; Jamaati-ud-Dawa; Idara Khidmat-e-Khalq; Falah-i-Insaniat Foundation; FiF; Falah-e-Insaniat Foundation; Falah-e-Insaniyat; Falah-i-Insaniyat; Falah Insania; Welfare of Humanity; Humanitarian Welfare Foundation; Human Welfare Foundation; Al-Anfal Trust; Tehrik-e-Hurmat-e-Rasool; Tehrik-e-Tahafuz Qibla Awwal; Al-Muhammadia Students; Al-Muhammadia Students Pakistan; AMS

Description: Designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) on December 26, 2001, Lashkar e-Tayyiba (LeT) is an anti-India-focused terrorist group. LeT formed in the late 1980s as the terrorist wing of Markaz ud Dawa ul-Irshad, a Pakistan-based extremist organization and charity originally formed to oppose the Soviet presence in Afghanistan. LeT is led by Hafiz Muhammad Saeed. Shortly after LeT was designated as an FTO, Saeed changed the group's name to Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JUD) and launched humanitarian projects to circumvent restrictions. LeT disseminates its message through JUD's media outlets. In addition to the creation of JUD, LeT has repeatedly changed its name in an effort to avoid sanctions.

Elements of LeT and Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) combine with other groups like Hizbul Mujahideen (HM) to mount anti-India attacks. The Pakistani government banned LeT in January 2002 and temporarily arrested LeT's leader Hafiz Saeed following the 2008 Mumbai attack. On January 30, 2017, Pakistan placed Hafiz Saeed under house arrest; however, he was released in November after a Lahore High Court judicial body rejected a government request to renew his detention.

Activities: LeT has conducted operations, including several high profile attacks, against Indian troops and civilian targets in the state of Jammu and Kashmir since 1993. The group has also attacked Coalition Forces in Afghanistan. LeT uses assault rifles, machine guns, mortars, explosives, and rocket-propelled grenades.

LeT was responsible for the November 2008 attacks in Mumbai against luxury hotels, a Jewish center, a train station, and a popular café that killed 166 people – including six U.S. citizens – and injured more than 300. India has charged 38 people in the case; most are at large, however, and thought to be in Pakistan.

In March 2010, Pakistani-American businessman David Headley pled guilty in a U.S. court to charges related to his role in the November 2008 LeT attacks in Mumbai, and to charges related to a separate plot to bomb the Danish newspaper, *Jyllands-Posten*. Headley testified in the trials of other LeT supporters in 2011 and 2015.

LeT was behind a July 2015 attack in Gurdaspur, Punjab, which killed seven people. In August 2015, operatives affiliated with LeT attacked Indian security forces in Udhampur district, Jammu and Kashmir. In December 2015, LeT carried out an attack on a paramilitary convoy after it left Srinagar, Kashmir; three militants opened fire on the convoy, injuring one civilian and seven Indian military personnel.

From February through May, 2016, LeT was suspected of engaging in at least three firefights with Indian security forces in Kupwara district, Jammu and Kashmir, injuring two Indian personnel. In June 2016, LeT was suspected of conducting an ambush on an Indian security force convoy in Pulwama district, Jammu and Kashmir, killing eight and injuring 20. Some media reports also alleged the group's involvement in the September 2016 attack on an Indian Army camp in Uri, Jammu and Kashmir; 20 soldiers were killed in the attack.

In June 2017, LeT conducted an attack in the state of Jammu and Kashmir that left six police officers dead. The next month, LeT militants attacked a bus of pilgrims returning from the Amarnath Yatra shrine, killing seven people.

Strength: The precise size of LeT is unknown, but it has several thousand members in Azad Kashmir; Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab Provinces in Pakistan; and in the state of Jammu and Kashmir, India.

Location/Area of Operation: LeT has global connections and a strong operational network throughout South Asia. LeT maintains a number of facilities, including training camps, schools, and medical clinics in Pakistan. LeT is also active in Afghanistan.

Funding and External Aid: LeT collects donations in Pakistan and the Gulf as well as from other donors in the Middle East and Europe – particularly the United Kingdom, where it is a designated terrorist organization. In 2017, LeT and its front organizations continued to operate and fundraise in Pakistan.

LASHKAR I JHANGVI

aka Army of Jhangvi; Lashkar e Jhangvi; Lashkar-i-Jhangvi

Description: Designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on January 30, 2003, Lashkar I Jhangvi (LJ) is the terrorist offshoot of the Sunni Deobandi sectarian group Sipah-i-Sahaba Pakistan. LJ carries out anti-Shia and other sectarian attacks in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The Government of Pakistan banned the group in August 2001 as part of an effort to rein in sectarian violence, causing many LJ members to seek refuge in Afghanistan with the Taliban, with whom the group had existing ties. After the collapse of the Taliban government in Afghanistan, LJ members became active in aiding other terrorists and have provided safe houses, false identities, and protection in Pakistani cities. LJ works closely with Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan. LJ chief Asif Chotu was killed along with three other LJ militants in January 2017 in a police operation in Pakistan.

Activities: LJ specializes in armed attacks and bombings and has admitted to numerous killings of Shia religious and community leaders in Pakistan. In January 1999, the group attempted to assassinate Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and his brother Shahbaz Sharif, Chief Minister of Punjab Province. Media reports linked LJ to attacks on Christian targets in Pakistan, including a March 2002 grenade assault on the Protestant International Church in Islamabad that killed two U.S. citizens.

In January 2014, at least 24 people were killed and 40 others wounded in a bus bombing by LJ targeting Shia pilgrims. LJ also claimed responsibility for the December 2015 suicide bombing that targeted a market in the predominantly Shia town of Parachinar, Pakistan that killed at least 23 people and wounded 50. In November 2016, two individuals suspected of belonging to LJ were arrested by police in Pakistan for their alleged involvement in 25 cases of targeted killings, which included the murder of Pakistani singer Amjad Sabri as well as army and police personnel.

Strength: Membership of the group is assessed to be in the low hundreds.

Location/Area of Operation: This group is primarily based in Pakistan's Punjab province, the Federally Administered Tribal Areas, Karachi, and Balochistan.

Funding and External Aid: Funding comes from wealthy donors in Pakistan as well as the Middle East, particularly Saudi Arabia. The group engages in criminal activity, including extortion, to fund its activities.

LIBERATION TIGERS OF TAMIL EELAM

aka Ellalan Force; Tamil Tigers

Description: Founded in 1976 and designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on October 8, 1997, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) is a Tamil secessionist group in Sri Lanka. Despite its military defeat at the hands of the Sri Lankan government in 2009, the LTTE's international network of sympathizers and financial support has persisted.

Activities: Although largely inactive since 2009, the LTTE was previously responsible for an integrated insurgent strategy that targeted key installations and senior Sri Lankan leaders. In early 2009, Sri Lankan forces recaptured the LTTE's key strongholds, including their capital of Kilinochchi. In May 2009, government forces defeated the last LTTE fighting forces, killed members of its leadership including leader Velupillai Prabhakaran, and declared military victory.

There have been no known attacks in Sri Lanka attributed to the LTTE since 2009, but a total of 13 LTTE supporters, several of whom had allegedly planned attacks against U.S. and Israeli diplomatic facilities in India, were arrested in Malaysia in 2014. Additional members were arrested in Malaysia and India in 2015, one of whom was accused of exhorting other Sri Lankans to fund and revive the LTTE.

Strength: The group's exact strength is unknown.

Location/Area of Operation: The LTTE is based in Sri Lanka and India.

Funding and External Aid: LTTE's financial network of support continued after the LTTE's military defeat in 2009 and employed charities as fronts to collect and divert funds for its activities.

MUJAHIDIN SHURA COUNCIL IN THE ENVIRONS OF JERUSALEM

aka MSC; Mujahideen Shura Council in the Environs of Jerusalem; Mujahideen Shura Council; Shura al-Mujahedin Fi Aknaf Bayt al-Maqdis; Majlis Shura al-Mujahidin; Majlis Shura al-Mujahideen; Magles Shoura al-Mujahddin

Description: The Mujahidin Shura Council in the Environs of Jerusalem (MSC) was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on August 19, 2014. The MSC is a consolidation of several Salafi terrorist groups based in Gaza that have claimed responsibility for numerous attacks against Israel since the group's founding in 2012.

Activities: On August 13, 2013, MSC claimed responsibility for a rocket attack targeting the Israeli city of Eilat. Previously, MSC claimed responsibility for the March 21, 2013, attack in which Gaza-based militants fired at least five rockets at Sderot, Israel; and the April 17, 2013, attack in which two rockets were fired at Eilat. There were no known MSC attacks in 2017.

Strength: MSC is estimated to have several hundred fighters.

Location/Area of Operation: MSC operates in Gaza.

Funding and External Aid: Unknown

AL-MULATHAMUN BATTALION

aka al-Mulathamun Brigade; al-Muwaqqi'un bil-Dima; Those Signed in Blood Battalion; Signatories in Blood; Those who Sign in Blood; Witnesses in Blood; Signed-in-Blood Battalion;

Masked Men Brigade; Khaled Abu al-Abbas Brigade; al-Mulathamun Masked Ones Brigade; al-Murabitoun; The Sentinels

Description: The al-Mulathamun Battalion (AMB) was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on December 19, 2013. AMB was originally part of al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) but became a separate organization in late 2012 after its leader, Mokhtar Belmokhtar, split from AQIM. After the split, Belmokhtar threatened to fight against Western interests and announced the creation of the sub-battalion, "Those Who Sign in Blood." In August 2013, AMB and the Mali-based Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) announced that the two organizations would merge under the name "al-Murabitoun." In late 2015, AMB announced a re-merger with AQIM. In 2017, the Sahara Branch of al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb, al-Murabitoun, Ansar al-Dine, and the Macina Liberation Front came together to form Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin.

Activities: AMB's "Those Who Sign in Blood" sub-battalion claimed responsibility for the January 2013 attack against the Tiguentourine gas facility near In Amenas, in southeastern Algeria. More than 800 people were taken hostage during the four-day siege, resulting in the deaths of 39 civilians, including three U.S. citizens. Seven other U.S. citizens escaped.

In May 2013, AMB cooperated with MUJAO in twin suicide bombings on a northern Nigerien military base and a French uranium mine in Arlit. The coordinated attacks killed at least 20 people, including all of the attackers.

In March 2015, AMB claimed responsibility for an attack at La Terrasse restaurant in Bamako, Mali. A French national, a Belgian national, and three Malians were killed when a masked gunman fired indiscriminately on the restaurant. AMB also claimed the August hotel siege in central Mali; 17 people were killed, including four Malian soldiers and nine civilians. In November, AMB operatives participated in the strike against the Radisson Blu Hotel in Bamako, Mali, taking more than 170 people hostage – including U.S. citizens. As many as 27 people were killed in the attack; one of those killed was a U.S. international development worker.

AMB also was reportedly involved in the AQIM January 2016 attack on a popular tourist hotel in Burkina Faso that killed nearly 30, including one U.S. citizen. AMB claimed a suicide car bombing at a military camp in Mali that killed 47 people in January 2017.

Strength: Membership levels of AMB are unknown.

Location/Area of Operation: The group operates in Algeria, Burkina Faso, Libya, Mali, and Niger.

Funding and External Aid: In addition to the support it may receive through its connections to other terrorist organizations in the region, AMB is likely funded through kidnapping-for-ransom and other criminal activities.

NATIONAL LIBERATION ARMY

aka ELN; Ejercito de Liberacion Nacional

Description: The National Liberation Army (ELN) was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on October 8, 1997. The ELN is a Colombian Marxist-Leninist group formed in 1964. The ELN remains focused on attacking economic infrastructure – in particular oil and gas pipelines and electricity pylons – and on extorting foreign and local companies.

Activities: In 2016, the ELN continued to target Colombia's infrastructure, particularly oil pipelines. The ELN also launched mortars at police stations and the military, placed explosive devices near roads, and engaged in sniper attacks, roadblocks, and ambushes. In February, the ELN initiated a wave of violent attacks to force a 72-hour economic shutdown in several parts of the country. On October 27, 2016, the ELN killed two civilian truck drivers in Arauca.

In June 2017, the ELN released two Dutch journalists that it had kidnapped, unharmed. Throughout 2017, the Government of Colombia and ELN conducted peace talks but did not ultimately reach an agreement. Rebel fighters continued attacks on the Colombian public, security forces, and infrastructure. A bilateral ceasefire was in place as of the end of 2017.

Strength: The group consists of about 1,500 combatants and an unknown number of supporters.

Location/Area of Operation: The group is based in the rural and mountainous areas of northern, northeastern, and southwestern Colombia as well as border regions with Venezuela.

Funding and External Aid: The ELN draws its funding from the illicit narcotics trade and from extortion of oil and gas companies. Additional funds are derived from kidnapping ransoms.

AL-NUSRAH FRONT

aka Jabhat al-Nusrah; Jabhet al-Nusrah; The Victory Front; al-Nusrah Front for the People of the Levant; al-Nusrah Front in Lebanon; Jabhat al-Nusra li-Ahl al-Sham min Mujahedi al-Sham fi Sahat al-Jihad; Support Front for the People of the Levant; Jabhat Fath al-Sham; Jabhat Fath al Sham; Jabhat Fatah al-Sham; Jabhat Fateh al-Sham; Front for the Conquest of Syria; The Front for liberation of al Sham; Front for the Conquest of Syria/the Levant; Front for the Liberation of the Levant; Conquest of the Levant Front; Fatah al-Sham Front; Fateh Al-Sham Front

Description: Al-Nusrah Front (ANF) is al-Qa'ida's affiliate in Syria and was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on May 15, 2014. It is led by Abu Muhammad al-Jawlani, aka al-Julani. The group was formed in late 2011 when then-al-Qa'ida in Iraq (AQI) – now ISIS – leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi sent al-Jawlani to Syria to organize terrorist cells. In 2013, the group split from AQI and became an independent entity. ANF's stated goal is to oust Syria's Assad regime and replace it with a Sunni Islamic state. The group is present throughout Syria, but is concentrated in and controls a portion of territory in northwest Syria, where it is active as an opposition force, in local governance, and in external plotting.

Activities: ANF has been active in a number of operations against other factions in the Syrian conflict. In December 2013, ANF abducted 13 nuns from a Christian monastery in Maaloula,

holding them for three months. In 2014, ANF also carried out multiple suicide bomb attacks and kidnappings, including the abduction of UN peacekeepers.

ANF continued fighting in Syria throughout 2015, attacking other opposition groups and kidnapping civilians. In March, ANF claimed an attack on the intelligence headquarters of Syria's air force in Aleppo, killing an estimated 20 members of the security force. In June, ANF claimed responsibility for the massacre of the Druze village Qalb Lawzeh in Idlib province, Syria, which killed 20. In July, the group claimed responsibility for a suicide bombing of an army outpost in Aleppo, which killed at least 25 soldiers and allied militia.

In 2016, the group carried out attacks in Aleppo and in other parts of Syria controlled by the Syrian army, killing both military officials and civilians. In July 2016, ANF leader Jawlani announced the group had adopted a new name, Jabhat Fath al-Sham, and would no longer be known as Al-Nusrah Front. The Department of State amended the designation in November 2016 to add additional aliases, including Jabhat Fath al-Sham.
In early 2017, ANF joined with four smaller Syrian factions and created "Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham" (HTS) as a vehicle to advance its position in the Syrian insurgency and further its own goals as al-Qa'ida's affiliate in Syria. ANF continued to dominate and operate through HTS in pursuit of its objectives. In October, ANF launched an attack near the Turkish border against the Syrian army, killing several soldiers. The group carried out multiple suicide bombings in Damascus, including suicide attacks using vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices in March. ANF took control of Idlib in July 2017, and it exercised an effective military monopoly over other local opposition groups there, as it continued plotting against U.S. and allied interests.

Strength: ANF has an estimated 18,000 members.

Location/Area of Operation: The group is based in Syria and Lebanon.

Funding and External Aid: ANF receives funding from a variety of sources, including kidnapping-for-ransom payments and donations from external Gulf-based donors.

PALESTINE ISLAMIC JIHAD

aka PIJ; PIJ-Shaqaqi Faction; PIJ-Shallah Faction; Islamic Jihad of Palestine; Islamic Jihad in Palestine; Abu Ghunaym Squad of the Hizballah Bayt al-Maqdis; Al-Quds Squads; Al-Quds Brigades; Saraya al-Quds; Al-Awdah Brigades

Description: Palestine Islamic Jihad (PIJ) was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on October 8, 1997. Formed by militant Palestinians in Gaza during the 1970s, PIJ is committed to the destruction of Israel through attacks against Israeli military and civilian targets and to the creation of an Islamic state in historic Palestine, including present day Israel.

Activities: PIJ terrorists have conducted numerous attacks, including large-scale suicide bombings, against Israeli civilian and military targets. Although U.S. citizens have died in PIJ attacks, the group has not directly targeted U.S. interests. Between 2008 and 2011, PIJ primarily

conducted rocket attacks and used other explosive devices to target southern Israel. Through 2014, PIJ operatives carried out attacks on Israeli buses in Tel Aviv. In March 2014, PIJ carried out a wave of rocket attacks into Israeli territory; up to 60 rockets may have reached Israel.

In early 2015, PIJ began re-arming and replenishing its ranks. In March of that year, reports suggested that approximately 200 new recruits between the ages of 19 and 22 were undergoing training programs lasting anywhere from 36 days to six months. That same month, PIJ revealed its militants were smuggling weapons, including rockets and mortars made inside Gaza, through tunnels in Gaza, in preparation for future attacks against Israel. In May, Israeli forces blamed PIJ for firing a rocket that landed in Gan Yazne, a region close to the Gaza border. The rocket was the first mid-range rocket fired at Israel since the August 2014 ceasefire. In August, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) claimed PIJ operatives in Syria fired four rockets at the Golan Heights and Upper Galilee.

Over the course of 2016, PIJ continued to strike Israel, primarily through light arms fire at IDF patrols. In September, Israeli authorities arrested PIJ operative Mahmoud Yusuf Hasin Abu Taha upon his entry into Israel from Gaza, interrupting a PIJ plot to abduct and kill an IDF soldier and carry out a mass-casualty attack on a reception hall in Beersheba.

In 2017, PIJ praised a number of shootings, bombings, and other attacks in Israel that resulted in multiple deaths.

Strength: PIJ has close to 1,000 members.

Location/Area of Operation: PIJ operates primarily in Gaza, with minimal presence in the West Bank and Israel. Other leaders reside in Lebanon and throughout the Middle East.

Funding and External Aid: PIJ receives financial assistance and training primarily from Iran. PIJ has partnered with Iranian- and Syrian-sponsored Hizballah to carry out joint operations.

PALESTINE LIBERATION FRONT – ABU ABBAS FACTION

aka PLF; PLF-Abu Abbas; Palestine Liberation Front

Description: The Palestinian Liberation Front – Abu Abbas Faction (PLF) was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on October 8, 1997. In the late 1970s, the Palestine Liberation Front (PLF) splintered from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC). It later split into pro-Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), pro-Syrian, and pro-Libyan factions. The pro-PLO faction was led by Muhammad Zaydan (a.k.a. Abu Abbas) and was based in Baghdad prior to Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Activities: The PLF was responsible for the 1985 attack on the Italian cruise ship *Achille Lauro* and the murder of U.S. citizen Leon Klinghoffer. The PLF was suspected of supporting terrorism against Israel by other Palestinian groups into the 1990s. In April 2004, Abu Abbas died of natural causes while in U.S. custody in Iraq. After not claiming an attack for 16 years,

the PLF claimed responsibility for the March 14, 2008, assault against an Israeli military bus in Huwarah, Israel, and the shooting of an Israeli settler. On February 18, 2010, the PLF claimed responsibility for an improvised explosive device (IED) attack against an Israel Defense Forces patrol, which caused minor injuries to a soldier; another IED was discovered during a search of the area. The group did not publicly claim any attacks in 2016 or 2017 but continued to maintain a strong presence in many refugee camps in Gaza, Lebanon, and Syria.

Strength: Estimates have placed membership between 50 and 500.

Location/Area of Operation: PLF leadership and members are based in Gaza, Lebanon, and the West Bank.

Funding and External Aid: Unknown

POPULAR FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF PALESTINE

aka PFLP; Halhul Gang; Halhul Squad; Palestinian Popular Resistance Forces; PPRF; Red Eagle Gang; Red Eagle Group; Red Eagles; Martyr Abu-Ali Mustafa Battalion

Description: Designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on October 8, 1997, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) is a Marxist-Leninist group that was formed in 1967 by George Habash after splitting from the Arab Nationalist Movement. The group earned a reputation for large-scale international attacks in the 1960s and 1970s, including airline hijackings that killed at least 20 U.S. citizens.

Activities: The PFLP increased its operational activity during the Second Intifada. During that time, the group assassinated Israeli Tourism Minister Rehavam Ze'evi in 2001, carried out at least two suicide operations, and launched multiple joint operations with other Palestinian terrorist groups. Between 2008 and 2011, the PLFP claimed responsibility for numerous attacks on Israel Defense Forces (IDF) in Gaza as well as mortar and rocket attacks fired from Gaza into Israel. In 2012, the Israeli Security Agency arrested several members of the PFLP for plotting to carry out attacks on IDF checkpoints and planning to conduct kidnappings.

On November 18, 2014, two Palestinians reportedly affiliated with the PFLP entered a Jerusalem synagogue and attacked Israelis with guns, knives, and axes, killing five people – including three U.S. citizens – and injuring 12. The next month, the PFLP claimed responsibility for several rocket attacks along the Lebanon-Israel border.

In August 2016, the Abu Ali Mustafa Brigades, the military wing of PFLP, fired a rocket at the Israeli town of Sderot. No casualties or damages were reported.

In June 2017, three Palestinian militants launched an attack near Jerusalem's Old City, stabbing and killing an Israeli border security agent. Two of the militants were members of PFLP, although ISIS claimed the attack.

Strength: Unknown

Location/Area of Operation: The PFLP operates in Gaza, Israel, Lebanon, Syria, and the West Bank.

Funding and External Aid: Unknown

POPULAR FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF PALESTINE-GENERAL COMMAND

aka PFLP-GC

Description: The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC) was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on October 8, 1997. The PFLP-GC split from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) in 1968, claiming it wanted to focus more on resistance and less on politics. Ahmad Jibril, a former captain in the Syrian Army, has led the PFLP-GC since its founding. The PFLP-GC is closely tied to both Syria and Iran.

Activities: The PFLP-GC carried out dozens of attacks in Europe and the Middle East during the 1970s and 1980s. The organization was known for cross-border terrorist attacks into Israel using unusual means, such as hot-air balloons and motorized hang gliders. Since the early 1990s, the group has primarily focused on supporting Hizballah's attacks against Israel, training members of other Palestinian terrorist groups, and smuggling weapons. More recently, the PFLP-GC has been implicated by Lebanese security officials in several rocket attacks against Israel. In 2009, the group was responsible for wounding two civilians in an armed attack in Nahariyya, Northern District, Israel.

In November 2012, PFLP-GC claimed responsibility for a bus bombing in Tel Aviv that injured 29 people, although four Palestine Islamic Jihad and Hamas operatives were later arrested for the attack. In 2015, the PFLP-GC reportedly began fighting alongside the Assad regime in Syria, while also receiving logistical and military aid from Hizballah and Iran.

Separately, in December 2015, the PFLP-GC took responsibility for rocket fire aimed at Israeli territory. The attack, in which at least three rockets were fired from Lebanon into northern Israel, landed near Shlomi, a small town near the Lebanese border. Although the PFLP-GC did not carry out any attacks in 2016 or 2017, the group remained an active participant in the Syrian conflict.

Strength: Several hundred members

Location/Area of Operation: Political leadership is headquartered in Damascus, with bases in southern Lebanon and a presence in the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon and Syria. The group also maintains a small presence in Gaza.

Funding and External Aid: The PFLP-GC receives safe haven and logistical and military support from Syria and financial support from Iran.

AL-QA'IDA

aka al-Qa'eda; Qa'idat al-Jihad (The Base for Jihad); formerly Qa'idat Ansar Allah (The Base of the Supporters of God); the Islamic Army; Islamic Salvation Foundation; The Base; The Group for the Preservation of the Holy Sites; The Islamic Army for the Liberation of the Holy Places; the World Islamic Front for Jihad Against Jews and Crusaders; the Usama Bin Laden Network; the Usama Bin Laden Organization; al-Jihad; the Jihad Group; Egyptian al-Jihad; Egyptian Islamic Jihad; New Jihad

Description: Designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on October 8, 1999, al-Qa'ida (AQ) was established in 1988. The group helped finance, recruit, transport, and train fighters for the Afghan resistance against the former Soviet Union. AQ strives to eliminate Western influence from the Muslim world, topple "apostate" governments of Muslim countries, and establish a pan-Islamic caliphate governed by its own interpretation of Sharia law that would ultimately be at the center of a new international order. These goals remain essentially unchanged since the group's 1996 public declaration of war against the United States. AQ leaders issued a statement in 1998 under the banner of "The World Islamic Front for Jihad against Jews and Crusaders," saying it was the duty of all Muslims to kill U.S. citizens – civilian and military – and their allies everywhere. AQ merged with al-Jihad (Egyptian Islamic Jihad) in June 2001. Many AQ leaders have been killed in recent years, including Usama bin Laden in May 2011. AQ's leader Ayman al-Zawahiri remained at-large in 2017.

Activities: AQ and its supporters conducted three bombings targeting U.S. troops in Aden in December 1992 and claimed responsibility for shooting down U.S. helicopters and killing U.S. soldiers in Somalia in 1993. AQ also carried out the August 1998 bombings of the U.S. embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, killing up to 300 individuals and injuring more than 5,000. In October 2000, AQ conducted a suicide attack on the USS Cole in the port of Aden, Yemen, with an explosive-laden boat, killing 17 U.S. Navy sailors and injuring 39 others. On September 11, 2001, 19 AQ members hijacked and crashed four U.S. commercial jets – two into the World Trade Center in New York City, one into the Pentagon, and the last into a field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania. Nearly 3,000 civilians, police, and first responders were killed. The dead included U.S. and foreign citizens from at least 77 countries.

In a December 2011 video, al-Zawahiri claimed AQ was behind the kidnapping of U.S. aid worker Warren Weinstein in Pakistan. Weinstein was held captive until his death in January 2015.

In February 2014, AQ removed ISIS as an AQ-affiliate. In September 2014, al-Zawahiri announced the establishment of Pakistan-based al-Qa'ida in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS). Two days later, two Pakistani warships were attacked in Karachi. AQIS claimed responsibility for the plot, which aspired to commandeer missile systems to attack nearby U.S. warships.

In September 2015, five senior AQ leaders were released from Iranian custody in exchange for an Iranian diplomat kidnapped in Yemen. Of the five, Saif al Adel and Abu Mohammed al Masri are wanted for the August 1998 U.S. Embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania.

In January 2016, AQ leader Ayman al-Zawahiri publicly released two audio messages and one seven-page statement, condemning the Government of Saudi Arabia and its role in the Syrian conflict, encouraging AQ activity in Southeast Asia – especially Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines, and acknowledging support for its affiliate in Syria, al-Nusrah Front. On October 3, Abu al-Faraj al-Masri, a senior AQ leader involved in planning attacks, was killed in Syria. As of September, AQ leaders and members were active in at least seven provinces in Afghanistan.

In February 2017, AQ senior leader Abu al-Khayr al-Masri was killed in Syria. In September 2017, a U.S. person was convicted in New York of charges related to supporting AQ to attack a U.S. military base in Afghanistan in 2009 using two truck bombs. In October, al-Zawahiri released a video calling for jihadists around the world to conduct attacks against the United States.

Strength: In South Asia, AQ's core has been seriously degraded. The death or arrest of dozens of mid- and senior-level AQ operatives, including bin Laden, has disrupted communication, financial support, facilitation nodes, and a number of terrorist plots. AQ, however, remains a focal point of "inspiration" for a worldwide network of affiliated groups – al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), al-Nusrah Front, al-Shabaab, and AQIS – and other terrorist groups, including the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, Islamic Jihad Union, Lashkar i Jhangvi, Harakat ul-Mujahideen, and Jemaah Islamiya. The Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan and the Haqqani Network also have ties to AQ. In addition, supporters and associates worldwide "inspired" by the group's ideology may operate without direction from AQ central leadership.

Location/Area of Operation: AQ was based in Afghanistan until Coalition Forces removed the Afghan Taliban from power in late 2001. Subsequently, the group's core leadership was largely based in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas, until Pakistani military operations in 2014 significantly degraded the group there. AQ affiliates – al-Nusrah Front, AQAP, AQIM, al-Shabaab, and AQIS – operate in Syria and Lebanon, Yemen, the Trans-Sahara, Somalia, and Afghanistan and Pakistan, respectively.

Funding and External Aid: AQ primarily depends on donations from like-minded supporters as well as from individuals who believe that their money is supporting a humanitarian cause. Some funds are diverted from Islamic charitable organizations.

AL-QA'IDA IN THE ARABIAN PENINSULA

aka al-Qa'ida in the South Arabian Peninsula; al-Qa'ida in Yemen; al-Qa'ida of Jihad Organization in the Arabian Peninsula; al-Qa'ida Organization in the Arabian Peninsula; Tanzim Qa'idat al-Jihad fi Jazirat al-Arab; AQAP; AQY; Ansar al-Shari'a; Sons of Abyan; Sons of Hadramawt; Sons of Hadramawt Committee; Civil Council of Hadramawt; and National Hadramawt Council

Description: Al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on January 19, 2010. In January 2009, the now-deceased leader of al-Qa'ida in

Yemen, Nasir al-Wahishi, publicly announced that Yemeni and Saudi al-Qa'ida (AQ) operatives were working together under the banner of AQAP. The announcement signaled the rebirth of an AQ franchise that previously carried out attacks in Saudi Arabia. AQAP's self-stated goals are to establish a caliphate and Sharia law in the Arabian Peninsula and the wider Middle East.

Activities: AQAP has claimed responsibility for numerous terrorist acts against both internal and foreign targets since its inception in January 2009, including a March 2009 suicide bombing against South Korean tourists in Yemen and the December 25, 2009, attempted attack on Northwest Airlines Flight 253 from Amsterdam to Detroit, Michigan. In October 2010, AQAP claimed responsibility for a foiled plot to send explosive-laden packages to the United States via cargo planes. The parcels were intercepted in the United Kingdom and in the United Arab Emirates.

AQAP, operating under the alias Ansar al-Shari'a (AAS), carried out a May 2012 suicide bombing in Sana'a that killed 96 people. Also in May 2012, the media reported that AQAP allegedly planned to detonate a bomb aboard a U.S.-bound airliner using an improvised explosive device.

In September 2014, AQAP launched two rocket attacks against the U.S. Embassy in Sana'a. The second attack injured multiple embassy security guards. Also in 2014, AQAP attempted attacks against the U.S. and British ambassadors to Yemen, and carried out a strike on the Iranian ambassador's residence in Sana'a that killed one guard and two pedestrians.

In January 2015, brothers Cherif and Said Kouachi attacked the satirical newspaper *Charlie Hebdo* in Paris, France, killing 12 people. One of the brothers, who had traveled to Yemen in 2011 and met with now-deceased Anwar al-Aulaqi, claimed the attack on behalf of AQAP.

Also in 2015, AQAP took advantage of Yemen's deteriorating political and economic environment after the Yemeni government was overthrown by Houthi rebels. The United States and several other countries closed their embassies amid the violence. In April, AQAP stormed the city of Mukalla, seizing control of government buildings, releasing terrorists from prison, and stealing millions from the central bank. From 2015 into 2016, AQAP consolidated its control over Mukalla and expanded its reach through large portions of Yemen's south.

In early 2016, AQAP swept through southern Yemen, gaining control of al-Hawta, Azzan, and Habban in Lahij Governorate, and Mahfad and Ahwar in Abyan Governorate. By February 2016, AQAP controlled most of Yemen's southeastern coast. Although the group lost control of Mukalla in April, when the port city was retaken by forces backed by the Saudi-led Coalition, these territorial losses did not significantly degrade AQAP's capabilities, although they did deprive the group of an important source of income.

AQAP also attempted to carry out multiple attacks targeting Yemeni government and security forces. In July 2016, two car bombs targeting security checkpoints outside Mukalla killed at least nine Yemeni soldiers and wounded many others.

In early 2017, a U.S. Navy SEAL was killed in a raid against AQAP leaders in Yemen. In June, AQAP conducted an attack using a car bomb and guns at a Yemeni army camp, killing at least two soldiers.

Strength: AQAP fighters are estimated to be in the low thousands.

Location/Area of Operation: The group is based in Yemen.

Funding and External Aid: AQAP's funding has historically come from theft, robberies, oil and gas revenue, kidnap-for-ransom operations, and donations from like-minded supporters. After seizing Mukallah in April 2015, the group had access to additional sources of revenue, including the millions it stole from the central bank. This access continued until Mukallah was retaken by Yemeni government forces in April 2016.

AL-QA'IDA IN THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT (AQIS)

aka al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent; Qaedat al-Jihad in the Indian Subcontinent

Description: In September 2014, al-Qa'ida announced the establishment of a new AQ affiliate, al-Qa'ida in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS). The Department of State designated AQIS on July 1, 2016 as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO). AQIS focuses on terrorist activity in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan. Its leader is Asim Umar, a former member of the FTO Harakat ul-Mujahidin.

Activities: AQIS claimed responsibility for the September 6, 2014, attack on a naval dockyard in Karachi, in which militants attempted to hijack a Pakistani Navy frigate. AQIS has also claimed attacks against human rights activists and secular writers in Bangladesh, including U.S. citizen Avijit Roy, U.S. embassy local employee Xulhaz Mannan, and Bangladeshi nationals Oyasiqur Rahman Babu, Ahmed Rajib Haideer, and A.K.M. Shafiul Islam. In September 2017, AQAP called on AQIS to launch more attacks on Burmese authorities, because of Burma's policies towards Rohingya Muslims.

Strength: AQIS is estimated to have several hundred members.

Location/Area of Operations: AQIS members are thought to be located primarily in Afghanistan, with elements operating in Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan.

Funding and External Aid: AQIS likely receives funding from al-Qa'ida senior leadership and engages in general criminal activity, kidnapping, and extortion.

AL-QA'IDA IN THE ISLAMIC MAGHREB

aka AQIM; GSPC; Le Groupe Salafiste Pour la Predication et le Combat; Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat; Salafist Group for Call and Combat; Tanzim al-Qa'ida fi Bilad al-Maghrib al-Islamiya

Description: The Salafist Group for Call and Combat (GSPC) was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on March 27, 2002. The Department of State amended the GSPC designation on February 20, 2008, after the GSPC officially joined with al-Qa'ida (AQ) in September 2006 and became al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). Although AQIM remains largely a regionally focused terrorist group, it has adopted a more anti-Western rhetoric and ideology, and has aspirations of overthrowing "apostate" African regimes and creating an Islamic state. Abdelmalek Droukdel, aka Abu Mus'ab Abd al-Wadoud, is the group's leader.

Activities: Following AQIM's 2007 bombing of the UN headquarters building and an Algerian government building in Algiers, which killed 60 people, AQIM's northern leadership was contained to northeastern Algeria, while the group's southern battalions focused mostly on kidnapping-for-ransom efforts. In 2011 and 2012, however, AQIM took advantage of the deteriorating security situation across Libya, Mali, and Tunisia to plan and conduct expanded operations. Militants with ties to AQIM were involved in the September 11, 2012, attack on U.S. facilities in Benghazi that killed U.S. Ambassador to Libya J. Christopher Stevens and three other Embassy staff members. In April 2014, AQIM killed 14 Algerian soldiers in an ambush east of Algiers.

In January 2015, AQIM claimed responsibility for an attack on a UN vehicle in Kidal, which wounded seven peacekeepers. Also in 2015, AQIM twice attacked UN convoys near Timbuktu with small arms and rocket-propelled grenades; three peacekeepers were killed in a May attack and six in a July attack. In November, AQIM, in cooperation with other terrorist groups, attacked the Radisson Blu Hotel in Bamako, Mali, taking more than 170 people hostage, including U.S. citizens. As many as 27 people were killed in the attack; one of those killed was an U.S. international development worker.

In January 2016, AQIM carried out an attack on a hotel in Burkina Faso, resulting in 28 deaths and another 56 injuries. In March, AQIM claimed responsibility for a strike on a popular tourist beach resort in Cote d'Ivoire; at least 16 people were killed and another 33 were injured.

AQIM has also continued to conduct kidnapping-for-ransom operations. Its targets are typically Western citizens from governments or third parties that have established a pattern of paying ransom for the release of individuals. In November 2014, AQIM released a video of two Western hostages, a Dutch and a French national, who were later released in December 2014.

In June 2015, AQIM published a video featuring one Swedish and one South African hostage who continued to be held captive since they were kidnapped in Timbuktu in 2011. Both were released in 2017.

In January 2017, AQIM conducted a suicide attack that left over 50 people dead in Gao, Mali.

Strength: AQIM has an estimated 1,000 fighters operating in the Sahel, including Algeria, northern Mali, southwest Libya, and Niger. Since the French intervention in northern Mali, AQIM's safe haven in northern Mali is less tenable for the organization and elements have moved to remote regions of northern Mali or to southwestern Libya. However, AQIM has been reorganizing and expanding in recent years.

Location/Area of Operation: The group is based in southern and eastern Algeria (including isolated parts of the Kabylie region), Burkina Faso, Cote D'Ivoire, Libya, northern Mali, Niger, and Tunisia.

Funding and External Aid: AQIM members engage in kidnapping-for-ransom and criminal activities to finance their operations. AQIM also successfully fundraises globally, and received limited financial and logistical assistance from supporters residing in Western Europe.

REAL IRA

aka RIRA; Real Irish Republican Army; 32 County Sovereignty Committee; 32 County Sovereignty Movement; Irish Republican Prisoners Welfare Association; Real Oglaigh Na hEireann

Description: The Real Irish Republican Army (RIRA) was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on May 16, 2001. The group was formed in 1997 as the clandestine armed wing of the 32 County Sovereignty Movement, a "political pressure group" dedicated to removing British forces from Northern Ireland and unifying Ireland. The RIRA has historically sought to disrupt the Northern Ireland peace process and did not participate in the September 2005 weapons decommissioning. Despite internal rifts and calls by some jailed members, including the group's founder Michael "Mickey" McKevitt, for a cease-fire and disbandment, the RIRA has pledged additional violence and has continued to conduct attacks.

Activities: Many RIRA members are former Provisional Irish Republican Army members who left the organization after the group renewed its ceasefire in 1997. These members brought extensive experience in terrorist tactics and bomb-making to the group. Targets have included civilians (the most notorious example is the Omagh bombing in August 1998), British security forces, and police officers in Northern Ireland. The Independent Monitoring Commission, which oversees the peace process, assessed that RIRA was likely responsible for the majority of the attacks that occurred post-Irish Republican Army (IRA)-decommissioning in Northern Ireland.

In May 2015, Irish police carried out 20 searches aimed at known dissident republicans across Ireland. Six individuals with links to RIRA and the Continuity Irish Republican Army (CIRA) were arrested after police discovered explosive devices. In spring 2016, the RIRA bombed the van of an Irish prison officer in east Belfast; the officer died from complications following the attack. Dublin police also linked the RIRA to an explosives cache they found in Dublin in April 2016.

In January 2017, RIRA gunmen fired at police officers in north Belfast, injuring one officer.

Strength: According to the Irish government, the RIRA has approximately 100 active members. The organization may receive limited support from IRA hardliners and sympathizers who are dissatisfied with the IRA's ceasefire and with Sinn Fein's involvement in the peace process.

Location/Area of Operation: The group operates in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

Funding and External Aid: The RIRA is suspected of receiving funds from sympathizers in the United States and of attempting to buy weapons from U.S. gun dealers. The RIRA reportedly purchased sophisticated weapons from the Balkans and occasionally collaborated with the CIRA.

REVOLUTIONARY ARMED FORCES OF COLOMBIA

aka FARC; Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia

Description: Designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on October 8, 1997, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) is Latin America's oldest, largest, and best-equipped terrorist organization. The FARC, founded in 1964, is responsible for large numbers of kidnappings-for-ransom in Colombia, holding as many as 700 hostages in past years. In November 2016, after four years of negotiation in Havana, Cuba, a peace agreement was crafted and approved by Colombia's Congress, putting in motion a six-month disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration process. In accordance with the peace agreement, the FARC began to demobilize in early December 2016 under UN supervision. Demobilization continued in 2017, with an estimated 7,000 FARC militants turning in over 8,000 weapons.

Activities: Over the years, the FARC has perpetrated a large number of high profile terrorist acts, including the 1999 murder of three U.S. missionaries working in Colombia, and multiple kidnappings and assassinations of Colombian government officials and civilians. In July 2008, the Colombian military conducted a dramatic rescue of 15 high-value FARC hostages including U.S. Department of Defense contractors Marc Gonsalves, Keith Stansell, and Thomas Howe, who were held captive for more than five years, along with former Colombian presidential candidate Ingrid Betancourt.

In 2016, there were no significant attacks by the FARC, but there have been reports of continued extortion and threats against local officials. FARC did not claim any attacks in 2017 during the demobilization process.

Strength: Prior to the peace accord, the FARC was estimated to have 7,000 members, with several thousand additional supporters.

Location/Area of Operation: FARC leaders and combatants were located in Colombia.

Funding and External Aid: Prior to the peace accord, the FARC has been primarily funded by extortion and the international drug trade.

REVOLUTIONARY PEOPLE'S LIBERATION PARTY/FRONT

aka DHKP/C; Dev Sol; Dev Sol Armed Revolutionary Units; Dev Sol Silahli Devrimci Birlikleri; Dev Sol SDB; Devrimci Halk Kurtulus Partisi-Cephesi; Devrimci Sol; Revolutionary Left

Description: Designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on October 8, 1997, the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party/Front (DHKP/C) was originally formed in 1978 as Devrimci Sol, or Dev Sol, a splinter faction of Dev Genc (Revolutionary Youth). It was renamed in 1994 after factional infighting. "Party" refers to the group's political activities, while "Front" is a reference to the group's militant operations. The group advocates a Marxist-Leninist ideology and opposes the United States, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and Turkish establishments. It strives to establish a socialist state and to abolish Turkish prisons.

Activities: Since the late 1980s, the group has primarily targeted current and retired Turkish security and military officials. In 1990, the group began to conduct attacks against foreign interests, including against U.S. military and diplomatic personnel and facilities. The DHKP/C assassinated two U.S. military contractors and wounded a U.S. Air Force officer in the 1990s, and bombed more than 20 U.S. and NATO military, diplomatic, commercial, and cultural facilities. DHKP/C added suicide bombings to its repertoire in 2001, with attacks against Turkish police in January and September of that year. Since the end of 2001, DHKP/C has typically used improvised explosive devices against official Turkish and U.S. targets.

After the death of its leader, Dursun Karatas, the DHKP/C reorganized in 2009 and was reportedly in competition with the Kurdistan Workers' Party for influence in Turkey. The group was responsible for a number of high profile attacks in 2012 that included a suicide bombing of a police station in Istanbul. This tactic continued in 2013 when, on February 1, a DHKP/C operative exploded a suicide vest inside the employee entrance to the U.S. Embassy in Ankara. The explosion killed a Turkish guard and seriously wounded a Turkish journalist. In March 2013, three members of the group attacked the Ministry of Justice and the Ankara headquarters of the Turkish Justice and Development political party using grenades and rocket launchers.

In 2015, the DHKP/C claimed responsibility for a suicide bombing that killed a police officer and wounded another. In March, Turkish prosecutor Mehmet Selim Kiraz was taken hostage and killed from multiple gunshot wounds by the DHKP/C after police attempted to rescue him. In August, two women opened fire on the U.S. Consulate in Istanbul; one woman was identified as a member of the DHKP/C.

On January 20, 2017, a DHKP/C militant launched an anti-tank missile into Istanbul police headquarters, which did not result in any deaths or injuries. Turkish police initiated a series of raids after the attack and apprehended the militant two days later.

Strength: Membership includes an estimated several dozen members inside Turkey, with a support network throughout Europe.

Location/Area of Operation: DHKP/C is located in Turkey, primarily in Adana, Ankara, Istanbul, and Izmir. Other members live and plan operations in European countries.

Funding and External Aid: The DHKP/C finances its activities chiefly through donations and extortion. The group raises funds primarily in Europe.

REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE

aka RS; Epanastatikos Aghonas; EA

Description: Designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on May 18, 2009, Revolutionary Struggle (RS) is a radical leftist group with Marxist ideology that has conducted attacks against both Greek and U.S. targets in Greece. RS emerged in 2003 following the arrests of members of the Greek leftist groups 17 November and Revolutionary People's Struggle.

Activities: RS first gained notoriety when it claimed responsibility for the September 5, 2003, bombings at the Athens Courthouse during the trials of 17 November members. From 2004 to 2006, RS carried out a number of improvised explosive device attacks, including a March 2004 attack outside of a Citibank office in Athens. RS claimed responsibility for the January 2007 rocket-propelled grenade attack on the U.S. Embassy in Athens, which damaged the building, and the March 2009 bombing of a Citibank branch in Athens.

The Greek government has made significant strides in curtailing RS' terrorist activity. On April 10, 2010, Greek police arrested six suspected RS members, including purported leader Nikos Maziotis, who later escaped. On April 3, 2013, five members of RS were convicted by an Athens appeals court, three of them receiving maximum prison sentences. Maziotis and another accused RS conspirator, Paula Roupa, were convicted in absentia. Prior to Maziotis's recapture, RS conducted a bomb attack outside a Bank of Greece office in Athens in April 2014; the blast caused extensive damage to surrounding structures but no casualties.

In March 2016, a Greek court sentenced Maziotis to life in prison plus 129 years. Roupa was sentenced in absentia to 11 years in prison on misdemeanor charges. Greek authorities suspect she was involved in a September 2016 bank robbery in Malesina, Greece. In January 2017, Roupa was arrested by Greek anti-terrorist police.

Strength: Unknown

Location/Area of Operation: The group is based in Athens, Greece.

Funding and External Aid: The group's funding is unknown but most likely supports itself through criminal activities, including bank robbery.

AL-SHABAAB

aka The Harakat Shabaab al-Mujahidin; al-Shabab; Shabaab; the Youth; Mujahidin al-Shabaab Movement; Mujahideen Youth Movement; Mujahidin Youth Movement

Description: Al-Shabaab was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on March 18, 2008. Al-Shabaab was the militant wing of the former Somali Islamic Courts Council that took over parts of southern Somalia during the second half of 2006. Since the end of 2006, al-Shabaab and associated militias have undertaken a violent insurgency using guerrilla warfare and terrorist tactics against the transitional governments of Somalia.

Al-Shabaab is an official al-Qa'ida (AQ) affiliate and has ties to other AQ affiliates, including al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula and al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb. The group's leader is Ahmed Diriye aka Ahmed Umar aka Abu Ubaidah.

Al-Shabaab is composed of Somali recruits and foreign terrorist fighters. Since 2011, al-Shabaab has seen its military capacity reduced due to the efforts of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and Somali forces, and clashes within the group itself. Despite al-Shabaab's loss of urban centers since 2012, the group has maintained its hold on large sections of rural areas throughout Somalia and has conducted attacks in Somalia, Kenya, Uganda, and Djibouti.

Activities: Al-Shabaab has used intimidation and violence to exploit divisions in Somalia and undermine the Somali government, recruit new fighters, extort funding from local populations, and kill activists working to bring about peace through political dialogue. The group has claimed responsibility for several high profile bombings and shootings throughout Somalia targeting AMISOM troops and Somali officials. Al-Shabaab has assassinated numerous civil society figures, government officials, journalists, international aid workers, and members of non-governmental organizations.

Al-Shabaab was responsible for the July 11, 2010, suicide bombings in Kampala, Uganda – its first attack outside of Somalia. The attack, which took place during the World Cup, killed 76 people, including one U.S. citizen. Al-Shabaab was blamed for the 2011 kidnapping of international aid workers from the Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya. Both hostages were eventually freed in 2013. In September 2013, al-Shabaab again expanded its area of operations when it staged a significant attack against the Westgate Mall in Nairobi, Kenya. The multi-day siege resulted in the deaths of at least 65 civilians, including foreign nationals from 13 countries and six soldiers and police officers; hundreds of others were injured. In April 2015, al-Shabaab carried out a raid with small arms and grenades on Kenya's Garissa University College that left 148 people dead.

Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for one of the deadliest attacks against AMISOM troops in Somalia in January 2016. Using a vehicle-borne IED and small arms fire, al-Shabaab massed against a Kenyan AMISOM base and killed more than 100 soldiers. In February, al-Shabaab attempted to down Daallo Airlines Flight 321 with 74 passengers on board. Only the suicide bomber was killed and the plane made an emergency landing in Mogadishu shortly after take-off due to an explosion that created a large hole in the fuselage near the wing. In August, al-Shabaab claimed a double suicide bombing in Galkayo, Somalia, that killed at least 20 people. Al-Shabaab carried out a series of raids in northeast Kenya in October, including one attack that killed at least 12 people at a guesthouse in Mandera, and in November, the group claimed

responsibility for a car bombing targeting an army convoy near Parliament in Mogadishu that killed at least two soldiers and injured another five.

Al-Shabaab continued a steady pace of attacks in 2017. In January, a car bomb killed 39 people in a busy section of Mogadishu. A similar attack in the capital killed over a dozen people on March 13, and approximately 20 people were killed in a car bomb and shooting at a hotel and adjacent restaurant in June. On October 14, although the group didn't claim responsibility, it is believed that al-Shabaab conducted a double truck bombing in a Mogadishu intersection with heavy vehicle and pedestrian traffic that killed over 500 people and injured 300 others.

Strength: Al-Shabaab is estimated to have between 7,000 and 9,000 members.

Location/Area of Operation: Al-Shabaab has lost full control of major urban centers in Somalia. In September 2012, the group lost control of Kismayo, a vital port it used to obtain supplies and funding through taxes. In October 2014, al-Shabaab lost another strategic port in Baraawe to AMISOM and Somali troops. Despite these losses, throughout 2016 and 2017, al-Shabaab continued to control large swaths of rural areas in the middle and lower Juba regions, as well as the Gedo, Bakol, Bay, and Shabelle regions. The group also maintained its presence in northern Somalia along the Golis Mountains and within Puntland's larger urban areas, and launched several attacks against targets in the border regions of Kenya.

Funding and External Aid: While al-Shabaab has seen its income diminish due to the loss of the strategic port cities of Baraawe, Kismayo, and Merka, it still receives enough income to launch attacks throughout Somalia, including against AMISOM bases and other civilian targets. Al-Shabaab obtains funds through illegal charcoal production and exports, taxation of local populations and businesses, and via remittances and other money transfers from the Somali diaspora (although these funds are not always intended to support al-Shabaab members).

SHINING PATH

aka SL; Sendero Luminoso; Ejercito Guerrillero Popular (People's Guerrilla Army); EGP; Ejercito Popular de Liberacion (People's Liberation Army); EPL; Partido Comunista del Peru (Communist Party of Peru); PCP; Partido Comunista del Peru en el Sendero Luminoso de Jose Carlos Mariategui (Communist Party of Peru on the Shining Path of Jose Carlos Mariategui); Socorro Popular del Peru (People's Aid of Peru); SPP

Description: The Shining Path (Sendero Luminoso or SL) was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on October 8, 1997. The Peru-based terrorist organization was formed in the late 1960s by former university professor Abimael Guzman, whose teachings created the foundation of SL's militant Maoist doctrine. In the 1980s, SL was one of the most ruthless terrorist groups in the Western Hemisphere. In 1992, the Peruvian government captured Guzman who, along with key accomplices, is serving a life sentence in prison. SL is now led by brothers Victor and Jorge Quispe Palomino as well as Tarcela Loya Vilchez. Under their direction, the group aims to overthrow the Peruvian government and names the United States a principal enemy.

Activities: SL committed 13 terrorist attacks in 2015, in comparison to 20 terrorist acts in 2014 and 49 in 2013. In 2016, SL terrorist attacks declined further. On April 9, 2016, the group attacked a six-vehicle military caravan transporting election materials ahead of the country's election; eight soldiers and two civilian contractors were killed by SL members armed with long-range rifles and grenades.

In separate incidents in 2017, SL killed several policemen in an area where the group controls territory and facilitates drug trafficking.

Strength: Estimates of SL's strength vary, but experts assess SL to number between 250 and 300 combatants.

Location/Area of Operation: The group is located in Peru, with almost all activity taking place in rural areas, specifically the Apurimac, Ene, and Montaro River Valleys of eastern Peru.

Funding and External Aid: SL is primarily funded by the illicit narcotics trade.

TEHRIK-E TALIBAN PAKISTAN

aka Pakistani Taliban; Tehreek-e-Taliban; Tehrik-e-Taliban; Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan; TTP

Description: Designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on September 1, 2010, Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) is a Pakistan- and Afghanistan-based terrorist organization formed in 2007 to oppose Pakistani military efforts in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas. Previously disparate tribal militants agreed to cooperate and eventually coalesced into TTP under the leadership of now deceased leader Baitullah Mehsud. Currently, Mullah Fazlullah leads the group. Since Fazlullah became leader, TTP has been fraught with violent infighting. TTP entered into peace talks with the Pakistani government in early 2014, but the talks collapsed in June of that year. In October 2014, the chief spokesperson and five regional commanders defected from TTP and publicly pledged allegiance to ISIS.

TTP aims to push the Government of Pakistan out of the Federal Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and parts of Khyber Pakhtunkwa Province and establish Sharia law by waging a terrorist campaign against the Pakistani military and state. TTP uses the tribal belt along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border to train and deploy its operatives, and has ties to al-Qa'ida (AQ). TTP draws ideological guidance from AQ, while elements of AQ rely in part on TTP for safe haven in the Pashtun areas along the Afghanistan-Pakistani border. This arrangement has given TTP access to both AQ's global terrorist network and the operational expertise of its members.

Activities: TTP has carried out and claimed responsibility for numerous terrorist acts against Pakistani and U.S. interests, including a December 2009 suicide attack on a U.S. military base in Khost, Afghanistan, which killed seven U.S. citizens; and an April 2010 suicide bombing against the U.S. Consulate in Peshawar, Pakistan, which killed six Pakistani citizens. TTP is suspected of being involved in the 2007 assassination of former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto.

TTP directed and facilitated the failed attempt by Faisal Shahzad to detonate an explosive device in New York City's Times Square on May 1, 2010.

Between 2011 and 2017, TTP continued to carry out attacks against the Government of Pakistan and civilian targets, as well as against U.S. targets in Pakistan. In 2012, TTP carried out attacks against a mosque, a police checkpoint, a Pakistani Air Force base, and a bus carrying Shia Muslims. In 2013, TTP attacked churches, the home of a government minister in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Province, and a Shia neighborhood in Karachi, Pakistan. TTP's attacks in 2013 killed and wounded hundreds of civilians and Pakistani government and law enforcement officials. In 2014, TTP targeted military and police convoys, bazaars, buses, and schools including two consecutive attacks against Karachi's international airport and a siege on a primary school in Peshawar, Pakistan that killed 145 people, 132 of whom were children. Throughout 2015, TTP focused many of its small-scale attacks on Pakistani government and law enforcement officials by targeting convoys, government buildings, motorcades, and police checkpoints. The group also bombed a Shia mosque near Peshawar and carried out suicide bombings at two churches in Lahore. In 2016, the group continued carrying out attacks, claiming responsibility for a December attack that left the Deputy Superintendent of the police counterterrorism department dead and his son injured in an attack on their vehicle in Peshawar.

In February 2017, TTP killed 13 people and injured over 80 when a suicide bomber targeted a protest in Lahore, and in March, TTP targeted a mosque in northwestern Pakistan, killing over 20 people and injuring dozens more. In July, the group killed 26 people, including nine policemen, using a suicide bomber in Lahore. In December, TTP militants disguised as women stormed an agricultural training school in Peshawar, leaving nine dead, including the attackers.

Strength: The group consists of several thousand fighters.

Location/Area of Operation: TTP operates in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Funding and External Aid: TTP likely raises most of its funds through kidnapping ransoms, criminal activity, and extortion.

Chapter 6
Legislative Requirements and Key Terms

Country Reports on Terrorism 2017 is submitted in compliance with Title 22 of the United States Code, Section 2656f (the "Act"), which requires the Department of State to provide Congress a full and complete annual report on terrorism for those countries and groups meeting the criteria of the Act. Statutory excerpts relating to the terms used in this report and a discussion of the interpretation and application of those terms in this report are included below.

Excerpts and Summary of Key Statutory Terms:

Section 2656f(a) of Title 22 of the United States Code states as follows:

(a) …The Secretary of State shall transmit to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate, by April 30 of each year, a full and complete report providing -

(1) (A) detailed assessments with respect to each foreign country -

(i) in which acts of international terrorism occurred which were, in the opinion of the Secretary, of major significance;

(ii) about which the Congress was notified during the preceding five years pursuant to section 4605(j) of Title 50; and

(iii) which the Secretary determines should be the subject of such report; and

(B) detailed assessments with respect to each foreign country whose territory is being used as a sanctuary for terrorist organizations;

(2) all relevant information about the activities during the preceding year of any terrorist group, and any umbrella group under which such terrorist group falls, known to be responsible for the kidnapping or death of an American citizen during the preceding five years, any terrorist group known to have obtained or developed, or to have attempted to obtain or develop, weapons of mass destruction, any terrorist group known to be financed by countries about which Congress was notified during the preceding year pursuant to section 4605(j) of Title 50, any group designated by the Secretary as a foreign terrorist organization under section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1189), and any other known international terrorist group which the Secretary determines should be the subject of such report;

(3) with respect to each foreign country from which the United States Government has sought cooperation during the previous five years in the investigation or prosecution of an act of international terrorism against United States citizens or interests, information on -

(A) the extent to which the government of the foreign country is cooperating with the United States Government in apprehending, convicting, and punishing the individual or individuals responsible for the act; and

(B) the extent to which the government of the foreign country is cooperating in preventing further acts of terrorism against United States citizens in the foreign country; and

(4) with respect to each foreign country from which the United States Government has sought cooperation during the previous five years in the prevention of an act of international terrorism against such citizens or interests, the information described in paragraph (3)(B).

Section 2656f(d) of Title 22 of the United States Code defines certain key terms used in Section 2656f(a) as follows:

(1) The term "international terrorism" means terrorism involving citizens or the territory of more than one country;

(2) The term "terrorism" means premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents; and

(3) The term "terrorist group" means any group practicing, or which has significant subgroups which practice, international terrorism.

Interpretation and Application of Key Terms. For purposes of this report, the terms "international terrorism," "terrorism," and "terrorist group" have the definitions assigned to them in 22 USC 2656f(d) (see above). The term "non-combatant," which is referred to but not defined in 22 USC 2656f(d)(2), is interpreted to mean, in addition to civilians, military personnel (whether or not armed or on duty) who are not deployed in a war zone or a war-like setting.

It should be noted that 22 USC 2656f(d) is one of many U.S. statutes and international legal instruments that concern terrorism and acts of violence, many of which use definitions for terrorism and related terms that are different from those used in this report. The interpretation and application of defined and related terms concerning terrorism in this report is therefore specific to the statutory and other requirements of the report, and is not intended to express the views of the U.S. government on how these terms should be interpreted or applied for any other purpose. Accordingly, there is not necessarily any correlation between the interpretation of terms such as "non-combatant" for purposes of this report and the meanings ascribed to similar terms pursuant to the law of war (which encapsulates the obligations of states and individuals with respect to their activities in situations of armed conflict).

Statistical Information. Pursuant to 22 USC § 2656f(b), this report should contain "to the extent practicable, complete statistical information on the number of individuals, including United States citizens and dual nationals, killed, injured, or kidnapped by each terrorist group during the preceding calendar year." This is satisfied through the inclusion of a statistical annex to the report that sets out statistical information provided by the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), a Department of Homeland Security Science

and Technology Center of Excellence, based at the University of Maryland. The statistical annex includes a discussion of the methodology employed by START in compiling the relevant data. This report does not contain statistical information specifically concerning combatants. The focus of the terrorism report, as is clear from the definition of terrorism, is on violence against noncombatant targets.

Contextual Reporting. Adverse mention in this report of individual members of any political, social, ethnic, religious, or national population is not meant to imply that all members of that population are terrorists. Indeed, terrorists rarely represent anything other than a tiny fraction of such larger populations. It is terrorist groups – and their actions – that are the focus of this report.

Furthermore, terrorist acts are part of a larger phenomenon of violence inspired by a cause, and at times the line between the two can become difficult to draw. This report includes some discretionary information in an effort to relate terrorist events to the larger context in which they occur, and to give a feel for the conflicts that spawn violence.

Thus, this report will discuss terrorist acts as well as other violent incidents that are not necessarily "international terrorism" and therefore are not subject to the statutory reporting requirement.