

Country Reports on Terrorism 2018

October 2019

United States Department of State Publication
Bureau of Counterterrorism
Released October 2019

Country Reports on Terrorism 2018 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.

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Glossary of Abbreviations

AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia
AML/CFT	Anti-Money Laundering and Countering Financing of Terrorism
API	Advance Passenger Information
AU	African Union
CVE	Countering Violent Extremism
EU	European Union
EUROPOL	The European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation
FATF	Financial Action Task Force
FIU	Financial Intelligence Unit
FTO	Foreign Terrorist Organization
FTF	Foreign Terrorist Fighter
GCERF	Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund
GCTF	Global Counterterrorism Forum
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
INTERPOL	The International Police Criminal Organization
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
MONEYVAL	Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PNR	Passenger Name Record
PREACT	Partnership for Regional East Africa Counterterrorism
PISCES	Personal Identification Secure Comparison and Evaluation System
TSCTP	Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership
VBIED	Vehicle-Borne Improvised Explosive Device
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

Foreword

The United States and its partners made major strides to defeat and degrade international terrorist organizations in 2018. Together, we liberated nearly all the territory ISIS previously held in Syria and Iraq, freeing 110,000 square kilometers and roughly 7.7 million men, women, and children from ISIS's brutal rule. These successes set the stage for the final destruction of the so-called "caliphate" in 2019. At the same time, the United States and its partners continued to pursue al-Qa'ida (AQ) globally, and the United States applied maximum pressure on Iran-backed terrorism, significantly expanding sanctions on Iranian state actors and proxies and building stronger international political will to counter those threats.

Despite these successes, the terrorist landscape remained complex in 2018. Even as ISIS lost almost all its physical territory, the group proved its ability to adapt, especially through its efforts to inspire or direct followers online. Over the last year, ISIS's global presence evolved with affiliates and networks conducting attacks in the Middle East, South and East Asia, and Africa. Additionally, battle-hardened terrorists headed home from the war zone in Syria and Iraq or traveled to third countries, posing new dangers. Hundreds of ISIS fighters were captured and detained by the Syrian Democratic Forces, a partner non-state actor. The United States led by example in repatriating and prosecuting American foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs), and we pressed other countries to do the same. Meanwhile, homegrown terrorists, inspired by ISIS ideology, planned and executed attacks against soft targets, including hotels, restaurants, stadiums, and other public spaces. The December 2018 shooting at a Christmas market in Strasbourg, France, which killed three people and wounded 12, demonstrated the ability of homegrown terrorists to strike in the heart of Western Europe.

Iran remains the world's worst state sponsor of terrorism. The regime has spent nearly one billion dollars per year to support terrorist groups that serve as its proxies and expand its malign influence across the globe. Tehran has funded international terrorist groups such as Hizballah, Hamas, and Palestinian Islamic Jihad. It also has engaged in its own terrorist plotting around the world, particularly in Europe. In January, German authorities investigated 10 suspected Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Qods Force operatives. In the summer, authorities in Belgium, France, and Germany thwarted an Iranian plot to bomb a political rally near Paris, France. In October, an Iranian operative was arrested for planning an assassination in Denmark, and in December, Albania expelled two Iranian officials for plotting terrorist attacks. Furthermore, Tehran continued to allow an AQ facilitation network to operate in Iran, which sends fighters and money to conflict zones in Afghanistan and Syria, and it has extended sanctuary to AQ members residing in the country.

AQ and its regional affiliates remain resilient and pose an enduring threat to the United States, our allies and partners, and our interests around the world. Given ISIS's setbacks, AQ aims to reestablish itself as the vanguard of the global jihadist movement. Despite our sustained efforts since September 11, 2001, and the group's leadership losses, AQ's regional affiliates continue to expand their ranks, plot, and carry out attacks, as well as raise funds and inspire new recruits through social media and virtual technologies. AQ's global network includes remnants of the group's leadership in Afghanistan and Pakistan, al-Nusrah Front in Syria, other AQ-linked

extremists in Syria, AQ in the Arabian Peninsula, AQ in the Islamic Maghreb, Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin, al-Shabaab, and AQ in the Indian Subcontinent.

Regionally focused terrorist groups also remained a threat in 2018. For example, Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Tayyiba – which was responsible for the 2008 Mumbai attacks – and Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) maintained the capability and intent to attack Indian and Afghan targets. In February, operatives reportedly affiliated with JeM attacked an Indian army camp at Sunjuwan, in the state of Jammu and Kashmir, killing seven. Elsewhere in South Asia, the Taliban and the Haqqani network (HQN) continued to launch lethal attacks throughout Afghanistan, including against U.S. military personnel. In one of its deadliest attacks to date, HQN – an affiliate of the Taliban – killed more than 100 people after detonating an explosives-laden ambulance in Kabul in January, a week after the Taliban conducted an attack on a Kabul hotel that killed 22. The Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan also continued to carry out attacks in 2018, including a March suicide bombing that targeted a checkpoint on the outskirts of Lahore, Pakistan, resulting in the deaths of four police officers and two civilians. Israel continued to face terrorist threats from Hamas and other terrorist organizations in Gaza. In 2018, Hamas and other Gaza-based groups launched more than 750 rockets and mortar shells toward Israel.

Terrorist tactics and use of technologies evolved throughout 2018. For example, the increased use of commercially available drones and encrypted communications, as well as low-tech vehicle and knife attacks, presented additional challenges for the international counterterrorism community. Moreover, terrorists remained intent on attacking civil aviation, though there were no successful such attacks in 2018.

In October, the White House released the *National Strategy for Counterterrorism*, the United States' first counterterrorism strategy since 2011. The strategy emphasizes the need to counter the full spectrum of terrorist threats we face, including ISIS, AQ, and Iran-backed groups, as well as regional terrorist organizations. It also highlights the need for a whole-of-government approach to counterterrorism – one that relies on both civilian and military tools to address near- and long-term terrorist threats. Our strategy places a premium on dismantling terrorist organizations using a wide range of diplomatic, law enforcement, military, intelligence, financial, and other tools. It also calls on our foreign partners to assume a greater share of the burden. In 2018, the United States used this whole-of-government approach to mobilize international responses to counter the most dangerous transnational terrorist organizations.

Throughout the year, we continued our efforts to combat terrorist financing. The Department of State completed 51 designation actions against terrorist groups and individuals, and the Department of the Treasury completed 157 terrorism designations. These actions were critical steps in cutting off the flow of resources that might be used to commit terrorist attacks.

Restricting terrorist travel remained a top priority. The United States played a leading role in helping states implement key measures in UN Security Council Resolution 2396 aimed at countering terrorist travel, including border security and information sharing measures. The United States signed three new arrangements to share terrorist watchlists under Homeland Security Presidential Directive 6, bringing the total number of partner countries to 72. The Personal Identification Secure Comparison and Evaluation System (PISCES) border security

platform grew to include 227 ports of entry in 23 countries, and our partners use it to screen more than 300,000 travelers each day. In December, the United States launched an initiative at the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) to adopt a standard for passenger name record data – a key screening tool that the United States has used for decades and that UN Security Council Resolution 2396 made mandatory for all UN members – by the end of 2019.

The United States continued to play a major role in building our partners' capabilities to detect, disrupt, and dismantle terrorist networks – particularly governments on the front lines against terrorist threats. Such assistance advanced major U.S. counterterrorism priorities, especially information sharing, aviation security, preventing homegrown terrorism, countering the financing of terrorism, countering Iran-backed groups, and pursuing FTF prosecutions and repatriations. The Department of State also launched a battlefield evidence initiative with the Departments of Defense and Justice, to enable the United States and partner nations to use captured enemy material more effectively in criminal prosecutions and other civilian applications.

The United States engaged a host of international partners – from governments to local religious leaders to tech companies – to counter terrorist radicalization and recruitment, both online and offline. We supported international initiatives, including the Strong Cities Network, which expanded to 125 cities globally and plays a key role in building local resilience to terrorist narratives. We also funded and mobilized support for grassroots programs to counter radicalization to violence in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Kenya, Kosovo, Malaysia, Mali, Nigeria, the Philippines, and many other locales.

These efforts are only a snapshot of our ongoing work to protect the United States and our allies from terrorism. *Country Reports on Terrorism 2018* provides a detailed review of last year's successes and challenges facing our country and our partners. As we look to 2019 and beyond, the United States and our partners will remain committed to the global counterterrorism fight.

Ambassador Nathan A. Sales
Coordinator for Counterterrorism

Chapter 1 – Country Reports

AFRICA

Overview

African countries expanded their efforts to develop regional counterterrorism solutions while struggling to contain the expansion of terrorist groups, affiliates, and aspirants involved in attacks or other activities in 2018. In East Africa, the Somalia-based terrorist group al-Shabaab and small local ISIS affiliates continued to threaten regional security. Al-Shabaab retained safe haven, access to recruits and resources, and de facto control over large parts of Somalia through which it moves freely. 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 in greater Mogadishu.

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 across the Horn of Africa in their efforts to build counterterrorism capacity, including in 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 (BH) and its offshoot, ISIS-West Africa (ISIS-WA), continued to conduct attacks against civilians, government, and security forces, which resulted in deaths, injuries, abductions, and the capture and destruction of property. BH attacks did not appear to discriminate between civilians and government officials, whereas ISIS-WA tended generally to focus on government and security forces, while trying to cultivate stronger ties with local communities, including by providing limited social services. ISIS-WA saw repeated successes against the Nigerian army, overrunning several posts in northeast Nigeria in the second half of 2018. Nigeria, along with its neighbors Cameroon, Chad, Niger, and Benin – and at times in conjunction with the Multinational Joint Task Force – worked to counter these threats, but proved unable to slow ISIS-WA's advance in the region or ensure adequate governance and protection for civilian populations. 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, such as defection, demobilization, disengagement, de-radicalization, and reintegration programming. Continued attacks by BH and ISIS-WA have taken a heavy toll on the civilian population, especially in northeast Nigeria where attacks have displaced more than two million people and left roughly 7.7 million in need of humanitarian assistance.

In the Sahel, terrorist groups – including affiliates and adherents of al-Qa'ida and ISIS as well as non-aligned groups – have expanded their operations in north and central Mali and the Tri-

Border Region of Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger. The number of attacks nearly doubled in 2018 from previous years. Partner countries remain strong willed against terrorism but lack the means to contain or degrade the threat on a sustained basis. Particularly alarming is the trend of terrorist leaders manipulating local ethnic conflicts and members of ethnic groups to support terrorist operations by assisting them with long-standing claims against other ethnic groups, for example, the ethnic fighting involving the Peuhl/Fulani ethnic group, or perennial farmer-herder violence over water and grazing areas. Mali has been unable to regain control of northern and central parts of the country. Burkina Faso also experienced increased terrorism in the northern and eastern parts of the country.

Terrorist activities increased in southern Africa. Early in the year, a dual South African/British couple in KwaZulu-Natal province in South Africa was kidnapped and murdered. Four individuals were charged, including two with terrorist connections. Also in South Africa, incendiary devices were planted in the Durban area on multiple occasions. A prosecutor linked incendiary devices used in an attack on a Shia mosque in the Durban area to ISIS. Neighboring Mozambique was subjected to repeat terrorist attacks of increasing sophistication in the northern province of Cabo Delgado. The attacks resulted in at least 150 civilian deaths and reportedly the internal displacement of several thousand people.

TRANS-SAHARA COUNTERTERRORISM PARTNERSHIP (TSCTP)

Established in 2005, 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, Libya, 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 TSCTP partners. 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, Burkina Faso, and the 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 TSCTP efforts and seeks to produce tangible results in a range of counterterrorism-related fields.

PARTNERSHIP FOR REGIONAL EAST AFRICA COUNTERTERRORISM (PREACT)

First established in 2009, 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. PRACT 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 PRACT, 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. Mozambique joined PRACT in 2018, enabling its participation in regional trainings to address increased threats in the northern border region with Tanzania.

BURKINA FASO

Overview: In 2018, terrorist activity continued in Burkina Faso's northernmost region and spread to its easternmost region. Individuals affiliated with Ansarul Islam, ISIS in the Greater Sahara (ISIS-GS), and Jamaat Nasr 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 – conducted targeted assassinations, IED attacks, and raids on security and military outposts. Terrorist groups used intimidation tactics in the region, exploiting weak governance, poverty, and chronic food insecurity. The Burkinabe government conducted counterterrorism operations and increased its capacity to respond to and thwart terrorist attacks following the March 2 JNIM attack in Ouagadougou. Human Rights Watch documented numerous allegations of human rights violations by Burkinabe security forces in counterterrorism operations, particularly in the north of the country. The Burkinabe government is investigating these allegations.

In 2018, bilateral and regional cooperation increased. Burkina Faso conducted operations with its G-5 Sahel Joint Force neighbors, mobilized French Operation Barkhane assets, and increased security cooperation with Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Togo. U.S. support developed Burkina Faso's counterterrorism capabilities to contain, disrupt, degrade, and defeat terrorist organizations. In 2018, Embassy Ouagadougou delivered several new security assistance projects to support the G-5 Sahel Joint Force, UN peacekeeping operations, the Burkinabe Air Force, and the Burkinabe Gendarmerie. The first US \$1.5 million tranche of G-5 Sahel assistance provided equipment support to Burkina Faso. U.S. Army Africa conducted the first-ever institutional capacity-building training to counter IEDs. The project included bomb detection equipment, training aids, and a train-the-trainer program to teach IED awareness. Embassy Ouagadougou completed improvements to the Loubila peacekeeping center and delivered Puma armored personnel carriers for training.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: Burkina Faso experienced an estimated 150 terrorist attacks across the country, primarily in the northern and easternmost regions. Incidents included targeted assassinations, kidnappings, IEDs, VBIEDs, and attacks on schools, security outposts, police stations, and barracks. IED attacks continued to target defense and security forces in the Nord and Sahel regions, and spread to the Est region.

The most sophisticated terrorist attack in Burkina Faso's history took place on March 2, in Ouagadougou, where at least four armed assailants detonated a VBIED at the Burkinabe military headquarters while four assailants simultaneously launched an attack on the French Embassy. JNIM claimed responsibility for the attack, which killed six soldiers and two gendarmes, and wounded 80 others. On August 11, five police officers and one civilian died after their convoy struck an IED in the Est region. Larger groups of as many as 30 perpetrators conducted raids on security outposts in the Sahel region, such as during an October 3 attack on the Inata Gendarmerie that left one Burkinabe dead and another wounded. On October 18, perpetrators assaulted the Djibo Gendarmerie with rocket-propelled grenades, wounding one gendarme and releasing 55 detainees.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Burkina Faso made no significant changes to its counterterrorism legal framework in 2018.

Burkina Faso's law enforcement entities and intelligence agency demonstrated increased capacity to detect and prevent acts of terrorism. On May 22, the Gendarmerie Special Intervention Unit (SIU) dismantled a terrorist cell in Ouagadougou. The SIU killed three suspected terrorists, captured one suspected terrorist, and recovered weapons, ammunition, explosive making materials, and Burkinabe and French military uniforms. The SIU also demonstrated an increased terror response capability by intervening quickly and effectively during the March 2 attack in Ouagadougou at the Burkinabe military headquarters and French Embassy.

Burkinabe security and law enforcement officials cited border security as a major area of concern, but continued to face significant resource constraints in confronting the issue. Burkina Faso continued to screen arriving and departing travelers at international airports and other points of entry using PISCES. Burkina Faso's law enforcement conducted sweeping operations, arresting and detaining large groups of suspects. On June 20, Burkina Faso's Ministry of Security released a list of 146 individuals wanted on suspicion of terrorism on social media and in the local press, leading to several arrests. There were approximately 80 open judicial investigations linked to terrorist attacks committed against civilians and security forces, which comprised about 537 individual defendants. Some 535 alleged terrorists remain detained at Ouagadougou's High Security Prison.

The United States provided counterterrorism assistance to Burkina Faso through the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance program.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Burkina Faso is a member of the Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA), a FATF-style regional body. Burkina Faso's FIU, the National Financial Information Processing Unit (CENTIF-BF), is a member of the Egmont Group, an informal network of FIUs aimed at combating money laundering and terrorist financing. CENTIF-BF tracks terrorist financing and secured 44 convictions related to fraud and money laundering throughout 2018.

Countering Violent Extremism: Burkina Faso remains actively engaged in countering violent extremism. In 2018, the government provided US \$269 million to support the Sahel Emergency

Plan (*Plan d'Urgence pour le Sahel*) to strengthen the role of government, enhance community law enforcement, and generate economic opportunities in the Sahel region. More than 40 percent of the plan's activities were complete by 2018. Burkina Faso's Ministry of Territory increased efforts to monitor foreign influences on ideology by investigating financing streams of newly created religious groups.

International and Regional Cooperation: Burkina Faso is a member of the G-5 Sahel Joint Force and the AU's 11-country Nouakchott Process to coordinate the regional response to terrorism and crime. In October, Burkina Faso signed a Memorandum of Understanding to operationalize a joint force with Benin, Togo, and Niger. Burkina Faso maintains two peacekeeping battalions in Mali as part of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). Burkina Faso's total UN contribution exceeds 1,700 troops, more than 10 percent of its military.

CAMEROON

Overview: Cameroon experienced a decrease in terrorist activity in the Far North Region. The Government of Cameroon attributed most of the extremist violence it experienced to the terrorist group Boko Haram (BH), though ISIS-West Africa (ISIS-WA) likely perpetrated some of the incidents. In 2018, BH carried out sporadic attacks in the Far North Region and rarely confronted security forces as it had in 2017. The group targeted civilians in villages on the western border with Nigeria and largely focused on kidnappings, arson, raids, and targeted killings. BH carried out relatively few suicide bombings compared with 2017. ISIS-WA focused its activities in the northern tip of the Far North Region, in villages surrounding the southern Lake Chad Basin. In 2018, ISIS-WA for the most part continued to avoid indiscriminate attacks on the populations, such as those carried out by BH, but also began collecting illicit taxes from cattle herders and fishermen.

In September, President Biya claimed BH had been defeated and underscored the necessity of a return to normalcy in the Far North Region. The Government of Cameroon initiated communication campaigns aimed at curbing "radical extremism" and reintegrating former BH fighters. The government announced the creation of a center in Meme in the Far North Region for the rehabilitation and reintegration of former BH recruits. The government has selected a site but construction has not yet begun.

Countering terrorist threats remained a top security priority for the Cameroonian government, which continued to work with the United States to improve the capacity of its security forces. In 2018, USAID expanded its programming to counter terrorist recruitment in the North and Far North Regions. The United States also increased its counterterrorism assistance to Cameroon through projects implemented by the Department of Justice, the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance program, and the Global Center for Cooperative Security. Cameroon is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: Although fewer terrorist attacks occurred in 2018 compared with 2017, BH continued to launch deadly assaults in the Far North Region. According to an International Crisis Group report, BH killed at least 135 civilians and 18 soldiers between

January and August. Despite a marked decrease in suicide bombings, the group launched numerous attacks, including targeted killings, abductions, ambushes, arson, and raids in search of supplies. Notable attacks in the Far North Region in 2018 included the following:

- On February 4, a BH fighter killed at least six people and burned a church in Hitawa.
- On February 20, BH fighters killed an estimated 10 people and wounded 12 others in Mayo Tsanaga.
- On June 8, BH fighters killed an estimated seven civilians in Maroua.
- On September 20, BH fighters wounded at least six soldiers in Amchide.
- On October 21, BH fighters abducted eight women and one child in Vourkaza.
- On November 28, BH suicide bombers killed two civilians and wounded 29 others in Amchide.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Cameroon made no significant changes to its counterterrorism legal framework in 2018.

Cameroon prosecuted numerous BH-affiliated defendants for terrorism-related crimes, primarily in the military tribunal in Maroua. Many defendants were acquitted because of lack of evidence. Others are serving prison sentences or awaiting trial. Deficits in civilian-military coordination contributed to a low conviction rate. Cameroon prosecutes suspected terrorists pursuant to its 2014 anti-terrorism law, which provides exclusive jurisdiction to military tribunals, prolongs investigative detention periods, and provides for the death penalty. Cameroonian courts have sentenced many BH defendants to death, but none has been executed to date. Cameroon continued to use the anti-terrorism law to suppress criticism and freedom of expression by arresting journalists and activists in connection with the ongoing crisis in the Anglophone regions. The government released 289 low-level detainees arrested on suspicion of being Anglophone separatists and facing misdemeanor charges. However, hundreds of others remain in detention. The government continued to characterize people espousing separatism for the Anglophone regions as terrorists.

Cameroon continued to screen arriving and departing travelers at international airports and other points of entry using PISCES.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: There were no changes in 2018. Cameroon is a member of the Task Force on Money Laundering in Central Africa (GABAC), a FATF-style regional body, but has never undergone a mutual evaluation.

Countering Violent Extremism: Although the Government of Cameroon does not have a national CVE strategy, it took isolated steps to promote reintegration of former BH fighters in 2018. On November 30, President Biya announced the creation of a National Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration Committee (NDDRC), which seeks to work with ex-BH fighters and armed separatist groups in the Northwest and Southwest regions. The NDDRC, working with international partners, particularly the UN, will disarm former fighters and reintegrate them into civilian life. According to a presidential decree, the NDDRC will destroy surrendered weapons and provide home communities with multifaceted assistance to facilitate the reintegration of ex-fighters.

UNDP began implementing the Lake Chad Basin Integrated Regional Stabilization Project, launched in 2017. UNDP executed the project within five council areas in the Far North Region. The three-year project, which targets 750,000 people in Cameroon, focuses on ensuring stability and consolidating peace through reconciliation, reintegration, and prevention of terrorism. In June, UNDP officials, administrative authorities, religious leaders, and journalists designed specific messages in local languages to counteract BH's ideology in the Far North Region. They worked with local organizations that relayed these highly contextualized messages to BH affiliates, and promoted reintegration of former fighters who renounced terrorism.

The Association of Civil Society Organizations against Radicalization and Terrorism (COSCCRT) supported communities in the Far North Region to resist recruitment by BH. In Maroua, COSCCRT supervised and provided support for 580 internally displaced children within three Koranic schools, providing messaging focused on counteracting BH's radical ideology. COSCCRT worked with the media, particularly community radios, to sensitize local communities and foil BH's attempts to recruit supporters through religious propaganda.

International and Regional Cooperation: Cameroon continued its counterterrorism cooperation with the international community, contributing significantly to operations of the Multi-National Joint Task Force. Cameroon is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and TSCTP.

Cameroon was part of a regional initiative organized by the UN and the AU to develop coordinated strategies for screening, prosecuting, and rehabilitating individuals associated with BH. Although not a member, Cameroon participated in regional workshops and events held by the GCTF. In 2018, Cameroon was a pilot country of the International Counterterrorism and Countering Violent Extremism Capacity-Building Clearinghouse Mechanism, an online database under the GCTF to identify and de-conflict gaps in counterterrorism and CVE programming.

CHAD

Overview: Chad continued to prioritize counterterrorism efforts despite ongoing financial woes that affected its ability to meet even basic financial commitments, such as paying police and military salaries. Although financial hardships limited its ability to provide external counterterrorism assistance, Chad played a strong role in military operations in neighboring countries. Chad provided approximately 2,500 combat forces to the Lake Chad Region's Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF), which also includes Benin, Cameroon, Niger, and Nigeria. 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 degrade terrorist groups in the region. Chad continued to deploy 1,450 soldiers supporting the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). Chad is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: Boko Haram (BH) and ISIS-West Africa (ISIS-WA) both continued to operate in the area around Lake Chad, taking advantage of porous borders to move among Chad, Cameroon, Niger, and Nigeria. ISIS-WA and BH-associated fighters frequently attacked

Chadian military forces and villages in Lake Prefecture. No Americans or American organizations were attacked, but one Chadian USAID grantee was among 23 killed in a September attack on the northern edge of Lake Chad.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Under the Suppression of Acts of Terrorism law (2015), penalties for terrorist offenses increased and can include capital punishment. Some civil society organizations expressed concern that the law was overly general, and could be used to target activists and government critics to curtail freedoms of expression and association. Law enforcement leadership publicly affirmed the requirement for all law enforcement officers to respect human rights. There were fewer reports in 2018 of arbitrary extrajudicial actions by the government or its agents. For further information, please refer to the Department of State's [Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#).

The Government of Chad continued its active participation in anti-terrorism training courses in 2018, including joint border security training with Cameroon. Chadian National Police continued to seek U.S. government training on investigations, crisis response, and border security. The Director General of the National Police improved its performance by fostering more efficient and effective communication across bureau lines and through cooperation with the U.S. Embassy.

In cooperation with the Regional Security Office, Chad continued to screen arriving and departing travelers at international airports and other points of entry using PISCES. With the International Organization for Migration, Chad used the Migration Information and Data Analysis System (MIDAS) to identify refugees and internally displaced persons. The Chadian government continued to maintain a heightened level of security at border crossings to prevent infiltration by members of BH, ISIS-WA, and Central African militias, and to stem the transit of illegal arms and other contraband. Border patrols comprised border security officials, gendarmes, police, and soldiers.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: There were no significant changes in 2018. Chad is a member of the Task Force on Money Laundering in Central Africa (GABAC), a FATF-style regional body. Chad's FIU, the National Agency for Financial Investigation, is a member of the Egmont Group.

Countering Violent Extremism: Most U.S. government CVE funding for Chad is programmed through USAID's West Africa Regional Mission in Accra, Ghana. These activities expanded access to information, strengthened engagement, and increased dialogue to combat violent extremism. U.S. government programs continued to amplify locally prominent moderate voices through support to community radio stations and training for religious leaders in human rights, tolerance, conflict prevention, and critical thinking. Additional CVE funding from the Department of State complemented these efforts to strengthen the broadcast capacity of community radio stations and improve civics education through the re-editing of a civics textbook. Four defectors from BH who surrendered to Chadian authorities reported that radio broadcasts describing lenient government policies were a contributing factor to their return. USAID Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) projects worked to build trust between individuals,

communities, and government in the Lake Chad Region. The region is strikingly under-served by all levels of governance and is the only part of Chad where BH is present.

International and Regional Cooperation: Chad is an active member of the TSCTP and the G-5 Sahel Joint Force, which also includes Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger. It maintains some 1,400 personnel in MINUSMA. As a member of the Lake Chad Basin Commission, Chad participated in efforts to develop the MNJTF. Chad also cooperated actively with Cameroon, Niger, and Nigeria in operations to counter the threat of BH and ISIS-WA on its borders.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Overview: According to the UN, there are more than 100 armed groups operating in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), yet historically, the DRC has not acknowledged the presence of terrorist organizations in its territory. The international community has generally not referred to these armed groups as terrorists. For political purposes, the government of former President Joseph Kabila labeled domestic armed groups – such as the Kamwina Nsapu rebel group in Kasai – and some opposition party members as “terrorists” for challenging DRC government authority or criticizing the president. However, the only armed group in the DRC with ties to a terrorist organization is the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) located in Beni Territory in eastern DRC, which ISIS has acknowledged as an affiliate. The ADF originated as a Ugandan rebel group but has been present in Beni for years, recruiting fighters from around the region. In 2018, as in previous years, the ADF was responsible for numerous attacks on civilians, the DRC military, and UN peacekeepers. A November 2018 study by the Congo Research Group, a New York University-affiliated NGO that tracks unrest in eastern DRC, concluded that the ADF demonstrated interest in increasing its ideological and financial links with broader jihadi movements comparable to ISIS. Online posts by some ADF members in 2016 and 2017, including a video presentation, referred to their group as Madina at Tawee Wa Mujahedeen and displayed an ISIS-like flag.

In November 2018, the U.S. government worked closely with the Government of the DRC to address terrorist threats against U.S. government facilities in Kinshasa. The DRC is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: In November, the U.S. Embassy in Kinshasa closed to the public for six days in response to a credible terrorist threat against U.S. government facilities in Kinshasa. Throughout 2018, the ADF attacked Congolese civilians, the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo (FARDC), and the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO) peacekeepers located in Beni Territory in eastern DRC. Human Rights Watch estimated that the ADF killed 235 civilians in Beni Territory between January and September 2018. On November 10, the ADF attacked Mayi Moya, north of Beni, and left a note on behalf of the ADF/National Army for the Liberation of Uganda stating the attack was in retaliation for MONUSCO and FARDC actions against the ADF. Seven MONUSCO peacekeepers and 15 FARDC soldiers were killed in joint anti-ADF operations in the Beni area in November.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: The DRC has no comprehensive counterterrorism legislation. The DRC’s National Assembly passed a draft anti-terrorism bill in December, which stalled in the Senate. Civil society activists and others expressed concern that, if passed as written, the law could be used as another tool to suppress opposition parties and political dissent by portraying critics of President Kabila as “terrorists.” Courts used international law provisions, applicable domestic criminal law, and military law to prosecute criminals charged with terrorism-like crimes, such as the mass killing of civilians.

The DRC shares approximately 6,835 miles of land and lake borders with nine countries and lacks the capacity to effectively patrol its borders. The authority responsible for monitoring frontier activity, the Director General of Migration, uses the International Organization for Migration’s Migration Information and Data Analysis System (MIDAS), a computerized personal identification and recognition system, at only 20 of the DRC’s more than 400 official border crossings. Since 2010, the Department of State’s Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) has trained roughly 900 border officers from the National Police’s (PNC) Direction Centrale de la Police des Frontieres Congolaise (Central Frontiers’ Police Directorate), which oversees security and surveillance activities at border crossings. High turnover rates prevalent throughout the PNC resulted in few INL-trained officers remaining with border units. The PNC anti-riot unit, the Légion Nationale d’Intervention, has a designated anti-terrorism squad, which has limited staff and receives no specialized training or equipment.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: The DRC is a member of the Task Force on Money Laundering in Central Africa (GABAC), a FATF-style regional body. In August 2018, GABAC undertook a mutual peer review of the DRC to determine the levels of compliance with international AML/CFT standards. The DRC’s FIU, the National Financial Information Cell, is embedded within the Ministry of Finance.

Countering Violent Extremism: There were no changes in 2018.

International and Regional Cooperation: The DRC is a member of the Southern African Development Community and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region.

DJIBOUTI

Overview: Djibouti remained a vital platform for regional counterterrorism and CVE efforts in 2018. 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. The Djibouti-based Intergovernmental Authority on Development Center of Excellence for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (ICEPCVE) expanded operations in Djibouti and the region by providing training and resources to counter terrorist radicalization and recruitment. Djibouti’s Armed Forces also continued participation in the U.S.-funded Africa Contingency Operations Training and Assistance program and deployed soldiers to the AMISOM campaign. Djibouti is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. As in previous years, Djiboutian government officials, particularly law enforcement officials and members of the High Islamic Council, worked closely to detect and address terrorist activity. On December 16, Djiboutian security forces participated in activities leading to the capture in

Djibouti of Peter Cherif, a suspect wanted in France in connection with the 2015 Charlie Hebdo attacks.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: There were no reported terrorist incidents in Djibouti in 2018.

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. In 2018, the Ministry of Justice created a national committee of experts to begin work on a national strategy to combat terrorism. The Ministry of Justice also began to harmonize Djibouti's legal codes to clearly define prosecutable acts of terrorism and establish a procedure for prosecuting acts of terrorism. The government continued to use counterterrorism legislation to suppress criticism by detaining and prosecuting opposition figures and other activists.

In 2018, preliminary international coordination relating to the 2014 "La Chaumiere" bombing case concluded. The Government of Djibouti plans to begin criminal proceedings in 2019. According to government officials, lack of judiciary cooperation with neighboring Somaliland contributed to delays in the investigation.

Djiboutian law enforcement entities continued to prioritize counterterrorism efforts. 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 protection of soft targets, including hotels and grocery stores, measures first implemented after the May 2014 al-Shabaab attack in Djibouti City. Djiboutian law enforcement also continued to extend vehicle searches throughout the capital in an effort coordinated through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Djibouti's law enforcement organization is composed of the Djiboutian National Police (DNP), the Djiboutian National Gendarmerie, the National Security Judiciary Police (NSJP), and the Djiboutian Coast Guard. In 2018, the DNP, National Gendarmerie, and the NSJP received training through the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) program as well as the International Law Enforcement Academy in Gaborone. ATA assistance focused primarily on building technical capacity for improved crisis response and border security. The ATA program also provided technical assistance to the DNP and gendarmerie at Ambouli International, Djibouti's largest airport. The program aims to improve the ability of airport security staff to identify and react to potential terrorist threats. The DNP, National Gendarmerie, and the NSJP also received training through the FBI's Legal Attaché office in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

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 PISCES. While the airport and seaport remain important entry points, the vast majority of travelers cross into Djibouti by land at three border points, one of which is the Loyada crossing at the Somali border, which was upgraded with U.S. funding.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Djibouti is a member of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF), a FATF-style regional body. In 2018, Djibouti's FIU, the Financial Information Service (SRF), organized four workshops on AML/CFT for compliance officers and other relevant stakeholders, including law enforcement authorities, the Ministry of Justice, reporting entities, and regulators. The SRF, which was previously housed in the Central Bank of Djibouti, moved into separate offices and began operating independently of the Central Bank, although they still share a budget. The SRF increased its staffing and training, expanding its core functions and improving its ability to supervise, coordinate, and investigate money laundering and terrorist financing matters. The SRF referred several cases of money laundering to law enforcement authorities.

Countering Violent Extremism: In November, ICEPCVE hosted a conference for local and regional community leaders and law enforcement officials to discuss public security and community policing. The forum focused on promoting preventive techniques to combat violent extremism at the community level. In May, ICEPCVE held a workshop for East Africa CVE researchers who received US \$5,000 sub-grants to conduct CVE research in their countries. ICEPCVE also hosted a "Digital Hub" on their website where researchers could exchange ideas and access a library with more than 100 scholarly articles related to countering and preventing terrorism in East Africa.

International and Regional Cooperation: Djibouti is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. Djibouti hosts the Intergovernmental Authority on Development headquarters. The Djiboutian military continued its participation in AMISOM, which includes military forces from Burundi, Kenya, Ethiopia, and Uganda. Although not a member, Djibouti also participated in GCTF regional workshops and events.

ERITREA

Overview: In May 2018, the Department of State recertified Eritrea as "not cooperating fully" with U.S. counterterrorism efforts pursuant to section 40A of the Arms Export Control Act. In considering this annual determination, the Department of State reviewed Eritrea's overall level of cooperation with U.S. efforts to combat terrorism, taking into account U.S. counterterrorism objectives and a realistic assessment of Eritrean capabilities.

In November 2018, the UNSC voted unanimously to lift the UN arms embargo on Eritrea that had been in effect since 2009. High-level engagement among Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, and Djibouti on issues cited in the relevant resolutions, as well as Eritrea's engagement with the UNSC's Somalia Sanctions Committee and the Somalia Eritrea Monitoring Group (SEMG), influenced the decision. The SEMG's 2018 report again concluded there was no evidence connecting Eritrea to al-Shabaab.

The Government of Eritrea's lack of transparency means there was no clear picture of the methods it used to track terrorists or maintain safeguards for its citizens. As a matter of practice, police refused to meet with security officials from western nations to discuss policy matters, although the United States had informal contacts with some law enforcement counterparts in 2018.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: There were no reported terrorist incidents in Eritrea in 2018.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Since September, the land border between Eritrea and Ethiopia has been open to citizens of the two countries to cross freely. There are no fully functioning immigration offices at border checkpoints to facilitate travel of third country nationals. Eritrean authorities maintain a presence at the border crossing points to check identification cards, but passports and visas are not required, nor is there meaningful customs screening or inspection. It is not clear how long this procedure will remain in effect. The Eritrean government continues to require all citizens to obtain an exit visa prior to airport departure. Eritrea has poor internet capacity, which makes use of the INTERPOL databases and biometric screening and information sharing at ports of entry problematic.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: 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 financing of terrorism. Eritrea issued new AML/CFT regulations in March (proclamation number 181/2018, updating a 2014 regulation), which outlined the structure and authorities of Eritrea's FIU, clarified some banking rules, and strengthened the country's regulatory and law enforcement regime for countering terrorism financing. Eritrea's FIU is not a member of the Egmont Group nor is it a member or observer of any FATF-style regional body. However, in December, Eritrea's FIU requested membership in the Eastern and Southern Africa Anti-Money Laundering Group (ESAAMLG), which is a FATF-style regional body.

Countering Violent Extremism: There were no significant changes in 2018.

International and Regional Cooperation: There were no changes in 2018.

ETHIOPIA

Overview: Ethiopia's counterterrorism cooperation with the United States improved under Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed. The continuing al-Shabaab threat emanating from Somalia dominated the Government of Ethiopia's security posture and the Ethiopian National Defense Force's (ENDF's) 2018 counterterrorism efforts. Ethiopia removed three domestic groups from its list of designated terrorist organizations, allowing the government to focus additional counterterrorism resources on al-Shabaab. The Ethiopian government contributed to FBI cases related to al-Shabaab and other U.S.-designated FTOs by providing information, evidence, and access to witnesses. Ethiopia is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: There were no reported terrorist incidents in Ethiopia in 2018.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: The Government of Ethiopia used its 2009 Anti-Terrorism Proclamation (ATP) to prosecute crimes associated with terrorist activity, and has a history of using the ATP to prosecute crimes associated with political opposition activity. There were no reports of new terrorism-related convictions in 2018. At the beginning of 2018, the Government of Ethiopia systematically reviewed and released more than 20,000

prisoners arrested for politically motivated reasons under the ATP. On July 5, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed removed three domestic groups from its list of designated terrorist organizations – the Oromo Liberation Front, Ogaden National Liberation Front, and Patriotic Ginbot-7 – and invited them to return to Ethiopia openly and join the political life of the country.

In June 2018, the Attorney General established a Legal and Justice Affairs Advisory Council (Advisory Council) composed of independent legal professionals and scholars and charged with reforming the legal and justice system. The Advisory Council is tasked with amending the ATP in line with the broader opening of political space in the country. The Attorney General's office is also working on revising Ethiopia's Criminal Procedure Code to avoid over reliance on the ATP to handle criminal prosecutions that are not terrorism-specific. The U.S. Embassy in Addis Ababa is working with the Government of Ethiopia to codify criminal investigative cooperation authorities between the U.S. government and Government of Ethiopia.

The ENDF, the Ethiopian Federal Police (EFP), Ethiopian intelligence, and regional special police worked to detect and prevent al-Shabaab attacks in Ethiopia. The EFP and intelligence services now report to the newly created Minister of Peace, which intends to help coordinate and streamline counterterrorism efforts, among a range of other duties. Additionally, the National Intelligence and Security Service is reorganizing and reforming to focus on collecting intelligence to detect and disrupt terrorism in support of the EFP and the Attorney General's mission to increase law enforcement efforts and prosecutions related to terrorism.

Border security was a persistent concern for Ethiopia. The Government of Ethiopia continued to tighten border controls with Eritrea, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, and South Sudan. Ethiopia employed PISCES to conduct traveler screening and watch listing at airports and other points of entry.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Ethiopia is a member of the Eastern and Southern Africa Anti-Money Laundering Group (ESAAMLG), a FATF-style regional body. In 2017, the FATF and the European Commission listed Ethiopia as one of 11 high-risk and non-cooperative jurisdictions with strategic deficiencies in its AML/CFT regimes. Ethiopia was one of eight countries named on both the FATF and European Commission lists. In 2018, Ethiopia continued to implement its National Risk Mitigation Action Plan and made progress to address technical compliance deficiencies in its AML/CFT regimes.

Countering Violent Extremism: The House of People's Representatives approved a bill that dissolved the Ministry of Federal and Pastoralist Development Affairs and moved its mandates, including CVE, to the Ministry of Peace. The Ethiopian government values CVE and has focused on development that addresses root causes of poverty, which it assesses to be a driver of terrorism. The Ethiopian government engaged in local mediation and conflict mitigation strategies to defuse ethnic and religious tensions, especially in the Oromia and Somali regions. The government also monitored violent activities and remained concerned about the prospect of terrorist radicalization and recruitment, particularly among the large Muslim youth population, and because of the significant economic migration of Ethiopians to the Middle East. Some returning economic migrants have been radicalized.

International and Regional Cooperation: Ethiopia participated in AU-led counterterrorism efforts, including as part of the AMISOM forces in Somalia. Ethiopia also supported counterterrorism efforts in Somalia with the Somali National Army and other regional security initiatives. Ethiopia is chair of the Djibouti-based Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and participated in its counterterrorism programs and trainings, including the IGAD Security Sector Program, which builds regional capacity to mitigate, detect, and deter terrorist activity. Although not a member, Ethiopia participated in regional GCTF meetings.

KENYA

Overview: Kenya continued to experience al-Shabaab terrorist attacks in the region bordering Somalia during 2018, particularly through IEDs and ambushes targeting Kenyan police and military forces. However, Kenya saw a decrease in fatalities from al-Shabaab attacks in 2018 owing to fewer indiscriminate attacks on civilians. Although al-Shabaab has shifted the focus of its attacks to security forces personnel and infrastructure, attacks targeting civilians still occur. The rest of the country remains vulnerable to attacks by terrorist groups.

Kenya is a willing U.S. partner in counterterrorism investigation, prosecution, and incident response, and continued to play a leading role in regional counterterrorism cooperation. Kenya joined the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS in 2018. The Kenya Defense Forces (KDF) continued to participate in AMISOM and supported border security and counter-IED efforts within Kenya. 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. Please refer to the Department of State's [Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#) and [Report on International Religious Freedom](#) for further information.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: Al-Shabaab continued attacks against Kenyan security forces inside the country, primarily along the border with Somalia. Terrorist incidents included the following:

- On February 16, al-Shabaab fighters killed three teachers in Wajir County.
- On May 8, an IED in Lamu County killed eight Kenyan soldiers and injured two others.
- On June 6, an al-Shabaab IED attack killed five paramilitary police officers in Liboi.
- On August 13, an al-Shabaab IED destroyed a Kenyan police vehicle in Mandera, killing 10 people.
- On September 14, eight al-Shabaab terrorists stopped a bus bound for Garissa and executed two passengers.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Kenya's government continued to use the Prevention of Terrorism Act (amended in 2014) to investigate and prosecute terrorism, but a high acquittal rate persists. In January, the High Court overturned five convictions for attempted terrorist travel to Somalia, as the government did not follow legal procedures for designating Somalia as a prohibited destination. The government has yet to fund a public defender service, which is critical to the success of its National Legal Aid Action Plan. Access to defense counsel for terrorism suspects is limited. On February 19, the Office of the Director of Public

Prosecutions (ODPP) published national plea-bargaining rules, incorporating them into the Criminal Procedure Code. The ODPP also began developing a uniform and consistent nationwide policy on plea negotiations. The effective use of plea agreements could allow for the inclusion of information and evidence provided by cooperating defendants to prosecute higher-level terrorism suspects.

Trials in terrorism cases often proceeded slowly. At the end of 2018, trials continued for four Kenyans accused of providing support for the 2013 Westgate Mall attack and four Kenyans and one Tanzanian in connection with the 2015 Garissa University attack. The trial of British terrorism suspect Jermaine Grant, who was serving a nine-year sentence for a separate conviction in 2015, was pending a verdict at year's end.

Counterterrorism functions are divided among the three branches of the National Police Service – the Kenya Police Service (including the paramilitary General Service Unit, Traffic Police, and countrywide regional, county, and local police stations); the Directorate of Criminal Investigations (including the investigative Anti-Terrorism Police Unit, Bomb Disposal Unit, and Cyber Forensics Investigative Unit); and the Administration Police (including the Border Police Unit). The National Intelligence Service, elements of the KDF, and the interagency also shared responsibility. Uneven coordination, resource constraints, insufficient training, corruption, and unclear command and control hindered effectiveness throughout the year. Kenya's National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) expanded outreach to private security companies and key sectors on soft target attacks, while Kenya's Executive Order No. 1 of June 2018 strengthened NCTC's mandate regarding counterterrorism-related interagency coordination. Kenya's security agencies focused on soft target threats in major cities and tourist areas, primarily universities, shopping malls, hotels, and resorts.

Terrorists continued to exploit 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 program trained and equipped rural Border Police Unit personnel in tactical ground sensor operations and border security operations.

Kenyan officials continued efforts to draft a coordinated interagency border control strategy. A June 2018 agreement will provide Kenya with the U.S. Automated Targeting System-Global (ATS-G) software, which facilitates screening of air travelers. ATS-G will be integrated with PISCES, thereby enhancing the capabilities of both systems to target potential threats and counter terrorist travel through Kenya. Kenya worked to improve aviation safety and security at Nairobi's Jomo Kenyatta International Airport. Kenya established interagency Joint Operations Centers at several points of entry and border crossings to promote information sharing. Immigration officers employed government watchlists. Watchlist screening and basic equipment at smaller ports of entry were generally lacking.

The Kenyan government worked to prevent the transit of FTFs, including Kenyans attempting to join al-Shabaab or ISIS, and those returning from abroad. Kenyan security services also detected and deterred terrorist plots and responded to dozens of terrorism-related incidents. For example, in February, five al-Shabaab members with plans to attack Nairobi and armed with rifles, grenades, and a car bomb were interdicted by police five hours north of the city. The Kenyan

government or its agents continued to face allegations of committing arbitrary and unlawful killings, particularly of known or suspected criminals, including terrorists.

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.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Kenya is a member of the Eastern and Southern Africa Anti-Money Laundering Group (ESAAMLG), a FATF-style regional body. Kenya last underwent a FATF mutual evaluation in 2011. For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: Kenya continued to implement its 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 that encouraged the prioritization, cohesion, and resourcing of stakeholders' CVE-related efforts in Isiolo, Garissa, and Wajir counties. The NCTC also led Kenya's Country Support Mechanism for GCERF, which awarded grants for community CVE initiatives. Police in Nairobi, and coastal and northeastern counties participated in community engagement training, dialogues on post-traumatic stress, and early warning and response programs. Prison officials improved their handling of terrorist offenders, and judicial officials are working to improve their approach to managing remand prisoners through plea bargaining and other methods. 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 UN headquarters in Africa in Nairobi, which serves as a hub for regional coordination against transnational threats. The KDF continued its participation in AMISOM, which includes military forces from Burundi, Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Uganda. In August, Kenya joined the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. Although not a member, Kenya frequently participated in regional meetings of the GCTF and hosted a GCTF workshop on the nexus between transnational organized crime and terrorism in February.

MALI

Overview: The Government of Mali remained a willing U.S. counterterrorism partner despite serious challenges and limited capabilities in the northern portion of the country. Widespread terrorist activity increased in Mali's largely ungoverned northern regions and center. Little progress in the implementation of the June 2015 peace accord between the Government of Mali and two coalitions of armed groups continued to hamper 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 marginally 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. Terrorism, insecurity, and lack of accountability or effective governance resulted in a significant increase in intercommunal violence, particularly in central Mali. The conflict area has moved farther south than at any time since the 2012 triple crisis of the political insurgency, military coup, and terrorist assault on the country. Security in the center of the country rapidly deteriorated in 2018. Terrorists took advantage of long-standing intercommunal and ethnic tensions to significantly increase violence against civilians. Mali was very cooperative in working with the United States to prevent acts of terrorism against U.S. citizens.

The French military's Operation Barkhane continued its integrated counterterrorism mission for the Sahel region. Cooperating with Malian forces and signatory armed groups, Operation Barkhane sought to degrade terrorist elements operating in northern and central Mali, particularly ISIS in the Greater Sahara (ISIS-GS) and Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslim (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. Domestic and international security forces believed most, if not all of these groups, were coordinating their efforts.

MINUSMA maintained its northern presence in 2018, and continued its work with the Malian government and various militia groups to facilitate redeployment of government administrators and security forces to the north. Human Rights Watch documented numerous allegations of human rights violations by Malian security forces in counterterrorism operations, particularly in the center of the country.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: JNIM and ISIS-GS continued to conduct terrorist attacks, primarily targeting Malian and international military forces. Attacks by terrorist groups expanded beyond the traditional conflict zone in the north to Mali's center and southern regions. Terrorist incidents included the following:

- On April 14, more than 40 heavily armed assailants attacked the MINUSMA Supercamp and adjacent French Barkhane camp in Timbuktu. Attackers employed suicide vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices (SVBIEDs), rockets, and small arms. Attackers wore blue helmets and disguised their vehicles with UN markings and Malian army colors. One UN peacekeeper was killed and seven others were wounded. Seven French soldiers and two Malian civilians were also wounded in the attack.
- On June 29, occupants of a vehicle painted with UN markings perpetrated a complex SVBIED and small arms attack against the headquarters of the G-5 Sahel Joint Force in Sévaré, Mopti region. Two Malian soldiers and one civilian were killed. Eight civilians were injured.
- On July 1, a SVBIED and two armed individuals on motorcycles struck a French Barkhane convoy in Gao, wounding 11 French soldiers.
- On October 26, more than 80 heavily armed assailants attacked the MINUSMA outpost in Ber, approximately 60 kilometers east of Timbuktu. The attackers used two one-ton SVBIEDs, rocket-propelled grenades, indirect fire, and at least four heavy machine guns during the assault, which killed two UN peacekeepers and critically injured 12 others.

- On November 12, terrorists detonated a SVBIED outside a UN residential compound in Gao, approximately one kilometer from the MINUSMA Supercamp. The explosion killed three Malian civilians and injured six UN personnel.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: There were no changes to Mali's counterterrorism legal framework in 2018. The government detained 155 people on terrorism-related charges. Ten terrorism cases were tried in the Bamako Appeals Court. Four individuals were convicted and received sentences ranging from 10 years to life imprisonment.

In October, members of the Groupement Spéciale d'Intervention de la *Gendarmerie Nationale* (GSIGN), an embassy-trained National Gendarmerie advanced intervention unit, began its first deployment to the Segou region in support of the government's Integrated Central Region Security Plan and Operation Dambé, a military counterterrorism operation. The unit had immediate impact, supporting current gendarme posts, intervening in an armed robbery, and arresting suspected terrorists. In Bamako, the next phase of training began with the creation of an additional 32-man team with the GSIGN at the new Department of State-funded training academy.

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. The Special Judicial Unit (PJS) and Special Investigative Brigade (BIS) focused on prosecuting terrorism cases under their mandate to fight transnational crime. The PJS consists of magistrates overseeing the judicial process and development of a case, while the BIS is made up of investigators who develop case files in consultation with or under the direction of an investigative judge. Combined counterterrorism missions involving law enforcement and military units lacked delineation and coordination.

Press reported that Malian security forces dismantled a terrorist cell comprising two Burkinabes, an Ivoirian, and a Malian on December 6. The cell was preparing attacks in Ouagadougou, Bamako, and Abidjan during the end-of-year festive period, according to press reports.

Although Mali has basic border security enforcement mechanisms, law enforcement units lacked capacity, training, and the necessary equipment to secure Mali's vast and porous borders, which extend approximately 4,500 miles and touch seven countries. 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 points of entry. Exit and entry stamps used by border officials have inconsistent size and shape, undermining efforts to authenticate travel documents.

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

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: There were no changes in 2018. Mali is a member of the Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA), a FATF-style regional body. Mali's FIU, the National Financial Intelligence Processing Unit, is a member of the Egmont Group.

Countering Violent Extremism: The Ministry of Religious Affairs is responsible for developing and monitoring the national strategy for the prevention of radicalization and terrorism, as well as working with the High Islamic Council and other religious associations to promote moderate Islam and maintain a secular state.

International and Regional Cooperation: Mali remained active in regional organizations and international bodies, including the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the UN, the AU, and TSCTP. The Malian military participated in multinational border security operations under the G-5 Sahel mandate. Although not a member, Mali also participated in GCTF regional workshops and events. In 2018, Mali was a pilot country of the International Counterterrorism and Countering Violent Extremism Capacity-Building Clearinghouse Mechanism, an online database under the GCTF to identify and de-conflict gaps in counterterrorism and CVE programming.

MAURITANIA

Overview: Mauritania remained a strong U.S. security and regional counterterrorism partner in 2018. 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. Al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) elements and other like-minded terrorist groups continued to exist along Mauritania's southeastern border with Mali. These groups' activities presented the greatest terrorist threat to Mauritania in 2018. On May 8, AQIM issued a statement calling for increased attacks. The statement mentioned Mauritania and defined the Islamic Maghreb to include Mauritania. After an August 10 incident involving drug traffickers in the northeast of Mauritania, the Mauritanian army sent more troops to reinforce its presence along the Malian border. It remains unclear to what extent the individuals arrested for trafficking were supporting or financing terrorist groups through their illicit activity.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: There were no reported terrorist incidents in Mauritania in 2018.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: There were no changes to Mauritania's counterterrorism legal framework in 2018. On February 27, the Nouakchott Criminal Court sentenced 11 suspects to prison on terrorism-related charges for periods ranging from five to 10 years. The individuals were convicted for forming an ISIS-affiliated cell and planning to carry out acts of terror aimed at disrupting the Arab League Summit Mauritania hosted in 2016.

The Government of Mauritania relies on a multi-faceted counterterrorism approach that includes community outreach initiatives, religious dialogue, capacity improvements for security forces, and activities aimed at securing the country's borders. The government continued its

counterterrorism cooperation with the United States in 2018 and welcomed opportunities to participate in U.S.-sponsored counterterrorism trainings.

Mauritania Armed Forces and Law Enforcement Services worked with U.S. authorities to track, monitor, and counter terrorist groups, including AQIM, ISIS, and Jamaat Nasr al-Islam wal Muslimin (JNIM). Through support from the United States and other counterterrorism partners, such as France, Mauritania deployed 20,000 soldiers across the country, divided across seven military zones. Despite these efforts, regions in the interior of Mauritania remained imperfectly monitored, owing to their geographic isolation from population centers and inhospitable desert conditions. These difficult environmental conditions continue to facilitate latent terrorist activities by various groups, who have used Mauritanian media outlets to broadcast communiqués and propaganda videos.

Border security remained inadequate because of a standing policy that accords responsibility for different sections of the country's land borders to different formations of the security forces. Owing to the security forces' geographic isolation from population centers, hard-to-access areas of the Sahara Desert further complicated efforts to monitor and secure borders. The Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance program, in cooperation with the U.S. Embassy's Regional Security Office and host-nation forces, provided training for more than 150 police officers, gendarmerie, customs personnel, prosecutors, judges, and high-level government officials.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: There were no significant changes in 2018. Mauritania is a member of the Middle East North Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF), a FATF-style regional body.

Countering Violent Extremism: The Mauritanian government continued to support CVE programs and offer alternatives to individuals it perceived as at-risk. During 2018, the Ministry of Islamic Affairs and Traditional Education (MIATE) hosted a seminar on terrorism, aimed at "diagnosing the root causes of extremism" and methods of treatment. MIATE also continued to collaborate with independent Islamic religious groups to counter radicalization to violence across all 15 provinces. The southern Mauritanian city of Kiffa is a member of the Strong Cities Network.

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. On July 12, the G-5 appointed Deputy Chief of Staff of the Mauritanian army, General Ould Sidi Hanana, to lead the G-5 Sahel Joint Force, replacing a Malian, Didier Dako, as head of the command. On October 15, the Nouakchott-based G-5 Sahel Defense Academy officially welcomed its first class of 37 mid-career officers from the five Sahel countries, whose training will last for nine months. The training will focus on organizing operations and carrying out combat missions, particularly in the fragile border regions linking the five countries. On December 6, Mauritania hosted the first G-5 Sahel donor coordination conference in Nouakchott, aimed at raising funds to support development activities to counter the extreme poverty-insecurity nexus that allows terrorist activity to flourish. Mauritania is a member of NATO's Mediterranean Dialogue.

MOZAMBIQUE

Overview: Since 2017, a largely domestic terrorist group that has aligned itself with ISIS has carried out at least 75 separate attacks in eight northern districts of Mozambique’s Cabo Delgado province – Ancuabe, Ibo, Macomia, Meluco, Mocimboa da Praia, Nangade, Palma, and Quissanga. These attacks have led to at least 150 civilian deaths and the reported internal displacement of several thousand citizens. Locals originally referred to the group as “al-Shabaab” – a name that in local parlance was intended to mean “the youth” and which does not appear to convey a link between this group and the Somali-based group with the same name. Independent local media outlets and academics have begun referring to the group as Ahl-e-Sunnat wal Jamaat, meaning “Followers of the Sunni Tradition and Unity,” the name some group members appear to use to describe themselves. The group’s leaders have linkages with like-minded terrorist groups in East Africa. In 2018, the terrorist group shifted its focus to small, remote villages in an effort to minimize direct conflict with government security forces. With limited exceptions, the group conducted nearly weekly attacks on rural villages in Mozambique’s northern Cabo Delgado province. The attacks varied in intensity and scale, but generally included the use of firearms, edged weapons (e.g. machetes and other metal objects), or arson, and often included the theft of food and other basic supplies. These attacks frequently included beheadings and kidnappings.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: Terrorists incidents in 2018 included the following:

- On May 20, attackers fired on a passenger bus, killing one. The bus was traveling between Nampula City and Mocimboa da Praia along National Highway 1, the main north-south route running nearly the entire length of Mozambique’s coast.
- On May 27, suspected members of the group carried out an attack in the village of Monjane, 45 kilometers south of the regional hub of Palma. Observers reported that a group of five armed men clad in civilian robes with turbans obscuring their faces kidnapped between five and 10 people, including two children. The victims were subsequently found beheaded.
- On November 22, terrorists reportedly killed 12 people, including women and children, in Chicuaia Velha. The attackers set fire to as many as 40 homes, with unconfirmed reports that some victims burned to death.
- On November 27, a group of suspected terrorists armed with AK-47s and machetes, reportedly killed one civilian and injured another in Nacutaru. The group also set fire to 14 informal retail stalls, stealing some goods prior to the arson.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: On August 3, the Mozambique president announced the approval of additional counterterrorism legislation under a new law, the Legal Regime for Repression and Combating Terrorism. The law adds articles to the penal code that provides for the punishment of anyone committing, planning, or participating in terrorist acts, as well as for those who provide or receive training for terrorist purposes. It also stipulates punishment for individuals who travel or attempt to travel to join a terrorist organization, as well as those who facilitate such travel. An ongoing counterterrorism trial of more than 189

defendants – held in an improvised court in Cabo Delgado and closed to the media – is seen as the first test of the new law. Many of these defendants were later acquitted.

Mozambique lacks a counterterrorism strategy or national action plan, and as a result, the response to terrorist threats has been primarily focused on security and ad hoc. The government reports that in its operations in Cabo Delgado, military units and elements of the national police coordinate through a joint headquarters that de-conflicts government interventions and facilitates the transfer of detainees to police control. A more formalized working group is in development, which would provide more consistent and comprehensive information sharing.

Mozambique identified border security as a significant challenge, including the need to enhance security screening at official land border posts, particularly with Tanzania, to increase its ability to deter illegal overland or maritime entry through unofficial border-crossing points. Weak border controls facilitate the entry into Mozambique of East African individuals linked to terrorist organizations, laying the groundwork for the current insurgency. In 2018, the International Organization for Migration provided assistance and capacity building in integrated border management at key air and land border points in the southern region of the country.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Mozambique is a member of the Eastern and Southern Africa Anti-Money Laundering Group (ESAAMLG), a FATF-style regional body. Mozambique is also a member of the Asset Recovery Inter-Agency Network for Southern Africa (ARINSA). Through ARINSA, Mozambique affords its investigators and prosecutors the opportunity to share information with other members to identify, track, and potentially seize criminal assets. Law 14/2013 and decree regulation 66/2014 specifically criminalize terrorism finance, and specify evidence collection procedures.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: The Government of Mozambique does not have a CVE national action plan, as recommended by the UN Secretary-General’s Preventing Violent Extremism Plan of Action, but the president has appointed a CVE focal point in the Ministry of Defense to lead the development and implementation of CVE activities. Mozambique is focused on the problem – specifically in Cabo Delgado – and is developing a multi-sectoral approach to address the drivers of terrorist radicalization. The security situation and remote location of Cabo Delgado presents challenges in interagency cooperation, communications, intelligence, and general capacity. Civil society and religious organizations are planning several programs to assist in identifying and addressing the drivers of terrorist radicalization through research and capacity-building activities that will begin after 2018.

International and Regional Cooperation: Mozambique is a member of the AU and the Southern African Development Community, and joined PRACT in 2018. Mozambique is developing a relationship with the Intergovernmental Authority of Development and has security cooperation memoranda of understanding with Malawi, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda. Mozambique is reportedly coordinating its counterterrorism operations with Tanzanian counterparts in some cases.

NIGER

Overview: The Government of Niger cooperated with its neighbors and international partners on counterterrorism. Niger is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS.

Niger's efforts to fight terrorism were challenged by a small defense force, budget shortfalls, and continuing instability in Mali, Burkina Faso, Libya, and the Lake Chad Basin. Terrorist groups active along Niger's border included Boko Haram (BH), ISIS in the Greater Sahara (ISIS-GS), the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant-Libya (ISIL-Libya), ISIS-West Africa (ISIS-WA), Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslim (JNIM), and the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO). Terrorist groups benefited from Niger's long borders and sparsely populated desert regions to move fighters, weapons, and other contraband. Terrorist organizations recruited from border populations with low access to government services and high levels of poverty. In the west, terrorists leveraged citizens' sense of injustice and a desire for protection stemming from historic farmer-herder violence.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: Terrorist groups carried out dozens of attacks in Niger along two main fronts: in the southeast from BH and ISIS-WA, and in the west and northwest from al-Qa'ida and groups affiliated with ISIS. Attacks targeted security forces and civilians. In the west, near the Burkina Faso border, the frequency and intensity of attacks increased and terrorists employed new tactics including the use of IEDs. Terrorist incidents in 2018 included the following:

- On April 11, armed men likely affiliated with ISIS-GS abducted a German aid worker, Joerg Lang, in Filingue, Tillaberi region. His whereabouts are unknown.
- On April 16, armed men likely affiliated with ISIS-GS attacked a Tuareg community in Filingue, killing eight people.
- On June 4, three BH suicide bombers simultaneously detonated in Diffa region, killing six people and wounding 37 others.
- On September 17, armed men abducted an Italian priest, Pier Luigi Maccalli, in Torodi, Tillaberi region. His whereabouts are unknown.
- On November 22, ISIS-WA terrorists attacked a residence where employees of a French drilling company, Foraco, were sleeping in Toumour, Diffa region. Seven local employees and one government representative were killed and seven more were injured.
- On November 24, BH members abducted 15 women and children in Toumour, Diffa region.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Niger's laws criminalized acts of terrorism consistent with international instruments. Niger finalized a National Border Security Strategy in 2018 with support from the U.S. Global Security Contingency Fund, an interagency program between the U.S. Departments of Defense, Justice, and State. In December, Niger's National Assembly passed an amendment defining the conditions under which a person associated with BH could benefit from support services, allowing increased international cooperation on the disarmament, de-radicalization, and reintegration of former BH members.

Nigerien law enforcement and security services were actively engaged in detecting, deterring, and preventing acts of terrorism. Counterterrorism investigations were primarily the responsibility of the Central Service for the Fight against Terrorism, an interagency body comprising representatives from Niger's National Police, National Guard, and Gendarmerie. Niger continued to use rudimentary terrorism watchlists that it shared with the security services and at border checkpoints. Niger continued its efforts to disrupt terrorist activities by arresting and prosecuting terrorist suspects. Since 2017, more than 700 of an estimated 1,400 BH-related detainees have moved through trial processes.

Niger's law enforcement capacity benefited from U.S.-provided assistance, including the use of PISCES and through the Department of State Antiterrorism Assistance program. Niger continued a U.S.-led biometric enrollment initiative for terror-related detainees in its two high-security prisons. Niger was one of six African countries participating in the Security Governance Initiative to strengthen coordination among its military and law enforcement services.

In connection with UNSCR 2396, Niger worked to expand terrorist watchlists and biometrics enrollment, used PISCES, and improved its disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration framework. Niger had adequate aviation security measures in place and hosted an ICAO meeting in July, although it did not take additional explicit steps to respond to UNSCR 2309 on aviation security.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: There were no significant changes in 2018. Niger is a member of the Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA), a FATF-style regional body. Niger's FIU, the National Financial Intelligence and processing unit of Niger, is a member of the Egmont Group.

Countering Violent Extremism: The Government of Niger continued to focus on CVE with projects supported by international partners and NGOs, including CVE radio programming, sensitization caravans, and youth symposia. In June, Niger's National Center for Strategic and Security Studies published a study on factors leading to radicalization to violence in five of Niger's eight regions. In November, the government launched its CVE National Action Plan, which created a unit within the Ministry of Interior (MOI) devoted to preventing terrorism. Local leaders in the Diffa and Tillaberi regions initiated disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration efforts supported by the MOI and the High Authority for the Consolidation of the Peace.

International and Regional Cooperation: Niger remained active in regional organizations and international bodies, including the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the UN, and TSCTP. Niger is a member of the G-5 Sahel and the Sahel Alliance, and hosts the G-5 Sahel Joint Forces' Central Sector Command in Niamey. Niger hosted the presidency of the G-5 Sahel for one year, starting in February 2018. Niger also hosts a G-5 Sahel Eastern Sector battalion at Madama, in the country's extreme northeast. Niger contributes troops to the Multi-National Joint Task Force in the Lake Chad Basin. On a rotational basis, Niger deploys an infantry battalion to the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA).

In late 2018, Niger, Burkina Faso, Benin, and Mali began developing a regional counterterrorism strategy to police nature reserves and ungoverned spaces. In April 2018, Niger hosted AFRICOM's annual multinational FLINTLOCK military exercise, in which it participates annually. The Government of Niger participated in conferences hosted by the GCTF West Africa Region Capacity-Building Working Group and the Criminal Justice and Rule of Law Working Group. Niger also participates in the Sahel Judicial Platform. Niger is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS.

NIGERIA

Overview: Boko Haram (BH) and ISIS-West Africa (ISIS-WA) continued to conduct attacks against government and security forces in the northeast, which resulted in deaths, injuries, abductions, and the capture and destruction of property. BH attacks did not appear to discriminate between civilians and government officials, whereas ISIS-WA tended to generally focus on government and security forces, while trying to cultivate stronger ties with local communities, including by providing limited social services.

Nigeria continued to work with other affected neighbors under the Multinational Joint Task Force to counter-BH and ISIS-WA and regain control over territory. By the end of 2018 however, BH and ISIS-WA enjoyed nearly complete freedom of movement throughout northern Borno State and eastern Yobe State. Human rights groups documented numerous allegations of human rights violations by Nigerian security forces during counterterrorism operations.

To date, terrorist actions by BH and ISIS-WA have contributed to 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. According to the "Bring Back Our Girls" campaign, of the 276 students abducted by BH in Chibok in 2014, 112 students remained missing at the end of 2018.

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

The Department of Defense continued to coordinate efforts with the Nigerian military at the Nigerian Defense Intelligence Agency, the Joint Combined Fusion Cell, and the Joint Coordination Planning Committee.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: BH and ISIS-WA carried out more than 600 to 700 attacks in Nigeria using small arms, captured military equipment, suicide bombers, IEDs, VBIEDs, ambushes, and kidnappings. The following list details only a fraction of the incidents that occurred:

- On February 19, suspected ISIS-WA militants conducted a night raid on the Government Girls Science Technical College in Dapchi, a town in Yobe State. The insurgents kidnapped around 110 students. Reports suggest at least five students were killed during the attack. On March 21, 106 children were released, including 104 Dapchi school girls (one additional girl and one boy were also released). One student is still being held by insurgents, reportedly because she refuses to convert to Islam.

- On May 1, twin suicide bombings in Mubi, Adamawa State – one in a mosque and another in a market – killed at least 27 and injured around 60 people.
- On June 16, two suspected BH suicide bombers attacked Damboa, Borno State, killing at least 31 people and injuring more than 40 others. Media reports noted the attacks targeted those celebrating the Eid al-Fitr holiday.
- On July 17, suspected ISIS-WA militants attacked a Nigerian military base in Jilli, Borno State – the first in a series of more than a dozen ISIS-WA overruns of Nigerian military installations through the end of 2018. The Nigerian army confirmed the attack, but did not confirm the number of casualties. Press reported as many as 600 soldiers unaccounted for.
- Between December 26 and 29, ISIS-WA conducted a series of attacks against the army barracks and navy base in Baga, Borno State. According to press reporting, civilians were not targeted, just military equipment. ISIS-WA forces remained in the town of Baga through the end of 2018.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: There were no significant changes to Nigeria’s counterterrorism legal framework in 2018. The National Assembly was expected to introduce the Terrorism Prohibition and Prevention Bill of 2017 in December. However, following objections from the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission to some of the draft bill’s provisions, it was returned to the National Assembly in February 2018 for re-drafting and is still being considered. Human rights organizations alleged that the Terrorism Prohibition and Prevention Bill is overly broad and violates Nigeria’s constitution and international human rights obligations.

The Office of the National Security Advisor is responsible for coordinating all security and enforcement agencies, including the Department of State Security (DSS), Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corps (NSCDC), Ministry of Justice, and Nigeria Police Force (NPF), which maintains a Counterterrorism Unit and Terrorist Investigation Branch.

The government continued hearings first started in October 2017, of 1,669-suspected supporters of BH and ISIS-WA. Hearings were held in front of civilian judges for suspects detained at the Kainji military facility, and the Government of Nigeria expressed its intent to hold hearings for 651-suspected BH and ISIS-WA supporters detained at Giwa Barracks in Maiduguri, Borno State. Three rounds of hearings reportedly resulted in 366 convictions for terrorism-related offenses. Four hundred twenty-one suspects were relocated to Abuja to await trial, and 882 cases were dismissed because the government had insufficient evidence to bring charges, however, the individuals reportedly remained in detention. Suspects awaiting trial in Abuja were largely those who pleaded not guilty. Two individuals, Haruna Yahaya and Banzana Yusuf, were convicted and jailed for involvement in the Chibok kidnapping; Yahaya was convicted in February and sentenced to 15 years, while Yusuf was convicted in July and sentenced to 20 years. In December, police reported arresting Umar Abdulmalik in connection with a 2015 bombing that killed 15 people in Abuja. Police said Abdulmalik confessed to carrying out several crimes including the bombing. Human rights groups alleged that terrorist suspects detained by the military were denied their rights to legal representation, due process, and to be heard by a judicial authority.

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

The Nigerian government continued to participate in U.S. capacity-building programs, work with the FBI to investigate specific terrorism matters, predominantly through the DSS, and provide IED components to the FBI for analysis at the Terrorist Device Analysis Center. The NSCDC and NPF also received crime scene training relevant to counterterrorism investigations.

The Nigerian government actively cooperated with the United States and other international partners to prevent further acts of terrorism in Nigeria, and to assist with counterterrorism investigations, including disruptions, information sharing, and interviews.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Nigeria is a member of the Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA), a FATF-style regional body. Nigeria's FIU, the Nigerian Financial Intelligence Unit, was readmitted to the Egmont Group in September following President Buhari signing into law the Nigerian Financial Intelligence Agency Bill, which made Nigeria's FIU operationally autonomous – a requirement the Egmont Group places on all of its members.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: The government continued its disarmament, de-radicalization, and reintegration initiative, Operation Safe Corridor, aimed at identifying and reintegrating former low-threat supporters of terrorist organizations. By year's end, at least 95 individuals completed the program. The U.S. Embassy's Public Affairs Section (PAS) also sends Nigerian government officials and civil society members to the United States for CVE-focused exchanges. PAS helps manage several major CVE messaging platforms supported by the Department of State's Global Engagement Center and Bureau of African Affairs that broadcast on radio, shortwave, and television.

International and Regional Cooperation: Nigeria continued high-level participation in regional security and counterterrorism conferences. In November, Nigeria hosted the Aqaba Conference on countering terrorism and radicalization in West Africa. In December, Nigerian authorities in Abuja participated in a crisis response exercise with the United Kingdom focused on responding to an active shooter or terrorist attack. Nigeria is a member of TSCTP. Nigeria is also a member of the Security Governance Initiative, a joint endeavor between the United States and six African partners that offers a comprehensive approach to improving security sector governance and capacity to address threats.

Nigeria is a member of the GCTF and co-chairs the GCTF's Criminal Justice and Rule of Law (CJ-ROL) Working Group with Switzerland. In June, Nigeria hosted a GCTF expert meeting on evidence collection and co-chaired the CJ-ROL Working Group Plenary meeting. Nigeria was a pilot country of the International Counterterrorism and Countering Violent Extremism Capacity-Building Clearinghouse Mechanism, an online database under the GCTF to identify and de-

conflict gaps in counterterrorism and CVE programming. Nigeria is also an International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law (IJJ) Board Member.

SENEGAL

Overview: Although there were no reported terrorist attacks in Senegal in 2018, the Government of Senegal considers itself a likely potential target given ongoing terrorist activities in West Africa. In light of these concerns, 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, the prevalence of multiple active terrorist groups in neighboring Mali risks spilling across the border into Senegal and threatening stability. Senegal has combated this threat by contributing troops to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), which may make Senegal or its interests targets for Mali-based terrorist groups. Internally, the promotion of extremist ideologies by a small number of religious leaders constituted the chief concern; however, these ideologies remain outside the Islamic norms that predominate in Senegal.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: There were no reported terrorist incidents in Senegal in 2018.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: There were no significant changes to Senegal's counterterrorism legal framework in 2018, but the Senegalese government did seek to formalize guidelines for the treatment of terrorism cases. Senegal continued to enhance the capabilities of its Inter-Ministerial Framework for Intervention and Coordination of Counterterrorism Operations (CICO). CICO, formed in 2016, is designed to coordinate the government's response to terrorism.

In 2018, the Superior Court of Dakar adjudicated and published comprehensive decisions on four terrorism cases, including the 29-defendant trial involving popular religious leader Alioune Ndao. Evidence suggested that all four cases resulted from exploitation of intelligence and involved relatively sophisticated investigative techniques and considerable domestic and regional cooperation. The cases demonstrate that Senegal takes seriously its small terrorism docket. The near 50 percent acquittal rate also provides a roadmap for U.S. engagement with law enforcement and justice sectors in 2019.

Senegal's gendarmerie and national police have specialized units to detect, deter, and prevent acts of terrorism. Challenges remain to effective interagency cooperation and information sharing between the various governmental bodies that have counterterrorism functions in the country. Development of the CICO is leading to improvements in these areas.

With funding from the United States, the Government of Senegal inaugurated a new regional counterterrorism training facility in the city of Thiès, the first of its kind in West Africa. The facility provides a base for U.S. government-sponsored counterterrorism training, which is developing Senegal's own training capacity and increasing its ability to project security throughout the region.

Senegal is working to improve its law enforcement capacity by participating in multilateral efforts, such as the GCTF's Border Security Initiative, AU programs, and the Economic Community of West Africa (ECOWAS). Additionally, Senegal continued to work with the International Organization for Migration to promote cooperation and coordination between border agencies. Senegal also received support from the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance program, which provided courses and consultations directly focused on soft target identification and protection, as well as the aforementioned counterterrorism center.

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 verify travel document security, the effective use of terrorist screening watchlists, and the capabilities of biographic and biometric screening collection beyond that deployed at major ports of entry. The country's border areas have far fewer resources to detect and deter terrorists in comparison with facilities at the new Blaise Diagne International Airport near Dakar.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Senegal is a member of the Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA), a FATF-style regional body. Senegal's FIU, the National Financial Intelligence Processing Unit (CENTIF), is a member of the Egmont Group. In February 2018, the National Assembly passed a new AML/CFT law to bring Senegal into conformity with other member countries of the West African Economic and Monetary Union and to address identified flaws. The new law increases the independence of CENTIF, heightens scrutiny of bulk cash transactions and virtual banks, and expands terrorist finance investigations to include preparatory acts such as attempt and conspiracy. The president has not yet signed a decree implementing the new law.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: There were no changes in 2018.

International and Regional Cooperation: Senegal is a member of the AU, ECOWAS, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and TSCTP. Although not a member of the GCTF, Senegal participated in regional workshops and activities held by the GCTF West Africa 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 Fifth Dakar International Forum on Peace and Security in Africa, which continued a strong focus on terrorism as part of the event's agenda.

SOMALIA

Overview: AMISOM, the Somali National Army (SNA), and U.S. and partner military forces maintained pressure on al-Shabaab in 2018. However, the group still maintained influence over large portions of the country. Al-Shabaab retained the ability to carry out high-profile attacks using VBIEDs, suicide bombings, mortars, and small arms. ISIS-Somalia, located primarily in

Puntland, expanded activities, establishing influence in Mogadishu with an intimidation and extortion campaign while declaring war on al-Shabaab.

Despite military pressure and law enforcement actions to disrupt plots (some 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. The Federal Government of Somalia's (FGS's) Comprehensive Approach to Security (CAS) partnership with the international community includes military, law enforcement, and CVE-specific "strands" to address Somalia's security challenges at the federal, state (Federal Member State or FMS), and local levels.

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

2018 Terrorist Incidents: Both ISIS-Somalia and al-Shabaab used a range of asymmetric tactics against AMISOM and Somali security forces, members of parliament, and other government personnel, as well as soft targets with fewer security measures, such as hotels, restaurants, and cafes. Al-Shabaab launched multiple, often coordinated attacks, on a regular basis throughout the country, using suicide bombers, VBIEDs, ambush-style raids, targeted killings, and mortar attacks, and 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. Separately, ISIS-Somalia also carried out a number of roadside IED and small arms attacks, suicide bombings, and targeted killings, primarily in Bosasso in Puntland and the Bakara Market area of Mogadishu, as well as in smaller towns.

Other notable incidents included the following:

- On March 2, al-Shabaab assaulted Somali and AMISOM forces in Lower and Middle Shabelle. After launching an attack on the town of Balaad, al-Shabaab ambushed an AMISOM convoy, killing at least seven Burundi National Defense Force troops, destroying multiple vehicles, and stealing logistics equipment and weapons. Al-Shabaab also simultaneously attacked an SNA base in nearby Afgoye with a car bomb, killing one SNA soldier and wounding several others, illustrating their continued capacity to launch multiple, simultaneous, complex attacks.
- On October 1, al-Shabaab conducted a suicide VBIED attack on a European Union Training Mission convoy leaving the SNA Headquarters on Industrial Road in Mogadishu.
- On October 13, al-Shabaab conducted twin suicide bomb attacks in the South West State (SWS) capital of Baidoa, killing 22 people and wounding another 40 in the first complex terrorist attack in Baidoa since February 2016. Bombers targeted the Badar restaurant and Bilan hotel, popular locations frequented by politicians and government officials, according to local sources. Some officials maintain that the attacks were an assassination attempt against former al-Shabaab leader-turned-SWS presidential candidate Mukhtar Robow.
- On November 7, al-Shabaab abducted three NGO workers in the Gedo region while they were undertaking a healthcare outreach program.

- On November 9, al-Shabaab conducted a complex attack involving three VBIEDs and five shooters at a hotel in Mogadishu, breaching the hotel wall, but failing to enter the hotel before being killed by responding security forces and hotel security, killing 52 and injuring another 106. The hotel reportedly housed meetings and planning activities for officials and politicians involved in the SWS election, scheduled for the following week.
- In a two-week period in early November, suspected members of ISIS killed 11 employees of Somalia's leading telecommunications company, Hormuud. A Hormuud manager told local media the victims were killed after the telecommunication company declined to pay extortion fees.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: There were no significant changes to Somalia's counterterrorism legal framework and law enforcement procedures in 2018.

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 screen 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 16 ports of entry. MIDAS provides biographic and biometric screening capabilities, but procedural and network connectivity deficiencies limited its effectiveness.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: In 2018, Somalia gained membership into Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF), a FATF-style regional body. The Somali government continued to strengthen AML/CFT efforts, including by developing the Financial Reporting Center, the country's FIU, which achieved initial operating capability in November.

Countering Violent Extremism: The Office of the Prime Minister leads the CAS Strand 4 on the Prevention and Countering of Violent Extremism (P/CVE), and a P/CVE coordinator was appointed in 2018. Following the 2017 presidential election, the FGS announced its intent to offer amnesty to any al-Shabaab members willing to denounce terrorism and support the FGS. A donor-supported effort to reintegrate former al-Shabaab combatants continued, primarily through reintegration centers operating in Mogadishu, Kismayo, and Baidoa.

International and Regional Cooperation: There were no significant changes in 2018. The SNA collaborates with AMISOM, which includes military forces from Burundi, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda. According to media sources, the United States, the United Kingdom, the EU, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, China, and Qatar also provide significant bilateral support.

SOUTH AFRICA

Overview: South Africa saw an increase in suspected terrorism-related incidents in 2018. In May, an attack on the only Shia mosque in the Durban area was reported to be sectarian in nature. The suspects arrested and charged in this case and the incendiary devices were linked to

ISIS by the prosecutor. In the weeks following the attack, several incendiary devices were detected in local shopping malls. Since publicly acknowledging the presence of ISIS facilitation networks and cells in 2016, the South African government has not provided public estimates of the number of South African nationals who have migrated or returned from ISIS-controlled territories. However, prominent think tanks and analysts in South Africa estimate that around 100 individuals migrated to ISIS-controlled parts of Syria or Iraq between early 2014 and late 2016, with the majority subsequently returning to South Africa or perishing on the battlefield.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: Terrorist incidents in 2018 included the following:

- In February, a dual South African/British couple were kidnapped and murdered in KwaZulu-Natal province. Police charged four people in the case, two with terrorist connections, including Fatima Patel who was previously charged for having links to ISIS, and Sayefudeen Del Vecchio.
- On May 10, in the Verulam neighborhood of Durban, assailants attacked the only Shia mosque, the Imam Hussain Mosque, in KwaZulu Natal. An unknown number of men stabbed two worshippers, slashed the throat of another, and set the mosque partially ablaze. One victim succumbed to his injuries. A few days after this incident, an undetonated incendiary device was found in the same mosque.
- On July 5, two similar incendiary devices were detonated at shopping malls in the Durban suburbs.
- On the morning of July 7, a similar incendiary device, this time undetonated, was found attached to a cell phone at one of the same shopping centers targeted on July 5. Shoppers were evacuated after the device was reported to authorities.
- On the evening of July 7, two incendiary devices were found near or under parked cars in close proximity to the Durban July festival, which is an annual gathering in Durban that attracts politicians, celebrities, and tourists.

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 terrorist groups, including ISIS. The Counter Assault Team, the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation, and South Africa's State Security Agency are tasked with detecting, deterring, and preventing acts of terrorism within South Africa. The South African Police Service (SAPS) Special Task Force is specifically trained and proficient in counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, and hostage rescue. The National Prosecuting Authority is committed to prosecuting cases of terrorism and international crime. The South African Revenue Service protects South African borders from illegal smuggling of goods. The Department of Justice submitted a Cybercrimes Bill to Parliament in 2018, aimed at halting the spread of malicious communications over the internet. The bill is still under parliamentary procedure.

The trial of twin brothers Brandon Lee Thulsie and Tony Lee Thulsie, arrested in 2016 for planning to attack the U.S. Embassy and Jewish institutions in South Africa, was postponed

several times in 2018. The brothers are still awaiting trial, along with siblings Ebrahim and Fatima Patel, charged with having links to ISIS. The Thulsies were designated as terrorists by the United States in 2017. Legal observers focusing on the Thulsie, Del Vecchio, and Patel cases view them as an important test of the POCDATARA legislation, given the lack of legal precedent.

On October 5, 19 suspects, including South Africans from the Durban area and foreign nationals from the DRC, Tanzania, and Burundi, were arrested in Durban in connection with the May 10 mosque attack. Charges against seven suspects were later withdrawn. The remaining suspects are being charged with murder, attempted murder, offenses relating to explosive or other lethal devices, arson, extortion, possession of explosives, kidnapping, unlawful possession of a firearm, and possession of unlicensed ammunition. State prosecution linked the assailants to ISIS, and provided supportive affidavits tying the group to terrorist activity. Bail was preliminarily granted for seven of the accused, while 11, including the Durban terror cell's ringleader Farhad Hooper, remained behind bars. On November 27, the magistrate approved the leave applications for the remaining 11 incarcerated suspects, releasing them on bail.

Border security is challenging in South Africa because of its numerous land, sea, and air ports of entry for international travelers. South Africa has multiple law enforcement agencies policing its borders, but they often operate within information silos and inadequate communication limits their border control ability. Counterterrorism measures at 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. 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 illicit sale of passports and identity documents, but the use of illegitimately obtained identity documents continued.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: There were no significant changes in 2018. South Africa is a member of the Eastern and Southern Africa Anti-Money Laundering Group (ESAAMLG), a FATF-style regional body. South Africa's FIU, the Financial Intelligence Centre, 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.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: South African community leaders and civil society participated in interactive CVE sessions with the U.S. government during 2018. South Africa's 2013 National Counter-Terrorism Strategy is based on five pillars: 1) Understanding and Prediction; 2) Prevention; 3) Mitigation; 4) Combating; and 5) Response – Dealing with the Consequences. The strategy is supported by an implementation plan, as well as timeframes for

implementation, assessment, and reassessment, and is updated annually by the South African interagency.

International and Regional Cooperation: South Africa is a member of the GCTF, the AU, 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. The proliferation of suspected terrorist attacks in northern Mozambique, some of which allegedly included Tanzanian perpetrators, led to increased cross-border security cooperation and the arrest of more than 120 Tanzanian nationals suspected of involvement in terrorism. Heavy-handed efforts by the government to deter attacks in Tanzania, particularly in the south, have led to concerns about excessive use of force, denial of due process, and possible movement of alleged instigators to border regions. For further information, please refer to the Department of State's [Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#).

Tanzanians were present among terrorist groups including the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) and offshoots thereof. Risks of attacks in Tanzania remain high, exacerbated by possible cooperation among terrorists in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Mozambique, and elsewhere in the region who seek to take advantage of lightly governed spaces and porous borders, including the return of trained and radicalized Tanzanian terrorists.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: There were no reported terrorist incidents in Tanzania in 2018.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: In September 2018, Tanzania enacted two major changes to its counterterrorism laws: a new witness protection statute and amendments to Tanzania's mutual legal assistance (MLA) law. The United States provided counterterrorism assistance to Tanzanian judicial officials through the U.S. Department of Justice's Resident Legal Advisor, conducting workshops aimed at drafting recommendations for legislative and procedural amendments to Tanzania's counterterrorism laws. The new MLA law greatly enhances Tanzania's ability to cooperate with the United States and other countries in terrorism and transitional criminal investigations.

Tanzania codified security coordination with Mozambique in January 2018, signing a Memorandum of Understanding to increase joint efforts to combat terrorism, drug trafficking, and money laundering. More than 50 Tanzanians were arrested in Mozambique in late 2017 and are currently on trial there. In October 2018, Tanzanian authorities announced the arrest of more than 120 Tanzanian nationals in southern Tanzania for alleged involvement with terrorist organizations in Mozambique. Security officials aggressively sought out terrorist actors, reportedly jailing numerous individuals and denying rights to due process.

Tanzania serves as a recruitment and transit point for terrorist and criminal organizations that capitalize on Tanzania's vast unguarded border spaces. The Department of State provides assistance to police through the Antiterrorism Assistance program, which focused on building

law enforcement capacity to reduce terrorism threats along strategic land borders, particularly in the Tanga region. Tanzania employed PISCES to conduct traveler screening and watchlisting at airports and other points of entry.

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. NCTC leads the government's coordination on counterterrorism issues, but remains under-resourced and maintains no legal mandate to investigate or arrest suspects. NCTC has participated in capacity-building efforts and cooperation with international regional partners. In 2018, NCTC continued to cooperate with U.S. government law enforcement agencies, which have provided support to improve Tanzania's interagency coordination and cooperation around planning for and responding to crises.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Tanzania is a member of the Eastern and Southern Africa Anti-Money Laundering Group (ESAAMLG), a FATF-style regional body. The Tanzania Financial Intelligence Unit is a member of the Egmont Group. Tanzania continued to make progress on strengthening its AML/CFT regimes, including by instituting new procedures to more tightly regulate the movement of foreign exchange. While the primary purpose of the restrictions appears to be reduction of tax evasion, the measures will also make it easier to trace transactions, including those associated with money laundering.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: Tanzania's NCTC continued to lead CVE efforts and was UNDP's partner in a multi-year project that began in spring 2017 to prevent terrorism. With support from UNDP, the government worked in 2018 to draft a national preventing violent extremism strategy and action plan, which is expected to be finalized in 2019.

CVE concepts are not well recognized among Tanzanian officials, particularly at the regional and district government levels, inhibiting progress to implement certain measures. Additionally, police relations are strained in communities, especially in Muslim majority regions along the coast, following security officials' aggressive tactics to neutralize threats.

International and Regional Cooperation: Tanzania is a member of the AU, the Southern African Development Community, and the East African Community, all of which implemented counterterrorism initiatives. The Tanzanian government benefited from training provided by bilateral and multilateral donors to enhance counterterrorism-related security units. Although not a member, Tanzania also participated in GCTF regional workshops and events.

UGANDA

Overview: The Government of Uganda continued to make important contributions toward countering terrorism in East Africa and the Horn of Africa in 2018. As the largest troop contributing country to AMISOM, Uganda remained a key partner in regional efforts to

neutralize al-Shabaab. The Ugandan government convened the Ninth High-Level Meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism of the Peace, Security, and Cooperation Framework, a meeting that focused heavily on the region's response to terrorist groups in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Members of various East Africa-based terrorist groups are believed to use established smuggling routes throughout Uganda as a transit points to their final destinations. However, the Uganda government has demonstrated strong political will to apprehend suspected terrorists and disrupt terrorist activity in its territory.

The Government of Uganda's failure to effectively prosecute six suspects on terrorism charges, and to use recently passed terrorism financing legislation to disrupt illicit financing, are illustrative of its lack of capacity to hold terrorists accountable for their actions.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: There were no reported terrorist incidents in Uganda in 2018.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Uganda made no significant changes to its counterterrorism legal framework in 2018.

In 2015, Ugandan security services arrested eight alleged al-Qa'ida and al-Shabaab members accused of plotting to bomb several locations in Kampala, and charged them with aiding and abetting terrorists and conspiracy to commit terrorism. In November 2018, the Ugandan court system acquitted six of the suspects because prosecutors failed to provide sufficient evidence. However, following their release, security forces immediately rearrested the acquitted suspects. The court moved forward with charges against two other alleged terrorists, who remain in police custody.

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 Department of State provides assistance to the UPF through the Antiterrorism Assistance program, which focused on building law enforcement capacity to reduce terrorism threats.

Border security remained a persistent concern for the Ugandan government, with especially porous borders between Uganda and both South Sudan and the DRC. Uganda used the U.S.-provided PISCES to conduct traveler screening at the country's major ports of entry.

The Government of Uganda is increasingly concerned about security threats along the country's western border with the DRC, particularly from the eastern DRC-based armed group Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), which it has accused of killing civilians and planning attacks against Ugandan interests. In November, Ugandan security officials met with their DRC counterparts to discuss ways to better coordinate and address the security threat posed by the ADF.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Uganda is a member of the Eastern and Southern Africa Anti-Money Laundering Group (ESAAMLG), a FATF-style regional body. Although Uganda made significant progress on legislation to govern illicit terrorism financing in 2017,

these authorities were reportedly not used to prosecute suspects in 2018. Uganda underwent its mutual evaluation in 2016 and in 2018 exited the FATF “grey list” for deficiencies identified in their 2007 report.

Private sector interlocutors said most of Uganda’s banks do not have the capacity or technology to comply with Uganda’s financial regulations, and reported that an enormous volume of mobile money transactions skirt Uganda’s financial regulatory framework entirely.

Countering Violent Extremism: UPF officials report that the Ugandan government developed a draft CVE National Action Plan in 2018. However, the government has not socialized the draft with security partners, and there is no timeline for its release.

International and Regional Cooperation: Uganda participates in counterterrorism efforts through its membership in the UN, Djibouti-based Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the East African Community, PRACT, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. Although not a member, Uganda also participated in GCTF regional workshops and events.

In October, the Ugandan government hosted a Ministerial and High-Level Meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism of the Peace, Security, and Cooperation Framework for the DRC and the Region. The conference focused largely on the threat of ADF and other armed groups in eastern DRC. Senior-level regional leaders agreed to meet subsequently to discuss these issues in more detail.

EAST ASIA AND PACIFIC

Overview

In 2018, 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. Regional cooperation between domestic law enforcement and judicial authorities among countries throughout Southeast Asia resulted in high numbers of terrorism-related arrests and, in many cases, successful prosecutions.

The region was shocked by the May 2018 attack in Surabaya, Indonesia, when entire families, including women and children, committed suicide bombings against security forces and churches. Southeast Asian governments remained concerned about FTFs returning from Iraq or Syria and using their operational skills, connections, and experience to launch attacks.

East Asian countries actively participated in regional and international efforts to counter terrorism. Australia, Fiji, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, and Taiwan are partners in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. Australia, China, Indonesia, Japan, and New Zealand are members of the GCTF. As co-chairs of the GCTF CVE Working Group, Australia and Indonesia organized an annual plenary meeting and a number of CVE-related workshops.

China's efforts focused primarily on "extremists" whom Beijing ascribes to the so-called East Turkistan Islamic Movement, despite a lack of independent evidence that a group by that name is still active. Using counterterrorism as a pretext, the Chinese Communist Party arbitrarily detained more than one million Uighurs, ethnic Kazakhs, and other members of Muslim minority groups in camps in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region.

AUSTRALIA

Overview: In 2018, Australia strengthened counterterrorism laws, investigated and disrupted suspected terrorist plots, and maintained high levels of cooperation with the United States and other international partners. Australia played a major role in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and was a leading contributor to the Coalition's military support, humanitarian assistance, and efforts to disrupt FTFs. Australia also played a major role in the GCTF as co-chair of its CVE Working Group. In May, the Australian Parliament passed legislation to finalize the functions and responsibilities of Australia's new Department of Home Affairs, its most significant domestic security and law enforcement reform in decades. At the end of 2018, Australia's National Terrorism Threat Advisory System remained at "Probable," the third-highest level on a five-level scale.

Australia focused on counterterrorism threats in Southeast Asia through capacity-building programs that thwart terrorist travel; effectively manage incarcerated terrorists; stabilize the southern Philippines, including Marawi City; and counter the financing of terrorism.

Other chief concerns included FTFs returning to Australia and the role of social media in inspiring terrorist radicalization. Australian security agencies estimate that about 230 Australian citizens have traveled to Iraq and Syria since 2012. The government estimates that approximately 100 remain in conflict areas, 40 have returned to Australia, and between 90 and 94 Australian FTFs have died in the conflict zone.

Australian officials are aware of approximately 70 children who traveled with their parents to ISIS-controlled areas or were born in such areas. Since 2016, state and territory governments have analyzed how best to balance the security risks returnees might pose with the humanitarian need to reintegrate them back into Australian society and provide needed support.

Since September 2014, Australian counterterrorism authorities have disrupted 15 terrorism plots domestically, and cautioned that a major terrorist event in Australia is "inevitable."

In 2018, the United States worked closely 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. The United States and Australia also worked closely on capacity-building efforts in Southeast Asia.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: Australia experienced two terrorist-related attacks, both in Melbourne. In February, a Bangladeshi woman traveling on a student visa stabbed and injured her landlord. Australian authorities reported that the woman was inspired and motivated by

ISIS's extremist ideology, going so far as to obtain a student visa and move to Australia to commit this attack. Having admitted her intention in court to "trigger the West" after a failed attempt to travel and fight in Syria, she faces charges of engaging in a terrorist act and attempted murder. In November, a Somalia-born man stabbed three pedestrians, killing one, before he was fatally shot by police. While ISIS claimed responsibility, police called it a lone-offender terror attack. The attacker was known to Australian intelligence and law enforcement for his radical views and family and social ties to other terrorists.

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 May, the Australian Parliament passed legislation to finalize implementation of its new Department of Home Affairs, a process that began in July 2017. The new department combines federal law enforcement, national and transportation security, criminal justice, emergency management, multicultural affairs, and immigration- and border-related functions from various agencies. The Home Affairs portfolio includes the Australian Border Force (ABF), the Australian Security Intelligence Organization, the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission, the Australian Federal Police, and the Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Center (AUSTRAC).

In November 2018, Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced Australia would further amend the Australian Citizenship Act of 2007 to lower the threshold requirements for dual citizens convicted of terrorism offenses to lose their Australian citizenship. To date, between nine and 12 dual citizens have been stripped of their citizenship under Australia's citizenship cessation legislation. Prime Minister Morrison also announced the government's intention to introduce a Temporary Exclusion Order scheme to prevent Australians involved in overseas terrorism-related activities from returning to Australia for up to two years.

Significant law enforcement actions in 2018 included the following:

- In January, authorities coordinated closely with Turkish counterparts to issue 20 arrest warrants for Australians who traveled to the Middle East to fight with ISIS.
- In June, an Australian man was arrested for planning terrorist acts and preparing for a foreign incursion.
- In November, authorities arrested three men for planning an ISIS-inspired mass casualty attack.

Australia's border security remained robust and the country continued to promote international cooperation on information sharing to thwart terrorist travel. In August, Australia's Department of Home Affairs hosted the Five Country Ministerial, where senior security officials from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United States, and the United Kingdom discussed persistent and emerging threats. Since 2012, an estimated 240 Australian passports have been canceled in relation to the Iraq and Syria conflict, including reviews of respective domestic procedures for releasing data about watchlisted individuals in order to promote the relevant and timely disclosure of actionable information. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the Australian Department of Home Affairs also made progress with operational plans for a limited Global Entry pilot and an international expedited traveler initiative.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Australia is a member of the FATF and co-chairs the Asia/Pacific Group (APG) on Money Laundering, a FATF-style regional body. Australia's FIU is a member of the Egmont Group and Australia chairs or co-chairs the Egmont Group's Information Exchange Working Group.

Australia remained a regional and global leader in countering terrorist financing. In June, Australia's largest bank was fined AUD 533 million (US \$378.8 million) for serious and systemic breaches of AML/CFT laws. In its settlement, Commonwealth Bank admitted the late filing of more than 53,000 reports of transactions exceeding AUD 10,000 (US \$7,100), failure to properly monitor transactions on more than 778,000 bank accounts, failure to perform checks on 80 suspicious customers, and late or missing suspicious matter report filing for 149 cases. AUSTRAC said it suspected "significant further undetected money laundering through Commonwealth Bank accounts." Australia and Thailand co-hosted the fourth regional Counter-Terrorism Financing Summit in Bangkok, attended by more than 350 representatives from 31 countries. At the summit, AUSTRAC announced it would post its first financial intelligence analyst to Guangzhou to work more closely with China's FIU.

Australia cooperated closely with the United States on terrorist designations and implemented its obligations to restrict terrorism financing, including funding to terrorist groups operating in Syria and Iraq, as well as freezing assets.

Countering Violent Extremism: The Department of Home Affairs, the lead coordinator for national CVE efforts, remained focused on four overlapping streams that emphasize diversity and social participation, target work with vulnerable communities and institutions, address online terrorist propaganda, and assist diversion and de-radicalization. In July, the Victoria State Government hosted the third annual Strong Cities Network Global Summit. Additionally, Australia is a donor to GCERF and actively promotes GCERF activities globally.

Australia is active in the GCTF and co-chairs the GCFT CVE Working Group with Indonesia. In February, the co-chairs organized a workshop on monitoring, measuring, and evaluating CVE programs. In October, the co-chairs organized a workshop on CVE in prisons. Finally, in December, the CVE Working Group held its annual plenary session in Melbourne and a workshop exploring issues of gender and extremism that included government and civil society actors from across Southeast Asia. At the GCTF Coordinating Committee meeting in September, Australia announced that it would partner with Switzerland and the United Kingdom to create a policy toolkit on the *Zurich-London Recommendations* that outline good practices for CVE and terrorist recruitment online.

International and Regional Cooperation: Australia is a member of the UN, the GCTF, the Pacific Island Forum, the East Asia Summit, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum, and the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism. Australia chaired the APEC Counter-Terrorism Working Group from 2017 to 2018.

At the eighth Trilateral Strategic Dialogue, which convened in August, Australia pledged to cooperate with the United States and Japan to counter the terrorism financing, combat the flow of FTFs, and increase cooperation in the Indo-Pacific. In March, Australia signed a Memorandum of Understanding with ASEAN outlining cooperation on counterterrorism, including law enforcement cooperation, capacity building, and technical assistance.

CHINA (HONG KONG AND MACAU)

Overview: China’s response to terrorism remained difficult to distinguish from the government’s suppression of peaceful activities that authorities deemed separatist or subversive in nature. China’s primary counterterrorism focus remained on ethnic Uighur so-called “extremists” whom Beijing ascribes to the East Turkistan Islamic Movement. Using counterterrorism as a pretext, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has detained more than one million Uighurs and members of other Muslim minority groups in camps in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR) since 2017. More than two million others have been subjected to political indoctrination in daytime facilities. China also developed new legal guidelines and law enforcement tools to justify and improve its capabilities to carry out this repressive campaign, which included pervasive, arbitrary, high-tech surveillance; the collection of personal data, including DNA samples; compulsory stays by Chinese government officials in Uighur homes; and controls on the expression of cultural or religious observations. Additionally, China has continued to misuse the INTERPOL Red Notice system, which is intended to flag travelers and request that member states provisionally arrest individuals pending extradition. As recently as 2017, China issued INTERPOL Red Notices to target Uighur activists or political dissidents who had not engaged in violence, but were accused of involvement in terrorism.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: Details about alleged terrorism-related incidents inside China were difficult to verify due to a lack of transparency and information from Chinese authorities. China also impeded U.S. diplomatic, law enforcement, and third-party efforts to independently verify state media accounts, which are often the only source of reporting on incidents in China. In addition, Chinese officials provided few responses to requests from U.S. law enforcement officials for information on terrorist incidents. In a notable shift from previous years, China announced that no violent terrorist incidents occurred in the XUAR in 2018 owing to “new counter-extremism policies,” – thus publicly justifying Beijing’s repressive campaign in Xinjiang.

Chinese citizens abroad were targeted in terrorism-related incidents in 2018. The Baloch Liberation Army claimed responsibility for a string of attacks in Pakistan linked to the Chinese Pakistan Economic Corridor and its infrastructure. In August, a suicide bomber targeted a bus carrying Chinese engineers in Balochistan province. In November, Balochistan separatists attacked the Chinese consulate in Karachi and killed four Pakistani citizens.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: In June, the Supreme People’s Procuratorate, Supreme People’s Court, Ministry of Public Security, and Ministry of Justice issued joint guidelines on legal procedures and penalty standards for terrorism crimes, including aiding or preparing terrorist activities. The guidelines clarified that wearing clothes or symbols that advocate terrorism or extremism, and individuals who write, publish, broadcast, or advocate

terrorism-related content online are criminally liable. In October, the XUAR regional government amended existing regulations to state that authorities can use “vocational skills training centers” to “de-radicalize” people suspected of extremism. Satellite imagery analysis, eyewitness accounts, and human rights groups document the use of razor wire, guard towers, and single points of egress consistent with imprisonment. Previous rules made no reference to vocational centers and the change retroactively provided legal cover for the mass detention of Uighurs and other minorities in the XUAR that began in 2017. In November, official media reported that the XUAR and Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region governments pledged closer “counterterrorism stability maintenance” cooperation and signed an agreement regarding counterterrorism cooperation and the management of Xinjiang residents studying in Ningxia. International media reports also began to emerge regarding the mass transfer of Uighurs to China’s interior due to overcrowding at the camps, and described draconian detention conditions in the facilities including torture and deaths.

In 2018, the CCP made several changes to the People’s Armed Police (PAP), a paramilitary organization that deploys both domestically and internationally for counterterrorism efforts. On January 1, the Central Military Commission assumed sole authority to command the PAP. On March 21, the CCP’s Central Committee announced changes designed to deepen the militarization and professionalization of the PAP, in part by moving several of its purely civilian functions to other government ministries.

The Chinese government continued to leverage its domestic technology sector to bolster its surveillance capabilities. Police continued to deepen use of closed-circuit television camera networks paired with facial recognition, iris scanning, and other technologies to track, discover, or predict threats to public safety across the country and most extensively in the XUAR. Although such technology has been used to catch criminal actors, it is also used to monitor and control domestic dissidents and ethnic and religious minorities. The government also continued to stress the threat of both domestic and international “cyber terrorism,” as it continued to tighten monitoring and censorship of online speech and mobile communications.

In May, member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) – China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan – agreed to an extradition treaty on the basis of terrorism charges, which China could potentially use to extradite minority Uighurs on purported “terrorism” charges from SCO member countries. In 2018, China continued to pressure Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, among other countries, to deport Uighurs to China.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: China is a member of the FATF, the Asia/Pacific Group (APG) on Money Laundering, and the Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing (EAG). 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 additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: China continued to implement broad campaigns in the XUAR under the guise of countering what the Chinese government called “extremism.” Authorities intensified a campaign of mass “re-education” or “vocational training” of Uighurs and other Muslims, which began in April 2017 with the purported goal of countering “extremism,” but whose actual goal the United States assesses to be the repression of religious minorities. Uighurs, Kazakhs, and other Muslims are reportedly forced to learn Chinese, recite slogans in praise of the CCP, and renounce their culture and religion. Authorities implemented pervasive controls throughout the XUAR that punish Uighurs and other Muslims for displaying signs of “extremism” that included such peaceful and mainstream practices as praying, growing long beards, traveling to Muslim-majority countries, possessing unauthorized religious texts or written materials in minority languages, and refusing to consume pork or alcohol. Chinese officials also mobilized Chinese civilians and officials to occupy the homes of Uighurs and other Muslims in the XUAR through “home stays” to monitor, indoctrinate, and in some cases, abuse them. The government’s broad definitions of “terrorism” and “extremism” and its unclear definition of “cyber terrorism” continued to raise human rights concerns. We refer you to the Department of State’s [Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#) for further information.

Regional and International Cooperation: China continued to promote the UN as the primary international forum for counterterrorism while increasing its engagement in other multilateral, regional, and bilateral fora. In April, Brazil, China, India, Russia, and South Africa held their third Counterterrorism Working Group meeting. China continued to participate in the Quadrilateral Cooperation and Coordination Mechanism for Counter Terrorism, along with Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Tajikistan and sought to present itself as a global leader on counterterrorism. In May, 28 countries sent representatives to attend the PAP’s biennial Great Wall International Forum on Counterterrorism. In June, the SCO Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure conducted its first legal experts meeting in Pakistan. In August, China and other SCO member states conducted a joint counterterrorism military exercise in Russia that included more than 3,000 participating troops. Beijing also pursued bilateral counterterrorism cooperation with Afghanistan, India, and Pakistan, including agreeing to support the development of an Afghan mountain brigade that would combat terrorists in eastern Afghanistan. China is a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Regional Forum, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), and East Asia Summit, and it is also a member of the GCTF.

Hong Kong

Hong Kong continued its 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 on port and border security. In October and November, Hong Kong underwent a FATF mutual evaluation review.

No terrorist incidents were reported in Hong Kong in 2018.

Counterterrorism remained an operational priority for the Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF). 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.

In April, the Hong Kong government stood up the Inter-departmental Counterterrorism Unit to strengthen overall counterterrorism efforts by monitoring global trends, reviewing and improving counterterrorism strategies in Hong Kong, developing specialized counterterrorism training, and optimizing emergency response plans.

Hong Kong is a member of the intergovernmental FATF and the Asia/Pacific Group (APG) 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 made publicly available by the United States under relevant authorities, as well as the UNSC 1267 ISIL (Da'esh) and al-Qa'ida and 1988 (Afghanistan/Taliban) Sanctions Committees' lists. In March, Hong Kong operationalized two laws to strengthen its ability to counter terrorism financing. The first law placed customer due diligence and record-keeping requirements on numerous designated non-financial businesses and professions, including trust company and service providers (TCSPs). The second required TCSPs to pass a fit and proper test before obtaining a license from the Companies Registry. In July, a law imposing reporting requirements for cross-border currency movements over US \$15,385 went into effect.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*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. In 2018, a HKPF officer participated in a counterterrorism-focused International Visitor Leadership Program in the United States. In December, the Inter-departmental Counterterrorism Unit visited Xinjiang to evaluate mainland China's counterterrorism response in that province. Hong Kong is also an APEC economy.

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.

No terrorist incidents were reported in Macau in 2018.

Macau is a member of the Asia/Pacific Group (APG) on Money Laundering, a FATF-style regional body. Macau's Financial Intelligence Office (FIO) is a member of the Egmont Group. In response to FATF recommendations, Macau established a declaration and disclosure system to detect cross-boundary movement of large quantities of currency and bearer negotiable instruments. Macau has not yet brought criminal charges on offenders based on two laws that went into effect in May 2017 that widened the scope of identifiable criminal offenses and strengthened customer due diligence measures. In October, the Government of Macau moved responsibility for its FIO from the Secretary for Economy and Finance to the Secretary for Security, to reinforce Macau's law enforcement efforts.

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 the UN Security Council ISIL (Da'esh) and al-Qa'ida sanctions regime. Filing suspicious transactions reports irrespective of transaction amounts is obligatory.

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In 2018, the FIO signed separate memoranda of understanding/cooperation for exchange of AML/CFT intelligence with their counterparts in the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, Estonia, and the Kyrgyz Republic.

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. 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 CVE to complement "hard" law enforcement counterterrorism efforts. Indonesia is an active member of the GCTF and co-chairs the group's CVE Working Group with Australia. The Indonesian, Malaysian, and Philippines' militaries continued coordinated patrols in the Sulu and Sulawesi Seas to deter and prevent kidnapping and terrorist transit in their adjoining exclusive economic zones. In May, a series of suicide bombings in Surabaya prompted Indonesia to amend legislation to strengthen law enforcement's counterterrorism capabilities.

In September 2018, the United States and Indonesia signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to strengthen and expand cooperation on counterterrorism, to include the exchange of information on known and suspected terrorists.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: JAD predominantly targeted police throughout the year. From May 8-10, JAD-linked prisoners killed five police officers during a riot and subsequent hostage standoff at a Police Mobile Brigade (BRIMOB) pre-trial detention facility near Jakarta. From May 13-14, a JAD cell consisting of three families, including children, committed a series of coordinated suicide bombings in Surabaya targeting three churches and Surabaya Police Headquarters. The bombings resulted in 25 fatalities, including 13 attackers, and 57 injured persons. One terrorist family accidentally detonated a bomb in their apartment before their planned attack, killing two bombers and wounding three others. The Surabaya bombings marked the first time entire families, including children, committed suicide bombings in Indonesia.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: In May, lawmakers passed an amendment to the 2003 Law on Combating Criminal Acts of Terrorism, which strengthened and expanded existing counterterrorism provisions. The amendment criminalizes extraterritorial fighting, preparatory acts, and material support for terrorism, and extends the detention period to gather evidence and build a case. The amendment also states that the Indonesian military will have a role in counterterrorism operations that should be clarified in a presidential regulation by May 2019. It mandated the Indonesian National Counterterrorism Agency (BNPT) to formulate national counterterrorism policy, coordinate counterterrorism-related law enforcement, and implement national awareness of counterterrorism strategies and de-radicalization campaigns.

Indonesian law enforcement agencies were increasingly able to detect, deter, and prevent terrorist attacks. The elite police counterterrorism force, Detachment 88, and BRIMOB lead counterterrorism investigations and operations. Terrorism prosecutions usually resulted in convictions. On June 22, an Indonesian court sentenced JAD figure Aman Abdurrahman to death for inciting others to commit at least five terrorist attacks in Indonesia, including the 2016 Thamrin attacks and the 2017 Kampung Melayu bombing. The South Jakarta District Court indicted JAD as a terrorist organization on July 24 – the first time an organization and not just an individual was charged – and officially banned JAD on July 31. Prison sentences tended to be short, with some exceptions. Corrections officials took steps to improve terrorist prisoner management. A drastic increase in the numbers of arrests and convictions has created additional pressure on overcrowded prisons. The Government of Indonesia is building a new super-maximum prison on Nusa Kambangan Island in Central Java.

From May to December, police arrested more than 370 terrorist suspects and convicted 150. The Indonesian Attorney General's Office Directorate of Terrorism and Transnational Crimes are prosecuting criminal cases. Trials for all terrorist suspects take place in Jakarta district courts, regardless of where in Indonesia the act of terrorism occurred.

Border security remained a challenge. The Customs and Excise Directorate General, which collects API and PNR data to screen travelers, continued to struggle with passenger 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. Indonesia's Immigration Directorate General used INTERPOL databases to expand screening of international passengers at key immigration checkpoints in airports and seaports but relies on the Customs Excise Directorate General for access to API/PNR.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Indonesia is a member of the Asia/Pacific Group (APG) on Money Laundering, a FATF-style regional body. Indonesia's FIU, the Indonesian Financial Transaction Reports and Analysis Center (PPATK), is a member of the Egmont Group. In July, the APG released a generally positive mutual evaluation review (MER) of Indonesia's financial system based on compliance with FATF's 40 recommendations. Indonesia was recently afforded observer status in FATF and is on track toward gaining full membership, pending the results of an upcoming FATF MER.

Indonesia's Counterterrorist Financing Law (9/2013) criminalized money laundering and terrorist financing and authorizes terrorist asset freezing pursuant to UNSCRs. Indonesia has prosecuted and convicted individuals for financing terrorism. In November, PPATK and the Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Center (AUSTRAC), in partnership with Thailand's Anti-Money Laundering Office, hosted the fourth Regional Counter-Terrorism Financing Summit in Bangkok. Indonesia and the Philippines signed an MOU on the prevention of money laundering and terrorism financing, aligning Indonesia's AML/CFT efforts with FATF guidelines.

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Countering Violent Extremism: BNPT continued its work on a draft CVE National Action Plan for anticipated release as a Presidential executive order. The National Action Plan will coordinate CVE efforts of 36 ministries, institutions, and civil society organizations. BNPT also managed de-radicalization programs for terrorist convicts. Indonesians deported from third countries for attempted travel to Iraq and Syria were enrolled in a one-month de-radicalization program at a rehabilitation shelter operated by the Ministry of Social Affairs in Bambu Apus, East Jakarta. BNPT used former terrorists for CVE outreach campaigns and helped establish religious boarding schools for children of former terrorists, to prevent their radicalization.

International and Regional Cooperation: Indonesia continued to support counterterrorism efforts in several regional and multilateral organizations, including the UN, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). Indonesia remained active in the ARF Inter-Sessional Meetings on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime and the APEC Counter-Terrorism Working Group. At an October 19 meeting, ASEAN Defense Ministers agreed to adopt Indonesia's "Our Eyes" initiative to improve strategic information sharing on counterterrorism among Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand.

Indonesia is a member of the GCTF and co-chairs the GCTF CVE Working Group with Australia. In February, the GCTF CVE Working Group co-chairs organized a workshop on theoretical frameworks, dimensions, and considerations in designing and implementing national monitoring, measuring, and evaluation frameworks and practices. In October, the CVE Working Group co-chairs organized a workshop on CVE in prisons. They also convened their annual plenary meeting as well as a workshop in December exploring gender and CVE issues that

included government and civil society actors from across Southeast Asia. In May, Indonesia hosted the Southeast Asia regional GCTF event on Addressing Challenges of Returning Families of FTFs. Indonesia continued to use the Jakarta Centre for Law Enforcement Cooperation as a regional training center.

MALAYSIA

Overview: Although there were no ISIS-affiliated attacks in Malaysia in 2018, the country remained a source, transit point, and, to a significantly lesser extent, destination country for terrorist groups including ISIS, Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), al-Qa'ida, and Jemaah Islamiya. Suspected ISIS supporters deported from Turkey and individuals planning to travel to the southern Philippines to support ISIS-affiliated groups used Malaysia as a transit point. Malaysia monitored, arrested, deported, and tried suspected supporters of terrorist groups. Malaysia also cooperated with the United States and others to increase border security capacity at airports and in the Sulu Sea, to counter terrorist messaging on social media, and to improve terrorist prosecutions. The national elections in May resulted in the first transition of power since independence, and the new government pledged to review and potentially amend or repeal several pieces of legislation that govern how terrorist suspects are arrested, investigated, and detained. Malaysia is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: After a lull in 2017 and much of 2018, Malaysian security forces thwarted a kidnapping-for-ransom attempt in Malaysian territorial waters in August. On September 11, two Indonesian fishermen were kidnaped off the coast of Semporna in Sabah state and later held by ASG militants in Sulu, Philippines with a US \$1 million ransom demand. One of the fishermen reportedly escaped on December 6, but the other remained a hostage at year's end. On September 20, two members of a kidnapping-for-ransom group, believed to be spotters for kidnapping activities, were killed in a shootout with Malaysian security forces on an island near the town of Kunak in Sabah state. On December 5, three Malaysian crewmembers were kidnapped from a tugboat in Malaysian waters near Pegasus Reef, off the coast of Kinabatangan in Sabah state, and taken to the Philippines. During the kidnapping, the captain of the vessel was shot in the leg.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: On November 30, the government lifted a moratorium it had recently imposed on several security laws, including those governing how terror suspects are arrested, investigated, and detained. The laws included the Prevention of Crime Act, the Prevention of Terrorism Act, the Sedition Act, and the Security Offences (Special Measures) Act. The laws were under formal review for potential repeal or revision to remove "elements of oppression." However, a November 27 riot at a Hindu temple in Selangor sparked concern among officials about the potential threat to national security, public order, and race relations, if the laws were no longer available. Legislative amendments were not announced by year's end, but officials said the legislation would only be used to protect those three areas of concern. Authorities, however, continued to use the Sedition Act against individuals who criticized the country's royalty.

During the year, police arrested approximately 20 individuals in Sabah state who were allegedly involved in various terrorism-related activities, including smuggling militants into the southern

Philippines, enabling kidnapping-for-ransom operations, recruiting children as militants and human shields, and participation in ASG-led beheadings.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: In February, Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM), the central bank, issued a policy directive called the Anti-Money Laundering and Counter Financing of Terrorism Policy for Digital Currencies (Sector 6). The directive aims to ensure that effective measures are in place against money laundering and terrorism financing risks associated with the use of digital currencies and to increase the transparency of digital currency activities in Malaysia. It requires all entities and persons who are involved in the exchange of digital currencies into money and vice versa, as well as the exchange of one digital currency for another, to register with BNM. The directive also requires the filing of reports pertaining to the identification and verification of customers and beneficial owners and the ongoing monitoring of customers' transactions. Lastly, the new law establishes requirements for suspicious transaction reporting and record keeping.

In October, the FATF published its *Third Enhanced Follow-up Report and Technical Compliance Re-Rating for Malaysia* on AML/CFT measures. This report analyzed Malaysia's progress in addressing technical compliance deficiencies identified in the mutual evaluation report. According to the report, as a result of Malaysia's progress in strengthening its framework to tackle money laundering and terrorist financing since its 2015 mutual evaluation, the FATF has re-rated the country on four of the 40 recommendations, and found Malaysia to be compliant on all four, including on the "terrorist financing offense."

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: In August 2018, the new government announced that the King Salman Center for International Peace, a former partnership with the Government of Saudi Arabia, would immediately cease operations and its functions would be absorbed by the Malaysian Institute for Defense and Security. The Global Movement of Moderates, an initiative started under the previous prime minister, announced it would cease operations as of July 31.

International and Regional Cooperation: Malaysia continued to support counterterrorism efforts in regional and multilateral organizations and participated in numerous counterterrorism events hosted by the UN, the GCTF, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, and the East Asia Summit. Malaysia hosted ASEAN's Senior Officials' Meeting on Transnational Crime, multiple UN workshops on preventing violent extremism, and an ARF workshop on countering online extreme messaging.

PHILIPPINES

Overview: Since defeating groups affiliated with ISIS at the siege of Marawi in 2017, the Philippine government has closely tracked terrorist groups that continue to operate in some areas, particularly in the southern Philippines. In 2018, the government further deepened close

counterterrorism cooperation with the United States, enhancing military and law enforcement efforts to address the full spectrum of terrorist threats. The Philippine government acknowledged threats from terrorist groups affiliated with ISIS and welcomed assistance from the United States and other international partners. In 2018, the Philippines joined the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS.

Groups affiliated with ISIS-Philippines attempted to recover from losses sustained in the 2017 Marawi siege, recruiting and training new members and staging attacks with IEDs and small arms, and targeting security forces and civilians. Government counterterrorism operations thwarted these attempts to occupy territory in the Philippines. Overall, terrorist incidents declined compared with 2017. ISIS affiliates active in the Philippines in 2018 included parts of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), the Maute Group, Ansar al-Khalifa Philippines (AKP), and elements of the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF). The Philippines remained a destination for FTFs from Indonesia and Malaysia, and a potential destination for those fleeing Syria and Iraq.

The Philippine government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) made progress toward political settlement of long-running insurgencies. In July, the Philippine Congress passed, and President Duterte signed, the Bangsamoro Organic Law (also called the Bangsamoro Basic Law), to implement the previous administration's peace agreement with the MILF. Some MILF fighters and breakaway groups, including BIFF, ASG, AKP, and the Maute Group, continued to oppose a peace agreement. The Communist Party of the Philippines/New People's Army continued attacks on security forces and civilians and the government sustained military and law enforcement operations against the group.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: Terrorist attacks against civilians and security forces continued, though at a slower pace than the previous year. ISIS claimed that a German-Moroccan terrorist carried out a July 31 suicide VBIED attack in Lamitan, Basilan. The government linked the attack, which killed 10 people, to the ASG. It blamed radical factions of the BIFF, AKP, and remnants of the Maute Group for other terrorist attacks in Western Mindanao. The government held the BIFF responsible for IED attacks on civilian targets in Isulan, Sultan Kudarat on August 28 and September 2 that collectively killed six people and wounded more than 40. The ASG continued terrorist activities in the Sulu Archipelago, though defections from the group increased and Philippine media observed that the tempo of kidnapping-for-ransom operations declined.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: The country's main counterterrorism legislation includes the 2007 Human Security Act (HSA) and the 2012 Terrorism Financing Prevention and Suppression Act. In 2018, the Government of the Philippines proposed amendments that would strengthen the HSA by covering preparatory acts and reducing administrative hurdles to terrorism prosecutions. These amendments were pending in Congress at the end of 2018.

Investments in personnel and training for the Philippine National Police's (PNP) Special Action Force and other specialized police units resulted in improvements to law enforcement's ability to detect, deter, and prevent terrorist acts. The government stepped up law enforcement and judicial responses to terrorism, detaining terrorism suspects, disrupting plots, continuing

terrorism-related investigations and prosecutions, and securing the first trial conviction for terrorism charges under the HSA. A Philippine court granted a U.S. request for the extradition of Russell Salic to face charges stemming from his alleged involvement in a plot to attack New York City targets, though extradition was pending appeal at year's end, as Salic faces prosecution in the Philippines on separate charges. In October, Philippine authorities detained a suspect allegedly involved in placing an IED near the U.S. Embassy in Manila in November 2016. The PNP continued to participate in the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance program and used the training and equipment received for post-blast investigations and other actions to prevent and respond to terrorist incidents.

The government worked towards compliance of UNSCR 2396, taking steps to curb terrorist travel. The Bureau of Immigration (BI) used deportation and exclusion against foreign nationals suspected of terrorist links. For example, the BI deported a suspected Egyptian ISIS commander in October. Although the BI screened against domestic and INTERPOL watchlists at ports of entry, additional capacity is needed to collect API and PNR. The Department of Foreign Affairs, National Bureau of Investigation, and Philippine Center for Transnational Crime worked with INTERPOL to enhance collection and reporting of lost and stolen passport information. Interagency information sharing further improved among Philippine law enforcement units and with international partners. The Philippines continues its efforts to increase aviation security capacity by procuring of advance screening technologies, additional training, strengthening oversight programs, information sharing, and closer collaboration with foreign partners. However, despite ongoing efforts by the United States and other international partners to meet international standards for security requirements at airports, the Manila International Airport continued to fail assessments. The U.S. Transportation Security Administration issued a public notice in December alerting travelers of the deficiencies.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: The Philippines is a member of the Asia/Pacific Group (APG) on Money Laundering, a FATF-style regional body. Its FIU, the Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC), is a member of the Egmont Group. The Philippines continued efforts to bring its banking controls up to international standards following a 2017 National Risk Assessment that identified key terrorism finance vulnerabilities. In November, President Duterte approved an executive order adopting a new National AML/CFT Strategy and establishing a National AML/CFT Coordinating Committee with AMLC as its secretariat, to facilitate interagency coordination on AML/CFT issues. The Joint Terrorist Financing Investigation Group continued to work with the United States to investigate suspected terrorist finance cases.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: The government continued efforts to finalize a CVE National Action Plan that will outline a whole-of-government strategy. Various government agencies developed and implemented CVE training for security forces and civil servants. Local governments, civil society, and the private sector partnered to mitigate conflicts, build social cohesion, expand opportunities for youth, and address other drivers of terrorist radicalization. The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) worked with local stakeholders to encourage

defections from the ASG, BIFF, and the Maute Group, and to rehabilitate former fighters. The government also supported strategic communications efforts to counter terrorist messaging, using AFP-supported media to highlight a May declaration against terrorism by a group of Philippine imams. The AFP and the PNP both have nascent counter-messaging operations.

International and Regional Cooperation: The Philippine navy continued joint patrols with its Indonesian and Malaysian counterparts under a June 2017 trilateral arrangement to combat piracy, terrorism, and the illegal drug trade. The Philippines joined other Association of Southeast Asia Nations (ASEAN) members in supporting the “Our Eyes” initiative to enhance the regional exchange of terrorism information. The Philippines continues to support counterterrorism efforts as a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the ASEAN Regional Forum, and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation.

SINGAPORE

Overview: Singapore continued to identify counterterrorism as the nation’s top security policy priority and 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 a campaign to prepare the populace for possible attacks. Singapore was a committed, active, and effective counterterrorism partner in 2018.

Counterterrorism remained a pillar of the non-defense security relationship between Singaporean and U.S. law enforcement and security services. The levels of cooperation in recent years on counterterrorism efforts and expanded information sharing continued in 2018. 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, expanding its support in 2016 to also include medical teams and a counterterrorism-training unit in 2018. Singapore was the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) chair for 2018, and hosted East Asia Summit and related meetings in November 2018.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: There were no terrorist incidents reported in Singapore in 2018.

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 president’s consent, to order arrest and detention without warrant if it determines 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 Order 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 the necessary tools to support the investigation and prosecution of terrorism offenses. Parliament passed the Public Order and Safety (Special Powers) Act in March, granting the government new

authority to shut down communications networks and ban the public from taking photos and videos of a “serious incident.”

The Government of Singapore maintains a “not if, but when” stance regarding the likelihood of terrorist attacks within the city-state. The government’s SGSecure public awareness campaign, launched in 2016 to improve emergency preparedness, promote security awareness, and build national resiliency continued with additional police drills and exercises in schools and workplaces to prepare community and religious groups for “maintaining social cohesion” in the aftermath of an attack. The SGSecure smartphone app broadcasts official alerts during major emergencies and enables users to report incidents and request help from authorities.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Singapore has maintained an Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism Industry Partnership (ACIP) since 2017. 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 the country’s capabilities to combat money laundering and terrorist financing. In November, Singapore’s parliament passed the “Serious Crimes and Counter-Terrorism (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill” to amend and update the existing Terrorism (Suppression of Financing) Act. The amendments include increased penalties for violations of Singapore’s AML/CFT laws and regulations; enhancements to Singapore’s ability to prosecute cases involving overseas AML/CFT violations, as well as cases involving the use of money mules; and an explicit prohibition against financing travel for terrorist training.

Countering Violent Extremism: 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 and formulating practical rehabilitation programs. The government also encourages inter-religious and inter-ethnic dialogue through Interracial and Religious Confidence Circles and the inter-agency Aftercare Group, local community forums 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 CVE capacity and highlighted opportunities for constructive engagement for those concerned with the conflict in Syria and Iraq, such as promoting legitimate charities that work to ease suffering in conflict zones. The Islamic Religious Council of Singapore (MUIS), 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. MUIS manages the Asatizah Recognition Scheme that vets Islamic religious teachers and scholars in Singapore.

Singapore’s 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 extremist narratives 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 ASEAN, the ASEAN Regional Forum, and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, and is a member of the “Our Eyes” regional intelligence sharing initiative. Singapore participated in the June UN High-Level Conference of Heads of Counterterrorism Agencies of Member States in New York. In October, as ASEAN chair, Singapore hosted the 2018 Southeast Asia Counter-Terrorism Symposium examining collective approaches to counterterrorism that included representatives from ASEAN Member States’ Ministries of Defense and national police forces, nongovernmental organizations working on countering and preventing violent extremism, and social media companies. Singapore also hosted the East Asia Summit (EAS) and U.S.-ASEAN Summit in November, which endorsed a Singapore-sponsored EAS Statement on “Smart Cities.” Although not a member, Singapore is an active participant in GCTF efforts and hosted a regional workshop on the nexus between transnational organized crime and terrorism.

THAILAND

Overview: Thailand experienced no attacks attributed to transnational terrorist groups in 2018 and violence was heavily restricted to attacks by ethno-nationalist insurgents in the country’s restive southern region. The number of terrorist incidents in the Deep South (the southernmost provinces of Narathiwat, Pattani, parts of Songkhla, and Yala) in 2018 was the lowest since the conflict reignited in 2004. Although Thai security officials remain concerned about the potential for ISIS to infiltrate domestic insurgent groups, Thai security officials have maintained that there is no evidence to date of any operational linkages between these domestic groups and international terrorism networks. Given the high volume of travelers through Bangkok’s main airport, an available market of illegal goods, and relatively weak banking oversight, Thailand’s principal vulnerability to international terrorism continues to be as a transit and facilitation hub. Thailand remained a productive counterterrorism partner, though the Thai government continues to focus on domestic political challenges as its primary security priority.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: The number of insurgent attacks and related fatalities decreased from 2017 and attacks were mostly confined to Thailand’s southernmost provinces. Methods primarily included shootings, arson, IEDs, and VBIEDS, although a series of landmine attacks represented a divergence from these typical tactics.

- In January, a motorcycle bomb exploded at a market in Yala province’s Mueang district killing three people and injuring 18 others.
- In February, three districts of Pattani province were hit by a series of bomb attacks, injuring six people but causing no fatalities. According to media reports, six bombs exploded and six others were defused by Thai authorities.
- In May, insurgents used small IEDs to launch a series of coordinated attacks across all four provinces of the Deep South, wounding at least three people but causing no fatalities. Most of the two-dozen IEDs targeted ATMs, with others targeting electric poles or government-related institutions.
- In early July, a series of five landmine explosions took place in Yala province over the course of a week, all on Buddhist-owned rubber plantations. Human Rights Watch claimed separatist insurgents were responsible for the attacks, but there was no claim of

responsibility. Although the long-running insurgency has seen extensive use of command-detonated IEDs, use of victim-activated IEDs is much less common.

- In December, two bombs exploded and an additional three were detonated by Explosive Ordinance Disposal officials on Samila Beach in the north of Thailand's Songkhla province, located just outside the region typically regarded as the "Deep South." The bombing caused no injuries or fatalities but damaged a famous golden mermaid statue that is a popular tourist attraction for both Thai and foreign vacationers.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Thailand is drafting a new Counterterrorism Act, which aims to integrate existing terrorism-related laws into one document. The National Legislative Assembly had not yet passed the bill at the end of 2018. Thailand continues to apply the 2017-21 National Counterterrorism Strategy to prevent and respond to terrorist attacks, but details of the strategy are not public.

Thailand's law enforcement authorities demonstrated some capacity to detect, deter, and respond to terrorist incidents. Multiple entities – including the Royal Thai Police, the 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.

The Thai government engaged in programs with establishments such as hotels, schools, and shopping centers to raise awareness on soft target protection and conducted activities to enhance the capacity of security officials to prevent and respond to terrorist attacks. In September, a Thai court sentenced nine men from the Deep South to four to six years in jail for conspiring to launch car-bomb attacks in the Bangkok region in 2016. The defendants' attorney asserted that the detainees were forced to confess under torture, but the judge rejected this claim.

Thailand's borders are relatively porous, and information sharing within Thailand and with neighboring countries is limited. The market in fraudulent documents remained active despite government efforts to crack down on criminal counterfeit networks. Bangkok's main airport experienced two significant security breaches in 2018. Although neither incident was terrorism-related, these incidents revealed security deficiencies at Suvarnabhumi International Airport. Beginning in 2016, Thailand began to collect and analyze API/PNR data on commercial flights at all international airports. As of late 2018, Thailand's immigration system is reported to be real-time connected with INTERPOL's Stolen and Lost Travel Document Database.

Throughout 2018, Thai law enforcement units benefitted from U.S.-provided capacity building assistance. Bilaterally, Thai law enforcement received U.S. training on forensic evidence collection and analysis, complex investigation techniques, police tactics, explosives, and cryptocurrencies. Thailand hosted and participated in courses offered at the International Law Enforcement Academy in Bangkok, which included relevant training on financial investigations, cyber investigations, tactical safety, personnel and physical security, radiological material

detection, post-blast investigations, and border interdictions. Thailand also participated in the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance program.

The Thai government generally does not regard counterterrorism or CVE efforts as high priorities in comparison with competing domestic concerns.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Thailand belongs to the APG, a FATF-style regional body, which commits to the effective implementation and enforcement of FATF internationally accepted AML/CFT standards. Thailand's FIU, the Anti-Money Laundering Office (AMLO), 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 (Bank of Thailand) has discovered unauthorized remittances, it has coordinated with police to arrest the offenders.

Through AMLO, Thailand has promptly issued designation orders each time the UN changed the list of designated persons or entities pursuant to UNSCRs 1373, 1267, and 1988, passed the updates to all relevant agencies through the electronic gateway through secure email, and published an updated consolidation of all designations on the AMLO website. If any transaction was found by the designated person/entity under the UNSCRs, AMLO would freeze those assets. Thailand displays a generally high level of political commitment to combating terrorist financing and demonstrates generally good compliance. In 2018, 12 terrorism financing cases were under investigation, and one case was prosecuted.

In November, AMLO, in partnership with FIUs from Indonesia, Australia, and five other countries, hosted the fourth Regional Counter-Terrorism Financing Summit in Bangkok. This year's summit focused on expanding regional synergies and solutions including a regional risk assessment on non-profit organization red flag indicators; the identification and prioritization of ISIS-affiliated organizations and emerging terrorist organizations in the region; the release of a secure information-sharing platform prototype; and a multilateral intelligence analyst exchange.

Thailand continues to implement UNSCR 1373 obligations in the banking and insurance sectors. Some assets have been frozen in compliance with UNSCR 1373, but no assets have been frozen pursuant to the UNSC ISIL (Da'esh) and al-Qa'ida sanctions regime.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: The national counterterrorism strategy published in 2017 includes a CVE component. Thailand is currently drafting a CVE national action plan.

International and Regional Cooperation: Thailand is a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), and the East Asia Summit. Thailand also submitted its Counter Terrorism Action Plan to APEC's Counter Terrorism Working Group in 2018.

EUROPE

Overview

Europe continued to face a number of ongoing terrorist threats and concerns in 2018, including from foreign terrorist organizations, FTFs returning from Iraq and Syria, homegrown terrorists, and Iran-backed terrorists. Despite the loss of its geographic territory, ISIS continued to project its influence by fomenting attacks against European symbolic targets and public spaces. The majority of these incidents occurred in Western Europe and Russia and involved simple plots with easily executable tactics, such as the use of common tools and vehicles to injure or kill pedestrians.

FTFs from Europe remained in the custody of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) in northeast Syria at the end of 2018. The United States urged European countries to bring back their citizens and prosecute them for their crimes. However, European leaders generally refused to repatriate and prosecute their citizens. The SDF lack the resources, capacity, and support to detain ISIS fighters indefinitely.

Terrorist groups espousing a range of extremist and nationalist ideologies, such as the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and the Turkey-based Revolutionary People's Liberation Party/Front, continued to plot against police and military targets in Turkey and raise funds throughout the rest of Europe. Many European countries also saw a rise in racially, ethnically, ideologically, or politically motivated terrorist activity and plotting, including against religious and other minorities.

Several European countries took concrete steps to combat Iranian regime-backed terrorism in 2018. Albania, Denmark, and France all reduced diplomatic relations in response to Iran-backed plots to conduct assassinations or bombings in each country. Numerous European nations continued to participate in the U.S.-Europol Law Enforcement Coordination Group (LECG) to counter Hizballah's terrorist and illicit activities around the world. The LECG met twice in 2018. These plots in the heart of Europe illustrate the global reach of Tehran's terrorist capabilities.

European countries were integral to worldwide counterterrorism efforts in 2018. Thirty-nine European countries, the EU, INTERPOL, and NATO were active in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. In December, NATO allies endorsed an update to the NATO Counterterrorism Action Plan. Key tenets of the CT Action Plan include expanding information sharing, improving resilience to terrorist attacks within the borders of the NATO alliance, increasing capabilities to defend against terrorist misuse of technology, and building partners' capacities to respond to security threats. The Counterterrorism Action Plan also continues support for the Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan and the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, as well as the creation of NATO Mission Iraq.

ALBANIA

Overview: Albania continued its strong support of international counterterrorism efforts in 2018 and its participation in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. The terrorism threat in Albania consists of FTFs returning from Iraq and Syria and attempts to radicalize Albanian youth to violence. In December, Albania expelled two Iranian officials, including the Iranian Ambassador to Albania, in response to an Iran-sponsored plot to carry out a terrorist attack in Albania.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: There were no reported terrorist incidents in Albania in 2018.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Albania criminalizes terrorist acts, financing of terrorism, conducting transactions with persons on 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 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 efforts to counter potential terrorist threats. The Albanian State Police Counterterrorism Unit (CTU) worked closely with U.S. agencies to match Albanian government requirements for equipment and training with U.S. expertise and resources. Through participation in the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance program, the CTU received further training on investigations ranging from the dark web to managing complex terrorism cases. Despite a scarcity of resources, the CTU also participated in several successful interdictions of known or suspected terrorists. The Albanian government has developed, in conjunction with international partners, contingency plans and capabilities to prevent and respond to terrorist attacks against soft targets.

U.S.-funded efforts continued to provide mentorship, assistance, and training to prosecutors, law enforcement officials, financial investigators, intelligence analysts, and judges from Albania, Bosnia, Kosovo, North Macedonia, and Serbia. These officials work on FTFs and terrorism-related cases through the Balkan Regional Counterterrorism program based 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. 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 2018, the vetting commission and the international monitoring operation had dismissed 30 judges, confirmed 31 new judges, and noted 16 judicial resignations that preempted the vetting process. Additionally, in December, Albania established the High Prosecutorial Council (HPC) and the High Judicial Council: bodies that will serve as pillars of an independent, quality judicial system. The HPC enables the creation of the Special Anti-Corruption and Organized Crime Structure, the National Bureau of Investigation, and the election of a Prosecutor General.

Albania is in the process of implementing PISCES, which will enhance Albanian border management and traveler screening, and complement Albania's broader Total Information Management System to better secure its borders from terrorist entry. Law enforcement services cooperate extensively with INTERPOL and other international law enforcement bodies. Albania is seeking to implement UNSCR 2396 regarding API and PNR data, a process that is ongoing and will improve screening of air passengers entering the country.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Albania is a member of the Council of Europe's MONEYVAL, a FATF-style regional body. Albania's FIU, the General Directorate for the Prevention of Money Laundering, is a member of the Egmont Group. Albania's FIU works proactively to prevent and combat money laundering and financing of terrorism. Albania continued to work with FATF and MONEYVAL to address identified weaknesses in its AML/CFT regime. A July 2018 MONEYVAL evaluation reported that Albania had "low effectiveness" in three immediate outcome areas: confiscation, terrorist finance investigation and prosecution, and proliferation finance sanctions. Albania's FIU drafted an action plan to address the deficiencies.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: The Government of Albania established its National CVE Center in January 2018, which is active in coordinating CVE programming among international donors and seeks to ensure all ministries cooperate effectively and avoid duplication of effort. The Albanian cities of Cerrik, Elbasan, Librazhd, and Tirana are members of the Strong Cities Network.

International and Regional Cooperation: Albania is a member of the Adriatic Council, the Council of Europe, NATO, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the OSCE, the Regional Cooperation Council for Southeast Europe, and the UN. Albanian criminal justice actors participated regularly in various regional associations, conferences, and other counterterrorism information-sharing exchanges.

AUSTRIA

Overview: U.S.-Austrian law enforcement cooperation remained strong. Austria prioritized counterterrorism measures and continued to assess that "Islamist extremism" remains the primary terrorism threat to Austria. Austria's Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution and Counterterrorism (BVT) – the key counterterrorism agency within the Ministry of the Interior – reported decreased radicalization to violence by terrorist groups in 2018. Corruption allegations against the BVT led to a parliamentary probe in 2018, which was ongoing at year's end.

According to a September 2018 study by the Austrian Institute for International Affairs, Austria ranks second in Europe for the number of FTFs per capita. The BVT estimated the number of Austrian FTFs fighting in Syria and Iraq, or wanting to travel to the conflict zone for terrorist

purposes, at 313 between 2014 and 2018. During this period, authorities prevented 59 persons, including 22 women, from leaving the country to travel to conflict zones. Fifty men who had traveled from Austria to Syria and Iraq are presumed dead. The BVT reported that “a handful” of Austrian FTFs are currently in jail in Syria and Iraq. The BVT monitors an estimated 94 persons who returned to Austria, and officials estimate an additional 110 could still return. Overall, the BVT noted that terrorist mobilization substantially declined after 2015.

Austria is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and a member of the Coalition’s Foreign Terrorist Fighters and Stabilization working groups. Throughout 2018, the Ministries of Interior, Justice, and Foreign Affairs increased efforts to counter radicalization to violence and to address the problem of FTFs. Law enforcement agencies focused on intelligence gathering and investigations, as well as sharing information with international partners.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: There were no reported terrorist incidents in Austria in 2018.

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. A 2018 amendment also criminalizes the display of symbols related to the Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas, Grey Wolves, the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK), and the Croatian Ustasha, effective January 1, 2019.

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 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 implement UNSCRs related to counterterrorism as well as the GCTF’s *Good Practices on Addressing the Challenge of Returning Families of Foreign Terrorist Fighters*.

Austria extended the 2016 implementation of its temporary border checks with its Schengen neighbor countries and continued to deploy more than 800 soldiers at its eastern borders. 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.

A legislative amendment passed in September 2018 criminalizes “travel for terrorism purposes” with sentences from six months up to five years in prison, extends domestic jurisdiction over individuals in Austria who committed a crime abroad, and ensures legal counsel for victims of terrorism. The new law is part of Austria’s implementation of the EU Directive on Combating

Terrorism and the UN's International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism.

Austria has rigorous processes in place to register and screen individuals applying for asylum, lawful residence, and citizenship. A 2018 amendment further tightened these processes. The amendment allows authorities to confiscate up to 840 euros from asylum seekers to cover costs related to the asylum proceedings and to analyze their phones and storage devices to obtain data on the routes traveled. 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 FATF. Austria's FIU, located in the Federal Criminal Police Office, is a member of the Egmont Group. Austria has a comprehensive legislative and regulatory framework for AML/CFT.

Austria criminalizes the financing of terrorism in line with international standards and freezes terrorist assets in accordance with UNSCRs implemented through EU legislation. Austria has a national listing mechanism for terrorist financing, which operates more quickly 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 or conduct 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). Consequently, STRs from NPOs are rare.

Countering Violent Extremism: Austria continued its CVE efforts largely in response to the FTF phenomenon. In addition, the Austrian government undertook or continued several other initiatives. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), 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 extremism. In an effort to counter radicalization and improve integration in the newly arrived refugee population, the Integration Office within the MFA developed an educational program focused on German language acquisition and education on Austrian values, such as equality and democratic principles. In addition, in 2018 the Austrian government drafted an action plan that seeks to implement terrorist prevention policies laid out in a national strategy. This includes a comprehensive "exit program" for youth who have been radicalized, which Austria claims is thus far unparalleled elsewhere in Europe. 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, the Council of Europe, the EU, OSCE, the Salzburg Forum, and the Central European Initiative. Austria is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and its FTF and Stabilization Working Groups. Austria remained active in the Western Balkans Counter Terrorism Initiative, a platform it initiated in 2015 to help fight terrorism in the Western Balkans.

Austria made the fight against terrorism a key priority of its July-December 2018 EU Council Presidency within its broader goal of “security and border protection.” This was exemplified by a November 2018 conference on terrorism, political Islam, and anti-Semitism held in Washington, DC. Austria’s interior minister led an EU-delegation to discuss terrorism, cybercrime, migration, and narcotics issues with senior U.S. government officials for the U.S.-EU Justice and Home Affairs Ministerial.

AZERBAIJAN

Overview: In 2018, the Azerbaijani government actively worked to deter, 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 suspected of joining or financing terrorist groups fighting outside Azerbaijan.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: There were no reported terrorist incidents in Azerbaijan in 2018.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: In 2018, Azerbaijan passed an amendment to expand law enforcement agencies’ legal authorities to monitor and control financial transaction mechanisms that the government perceives could be used to finance terrorism.

Azerbaijani law enforcement and security services have demonstrated adequate 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. In July, the Council of Europe’s Committee for the Prevention of Torture reported that torture and other forms of physical mistreatment by police and other law enforcement agencies, corruption in the entire law enforcement system, and impunity remained systemic and endemic. 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. NGOs reported that both the MIA and SSS detained individuals who exercised their rights to fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression.

The Special State Protection Service is a security agency under the Presidential Administration tasked with protecting the Azerbaijani president, visiting foreign heads of state and government, and critical infrastructure and strategic state resources, such as oil and gas pipelines. The State Border Service (SBS) and State Customs Committee jointly manage border security, and interdict terrorist efforts to move people, money, and materials – including weapons of mass destruction (WMD) – across Azerbaijan’s land and maritime borders. The SBS is also responsible for defending oil platforms against terrorism. The Prosecutor General’s Office is responsible for prosecuting suspects accused of terrorism, conspiracy to commit terrorism, conspiracy to aid terrorism, and other terrorism-related crimes. The government continued to use terrorism charges against religious activists involved in political activities and others they alleged were religious extremists.

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

In 2018, Azerbaijani law enforcement and security services reported preventing several potential terrorist attacks, including:

- On November 14, the SSS reported that five individuals were killed and more than 60 arrested while resisting the police in operations following the July 3 attack on the former mayor of Ganja, Azerbaijan’s second largest city. Two police officers in subsequent demonstrations were also killed. The government alleged the attacks were part of a Shia “extremist conspiracy,” however human rights defenders claim authorities took advantage of criminal acts that were unrelated to religion to kill and detain religious activists.
- On November 23, according to press reports, the SSS reported the arrest of three individuals – Ilgar Agayev, Sahil Ibrahimov, and Namig Mammadov – suspected of financing terrorists in Syria.
- On December 9, the Baku Grave Crimes Court convicted Emin Guliyev, Asim Bakhishov, and Teyfur Aliverdiyev of fighting for al-Nusrah Front in Syria, and sentenced them to imprisonment of 13 years, nine years, and nine years, respectively.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Azerbaijan is a member of MONEYVAL, a FATF-style regional body. Azerbaijan’s FIU, the Financial Monitoring Service, is a member of the Egmont Group. In 2018, Azerbaijan continued implementing its “National Action Plan for 2017-2019 on combatting criminally acquired money, legalization of other properties, and financing of terrorism.”

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: Azerbaijan made no significant changes to its CVE efforts in 2018.

International and Regional Cooperation: Azerbaijan maintained membership in the Council of Europe, the OSCE, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and other international bodies. Azerbaijan supports NATO counterterrorism initiatives as one of the Alliance’s Partnership for Peace countries. Azerbaijan participated in NATO’s Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan, where Azerbaijan deployed 120 peacekeeping troops, and contributed to the Afghan National Army Trust Fund. In June 2018, Azerbaijan hosted the International Contact Group conference to promote peace and security in Afghanistan.

BELGIUM

Overview: Belgium continues to make incremental improvements to counterterrorism-related policy, information-sharing practices, and resource allotments, which have enhanced authorities’ abilities to investigate and prevent terrorist attacks. In June, Belgian authorities arrested two nationals of Iranian descent for their suspected involvement in a planned terrorist attack on a rally organized by an Iranian opposition group outside Paris. In October, Germany extradited an Iranian official to Belgium for his involvement in the same failed terrorist attack outside Paris.

Belgium actively shares threat information with the United States. However, 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 homegrown terrorism, often inspired by ISIS or al-Qa’ida. The large number of Belgian FTFs 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 and contributed troops and airstrike capabilities to the Defeat-ISIS military campaign.

2018 Terrorist Incidents:

- On May 29, a man on conditional parole stabbed, shot, and killed two Belgian police officers and a bystander in Liege, and wounded four additional police officers before being shot and killed by the police. Belgian authorities assessed that the attacker was a radicalized lone offender inspired by ISIS.
- On June 30, Belgian authorities arrested two Belgian citizens of Iranian descent near Brussels and charged them with “attempt at terrorist murder and preparing a terrorist crime.” The couple was suspected of supporting a planned – albeit foiled – terrorist attack on a rally organized by an Iranian opposition group outside Paris. Belgian authorities extradited two additional individuals involved in the covert plot, including Iranian official Assadollah Assadi, who was arrested in Germany.
- On November 20, a man with a knife attacked and injured a police officer in Brussels. Police shot and arrested the assailant, who was charged with “attempted murder in a terrorist context” and awaits trial.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Belgium amended its criminal code to permit plea bargaining, a potentially useful tool in future terrorism-related prosecutions. In November, Belgian prosecutors negotiated the first plea bargain, albeit in a corruption case unrelated to terrorism. However, Belgium’s comparatively short prison sentences reduce plea

bargaining's potential efficacy. Belgium further amended its criminal code to grant law enforcement the authority to use and task civil informants, including in terrorism-related and organized crime-related investigations. The federal government initiated a working group to develop implementation rules and regulations that could potentially facilitate Belgium's use of civil informants in 2019.

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 expanded its analytic threat assessment role and now maintains Belgium's database of FTFs, "hate preachers," and homegrown terrorists. Belgium's National Security Council also plays a significant role in the intelligence and security structure. Belgium's complex, highly decentralized government structure presents challenges to internal communication and cooperation between Belgium's numerous law enforcement and criminal justice entities. Although Belgium is a strong counterterrorism partner to the United States, government-wide resource constraints and weak sentencing guidelines impair Belgium's ability to proactively detect, deter, and prevent acts of terrorism.

Belgium fully implemented the EU PNR Directive. In January, Belgium established a Passenger Information Unit, which hosts representatives from Belgium's Ministry of Interior, the federal police, and military and civilian security services. Belgium plans to collect PNR data on land (rail and bus) and sea (ferry) cross-border traffic as well. The Belgian government approved a trial of rail and bus passenger data exchange with the United Kingdom.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Belgium is a member of the FATF. Belgium's FIU, the Cellule de Traitement des Informations Financieres, is a member of the Egmont Group.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: Belgium's federal, regional, and local governments remained engaged in CVE efforts despite ongoing institutional and resource constraints. In April, the federal government approved a proposal requiring mayors to appoint local task forces to address at-risk individuals in their cities suspected of engaging in terrorist activity. The proposal would implement a key recommendation of the Parliamentary Investigative Commission's final report on the March 22, 2016, Brussels terrorist attacks. In January, Belgium's State Security Service published brochures on "Salafism and violent extremism" in Belgium.

Antwerp's law enforcement community created a private-sector engagement program named SHIELD that was modeled after the New York Police Department's similar "NYPD SHIELD" counterterrorism program.

Prisoners charged or convicted with terrorism-related offenses are transferred to prisons with segregated sections for radicalized inmates, though many become eligible for parole upon completing one- to two-thirds of a typical five-year sentence. Prisoner rehabilitation resources

remained minimal. In Flanders and Wallonia, the Flemish regional government and French Linguistic Community government struggled to fill vacancies in departments tasked with carrying out their respective CVE action plans. In December, a hate preacher convicted of recruiting would-be jihadists held a press conference on the day of his release from prison and criticized Belgium's de-radicalization programs.

In September, Belgian officials from Liege and Verviers hosted a delegation from Chattanooga and Nashville, Tennessee, to exchange best practices on CVE through the City Pair CVE Partnership Program.

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

International and Regional Cooperation: Belgium participates in EU, NATO, the OSCE, and the Council of Europe's counterterrorism efforts. Belgium is a member of the advisory board of the UN Counterterrorism Center, and Belgium's Michèle Coninx remained Executive Director of the UN Counterterrorism Executive Directorate in 2018.

Belgium participated in all EU efforts to interdict FTF travel across land and maritime borders, encouraged efforts to strengthen Schengen zone external borders, and maintained a leading role in the European Strategic Communication Network. Belgium is leading EU Member States' efforts to expand the exchange of PNR data to cross-border rail and bus traffic, including through a trial project with the United Kingdom.

Belgium contributed troops to the EU Training Mission in Mali and led the mission (on a rotating basis) until January 31. Belgium also contributed troops to the UN's Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), and Belgium's Major General Jean-Paul Deconinck commanded MINUSMA until October 2.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Overview: Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) remained a cooperative counterterrorism partner and continued to increase its counterterrorism capacity in 2018. Few BiH citizens attempted to travel to foreign battlefields in 2018, although dozens remain in Iraq, Syria, and Ukraine. BiH closed some legislative loopholes through amendments to terrorism provisions in its criminal code, although lenient sentencing remained a challenge. Some operational domestic coordination exists, but interpersonal and interagency infighting and stovepiping undermined effective cooperation. Extremist ideology and regional nationalist groups remained potential sources of terrorism in BiH. While little progress was made on rehabilitation and de-radicalization, the BiH Ministry of Security and the Interreligious Council made notable efforts to prevent and counter violent extremism. BiH is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: There were no reported terrorist incidents in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2018.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: In May, the BiH Parliament adopted amendments to the criminal code to increase the minimum sentence for certain terrorist-related

crimes from five to eight years, eliminate the ability of convicted terrorists to pay fines rather than serving time, and prohibit terrorists from securing provisional release (parole). Although the legislation increases the minimum sentence for the recruitment and training of FTFs from five to eight years, judges can still liberally apply mitigating circumstances, which allows them to reduce a five- or eight-year minimum sentence to just one year. Before this amendment, FTFs 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 could opt to pay a fine and benefit from release on parole rather than serve time in custody. The May 2018 amendments foreclosed these two routes for convicted terrorists. If a judge finds mitigating factors, a one-year sentence cannot be converted into a fine or parole.

The Ministry of Security also convened a working group to draft further amendments to the criminal code. The draft amendments further align BiH law with EU directives on the suppression of terrorism and introduce three new crimes to the BiH criminal code: traveling and residing abroad for terrorism, misusing information technology or cyber technology for terrorist purposes, and forging documents for the purposes of terrorism. The draft amendments also strengthen an existing criminal code provision on training for terrorist activities. Statewide elections in early October and subsequent government formation make it unlikely that the amendments will be adopted swiftly, but there is political will to continue to strengthen these provisions.

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. A 2017 draft law to increase the number of counterterrorism-focused SIPA officers to approximately 50 by upgrading the relevant unit to a department is still pending adoption in parliament. Slow government formation after the October 2018 elections continues to delay the measure's adoption. SIPA continues to receive training funded by the U.S. Department of State to ensure that key units can effectively investigate terrorism-related crimes.

Law enforcement cooperation continued to suffer from interpersonal and institutional infighting. A BiH Prosecutor's Office-led task force met only once in 2018. At the operational level, however, law enforcement and prosecutors meet and work jointly on certain cases. However, shortages of counterterrorism investigators and interagency cooperation often led to investigative disruptions.

In March, the Ministry of Security's signed a Memorandum of Intent to install PISCES at BiH airports and select land border crossings to enhance existing traveler screening processes. The Government of BiH is also considering use of API and PNR data as part of its integrated border management and in line with UNSCR 2396.

BiH continued its efforts to disrupt terrorist activity in 2018 through arrests and indictments:

- In April, SIPA arrested Maksim Božić and Edin Hastor in Sarajevo for suspected connections to ISIS. During the search conducted at Hastor's home, SIPA seized a large cache of weapons, ammunitions, and hand grenades. In July, Božić and Hastor were

indicted for allegedly planning terrorist attacks against SIPA and the Ministry of Interior of Tuzla Canton (in northeast BiH).

- In November, SIPA arrested a suspect at Sarajevo Airport on suspicion of involvement in terrorist activity. The suspect remained in custody at year's end. Media outlets report the suspect is connected to the 2011 terrorist attack on the U.S. Embassy in Sarajevo.
- In December, sub-state entity Republika Srpska (RS) officials arrested a 48-year old FTF returnee on suspicion of forming and training groups to join a foreign terrorist organization. While this case was initially charged in RS, it is still possible the case will be transferred to the Sarajevo Prosecutor's Office where terrorism cases have been prosecuted to date.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: BiH is a member of MONEYVAL. BiH's FIU, the Financial Intelligence Department, is a member of the Egmont Group. BiH completed its FATF Action Plan and in February, was removed from the FATF "grey list," and will no longer be subject to the FATF's monitoring under its on-going global AML/CFT compliance process.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: In 2018, 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 Interreligious Council also increased its coordination and activities with its 15 regional chapters, with a focus on increasing engagement with women and youth.

The BiH Ministry of Security, led by its coordinator for international and domestic efforts to prevent violent extremism, partnered with the international community on numerous CVE programs in BiH, including a project to create the first CVE referral mechanism, which was made possible through international assistance to the Government of BiH. Working in close partnership with the International Organization for Migration and other 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 levels.

The BiH cities of Bihać, Bijeljina, Doboj, Jablanica, Prijedor, Srebrenik, and Tuzla Canton – and the municipality of Centar (Sarajevo) – are members of the Strong Cities Network.

International and Regional Cooperation: The State Prosecutor's Office works frequently with counterparts in Serbia and Montenegro, and EU countries such as Austria, Germany, and the United Kingdom on counterterrorism investigations. BiH is a member of the UN, the OSCE, the Regional Cooperation Council for Southeast Europe, and the Council of Europe.

BULGARIA

Overview: The Bulgarian government assumed the European Council Presidency in the first half of 2018, during which the country prioritized security, including counterterrorism, CVE, and preventing terrorist radicalization. Bulgaria is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: There were no reported terrorist incidents in Bulgaria in 2018.

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. The bill defines three levels of terrorist threats and four levels of response readiness. The bill also regulates the role of the military forces in counterterrorism activities and delineates the cooperation between the central and local governments.

The Ministry of the Interior 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 the 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 was 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. As of November, the court is again hearing the case against two suspected accomplices in Hizballah's 2012 Burgas airport bombing, following procedural issues that have caused multiple delays in the trial.

After the migrant crisis in 2014-15 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 EU, Bulgaria shares API appearing on the biographical data page of passports. Based on bilateral police cooperation agreements, Bulgaria also shares this type of information with non-EU countries for law enforcement purposes on an as-needed basis. 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.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Bulgaria is a member of MONEYVAL. Bulgaria's FIU, Financial Intelligence Directorate of the State Agency for National Security, is a member of the Egmont Group.

Countering Violent Extremism: There were no significant changes in 2018.

International and Regional Cooperation: Bulgaria is a member of and active contributor to counterterrorism initiatives at the UN, EU, NATO, the OSCE, and the Organization for Black Sea Economic Cooperation.

CYPRUS

Overview: The Republic of Cyprus collaborated closely with the United States, the EU, and other countries – bilaterally and multilaterally – in international counterterrorism efforts in 2018. Cyprus’s counterterrorism partnership with the United States included participation in a Department of Justice regional program focused on countering Hizballah, which was funded by the Department of State. The program strengthened Cyprus’s understanding of Hizballah and stressed the importance of interagency cooperation in countering all types of terrorism.

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 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 Republic of Cyprus and Turkey, which do not maintain diplomatic relations.

The Republic of Cyprus is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: There were no reported terrorist incidents in Cyprus in 2018.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: The Republic of Cyprus passed but has not fully implemented a law regulating undercover activities by police officers, and it is still determining the details surrounding new training required by the legislation. The House of Representatives has been considering a draft law regulating the use of surveillance of private communications by law enforcement since 2017.

In December, the Republic of Cyprus approved a law pertaining to the EU PNR Directive and continued its preparations for implementation. As of the end of 2018, however, the Republic of Cyprus did not have an API contract and consequently was not receiving API on arrivals from most non-EU states. Cyprus also continued the process to implement EU directive 2017/541 on combating terrorism, which will require amendments to national counterterrorism laws. At the end of 2018, these amendments were pending in the House of Representatives.

Cyprus continued to monitor entry through its airports, seaports, and across the UN buffer zone, but it is unclear how effectively and uniformly watchlist data was employed across all points of entry. Cyprus began using biometric data to screen some travelers at peak travel times at Larnaca and Paphos international airports through the installation of kiosks that collect traveler biometric data and analyze it against watchlist data. The program for the biometric kiosks became permanent after a trial period ended in 2018.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: The Republic of Cyprus is a member of MONEYVAL and is undergoing a mutual evaluation report by MONEYVAL in 2018-19. The Republic of Cyprus's FIU, the Unit for Combating Money Laundering (MOKAS), is a member of the Egmont Group.

In 2018, the Republic of Cyprus published its first National Money Laundering/Terrorist Financing Risk Assessment (NRA). Utilizing the World Bank's money laundering/terrorist financing (ML/TF) risk assessment tool, the Central Bank of Cyprus and MOKAS engaged relevant stakeholders to produce the NRA, an extensive analysis and self-assessment of the risks and vulnerabilities posed by ML/TF in the Republic of Cyprus. The NRA recommended amendments to the Combating of Terrorism Law of 2010 and the AML/CFT law to incorporate the definition of terrorist financing required by the Fourth EU AML Directive, and highlighted the need for capacity building and training of all reporting entities on terrorist financing techniques, methods, and trends.

In 2018, the Central Bank of Cyprus issued circulars to compliance officers in AML/CFT regulated entities setting out risk-based enhanced due diligence requirements with regard to shell companies/entities and identities of ultimate beneficial owners. As a result, thousands of noncompliant bank accounts and companies have been closed. While many of the closed accounts likely were associated with illicit financial activities, data is not available as to whether any were associated with terrorism.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: There were no significant changes in Cyprus's CVE efforts in 2018.

International and Regional Cooperation: There were no changes in 2018.

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 CVE initiatives, domestically and abroad. Denmark cooperates closely with the United States, the UN, and the EU on counterterrorism initiatives, including within the GCTF and the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS.

According to the Danish Security and Intelligence Service (PET), at least 150 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. According to the PET-administered Center for Terror Analysis (CTA), the primary terrorist threat to Denmark is small, simple attacks perpetrated by radicalized members of the Islamic community. CTA also assesses a limited but increasing threat from other terrorist actors who target Denmark's asylum centers, religious minorities, and migrants.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: On February 17, Mohamed Abdelkader Salem Al-Tamimi, a Danish citizen of Iraqi descent, attacked a young couple with an ax at a convenience store near Copenhagen. Their injuries were not life-threatening. Police arrested Al-Tamimi after an armed robbery two days later. PET assessed that Al-Tamimi may have been radicalized while serving a series of prison sentences beginning in 2009.

On March 19, four men between the ages of 19 and 23 connected to Kurdish organizations in Syria threw Molotov cocktails at the Turkish Embassy. No injuries were reported and the embassy only suffered cosmetic damage. PET arrested the four men, who now face trial for the most serious form of arson under Danish law.

On September 26, PET arrested three Danish residents of Kurdish origin accused of sending drone equipment to ISIS. In total, at least six people were part of the suspected terrorist cell led by Basil Hassan, a reportedly deceased Danish-Lebanese citizen, who played a crucial role in ISIS's drone program.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: In July, the Danish Parliament passed legislation implementing the revised EU fingerprint database regulations, which allow law enforcement officials to search EU fingerprint databases of asylum seekers. In September, the Danish Directorate for Correctional Services released revised guidelines allowing police greater discretion in controlling the terms of probation for people convicted of terrorism-related offenses. In 2018, Denmark banned seven religious figures, including two U.S. citizens Hamza Sodagar and Khalifah At-Thahabi, from entering the country for two years for being deemed a threat to public order due to their alleged roles in promoting "hate speech."

Denmark continued to use its 2006 terrorism legislation that allows information sharing between its agencies responsible for counterterrorism and FTFs – the PET and the Danish Defense Intelligence Service (DDIS). 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 through 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.

Counterterrorism-related actions by law enforcement included:

- On September 28, Danish intelligence disrupted an Iranian plot to assassinate expatriate leaders of the Arab Struggle Movement for the Liberation of al-Ahwaz (ASMLA) living in Denmark.
- On October 30, in a highly publicized news conference, PET Chief Finn Borch Andersen and Minister of Foreign Affairs Anders Samuelsen announced a Norwegian national of Iranian descent was arrested in Sweden in connection with the plot and extradited to Denmark for trial. Denmark later charged three ASMLA members of Iranian origin with violating the Danish law that prohibits condoning terrorism for publicly praising a September terrorist attack on a military parade in Ashvaz, Iran.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Denmark is a member of the FATF. Its FIU, the Money Laundering Secretariat, is a member of the Egmont Group. Denmark has a robust legal framework to combat the financing of terrorism.

In May, Denmark amended its money laundering laws to address a loophole and criminalize “self-laundering,” which Denmark defines as a “crime committed by the person who uses, substitutes or transfers money, goods or other benefits in or to economic, financial, speculative or entrepreneurial activities deriving from a crime committed by himself in order to hide their criminal origin.” In October, Denmark released updated guidance for AML/CFT. In November, the FATF noted that Denmark made significant improvements in 10 out of 12 areas since its 2017 review.

Countering Violent Extremism: In February, Denmark’s National Center for the Prevention of Extremism (National Center) developed a handbook for municipalities to effectively engage civil society actors to prevent radicalization to violence and to develop their own action plans. The National Center also partnered with universities to fund two PhD scholarships and funded the development of university courses on prevention of radicalization to violence. In June, the U.S. Embassy sponsored a CVE-focused TechCamp for at-risk youth in the digital space, focused on countering malign influence, and positively influencing Danish CVE efforts. In August, the National Center, the Media Council for Children and PET began publishing an online magazine helping youth identify terrorist ideology and online propaganda. In September, the National Center launched a mentorship corps with 140 employees from 27 municipalities to prevent violent extremism in their local communities. VINK, Copenhagen City’s anti-radicalization unit, is launching a new project that reaches out to the mosques in the area, offering guidance to congregation members who serve on mosque boards of directors. In November, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced it would spend an additional US \$18.2 million to prevent radicalization to violence and terrorism.

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 actively participates in the GCTF, the Council of Europe, NATO, the OSCE, INTERPOL, the Bern Club, and the European Counterterrorism Center.

FRANCE

Overview: France remained an important counterterrorism partner of the United States in 2018. It is a longstanding and important member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and the GCTF. France continued to conduct counterterrorism operations in Iraq, Syria, Libya, Mali, the Sahel region, and the Lake Chad region.

The terrorist threat in France remained significant, but diminished from its height in 2015. Terrorists inspired by or affiliated with ISIS perpetrated at least two small-scale attacks in 2018. The profile of realized attacks remains consistent with those seen in 2017, which were generally smaller-scale, opportunistic, and perpetrated by solitary local actors with little, if any, direct guidance from established terrorist organizations. Multiple violent incidents shared similarities

to terrorist attacks but were determined by French authorities to have no formal connection to terrorism.

French law enforcement and intelligence agencies thwarted at least six attacks in 2018 and arrested multiple individuals on terrorism-related charges. French authorities arrested individuals from racially or ethnically motivated extremist groups and Iran-backed terrorist organizations, in addition to those affiliated with ISIS and other terrorist organizations. The government announced it would create a national counterterrorism prosecutor position and identified the internal security and intelligence agency General Directorate for Internal Security (DGSI) as the lead agency in all domestic counterterrorism efforts.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: Three small-scale suspected terrorist attacks took place in 2018:

- On March 23, a 25-year-old French citizen born in Morocco killed four and injured 15 in the southern cities of Carcassonne and Trèbes before being shot and killed by gendarmes. After hijacking a car in Carcassonne, the attacker opened fire on police and then drove to Trèbes, where he opened fire in a supermarket, took hostages, and demanded the release of Salah Abdeslam, one of the alleged perpetrators of the November 13, 2015, attacks in Paris. Security forces stormed the supermarket and killed the attacker, who reportedly claimed allegiance to ISIS during the attack. One gendarme was killed in the attack.
- On May 12, a 21-year-old Chechnya-born French citizen stabbed five pedestrians near Opera Garnier in Paris, killing one. Police responding to the attack attempted to subdue the assailant using a stun-gun, but after the device's failure, shot and killed him. ISIS claimed responsibility for the attack.
- On December 11, a 29-year-old French citizen armed with a handgun and knife attacked the Strasbourg Christmas market, killing five and injuring 11. The attacker was shot and killed by police in Strasbourg on December 13. The Paris Prosecutor's counterterrorism office opened an investigation into the attack and an ISIS propaganda outlet described the attacker as one of its "soldiers" shortly after his death.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: In July, the French government unveiled a new counterterrorism plan of action to build on previous efforts and address issues related to inter-ministerial coordination, resource allocation, and surveillance of suspected terrorists. The plan identified the DGSI as the lead agency on all domestic counterterrorism efforts and called for the creation of a national counterterrorism prosecutor's office. Pending legislation would require the office to be operational by the end of 2019. The plan also created two new specialized units within the Interior Ministry, one to track terrorist prisoners upon their release from detention and another to identify key factors driving radicalized individuals to act, the latter unit intended to help allocate surveillance resources more efficiently.

The French armed forces continued Operation Sentinelle, a domestic deployment of up to 7,000 soldiers to enhance security at sensitive sites and large events throughout the country. While French officials and many independent observers view it as an effective deterrent, Operation Sentinelle complicates resource allocation challenges faced by a French military active in several overseas theaters. France maintained border controls with its Schengen neighbors in place since November 2015.

Most terrorism-related arrests were made by DGSJ and involved individuals and groups suspected of having links to ISIS, but authorities also pursued Iran-backed and racially or ethnically motivated terrorists. On June 30, French and Belgian authorities arrested several individuals – including an Iranian official based in Austria – suspected of planning to attack an event organized by the Mujahedin-e-Khalq in Villepinte. In October, France imposed sanctions on two Iranian operatives and the internal directorate of the Iranian intelligence agency (MOIS) in connection with the covert terrorist plot. Authorities separately arrested 11 people during an October raid of the Iranian government-funded organization Zahra France, which the government suspected of supporting and defending the terrorist organizations Hamas and Hizballah. In June, French security agencies arrested 10 terrorists in Corsica over an alleged plot to attack Muslims. In November, French authorities arrested six individuals who the French government characterized as “ultra-right extremists” for allegedly plotting to attack President Macron.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: France is a member of the FATF and its FIU, Tracfin, is a member of the Egmont Group. On April 25-26, France hosted an international conference to discuss CFT. Over 70 delegations attended the conference. President Macron highlighted France’s CFT priorities, including improved intelligence sharing, greater transparency on financial transactions, better monitoring of charities in order to prevent their abuse by terrorism financiers, and new regulations on financial technology. France continued its efforts to investigate and prosecute the financing of terrorism. In addition to multiple prosecutions of individuals charged with providing financial support to terrorist organizations, the government also indicted French-Swiss construction materials firm Lafarge in June for financing a terrorist enterprise and complicity in crimes against humanity for allegedly making payments to ISIS in order to keep its Jalabiya, Syria, cement plant running in 2013-14.

Countering Violent Extremism: In February, the French government released its “Prevent to Protect” CVE plan, whose 60 measures outline a strategy focused on education, youth engagement, detection, and professionalization and standardization of re-integration programs, particularly for minors returning from Iraq and Syria and for radicalized prisoners. For returned minors, the plan calls for long-term, locally driven counseling and support programs run out of prefectures in coordination with the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health. On radicalized prisoners, the government formalized an approach based on a four-month evaluation of prisoners followed either by restricted isolation (for extreme cases) or placement in dedicated units with multidisciplinary counseling (for lower risk cases). The government also decided to expand from Paris to three additional cities a pilot “day center” program to disengage and reintegrate radicalized individuals on probation or recently released from prison.

Bordeaux, Montreuil, Paris, and Sarcelles are members of the Strong Cities Network.

International and Regional Cooperation: France is an active participant in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and the GCTF. France also plays a strong role on the UN Security Council ISIL (Da’esh) and al-Qai’da Sanctions Committee. 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. France has sent technical experts to various EU member states to assist in their implementation of PNR programs pursuant to a 2016 EU directive.

GEORGIA

Overview: In 2018, Georgia, a longstanding member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, continued its robust engagement with the United States across a range of counterterrorism-related issues. The State Security Service of Georgia (SSSG), Georgia's lead agency regarding terrorism-related incidents and investigations, reported a decline of support for ISIS among Georgian citizens in 2018. The SSSG arrested, prosecuted, and sentenced eight individuals for supporting ISIS member Akhmet Chataev, who was killed in a counterterrorism operation in Tbilisi in 2017. The SSSG estimates that approximately 14 Georgian nationals are in Syria or Iraq supporting terrorist groups. In addition to implementing several amendments aimed at strengthening counterterrorism legislation, Georgia established a Permanent Interagency Commission, which is working on Georgia's national counterterrorism strategy and action plan.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: There were no reported terrorist incidents in Georgia in 2018.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Georgia continued to enhance its counterterrorism legislation in 2018 through amendments to its criminal code, which granted government officials greater authorities for cases with connections to foreign jurisdictions. Under the new amendments, investigators and prosecutors are entitled to interview witnesses remotely or those registered in a foreign state using technical means, obtain computer data under the control of a foreign jurisdiction, and conduct investigations and examinations in a foreign jurisdiction with its agreement.

Georgia is generally capable of detecting, deterring, and responding to terrorism incidents. The SSSG has the lead in handling terrorism-related incidents and investigations, and is generally well equipped and well trained. The SSSG's Counterterrorism Unit continues to receive regular training and equipment. Recognizing the need for a whole-of-government response to the challenges of terrorism, in September 2018, Georgia established its SSSG-chaired Permanent Interagency Commission, an interagency group responsible for drafting and monitoring the implementation of Georgia's national counterterrorism strategy and action plan. In 2018, Georgia also carried out exercises to enhance interoperability and cooperation between agencies with counterterrorism-related mandates.

Georgia took steps in 2018 to improve its border, maritime, and aviation security through legislation and infrastructure improvement. In April, Georgia passed Government Decree N174, which enhances the legal procedures related to the development of Georgia's API and PNR systems, in line with UNSCR 2396. In May, Georgia integrated INTERPOL databases into its national border databases. Throughout 2018, Georgia improved infrastructure on four land border sectors bordering Armenia and Turkey. Georgia's Border Police installed surveillance and monitoring systems at three land border sectors on its border with Armenia. In October, the United States transferred two Island class patrol boats to Georgia's Coast Guard, and the Georgian government approved a new statute for the Joint Maritime Operations Center, updating

its rules and procedures regarding information exchange. In 2018, Georgia's Civil Aviation Agency conducted 23 quality control activities, including inspections, audits, and covert tests.

In 2018, Georgia detained, prosecuted, and sentenced several Georgian nationals affiliated with Chechen ISIS member Akhmet Chataev, following his death in a SSSG-led counterterrorism operation in November 2017. SSSG-led operations in Tbilisi and Pankisi Gorge led to the detention of eight individuals. All eight were found guilty of terrorism charges. The SSSG also investigated three cases of false notifications of terrorism, one case of public incitement to terrorism and illegal purchase and storage of firearms and ammunition, and two cases of preparation of an act of terrorism.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Georgia is a member of MONEYVAL, a FATF-style regional body. Georgia's FIU, the Financial Monitoring Service (FMS), is a member of the Egmont Group. In 2018, the FMS drafted a new AML/CFT law and submitted it to the government for approval. In addition, in 2018 the Interagency Commission on Implementation of UNSCRs also submitted 15 motions requesting to freeze the assets of 130 individuals and 30 entities and seize the frozen assets of one individual and 19 entities. The Commission also implemented several UNSCRs related to asset freezing, travel bans, and arms embargoes on individuals and legal entities suspected of involvement in terrorism.

The FMS reported that the SSSG launched investigations into two cases of terrorism financing. The National Bank of Georgia carried out on-site inspections of 25 financial institutions to assess the efficiency of risk management processes relating to money laundering and terrorism financing. The Government of Georgia charged six individuals associated with Chechen ISIS member Akhmet Chataev with financing terrorism and/or providing other material support to terrorist activities. Georgia also conducted trainings, seminars, and workshops on AML/CFT involving approximately 120 participants from across the Georgian government.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: In 2018, the Georgian government continued its CVE efforts in vulnerable populations by focusing on initiatives in education, civic and political participation, media and access to information, gender issues, preserving minority culture and identity, justice and law-enforcement activities, and social and regional integration.

In cooperation with the Council of Europe, Georgia implemented the "Reference Framework of Competencies for Democratic Culture" project, which aims in part to prevent radicalization to terrorism in schools. Georgia also held a series of CVE trainings and conferences promoting religious tolerance and antidiscrimination.

In 2018, Georgia developed several initiatives aimed at addressing the perceived underlying drivers of terrorist radicalization in vulnerable communities, including the implementation of small grants programs, under which Georgia issued seven grants in the Pankisi Gorge in 2018. Georgia also received targeted training funded by the Department of State and conducted by the

Department of Justice on CVE topics including effective law enforcement techniques, prosecutorial strategies, benefits of community outreach programs, digital investigation and analysis, effective electronic and other covert surveillance techniques, threats emanating from al-Qa'ida, ISIS, ISIS-Yemen, or al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula propaganda, FTFs, battlefield evidence, and returning ISIS fighters.

International and Regional Cooperation: Georgia is actively engaged on counterterrorism issues at the international, regional, and bilateral levels. Georgia also cooperates closely with NATO, the Council of Europe, the Organization of Black Sea Economic Cooperation, and the Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldova (GUAM) Organization for Democracy and Economic Development.

In 2018, Georgia signed a Memorandum of Understanding on secure communication lines and a liaison agreement in March with Europol, enabling the use of Europol's secure channels for communication. Adding to existing agreements with 23 countries and the EU, Georgia also signed agreements on the exchange and mutual protection of classified information with Albania, Moldova, and Italy, and concluded similar agreements with Germany and Belarus.

GERMANY

Overview: Germany continued its counterterrorism cooperation with the United States and the international community as a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and the GCTF. Germany continued to process significantly increased numbers of terrorism-related investigations, arrests, and prosecutions. Law enforcement targeted a range of suspects, including Islamist terrorists (the most significant number of cases and the greatest threat, according to German officials). Law enforcement also targeted violent threats and other crimes carried out by racially, ethnically, ideologically, or politically motivated actors (an increasing trend). The government monitored approximately 800 *Gefährder* (i.e., dangerous persons who have not been accused of crimes but have come to the attention of law enforcement), accelerated deportations of foreign terror suspects, and actively investigated returning FTFs. The “Pact for the Rule of Law” set forth the March 2018 coalition agreement, commits, among other things, to create 15,000 new jobs in federal and state-level law enforcement agencies, and 2,000 new judiciary positions.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: On June 12, police arrested a 42-year-old Tunisian suspected of planning an attack using explosives and ricin. German police subsequently arrested his wife as an accomplice and Tunisian authorities arrested two Tunisian men connected to the plot.

On October 15, a 55-year old Syrian injured four people in an arson attack and hostage-taking at Cologne's main train station. Federal prosecutors assumed control over the investigation of the suspected terrorist incident, citing “indications of a radical Islamist background.”

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Germany bolstered its counterterrorism tools in 2018 through amendments to the Residence Act and the Alien Act, which increase the maximum time of pre-deportation detention (from four to 10 days) and permit extensions of up to 12 months for persons formally determined to pose potential security threats (*Gefährder*) and

are awaiting travel documents needed for deportation. New legislation allows the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees to read and evaluate data from mobile phones belonging to asylum applicants without identity documents in order to confirm their identity. In May 2018, the Federal High Court ruled that overt acts in support of terrorism are required to prosecute spouses or family members of FTFs in Syria and Iraq, and that a spousal relationship with a terrorist or mere participation in family life in the conflict area is insufficient grounds for prosecution.

Counterterrorism investigations are conducted by both federal- and state-level law enforcement agencies, and coordinated through the Joint Counter-Terrorism Center, which comprises 40 internal law enforcement and security agencies. In 2018, new terrorism investigations rose significantly for the second year in a row. Approximately 500 cases opened in previous years were transferred from federal to state prosecutors in 2018, and approximately 500 carryover cases from previous years were dropped. Some counterterrorism cases are offshoots of refugee processing (for example, asylum seekers who claim to be threatened by “Islamist extremists” or falsely claim membership in ISIS or al-Qa’ida in order to increase their chances for asylum, knowing that Germany prohibits deportation to countries that impose the death penalty). Law enforcement agencies significantly increased the number of *Gefährder* deported in 2018, but federal officials did not supply a figure.

Germany continued to participate in international efforts to enhance border security. It has established the legislation needed to collect and analyze PNR data as required by the EU. Germany continued to participate in multilateral counterterrorism operational efforts in Africa and the Middle East. Through the GCTF, Germany co-sponsored the “Initiative to Counter Unmanned Aerial System Threats” with the United States.

Significant law enforcement actions in 2018 included:

- On October 9, German authorities extradited Iranian official Assadollah Assadi to Belgium, following a legal battle in which he unsuccessfully claimed diplomatic status following his June 30 arrest while on what he claimed was personal travel in Germany. Assadi was arrested in Germany pursuant to a European arrest warrant alleging espionage and a covert plot to attack Iranian opposition activists at a rally in France.
- On October 15, over U.S. objections, Germany deported to Morocco Mounir el Motassadeq, a member of the Hamburg-based terrorist cell that supported the logistical planning efforts of 9/11 pilot Mohammed Atta in connection with the 9/11 attacks.
- On May 7, the Constitutional Court re-authorized deportations to Tunisia. While German law forbids deportations when the deportee faces mistreatment in the receiving country, Germany deported Tunisian Sami Aidoudi (suspected former bodyguard of Osama bin Laden) to Tunisia on July 13, citing the country’s long-standing moratorium on enforcing the death penalty. Germany denied an appeal to overturn the deportation on humanitarian grounds on November 31.

Germany continued to examine the December 19, 2016 Christmas Market terror attack. The Bundestag and two state parliaments (North-Rhine Westphalia and Berlin) conducted hearings to evaluate law enforcement’s performance in the case, including law enforcement coordination among different agencies and states, and police practices.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Germany is a member of the FATF and its FIU is a member of the Egmont Group. Germany completed the transfer of its FIU to the Customs Office and hired a new FIU chief in July 2018. The FIU is working to eliminate a backlog of cases and will undergo a regularly scheduled FATF Mutual Evaluation Report in 2020. No new counterterrorism financing legislation was enacted in 2018. Germany remained a strong advocate of the UN Security Council ISIL (Da'esh) and al-Qa'ida sanctions regime.

Countering Violent Extremism: In 2018, Germany maintained funding for existing CVE programs and earmarked a total of US \$255 million for programs that target all types of terrorism, including an US \$118 million National Prevention Strategy Against Islamist Extremism and special programs concerning returning FTFs and their families. The majority of programs are federally funded, led jointly by the Federal Interior and Family Ministries, and implemented locally through the States and NGOs. The program focuses on local communities, schools, and refugee integration centers; the program gives special attention to prevention and de-radicalization through the internet, refugee integration, and prisons. These programs have mandatory evaluation requirements and local research institutions have begun to engage in CVE-related research.

Augsburg, Berlin, Dresden, and Dusseldorf are members of the Strong Cities Network.

International and Regional Cooperation: The United States and Germany are co-leading the GCTF "Initiative to Counter Unmanned Aerial System Threats," announced in September 2018. Germany hosted the launch event and first regional workshop of the initiative in Berlin in December 2018. Germany remains an active participant in other GCTF initiatives and hosted a regional workshop on a terrorist travel initiative in December 2018.

GREECE

Overview: The Greek government remained a cooperative counterterrorism partner in 2018, and enhanced tools and information exchange to vet undocumented migrants who continue to arrive in significant numbers. Greece passed legislation permitting collection and analysis of PNR data in implementation of European law and international best practices. U.S. and Greek forces participated in a large-scale joint counterterrorism training exercise. There were no major terrorist incidents in Greece in 2018. However, domestic groups carried out intermittent small-scale attacks. Greece is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: Several terrorist incidents occurred in 2018:

- On December 13, a bomb exploded outside private television station SKAI TV in Athens causing extensive damage but no injuries. An anonymous call to a news website provided advance warning and the police evacuated the area before the bomb detonated. The militant group known by the acronym OLA (often called Popular Fighters Group or Group of People's Fighters) later claimed responsibility for the incident in an online statement.

- On December 27, a small explosive device detonated outside an Athens church, causing minor injuries to a police officer and church employee. A group called the Iconoclastic Sect later claimed responsibility in an online statement that indicated the objective of the explosion was to kill people inside the church.
- Greece also experienced a number of small-scale attacks conducted primarily by domestic anarchists often acting in solidarity with incarcerated terrorists, protesting what they view as corrupt acts by government or private individuals, or opposing foreign policy decisions. Examples of these attacks included exploding incendiary devices targeting academics, firebombing police vehicles and stations while officers were inside, and targeting government buildings and foreign missions.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: On November 28, the Greek Parliament approved into law the EU PNR Directive for the prevention, detection, investigation, and prosecution of terrorist offenses and serious crime, bringing Greece in line with Visa Waiver Program requirements, European law, and international standards. Greece's law enforcement and border security officials make use of watch lists, databases, and biometrics to detect, deter, and prevent acts of terrorism. The porous nature of Greece's borders remained a concern; migrants continued to arrive in Greece, though the number of arrivals has decreased significantly from the peak of the migrant crisis in 2015. Greece's national identification card remained extremely vulnerable to alteration and photo substitution; it has not incorporated security features, such as a digitized photo and biometrics. The Greek government has committed to address this vulnerability through the introduction of a biometric national identification card in the near future.

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

- On January 27, Greek officials detained an Afghan national caught carrying dozens of detonators and charged him with illegal possession of explosives.
- On March 19, a Greek court convicted a 33-year-old Syrian man, who first came to Greece as a refugee in 2016, on murder and explosives charges related to his time with ISIS in Syria.
- On May 8, Hellenic National Police arrested 14 people in a single operation on charges of terrorist financing and money laundering in connection with the 2017 parcel bombings by Konstantinos Giatzoglou, which targeted European institutions and wounded former Prime Minister Lucas Papademos.
- On June 11, a criminal appeals court sentenced convicted terrorist Paula Roupa to life in prison plus 25 years for her leadership role in the April 2014 bomb explosion in front of the Bank of Greece claimed by the terrorist group Revolutionary Struggle. The court found Roupa guilty of a series of charges including forming a terrorist organization and supplying, possession, and use of explosives.

Greek judges and prosecutors are professional, experienced, and well-equipped to confront domestic terrorism. However, Greece is less experienced in the prosecution of international terrorism. Greece has not implemented all aspects of UNSCR 2396 that could help strengthen the legal framework to prosecute FTFs.

Despite objections from the U.S. government and others, Greek officials granted convicted terrorist Dimitris Koufontinas five furloughs from prison in 2018. Koufontinas is serving 11 life sentences plus 25 years for the murder of 11 people and his leadership role in November 17, the terrorist group that targeted and assassinated members of the U.S. Mission to Greece, as well as British and Turkish diplomats, Greek politicians, and Greek citizens. On August 3, prison authorities transferred Koufontinas from Greece's highest-security prison to an agricultural prison where inmates live in open conditions and participate in farm work resulting in a net reduction of their sentences.

Prison authorities also transferred fellow November 17 member and convicted terrorist Christodoulos Xiros from Greece's highest-security prison to a lower-security prison on August 6. On December 10, a court of appeals rejected convicted terrorist Savvas Xiros' request for conditional release from prison for health reasons on the grounds that he should spend 25 years in prison before he is able to apply for conditional release. Xiros is serving five life sentences for his key role in the November 17 terrorist group as a bomb maker.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Greece is a member of FATF and its FIU, the Hellenic Anti-Money Laundering and Anti-Terrorist Financing Commission (HAMLC), is a member of the Egmont Group. Greece is currently undergoing its fourth FATF Mutual Evaluation Review. 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 2018 but did not report evidence of terrorist financing in Greece. 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.

Countering Violent Extremism: There were no significant changes in Greece's CVE efforts since the 2017 report.

International and Regional Cooperation: U.S. and Greek forces collaborated in a large-scale, interagency joint counterterrorism exercise in 2018.

ITALY

Overview: Italy collaborated closely with the United States, the EU, and the UN in its international counterterrorism efforts. Italy is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and the GCTF. As part of the Coalition, Italy was the second largest contributor of troops in Iraq, after the United States, heads the Coalition's police training sub-group, and leads efforts to train Iraqi police and security forces. Italy continued to co-chair the Defeat-ISIS Coalition's Counter-Finance working group with the United States and Saudi Arabia. Italy is the fourth largest troop contributor to NATO's Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan and hosts NATO's Hub for the South.

Domestically, Italy investigated and prosecuted terrorist suspects within its borders, and deported 117 individuals for terrorism-related reasons. Criminal and low-level terrorist acts, such as those

involving small IEDs, remained a threat. Italy has identified approximately 100 FTFs 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, Italian officials are concerned fighters from the Western Balkans returning to Europe could also pass through Italian territory, given the significant Balkan origin communities in Italy.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: On October 13, a small IED concealed in an envelope exploded in front of the Lega political party office in Ala, in the province of Trento, ahead of a visit of Deputy Prime Minister/Minister of Interior and Lega leader Matteo Salvini. No injuries were reported. Police identified two suspects who were members of an anarchist group.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: In November, Parliament passed the so-called “Salvini Decree,” a package of law enforcement and migration measures containing provisions making it easier to strip citizenship from naturalized migrants convicted of terrorism. In addition, the decree requires automobile rental companies to share information on van and truck rentals with police to allow for terrorism-related screening. Italian authorities continue to work with the U.S. government on building Italy’s capacity to screen arriving migrants for known and suspected terrorists. The Italian government continued to make use of 2005 legislation facilitating the detention of terrorist suspects and expedited procedures for expelling non-citizens suspected of endangering national security. In 2018, Italy deported 117 individuals on security grounds, up from 105 in 2017.

Prominent arrests and expulsions in 2018 included the following:

- In January, police deactivated a small IED in front of the Rome office of the political party Brothers of Italy. No suspects were named, but a few weeks later the same office was vandalized and spray-painted with anarchist symbols.
- On April 20, police arrested a Gambian migrant in Naples suspected of preparing an attack. The suspect had reportedly been radicalized to violence in Libya before crossing to Italy by sea. He had been in contact with ISIS supporters, who sent him €1,500 (US \$1,705) and instructions on how to execute an attack.
- In May and October, police expelled an Albanian citizen and his sister, both residents in the province of Grosseto, for having engaged in recruitment for ISIS. The two were identified as part of a larger investigation dating from 2015, which led to the arrest of 10 other suspects in Italy and to the identification of a number of FTFs of Italian origin who traveled to Syria.
- On May 10, police arrested in Lombardy and Sardinia 11 Syrian and three Moroccan suspects accused of raising US \$2.3 million for al-Nusra Front in Syria. The funds were mainly generated by profits from migrant smuggling through the Balkans and into Italy.
- On August 17, two Moroccan citizens were expelled for espousing violence and spreading pro-ISIS propaganda. One had recently completed a drug-related sentence in a prison in Calabria where he had become radicalized to violence. Both were deported to Morocco on direct flights, accompanied by police escort.

- On November 2, police expelled a 23-year-old Kosovo citizen who returned to Milan despite having been expelled in 2015 for circulating jihadist propaganda online. His earlier deportation banned him from reentering Italy for 10 years.
- On November 12, police expelled a 29-year-old Tunisian citizen, resident in Ravenna, who had been detained for drug-related charges. During a previous incarceration, he showed signs of radicalization to violence, celebrating the news of the 2016 terror attacks in Brussels and making statements in support of ISIS.
- On November 28, police arrested a Palestinian, Amin al Haj, in Macomer, Sardinia. He was suspected of planning a chemical attack and being member of ISIS. According to press reporting, his cousin Mohamed Hassad told Lebanese police that Amin, who proclaimed loyalty to ISIS, participated in a failed terror attack against the Lebanese army several years ago. In Sardinia, he purchased substances that he intended to use in an attack on the water supply of a local military barracks.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Italy is a member of FATF, and its FIU 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.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: There were no significant changes in Italy’s CVE efforts since the 2017 report.

International and Regional Cooperation: Italy continued to support counterterrorism efforts in regional and multilateral organizations, including NATO, the OSCE, and the GCTF. In its capacity as 2018 OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Italy hosted a conference on counterterrorism in May entitled “The Reverse Flow of Foreign Terrorist Fighters: Challenges for the OSCE Area and Beyond.” At the conference, OSCE subject matter experts exchanged best practices on tracing FTFs and strengthening counterterrorism cooperation. Italy strengthened its counterterrorism capacity building efforts in Libya, focusing on coast guard cooperation, investigative training for law enforcement, and border security measures. In 2018, the Italian military commenced training activities in Niger with local security forces in support of the efforts of Nigerien authorities and G5 Sahel Member States to strengthen border security, counter illicit trafficking, and combat threats to regional security.

KOSOVO

Overview: Kosovo continued to fight the threat of terrorism through close cooperation with the United States. Kosovo is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. More than 400 Kosovar men, women, and children are known to have traveled to Syria and Iraq to join terrorist groups, of which approximately 70 are deceased. An estimated 130 individuals have returned to Kosovo, while about 200 remain in the conflict zone. In 2018, the Government of Kosovo continued to implement its comprehensive CVE strategy and updated its action plan. In 2018, the government approved its third counterterrorism strategy and action plan for 2018-22.

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 2017, extending the country's judicial authority and access to justice for citizens. The NATO Kosovo Force and EU Rule of Law Mission continued to work with the Kosovo Police (KP) to maintain a safe and secure environment and strengthen the rule of law, including at the borders.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: There were no reported terrorist incidents in Kosovo in 2018.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Kosovo's legislative framework is sufficient to prosecute individuals suspected of committing or supporting terrorist activities, but there are challenges in implementation. Kosovo officials recognize the need to improve interagency cooperation.

On November 23, the Kosovo Assembly passed amendments to the criminal code, which include a variety of changes to assist in the fight against terrorism and implement the latest regional conventions and protocols, including the Council of Europe 2017 Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism and the EU Directive on Combating Terrorism. The amendments cover all aspects of terrorism financing, encompassing the concept of crypto-currencies within the amended definition of funds as they represent digital value. Kosovo introduced two new laws to deal with terrorists who steal or use another person's identity or use the account information of another person, and terrorists who travel in or out of Kosovo for terrorist activities. The latter will allow Kosovo to prosecute terrorists using Kosovo as a transit point and assist foreign countries in pursuit of terrorists.

The Government of Kosovo strengthened its existing counterterrorism provisions and approved a new counterterrorism strategy for 2018-22. The new counterterrorism strategy provides a comprehensive approach to preventing and combating terrorism and is one of the government's strategic priorities. On March 30, the Assembly passed the Law on Critical Infrastructure, which aims to identify, preserve, and protect national and European critical infrastructure.

Law enforcement authorities demonstrated adequate capacity to detect and prevent several terrorist plots in Kosovo and abroad. The KP Counterterrorism Directorate (KPCT), which is responsible for counterterrorism investigations, increased their investigative capacities by increasing personnel and developing a cyber-counterterrorism unit. The Department of State supported these efforts through the Antiterrorism Assistance program.

The Kosovo Border Police regularly updated their watchlist of persons suspected of connections to terrorism or criminal activities; they had 33 hits in 2018. Kosovo is dedicated to full implementation of UNSCR 2396.

In June, KPCT arrested five persons suspected of planning terrorist attacks in Kosovo and Western European countries. Another person of Kosovo origin was arrested simultaneously in Germany, based on a Kosovo-issued international arrest warrant, and then extradited to Kosovo.

KP units responsible for these actions benefited from significant U.S. capacity-building assistance.

In 2018, trials and investigations continued for 29 suspects and nine cases. Kosovo imams previously arrested on terrorism-related charges were acquitted. Kosovo authorities arrested six additional individuals on terrorism-related charges and courts issued 20 guilty verdicts for terrorism-related criminal offenses. Authorities issued four new indictments on terrorism charges involving 11 individuals.

On July 17, the Pristina Basic Court convicted seven defendants and acquitted one person on terrorism and weapons charges related to their participation in the Syrian conflict as ISIS members. Those convicted received sentences from 28 months to four years imprisonment.

On May 18, the Pristina Basic Court convicted eight defendants for planning an attack in Albania against the Israeli national soccer team and various Kosovo targets in November 2016. Sentences ranged from 18 months to 10 years. On September 17, the Appellate Court reduced the sentence for each defendant.

The Government of Kosovo continued to demonstrate political will to address threats related to terrorism through law enforcement and border security with significant U.S. capacity building assistance. 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: Kosovo's FIU is a member of the Egmont Group.

Countering Violent Extremism: Kosovo's CVE strategy and action plan provides 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. Implementation has been uneven across government ministries and challenges continue due to lack of capacity and inadequate resources. In September, the Kosovo government updated its CVE action plan by adding several new activities on reintegration and rehabilitation.

The Kosovo Justice Ministry continued its implementation of a corrections program aimed at enhancing the management of terrorists in prison, and setting up frameworks for the rehabilitation and eventual reintegration of convicted terrorists. On May 23, the Ministry of Internal Affairs announced the establishment of a Prevention and Reintegration Division. The aim of this division is to reintegrate individuals who served time in prison on terrorism charges, FTF returnees, and family members.

Kosovo's CVE strategy includes the preparation and promotion of counter narratives to delegitimize terrorists' messages. In 2018, the Government of Kosovo began working with *Hedayah* and Embassy Pristina to develop a national CVE communications strategy.

Kosovo organizations continued cooperative activities through the Country Support Mechanism under GCERF, a public-private global fund to support local, grassroots CVE efforts in at-risk communities.

Ferizaj, Gjakova, Gjilan, Gračanica, Hani i Elezit, Kaçanik, Mitrovica South, Peja, Prishtina, Prizen, Viti, Vushtrri, and Zvečan are members of the Strong Cities Network.

International and Regional Cooperation: The Government of Kosovo worked closely with officials in Albania and North Macedonia to support counterterrorism capacity building and cooperation.

NORTH MACEDONIA

Overview: North Macedonia cooperated with U.S. counterterrorism efforts and was a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. With no terrorist attacks in 2018 and no reported departures to join ISIS, the main terrorism threat North Macedonia faced consisted of returning FTFs and the potential for radicalization to violence. In March, the government adopted the 2018-22 National Counterterrorism Strategy and a standalone 2018-2022 National Strategy for Countering Violent Extremism, both accompanied by national action plans.

North Macedonia's authorities assessed that ISIS members and sympathizers maintained a presence in North Macedonia. The National Committee for Countering Violent Extremism and Countering Terrorism (NCCVECT), the Ministry of Interior (MOI), and the Department of Security and Counterintelligence estimated that at least 156 citizens of North Macedonia have traveled to join terrorist groups in Syria and Iraq. Of that number, 35 were killed, approximately 38 remain, and 83 returned to North Macedonia. In August, North Macedonia repatriated and detained for investigation seven of its citizens from Syrian Democratic Forces' custody, becoming one of the first countries to successfully do so and setting an example for the rest of the world to follow.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: There were no reported terrorist incidents in North Macedonia in 2018.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: North Macedonia's legislative framework is adequate to prosecute individuals and groups suspected of committing or aiding terrorist activities or participating in foreign wars. On March 6, the government adopted separate national strategies on counterterrorism and CVE, accompanied by respective action plans, which were drafted with U.S. support and input from civil society.

North Macedonian law enforcement's capacity to proactively detect, deter, and prevent acts of terrorism improved as a result of numerous trainings and the development of operational plans to prevent and respond to possible terrorist attacks. The MOI's Anti-Terrorism Unit takes the lead in performing counterterrorism functions.

North Macedonia's criminal justice leaders cooperated with the United States on terrorism-related matters. On December 27, North Macedonia's Public Prosecution Office filed indictments in court against the seven FTFs repatriated from Syria in August under Articles 394 and 322 of the criminal code, which criminalize membership and participation in a terrorist organization, respectively.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: North Macedonia is a member of MONEYVAL, a FATF-style regional body. North Macedonia's FIU, the Financial Intelligence Office (FIO), is a member of the Egmont Group. North Macedonia's AML/CFT legal framework remains largely in compliance with international standards. In 2018, North Macedonia agreed to join the Group of Seven (G-7) 24/7 Network to combat cybercrime and counterterrorism networks.

In 2018, the Government of North Macedonia continued to address deficiencies noted in MONEYVAL's 2014 Fourth Round Evaluation Report by drafting a new law on restrictive measures. Following approval in parliament on June 26, the Law on the Prevention of Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing harmonized domestic legislation with UNSCR 1373 as well as with FATF recommendations on targeted financial sanctions related to terrorism. The law defined the FIO's scope of work, as well as the obligations of government authorities and other entities to identify and prevent money laundering and terrorist financing, and to conduct a national risk assessment. This law supplemented the criminal code to address terrorism and expanded criminal liability of those who finance terrorist activities or are involved in terrorist offences. As of October, North Macedonia's FIO received two suspicious transaction reports for terrorist financing. One report was dismissed, and the second report is currently being processed.

Countering Violent Extremism: In March, the government adopted national counterterrorism and CVE strategies and accompanying action plans. The NCCVECT oversees implementation. The number of activities anticipated in the action plans was not sufficiently supported by the NCCVECT's budget. The Committee therefore heavily relied on the international donor community for funding and program implementation. The Committee focused on CVE prevention and counter-messaging, developing local community resilience, and prison reform. The Department of State supported a Mothers School Program and a regional counter-messaging program that aimed to stem terrorist recruitment online. Additionally, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, EU, Council of Europe, and OSCE implemented a range of CVE projects in North Macedonia.

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

International and Regional Cooperation: North Macedonia is a willing international and regional counterterrorism partner. Since the NCCVECT was established in 2017, it has focused on increasing regional cooperation with similar counterterrorism and CVE coordination bodies in neighboring countries. The NCCVECT signed a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Albania in December 2017 and anticipates signing an MOU with Kosovo to cement counterterrorism and CVE cooperation. North Macedonia, Kosovo, and Albania also began drafting a trilateral CVE Action Plan, and are working on harmonizing it with the Joint Action Plans for CVE between the Western Balkans Six and the EU, which was signed in October. NCCVECT members actively participated in various regional and international CVE conferences.

THE NETHERLANDS

Overview: The Netherlands continued to respond effectively to the global terrorist threat in the areas of border and transportation security, counterterrorist financing, CVE, and bilateral and multilateral counterterrorism cooperation. Since March 2013, the Dutch national threat level has been “substantial” (the second-highest ranking). The main 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.

The Netherlands is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, participates in all Coalition working groups, and is co-chair, with Turkey and Kuwait, of the Coalition’s FTF Working Group. The Netherlands has liaisons embedded at various operational command center, conducted air strikes against terrorist targets in Iraq and Syria, provided force protection, and contributed military personnel and trainers in Iraq. The Netherlands is also a member of the GCTF and co-chairs the GCTF with Morocco.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: On August 31, an Afghan asylum seeker living in Germany stabbed two U.S. citizens at Amsterdam Central Station. Authorities believe the perpetrator did not specifically target the U.S. citizens. Both victims survived the attack. The suspect acted alone and had terrorist intent. The first hearing for the suspect took place on December 11, and he remained in Dutch custody at year’s end.

On May 5, a Syrian asylum seeker stabbed three people in The Hague. All three survived the attack. Dutch law enforcement considers it very likely that the suspect acted with terrorist intent. The suspect has a history as a psychiatric patient. The suspect remained in Dutch custody at year’s end.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: The Netherlands implemented counterterrorism legislation in line with relevant UNSCRs. Within the EU, the Netherlands continued to push for implementation of the EU’s “Road Map to Improve Information Exchange,” first proposed by the Netherlands during its EU Presidency in 2016. There were no significant changes in law enforcement structures, capacity, international cooperation, or border security legislation in 2018. On May 1, a new Law on the Intelligence Services entered into force. This law governs the authorities and mandates of the Dutch intelligence services. Updates from the previous version of the law include changes to the mandate to intercept online data.

On October 16, various new counterterrorism measures entered into force. The measures include extending the period authorities can hold a terrorist suspect in pre-trial detention, making it easier to draw DNA material from terrorist suspects, making it mandatory for citizens to report terrorist crimes to authorities, and withdrawing voting rights from convicted terrorists.

In support of UNSCR 2396, the Netherlands developed Travel Information Portal (TRIP) software to enable passenger screening, and signed over the intellectual property rights to the UN so that other countries can use it.

Significant law enforcement and judicial actions related to counterterrorism included:

- Following the August 31 attack at Amsterdam Central Station, Dutch authorities cooperated with U.S. agencies. The local government in Amsterdam is developing ways to improve cooperation with embassies from relevant countries during an emergency, including quicker and more complete information sharing.
- During a large, coordinated operation on September 27, authorities arrested seven suspects on suspicion of planning a major terrorist attack in the Netherlands. The group was in the process of acquiring AK-47s, small arms, hand grenades, bomb vests, and precursors for building explosive devices. Upon their arrest, four suspects were allegedly training to attack a major event. At year's end, one suspect had been released pending the conclusion of the investigation; the others remained in custody.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: The Netherlands is a member of the FATF and is one of the Cooperating and Supporting Nations of the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force, a FATF-style regional body. The Netherlands' FIU is a member of the Egmont Group and has the rotating chair for 2017-19. The government effectively enforced terrorist finance laws. At least five persons were arrested in 2018 for financing FTFs in Syria. Their cases remained pending at year's end.

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. As of December 2018, the government's national terrorist watch lists include 135 individuals and three organizations whose assets were frozen.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: The Netherlands' 2016-2020 National Counterterrorism Strategy contains measures to strengthen communities, build resilience to terrorist radicalization, and prevent persons from becoming FTFs. The government prioritizes prevention, among other themes, within its strategy. The government uses a local, multi-disciplinary approach for prevention and develops tailored plans of action to intervene with individuals suspected of radicalization.

Community police officers are the cornerstone of the local approach to prevention. 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. Similar programs also rehabilitate former terrorists. To counter terrorist messaging, local governments use outreach efforts with community and religious leaders to amplify credible voices. Returned FTFs 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, GCTF, the EU, the Council of Europe, the OSCE, and NATO. As co-chair of the GCTF, the Netherlands hosts and has seconded staff to the GCTF Administrative Unit. In 2018, the Netherlands led a GCTF initiative on the nexus between terrorism and organized crime, and with the United States an initiative on returning FTFs and their families. The Netherlands is on the governing board of the three GCTF-inspired institutions: the International Center of Excellence for Countering Violent Extremism (*Hedayah*), the International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law (IIJ), and GCERF. The Netherlands also participates in the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism.

The Netherlands continued to finance a wide variety of capacity-building projects. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs appointed regional security coordinators at six embassies who are dedicated to capacity building to identify terrorist 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 and the United States maintained good collaboration on counterterrorism. Norway's Police Security Service (PST) continued to assess that individuals and groups inspired by "extreme Islamist groups" represented the most significant terrorist threat to Norway. Norway saw an increased level of mobilization and recruitment among certain racially or ethnically motivated extremist groups, although they did not conduct any attacks in 2018. An estimated 100 individuals have traveled to Syria and Iraq to fight on behalf of ISIS and 30 Norwegian-affiliated FTFs remain in Syria and Iraq. In 2018, no known individuals left Norway to join ISIS. Authorities convicted two Norwegians for providing support to ISIS and participation in ISIS operations.

Norway is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. The government co-sponsored UNSCRs 2178 and 2396 and contributed to the Coalition's five lines of effort, including military personnel support to a capacity-building mission for Iraqi security forces in Anbar, Iraq. In 2018, Norway provided approximately US \$310 million to address the humanitarian crises in Iraq and Syria.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: Norway reported no terrorist incidents in 2018.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Terrorism is a criminal offense in Norway, and it is illegal to conduct or plan to conduct a terrorist attack, receive terrorism-related training, or provide material support to a terrorist organization. In addition, it is a criminal offense to travel or intend to travel to fight on behalf of a terrorist organization. The maximum prison sentence for serious terrorism offenses is 30 years.

Norway continued to prosecute individuals for terrorism-related offenses in 2018. The most significant convictions in 2018 were of two Norwegian citizens found to have been ISIS members and to have fought on behalf of ISIS in Syria. One convicted terrorist received a prison sentence of seven years and three months and the other received six years and six months.

The PST is responsible for domestic security, including counterterrorism activities. The Joint Counter Terrorism Center, a joint analysis cell, includes participants from the PST and the Norwegian Intelligence Service (NIS), the external security service. Both PST and NIS have devoted significant resources to identifying, tracking, and taking action against Norwegian citizens intending to travel to and from Syria or Iraq to fight for terrorist groups.

Norway shares fingerprint information in criminal investigations with the EU and the parties to the Prüm Convention. Norway continued to explore an agreement on sharing PNR data with the EU and is simultaneously developing a national PNR system, which remained in the pilot phase at the end of 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 Immigration Database serves as a central repository for immigration authorities and contains biographic data and facial photos for all applicants for admission. The Norwegian police and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs issue passports that, since 2005, have contained biometric data accessible for review by border security officials. Norway coordinates with INTERPOL and Europol to enhance its vetting processes and has access to the Schengen Information System and the Visa Information System to share and receive information regarding suspected terrorists.

Security measures to protect soft targets in the capital, Oslo, include physical barriers in the streets of one of the city's main pedestrian thoroughfares and directly outside the neighboring buildings. Police at Oslo's Gardermoen Airport are now armed on a permanent basis. Norway altered the police training regime to better address the risk of attacks in public places. The National Auditor reported that the government had failed to secure certain elements of public infrastructure sufficiently, such as government and defense facilities, against potential terrorist attacks. The government acknowledged the need for more progress, attributing delays to the complexity of the proposed measures.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Norway is a member of the FATF. Norway's 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. Norway is a member of the Defeat-ISIS Coalition's Counter-ISIS Finance Group. The government operates a domestic interagency group, which included the Ministries of Justice, Finance, and Foreign Affairs, to counter money laundering and the financing of terrorism.

Countering Violent Extremism: 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, promoting the reintegration of former terrorists, and preventing online recruitment and radicalization to violence.

Norway continued to improve coordination among authorities responsible for managing the release from prison and reintegration of those convicted of terrorism-related offenses. Municipalities considered home to populations and individuals most vulnerable to radicalization have created action plans and increased budgets for prevention activities. The national government hosts an annual conference on terrorist radicalization, which in 2018 focused on best practices and collaborative efforts between the police and local governments and agencies in preventing radicalization to violence.

Norway continued to support the Youth Civil Activism Network. Oslo and Kristiansand are members of the Strong Cities Network.

International and Regional Cooperation: Norway is active in multilateral fora in efforts to counter terrorism, including NATO, the EU’s Radicalization Awareness Network, and the OSCE. Norway participated in, and provided financial support to, the GCTF Working Group on Capacity-Building in East Africa, supported INTERPOL’s capacity-building programs on border security and rule of law in North Africa and the Sahel, and funded counter-radicalization programs in prisons in Morocco, Kenya, and Indonesia. Norway continued to support implementation of the UN Secretary General’s Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism and is co-chair with Jordan of the Group of Friends at the UN on preventing violent extremism. In 2018, Norway hosted the UNDP conference “Assessing Progress Made, and the Future of Development Approaches to Preventing Violent Extremism” and announced it will contribute US \$1.2 million to the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism for the 2018-21 period, in partnership with UNDP. Norway supports the GCERF.

RUSSIA

Overview: The Russian Federation continued to prioritize counterterrorism efforts in 2018 and remained a target of international terrorist groups, particularly ISIS. Low-level militant terrorist activity remained a problem in Russia’s northern Caucasus region despite increases to counterterrorism activities and political consolidation efforts.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: On August 20, a series of attacks in and around Grozny, the capital of the Russian republic of Chechnya, killed one police officer and injured three other officers and a civilian. ISIS claimed credit for the attacks, which stand out in that the perpetrators split up and struck several targets simultaneously in the Grozny region. The outcome of the attacks is in line with typical terrorist activity in the North Caucasus republics of Chechnya, Dagestan, and Ingushetia. Additional attacks included:

- On February 19, a terrorist opened fire on worshippers with a hunting rifle before being killed by security forces outside a Christian Orthodox Church in Kizlyar City, Dagestan. ISIS claimed responsibility for the attack that left five worshippers dead and five wounded, including two security personnel.
- On May 9, ISIS claimed credit for an attack on a Sufi shrine in Dagestan.

- On May 19, four teenage militants claiming ties to ISIS attempted to storm a church in Grozny, killing one churchgoer and two police officers. Church members blocked the attackers from entering and security forces killed all four in a brief shootout.
- On October 31, a teenager blew himself up at a Federal Security Service (FSB) building in the northern Russian city of Arkhangelsk. Evidence suggests that the bombing was linked to anarchism, which has a long history in Russia but is typically connected to vandalism or arson attacks rather than bombings. The FSB has long been a target of anarchists in Russia for its role in repressing political groups in the country.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Russia increasingly used anti-terrorism legislation against the political opposition, independent media, and certain religious organizations to criminalize the legitimate exercise of freedom of expression or association. For further information, see the Department of State’s [Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#).

In May, Russia amended the federal law pertaining to procedures of exit from and entry into the country. If the Russian Interdepartmental Commission on Combating the Financing of Terrorism has frozen funds of a foreign citizen, or the court has suspended operations on a person’s bank accounts, that person may be banned from entering the Russian Federation. Additionally, if a person participates in the financing of terrorism and extremism, that person may be banned from entering the Russian Federation.

On November 8, Russia’s FSB Director General Alexander Bortnikov said that in 2018 the FSB and its international partners identified 70 terrorist cells, 38 of which were affiliated with ISIS, across 24 regions of the country. He stated that Russian law enforcement detained 777 “supporters.” Russian authorities also detected and prevented potential terrorist attacks. For example, from June 14 to July 15, the Russian Federation held the FIFA World Cup in various cities across the western provinces. Despite multitudes of threats in a torrent of online postings from ISIS and lone offenders who may have been mobilized by online propaganda, Russia safeguarded millions of attendees who presented numerous soft target opportunities.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Russia is a member of the FATF and two FATF-style regional bodies: MONEYVAL and the Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism. Russia’s FIU, the Federal Service for Financial Monitoring (Rosfinmonitoring) is a member of the Egmont Group.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: There were no significant changes in 2018.

International and Regional Cooperation: Russia participated in several joint counterterrorism exercises, including the Defenders of Friendship in October with the Egyptian Air Force. In 2018, Russia increased its counterterrorism cooperation efforts with China, Pakistan, and Uzbekistan. Russia also promoted the Collective Security Treaty Organization as a forum for international counterterrorism cooperation. Russia is a member of the GCTF and an active

participant in several multilateral organizations, including the OSCE, East Asia Summit (EAS), Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum. In 2018, Russia proposed an EAS Statement on FTFs that was endorsed in November.

SERBIA

Overview: With no terrorist attacks in 2018 and low levels of ISIS recruitment activities, the main terrorism threats in Serbia remained the potential movement of money and weapons through the region, recruitment and return of FTFs, revitalization of terrorist ideologies, and opportunities for self-radicalization to violence. Serbia has built on its efforts to counter terrorism and continued cooperation with international partners. Serbia is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. However, inexperience as a donor and internal bureaucratic challenges have limited Serbia's support to the Coalition.

Terrorist Incidents: There were no reported terrorist incidents in Serbia in 2018.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: In March, Serbia's *Law on Organization and Jurisdiction of State Authorities Combatting Organized Crime, Terrorism and Corruption* went into effect. The law mandates that each state body have a liaison officer to assist in criminal investigations and establishes four specialized anti-corruption prosecutorial units and judicial courts. Under the law, the Belgrade Higher Court's Special Department for Organized Crime hears terrorism-related offenses and the Organized Crime Prosecutor's Office (OCPO) prosecutes them. The Appellate Court's Special Department for Organized Crime hears appeals.

Serbia's law enforcement capacities need improvement, but are progressing. The Criminal Police Directorate's Service for Combating Terrorism and Extremism (TES) works on terrorism detection, deterrence, and prevention. Serbia's Operational Working Group consists of TES, the Security Information Agency (BIA), and the Prosecutor's Office. Soft targets are required to have terrorism contingency plans, with TES officers providing consultation and oversight. In 2018, TES organized a specialized unit devoted to terrorists' use of the internet and, for the first time, used an online undercover agent in a counterterrorism case.

The Serbian Border Police's System to Check Persons and Vehicles (SZPLIV) screens passengers and vehicles at all border crossings and other ports of entry. SZPLIV verifies the validity of travel documents through basic indicative security elements, collects biographic and biometric data, checks visa status, searches national and international databases, and stores the information. However, data transmission to the central system can take days. Serbia used U.S. training and equipment to develop its security document screening and fraudulent document detection capabilities.

Serbia's criminal code outlaws unauthorized participation in a war or armed conflict in a foreign country consistent with UNSCR 2178 and prescribes incarceration from six months to eight years, with penalties increased to 10 years for citizens who organize, train, or fund a foreign armed conflict. Although UNSCR 2396 mandates that member states develop systems to screen

PNR data, API and PNR programs are not yet legally authorized in Serbia. Serbia's Civil Aviation Directorate is integrating with the European Common Aviation Area and cooperates with international partners to enhance capacities in accordance with UNSCR 2309.

In April, Belgrade High Court's Special Department for Organized Crime convicted seven individuals of terrorism, recruiting and training others in the commission of terrorist acts, and terrorism financing. OCPO prosecuted the case, which began in 2014. The convicted defendants supported ISIS and the al-Nusrah Front in Syria, recruited others to do so, and sent money to those organizations. Three defendants were convicted *in absentia*. Their seven individual sentences range from seven years and six months, to 11 years.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Serbia is a member of MONEYVAL and has observer status in the Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism. Serbia's FIU, the Administration for the Prevention of Money Laundering, is a member of the Egmont Group and participates in international trainings.

Serbia has a National Strategy for the Fight Against Money Laundering and Terrorism Funding and existing laws to implement UNSCRs 1267, 1373, 2178, and 2199. In February, the *Law on Freezing of Assets with the Aim of Preventing Terrorism* went into effect, in accordance with MONEYVAL recommendations and international standards. In April, the *Law on the Prevention of Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism* went into effect, which harmonizes Serbia's regime with international requirements and standards. However, Serbia has yet to demonstrate effective implementation of these laws, and was placed on FATF's "grey list" in 2018.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: Serbia is implementing its National Strategy for the Prevention and Countering of Terrorism for the Period 2017-2021 and accompanying Action Plan, which seeks to identify early factors leading to radicalization to violence, enhance the security culture of citizens, and intercept threats from social media activities. Serbia has not appointed a national CVE coordinator.

Bujanovac, Novi Pazar, Preševo, and Tutin are members of the Strong Cities Network.

International and Regional Cooperation: Serbia is engaged in some regional and international cooperation on counterterrorism issues. The Ministry of the Interior (MOI) and the Security Information Agency cooperate with INTERPOL and Europol on counterterrorism activities, including watchlists. In 2018, the MOI responded to approximately 20 counterterrorism requests from the Federal Bureau of Investigation. In April, the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Overseas Prosecutorial Development Assistance and Training held a workshop for OCPO prosecutors, TES investigators, and judges who handle terrorism and terrorism-financing cases. Training focused on counterterrorism and counter terrorism financing investigations, including the use of cyber investigations and U.S. legal assistance. Serbia, a NATO Partnership for Peace

member, assisted in NATO training of Iraqi military medical personnel as part of anti-terrorism efforts and routinely participates in international law enforcement training.

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 routinely engage with Albania, North Macedonia, and Montenegro. In March, Serbia ceased all bilateral border security cooperation with Kosovo.

SPAIN

Overview: Spain's terrorism alert level remained at four (high) on a five-point scale throughout 2018. Spanish authorities continued to arrest individuals suspected of planning terror attacks; facilitating terrorist financing; and engaging in ISIS- and al-Qai'da-related recruitment and radicalization, both online and in their communities. Spanish counterterrorism cooperation with the United States was excellent. Spain maintained its contribution to the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, with roughly 500 personnel deployed to Iraq throughout the year for military and police training missions. Spain continued to exercise leadership in regional and global counterterrorism fora, including the GCTF and the 5+5 Defense Initiative. In a significant step forward for counterterrorism information sharing, the Catalonia region's autonomous police force formally joined the central government's Intelligence Center for Countering Terrorism and Organized Crime. On May 3, Basque terrorist group Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA) announced its dissolution. ETA observed a unilateral ceasefire beginning in 2011, following a decades-long campaign of violence that claimed more than 800 victims. Spanish officials vowed to continue seeking prosecution for individuals involved in past ETA operations.

Terrorist Incidents: On August 20, a 29-year-old man of Algerian origin brandished a knife in a police station in Cornellà de Llobregat, a town near Barcelona, reportedly shouting "Allahu akbar" before being fatally shot by a police officer. Local authorities described the incident as a terrorist attack because the suspect had reportedly previously accessed ISIS material online. However, a lawyer retained by the assailant's family denied any terrorist sympathies or affiliation, insisting that his actions reflected a "grave personal crisis" stemming from his recent divorce.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Spain's 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 to violence on the internet, training remotely, operating without clear affiliation, or traveling in support of non-state terrorist actors. As of November 2018, Spanish authorities reported that there were 252 individuals detained in Spain on terrorism-related charges.

Significant law enforcement actions related to counterterrorism included:

- On May 8, the Spanish National Police arrested two terror suspects in Murcia and the Basque Country, and Moroccan authorities arrested three individuals allegedly belonging to the same terrorist cell. The five detainees were in contact with ISIS affiliates in Syria,

exchanged pro-ISIS messaging online, attempted to recruit others, and incited attacks against Western targets.

- On October 23, Spanish National Police arrested two men in Valencia and Alicante for allegedly disseminating “jihadist” propaganda through social networks, “inciting hate and violence” against Westerners, and spreading images of the Syrian armed conflict. The suspects were Syrian nationals aged 55 and 58 with connections to ISIS and al-Qa’ida. One of the suspects allegedly held a high-profile role in the “information structure” of ISIS, distributing ISIS propaganda via instant messaging.
- On December 3, Spanish National Police arrested a 46-year-old Moroccan national in Valencia for “extremist indoctrination” and “promoting terrorist propaganda.” The suspect allegedly expressed a desire to travel to fight in Syria, had been in contact with al-Nusrah Front, and had been selling narcotics to finance terrorist activities.
- On April 10, three leaders of a Catalonia-based terrorist cell dismantled in April 2015 received 12-year jail sentences, while seven other individuals associated with the cell received eight-year sentences. The Spanish court determined that the cell was formed “with the sole purpose of carrying out the declared principles of Daesh” and sought to encourage Spaniards to travel to Syria and Iraq. The cell allegedly planned to attack emblematic locations in Barcelona and to kidnap and behead an individual. The cell included Moroccan, Spanish, and Brazilian nationals.
- On October 2, the Spanish Ministry of Interior carried out a groundbreaking operation to counter radicalization in prisons, identifying 25 ISIS-affiliated inmates across 17 Spanish jails who were working to radicalize and recruit other inmates to terrorism.
- On December 7, the Council of Ministers approved a proposal for a new law implementing the EU PNR Directive to track suspected terrorists and other travelers of concern.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Spain is a member of the 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 FIU, 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 Finance Group. On December 11, Spanish National Police broke up an alleged terrorist financing ring operated by four Syrian nationals incarcerated in Spanish prisons, who used their illicit proceeds from Mediterranean drug trafficking and people smuggling to fund terrorist activities in Syria.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: Spain continued implementation of its national CVE plan, developed in 2015 and led by the Intelligence Center for Countering Terrorism and Organized Crime. It seeks to build partnerships at the local level between civil society leaders from vulnerable communities and representatives of law enforcement and other public services. On October 25, Interior Minister Fernando Grande-Marlaska announced that Spain would revise the plan, which “needs an important revamp.”

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

International and Regional Cooperation: Spain is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and the GCTF, and supports counterterrorism initiatives in the UN, the Council of Europe, NATO, and the OSCE. Spain maintained forces 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, and Spain) and North African (Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, and Tunisia) countries to build capacity on counterterrorism, maritime and aviation security, and disaster management. Spain cooperated with regional partners on counterterrorism investigations and arrests. For example, on May 17 Spanish National Police arrested a 27-year-old Moroccan national with a European arrest warrant issued by Germany, and on May 29, authorities in the Basque Country arrested a 21-year-old French escaped criminal flagged on a French watch list for “radicalization.”

SWEDEN

Overview: According to the Swedish Security Services annual assessment in February 2018, Sweden faces “a new normal,” with an estimated 2,000 “Islamist extremists” and 1,000 “white supremacist and leftist violent extremists” present in the country. In 2018, Sweden strengthened its counterterrorism legal framework to improve interdiction, surveillance, and prosecution of terrorists. In September 2018, Sweden ratified the EU’s 2017 Anti-Terrorism Directive and the Additional Protocol to the Council of Europe’s Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism; this included 12 legislative amendments to criminal, commercial, immigration, and other statutory codes that entered into effect on September 1, and seven additional proposals that are on the legislative calendar for 2019. At the end of 2018, the national alert level was a three (elevated threat, no evidence of planning) on a scale of five (attack imminent, evidence of planning).

Sweden is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. In addition to being a leader in providing humanitarian support to ISIS-affected communities, Sweden deployed 70 military trainers to Iraq in support of Defeat-ISIS efforts. Sweden is signatory to two bilateral information-sharing arrangements under the Visa Waiver Program.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: There were no reported terrorist incidents in Sweden in 2018.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: During 2018, amendments to 12 different laws entered into force to implement the EU’s Anti-Terrorism Directive and the Additional Protocol to the Council of Europe’s Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism. The most significant of these amendments were:

- It is now a criminal offense to conduct research or receive training with the intent to commit a terrorist offense.
- The definition of a terrorist offense was updated to include computer hacking connected to terrorism.

- The definition of terrorism-related travel was updated to include terrorist travel to an individual's own country of citizenship. Previously, persons holding dual citizenship could not be punished for travelling to their own country of citizenship to conduct terrorist activities. The only exception to the new law is for Swedish citizens traveling to Sweden.
- The definition and applicability of terrorism financing was broadened and made more comprehensive. For example, it is now punishable for an individual to fund anything related to terrorism, including financing a person's education on terrorism-related subjects, such as bomb making or document fraud.
- The jurisdiction of Swedish courts was expanded to cover terrorism-related crimes committed abroad.

The Swedish government increased the Security Service's budget for countering terrorism threats and persons radicalized to violence by US \$20.2 million for 2018, US \$23.7 million for 2019, and US \$23.7 million for 2020.

On June 7, Stockholm District Court sentenced Rakhmat Akilov, a citizen of Uzbekistan illegally in Sweden after having his asylum request denied, to life in prison following his terrorist truck attack in Stockholm on April 7, 2017, which killed five and injured a dozen more. If he is released from prison early, Akilov will be expelled from Sweden. The court found Akilov guilty of five murders, 119 counts of attempted murder, and 24 counts of causing danger to others. Akilov had expressed sympathy for ISIS before the attack.

Sweden is party to identity verification and border management tools such as API, the Schengen Information System, and the Visa Information System, exchanging information with other Members States on irregular immigration and border control. The EU PNR Directive came into force on August 1, 2018.

Sweden used the "serious threat to public policy or internal security" justification permitted under the Schengen Border Code to unilaterally prolong until February 2019 the temporary border controls first introduced in 2015 in response to the massive influx of asylum seekers.

Sweden implemented UNSCR 2178 to counter FTFs and UNSCR 2309 to improve aviation security, and is undertaking the necessary measures to implement UNSCR 2396 to deter terrorist travel.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Sweden has been a member of FATF since 1990. In order to comply with the EU's Anti-Terrorism Directive, Sweden's Parliament broadened the definition and applicability of terrorism financing and made them more comprehensive. For example, it is now punishable for an individual to fund anything related to terrorism, including financing a person's education on terrorism-related subjects, such as bomb making or document fraud.

Countering Violent Extremism: In January 2018, the government opened a permanent National Center for Preventing Violent Extremism at the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (Brottsförebyggande Rådet or BRÅ for short) under the Ministry of Justice. This

CVE Center, which replaced a temporary center that had been located under the Ministry of Culture, is tasked with coordinating efforts among government ministries, local municipalities, and civil society organizations. The new CVE Center provides national-level support, focused risk assessments, and action plans to local municipalities.

Malmö and Stockholm are 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 FTFs), the Counter-Terrorism Group, the Police Working Group on Terrorism, and Europol.

Sweden continued counterterrorism capacity building projects through development assistance carried out by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency and also via funding to the OSCE and UNODC’s Terrorism Prevention Branch. 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 also participates in the Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan with 25 service members and recently extended the mission through 2019. Sweden is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and made humanitarian contributions to ISIS-impacted populations in Iraq (US \$22 million for 2018) in addition to development aid funding to Iraq (US \$15 million for 2018). Sweden extended its deployment of 70 military trainers in Iraq in support of Coalition efforts until the end of 2019.

TURKEY

Overview: Turkey continued its efforts to defeat terrorist organizations both inside and outside its borders, including the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK) and ISIS. Turkey remained an active contributor in international counterterrorism fora, including the GCTF.

Turkey is a source and transit country for FTFs seeking to join ISIS and other terrorist groups fighting in Syria and Iraq. Turkey is an active member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, co-chairs the Defeat-ISIS Coalition FTF Working Group, and continued to provide access to its airspace and facilities for operations in Iraq and Syria. According to public data, as of October 23, Turkey’s “Banned from Entry List” included approximately 70,000 individuals. Turkey deported approximately 6,000 individuals for suspected terrorism ties.

The PKK continued to conduct terrorist attacks in Turkey and against Turkish interests outside of Turkey. Turkey’s security forces conducted operations domestically, along with airstrikes in northern Iraq and operations in Syria. The Ministry of National Defense claimed that, as of November 15, the government had killed, wounded, or captured more than 1,289 PKK terrorists to date in 2018. Detentions and arrests of individuals suspected of aiding the PKK continued in 2018.

According to interior ministry data, law enforcement forces detained more than 11,421 suspects for allegedly aiding and abetting the PKK for the year up to December 10. Two Turkish

National Intelligence Organization (Milli Istihbarat Teskilatı, or MIT) officers who were kidnapped in 2017 by the PKK in northern Iraq remained missing at year's end. 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 2018. The United States listed three senior PKK leaders under the Rewards for Justice program in November, offering up to US \$12 million in exchange for information leading to the three leaders.

In the aftermath of the July 2016 coup attempt, the government labeled the movement of self-exiled cleric Fethullah Gulen as the "Fethullah Terrorist Organization" (FETO). FETO is not a designated terrorist organization in the United States. This resulted in continued detentions and arrests of Turkish citizens as well as foreign citizens resident in Turkey – including U.S. citizens and locally employed staff at the U.S. Mission to Turkey – for alleged FETO or terrorism-related links, often on the basis of scant evidence and minimal due process. According to the Presidency, the government had detained 47,778 individuals by December 11. In addition, the government continued to dismiss military, security, and civil servants from public office in 2018. By year's end, the government had dismissed or suspended more than 130,000 civil servants from public office, arrested or imprisoned more than 80,000 citizens, and closed more than 1,500 NGOs for alleged FETO links since the 2016 coup attempt.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: Several terrorist incidents occurred in 2018:

- On February 1, three Turkish soldiers were killed and seven wounded by the PKK in cross-border rocket attacks from Iraq into the Turkish province of Hakkari.
- On March 30, six Turkish village guards and one Turkish soldier were killed, and six guards and soldiers injured, in a PKK shooting in Siirt province.
- On July 31, a PKK roadside bomb killed two civilians, including an infant, in Hakkari province.
- On October 4, a PKK bomb killed eight soldiers and wounded two more in Batman province.

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 the legitimate exercise of freedom of expression and assembly. According to the Ministry of Interior, authorities referred more than 7,000 social media accounts to judicial authorities for alleged terrorist-related propaganda. Turkey has advanced law enforcement capacity to combat terrorism, and efforts continue to streamline interagency information sharing. According to the Presidency, until December 11 the government carried out 1,206 operations against ISIS and arrested 854 suspected ISIS members. Turkey will sometimes deport suspected foreign terrorist fighters without providing advance notice to the destination countries.

Turkey continued construction of security walls along its land borders with Syria and Iran. By October, 91 out of 144 kilometers of walls on the Iranian border and 805 of 828 kilometers of planned walls along the Syrian border had been completed. According to government data, from January to July, Turkish security forces apprehended more than 127,776 irregular migrants attempting to illegally cross Turkey's borders.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Turkey is a member of the FATF, and its FIU, the Financial Crimes Investigation Board, is a member of the Egmont Group. There have been no significant changes to the country's counterterrorism financing regime since 2016. FATF will complete a new full assessment of Turkey's counter terrorist financing regime in 2019.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: The Turkish National Police (TNP) undertakes 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 some rehabilitation and reintegration programs for convicts and former criminals.

Turkey's Religious Affairs Presidency (Diyanet), which reports to the Presidency following a governmental reorganization, reports that it works to undermine terrorist messaging by promoting its inclusive version of Islam. All Sunni imams in Turkey officially must be employees of the Diyanet.

Turkey hosted the third Regional Coordination Conference for Counter-Terrorism and Prevention and Countering Violent Extremism in South East Europe in December.

The city of Antalya is a member of the Strong Cities Network.

International and Regional Cooperation: Turkey is a member of the UN, NATO, the Committee of Experts on Terrorism of the Council of Europe, and the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and co-chairs, with Kuwait and the Netherlands, the Defeat-ISIS Coalition FTF Working Group. Turkey regularly participates in GCTF meetings and initiatives. Turkey also contributes to the International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law, a GCTF-inspired institution, and provides expert support to assist training for judges and prosecutors handling terrorism cases. Turkey participates in the 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 in a variety of sectors, including counterterrorism.

UNITED KINGDOM

Overview: The United Kingdom remains one of the strongest and most able U.S. partners in the global fight against terrorism, and cooperation with the United Kingdom on efforts to counter terrorism is excellent. The UK suffered no major terrorist attacks in 2018, though the country's

counterterrorism posture continues to be heavily influenced by the five major attacks in 2017. Throughout 2018, the terrorism threat level in the United Kingdom has been at the second-highest rating (severe), which means UK officials believe that an attack is highly likely. UK officials categorize Islamist terrorism as the greatest threat to national security, though both policy and operational officials say there is a rising threat from racially or ethnically motivated extremists. Since March 2017, police and security services have disrupted 13 Islamist and four racially or ethnically motivated plots.

In June 2018, the United Kingdom released its updated counterterrorism strategy, CONTEST, which was its first update since 2011. While the new CONTEST is currently cost-neutral, the document highlights new and ongoing pilot projects, including:

1. Three multi-agency centers to review dormant terrorism investigations and support local-level interventions, as warranted.
2. Expanding public-private partnerships to better protect economic infrastructure.
3. Expanding the Desistance and Disengagement Programme, for individuals who are already engaging in terrorist related activity, with the aim of reintegrating them safely back into society.
4. Enhancing the ability at the border to target individuals and goods of concern, including better data and analytics.
5. Enhancing capabilities to detect terrorist activity involving chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosives material and their precursors, and to control and safeguard these materials.

The threat level for Northern Ireland-related terrorism within Northern Ireland, set separately for Northern Ireland and Great Britain (England, Wales and Scotland), remains severe. In October 2018, the four-member Independent Reporting Commission published the first of four annual reports assessing that paramilitarism remains “a stark reality of life” in Northern Ireland and noted that the “absence of political decision making” since the collapse of Northern Ireland’s devolved government in January 2017 has had a “major adverse impact” on efforts to end paramilitarism.

As a partner in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, the United Kingdom continued to contribute to stabilization efforts in Iraq and northeastern Syria. The United Kingdom is also working with regional partners to develop border infrastructure, watchlists, and biometric capabilities to counter FTF movement. The United Kingdom reports that approximately 900 individuals traveled from the United Kingdom to engage in the conflict in Syria and Iraq. Of these, approximately 20 percent are believed dead, 40 percent have returned to the United Kingdom, and 40 percent remain in the conflict zone or unaccounted for.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Accompanying CONTEST, the UK government introduced the *Counterterrorism and Border Security Bill 2018*, which was debated throughout the second half of 2018 and is expected to pass in 2019.

The United Kingdom structures counterterrorism policing efforts around a network of regional counterterrorism units and counterterrorism intelligence units comprised of MI5 and regional

police forces such as the Metropolitan 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. According to Home Office figures, the United Kingdom made 351 arrests for terrorism-related activity from January through June 2018. While senior officials cite this as a 22 percent drop from the previous year, the Metropolitan police do not assess this as a diminishing threat level, and say there are approximately 700 active investigations, involving about 3,000 individuals. From June 2017 through June 2018, the United Kingdom convicted 90 people of terrorism-related offenses, and currently have over 200 people in custody on allegations of the same types of offenses.

The United Kingdom has advanced biometric screening capabilities at some points of entry, and utilizes biometrics for vetting during the visa process and identity verification; some ports of entry, such as ferry ports, have no biometric screening. All major airports in the United Kingdom use e-gate technology for passengers presenting UK, EU, European Economic Area, or Swiss passports, and the United Kingdom has announced plans to expand to include all Five Eyes travelers (Australia, Canada, United States, and New Zealand). E-gate incorporates facial recognition technology to match travelers with data recorded in the e-chip of eligible passports.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: The United Kingdom is a member of the FATF and has observer or cooperating status in the following FATF-style regional bodies: Eastern and Southern Africa Anti-Money Laundering Group (ESAAMLG); the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force (CFATF); the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering (APG); and the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF). The UK FIU is a member of the Egmont Group. The UK 2018 FATF Mutual Evaluation Report found that they are “highly effective” in the terrorist financing elements of the assessment.

In May, the UK Parliament passed the *2018 Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act*. Under the Act, the government can impose sanctions, for the purposes of furthering the prevention of terrorism, on a person or group if there are reasonable grounds to suspect they have been involved in a terrorist activity. The United Kingdom shares terrorist financing information between the financial sector, law enforcement, and regulators through the Joint Money Laundering Intelligence Task Force. The United Kingdom implements the EU Fourth Anti-Money Laundering Directive. The EU Fifth Anti-Money Laundering Directive entered into force in July 2018, with a transposition deadline during January 2020.

The United Kingdom actively prosecutes those involved in terrorist financing. Since 2001, at least 70 individuals have been charged under “fundraising”-related sections of the Terrorism Act 2000, and of those, at least 32 individuals were convicted. Additionally, individuals suspected (but not charged) of funding terrorism were convicted of related offenses, such as training for terrorism, fraud, and money laundering.

The United Kingdom complies with its obligations under the UN Security Council ISIL (Da’esh) and al-Qa’ida sanctions regime. As of June 2018, the United Kingdom had US \$89,334 of

terrorist assets frozen under EU Regulation 881/2002, which implements the UN Security Council ISIL (Da'esh) and al-Qa'ida sanctions regime, and an additional US \$11,482 frozen under the Terrorist Asset Freezing Act 2010.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: In January 2018, the Home Secretary appointed former campaigner and charity leader Sara Khan to lead the Commission for Countering Extremism (CCE), a non-statutory expert committee of the Home Office. The CCE operates independently from CONTEST (which covers integration policy) and covers the UK Counter Extremist Strategy. The CCE is currently conducting a broad study of “Far Right and Islamist extremism” and its deep impact on individuals, communities, and wider British society.

Regarding the Strong Cities Network, Luton joined Birmingham and London as members in 2018, with Manchester, Leeds, Leicester, and Cardiff in the process of joining. During 2017-18, 67 city-level officials and civil society partners from London, Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds, and Luton participated in exchange programs with U.S. counterparts in Los Angeles, Denver, Boston, Seattle, and Portland, sharing lessons learned and best practice for preventing identity-based violence, safeguarding vulnerable populations, and building social cohesion and community resilience to terrorist radicalization.

International and Regional Cooperation: The United Kingdom continued to strongly support counterterrorism efforts in regional and multilateral organizations, as well as through the GCTF and an international task force assisting countries develop CVE plans. In September 2018, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, and Australia announced a joint GCTF initiative to develop a toolkit on preventing and countering violent extremism and terrorism online, and hosted the launch event of a GCTF initiative on returning families of FTFs.

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Overview

Although significant terrorist activities and safe havens continued to persist in the Middle East and North Africa throughout 2018, the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and its local partners reached important milestones in the fight against ISIS. By the year's end, the Coalition and its partners had successfully liberated nearly all the territory ISIS once controlled in Iraq and Syria. However, ISIS increasingly reverted to clandestine tactics as its so-called physical “caliphate” neared collapse. Beyond Iraq and Syria, ISIS branches, networks, and supporters across the Middle East and North Africa remained active in 2018, including in Libya, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, the Sinai Peninsula, Tunisia, and Yemen.

In Egypt, ISIS continued its terrorist campaign in the Sinai and mainland Egypt through its branch ISIS-Sinai Province. ISIS's presence and capabilities in the Maghreb were reduced in

2018 by U.S. airstrikes in Libya and the counterterrorism efforts of the Algerian, Moroccan, and Tunisian governments. In Libya, the UN-supported Government of National Accord (GNA) led by Prime Minister Fayez al Sarraj, remained a close partner of the United States on counterterrorism efforts, while the eastern Libya-based “Libyan National Army” significantly degraded terrorist safe havens in eastern Libya. A series of U.S. airstrikes, conducted in coordination with the GNA, disrupted al-Qa’ida in the Islamic Maghreb’s (AQIM’s) safe haven in Libya and degraded AQIM’s ability to threaten U.S. interests and those of U.S. allies. Political reconciliation that results in a unified Libyan government capable of countering terrorism remains the only long-term solution to denying terrorists safe haven in Libya.

Despite setbacks, al-Qa’ida remained resilient and actively exploited the world’s focus on ISIS to quietly reconstitute its capabilities and maintain safe havens amid fragile political and security climates, particularly in Egypt, Libya, Syria, and Yemen. In 2018, the Department of State amended the FTO designation of the al-Nusrah Front, an al-Qa’ida affiliate in Syria, to include the alias Hay’at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS). HTS effectively controlled most of Idlib province in northwestern Syria, which was its safe haven throughout 2018.

In Yemen, al-Qa’ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and ISIS’s branch in Yemen continued to exploit the security vacuum created by the ongoing conflict between the Republic of Yemen government and Iran-backed Houthi forces. AQAP used its tribal connections and public discontent with Houthi governance to recruit new members, 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 branch engaged in operations against AQAP and continued to claim attacks against Yemeni security forces and the Houthis.

Iran uses its Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Qods Force (IRGC-QF) to advance its interests abroad, provide cover for intelligence operations, and create instability in the Middle East. Iran has acknowledged the involvement of the IRGC-QF in the conflicts in Iraq and Syria. Through the IRGC-QF, Iran supports several U.S.-designated terrorist groups, providing funding, training, weapons, and equipment. Among the groups receiving support from Iran are Hizballah, Hamas, Palestine Islamic Jihad, Kata’ib Hizballah in Iraq, and al-Ashtar Brigades in Bahrain. Iran has also provided weapons and support to Shia militant groups in Iraq and to the Houthis in Yemen.

Countries in the Persian Gulf region continued to take important steps to combat terrorism, including through countering terrorist financing. The ongoing rift between Qatar on one side and Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and Egypt on the other continued to strain regional counterterrorism cooperation. Saudi Arabia and the United States co-led the Terrorist Financing Targeting Center (TFTC), an initiative founded in 2017 to increase U.S.-Gulf multilateral collaboration to counter terrorist financing. TFTC members targeted Hizballah and IRGC-QF facilitators with sanctions in May and October 2018, respectively.

In the Levant, Jordan and Lebanon both remained committed partners to the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. Several terrorist groups, most notably Hizballah, continued to operate in Lebanon throughout the year. Hizballah remained Iran’s most powerful terrorist partner and the most

capable terrorist organization in Lebanon, controlling areas across the country. Iran's annual financial backing to Hizballah – an estimated US \$700 million per year – accounts for the overwhelming majority of the group's annual budget. Hizballah's presence in Lebanon and Syria continued to pose a threat to Israel. Although Palestinian terrorist groups in Gaza and the West Bank continued to threaten Israel, Israeli and Palestinian Authority security forces continued their coordination in the West Bank in an effort to mitigate violence. Terrorists continued to attempt arms and dual-use smuggling efforts through the Sinai into Gaza through tunnels, but the Government of Egypt made progress in preventing such smuggling from its side.

ALGERIA

Overview: The United States and Algeria enjoyed close counterterrorism cooperation and had regular dialogue to discuss and coordinate counterterrorism efforts, exchange expertise, and strengthen the existing counterterrorism partnership. Algeria continued its significant efforts to prevent terrorist activity within its borders. Algerian armed forces and internal security forces published figures to show the continued pressure on terrorist groups, indicated by the considerable increase in numbers of terrorists surrendered, compared with 2017, and a comparable number of arms caches and hideouts that were destroyed in sweeping operations. Some analysts assessed that continuing losses have substantially reduced the capacities of terrorist groups to operate within Algeria. Al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), AQIM-allied groups, and ISIS's Algeria branch – including elements of the local group known as Jund al-Khilafah in Algeria (or Soldiers of the Caliphate in Algeria) – remained in the country but were under significant pressure. These groups aspired to impose their interpretations of Islamic law in the region and to attack Algerian security services, local government targets, and Western commercial interests. Terrorist activity in Libya, Mali, and Tunisia – as well as human, weapons, and narcotics trafficking – contributed to the overall threat, particularly in border regions.

Algeria actively supported the effort to counter ISIS through counter-messaging and capacity-building programs with neighboring states. Algeria is a member of the GCTF and co-chaired the GCTF's West Africa Region Capacity-Building Working Group with Canada in 2018.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: AQIM continued attacks using IEDs, bombings, and ambushes. The Algerian government maintained a strict “no concessions” policy with regard to individuals or groups holding its citizens hostage. Terrorist attacks in 2018 included the following:

- On February 14, five soldiers were reported killed and others seriously injured in a roadside IED blast in Ferkane, in northeastern Algeria near the Tunisian border. Four days later, AQIM claimed responsibility on social media for the attack as retaliation for the eight terrorists who were killed on January 26 by the Algerian army in Chechar, a small town in northeastern Algeria.
- On July 30, an IED blast killed seven soldiers and wounded 14 others who were conducting a sweeping operation near Skikda, a coastal city east of Algiers. In the skirmish that followed, four terrorists were killed and one was captured.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Algeria made no significant changes to its counterterrorism legal framework in 2018.

Algerian military forces and multiple law enforcement, intelligence, and security services addressed counterterrorism, counter-intelligence, investigations, border security, and crisis response. These included the various branches of the Joint Staff, the Algerian army, 140,000 members of the National Gendarmerie, and border guards, under the Ministry of National Defense (MND); and about 210,000 national police, or General Directorate of National Security, under the Ministry of Interior. 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. In 2018, media reported that the Algerian army instituted a series of intensified security measures along its borders, including fences, observation towers, surveillance equipment, and drones. Algerian and Tunisian customs and law enforcement officials continued to coordinate along their shared border, including conducting a joint maritime exercise. The Government of Algeria closely monitored passenger manifests of inbound and outbound flights. Government officials made active use of INTERPOL databases leading to at least 25 arrests based on INTERPOL Red Notices.

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 GCTF.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: There were no significant changes in 2018. Algeria is a member of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF). Its FIU, known as the Financial Intelligence Processing Unit, is a member of the Egmont Group, the international body of FIUs that engage in secure information-sharing to combat money laundering and terrorist financing.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: Algeria pursues a whole-of-government approach to CVE, including rehabilitation and reintegration programs for repentant terrorists. Stressing the importance of an inclusive society, the Foreign Ministry published a booklet in 2018 on *The Role of Democracy in the Fight against Violent Extremism and Terrorism*. The regulation of mosques to ensure they are “de-politicized” and “de-ideologized” is a key aspect of the Algerian approach. Algeria acknowledges the crucial role of women and families in CVE efforts, and of its “mouchidates,” 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 affirm Algeria’s Sunni Maliki tradition of Islam, which they believe provides a moderate religious vision for the country. There have been complaints the government imposes restrictions on other variants of Islam for failure to abide by administrative procedures required of all religious institutions.

International and Regional Cooperation: Algeria continued to support counterterrorism efforts through regional and multilateral organizations. As co-chair of the GCTF's West Africa Region Capacity-Building Working Group, Algeria hosted that group's plenary meeting in November along with a Police Cooperation Workshop. Algeria has taken a leadership role in AFRIPOL, the Algiers-based African Union mechanism for police cooperation, whose mandate is to enhance African police cooperation and prevent transnational crime and terrorism. Algeria hosted the AFRIPOL general assembly, donated the communication and data system for AFRIPOL to all member states, and spearheaded memoranda of understanding with other police organizations (e.g., INTERPOL and Europol).

Algeria continued positive 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 forums to discuss development and security policies and the evolution of regional terrorism.

BAHRAIN

Overview: Bahraini Shia militants remained a threat to security forces, though there were no successful major terrorist attacks in 2018. The Bahraini government made gains in detecting and containing terrorist threats from Bahraini Shia terrorists, often backed by Iran, and from ISIS sympathizers. Bahrain regularly experienced low-level violence between predominantly Bahraini Shia youths, who used Molotov cocktails and other homemade devices, and the predominantly Sunni security forces in mostly Shia villages. The Government of Bahrain is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and supported the Coalition's diplomatic efforts and military operations by hosting the Fifth Fleet and Naval Central Command. Bahrain held parliamentary and municipal council elections on November 24 and December 1, respectively; both were peaceful. Political relations between the Sunni-led government and Shia-dominated opposition remained tense, exacerbated by a law ratified in June, preventing Bahrainis who had been members of now-banned political societies from contesting the elections. Sustained political tension, attributable to discrimination against the Shia majority, could increase the risk of radicalization to violence.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: There were no major terrorist attacks reported in Bahrain in 2018.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Bahrain made no significant changes to its counterterrorism legal framework or border security procedures in 2018.

From January through March, Bahraini security forces conducted several large-scale raids of suspected militant strongholds, resulting in the arrest of more than 400 suspected Bahraini Shia militants and the seizure of weapons, ammunition, and explosives. Throughout the year, Bahrain continued to conduct smaller-scale security operations targeting these Shia militants. In July, the Bahraini government welcomed the U.S. designation of Iran-backed terrorist group al-Ashtar Brigades (AAB) as an FTO and Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT), and the August U.S. designation of Qassim Abdullah Ali Ahmed, also known as Qassim Al-Muamen, as SDGT. In January, AAB revealed a new logo using the same design as Iran's Islamic

Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and has since aligned its public messaging alongside other Iran-backed terrorist proxies. The United States assisted Bahraini counterterrorism efforts by providing training, equipment, and other assistance to law enforcement agencies.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Bahrain is a member of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF), and its FIU is a member of the Egmont Group. Bahrain is a member of the Riyadh-based Terrorist Financing Targeting Center (TFTC). 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. The MENAFATF and FATF jointly completed its Mutual Evaluation Report of Bahrain in June; the report contained several recommendations to enhance its AML/CFT regimes.

Bahrain criminalizes terrorist financing in accordance with international standards and can immediately freeze suspicious financial assets. The government requires 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 UNSCRs to financial institutions.

On October 23, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs imposed sanctions on several individuals and entities linked to either Iran’s IRGC or the Taliban for their support for or funding of terrorism, blocking their assets and banning transactions in Bahrain. These actions were taken in collaboration with the TFTC, which acts as a coordinating body for Gulf Cooperation Council countries’ terrorism financing efforts.

Government officials contended that some Shia religious leaders directed donations to finance militant activities and that clergy misused religious traditions, including religious pilgrimages, to recruit militants. However, activists and opposition-aligned clergy claimed that scrutiny of Shia alms giving (or khums) has been part of a wider crackdown on the political opposition.

Countering Violent Extremism: 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 NGOs have developed programming targeting youth and other vulnerable populations. In 2017, Bahrain passed the alternative sentencing law as a mechanism intended to reduce harsh punishments for minor crimes, which may otherwise potentially lead to radicalization to violence. In May 2018, Bahrain’s High Criminal Court made first use of the alternative sentencing law when it ordered 11 women convicted of various offenses to be released to complete community service instead of serving prison terms.

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 or Iraq to fight with ISIS and other terrorist groups. These individuals were radicalized in part by a few extremist preachers. The large number of Bahraini Shia youths serving prison sentences related to crimes committed during Bahrain’s 2011 uprising are expected to be released within the next several years. Prison conditions may increase the likelihood of radicalization to violence.

The government attempted outreach through initiatives such as the community police, which recruits Bahraini Shia 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. In March, the Minister of Interior announced the launch of an initiative called "The Spirit of Belonging," though there has been no public activity under this initiative to date. Government restrictions on freedom of political expression and association may also increase the likelihood of radicalization to violence.

International and Regional Cooperation: As of November, there were approximately 200 members of the Bahrain Defense Forces deployed in Yemen as part of the Saudi-led coalition against the Iran-backed Houthis. Bahrain is an active member of the Gulf Cooperation Council, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and the Arab League. The Bahraini government attended several conferences related to multilateral counterterrorism cooperation in 2018. Bahrain continued to offer its support for countering Iran's malfeasance in the region, and contributed to UN reporting under UNSCR 2231.

EGYPT

Overview: Egypt is a counterterrorism partner of the United States, a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, and a member of the GCTF. Attacks in mainland Egypt increased in 2018 while the number of attacks in Sinai diminished compared with 2017. However, from July 2018 forward the trend in Sinai was fewer but deadlier attacks. Attacks that occurred focused largely on security forces and the Christian community, civilians, and, to a lesser extent, foreign tourists. With the February launch of Operation Sinai 2018, President Abdel Fatah al-Sisi's government and the Egyptian Security Forces (ESF) continued a concerted effort to fight terrorist groups in North Sinai, but terrorist attacks continued in both North Sinai and mainland Egypt. ISIS branches and networks, including ISIS-Sinai Province (ISIS-SP) and an ISIS network in mainland Egypt, posed the most significant threats of terrorism. U.S.-designated terrorist groups Harakat Sawa'd Misr and Liwa al-Thawra also posed a continued threat, but with diminished activities compared with previous years.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: ISIS affiliates and other terrorist groups carried out frequent attacks throughout Egypt. Methods included complex assaults involving dozens of terrorists, IEDs, VBIEDs, ambushes, kidnappings, and targeted assassinations. Notable terrorist attacks in 2018 included the following:

- On April 14, 14 ISIS-SP attackers armed with firearms, missiles, and suicide vests conducted a complex attack against Egyptian Armed Forces (EAF) in al-Qusayma, North Sinai, killing eight EAF personnel.
- On August 12, a suicide bomber detonated prematurely as he approached the al-Azra Coptic Church in the Shubra neighborhood of Cairo.

- On September 4, an individual was on foot just outside the perimeter of the U.S. Embassy in Cairo when his backpack exploded, lightly wounding him. The attacker was arrested by Egyptian police.
- On November 2, assailants opened fire on three buses carrying Coptic pilgrims to a monastery in Minya, Upper Egypt. Seven Coptic pilgrims were killed, and 19 were wounded. ISIS later claimed responsibility.
- On December 29, a tour bus struck a roadside bomb near the Pyramids of Giza, killing three Vietnamese tourists and an Egyptian tour guide and injuring 11 others.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: In August, President al-Sisi ratified a law combating use of the internet by “extremist” and terrorist organizations to carry out attacks. The Anti-Cyber and Information Technology Crimes law prohibits “the dissemination of information on the movements of the army or police,” and “the promotion of the ideas of terrorist organizations.” Although the law had not been implemented by the end of 2018, human rights groups have criticized the law as too expansive, arguing that it could be used to block any website critical of the government.

In February, the EAF and ESF launched Operation Sinai 2018, with the stated objective of eliminating terrorism in Sinai. The operation saw increased coordination between the Ministries of Defense and Interior in targeting terrorist elements in North Sinai. In addition to military operations, the Egyptian government announced that it planned to adapt its counterterrorism strategy to address immediate humanitarian needs and long-term economic and social development goals, though this has long been part of the government’s talking points about its activities in the Sinai.

The National Security Sector of the Ministry of Interior (MOI) is primarily responsible for counterterrorism operations in the Nile Valley but also works with other elements of the MOI, the Egyptian General Intelligence Service, and the EAF.

Egypt’s most significant physical border security concerns were Libya, Sudan, and Gaza. At border crossings and airports, Egyptian authorities checked for the presence of security features in 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 with detailed information maintained by the security services. The United States assisted Egypt’s counterterrorism efforts by providing training, equipment, and other assistance to its law enforcement security services.

Egypt indicated that it would require, and plans to formally request, international assistance to enhance its technical capabilities to implement UNSCR 2396 to counter terrorist travel.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Egypt is a member of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF) and Egypt’s Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Combating Unit (EMLCU) is a member of the Egmont Group. In 2018, EMLCU approved new customer due diligence procedures and know your customer rules.

Egypt has taken a leading role in the Egmont Group, serving as Chair of the Membership, Support, and Compliance Working Group. In 2018, EMLCU implemented SIRON, an automatic advanced analytics system developed by the UN for anti-money laundering efforts, across the Egyptian banking system. EMLCU works with the Egyptian National Security Agency on terrorism cases and with the Administrative Control Authority on public cases. EMLCU is a member of Egypt's National Payments Council, which is chaired by President al-Sisi, and is responsible for coordinating government efforts to modernize payment methods in Egypt.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: Dar al-Iftaa, an official body that issues religious edicts and is associated with al-Azhar University, has taken the lead on CVE messaging and countering religious guidance from terrorist groups. In October, Dar al-Iftaa hosted its fourth international conference on global strategies to limit fatwa issuance to “authoritative religious institutions.” Last year’s conference resulted in the launch of the Global Fatwa Index that, according to Egypt, endorses a scholarly methodology for observing, analyzing, and evaluating fatwa discourses worldwide and developing a curriculum for students of fatwa around the world.

Al-Azhar continued to issue statements promoting tolerance and challenging ISIS statements as part of its domestic and online CVE messaging.

The Ministry of Islamic Endowments (Awqaf) continued to issue guidance to Egypt’s imams and provide a weekly theme for Friday sermons. In regard to increasing religious education opportunities and providing more leadership roles for women, Awqaf completed a training program in June on interpretation of religious texts for 300 female preachers, and in July the government published an action plan for renewing religious discourse that included hiring and training imams, expanding the role of women in religious preaching, and opening a training academy for preachers to help reach different segments of the public.

The Cairo Center for Conflict Resolution and Peacekeeping in Africa (CCCPA), under the auspices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, provided training through its Preventing Radicalization and Extremism Leading to Terrorism (PRELT) program. PRELT aims to prevent the proliferation of “extremist” ideology among individuals in communities considered susceptible to terrorist recruitment. In 2018, CCCPA expanded its focus from sub-Saharan Africa into the Sahel.

International and Regional Cooperation: Egypt continued to support counterterrorism efforts through regional and multilateral organizations, including through the GCTF. Egypt currently co-chairs the GCTF East Africa Working Group with the EU, and in March hosted the working group’s annual plenary meeting in Cairo. As Chair of the Peace and Security Council of the AU, Egypt regularly prioritized discussions of counterterrorism issues. In January, Egypt used its chairmanship to organize a counterterrorism summit for heads-of-state, which focused on a comprehensive approach to counterterrorism. Egypt also announced a new counterterrorism

center in Cairo for the Community of Sahel-Saharan States to promote cross-border cooperation in the Sahel-Saharan region.

IRAQ

Overview: By the end of 2018, Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) were in nominal control of all territories liberated from ISIS. Reverting to clandestine tactics following its loss of territory, ISIS increasingly resorted to targeted assassinations of police and local political leaders, along with IEDs and shooting attacks directed at both government and government-associated civilian targets. ISIS sought to reestablish support among populations in Ninewa, Kirkuk, Diyala, Salah ad Din, and Anbar provinces, in particular. Although ISIS maintained the capability to conduct deadly terrorist attacks in Iraq, these attacks resulted in fewer casualties in 2018 than in 2017. The Iran-backed, U.S.-designated FTO, Kata'ib Hizballah, continued to operate in Iraq during 2018. Iran-aligned Iraqi militias instigated violent and destabilizing activities in Iraq and within the region.

In 2018, the Departments of State and the Treasury designated as Specially Designated Global Terrorists several affiliates of Iran-backed Iraqi militias outside the control of the government. The Kurdistan Workers Party (commonly known as the PKK), a terrorist group headquartered in the mountains of northern Iraq, continued to conduct terrorist attacks in Turkey. Iraq continued its cooperation with the United States and the international community to counter terrorism and dismantle ISIS's financial networks. Iraq continued to make progress implementing its 2016 AML/CFT law. The AML/CFT Committee, established in 2017, designated at least 34 individuals in 2018.

In 2018, following ISIS's demonstrated use of chemical agents in territory it controlled between 2014 and 2017, the United States continued to work with Iraq to deny ISIS access to chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) materials and expertise strengthening the ability of Iraq's government, academic institutions, and private sector to secure weaponizable chemical and biological materials and detect, disrupt, and respond effectively to suspected CBRN activity.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: According to the UN, acts of terrorism, violence, and armed conflict with ISIS killed more than 900 civilians and injured more than 1,600 as of November 30. This was a significant decrease from 2017, when roughly 3,000 civilians died and 4,600 were injured. ISIS continued to carry out suicide and hit-and-run attacks throughout the country. The most significant of these was a pair of coordinated suicide bombings in Baghdad's al-Tayaran Square on January 15 that killed 38 Iraqis and wounded 105 others. Other prominent ISIS attacks included the following:

- On February 18, ISIS militants ambushed a convoy of pro-government militia fighters in Kirkuk governorate, killing at least 27 people.
- On April 12, a suicide bomber attacked a funeral for Sunni tribal fighters near Shirqat in Salah al-Din governorate, killing at least 25 mourners and injuring at least 18 others.
- On August 29, a suicide car bomber targeted a pro-government militia checkpoint near al-Qaim in Anbar governorate, killing 16 people and wounding 20 others.

- On September 28, Iran-backed terrorists were responsible for repeated incidents of fire on the U.S. Consulate in Basrah.
- On October 6, ISIS conducted its first attack in Fallujah since the city was liberated in June 2016.
- On November 8, a car bomb exploded near a restaurant in Mosul, Ninewa governorate, killing 13 people and wounding 23 others. This represented the first VBIED attack since Mosul's liberation in July 2017.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Iraq made no significant changes to its counterterrorism legal framework in 2018.

Iraq improved its ability to detect and prevent terrorist threats and continued to disrupt terrorist activities by detaining, arresting, and trying thousands of suspected terrorists in 2018. However, the lack of centralized databases continued to hinder Iraq's ability to track the number of terrorism suspects it detained and arrested.

Iraq has multiple security, law enforcement, and intelligence organizations with overlapping responsibilities, including the Counterterrorism Service, the National Security Services, the Iraqi National Intelligence Service, military intelligence, and assorted Ministry of Interior units including national and local police. The United States assisted Iraqi counterterrorism efforts by providing training, equipment, and other assistance to such law enforcement organization. Iraq has identified improving interagency cooperation as a priority for its security sector reform program. As part of that program, the Ministry of Interior recognized the need to shift priorities from supporting major combat operations against ISIS to more traditional law enforcement activities such as criminal investigations and local policing. Significant portions of law enforcement infrastructure in liberated territories destroyed by ISIS – including prisons, border posts, and police stations – remain in ruins.

Border security remained a critical capability gap, as the ISF has limited capability to fully secure Iraq's borders with Syria and Iran. Iraq and the United States are partnering to close this gap through broader deployment of and upgrades to the U.S.-provided PISCES. The Ministry of Interior shared biometric information on known and suspected terrorists as well as 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 (MENAFATF) and the Defeat-ISIS Coalition's Counter-ISIS Finance Group. Iraq worked with FATF to improve strategic deficiencies in its AML/CFT regime. Iraq improved this regime with U.S. assistance, including issuing a set of regulations in accordance with its 2016 law, to help bolster its compliance with the FATF recommendations. In June 2018, FATF removed Iraq from monitoring under its ongoing global AML/CFT compliance process ("grey list") of high-risk jurisdictions.

In 2018, the Government of Iraq – including the Central Bank of Iraq, law enforcement, and the judiciary – continued to dismantle ISIS's financial networks 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 areas formerly controlled by ISIS

(before their territorial defeat). 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 arrests of suspects.

Countering Violent Extremism: Iraq remained active in its strategic messaging to discredit ISIS, including through its membership in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS's Communications Working Group, and engaged with U.S. military and civilian counterparts to develop a wide range of capabilities to build national cohesion and combat terrorist ideology. The Government of Iraq and the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS also implemented stabilization, reconciliation, and accountability programs to strengthen locals' ability to counter violent extremism.

Many FTFs remain in Iraqi custody, and Iraq has detained a large number of ISIS-affiliated foreign women and children. Additionally, displaced Iraqis whose extended family members are suspected of supporting ISIS remained vulnerable to revenge attacks or retribution killings, or were denied access to services or freedom of movement. Consequently, ISIS-affiliated family members 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, as well as the provision of fair and equal justice, is important to prevent future radicalization to violence.

International and Regional Cooperation: Iraq is a pivotal member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and a participant in all Coalition Working Groups (Foreign Terrorist Fighters, Counter-ISIS Finance Group, Stabilization, and Communications). Iraq continued to work with multilateral and regional organizations, including the UN, NATO, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, INTERPOL, and the Arab League to support counterterrorism efforts. In July, foreign ministers from the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS recognized the ISF's efforts at a Coalition meeting in Brussels.

ISRAEL, WEST BANK AND GAZA

Israel

Overview: Israel was a committed counterterrorism partner in 2018, closely coordinating with the United States on a range of counterterrorism initiatives. Israel and the United States held numerous interagency counterterrorism dialogues to discuss the broad range of threats in the Middle East and determine areas of collaboration to address these challenges.

Israel faced threats on its northern border from Hizballah and along the northeastern frontier from Hizballah and other Iran-backed groups in Syria. Israeli security officials and politicians expressed concerns that Iran was supplying Hizballah 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 Lebanon and Syria. In December, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) commenced Operation Northern Shield, exposing and neutralizing a series of Hizballah-constructed tunnels extending from Lebanon into Israel.

Along its southern border with Egypt and Gaza, Israel faced threats from terrorist organizations including Hamas, Palestine Islamic Jihad (PIJ), and ISIS-Sinai Province. Hamas and PIJ tunneling activities continued, as did Hamas-coordinated demonstrations and low-level violence along the Gaza security fence. Rocket attacks originating from Gaza resulted in one civilian fatality and numerous injuries in 2018.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: Israel experienced numerous terrorist attacks in 2018 involving weapons ranging from rockets and mortars to small arms and knives. The following is a partial list of terrorist incidents that occurred in 2018:

- On March 18, Abd al-Rahman Bani Fadel, a 28-year-old Palestinian man and West Bank resident, stabbed Israeli citizen Adiel Kolman in Jerusalem's Old City. A nearby police officer intervened in the attack and killed Bani Fadel. Kolman sustained multiple stab wounds and later died from them.
- Since late March, Hamas coordinated weekly "March of Return" protests along the Gaza security fence, some of which drew tens of thousands of people. Armed terrorists breached the security fence, launched incendiary devices into Israel, and threw stones and other objects at IDF soldiers. Additionally, sniper attacks injured IDF forces and resulted in the death of at least one IDF soldier. Since April, militants sent hundreds of incendiary devices into southern Israel by kite and balloon, resulting in more than 7,000 acres burned, including a forest preserve and numerous farmed fields, causing more than US \$2 million in damages.
- Since the end of May, Hamas and other terrorist groups have initiated four major exchanges of rocket and mortar fire from Gaza toward Israel, launching more than 750 rockets and mortar shells from Gaza toward Israel. The IDF confirmed that the Iron Dome, Israel's air defense system, intercepted more than 100 of these projectiles. Several others landed in civilian residential areas; one was a direct hit on a home in the city of Ashkelon, resulting in one civilian fatality. During November 12-13, more than 400 rockets were fired from Gaza into Israel, the highest number in a 24-hour-period since Operation Protective Edge (2014), forcing schools to close and civilians to take shelter in affected areas.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Israel has a robust legal framework to combat terrorism within its borders and to promote international legal assistance in the investigation and prosecution of terrorists.

On March 7, the Knesset passed an amendment to the 2016 Combating Terrorism Law that authorized the police to issue restrictions on the release of bodies of terrorists who died in the course of perpetrating or attempting to perpetrate terrorist acts. The amendment also provided police with the authority to impose restrictions on the processing of terrorists' funerals.

On April 30, the Knesset passed an amendment to the Basic Law that restricts the right of an individual convicted of a serious terrorism or security offense to serve as a Knesset member.

Israeli security forces took numerous significant law enforcement actions against suspected terrorists and terrorist groups. The following examples represent a fraction of the law enforcement actions taken in 2018:

- In April, Israel Security Agency (ISA) officials, in coordination with the Israel National Police (INP) and the IDF, arrested 20 Hamas members from Nablus who planned terrorist attacks across Israel and the West Bank. The cell's reported leaders were 35-year-old Mu'tazem Muhammad Salem and 33-year-old Faras Kamel Zavid, both Palestinian residents of Nablus. During the ISA's investigation, it uncovered several explosive devices allegedly for use in planned attacks in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.
- On October 8, the Jerusalem District Court sentenced Darham Jabarin, an Israeli citizen and resident of Umm al-Fahm, to 42 months' imprisonment for having contacts with a foreign agent and providing support to Hamas.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: In December, Israel became a full member of the FATF, and the body adopted Israel's Mutual Evaluation Report completed jointly by the FATF and MONEYVAL, a FATF-style regional body. Israel's FIU, the Israeli Money Laundering and Terror Finance Prohibition Authority, is a member of the Egmont Group.

On February 12, the Knesset passed an amendment to the 2016 Combating Terrorism Law that transferred terrorism designation authority from the Ministers' Committee for Security to the Minister of Defense to ensure that Israel enforced UN sanctions on foreign terrorist organizations and individuals until it could complete a domestic review process of the designation.

Countering Violent Extremism: The Ministry of Public Security supported and funded Israel's flagship CVE initiative, City Without Violence. One hundred fifty-one municipalities' implemented education and social welfare projects to counter violence, crime, and terrorism. The program emphasized partnerships with the INP, with the goal of reducing violence and increasing citizen-police communication.

The President of Israel's initiative, Israeli Hope, in cooperation with government ministries, established a sustainable partnership across different segments of Israeli society, focusing on projects ranging from education to employment to sports. The sports initiative, with the cooperation of the Ministry of Culture and Sports, implemented programs aimed at countering racism and reducing violence in collaboration with professional soccer clubs and players. The Ministry of Education headed another initiative, which encouraged schools to promote shared citizenship educational programs.

Former IDF Chief of the General Staff Lieutenant General Gadi Eizenkot attended the last two International Counter-Violent Extremist Organizations conferences hosted by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington.

International and Regional Cooperation: There were no changes in 2018.

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, though the PA also continued to provide payments to convicted terrorists and the families of deceased terrorists. 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. The IDF and ISA arrested members of terrorist organizations operating in the West Bank.

In 2018, the United States assisted the PA's law enforcement efforts, which contributed to counterterrorism capacity building by providing training, equipment, and infrastructure support to the PASF. U.S. training and support assisted in the PA's continuing work to sustain and further develop 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 2018. The number of Palestinian terrorist attacks against Israelis in the West Bank was lower compared with the heightened period of violence from October 2015 to April 2016; 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 against Palestinians) in the West Bank. These incidents increased in number in 2018 over the previous year, though there were no reported fatalities.

Hamas maintained security control of Gaza. Several militant groups launched rocket attacks against Israel, threw Molotov cocktails, planted IEDs, and launched incendiary kites and devices toward Israel during demonstrations along the Israel-Gaza security fence. 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 the Palestine Liberation Organization (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. The amounts of the payments increased in relation to the length of the military court sentence. These payments (as well as 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. Israeli government officials criticized this practice as incentivizing acts of terror. In 2018, the Knesset adopted a new Israeli law expected to be implemented in 2019, which mandates withholding from PA custom clearance revenues an amount equivalent to PA prisoner and martyr payments, based on Israeli calculations.

2018 Terrorist Incidents:

- In January, Palestinian assailants killed an Israeli civilian in the northern West Bank in a drive-by shooting.
- In March, a Palestinian man rammed a vehicle into a group of Israeli soldiers in the northern West Bank, killing two Israeli soldiers and wounding two others.
- In July, a Palestinian man infiltrated an Israeli settlement northeast of Jerusalem and stabbed three Israeli civilians, killing one and wounding two others.
- In September, a Palestinian man fatally stabbed an American-Israeli resident of the Efrat settlement outside a shopping center near the Gush Etzion junction in the West Bank.
- In December, Palestinian assailants opened fire at a bus stop in the northern West Bank, killing one individual and injuring seven others. That same week, a Palestinian assailant shot and killed two IDF soldiers in a drive-by shooting near a traffic junction in the central West Bank.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: The West Bank and Gaza made no significant changes to their counterterrorism legal framework in 2018. The Palestinian Legislative Council has not met since 2007 and dissolved in December 2018.

The Preventive Security Organization is the key PA institution that works to prevent West Bank 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 helped enhance cooperation between security service investigators and public prosecutors.

The Palestinian Civil Police's (PCP's) forensic laboratory continued to improve its operations in 2018. The laboratory conducted basic manual analyses and examinations of firearm evidence, documentary evidence, and drug and chemical analysis. With U.S. support, the PCP forensic laboratory is seeking international standards certification.

Per Oslo-era agreements, 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 (MENAFATF). The Palestinian Financial Follow-Up Unit is the PA's FIU.

In 2018, the PA completed its first-ever National Risk Assessment to identify vulnerabilities to terrorist financing and money laundering within the PA government, banking, and commercial sectors. The PA is currently drafting a strategy to counter these vulnerabilities in advance of its FATF evaluation. The PA is also drafting its first prosecutors' manual on policy and procedures to investigate and prosecute terrorist financing and money laundering cases.

The Palestinian Monetary Authority increased regulations and restrictions on the more than 300 money changers in the West Bank. Hamas licensed and regulated money changers in Gaza. According to business contacts in Gaza, Hamas does not impose reporting requirements on Gaza-based money changers.

Countering Violent Extremism: The PA’s Palestinian Broadcasting Company’s code of conduct states that 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 or speak out publicly against members of their institutions who advocated for violence. However, PA President Mahmoud Abbas maintained a public commitment to non-violence.

The PA maintained control over the content of Friday sermons delivered in about 1,800 West Bank mosques to ensure they do not endorse incitement to violence. The PA Minister of Awqaf and Religious Affairs distributed approved themes weekly and prohibited incitement to violence.

International and Regional Cooperation: The PA is an active member of the Arab League and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. The “State of Palestine” acceded to INTERPOL in 2017.

JORDAN

Overview: Jordan remained a committed partner on counterterrorism and CVE in 2018. As a regional leader in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, Jordan played an important role in degrading the terrorist group’s territorial control and operational reach. Jordan continued to face a persistent threat of terrorist activity in 2018, both domestically and along its borders, owing in part to its proximity to regional conflicts in Iraq and Syria and the state’s official rejection of Salafi-jihadi interpretations of Islam. Terrorist entities expressed interest in attacking both hard and soft targets, such as high-profile public events, hotels, and tourist locations. Jordanian security forces thwarted several plots and apprehended numerous terrorists. Prominent terrorist incidents included an ISIS-inspired attack in Fuheis and an ensuing counterterrorism raid in Salt that resulted in the deaths of five members of the Jordanian security forces. Coordination among Jordan’s security services for terrorism response capabilities and prevention remains a challenge.

Border security remains an overarching priority for the Jordanian government, given fears that violence from the conflict in neighboring Syria will spill over into Jordan. There were many Jordanian nationals among the FTFs in Iraq and Syria. The threat of domestic radicalization, especially online, remains. Returning FTFs are an ongoing concern for Jordan’s security services. As a member of the GCTF, Jordan continued to be a committed partner on FTF issues in 2018 as co-chair with the United States of the GCTF FTF Working Group.

2018 Terrorist Incidents:

- On August 10, ISIS-inspired terrorists detonated an IED beneath a police vehicle outside a music festival in Fuheis, resulting in the deaths of two police officers. Security forces traced the terrorist cell to a residence in nearby Salt and conducted a raid, engaging the terrorists, who opened fire, resulting in a shootout that inadvertently set off additional

explosives stockpiled at the building. This confrontation resulted in the deaths of five members of the security forces; 10 others were wounded.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Jordan made no significant changes to its counterterrorism legal framework in 2018.

In November, the State Security Court convicted 10 people for their involvement in the 2016 shooting attacks in Karak in southern Jordan, which left 14 people dead and 34 others injured. Sentences ranged from three years to life in prison with hard labor.

The General Intelligence Directorate is the primary government agency responsible for counterterrorism. It operates with support from various elements within the Jordan Armed Forces, the Public Security Directorate, and the Gendarmerie. Although Jordan's civilian and military security agencies are more professional and effective than others in the region, increased terrorist threats continued to strain their incident response capabilities and coordination mechanisms. The Jordanian government continued to implement measures to improve interagency coordination among security agencies during responses to terrorism-related events.

A U.S. criminal complaint was unsealed in 2017 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 the 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. In 2018, Jordan continued to cite a court ruling that its constitution forbids the extradition of Jordanian nationals. The United States regards the extradition treaty as valid.

Jordan continued to reinforce its border defenses and surveillance capabilities in response to terrorist and criminal threats emanating from its 230-mile border with Syria and 112-mile border with Iraq. The Jordan-Syria border crossing at Jaber/Nassib reopened on October 15.

In early 2018, Royal Jordanian Airlines (the only Jordanian airline with non-stop flights to the United States) and the Queen Alia International Airport implemented heightened security interviews for passengers at check-in and security screenings for powders in luggage, in line with Transportation Security Agency requirements for airlines with non-stop airline service to the United States. Jordan received training, equipment, and other assistance through the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance program and concentrated on strengthening the security services' counterterrorism capabilities, including the inauguration of a regional training center.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Jordan is a member of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF) and the Defeat-ISIS Coalition's Counter-ISIS Finance Group (CIFG). It hosted the ninth CIFG meeting in February. Jordan's FIU, the Anti-Money Laundering and Counter Terrorist Financing Unit (AMLU), is a member of the Egmont Group.

AMLU is the national focal point for international coordination in accordance with the UN Security Council ISIL (Da'esh) and al-Qa'ida sanctions regime. In this capacity, AMLU routinely received and responded to requests for information from counterparts and regularly disseminated the names of UN-designated individuals and entities to financial institutions. Jordan monitored U.S. designations under Executive Order 13224 and shared this information internally. In preparation for Jordan's 2018 MENAFATF Mutual Evaluation Review, and with technical assistance from the International Monetary Fund, the Jordanian government adopted a risk-based approach to monitoring exchange houses and non-profit organizations to better target resources where they were most needed. AMLU received 666 suspicious transaction reports through November 2018, compared with 654 in 2017.

Countering Violent Extremism: Jordan worked with UNDP to develop a holistic National Action Plan on Preventing Violent Extremism to establish roles and responsibilities for government entities and promote the involvement of non-governmental organizations, civil society, youth, and the private sector in CVE initiatives. The Jordanian government continued to centralize training of imams and messaging for Friday prayers in an effort to forestall what it viewed as radical versions of Islam. Irbid, Karak, and Zarqa are members of the Strong Cities Network and worked to develop capacity in local communities to prevent violence and build community cohesion.

International and Regional Cooperation: Jordan is a major non-NATO ally, a member of the GCTF, and co-chairs the GCTF FTF Working Group with the United States. It hosted the annual plenary meeting in Amman in April. Jordan is a member of the Arab League, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, and the Proliferation Security Initiative.

Jordan demonstrated its global leadership in counterterrorism by convening multiple senior-level meetings on various security issues as part of the Aqaba Process in 2018, a forum launched by King Abdullah in 2015. Jordan hosted Aqaba Process meetings on security challenges in East Africa and Southeast Asia in 2018. The Aqaba Process aimed to maintain international and regional cooperation in the fight against terrorism with a holistic approach and to discuss security challenges in regions around the world that are dealing with terrorism hotspots.

On March 22, the Department of State and the Government of Jordan jointly inaugurated a regional counterterrorism training facility to increase the training capacity of both Jordanian forces and regional partners. To date, the regional Antiterrorism Assistance facility supported the training of 23 partner nations.

On October 9, the Jordan Armed Forces' Military Center for Counter Terrorism and Extremism hosted more than 300 security practitioners, academics, and civil society and business leaders from 20 countries at the Amman Forum on Countering Violent Extremism. The event was launched in collaboration with the U.S. Embassy in Amman and U.S. non-profit organization Spirit of America Worldwide.

In coordination with the U.S. government, Jordan continued to host and conduct training for Palestinian Authority Security Forces and Civil Defense, in addition to other police forces from the region.

KUWAIT

Overview: The Government of Kuwait focused on improving its capacity to implement counterterrorism arrangements concluded in previous years. Kuwait joined the United States and other members of the Terrorist Financing Targeting Center (TFTC) in coordinated domestic designations of individuals and entities associated with Hizballah and the Taliban. Kuwait is a regional leader in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and co-leads, with Turkey and the Netherlands, the Coalition's FTF Working Group. In February, Kuwait hosted a full Coalition ministerial meeting at which the Coalition's Guiding Principles were affirmed.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: There were no reported terrorist incidents in Kuwait in 2018.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Kuwait made no significant changes to its counterterrorism legal framework or border security procedures in 2018.

In January, the Court of Appeals upheld the sentences of seven defendants convicted of funding ISIS and training ISIS members to use arms. The first defendant, a Lebanese national, was also convicted of fighting for ISIS and sentenced to 15 years. The other six defendants (two Kuwaitis, two Saudis, one Syrian, and one Egyptian) were sentenced to 10 years each.

Also in January, the Criminal Court, after finding insufficient evidence, acquitted five Syrians and one Iraqi of transferring money to Syria through an exchange bureau to finance and support ISIS.

In March, the Court of Appeals upheld the 2017 sentencing of a Filipina national to 10 years in prison, followed by deportation, for her affiliation with ISIS. The subject was in contact with the terrorist group in Libya where her husband was an ISIS fighter. She confessed to being a member of ISIS and plotting terrorist attacks in Kuwait.

In July, the Court of Cassation upheld the Court of Appeals' five-year prison sentence of a Kuwaiti citizen for joining ISIS and fighting for the terrorist group in Syria. Charges also included exporting and selling Syrian oil for the terrorist group's benefit.

During 2018, the Kuwaiti government participated in multiple Department of State-supported capacity-building workshops that focused on counterterrorism or counterterrorism financing. In addition, Kuwait concentrated on law enforcement and judicial capacity building across a broad spectrum of government agencies. For example, in December the Department of Justice's Office of Overseas Prosecutorial Development, Assistance, and Training (OPDAT) organized a three-day, AML/CFT training for practitioners from across Kuwait's AML/CFT regime, to include Kuwait's FIU, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, and others on a broad spectrum of investigative techniques often used in terrorism investigations.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Kuwait is a member of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF), the Defeat-ISIS Coalition’s Counter-ISIS Finance Group, and the TFTC. Kuwait’s FIU is a member of the Egmont Group.

In 2018, Kuwait hosted two meetings of the TFTC Executive Committee in Kuwait City. In May, TFTC member states designated individuals and entities associated with Hizballah. However, Kuwait chose not to designate Hasan Nasrallah, the Secretary General of Hizballah. In October, Kuwait joined its TFTC partners in designating nine individuals associated with the Taliban, including those facilitating Iranian support to bolster the terrorist group.

In 2018, Kuwait’s National Committee on CFT finalized its National CFT Risk Assessment, which contains plans and recommendations that will be presented to the Kuwait Cabinet.

In October, five Kuwaitis who work in counterterrorism and the financial industry participated in the Department of State’s International Visitor Leadership Program, meeting with professional counterparts and visiting U.S. public and private sector organizations related to combating terrorist financing and FTFs.

Countering Violent Extremism: Kuwait’s Ministry of Education implemented a program to fight what it viewed as extremist ideologies at public schools through teacher-training and student-counseling programs. As part of the government’s National Plan to Reinforce Moderation, the Ministry of Information runs a television channel with programming aimed at audiences believed to be at higher risk of radicalization to violence. The Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs maintained a training program for imams and a separate program enabling social salon (diwanya) owners to invite religious scholars to engage attendees and counter the potential presence of “radicalizing influences.” In August, the Ministry announced a new annual award for the imam who offers an innovative initiative in the field of “countering extremism.”

International and Regional Cooperation: In January 2018, Kuwait joined the UNSC for a two-year term and serves as chair of the UNSC’s Democratic Republic of the Congo Sanctions Committee and vice chair of the Somalia and Central African Republic sanctions committees. In February, Kuwait hosted the Kuwait International Conference for Reconstruction of Iraq. In June, Kuwait participated in the FATF-MENAFATF joint plenary meeting in Paris. Kuwait is also an active member of the Arab League and of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. As a member of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), Kuwait has been playing a lead role in mediating the GCC dispute among Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates on the one hand and Qatar on the other.

LEBANON

Overview: Lebanon is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and a committed partner in countering terrorism. In 2018, the United States provided security assistance and training to the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) to increase the LAF’s capacity as the sole legitimate defender of Lebanon’s sovereignty. The United States also worked with Lebanon’s defense and law enforcement organizations, such as the Internal Security Forces (ISF), to build

its counterterrorism capabilities and its ability to investigate and prosecute local terrorism cases. Terrorist groups operating in Lebanon included U.S.-designated FTOs such as Hizballah, Hamas, ISIS, 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. In September, Hizballah announced that its armed militia had advanced its military capabilities and that the group possessed precision-guided missiles. In December, Israel announced the discovery of Hizballah-constructed tunnels that crossed the Lebanon-Israel frontier, several of which were later confirmed by the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).

Despite the Lebanese government's official policy of disassociation from regional conflicts, Hizballah continued its military role in Iraq, Syria, and Yemen in support of the Syrian regime. Hamas and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine continued to operate in Lebanon's 12 Palestinian refugee camps. The camps remained outside the control of Lebanese security forces and continued to pose a security threat because of their potential for militant recruitment and terrorist infiltration. Several terrorists on the FBI's Most Wanted List and who are the subjects of the Department of State's Rewards for Justice program are reportedly residing in Lebanon.

2018 Terrorist Incidents:

- On February 4, a LAF soldier was killed in Tripoli, and seven others were wounded while confronting and arresting ISIS militants.
- Lebanon-based terrorist group Hizballah continued to plan attacks around the world, as detailed in other sections of this report.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Lebanon does not have a comprehensive counterterrorism law, but several articles of Lebanon's criminal code are effectively used to prosecute acts of terrorism. In 2018, Lebanon took steps to adapt its laws to improve the investigation of cyber activities related to terrorism. The Central Bank and Lebanon's security services held the fourth edition of the Anti-Cybercrime Forum. The LAF, the ISF, the General Directorate of General Security, and the General Directorate of State Security are the primary government agencies responsible for counterterrorism. Although cooperation among the agencies was inconsistent, they took steps to improve information sharing and were receptive to additional capacity building and reforms.

In July, the LAF conducted a narco-terrorism raid targeting a drug dealer whom the LAF said funded activities of terrorist groups. In August, the ISF foiled an alleged ISIS plot to attack LAF checkpoints and churches in northern Lebanon. In September, Lebanese security forces detained an individual linked to ISIS over a plot to poison the LAF's food and water supply. In November, the LAF conducted counter narco-terrorist operations in the Baalbek region in pursuit of fugitives of a dangerous armed gang. The security services involved in these successful operations benefited from significant U.S.-provided capacity-building assistance.

In 2018, Lebanese security services collaborated with the United States on numerous instances to foil terrorist plots and investigate and apprehend individuals involved in terrorism. However,

corruption, unclear delineation of responsibilities among Lebanon's security services, and an outdated judicial system with backlogged cases hampered law enforcement efforts. In addition, Hizballah's role in Lebanon's confessional power-sharing system continued to hinder government actions against the group's terrorist activities.

The LAF has primary responsibility for securing Lebanon's borders. In 2018, it further developed a network of border positions along the Lebanon-Syria border, including the construction of positions in territory previously occupied by ISIS. While Lebanon was not a source country for WMD components, its porous borders with Syria posed risks. In 2018, the LAF and other security services partnered with the U.S. government to detect and prevent the proliferation and trafficking of WMD. Lebanon collects biographic data for travelers at the Beirut International Airport, PNR data for commercial flights, and API. In 2018, the United States worked with Lebanon to develop a central repository to process and share biometric data among Lebanese security services.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Lebanon held the presidency of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF) in 2018. The FIU of Lebanon's Central Bank—the Special Investigation Commission (SIC) – is a member of the Egmont Group. Lebanon is also a member of the Defeat-ISIS Coalition's Counter-ISIS Finance Group.

In June, the Central Bank issued two Circulars requiring Collective Investment Schemes and Financial Intermediation Institutions to comply with the AML/CFT law and with relevant Central Bank or SIC regulations and directives. The Central Bank and members of the Association of Lebanese Banks reaffirmed their commitment to comply with U.S. sanctions, in accordance with Central Bank directives. Cooperation between the SIC and local enforcement authorities on terrorist financing cases improved in 2018. During the first nine months of the year, the SIC received seven terrorism and terrorism financing cases from local sources. The SIC was able to identify and freeze assets and referred four terrorism financing cases to the general prosecutor. The SIC stated that terrorism financing prosecutions and convictions rendered by the military court have increased.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: In March, Lebanon adopted its National Strategy for Preventing Violent Extremism. Anjar, Madjal, Saida, and Tripoli are members of the Strong Cities Network, and Lebanon is working to include other vulnerable cities around the country. The LAF continues to implement a comprehensive counter-messaging strategy that amplifies what it views as moderate voices and uses television spots, social media, billboards, and SMS messages to counter terrorist narratives.

International and Regional Cooperation: Lebanon supported counterterrorism efforts in regional organizations and participated in counterterrorism finance programs. The nation offered training to regional peers in international standards to combat terrorist financing. In February,

Lebanon published in its official gazette that it would accede to the 1999 International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism.

LIBYA

Overview: Libya's UN-backed Government of National Accord (GNA) was a reliable counterterrorism partner in 2018, participated in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, and continued to work with the United States to counter the spread of terrorist groups such as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant-Libya (ISIL-Libya) and al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). Terrorist groups continued to exploit the country's political instability and limited government presence, and some groups have integrated themselves within local communities – particularly in the South. Libya was the target of dozens of terrorist attacks in 2018. Through coordination with the GNA, the United States conducted periodic precision airstrikes on ISIL-Libya and AQIM cells. The GNA continued to cooperate with the United States on the investigation of suspected terrorists. The eastern Libya-based Libyan National Army (LNA) announced in June that a military operation had cleared the city of Derna of extremist fighters. The LNA, led by General Khalifa Haftar and not aligned with the GNA, has expressed the goal of ridding Libya of terrorist groups.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: ISIL-Libya and al-Qa'ida-aligned terrorists carried out dozens of attacks throughout 2018. Methods included suicide bombings, VBIEDs, ambushes, kidnappings, and targeted assassinations. The following is a partial list of terrorist incidents that occurred in 2018:

- On May 2, ISIS fighters attacked the High National Electoral Commission headquarters in Tripoli, killing 11 people.
- On September 10, ISIS fighters attacked the offices of the National Oil Corporation in Tripoli, killing two staff members.
- On November 24, ISIS fighters attacked a police station in the southeastern town of Tazirbu, killing eight police officers and kidnapping 11 individuals.
- On December 25, ISIS operatives conducted an attack against the Libyan Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tripoli, killing three people.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Libya lacks a comprehensive counterterrorism law, although the Libyan penal code 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 AU's Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism, which requires states to criminalize terrorist acts under their national laws.

The GNA continued to support and seek international cooperation to combat ISIS. The GNA conducted consultations to develop a counterterrorism strategy, including a planning conference supported by the United Kingdom and the EU, but had not passed any legislation by the end of 2018.

A multitude of organizations under the GNA claimed counterterrorism responsibilities, such as the Counterterrorism Unit, the Counterterrorism Task Force (CTTF), the Central Investigations Division, the General Investigations Division, and the Libyan Intelligence Service. Because of 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 because of continued political and security force fragmentation. The CTTF has begun efforts to work with foreign partner forces to train and build capacity to counter terrorist activity in Tripoli and areas around Misrata.

In many parts of Libya, armed groups, rather than state institutions, provide security and law enforcement functions, including detaining terrorist elements. National police and security forces are fragmented, are inadequately trained and equipped, and lack clear reporting chains and coordination mechanisms. Libya's military forces are similarly weak and fragmented. Non-state armed groups often overmatch formal security structures.

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 FTFs that pose serious security challenges to the region. The GNA has requested international support to enhance its border security capacity and has participated in discussions with its southern neighbors to improve security and monitoring along Libya's southern borders.

Security at Libya's airports is minimal, with limited use of PNR systems or biometric technology. Libya, however, is working with the Department of State to enhance security measures, to include biometric screening, at Tripoli's Mitiga International Airport. The Department of State provided training to Libyan airport officials, border guards, customs agents, and police forces, 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. 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 worked with the Libyan Naval Coastguard to increase the effectiveness of the organization, including command and control.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Libya is a member of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF) and the Defeat-ISIS Coalition's Counter-ISIS Finance Group. Libya's Minister of Interior made public statements and bilateral requests to develop counter-terrorism financing legislation and capacities.

Countering Violent Extremism: There were no significant changes in 2018.

Regional and International Cooperation: Many international organizations and diplomatic missions have reestablished a limited presence in Tripoli, since nearly all evacuated the capital in 2014. Other countries and organizations maintain a permanent presence in Tunis, Tunisia. The political conflict and limited international presence in Libya severely restricted counterterrorism cooperation. International assistance, including U.S. government-provided training on airport

security and land border management, increased in 2018. Other border security initiatives – through the EU Border Assistance Mission, UNDP and UNODC – focused on improving policing and criminal justice functions and counterterrorism legislation and legal frameworks. Libya is a member of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Arab League, and has participated in meetings of the GCTF’s West Africa Regional Capacity-Building Working Group.

MOROCCO

Overview: The United States and Morocco have excellent and long-standing counterterrorism cooperation. The Government of Morocco continued its comprehensive counterterrorism strategy that includes vigilant security measures, regional and international cooperation, and counter-radicalization policies. In 2018, Morocco’s counterterrorism efforts largely mitigated its 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. Morocco experienced its first terrorist incident since 2011 with the killing of two Scandinavian tourists in December. Morocco is an active participant in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. Morocco is also a member of the GCTF and is currently the co-chair of the GCTF with the Netherlands.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: In December 2018, two Scandinavian tourists were killed outside of Marrakesh in an ISIS-inspired attack. This was the first terrorist incident in Morocco since 2011.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: In 2018, Morocco completed a draft law to manage trade in dual-use goods, which would give Moroccan law enforcement the authority to stop the illicit trade and transfer of goods that could be used to create WMDs or to support the development of a WMD program.

In 2018, Moroccan law enforcement under the coordination of the Ministry of Interior, aggressively targeted and reported to have arrested 71 individuals and effectively dismantled more than 20 terrorists cells planning to attack a range of targets, including public buildings, prominent figures, and tourist sites. Moroccan law enforcement leveraged intelligence collection, police work, and collaboration with international partners to conduct counterterrorism operations.

The Central Bureau of Judicial Investigation (BCIJ) remains the primary law enforcement agency responsible for counterterrorism prosecutions. The BCIJ reports to the General Directorate for Territorial Surveillance and operates under the supervision of the public prosecutor of the Court of Appeals. The following offers a snapshot of arrests in 2018:

- In March, Moroccan authorities dismantled an eight-person cell that was allegedly planning terrorist attacks in the northern city of Tangier and in central Morocco, seizing hunting weapons, military uniforms, and electronic devices.

- In July, Moroccan authorities arrested four individuals suspected of being connected with ISIS and operating in four cities across the country, as well as linked to a terrorist cell dismantled in May operating in Morocco and Spain.
- In September, Moroccan authorities dismantled a 12-person cell operating in Casablanca and Tangier, which was allegedly planning terrorist attacks and seeking to join ISIS in Syria.

Moroccan law enforcement agencies participated in a wide range of U.S.-sponsored programs to improve the country's technical and investigative capabilities, including financial investigation, intelligence analysis, and cybersecurity.

In January 2018, the Moroccan Royal Armed Forces created the Joint Standing Committee on Special Operations. The creation of this committee codifies into the military doctrine a single organization responsible for the organizing, training, development, and equipping of all the Moroccan military forces responsible for conducting counterterrorism operations.

Border security remained a top priority for Moroccan authorities. 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 airline carriers worked regularly with the United States to detect and deter individuals attempting to transit illegally and to address watchlisted travelers. Moroccan airport authorities have excellent capabilities in detecting fraudulent documents. In addition, police, customs officers, and the Royal Gendarmerie operated mobile and fixed checkpoints along the roads in border areas and at the entrances to major municipalities. Moroccan naval and coast guard units monitored and patrolled Morocco's extensive coastal waters, including the Strait of Gibraltar, to interdict illicit traffickers.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: There were no significant changes in 2018. Morocco is a member of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF) and its FIU, known as the Unité de Traitement du Renseignement Financier, is a member of the Egmont Group.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: Morocco has a comprehensive CVE strategy that prioritizes economic and human development in addition to countering radicalization and oversight of the religious sphere. To counter what it views as religious extremism, Morocco promotes an interpretation of the Maliki-Ashari school of Sunni Islam, which it considers moderate. The Ministry of Endowments and Islamic Affairs has developed an educational curriculum for Morocco's nearly 50,000 imams as well as for female students (mouchidates). The Royal Mohammedan League of Ulema (Rabita Mohammedia) counters radicalization by producing scholarly research, reviewing educational curricula, and conducting youth outreach on religious and social topics.

In prisons, the Department of State has supported the General Delegation for Prison Administration and Reintegration's (DGAPR's) efforts to modernize prison management, develop prisoner classification tools, and construct more secure facilities. In August, King Mohammed VI pardoned 14 detainees following their renunciation of terrorist views after their successful completion of the DGAPR rehabilitation program.

USAID continued to address youth marginalization in areas of Morocco more vulnerable to recruitment by terrorist organizations. USAID's Community Oriented Policing Activity provided opportunities for dialogue that have resulted in greater trust and a freer flow of information between police and communities.

International and Regional Cooperation: Morocco is currently a co-chair of the GCTF with the Netherlands. Morocco hosted two GCTF events in 2018, the "Initiative to Address Homegrown Terrorism" and the "Workshop on Countering Violent Extremism in Prisons." The former initiative, co-led by Morocco and the United States, resulted in the "Rabat-Washington Good Practices on the Prevention, Detection, Intervention, and Response to Homegrown Terrorism" that GCTF ministers endorsed in September 2018. Also in September, Morocco co-launched with the United States the GCTF "Initiative on Improving Capabilities for Detecting and Interdicting Terrorist Travel Through Enhanced Terrorist Screening and Information Sharing," with the goal of developing good practices for interdicting terrorist travel through building watchlist capability, improving border control, and increasing information sharing. In June, Morocco hosted a Political Directors Meeting of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS with a regional focus on Africa. In January, AU members elected Morocco to the Peace and Security Council of the AU, after Morocco rejoined the AU in 2017.

Morocco is a major non-NATO ally. Morocco hosted the annual AFRICAN LION exercise and participated in multilateral regional training exercises. Morocco is an active member of the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP). Morocco also has strong cooperation with European partners – especially Belgium, France, and Spain – to thwart potential terrorist threats in Europe.

OMAN

Overview: Oman is an important regional counterterrorism partner that actively works to prevent terrorists from conducting attacks or operating in the country. The Omani government in 2018 remained concerned about the conflict in Yemen and the potential for al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and ISIS-Yemen to threaten Oman's land and maritime borders. Omani officials regularly engaged with U.S. officials on counterterrorism, but rarely broadcasted their 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 (IMCTC), and the Riyadh-based Terrorist Finance Targeting Center (TFTC). The Government of Oman issued several statements condemning terrorist attacks around the world in 2018.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: There were no terrorist attacks reported in Oman in 2018.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Oman released a new penal code by Royal Decree 7/2018 in January. The new code expands on previously established penalties, and specifically stipulates imprisonment for a term of three to 15 years for any Omani citizen who joins or offers either material or “ideological” support to a foreign terrorist or “extremist” organization. Other provisions in the new penal code are consistent with previous policies outlining 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 because of Oman’s extensive coastline and long, remote borders with Saudi Arabia and Yemen. Nevertheless, Oman had adequate 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 Royal Office (RO) and the Internal Security Service 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 2018, the ROP Coast Guard, ROP Customs, and the RO itself participated in U.S. Export Control and Related Border Security program aimed at improving the government’s interdiction and investigation capabilities at air, land, and sea ports of entry. Additionally, the ROP Coast Guard participated in an exchange trip to the United States to observe U.S. port security procedures and to conduct meetings with U.S. officials.

Oman continued to participate in the Department of State’s Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) program in 2018, further developing both hard and soft skills related to counterterrorism operations and investigations. Additional ATA training concentrated on crisis response planning, border security, exercise development, and maritime security. Omani security officials representing the ROP, the Royal Army of Oman, the RO, and multiple civilian agencies participated in the training.

The major impediments to more effective law enforcement and border security are limited resources, insufficient 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 construction of a fence along the border with Yemen to prevent illegal entry into Oman, and the Omani government continued to seek opportunities for additional U.S. border security training. Representatives of several civilian agencies also traveled to the United States in December 2018 to participate in an ATA-funded training program aimed at improving interagency crisis coordination.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Oman is a member of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF) and the Riyadh-based TFTC. In May, representatives of Oman’s National Committee to Combat Money Laundering and Terrorism Finance, the Ministry of Justice, the Central Bank, and several other agencies attended MENAFATF’s 27th meeting in Beirut. In September, Oman’s FIU, the National Center for Financial Information, hosted a workshop on AML/CFT. Finally, Oman Public Prosecution worked with the U.S. Department of Justice in 2018 to coordinate a counterterrorism financing training program for relevant Omani government agencies.

Royal Decree 30/2016, Oman’s CFT law, requires financial institutions, private industry, and non-profit organizations to screen transactions for money laundering or terrorist financing 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, numerous gaps remain. These include completing the drafting and implementation of certification procedures for AML and CFT, issuing directives for the immediate freezing and seizure of the assets of persons and entities on the UN sanctions list under the UN Security Council ISIL (Da’esh) and al-Qa’ida sanctions regime and its successor resolutions, and designating wire transfer amounts for customer due diligence procedures.

Countering Violent Extremism: The full nature and scope of Oman’s CVE initiatives remained opaque in 2018, but it is believed Oman maintains tightly controlled and non-public initiatives to counter terrorist recruitment. Radicalization to violence in Oman was not considered a significant threat in 2018.

As in recent years, the Omani government promoted an advocacy campaign, “Islam in Oman,” designed to highlight and encourage religious tolerance and inclusiveness. The Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs continued working to expand a program titled “Tolerance, Understanding, Co-existence – Oman’s Message of Islam” in 2018, facilitating several exhibitions and events in Europe.

International and Regional Cooperation: In November, Omani delegations attended both an IMCTC meeting in Riyadh and the League of Arab States meeting on combating terrorism in Cairo. Oman also attended the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) summit in Riyadh in December, and it continues to participate in the U.S.-GCC Strategic Cooperation Forum. Oman regularly votes in favor of counterterrorism measures in the UN General Assembly, the Arab League, and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

QATAR

Overview: The United States and Qatar continued to increase counterterrorism cooperation in 2018, building on progress made after the U.S. Secretary of State and Qatari Foreign Minister signed a counterterrorism Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in July 2017. At the U.S.-Qatar Counterterrorism Dialogue in September 2018, the two governments affirmed their progress implementing the MOU and committed to a set of shared 2019 priorities. Qatar is an active participant in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, is active in all Defeat-ISIS Coalition

working groups, and facilitated U.S. military operations in the region. Qatar hosts roughly 10,000 U.S. service members on two military installations critical to Coalition efforts. Security services capable of monitoring and disrupting terrorist activities have maintained the status quo.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: There were no terrorist attacks reported in Qatar in 2018.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: In 2018, the Qatari government developed new draft AML/CFT legislation. At year's end, the law awaited final approval by the Council of Ministers and the Amir.

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. The Qatar State Security Bureau (SSB) maintained an aggressive posture toward monitoring internal terrorism-related activities. The Ministry of Interior (MOI) and Internal Security Force (ISF) remained well-positioned to respond to incidents with rapid reaction forces that routinely engage in structured counterterrorism training and exercises, including with U.S. agencies. Qatar's Office of Public Prosecution was active in prosecuting terrorism and terrorism financing cases.

As a result of the counterterrorism MOU signed in 2017, the United States and Qatar continued to increase information sharing, including on terrorist screening information. Aviation security information sharing also increased. MOI authorities cooperated with the Department of Homeland Security, Customs and Border Protection, and Transportation Security Agency officials to enhance screening capabilities of the estimated 30 million travelers who pass through Hamad International Airport each year.

U.S. technical assistance to Qatari law enforcement and judicial agencies increased during 2018. The Departments of Justice, State, and the Treasury, as well as the FBI, led or participated in several capacity-building initiatives involving the MOI, the SSB, the Public Prosecution, the Central Bank, and other Qatari agencies. A Department of Justice Resident Legal Advisor began an assignment in Doha in April, providing technical assistance to Qatar's counterterrorism efforts. In November, Qatar funded a three-year anti-terrorism training program provided by the Department of State, which will include training pertinent to Qatar's preparations to host the FIFA World Cup in 2022; the primary recipients are MOI and ISF officers.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Qatar is a member of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF). Qatar continued preparations for the MENAFATF Mutual Evaluation, scheduled to begin in 2021, including holding a mock assessment. Qatar is a member of the Defeat-ISIS Coalition's Counter-ISIS Finance Group, as well as the Riyadh-based Terrorist Financing Targeting Center.

The Qatari government developed a new draft AML/CFT law in 2018 and sought feedback from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the U.S. government. In May, Qatar domestically

designated 28 individuals and entities for their involvement in terrorism. Qatar deepened cooperation with the United States on combating terrorism financing during 2018. Qatar joined the United States and other TFTC countries in coordinated domestic designations of individuals and entities associated with Hizballah and the Taliban.

Qatar took actions in 2018 under the UN Security Council's ISIL (Da'esh) and al-Qa'ida sanctions regime. Of the three individuals who were brought to trial in 2015 and 2016, one was convicted and has appealed, and two were acquitted. All three were charged again in July 2017, and their cases remained pending at the end of 2018. The Qatari Attorney General appealed the two acquittals. One individual was released from pre-trial detention while the new charges and appeal remained pending. Additionally, a fourth UN-designated financier remained in custody. The Public Prosecution continued to prosecute non-UN-designated persons on terrorism and terrorism financing charges, including a Qatari national who joined ISIS in Syria and was arrested upon his return. In a matter involving 25 persons convicted on terrorism charges in 2017, 23 of whom were also convicted on charges of financing ISIS – the men's cases remained on appeal before the Court of Cassation. Of these 25, 18 were imprisoned (serving terms ranging from three to 13 years), while the other seven men were convicted in absentia and remain fugitives.

In 2018, Qatar continued to maintain restrictions, imposed in 2017, on the overseas activities of Qatari charities, requiring all such activity to be conducted through one of two approved charities in an effort to better monitor charitable giving for terrorist financing abuse.

Countering Violent Extremism: The core of Qatar's CVE strategy remained intensive investment in education and increasing economic opportunities for youth around the globe. Qatar was also a major funder of GCERF and sits on GCERF's Governing Board of Directors. The Qatar Fund for Development supports GCERF activities by building awareness among community leaders about the impact of violent extremism, sharing information on how to respond to violent extremism, promoting community engagement in events to promote peace, and providing educational initiatives.

International and Regional Cooperation: Qatar is an active counterterrorism participant in the UN, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and the Arab League. Qatar is also a member of the GCTF and a major contributor to GCERF. The country was active in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) activities, but the Gulf dispute that broke out in June 2017 froze most GCC-wide engagements. In November 2018, Qatar committed to providing the new UN Office of Counterterrorism with US \$75 million over five years to support a variety of UN priorities, including implementing UNSCR 2396, supporting victims of terrorism, and preventing and countering violent extremism.

SAUDI ARABIA

Overview: Saudi Arabia continued to maintain a strong counterterrorism relationship with the United States and responded to terrorist threats from violent militant groups, ISIS sympathizers, al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), and Iran-backed Houthi militants based in Yemen. Based on local reporting, Saudi Arabia continued to see a reduction in the number of deaths

attributable to terrorist violence as the government actively and effectively improved its counterterrorism readiness. Through a range of counterterrorism initiatives, many in partnership with the U.S. government, Saudi Arabia took tangible steps to strengthen its counterterrorism capabilities in border security, counter terrorist financing, and CVE. Saudi Arabia remained a key member and active participant in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and co-leads the Defeat-ISIS Coalition's Counter-ISIS Finance Group. Saudi Arabia co-chairs the Riyadh-based Terrorist Financing Targeting Center (TFTC) with the United States, an initiative founded in 2017 to increase U.S.-Gulf multilateral collaboration to counter terrorist financing. Senior Saudi government and religious leaders issued strong public statements denouncing violent acts perpetrated by global terrorist organizations.

During 2018, Saudi Arabia faced terrorist threats primarily targeting Saudi security forces. Saudi Arabia participated in forums designed to expand regional CVE efforts and what Saudi Arabia describes as “the radicalization of Islam,” while addressing the challenge of returning FTFs from conflict zones and terrorist propaganda. In 2018, Saudi Arabia continued its recent efforts to promote what it calls “moderate Islam,” though some support for intolerant views in third countries persisted, and some Saudi textbooks continued to include language that promoted discrimination, intolerance, and violence.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: Saudi Arabia continued to experience sporadic lone offender, ISIS-inspired attacks, primarily targeting Saudi security forces. Suspected militants perpetrated violence using homemade and other IEDs and gunfire. Attacks in 2018 included the following:

- On April 19, assailants attacked a police checkpoint in southern Asir province, killing four police officers and injuring four others.
- On May 31, local media and the Ministry of Interior reported that two attackers fatally stabbed a Saudi traffic police officer and engaged in a gunfight with security forces near a National Guard facility in Taif.
- On July 8, three suspected militants killed a Saudi security officer and a Bangladeshi national in a shooting incident at a security checkpoint in Buraidah in Qassim province.
- On August 15, security officials reported that a suspected ISIS sympathizer attempted to detonate an explosive belt in the city of al-Bukayriyah, in Qassim province.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: There were no changes to counterterrorism legislation in 2018. The Saudi government enforced the 2017 Counterterrorism and Counter Terror Financing Law (CT Law), resulting in terrorism-related convictions.

Saudi Arabia's law enforcement units leveraged collaboration with regional and international partners to disrupt terrorist activities. Human rights organizations have asserted that the CT Law – like its predecessor – restricts freedom of expression and association by establishing an overly broad definition of terrorism that is applied to non-violent offenses, including peaceful political or social activism. In 2018, authorities arrested several women's activists, scholars, and religious leaders. Authorities continued to defend these arrests as a response to criminal acts that fell under the cover of “terrorism” or vaguely-defined crimes against national security.

Saudi Arabia's most significant physical border security concern continued to be the cross-border threats from Yemen, including terrorist infiltration, drug trafficking, contraband smuggling, and threats related to the ongoing conflict in Yemen. Saudi Arabian security forces improved their operational effectiveness, focused on surveillance, increased patrols around critical infrastructure, and improved information sharing and interagency coordination to deny terrorists safe haven. The Saudi government closely monitored passenger manifests for inbound and outbound flights, scrutinized visitors' travel documents, and collected biometric information. The Government of Saudi Arabia maintained INTERPOL channels to monitor travelers at land, air, and maritime borders.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Saudi Arabia is a member of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF) and its FIU, the Saudi Arabia Financial Investigation Unit, is a member of the Egmont Group. Along with Italy and the United States, Saudi Arabia serves as co-lead of the Defeat-ISIS Coalition's Counter-ISIS Finance Group.

Saudi Arabia has a strong legal framework to combat and deter terrorism financing, and sought to strengthen this framework in 2018. The FATF's 2018 review of Saudi Arabia's Mutual Evaluation Report found Saudi Arabia to have a low or moderate level of effectiveness for seven of the 11 criteria for AML/CFT. In response, Saudi Arabia has committed to improving areas identified as deficient by the FATF through a national action plan. Saudi Arabia continued to make progress to improve its AML/CFT legal framework. Saudi Arabia and the United States co-chaired meetings of the TFTC in 2018. In collaboration with other TFTC member states, Saudi Arabia imposed two rounds of sanctions in 2018 against individuals and entities acting on behalf of or providing support to Hizballah and the Taliban.

Countering Violent Extremism: In 2018, Saudi Arabia employed a multifaceted approach to CVE programming with the goal of maintaining momentum after high-level CVE events in 2017. The stated aim of CVE institutions, including the Global Center for Combating Extremist Ideology (or *Etidal*, in Arabic) and the Ideological Warfare Center, was to promote partnerships between government agencies and non-government stakeholders to address "the root causes of extremism" and dismantle ISIS narratives through offensive cyber campaigns. The Ministry of Interior continued to operate its program to rehabilitate individuals with past "extremist involvement." While the government portrayed the program as highly successful, it lacked demonstrable metrics for its effectiveness.

Saudi Arabia continued to enact domestic religious sector reforms, including the development of more stringent guidance and approval for Saudi religious personnel traveling overseas to conduct proselytization. As part of what Saudi Arabia describes as its "moderate Islam" initiative, Saudi clerics and religious attachés sent abroad were vetted for observance to principles of tolerance and peaceful co-existence and were forbidden from undertaking proselytization efforts beyond host country Sunni Muslim communities. The Saudi-chartered and -led Muslim World League (MWL), which promotes the Salafist form of Islam practiced in Saudi Arabia, has been involved in the kingdom's various counter-messaging initiatives globally. The current MWL leadership has presented a significantly more inclusive and less discriminatory message than previous

MWL leaders and Saudi religious authorities. Despite this progress, support for intolerant views in third countries persisted.

While Saudi Arabia has supported the continued removal of discriminatory content from public school textbooks and enhancing the capacity of public school teachers to integrate CVE consideration into their instruction, studies from the Anti-Defamation League and the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom still found language that promoted discrimination, intolerance, and violence in textbooks. Though the MWL continued to press a message of moderation internationally, including outreach efforts to Muslim minority communities, Jewish communities in the United States and Europe, and Middle Eastern Christian churches (Egyptian Copts, Lebanese Maronites), senior government officials still expressed views that the type of extremist, intolerant, and violent rhetoric found in Saudi textbooks was “a legacy issue.”

International and Regional Cooperation: Saudi Arabia continued to encourage greater international and regional coordination on counterterrorism issues. Saudi Arabia is an active member of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Arab League. It is also a founding member of the Riyadh-based Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition. Saudi Arabia is also a member of the GCTF. Throughout the year, Saudi government officials continued to lead high-level meetings on regional security. The government hosted international counterterrorism conferences, including the 16th Advisory Board meeting of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Center on April 17.

TUNISIA

Overview: The government continues to prioritize counterterrorism, and Tunisia cooperated with the United States and other international partners to professionalize its security apparatus. U.S. security assistance to Tunisia grew in 2018 and Tunisia made tangible progress on several of its counterterrorism goals, including enhanced border security, new proposed legislation, asset freezing of terrorist financiers, and implementation of CVE programming. Tunisia also made positive strides in developing its military and civilian security capacity to conduct counterterrorism efforts. Tunisia is currently working on a strategy for the return, trial, and incarceration of captured Tunisian FTFs from battlefields in Iraq, Libya, and Syria. Tunisia is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and is active in the Coalition’s FTF and Counter-ISIS Finance working groups.

The risk of terrorist activity in Tunisia remained high in 2018, including the potential for terrorist attacks and the infiltration of arms and terrorists from neighboring countries. In 2018, aspiring ISIS affiliate Jund Al Khilafa-Tunisia (JAK-T), al-Qa’ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)-aligned Uqba bin Nafi’ Battalion, and others conducted primarily small-scale attacks against Tunisian security personnel, including one in July against the Tunisian National Guard that killed six officers. Nonetheless, Tunisian security forces continued to improve their ability to preempt terrorist activities by identifying and dismantling numerous terrorist cells.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: Terrorist organizations remained active in Tunisia, primarily targeting Tunisian security elements. The list below highlights the most significant terrorist incidents of 2018:

- On July 8, armed terrorists ambushed a group of Tunisian National Guard officers in Jendouba near the Tunisia-Algeria border, killing six officers. Two days later, Algerian military forces conducted operations along the border, killing three terrorists and arresting three others suspected of involvement in the July 8 ambush.
- On October 29, a 30-year-old woman affiliated with ISIS detonated a suicide IED near several police officers on Habib Bourguiba Avenue in central Tunis. The explosion killed the terrorist and injured 20 police officers and six civilians.
- On December 15, 12 terrorists affiliated with JAK-T stole approximately US \$110,000 from a local bank in Kasserine before killing a Tunisian civilian in his home. The group targeted the individual for being a relative of a Tunisian soldier whom terrorists killed in 2016.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Tunisia pursued several counterterrorism legislative initiatives toward the end of 2018. On November 23, the Ministerial Council announced the need to conduct further review of the draft state of emergency law's provisions on civil liberty guarantees and judicial controls. Under consideration since 2014, the draft law remains controversial because of the power it would provide the Ministry of Interior to administer house arrests and curfews, limit public meetings, monitor media, and inspect businesses without prior judicial permission. Following the October suicide bombing in Tunis, a parliamentary committee reexamined a draft law on the protection of security forces in an effort to expedite its completion. The draft law has been stalled for more than two years because of its controversial language, which critics say lacks explicit civil liberty protections. Parliament requested that the government revise the language in the current draft before it considers the bill for ratification.

The 2015 Countering Terrorism and Money Laundering Law is currently under review by a parliamentary plenary session for possible amendments. These amendments include lifting immunity on anyone involved in investigations related to terrorism or money laundering crimes; establishing legal and procedural frameworks to implement UNSCRs related to prohibiting the proliferation and financing of WMD; adding a juvenile court to the CT Judicial Pole; and increasing penalties for money laundering crimes and broadening the crime's definition. Two of the proposed amendments, Articles 107 and 108, have prompted criticism by lawyers who argue that attorney-client confidentiality would be threatened by regulations requiring lawyers to report clients suspected of terrorist activities.

The Government of Tunisia's counterterrorism efforts demonstrated sustained momentum in 2018, with successful weapons seizures, arrests, and operations against armed groups throughout the country. Significant law enforcement actions and arrests included the following:

- On January 24, a National Guard unit conducted a security operation in Kasserine, killing one terrorist and wounding several others. The operation is credited with dismantling a cell providing logistical support to aspiring ISIS affiliate JAK-T.

- On June 4, the Counterterrorism Investigative Brigade of the Aouina National Guard arrested five people ages 17 to 21 who, after interrogation, confessed their intention to join JAK-T.
- On November 13, the National Terrorist Crimes Investigation Unit (UNECT) conducted counterterrorism raids in Raoued and Tunis, dismantling 40 active terrorist cells. In Raoued, UNECT seized a laboratory equipped to produce explosive materials and toxic gases.
- On December 5, a counterterrorism special unit raided a house and arrested a suspected terrorist in Sidi Bouzid. The unit seized many weapons and dismantled a terrorist cell that had been planning attacks against security personnel.

Tunisia maintained its focus on border security in 2018, coordinating with international donors through the G7+7 Border Security sub-committee to request and implement training and equipment for its border forces. Tunisia continued to receive support from Germany and the United States to complete installation of electronic surveillance equipment along its border with Libya. It also received maritime border training from Italy and is implementing a comprehensive border police program funded by the EU and organized by the International Center for Migration Policy Development. Tunisia continued to prioritize the safeguarding of tourist zones in 2018. As a result of sustained collaboration and cooperation among security forces, international partners, and the tourism industry to enact preventative measures throughout the country, the last attack against tourists in Tunisia was in June 2015.

Tunisian security personnel continued to participate in the Department of State's expanded Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) program and additional training funded through the State Department's Counterterrorism Partnership Fund. This year's ATA programming included interoperability and sustainment training for members of the National Police, the National Guard, Intervention Units, the Presidential Guard, and Civil Protection. The ATA program expanded outside of Tunis in 2018 to include courses in Kairouan, Medenine, Nabeul, and Sousse governorates.

In close collaboration with the Ministry of Interior, the Department of State is implementing a new police academy modernization project, which includes curriculum development. U.S. government programs also provided the Ministries of Interior and Justice with armored and non-armored vehicles, surveillance cameras, and other equipment to enhance internal and border security. The Tunisian armed forces consider counterterrorism and border security their principal mission, and 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 (MENAFATF) and the country's FIU, the Tunisian Financial Analysis Committee, is a member of the Egmont Group. In 2017, FATF categorized Tunisia as having strategic AML/CFT deficiencies. Tunisia developed an action plan to correct these deficiencies. In line with the new action plan, the National Counter-Terrorism Committee (CNLCT) published its first *National List of Individuals, Organizations and Entities Related to Terrorist Crimes* in November. This list included the names of 23 supporters of terrorism whose assets the Government of Tunisia froze. Some of those listed have been sentenced by the courts

in absentia, while others were imprisoned. Most of the accused belong to terrorist organizations such as Ansar Sharia, ISIS, JAK-T, and Katibat Uqba bin Nafi'. CNLCT President Mokhtar Ben Nasr announced that a second list would be published in the *Official Gazette of the Republic of Tunisia* by the end of 2018, with subsequent lists to be published periodically.

Countering Violent Extremism: In October, CNLCT published the Tunisian National Counterterrorism Strategy. The strategy contains four main pillars (prevention, protection, prosecution, and response) and collectively contains 59 targeted measures, 18 of which are dedicated solely to CVE. CNLCT approaches CVE comprehensively, working with the Ministries of Education, Culture, Communication, and Religion, as well as with Tunisian civil society organizations and international partners to implement both broad counter-messaging campaigns and targeted CVE programming for at-risk populations such as youth and prison inmates. Tunisia is a founding member of the Strong Cities Network. Tunisia also made a concerted effort to improve socioeconomic conditions in the country through economic development and education programs to address conditions that terrorists have exploited for recruitment.

International and Regional Cooperation: Tunisia participates in multinational and regional efforts to counter terrorism, such as those at the UN, the Arab League, the GCTF, and the AU. Tunisia hosted a GCTF meeting on returning families of FTFs in February 2018. Tunisia is a major non-NATO ally and a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. 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.

Tunisia is an active member of the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP), 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) government continued to prosecute numerous individuals for terrorism-related offenses in 2018. 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 its support for counter messaging and CVE platforms, such as the Sawab and Hedayah Centers, respectively. The Government of the UAE remained co-chair of the Defeat-ISIS Coalition's Communications Working Group along with the United States and the United Kingdom, as well as co-chair of the Defeat-ISIS Coalition's Stabilization Working Group with the United States and Germany.

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 with financial authorities to counter terrorist

finance. UAE government officials worked closely with 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 to support local forces in counterterrorism operations.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: There were no terrorist attacks reported in the UAE in 2018.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: In 2018, the UAE continued to prosecute numerous individuals in terrorism-related cases using existing legislation. The UAE updated its legal framework to strengthen sentences for individuals convicted of cybercrime that supported terrorist organizations and unlawful entities. International human rights NGOs and activists have asserted the UAE uses its counterterrorism and cybercrime 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 Federal Appeal Court's State Security Court examined numerous new terrorism-related cases in 2018 and retried many 2017 terrorism-related cases. Most cases involved defendants accused of promoting or affiliating with UAE-designated terrorist organizations, including ISIS, AQAP, and al-Nusrah Front.

As in previous years, the Government of the UAE worked closely with the United States, through the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), to improve its border security posture. Law enforcement information-sharing between the 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 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 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 (MENAFATF) and the UAE's FIU, the Anti-Money Laundering and Suspicious Cases Unit, is a member of the Egmont Group. The UAE also participates in the Defeat-ISIS Coalition's Counter-ISIS Finance Group and the Riyadh-based Terrorist Financing Targeting Center (TFTC). The UAE remained a regional and global financial and transportation hub for terrorist organizations 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 continual 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 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 United States and the UAE jointly took action to disrupt an extensive currency exchange network in Iran and the UAE that financed the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Qods Force. The UAE also announced the designation of members of Hizballah's Shura Council, the primary decision-making body of Hizballah, alongside the United States and other TIFC members.

In October, the UAE issued Federal Law No. 20 of 2018 on Facing AML/CFT and Illegal Organizations. The law mandates abiding by any decisions and sanctions issued by the UNSC. It also includes regulation of holding and declaring virtual and digital currencies. The UAE introduced in the law the obligations of Designated Non-Financial Business and Professions in addition to financial institutions, which are required to put in place adequate systems and controls to assess their risk exposure to financing of terrorism. It empowers law enforcement with the authority to conduct undercover operations.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: The UAE government continued to play a leadership role in global efforts to counter terrorist radicalization and recruitment. The UAE continued its support of 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 regulated all mosque sermons and religious publications to “instill the principle of moderation in Islam.”

The Ministry of Tolerance has been active in promoting messages of tolerance and coexistence through the introduction of several initiatives, such as the Communities Forum, the International Tolerance Symposium, the National Festival of Tolerance, and the UAE Tolerance and Peaceful Coexistence Association. In Dubai, CVE was a central theme of the World Tolerance Summit. Additionally, in November 2018, the Ministry of Tolerance and the Ministry of Education launched a joint project to promote tolerance across public and private schools and to plan extra-curricular student activities to encourage acceptance and respect for others. The Ministry of Interior also organized the March UAE International Conference on National Security and Elimination of Risks, “Tolerance, Moderation and Dialogue in Facing Extremism.” The Forum

for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies has hosted the fifth annual forum in Abu Dhabi titled “Virtue: An Opportunity for Global Peace,” gathering 800 scholars and religious figures from 120 countries. Prominent UAE officials and religious leaders continued to publicly criticize and highlight the dangers of terrorist narratives.

International and Regional Cooperation: The UAE was a vocal and active participant in counterterrorism efforts at both the regional and international levels. The UAE is a member of the GCTF and hosted a workshop on monitoring, measuring, and evaluating CVE policies, programs, and activities. It also continued to play a role in global counterterrorism efforts through its training of Somali forces and its deployment in Yemen, to counter terrorist organizations such as al-Shabaab, AQAP, and ISIS-Yemen.

YEMEN

Overview: Throughout 2018, al-Qa’ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), ISIS-Yemen, Hizballah, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Qods Force (IRGC-QF), and other Iran-backed terrorist groups, continued to exploit the political and security vacuum created by the ongoing conflict between the Yemeni government under the leadership of President Abd Rabu Mansour Hadi, backed by a Saudi-led coalition, and the Iran-backed Houthi forces. Additionally, IRGC-QF has exploited the conflict to expand its influence in Yemen. UN and other reporting has highlighted the growing connection between the IRGC-QF and the Houthis, including the provision of lethal aid used by the Houthis to target civilian sites in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). In Yemen, Houthi attacks enabled by U.S.-designated Iranian entities or proxies targeted military and civilian sites, primarily associated with Republic of Yemen Government (ROYG) and Saudi-led coalition members. Media reports suggest that other FTOs, such as Hizballah, may also be supporting the Houthis. The Saudi-led coalition continued its air campaign to restore the legitimacy of the ROYG, which it started in March 2015. The ROYG, in partnership with the Saudi-led coalition, controlled the majority of Yemeni territory at the end of 2018, including the population centers of Aden, Al Ghaydah, Mukalla, and Ta’izz. Houthi forces controlled the capital of Sana’a and surrounding northwest highlands, and largely controlled the port city of Hudaydah, among other areas. AQAP retained a significant area of influence inside Yemen, though the terrorist group suffered setbacks caused by counterterrorism pressure.

The ROYG cooperated closely with the U.S. government on counterterrorism efforts. However, because of the instability and violence in Yemen, and because of its own degraded capabilities, 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 2018 continued to remove key leaders and complicate AQAP’s freedom of movement, but AQAP and ISIS-Yemen continued to carry out terrorist attacks throughout the country, including in government-held territory. UAE-backed Yemeni forces continued to play a significant role in counterterrorism efforts.

ISIS-Yemen remained considerably smaller in size and influence compared with AQAP, but it remained operationally active and continued to claim attacks against AQAP, Yemeni security forces, and the Houthis.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: AQAP and ISIS-Yemen terrorists carried out hundreds of attacks throughout Yemen in 2018. Methods included suicide bombers, VBIEDs, ambushes, armed clashes, kidnappings, and targeted assassinations. The following list details a small fraction of the incidents that occurred:

- On February 24, suspected ISIS terrorists and car suicide bombers targeted the headquarters of a Yemeni counterterrorism unit in Aden, killing at least 14 people and wounding more than 40 others.
- On June 14, AQAP conducted a complex attack targeting UAE-backed forces in al-Wada'a district in Abyan governorate.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Yemen made no significant changes to its counterterrorism legal framework or to its law enforcement and border security procedures in 2018. Yemen does not have comprehensive counterterrorism legislation and no progress was made owing to the state of unrest and because most of Yemen's government remained in exile until November, at which point the Prime Minister directed most of the country's ministers to move to the ROYG's temporary capital of Aden. Owing 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. Before 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). The law would facilitate the detention of suspects and include mandatory sentencing for several terrorism-related crimes. There have been no clear moves to implement legal structures compliant with UNSCR 2178, relating to countering foreign terrorists. 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.

Before March 2015, the National Security Agency and President's Office drafted a National Counterterrorism Strategy. A ministerial committee reviewed the draft but was unable to finalize its task because of developments in the country. Thus, Yemen's National Counterterrorism Strategy had not been officially adopted or implemented by the end of 2018.

Yemen employs the U.S.-provided PISCES in an effort to secure borders and identify fraudulent travel documents. Despite 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 the nation's maritime borders remained extremely porous because of a lack of capacity. The central southern coast remains highly vulnerable to maritime smuggling of fighters, weapons, materials, and

goods used to support AQAP and ISIS-Yemen. During 2018, the United States planned multiple training courses for more than 140 land border and coast guard personnel. These courses, funded by the Department of State's Export Control and Related Border Security program, provided hands-on training in Saudi Arabia and Seychelles to conduct illicit weapons interdiction operations at sea and in port, focusing on conventional weapons, explosives, ammunition, man-portable air-defense systems (known as MANPADS, or MPADS), ballistic missile components, and WMD materials. U.S. partners provided training and technical assistance in several counterterrorism-related areas, although the conflict hampered in-country efforts in 2018.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: There were no significant changes in 2018. Yemen is a member of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF). Owing to a lack of judicial capacity and territorial control, the Yemeni government is unable to fully implement UNSCRs related to terrorist financing. Since 2010, FATF has identified Yemen as a risk to the international financial system because of its strategic AML/CFT deficiencies.

Countering Violent Extremism: There were no significant changes in 2018.

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 concentrated on working toward a peaceful solution to the conflict. Despite the challenges, the ROYG remained a dependable international partner as it worked to reestablish the rule of law within the territory it holds. Yemen, with the United States and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, participates in the Yemen Security Working Group, which includes high-level military and diplomatic representatives from its three member states, and develops several cooperative capacity-building initiatives for Yemeni military and security forces. For example, in April 2018, Yemen Coast Guard members participated in a four-week training held in the Republic of Seychelles and delivered by the UNODC Maritime Crime Program. Yemen also belongs to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Arab League.

SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA

Overview

Although al-Qa'ida in Afghanistan and Pakistan has been seriously degraded, remnants of al-Qa'ida'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.

Afghanistan continued to experience aggressive and coordinated attacks by ISIS's branch in the region, the Islamic State's Khorasan Province (ISIS-K) and the Afghan Taliban, including the affiliated Haqqani Network (HQN). Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) retained full responsibility for security in Afghanistan and in partnership with NATO's Resolute Support Mission, took aggressive action against terrorist elements across Afghanistan.

ISIS-K remained active in 2018, although counterterrorism pressure from Afghan and Resolute Support forces, and clashes with the Afghan Taliban, removed fighters from the battlefield and restricted the group's ability to expand territorial control in 2018. Nevertheless, the group was able to conduct a significant number of high-profile, mass-casualty attacks in both Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The Afghan government and the Afghan Taliban took steps towards a political settlement in 2018. In June, the Afghan government initiated a successful Eid-al-Fitr cease-fire, although ANDSF and Resolute Support committed to continue operations against al-Qa'ida and ISIS-K during the cease-fire. In September, President Trump appointed Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad as the Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation, who has advanced a political settlement in Afghanistan.

Pakistan continued to experience significant terrorist attacks, particularly against vulnerable civilian and government targets. Pakistani military and security forces undertook counterterrorism operations against groups that conducted attacks within Pakistan, such as Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). Pakistan did not take sufficient action against externally focused groups such as Lashkar e-Tayyiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM), which continued to operate, train, organize, and fundraise in Pakistan. The Pakistani government pledged support for political reconciliation between the Afghan government and the Afghan Taliban but did not restrict the Afghan Taliban and HQN from operating in Pakistan and threatening U.S. and Afghan forces in Afghanistan. In June, the FATF placed Pakistan on its list of jurisdictions with strategic deficiencies (the "grey list") for deficiencies in its AML/CFT regimes, including the failure to implement UN sanctions related to designated entities.

India continued to experience attacks, including by Pakistan-based terrorist organizations and tribal and Maoist insurgents. Indian authorities blamed Pakistan for cross-border attacks in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. India continued to apply pressure to detect, disrupt, and degrade terrorist organizations' operations within its borders, including the disruption of an ISIS-inspired terrorist cell reportedly planning terrorist attacks in late 2018. During 2018, the Government of India sought to deepen counterterrorism cooperation and information sharing with the United States, including through the bilateral Counterterrorism Joint Working Group meeting in March and the first 2+2 (top U.S. and Indian diplomatic and military officials) Ministerial Dialogue in September. In June, the Indian government designated ISIS-K and AQIS as terrorist organizations under domestic designation authorities.

The pace and magnitude of terrorist attacks in Bangladesh continued to decline in 2018, although a secularist writer was killed and a university professor seriously injured in separate incidents. Bangladeshi security forces claimed to have disrupted planned attacks, captured suspected militant leaders, and seized caches of weapons, ammunition, and explosives. The Government of Bangladesh continued efforts to counter terrorist radicalization and recruitment and limit the flow of FTFs.

Countries in Central Asia remained concerned about the potential spillover of terrorism from Afghanistan, as well as the potential threat posed by the return of individuals from Central Asia who traveled to Iraq or Syria to fight with terrorist groups, including ISIS. In July, ISIS claimed

responsibility for an unprecedented attack in southern Tajikistan, which left four Western tourists dead, including two Americans. Through the C5+1 (United States plus the Central Asian countries) diplomatic platform, officials from Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan participated in the associated C5+1 Security Working Group focused on regional cooperation on counterterrorism and CVE.

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 ability of the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) to combat insurgent groups through NATO’s Resolute Support Mission. In 2018, the Afghan Taliban concentrated their offensive operations against the ANDSF, the Afghan government, Resolute Support Forces, and Afghan civilians. Meanwhile, the Islamic State’s Khorasan Province (ISIS-K) and the Afghan Taliban-affiliated Haqqani Network (HQN) increased high-profile terrorist attacks targeting Afghan civilians, government officials, and members of the international community.

The Afghan government and the Afghan Taliban took steps towards a political process in 2018. In June, the Afghan government initiated a successful Eid-al-Fitr cease-fire, although ANDSF and Resolute Support committed to continue operations against al-Qa’ida and ISIS-K during the cease-fire. In September, President Trump appointed Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad as the Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation, who has engaged with stakeholders to advance a political settlement in Afghanistan. In December, the Pakistan government, Afghan government, and Afghan Taliban delegations attended discussions in Abu Dhabi.

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

2018 Terrorist Incidents: Terrorist groups continued to use VBIEDs and complex attacks that involve multiple attackers wearing suicide vests to target ANDSF, Afghan government buildings, foreign governments, polling centers, journalists, and soft Afghan and international civilian targets to include international organizations. The following list details a fraction of the terrorist incidents that occurred:

- On January 27, the Taliban’s HQN packed an ambulance with explosives and detonated it on a crowded street in Kabul, killing 103 people – mostly civilians – and injuring at least 235.
- On March 23, the Taliban detonated a VBIED as spectators departed a wrestling match in Lashkar Gah, Helmand, killing at least 14 civilians and sparking a women-led mass protest against Taliban violence.
- On April 22, an ISIS-K suicide bomber detonated his vest at an identity card distribution center in a predominantly ethnically Hazara, Shia-minority neighborhood in Kabul, killing more than 60 civilians.
- On April 30, ISIS-K members conducted a suicide bombing in Kabul and a shooting in eastern Khost province killing 25 people, including 10 journalists. Following the first

explosion, a second bomber, holding a camera and posing as a journalist, killed rescue workers and journalists who had rushed to the scene.

- On June 4, an ISIS-K suicide bomber detonated his vest at a gathering of prominent Muslim religious scholars, who had convened in Kabul to issue a pro-peace Islamic edict calling for an end to violence against Muslims, killing 20 civilians.
- On August 15, an ISIS-K suicide bomber detonated his suicide vest at a private school in a predominantly ethnically Hazara, Shia-minority neighborhood in Kabul, killing 48 students as they prepared to take their university entrance examinations.
- On November 20, a suicide bomber detonated his vest among a gathering of religious clerics at the Uranus Wedding Hall in Kabul, killing more than 50 people. The clerics had gathered to commemorate the Prophet Mohammed's birthday.

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.

U.S. law enforcement assisted the Ministry of Interior, National Directorate of Security (NDS), and other Afghan authorities in disrupting and dismantling terrorist operations and prosecuting terrorist suspects. Working with U.S. partners, Afghan security forces are developing the capacity to investigate terrorist financiers and facilitators. Recent investigative developments include the targeting of unlicensed *hawaladars* that launder narcotics proceeds and support insurgent financing.

In 2018, Afghan civilian security forces continued to participate in the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance program, receiving capacity-building training and mentorship in specialized counterterrorism-related skillsets such as crisis response, methods of entry, and response to an active shooter. 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 a November 2018 attack in Kabul against a British security contractor compound, securing the compound and killing the attackers. President Ghani is working to double the number of these units throughout the country.

In October, the government opened the Maslakh truck screening facility, which allowed for more comprehensive searches of large vehicles entering Kabul's international zone (IZ), significantly augmenting IZ security. The Afghan government also established a new security unit with sole responsibility for protecting an expanded perimeter, integrating command and control to establish a unity of effort with IZ security. The new unit replaced a patchwork of police, military, and private security contractors that previously reported to the Ministries of Interior and Defense through different chains of command.

Afghanistan continued to face significant challenges in protecting the country's borders, particularly in the border regions with Pakistan and Iran. Under the Afghanistan-Pakistan Action Plan for Peace and Solidarity, which met for the first time in July, Afghan and Pakistani officials agreed in principle to create a mechanism for communication between forces on each side of the

border. However, this has so far been limited to informal cooperation and ad hoc meetings between border commanders on both sides.

Afghanistan continued to process traveler arrivals and departures at major points of entry using a U.S.-provided border security system, PISCES, which has been successfully integrated with INTERPOL's I-24/7 platform.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Afghanistan is a member of the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering (APG), a FATF-style regional body. In line with FATF recommendations, Afghanistan's FIU, the Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Center of Afghanistan (FinTRACA), initiated a money laundering and terrorist financing risk assessment that will conclude in 2019. Despite technical compliance, insufficient cooperation and lack of capacity still hamper terrorist finance investigations. FinTRACA distributes UN sanctions lists under UNSCRs 1267 and 1988 to financial institutions via a circular and a link on FinTRACA's website. As of October, FinTRACA designated 258 persons to its watchlist, froze 29 bank accounts, revoked or suspended 25 business licenses, and imposed US \$74,000 in fines on money service businesses and banks for failure to comply with AML/CFT laws.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: In 2018, the Office of the National Security Council worked to finalize a national CVE strategy. The Ulema Council, with support from the High Peace Council, participated in conferences in Indonesia and Saudi Arabia that called on the Afghan Taliban to engage the Afghan government directly in peace negotiations. On June 4, the Ulema Council and High Peace Council gathered nearly 3,000 religious scholars in Kabul to issue a pro-peace Islamic edict challenging religious justifications for violence. ISIS-K conducted attacks against this meeting, religious minority groups, and other gatherings of moderate religious scholars.

An estimated 100,000 out of 160,000 mosques are not registered with the Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs (MOHRA) and operate independently of the government. MOHRA reported that unregistered madrassahs continued to "radicalize" vulnerable populations in 2018.

International and Regional Cooperation: Afghanistan is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS.

BANGLADESH

Overview: The pace and magnitude of terrorist attacks in Bangladesh continued to decline in 2018, although a secularist writer was killed and a university professor was seriously injured in separate incidents. Bangladeshi security forces continued a counterterrorism campaign that claimed to have disrupted planned attacks, captured suspected militant leaders, and seized caches of weapons, ammunition, and explosives. However, judicial impediments to the successful prosecution of terrorists and allegations of extrajudicial killings by security forces during

counterterrorism raids have inhibited broader counterterrorism successes. The Government of Bangladesh continued to articulate a “zero-tolerance” policy toward terrorism and the use of its territory as a terrorist safe haven. While the Bangladeshi government often attributed terrorist violence to local militants, al-Qa’ida in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS) and ISIS have together 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.

2018 Terrorist Incidents:

- On June 11, suspected terrorists murdered Shajahan Bachchu, a secularist writer and political activist in Munshiganj, in central Bangladesh. While the investigation is ongoing, Bangladeshi security forces suspect that the perpetrators were affiliated with AQIS.
- On March 3, a man self-identifying as a member of an AQIS-affiliated group, attacked Zafar Iqbal, a professor at a university in Sylhet, claiming that Iqbal was an “enemy of Islam.” However, the Bangladeshi government’s investigation determined that the attacker did not have ties to AQIS or other terrorist organizations.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: In 2018, Bangladesh’s criminal justice system was still in the process of fully implementing the Antiterrorism Act of 2009 as amended in 2012 and 2013. On April 5, the Government of Bangladesh formed the first two antiterrorism special tribunals authorized by the Antiterrorism Act in Dhaka and Chittagong. One of the Dhaka tribunal’s first cases was the trial of six defendants for the December 2016 Holey Artisan Bakery attack. 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 UNSCR 2178 on addressing FTFs. Despite lacking laws specific to FTFs, Bangladesh arrested suspected FTFs or facilitators of such fighters on other charges under existing law.

Bangladesh cooperated with the United States to strengthen control of its borders and ports of entry. 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” in September 2017, 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 API 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, sometimes described as the result of “shootouts” or “crossfire,” often euphemisms for extrajudicial killings. Observers questioned the veracity and significance of some of the reported counterterrorism operations, describing them as either staged by law enforcement or inaccurately portrayed by the media.

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, leadership development, and train-the-trainers, as well as enhancing cyber and digital investigation capabilities. Bangladesh also received Department of Justice prosecutorial skills training, community policing support, and technical advice on the modernization of its Evidence Act. Bangladesh is receiving assistance from the United States in developing an Alert List of known and suspected terrorists and militants to better screen for persons of interest at its ports of entry.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Bangladesh is a member and incoming co-chair of the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering (APG), a FATF-style regional body. The Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU) is a member of the Egmont Group. Bangladesh Bank and the BFIU lead the government's efforts to comply with the international 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, that is, organizations engaged or involved in terrorist activities, including the organizations listed in the UN Security Council ISIL (Da'esh) and al-Qa'ida sanctions list. Bangladesh Bank also publishes lists of domestically designated and UN-sanctioned individuals and groups on its website. The Act includes a broad provision 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 in 2018. Bangladesh Bank and the U.S. Department of Justice sponsor an annual dialogue on AML/CFT with the chief executive officers of Bangladesh's major financial institutions. In 2018, this public-private partnership on AML/CFT compliance was augmented by a separate conference with the Chief Anti-Money Laundering Compliance Officers of 40 Bangladeshi banks.

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 below 20 percent, and a case can take as long as seven years from the filing of charges to sentencing.

Countering Violent Extremism: Bangladeshi organizations continued cooperative activities through the Country Support Mechanism under GCERF, a public-private global fund to support local, grassroots CVE efforts in at-risk communities. 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 CVE strategy hindered sustained engagement with the United States and the international community.

The Bangladeshi cities of Dhaka North, Dhaka South, and Narayanganj are members of the Strong Cities Network.

International and Regional Cooperation: There were no changes in 2018.

INDIA

Overview: The parts of India most seriously impacted by terrorism in 2018 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. In June, the Indian government designated the Islamic State's Khorasan Province (ISIS-K) and al-Qa'ida in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS) as terrorist organizations under domestic designation authorities.

Counterterrorism cooperation between the United States and India continued to expand in 2018. In March, the U.S.-India Counterterrorism Joint Working Group reviewed threats posed by terrorist groups worldwide. In September, during the first 2+2 (top U.S. and Indian diplomatic and military officials) Ministerial Dialogue, both sides announced their intent to increase information sharing on known or suspected terrorists and to enhance their ongoing cooperation on terrorism issues at the UN and FATF. Both sides also committed to implementing UNSCR 2396.

2018 Terrorist Incidents:

- On February 10, Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) claimed responsibility for killing nine Indian officers at the Sunjuwan military station.
- On March 13, Maoists killed nine and critically injured two paramilitary personnel of the Central Reserve Police Force in an IED attack on an armored personnel carrier in southern Chhattisgarh state.
- On June 14, leading Kashmiri journalist Shujaat Bukhari was shot to death by terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir's capital with his two police bodyguards. The prime suspect, Naveed Jatt, was killed in a firefight with Indian security forces in November.

- On September 23, Maoists in the southern state of Andhra Pradesh killed a state lawmaker and a former state lawmaker in a tribal-dominated eastern part of the state.
- On November 18, three persons were killed and 20 were injured when two Sikh extremists threw grenades into a building where Sikhs belonging to the Nirankari sect had gathered.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: There were no major changes to counterterrorism laws in 2018. 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.

Under India's constitution, state governments are responsible for law and order. 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 antiterrorism squads 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 and to the NSG's limited independent logistics capacity. Continued weaknesses in intelligence and information sharing negatively impacted 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 (MAC) continued work on implementation. Larger Indian states have established their own state-level MACs and are providing near-real-time information on terrorism to India's various law enforcement agencies.

In an example of a significant counterterrorism law enforcement action, the NIA arrested Jamaat-ul-Mujahadeen Bangladesh senior leader Mohammad Jahidul Islam in Bangalore in August after he allegedly tried and failed to bomb shrines sacred to Buddhists in Bodhgaya in the Indian state of Bihar. Police suspect he was also involved in a series of cases in Bangladesh. In December, the NIA and several local law enforcement agencies carried out raids in Delhi and Uttar Pradesh and arrested 10 suspects who were reportedly part of an ISIS-inspired module planning terrorist attacks.

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 FATF, as well as two FATF-style regional bodies: the Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism (EAG) and the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering (APG). India's FIU 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 for Revenue, the committee will form several working groups to examine specific topics, including financial institutions, financial inclusion, and anti-money laundering. Once complete, the committee will present the assessment to the Minister of Finance for approval.

Between July 2017 and June 2018, India initiated 2,524 AML/CFT investigations, filed 414 prosecution complaints, arrested 170 individuals, and secured 732 Provisional Attachment Orders for confiscations. In June, the Indian government also announced its domestic terrorist designations of ISIS-K and AQIS.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: In 2018, Indian CVE programs continued to target disaffected sectors of Indian society that were at the highest risk of vulnerability for terrorist recruitment. Indian government officials continued to be concerned over the use of the internet – including social media and messaging apps like WhatsApp – for terrorist recruitment and radicalization and the fomenting of inter-religious tensions. India’s Home Secretary and other senior government officers met representatives from global social media companies to review steps to prevent online terrorist recruitment and radicalization. Nevertheless, cases of online terrorist radicalization in southern India were reported throughout the year, including reports of some recruits being smuggled to ISIS pockets in Afghanistan.

The city of Mumbai is a founding member of the Strong Cities Network.

International and Regional Cooperation: India is a founding member of the GCTF and participated in GCTF, Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum, and other UN fora on counterterrorism in 2018. India continued to use multilateral fora and bilateral visits to highlight terrorism concerns and their impacts. India also led efforts to condemn terrorism and took tangible steps against the threat in the various meetings of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and ASEAN. Indian troops also participated in a SCO-wide antiterrorism exercise called SCO Peace Mission 2018 alongside Russian, Chinese, and Pakistani troops. This was the first time Indian and Pakistani troops conducted a counterterrorism exercise together. The United States and Indian Special Forces took part in an annual exercise in Rajasthan in which counterterrorism was one of the simulated scenarios.

KAZAKHSTAN

Overview: Kazakhstan continued to express concern about FTFs potentially returning from Syria and Iraq, and the potential for homegrown terrorist attacks. No terrorist attacks were reported in Kazakhstan in 2018. The government adopted a new five-year counterterrorism strategy. However, the strategy’s law enforcement-centered approach and continued restrictions on religious practice have prompted concerns among some outside experts that the government’s efforts may be counterproductive. Kazakhstan remains a committed U.S. partner on counterterrorism efforts and regularly expresses interest in expanding this cooperation.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: There were no reported terrorist incidents in Kazakhstan in 2018.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Kazakhstan has a comprehensive counterterrorism legal framework. The country's lead agency for counterterrorism is the Committee for National Security (KNB), which coordinates efforts among multiple state agencies and at the local level. In March, the government approved an ambitious five-year, US \$900 million statewide program to counter terrorism and "religious extremism," with KNB leading in both drafting and implementing the strategy. The strategy dovetails with the government's previously approved Concept of State Policy in the Religious Sphere for 2017–2020, which aims to combat the use of religion for "destructive purposes." Law enforcement officers and prosecutors continued to exhibit wide discretion in determining what activities qualify as "terrorism" or "extremism" under the law, leaving political opponents and promoters of unsanctioned versions of Islam vulnerable to prosecution.

Kazakhstani law bans citizens from fighting in foreign wars. In 2017, 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." No such convictions were registered in 2018. The government takes a two-pronged approach to its citizens returning from Iraq and Syria, offering rehabilitation services to some and arresting and prosecuting others. In October, KNB and the Prosecutor General's Office successfully extradited a Kazakhstani national from Greece wanted for terrorist activity in Syria.

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 occurred remained unknown. From January through August, the KNB reportedly detained 18 people for participating in international terrorist organizations and detained 26 others for alleged "terrorist propaganda." KNB reported that it had disrupted attacks during the early planning stages on law enforcement facilities and other government buildings in Astana, Aktobe, and Uralsk. Courts continued to deliver harsh sentences for the promotion of "extremism" online. For example, a 30-year-old man in October was sentenced to seven years in prison for the "propagation of terrorism" through the distribution of audio recordings with "religious content" on social media. In many cases, the nature of such charges is difficult to verify and, in some cases, appeared to be connected to political opposition activity. For further information, see the Department of State's [Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#) and [International Religious Freedom Report](#).

Kazakhstan's Border Guard Service (BGS), part of the KNB, uses specialized passport control equipment, allowing officers to check for fraudulent documents. BGS officers interdicted foreign travelers attempting to enter and transit Kazakhstan with fake passports, such as an Iranian citizen who attempted to transit Almaty to Istanbul with onward flights to Europe in December with a fake Malaysian passport. 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 UNSCR 2178.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Kazakhstan belongs to the Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism (EAG), a FATF-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 Crime Statistics Committee of the Prosecutor General's Office reported that five terrorist financing cases were transferred to the court system during the first nine months of 2018.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: Kazakhstan's newly adopted five-year counterterrorism strategy places a heavy emphasis on law enforcement. The strategy's CVE initiatives focus on educating youth about government-sanctioned versions of Islam and provide alternatives to "radicalism" through social programs and economic opportunities. The government's Committee on Social Accord (formerly the Committee on Religious Affairs) conducted direct outreach to at-risk youth across the country. The government continued to develop rehabilitation and reintegration programs for individuals convicted of "extremism"-related offenses and for their relatives.

The Government of Kazakhstan censored online content to reduce "extremist" messaging. Religious experts associated with government institutions created groups on social networks such as Facebook and VKontakte, where they posted information and answered user questions about "religious extremism." Committee on Social Accord officials provided training for local imams, NGOs, and the media.

International and Regional 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 also participates in 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. Kazakhstan is a member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which organized a large-scale antiterrorism military exercise in Russia in August. Kazakhstani agencies partnered with the United States and international organizations such as UNDP, UNODC, and the OSCE on a variety of CVE projects. As a member of the C5+1 diplomatic platform, Kazakhstan participates in the associated C5+1 Security Working Group, which focuses on regional cooperation on counterterrorism and CVE.

KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

Overview: The Kyrgyz Republic's counterterrorism efforts continued to focus on rooting out those it considered "extremists," countering the spread of "extremism," limiting the flow of Kyrgyz national FTFs, and preventing those returning from conflicts abroad from engaging in

terrorist activities. 2018 marked the first year of implementation of the Kyrgyz government's first national program and action plan on combatting terrorism and "extremism." Terrorist attacks in the country remained rare, but the August 2016 suicide bombing against the Chinese Embassy in Bishkek and continued reports of terrorism-related arrests in 2018 underscored the potential threat facing the country. No terrorist attacks were reported in the Kyrgyz Republic in 2018. The Kyrgyz government restricts public information on national security issues, making it 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 allow for the relatively free movement of people and illicit goods in and out of the country. According to government statistics, an estimated 850 Kyrgyz citizens have left the country to join ISIS or other terrorist groups. Most experts believe the true number is higher.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: There were no reported terrorist incidents in the Kyrgyz Republic in 2018.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: There were no major changes to counterterrorism legislation or law enforcement capacity related to counterterrorism in 2018. There were also no reports of the government using counterterrorism laws to prosecute political opponents.

Kyrgyz authorities continued to report terrorism-related arrests in 2018, many of which involved Kyrgyz and foreign citizens who reportedly fought in Syria. In 2018, law enforcement agencies reportedly disrupted one planned terrorist attack and arrested at least 30 people on terrorism-related charges, over half of whom were reported to be returnees from foreign conflict zones. In October, authorities reportedly uncovered a sleeper cell consisting of five foreigners and four Kyrgyz citizens who were recruiting locals to fight in Syria and Afghanistan and were reportedly planning to carry out attacks in the Kyrgyz Republic. In addition, Kyrgyz courts, in coordination with security agencies, reportedly blocked at least 36 websites and 22 social media accounts that were purportedly spreading "extremist" material. Because of the opaque nature of the Kyrgyz government's counterterrorism operations, however, it is impossible to verify information about these and other incidents. In 2018, Kyrgyz police units participated in the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance's program on behavioral observation skills course.

In 2018, the government reportedly installed three sets of electronic gates (e-gates) at the Manas Airport in Bishkek and two e-gates at the Osh Airport to verify biometric passports of Kyrgyz citizens. There is no information indicating that the government is using these e-gates to scan passengers against a terrorist watchlist. The government has expressed interest in acquiring an API System for commercial flights, but is unlikely to move forward on this initiative without significant donor support.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: There were no significant changes in 2018. The Kyrgyz Republic belongs to the Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism (EAG), a FATF-style regional body. The EAG conducted a mutual evaluation review of the Kyrgyz Republic in September 2018.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: In 2018, the Kyrgyz government began implementing its first 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. While the approval of the program and action plan was a positive first step in establishing a coordinated counterterrorism and CVE national strategy, no new programs or significant accomplishments resulting from either document were reported in 2018.

The Ministry of Education, in cooperation with the State Commission for Religious Affairs (SCRA), is in its third year of a program to develop a new curriculum for high school students on a government-approved form of Islam and identify terrorist recruitment tactics. The Ministry of Interior and SCRA, often in cooperation with local religious leaders and civil society, continued to host CVE roundtables and seminars and produce public awareness and counter-messaging material distributed across a range of media platforms, with much of the focus on preventing radicalization amongst youth and women. The Kyrgyz government cooperates with the UN, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and other international organizations and foreign governments, to facilitate CVE training and other CVE-related assistance programs.

In 2018, UNODC continued to support the Kyrgyz Prison Service to develop strategies to manage the spread of extremism among prisoners and prevent radicalization. The U.S. Embassy supports the Kyrgyz government’s CVE efforts with a range of programs, including speaker and exchange programs, vocational training and other support for madrassa students, and the establishment of local crime prevention centers to address the drivers of radicalization and terrorism in at-risk communities. Nonetheless, discrimination against ethnic minorities, corruption, security force abuses, and challenges with local governance remain underlying – and unaddressed – factors in radicalization to violence.

International and Regional Cooperation: In 2018, the Kyrgyz Republic participated in counterterrorism activities and trainings organized by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, NATO, the Commonwealth of Independent States, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and the Collective Security Treaty Organization. The Kyrgyz Republic participated in seven regional military or law enforcement counterterrorism exercises in 2018, two of which were hosted by the Kyrgyz Republic. As a member of the C5+1 diplomatic platform, the Kyrgyz Republic participates in the associated C5+1 Security Working Group, which focuses on regional cooperation on counterterrorism and CVE.

MALDIVES

Overview: The Government of Maldives’ counterterrorism efforts concentrate on countering terrorist recruitment and radicalization and limiting the flow of FTFs. Marginalized Maldivians, those within the penal system or involved in criminal gangs, and those educated in Arab Gulf states are at a heightened risk of radicalization to violence, with some joining terrorist groups.

The Government of Maldives claims to have intercepted 68 Maldivians attempting to travel to Syria from 2016 to 2018, while 61 Maldivians were conducting terrorist attacks abroad. Media reports also illustrated a pattern of Maldivians transiting through third countries to become FTFs. In January, the Defense Minister announced that authorities were aware of three returned FTFs but did not reveal what action was taken in these cases. Since August, media reports indicated at least six individuals with known links to terrorist groups were released from prison, including a Maldivian charged with joining a terrorist organization while in Pakistan, but freed based on insufficient evidence. In 2018, the Prosecutor General's Office (PGO) charged five Maldivians with planning to detonate an IED.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: There were no reported terrorist incidents in Maldives in 2018.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: The Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) is the primary legislation for preventing and prosecuting terrorism. However, as recently as summer 2018, under the previous government, Maldives used the PTA to suppress criticism by detaining and prosecuting journalists, political opposition figures, and other activists, including making several high-profile arrests during a state of emergency declared by former President Abdulla Yameen in February. The PTA criminalizes joining or fighting in a conflict abroad. In June, media reported that the Maldives Police Service (MPS) arrested a group of Maldivians attempting to travel to Syria, including one who had already been banned from traveling through a court order after a previous attempt to travel to Syria. In 2018, the PGO charged one Maldivian with intent to participate in a foreign war, and charged five Maldivians with planning to detonate an IED.

By the end of 2018, the Criminal Court had yet to issue verdicts against four Maldivians who had been charged in 2017 with attempting to participate in the fighting in Syria. In November, the court ordered the conditional release of two Maldivians, also charged in November 2017, with conspiring with ISIS to launch a suicide attack in Malé, based on their treatment during detention since their arrest in September 2017. In October, the court conditionally released two of the four suspects charged in August 2017, with possessing IED-related items, based on medical grounds. In August, the Criminal Court acquitted a Maldivian charged with joining a terrorist organization while in Pakistan, citing insufficient evidence.

MPS is responsible for counterterrorism investigations and transfers cases to the PGO for the duration of the trial. The country's National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) coordinates interagency counterterrorism policy and liaises with international security partners. NCTC falls under the Maldives National Defense Force (MNDF), with participation from MPS, Customs, Immigration, and other agencies. Responsibility for counterterrorism operations, including investigations, primarily rests with MPS. MNDF, including the Maldives Marine Corps 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.

Maldives uses a U.S.-provided border security system, PISCES, to process passengers at its main international airport and at the Malé seaport.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Maldives is a member of the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering (APG), a FATF-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 prosecuted any cases under the Act 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.

Countering Violent Extremism: Since the 2017 launch of the National Strategy on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism, NCTC has identified islands prone to radicalization and conducted a “Violent Extremism and Terrorism” workshop with senior educators in the greater Malé area, implemented youth leadership and training programs on several islands, and conducted a leadership program for young staff of the Island Aviation Services Limited, the country’s national airline.

International and Regional Cooperation: In 2018, Maldivian government officials participated in and jointly hosted international and regional workshops on counterterrorism efforts. The Maldivian government sent participants to U.S.-sponsored regional counterterrorism workshops and courses, such as the Comprehensive Security Response to Terrorism course at the Daniel K. Inouye-Asia Pacific Center for Security Studies. In February, NCTC worked with UNODC to conduct a “train the trainers” session for South Asia on Investigation, Prosecution, and Adjudication of Foreign Terrorist Fighter Cases. In November, NCTC collaborated with UNODC in hosting a workshop on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Gender Mainstreaming in Criminal Justice Response to Terrorism. Also in November, legal experts and port and maritime security officers from the Maldives, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh attended a sub-regional workshop in London on implementing maritime counter terrorism instruments at the International Maritime Organization. In December, MNDF focused one of its annual bilateral military exercises with India on capacity building and developing interoperability for a joint response to terrorist incidents. In December, NCTC Director General and MPS officers participated in a UNODC-organized workshop in Singapore on countering terrorism financing and the proliferation of WMD.

NEPAL

Overview: Nepal experienced no acts of international terrorism in 2018. Incidents of domestic terrorism, which focused on voter intimidation or targeted government officials during the late-2017 provincial and federal election season, were less common in 2018. The Government of Nepal attributed most of the attacks to the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), a Maoist faction also known as the “Netra Bikram Chand Group” or “Biplav Group” which split from the mainstream Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Center) in 2015. Nepal’s security services continue to monitor the Biplav Group. Due to Nepal’s open border with India and insufficient security protocols at the country’s sole international airport in Kathmandu, Nepal has and could continue to be used as a transit or staging point for international terrorists.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: Nepal experienced no acts of international terrorism in 2018. Domestic terrorist incidents included small bombings in various locations throughout the country, for which authorities blamed the Biplav Group. Examples included the following:

- On April 17, in the weeks before Indian Prime Minister Modi’s visit to Nepal, a bomb exploded at the Indian Consulate in Birgunj in southern Nepal, damaging the perimeter wall.
- On April 28, an IED damaged a wall of the Arun-3 Hydroelectric Project, which Prime Minister Modi was scheduled to inaugurate.
- On May 13, authorities located and neutralized small bombs planted in several locations, including the Pokhara Airport and a rural highway bridge, on the same day that the Biplav Group called for a nationwide strike. Another bomb caused superficial damage to a supermarket in Bharatpur in southern central Nepal. No injuries were reported.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: The 2017 criminal code, which came into effect in August 2018, does not explicitly mention terrorism, but has broad provisions relating to offenses against the state. It prohibits individuals from building armed military or paramilitary organizations and bars any person from associating with an “organized force” to undermine the sovereignty, territorial integrity, or national unity of Nepal.

The law enforcement entity 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 counterterrorism efforts and receive training in hostage rescue and in responding to hijackings and similar terrorism incidents.

Airport security controls in Nepal are weak and inadequate. 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 national central bureau, which is located at Nepal Police headquarters. 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 there is a lack of sufficient security controls; for example, only one immigration official may be present at the checkpoint. Thus, 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 (APG), a FATF-style regional body. While the Government of Nepal has made symbolic progress in constructing an AML/CFT regime, many regulations and requirements that are in place nominally for these purposes do not actually address AML/CFT trends or dynamics. Additional work is required to develop expertise in financial crimes awareness, prevention, identification, investigations, case management, interagency and departmental coordination, and border control.

Countering Violent Extremism: There were no reported changes in 2018.

International and Regional Cooperation: Nepal is a member of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and signatory of the SAARC Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism. Nepal Polices sends two to three officers to INTERPOL's annual regional counterterrorism seminar.

PAKISTAN

Overview: Although the Pakistani government voiced support for political reconciliation between the Afghan government and the Afghan Taliban, it did not restrict the Afghan Taliban and the Haqqani Network (HQN) from operating in Pakistan-based safe havens and threatening U.S. and Afghan forces in Afghanistan. The government failed to significantly limit Lashkar e-Tayyiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) from raising money, recruiting, and training in Pakistan – and allowed candidates overtly affiliated with LeT front organizations to contest the July general elections.

Pakistan experienced significant terrorist threats in 2018, although the number of attacks and casualties has continued to decrease from previous years. The major terrorist groups that focused on conducting attacks in Pakistan included Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), Jamaat-ul-Ahrar (JuA), Islamic State's Khorasan Province (ISIS-K), and the sectarian group Lashkar-e-Jhangvi al-Alami (LJA). ISIS-K claimed several major attacks against Pakistani targets, some of which may have been conducted in collaboration with other terrorist groups. Separatist militant groups conducted terrorist attacks against governmental, non-governmental, and diplomatic targets in Balochistan and Sindh provinces. Groups located in Pakistan, but focused on conducting attacks outside the country, included the Afghan Taliban, HQN, LeT and its affiliated front organizations, and JeM. Terrorists used a range of tactics to attack individuals, schools, markets, government institutions, and places of worship, including IEDs, VBIEDs, suicide bombings, targeted assassinations, and rocket-propelled grenades.

In 2018, Pakistan held general elections and conducted a peaceful transfer of power. The Pakistani government and military continued efforts to disrupt terrorist attacks and eliminate anti-state militants. In June, the FATF placed Pakistan on its “grey list” for deficiencies in its AML/CFT regimes, including the failure to implement UN sanctions related to designated entities.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: Pakistan experienced numerous terrorist attacks in 2018. Militant and terrorist groups targeted civilians, journalists, community leaders, security forces, law enforcement agents, and schools killing and injuring hundreds. Religious minorities faced significant threats from terrorist groups. The following examples include some of the more destructive and high-profile attacks and demonstrate a variety of methods, targets, and perpetrators:

- On March 14, a suicide bomber killed nine people and injured 35 others in Raiwind, near Lahore in Punjab province. TTP claimed responsibility for the attack.
- On July 13, a suicide bomber killed at least 149 people and injured at least 186 others at a pre-election campaign event in Mastung, Balochistan province. ISIS-K claimed responsibility for the attack.
- On November 23, a suicide bomber killed at least 33 people and injured at least 56 others in Hangu, Orakzai district, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. ISIS-K claimed responsibility for the attack.
- Also on November 23, three individuals from the Balochistan Liberation Army armed with guns and suicide vests attacked the Chinese consulate in Karachi, Sindh province. They killed four consulate guards before being killed by law enforcement.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: The Government of Pakistan continued to implement the Antiterrorism Act of 1997, the National Counterterrorism Authority (NACTA) Act, the 2014 Investigation for Fair Trial Act, and 2014 amendments to the Antiterrorism Act, 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. In 2017, the government renewed a constitutional amendment allowing military courts to try civilians on terrorism charges for two additional years. However, critics have argued that the military courts are not transparent and are 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. Pakistan's Ministry of Interior has more than 10 law enforcement-related entities under its administration. NACTA acts as a coordinating body. In November, the Minister of State for the Interior, Shehryar Afridi, announced that the Ministry of Interior would reorganize NACTA as part of its reforms to the National Action Plan on terrorism, which was still in progress at the end of the reporting period.

Pakistan collects biometric information at land crossings with its International Border Management Security System. Authorities had limited ability to detect smuggling by 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 managed the entry of dual-use chemicals for legitimate purposes through end-use verification, while also attempting to prevent their diversion for use in IEDs. In keeping with UNSCR 2178, returning FTFs may be prosecuted under Pakistani law. NACTA is responsible for compiling and verifying data on these individuals.

In early 2017, after 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 disarm, disrupt, kill, and apprehend terrorists. Military courts operated without transparency and sentenced at least 104 convicted terrorists to death in 2018, up from at least 15 in 2017.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: As a member of the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering (APG), a FATF-style regional body, Pakistan has agreed to implement international standards to combat money laundering, terrorism finance, and proliferation finance. Pakistan criminalizes terrorist financing through the Antiterrorism Act, but implementation remains uneven. In June 2018, the FATF placed Pakistan on its "grey list" for deficiencies across its AML/CFT regimes, specifically citing concerns over Pakistan's failure to fully implement the UN Security Council ISIL (Da'esh) and al-Qa'ida sanctions regime. FATF noted that UN-listed entities, including LeT and its affiliates, were not effectively prohibited from raising funds in Pakistan, or being denied financial services. Although Pakistan's laws technically comply with international AML/CFT 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. Pakistan committed to addressing these concerns as part of an agreed FATF Action Plan.

Pakistan's 2015 National Action Plan to combat terrorism includes efforts to prevent and counter terrorist financing, including by enhancing interagency coordination on countering the finance of terrorism. The law designates the use of unlicensed *hundi* and *hawala* systems as predicate offences to terrorism and requires banks to report suspicious transactions to Pakistan's FIU, 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 additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: In November, the Pakistani government announced that it would review and potentially revise NACTA's composition and operations. Before the review, NACTA's CVE work adhered to the National Narrative to Counter Violent Extremism, which was finalized in 2017. 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 five de-radicalization camps offering "corrective religious education," vocational training, counseling, and therapy. A Pakistani NGO administered the Sabaoon Rehabilitation Center in Swat Valley, which was founded in partnership with the Pakistani military, and focused on juvenile terrorists.

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 or to provide documentation of their sources of funding, or to limit their acceptance to foreign students with valid visas, a background check, and the consent of their governments, as required by law.

The Pakistani cities of Nowshera, Peshawar, and Quetta are members of the Strong Cities Network.

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 GCTF, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (as an observer), the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Regional Forum.

SRI LANKA

Overview: There were no terrorist attacks reported in Sri Lanka in 2018. In June, a suspected former Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) member was arrested in possession of a uniform, LTTE flag, claymore mine, and other military equipment. In July, Sri Lankan naval forces excavated a former LTTE training camp, where they uncovered a large stash of military equipment and bombs. Sri Lanka remains vulnerable to money laundering and terrorist financing. Sri Lanka strengthened its counterterrorism efforts by improving its counterterrorism legislation, enhancing border security, implementing AML/CFT measures, and collaborating with numerous international organizations and donor countries, including the United States. Counterterrorism cooperation and training is a growing part of the U.S. relationship with Sri Lanka. For example, Sri Lankan Coast Guard officers attended and took part in several courses conducted by the Department of State's Export Control and Related Border Security (EXBS) Program in 2018. Additionally, the Sri Lankan government regularly sends officers to U.S.-sponsored regional counterterrorism workshops and courses.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: There were no reported terrorist incidents in Sri Lanka in 2018.

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. In February 2017, the government announced it suspended making arrests under the PTA because of widespread concerns about several of its provisions; however, the government made at least four arrests under the PTA in 2018. An estimated 70 to 130 individuals remain in detention from prior PTA arrests. The draft Counter Terrorism Act (CTA) set to repeal and replace the PTA obtained cabinet approval September 18 and was submitted as a draft law to parliament on October 9. According to international and domestic legal experts, there are significant flaws in the draft legislation, but the CTA represents a significant improvement over the PTA.

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. In November, President Sirisena moved the Sri Lanka Police Department from the Ministry of Law and Order to the Ministry of Defense.

Border security remained a significant issue for the Sri Lankan government. In July, the Sri Lankan National Border Management Committee, with assistance from the UN Migration Agency, launched a new integrated border management strategy. The strategy aims to promote inter-agency collaboration and move toward intelligence-driven, risk-based border control. 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 EXBS program, continued to train Sri Lanka 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 EU Immigration Department on an API 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 (APG), a FATF-style regional body. Sri Lanka's FIU 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 remains vulnerable to money laundering and terrorist financing. In 2017, the FATF added Sri Lanka to its "grey list" for deficiencies across its AML/CFT regimes. Sri Lanka agreed to an action plan to address several AML/CFT vulnerabilities.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: There were no reported changes in 2018.

International and Regional Cooperation: Sri Lanka continued to cooperate with numerous donor countries and regional partners to improve its land and maritime border security. Sri Lanka is a partner nation in the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism. In March, Sri Lanka participated in the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate sub-regional workshop in New York on national CVE strategies. Additionally, in November, legal experts and port and maritime security officers from Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and the Maldives attended a sub-regional workshop on implementing maritime counterterrorism instruments at the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in London, hosted jointly by the UNODC and IMO Counter Terrorism Committee.

TAJIKISTAN

Overview: In July 2018, an unprecedented attack left four Western tourists dead, including two Americans, which underscored the threat posed by ISIS in Tajikistan and the importance of counterterrorism efforts, as well as initiatives to counter terrorist recruitment and radicalization. The majority of Tajik domestic counterterrorism activities conducted in 2018 targeted organizations and individuals allegedly linked to Islamist terrorism in Tajikistan, but the government also arrested terrorist suspects returning from Afghanistan, Iraq, Russia, and Syria. Tajik authorities reported that an estimated 1,900 Tajik citizens have traveled to Iraq and Syria to join ISIS since 2015. The Ministry of Internal Affairs reported that 163 FTFs have returned to Tajikistan. According to the Prosecutor General, more than 450 Tajik citizens remained imprisoned in Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan for participating in terrorist groups' combat operations, and another 470 Tajik fighters were killed. 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.

2018 Terrorist Incidents:

- On July 29, five men attacked a group of seven Western cyclists on a rural highway outside Danghara, southeast of Dushanbe, killing four people, including two Americans. Assailants ran several cyclists off the road and then attacked them with knives. Police shot and killed four of the attackers, and the lone survivor was sentenced to life in prison on November 21. ISIS claimed responsibility for the attack and the assailants pledged loyalty to ISIS in an online video. The government, however, believed that the opposition political party, the Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan (IRPT), was responsible for the attack.
- On August 26, assailants killed two Tajik forestry workers and wounded one other in the Farkhor district, near the Tajik-Afghan border. Details surrounding the incident are unclear. Both the Tajik and Afghan media reported a retaliatory airstrike against militants on the Afghan side by the Tajik, or possibly the Russian military; however, both Dushanbe and Moscow officially refuted this claim.
- On November 4, Tajik officials reportedly arrested 12 suspects planning to set off a bomb at the Russian 201st motorized rifle division headquarters in Dushanbe, allegedly under instructions from ISIS.
- On November 7, a bloody prison riot in the northern city of Khujand left dozens of individuals, including several prison guards, killed or injured. ISIS claimed responsibility for the riot.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: On June 13, the Tajik Parliament adopted amendments to Article 179 of the criminal code that empower law enforcement agencies to track which websites people visit, including social media pages. Based on this amendment, the government can prosecute anyone for hitting “like” or “share” under a social media post that espouses “extremism” or terrorism. Critics argued that this law gives the government indefinite latitude in determining what constitutes “extremism,” noting that the Tajik government continues

to unilaterally designate political opposition groups such as the IRPT, or religious affiliations, such as Salafi Muslims, as terrorist groups.

There were no reported changes to law enforcement capabilities in 2018.

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 databases and other watchlists, but connectivity at smaller border posts is lacking. Tajikistan is currently installing three e-gates at the Dushanbe Airport for e-visa holders. The system is connected to INTERPOL and will automatically check the status of e-visa holders.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Tajikistan belongs to the Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism (EAG), a FATF-style regional body. Tajikistan's FIU, the Financial Monitoring Department (FMD) at the National Bank of Tajikistan, is a member of the Egmont Group. The National Bank of Tajikistan is currently working to improve Tajikistan's image with the FATF and the EAG. FMD's website contains a list of individuals and entities involved in terrorism, including those sanctioned under relevant UNSCRs. In November 2018, the EAG approved a mutual evaluation report of Tajikistan to evaluate its compliance with and effectiveness toward meeting FATF standards.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#) and the [*2018 FATF Mutual Evaluation Report*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: Tajikistan continued to focus on implementation of the 2016 national CVE strategy. The strategy, designed for implementation from 2016 to 2020, is a whole-of-government approach to combat radicalization in Tajik society.

Tajikistan amended its criminal laws in 2015, permitting authorities to pardon Tajik fighters who voluntarily return 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. To date, the government has dropped charges against approximately 43 FTFs who were reintegrated into their communities. Those pardoned remained on government watchlists but were not legally prevented from applying for jobs, enrolling in universities, or traveling abroad.

In an effort to counter what it considers "extremism," the government continued to restrict certain forms of political and religious expression and groups it classifies as "extremist." In December 2018, Tajikistan was again 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, such as the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). On February 21, the Tajik Parliament ratified the SCO's Convention on Combatting Extremism. As a member of the C5+1 diplomatic platform, Tajikistan participates in the associated C5+1 Security Working Group, which focuses on regional cooperation on counterterrorism and CVE.

TURKMENISTAN

Overview: There were no reported terrorist incidents in Turkmenistan in 2018. 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 international terrorism. Turkmen authorities continued to maintain close surveillance on its population and borders.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: There were no reported terrorist incidents in Turkmenistan in 2018.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: There were no reported changes in 2018.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Turkmenistan belongs to the Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism (EAG), a FATF-style regional body, and the government continued to express interest in gaining admission to the Egmont Group.

The Government of Turkmenistan cooperated with and attended trainings offered by international organizations such as the UN and the OSCE on responding to counterterrorism threats, combating money laundering, and other counter terrorism financing issues. OSCE training sessions covered methods to detect money laundering, corruption, and the financing of terrorism. In July, Turkmen Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs took part in a meeting of Central Asian states in Cholpon-Ata, Kyrgyzstan. Participants discussed the need to deepen cooperation in the fight against international terrorism and “extremism,” drug trafficking, and transnational organized crime.

During 2018, the Turkmen government continued to monitor and regulate alternative remittance services, collected data on wire transfers, and monitored non-profit organizations, purportedly to prevent misuse of financing to sponsor terrorist activities.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: In 2018, the Government of Turkmenistan cooperated with international organizations and participated in the C5+1 regional CVE framework. In May, government officials participated in an international conference on Countering Terrorism and Preventing Violent Extremism organized by the UN, OSCE, and the EU in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. Turkmen government officials also participated in the C5+1 regional framework to counter international terrorism.

International and Regional Cooperation: Senior U.S. government officials visited Turkmenistan in October and December to discuss issues related to regional security, combating terrorism, and border security. Turkmenistan supports some regional and international efforts to

fight terrorism. In August, Turkmenistan participated in an OSCE-conducted interactive course for border and migration officials on identifying FTFs. In October, the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventative Diplomacy for Central Asia organized a regional seminar on countering terrorism focused on best practices in border protection and management. As a member of the C5+1 diplomatic platform, Turkmenistan participates in the associated C5+1 Security Working Group, which focuses on regional cooperation on counterterrorism and CVE.

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. Uzbekistan continued to improve relations with its neighbors in many areas, including security cooperation. Uzbekistan has actively participated in the C5+1 diplomatic platform, which includes a program related to CVE. After an initial increase in law enforcement cooperation with the United States following the October 31, 2017, terrorist attack in New York City, in which an ethnic Uzbek who was a U.S. permanent resident was charged, Uzbekistan’s law enforcement bodies largely abstained from substantive cooperation with the U.S. government in law enforcement and information exchange. 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.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: There were no reported terrorist incidents in Uzbekistan in 2018. In November, Uzbek authorities arrested Dzhasurbek Yuldashev on suspicion of planning a terrorist attack.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: The Law on Combating Terrorism governs terrorism-related investigations and prosecutions and identifies the State Security Service (SSS) as the lead counterterrorism law enforcement agency. Uzbekistan also criminalizes terrorism under its criminal code, and the National Development Strategy for 2017–2021 targets corruption, “extremism,” and terrorism.

Uzbekistan does not publicly share operational counterterrorism information. The SSS and the Ministry of Interior have dedicated counterterrorism units. Arrests for “religious extremism” also continued in 2018. Despite the removal of an estimated 16,000 people from a 17,000-person security watchlist of suspected Muslim “extremists” in 2017, the Uzbek government continued to use security concerns related to terrorism as grounds for detentions. They conducted frequent document checks and resident-list checks to identify potential FTFs. In November, the SSS reportedly detained six members of a jihadist group for distributing “extremist” literature and planning to join terrorist organizations in Afghanistan.

Although Uzbekistan does not disclose data on returning FTFs, local media in March reported that a Fergana district court in Uzbekistan sentenced an Uzbek fighter who had returned from Syria and was reportedly planning a terrorist act in Russia to 15 years imprisonment. Another Uzbek national who was recruited by ISIS and fled a Turkish prison was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment in Uzbekistan.

Uzbek law enforcement maintains its own terrorist watchlist and contributes to INTERPOL databases. Most border posts and airports are equipped with biometric data scanners. Uzbekistan has mostly completed the conversion of all passports to a new biometric version, and is working to introduce international biometric passports for travel abroad, starting in January 2019.

Uzbekistan has not reported specific actions to implement UNSCRs 2309 and 2396. Uzbekistan is currently evaluating the adoption of the U.S. Automated Targeting System-Global (ATS-G) passenger screening system, which could improve implementation of UNSCR 2396 obligations on PNR and API collection and analysis.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Uzbekistan belongs to the Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism (EAG), a FATF-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 AML/CFT law provides for freezing of assets and mandates that all financial entities check parties to a transaction against lists of persons involved in or suspected of involvement in terrorist activities. An additional regulation establishes a procedure for the creation of such lists and delisting requests. In preparation for its 2019 EAG mutual assessment, the Uzbek government set up an interagency Commission on Combatting Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism, headed by the Prosecutor General’s Office.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: Uzbekistan remains concerned about ISIS recruitment of Uzbeks. Local government organizations continued to educate citizens about the dangers of “religious extremism.” Official media and Tashkent Islamic University produced public messages about the dangers of “extremism” and posted them on social media platforms and messaging apps.

In 2018, Uzbekistan adopted a law on “combating extremism,” which provides a broad definition of extremism and does not differentiate between extremism and violent extremism. The Ministry of Justice maintains a list of “extremist” organizations. The Government of Uzbekistan has been publicly endorsing rehabilitation and reintegration of citizens previously engaged or suspected of being engaged in terrorist activities. In September, the government established an interagency commission headed by the Prosecutor General’s Office to oversee the rehabilitation process of Uzbek citizens who had been “misled” into joining terrorist groups in Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan, but had not been involved in combat or terrorist activities.

For further information, see the Department of State’s [*Country Reports on Human Rights Practices*](#) and [*International Religious Freedom Report*](#).

International and Regional Cooperation: Uzbekistan is a member of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). SCO’s Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure headquarters is in Tashkent. Uzbekistan continued to work with the OSCE

and UNODC on security issues, and participated in a training course led by the U.S. Department of Justice on prosecuting and investigating terrorism crimes. As a member of the C5+1 diplomatic platform, Uzbekistan participates in the associated C5+1 Security Working Group, which focuses on regional cooperation on counterterrorism and CVE.

WESTERN HEMISPHERE

Overview

In 2018, Hizballah continued its long history of activity in the Western Hemisphere, including its use of Hizballah financiers who continued to operate in the Tri-Border Area (TBA) of South America, where Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay meet. Individuals affiliated with al-Qa'ida and other international terrorist groups, including ISIS, continued attempts to exploit the region. For instance, in February, authorities in Trinidad and Tobago disrupted an ISIS-inspired plot to attack the country's Carnival celebrations. Meanwhile, regional terrorist groups, such as the ELN, were active in the Hemisphere, including in Colombia, Venezuela, and Peru.

Travel of FTFs from the Western Hemisphere to Iraq and Syria virtually ceased in 2018, as heightened awareness of the threat led to tightened border security and ISIS's position on the ground deteriorated. Canada, and, to a lesser extent, the Caribbean (particularly Trinidad and Tobago), had previously been significant *per capita* sources of FTFs. The potential return of these battle-tested terrorists remained a concern.

Individuals affiliated with al-Qa'ida and other international terrorist groups, including ISIS, continued attempts to exploit the region. For instance, in February, authorities in Trinidad and Tobago disrupted an ISIS-inspired plot to attack the country's Carnival celebrations. Many Latin American countries have porous borders, limited law enforcement capabilities, and established smuggling routes. 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 2018.

Hizballah continued its financial and fundraising activities in the Western Hemisphere. In July, the Government of Argentina took action against Hizballah by freezing the financial assets of 14 individuals belonging to the Barakat clan, a Hizballah financing group in South America. In October, Brazilian Federal Police arrested the leader of the clan, Assad Ahmad Barakat. The Department of the Treasury designated him as a foreign sanctions evader with respect to Iran in 2004, and he is considered one of Hizballah's most important financiers. Assad Ahmad Barakat has close ties with Hizballah leadership and has worked closely with numerous extremists and suspected Hizballah associates in the TBA. More broadly, the free trade zones in the TBA and Panama, where terrorism financing networks operate, remained regional nodes for money laundering and vulnerable to terrorist financing.

In Peru, Muhammad Ghaleb Hamdar, a Lebanese citizen suspected of links to Hizballah, remained in custody. Hamdar was designated in 2016 as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist

by the Treasury Department for helping to plan and support acts of terrorism. In April 2017, a Peruvian court acquitted Hamdar of terrorism charges but sentenced him to six years in prison for using false documents. The Peruvian Supreme Court subsequently overturned his conviction, and a new trial on terrorism charges was set for January 2019. Shining Path, a designated FTO, remained active in Peru although with limited capacity to attack urban areas and concentrated mostly on criminal activities in the remote Apurímac, Ene, and Mantaro River Valleys in eastern Peru.

The Government of Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), a designated FTO, 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 (ELN) – a designated FTO – agreeing to a cease-fire, which lasted only three months and ended on January 9, 2018. Renewed talks in Ecuador and Cuba stalled, and on August 7, 2018, President Ivan Duque paused the talks indefinitely, until the ELN agreed to release all kidnapping victims and cease criminal activity. Credible reports indicate that Venezuela maintained a permissive environment for known terrorist groups. Individuals linked to FARC dissidents (who remain committed to terrorism notwithstanding the peace accord) and ELN, as well as Hizballah supporters or sympathizers, were present in the country.

Members of the ELN also maintained a presence in Cuba. Cuba did not arrest or extradite an ELN commander or provide information on other members, despite a November request from the Government of Colombia. Multiple fugitives who committed or supported acts of terrorism in the United States also continued to live freely in Cuba. For example, the Cuban regime has refused to return Joanne Chesimard, a fugitive who was convicted of executing New Jersey State Trooper Werner Foerster and is on the FBI's Most Wanted Terrorists List. Cuba likewise has refused to return William Morales, a fugitive bomb maker for the Armed Forces for National Liberation (FALN). Morales, wanted by the FBI, escaped detention after being convicted of charges related to domestic terrorism.

The Organization of American States/Inter-American Committee against Terrorism (OAS/CICTE) made strides across its focus areas: cybersecurity; border management; countering the financing of terrorism; preventing the proliferation of WMD; preventing violent extremism; and addressing the FTF phenomenon. Working closely with its member states, OAS/CICTE established policies and implemented programs to address these issues, and bolstered counterterrorism partnerships, cooperation, and information sharing by promoting counterterrorism policies and by providing training and capacity building. OAS/CICTE's 18th Regular Session May 3-4 in Washington, D.C., with Argentina as incoming chair, concentrated on CVE, FTFs, and terrorist use of the internet.

Through regular exchanges of intelligence and other information, the United States continued to collaborate with Canada and Mexico to protect the borders it shares with these two countries.

On December 11, Deputy Secretary of State John J. Sullivan hosted 12 key North, Central, and South American partners for a Western Hemisphere Counterterrorism Ministerial in Washington, D.C. Participating governments (Argentina, Bahamas, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia,

Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago, and the United States) discussed the threat that transnational terrorist groups, such as ISIS, al-Qa'ida, and Hizballah, pose to the security of their citizens at home and abroad. Participants also expressed concern that these groups may seek to exploit gaps in national and regional counterterrorism capabilities, including in border security, law enforcement, counterterrorist financing, and information sharing. Participants reaffirmed their commitment to bolstering counterterrorism capabilities and working together to address gaps to counter terrorist threats more effectively. Argentina hosted a follow-on ministerial in July 2019 to assess progress and continue to identify areas of potential cooperation.

ARGENTINA

Overview: Argentina continued to focus its counterterrorism strategy on its remote northern and northeastern borders, which include the Tri-Border Area (TBA) of Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay, where Hizballah financial networks are active. Robust U.S.-Argentine law enforcement and security cooperation continued. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs merged its counternarcotics and counterterrorism offices into the Human Security Directorate. The Government of Argentina systematically issued statements condemning major acts of terrorism.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: On November 14, Argentine authorities arrested two individuals after an IED detonated as they placed it at the Recoleta Cemetery in the City of Buenos Aires, a major tourist attraction. One of the individuals planting the bomb was injured when the device exploded unexpectedly. No bystanders were killed or injured. Argentine media reported the perpetrators appeared to be part of a local anarchist cell.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Argentina delayed plans to introduce changes to the penal code to reform its counterterrorism legal framework. The executive branch prepared draft legislation that included penal system reforms, a new approach to combating terrorism financing, and a modernization of security and intelligence capabilities, but this draft legislation was not submitted to Congress for approval. Legislation on non-conviction-based asset forfeiture that would include forfeitures related to terrorism and terrorism financing stalled in the Argentine Congress.

Hizballah's 1994 bombing of the Argentine Israeli Mutual Association (AMIA) remained in the news and prompted a separate proposal to reform the penal code by authorizing trials *in absentia* as a mechanism for prosecuting fugitives. In December 2017, an Argentine federal judge issued pre-trial detention orders for former Argentine President Cristina Fernández de Kirchner and several former associates accused of treason for allegedly covering up Iran's involvement in the AMIA attack. The Argentine Senate decided not to vote to remove Kirchner's parliamentary immunity, and the pre-trial detention order lapsed in November 2018.

Multiple security agencies maintained specialized law enforcement units that have substantial capabilities to respond to criminal activities, including terrorist incidents. The Argentine government established a Counter Narcotics Task Force in Salta province composed of the four 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 TBA.

Throughout 2018, the Argentine National Directorate for Migration (DNM) improved its capacity to use API data to identify known and suspected terrorists attempting to enter Argentina by means of commercial carriers. Thanks to enhanced security protocols and information sharing, the DNM was well prepared to identify and disrupt travel by such individuals and other potential threats in advance of the November 30 to December 1 G-20 Leader's Summit.

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. The MOS worked with its federal security forces to incorporate biometric data into its fight against international terrorism and transnational crime, including into its security vetting process to prevent known and suspected terrorists from exploiting its immigration system.

On July 13, the Attorney General of Argentina took a significant step in advancing Argentina's ability to identify, investigate, thwart, and prosecute terrorism by issuing a resolution to create a Counter-Terrorism Secretariat within the Argentine Federal Prosecutor's Office.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Argentina is a member of the FATF and the Financial Action Task Force of Latin America (GAFILAT), a FATF-style regional body. Argentina held the presidency of FATF from July 2017 through June 2018. Argentina's FIU, the Financial Information Unit Argentina (UIF), is a member of the Egmont Group. Reforms have empowered UIF to act as the lead agency on all financial intelligence matters.

In July, UIF issued an administrative order directing financial institutions to freeze assets belonging to 14 individuals linked to an organization led by Assad Ahmad Barakat, a U.S. Treasury-designated foreign sanctions evader with respect to Iran. UIF, with assistance from its U.S. Treasury counterparts, the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) and the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), detected money-laundering activities by the Barakat Group through Argentine casinos in the TBA that had possible links to terrorism financing. Information sharing between Argentine authorities and their counterparts in Brazil and Paraguay appear to have increased significantly, resulting in actions in all three countries that included the abovementioned UIF freeze order and the arrest of Assad Barakat by the Brazilian Federal Police (DPF) based on an arrest warrant issued in Paraguay.

The Department of Justice, with funding provided by the Department of State, implemented capacity-building activities and training that focused on strengthening Argentina's ability to identify and disrupt trade-based money laundering, smuggling, and other transnational crimes linked to terrorist financing; deepening Argentine understanding of the involvement of transnational criminal organizations in public corruption; and discussing international best practices on judicial cooperation to combat terrorism and its financing. Argentine law enforcement, border security, the judiciary, and prosecutorial agencies involved in combating money laundering and the financing of terrorism attended these activities.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: There were no changes in 2018.

International and Regional Cooperation: The Government of Argentina and the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism signed a Memorandum of Understanding in which the UN pledged to support Argentina’s efforts to adjust its penal code to comply with “international standards on cyberterrorism and terrorist financing.” Argentina became chair of The Organization of American States/Inter-American Committee against Terrorism (OAS/CICTE) in May 2018 and participated in the Southern Common Market Special Forum on Terrorism. In November, the MOS and OAS/CICTE hosted a five-day regional workshop on combating cybercrime with participation from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and U.S. Secret Service cyber experts. Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay coordinated law enforcement efforts in the TBA by means of their Trilateral Tri-Border Area Command.

The United States and Argentina co-hosted an Anti-Money Laundering and Countering Terrorist Financing Practitioners’ Workshop September 17-19 in Puerto Iguazú on the Argentine side of the TBA. The three-day workshop brought together prosecutors, judges, law enforcement investigators, financial intelligence/sanctions officials, and intelligence officials from Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and the United States.

Argentina also participated in the Department of State-hosted Western Hemisphere Counterterrorism Ministerial December 11 in Washington, D.C., and committed to hosting a follow-on ministerial in Buenos Aires in July 2019.

BRAZIL

Overview: Brazil and the United States maintained strong counterterrorism cooperation in 2018, building on collaborative efforts since the 2016 Summer Olympics. 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.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: There were no terrorist attacks reported in Brazil in 2018.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: There were no major changes to counterterrorism legislation in 2018.

In February, President Michel Temer divided the Ministry of Justice and created the Ministry of Public Security (MPS), with DPF moving under the authority of the MPS.

In August, Brazil adopted into law UNSCR 2396 on countering threats posed by terrorist ravel, including returning FTFs, and awaits creation of a domestic implementation strategy.

In May, DPF launched Operation Bravata to combat racist and terrorist threats made online, with one person arrested in Curitiba. In April, a federal judge in Curitiba accepted charges against a journalist accused of promoting terrorism after infiltrating ISIS sympathizers as part of a journalistic investigation conducted in 2016. According to the judge, the journalist “exceeded the tolerable limit and promoted the terrorist organization Islamic State” in messages to the group.

There were no new arrests or convictions related to 2016’s Operation Hashtag, which dismantled a loose, online, pro-ISIS network prior to the 2016 Olympics. In November, a federal judge sentenced a defendant arrested under Operation Atila, which began in 2017 to investigate the use of mobile communication applications to promote terrorist groups. The defendant, one of 11 arrested and charged with promoting ISIS in Brazil, was sentenced to reduced charges of “advocating the commission of crimes and corrupting minors.”

All Brazilian law enforcement agencies, including those tasked with border security and counterterrorism, continued to suffer from budget constraints caused by the ongoing economic recession and fiscal shortfall. These effects were particularly acute at major ports of entry.

Brazilian authorities continued to work with other concerned nations – particularly the United States – to counter document fraud. Regional and international joint operations successfully disrupted numerous document vendors and facilitators, as well as related human smuggling networks. The Department of State provided comprehensive and ongoing training on counterfeit and fraudulent document recognition to airlines 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 (CBP) trained Brazilian airline employees on identifying fraudulent documents.

CBP launched a pilot of the Joint Security Program (JSP) in October 2017 with the goal of identifying high-risk air travelers and contraband arriving to and departing from Brazil. JSP officers work side-by-side with Brazilian law enforcement and border control counterparts to identify inbound and outbound travelers with links to terrorism and narcotics, weapons, currency, or alien smuggling. CBP conducted three pilot operations since 2017 in São Paulo’s Guarulhos International Airport – the busiest airport in South America. 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 the intention of covering the entire Brazilian border by 2021.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Brazil is a member of the FATF and the Financial Action Task Force of Latin America (GAFILAT), a FATF-style regional body. Its FIU, the Council for Financial Activities Control, is a member of the Egmont Group. Brazil made progress mitigating the shortcomings identified in its third-round FATF mutual evaluation report from 2010, and it continued to address the remaining deficiencies.

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, FATF noted in its 14th follow-up report to the 2010 mutual evaluation report, that Brazil's CFT regime was not in full compliance with FATF standards, particularly regarding its domestic designation framework, which was not sufficient. In response to FATF's observations, Brazil committed to an action plan for addressing the remaining deficiencies.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: The Brazilian Senate and various government agencies, including DPF and Ministry of Foreign Relations, organized or participated in 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/Inter-American Committee against Terrorism, the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) Joint Working Group on Counterterrorism, and the Southern Common Market's working group on terrorism and sub-working group on financial issues. Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay coordinated law enforcement efforts in the Tri-Border Area (TBA) with Argentina and Paraguay by means of their Trilateral Tri-Border Area Command. In September, Brazil participated in a Workshop on Preventing Terrorism and Transnational Crime in the TBA, which encompassed Puerto Iguazú, Argentina; Ciudad del Este, Paraguay; and Foz do Iguacu, Brazil. The Department of Justice's Office of Overseas Prosecutorial Development, Assistance, and Training (OPDAT) hosted this Department of State-sponsored event. The three-day workshop included prosecutors, judges, law enforcement investigators, financial intelligence and sanctions officials, and intelligence officials from the region.

CANADA

Overview: The primary terrorist threats to Canada remained international terrorist groups such as ISIS and al-Qa'ida and their sympathizers, homegrown terrorists inspired by these groups, and domestic terrorists, including racially or ethnically motivated terrorists and the "Incel movement." There were no terrorist attacks reported in Canada in 2018. Returning FTFs were also a concern. By the end of 2018, roughly 190 Canadian citizens or permanent residents had traveled abroad to engage in terrorist activity and an estimated 60 have returned to Canada. The government has some policies and legislation in place to counter radicalization to violence but securing the legal authority to address prosecuting returning FTFs remained a challenge.

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

2018 Terrorist Incidents: There were no clear terrorist incidents in Canada in 2018, although there were several acts of violence that took place that raised concerns about potential terrorism. The events included an April 23 van attack in Toronto that killed 10, injured 15, and whose perpetrator authorities believe was inspired by the Incel movement, as well as a May 24 bombing at a restaurant in Mississauga that wounded more than 15 people.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: In 2018, the following activities affecting the investigation or prosecution of terrorism offenses occurred:

- On May 30, the Government of Canada listed the Islamic State-Khorasan Province as a terrorist entity.
- In July, Canada published its *Federal Terrorism Response Plan: Domestic Concept of Operations*, which lays out the government's response plan in the event of a terrorist attack.
- An October 24 vote in Parliament removed hybridization clauses from Bill C-75 (*An Act to amend the Criminal Code, the Youth Criminal Justice Act and other Acts and to make consequential amendments to other Acts*) that would have given prosecutors discretion to charge terrorism-related activities as non-terrorist offenses with lesser penalties. Bill C-75 now keeps terrorism-related charges as indictable offenses with longer sentences.
- On November 30, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled media must hand over research materials from terrorism stories to law enforcement authorities.
- Some terrorism prosecutions were ongoing, but Canadian officials opened no new cases. At May and June hearings in Montreal, prosecutors for the first time sought to apply a new legal provision permitting removal of terrorist-related content from the online space.
- On October 26, the Immigration and Refugee Board ordered the deportation of a Jordanian citizen who used social media platforms to support lone-offender terror attacks on Canadian infrastructure sites.

While Canada's top priority remained the prosecution of returning FTFs, impediments often derailed prosecutions. On October 30, Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Ralph Goodale announced that Canada would not risk sending officials into Syria to repatriate FTFs, as Canada had no legal responsibility to do so in the case of voluntary travelers. Difficulty in obtaining evidence overseas and a reluctance to disclose intelligence as evidence in the courtroom often resulted in insufficient evidence for trial. When prosecution is not possible, Canada uses a whole-of-government approach to design mitigation measures.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Canada is a member of the FATF and the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering, a FATF-style regional body. It maintains observer status in the Financial Action Task Force of Latin America (GAFILAT) and is a cooperating and supporting nation of the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force (CFATF), two other FATF-style regional bodies. Canada's FIU, the Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre of Canada, is a member of the Egmont Group.

On November 8, Parliament's Standing Committee on Finance published a report on confronting money laundering and terrorist financing, as part of its five-year statutory review cycle of Canada's [*Proceeds of Crime \(Money Laundering\) and Terrorist Financing Act*](#). The report

examined Canada's AML/CFT regime, including identifying legislative and regulatory gaps and ways of improving intelligence capacity and enforcement measures, and presented a list of recommendations for the Government of Canada to improve its AML/CFT regime.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: Canada released its *National Strategy on Countering Radicalization to Violence* in December, following a public consultation by the Canada Centre for Community Engagement and Prevention of Violence. The strategy establishes Canada's priorities, which include building, sharing, and using knowledge; addressing radicalization to violence online; and supporting interventions.

Canada continued to place an emphasis on CVE by announcing new grants from the Community Resilience Fund, which "supports partnerships and financial assistance in countering radicalization to violence." Grants in 2018 included the following:

- On January 19, Canada announced US \$4 million over five years for the Edmonton Police Service and the Organization for the Prevention of Violence to map and address the sources and causes of violent extremism in Alberta.
- On February 20, Ottawa granted US \$546,000 over two years to Ryerson University to research and develop more innovative CVE approaches.
- On July 24, Canada granted US \$250,000 over three years to the University of Waterloo to study the motivations of radicalization to violence.
- On September 6, Ottawa announced US \$1,048,000 over three years for FOCUS (Furthering Our Community by Uniting Our Services) Toronto, the Toronto Police Service's collaborative prevention and intervention program to improve community resiliency.
- On November 6, Canada launched *Canada Redirect*, a US \$1.5 million project designed to combat online radicalization to violence. Moonshot CVE will develop an advertising campaign promoting alternate content search results.
- On November 13, Ottawa offered US \$2 million over five years to British Columbia to develop *Shift*, a civilian-led individually tailored intervention program.

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 is an active participant in the GCTF and co-chairs the GCTF's West Africa Working Group with Algeria, which held a plenary meeting and workshop on police cooperation in 2018. Canada announced its bid to co-chair (with Morocco) the GCTF, which would begin in September 2019. Canada actively participated in NATO, the EU, and INTERPOL counterterrorism efforts, and is a member of the ASEAN Regional Forum and Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC).

COLOMBIA

Overview: Colombia experienced a modest increase in terrorist activity, largely because of persistent security challenges in areas vacated by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) as part of the November 2016 peace accord. As of December, roughly 13,500 ex-combatants, including former rank-and-file guerrillas and militia, continued to participate in the reintegration process. While nationwide security indices have improved dramatically over the past decade, some indicators worsened compared with 2017. Ongoing challenges to peace accord implementation and continued security vacuums created increased risk for terrorist activity and attacks on civilians, security forces, and infrastructure in some areas. A troubling number of FARC dissidents, estimated to total 1,000 to 1,700 individuals who never demobilized or who left the peace process, continued terrorist and other criminal activities, particularly in border regions and areas previously controlled by the FARC.

Peace talks between the Colombian government and the other major terrorist organization active in the country, the National Liberation Army (ELN), continued until August. After the election and inauguration of President Iván Duque on August 7, his administration paused the talks indefinitely, effective August 7, until the ELN releases all kidnapping victims and ceases criminal activity.

Overall, the number of FARC dissidents and ELN individuals who were killed or captured decreased compared with 2017. Colombian-U.S. counterterrorism cooperation remained strong.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: Colombian government statistics showed an 11.5 percent increase in terrorist incidents from 2017. This figure excludes incidents related to organized criminal groups without a political motivation. ELN and FARC dissidents conducted attacks on security forces and civilians.¹ Several of these attacks were notable for their severity or press coverage:

- On January 28, three separate ELN attacks in northern Colombia killed eight Colombian National Police officers and left dozens wounded.
- In late March, a group led by FARC dissidents' leader, Walter Arizala Vernaza, also known as Guacho, kidnapped and killed three members of a news team from Ecuador. In July, the same group killed three investigators in Tumaco, Nariño.
- ELN continued to kidnap civilians and members of security services. Most notably, in August, ELN kidnapped three police officers, a soldier, and two civilian contractors in Chocó, and three soldiers in Arauca, all of whom were released in September.
- Armed groups continued to conduct frequent attacks on infrastructure, including the Caño-Limón-Convenas oil pipeline and the Tumaco electrical grid.

The Department of Justice at the U.S. Embassy in Bogota continued to coordinate with Colombian judicial authorities on the upcoming plea of Raúl Gutiérrez Sánchez, a Cuban

¹ *The FARC remains a Foreign Terrorist Organization under the U.S. Immigration and Nationality Act. The Colombian government, however, 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.*

national charged in Colombia with conspiracy to carry out terrorism by bombing U.S. diplomats in Bogotá in March. The United States and Colombia investigated the case bilaterally and the U.S. Embassy coordinated with the Colombian Attorney General to charge the defendant in Colombia. At the end of 2018, Gutiérrez was expected to plead guilty to “conspiracy to carry out terrorism” and receive an eight-year sentence.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: There were no changes to counterterrorism legislation and investigative procedures in 2018. Colombian authorities continued to operate joint police-military task forces to enhance coordination in countering terrorism.

The Department of State’s Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs supported the U.S. Department of Justice, International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (ICITAP), to continue work with the Colombian Attorney General and other agencies to improve standards for investigators, forensic experts, and criminal analysts. ICITAP trained 154 wire communication analysts in 2018.

Colombian border security remained an area of vulnerability as law enforcement officers continued to face challenges posed by porous borders, difficult topography, and the presence of illegal armed groups and drug trafficking. Biometric and biographic screening was conducted systematically at international airports but only on a rotating basis at several other official border crossings. The Colombian government uses API but does not collect PNR data in an automated system.

There were incremental changes in cooperation on border security, evidence sharing, and joint law enforcement operations with neighboring countries. Colombia used API data to identify threats. Law enforcement cooperation between Colombia and the United States remained strong.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Colombia is a member of the Financial Action Task Force of Latin America (GAFILAT), a FATF-style regional body, which assessed Colombia in November 2018. GAFILAT noted that Colombia’s main terrorism financing threat came from the proceeds of criminal activities and found a disparity between an understanding of terrorism financing risks between law enforcement agencies and supervisory authorities. Colombia’s FIU, the Unit of Information and Financial Analysis, is a member of the Egmont Group. There were no significant changes to Colombia’s AML/CFT regime in 2018.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: Roughly 13,500 FARC ex-combatants and former militia members who demobilized under the 2016 peace accord participated in social and economic reincorporation activities. Nevertheless, delays in implementing the program continued to increase the risk that some ex-combatants would return to engaging in criminal activities, including terrorism.

Colombia continued to employ a modern, multi-agency approach to CVE, with an emphasis on encouraging individual guerrillas (primarily from the ELN) to demobilize. In 2018, the number of ex-combatants successfully graduating from the government's long-running and successful individual reintegration program (separate from those who demobilized as a result of the peace accord with the FARC) reached more than 20,490. The number of members of FARC and ELN members who demobilized individually declined from 827 in 2017 to 635 through October 2018.

International and Regional Cooperation: Colombia is a member of the GCTF and continued to lead in providing security training and assistance to other countries in the region. In 2018, 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 2018. At the end of 2018, there was no credible evidence indicating international terrorist groups established bases in Mexico, worked directly with Mexican drug cartels, or sent operatives via Mexico into the United States. International supporters and facilitators of terrorist groups such as Hizballah and ISIS are active elsewhere in the Western Hemisphere, and the U.S. southern border remains vulnerable to potential terrorist transit, although terrorist groups are more likely to seek other means of trying to enter the United States.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: There were no terrorist attacks reported in Mexico in 2018. In at least one instance, the Mexican government disrupted a homegrown terrorist's plot at an early stage and mitigated a potential threat. The individual had self-radicalized online.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: There were no changes to Mexico's counterterrorism legislation or investigative procedures, other than those described under the terrorist financing section. Mexico does not view terrorism as a major threat to its security, but acknowledges the United States' concerns and cooperates closely, as evidenced by their assistance in the 2011 failed assassination case. The government lacked adequate laws prohibiting material support to terrorists and it relied on counterterrorism regimes in other countries to thwart potential threats. Impunity remained a problem with extremely low rates of prosecution for all crimes.

The Mexican Center for Investigation and National Security (CISEN), housed in the Interior Ministry (SEGOB), was the lead agency for assessing and preventing terrorist threats for most of 2018. The Mexican Congress passed legislation in November to reorganize the national and public security bureaucracy in preparation for the new administration that took office December 1. The National Intelligence Agency (CNI) replaced CISEN, and moved into the new Security and Citizen Protection Ministry. Early indications suggest CNI will assume CISEN's counterterrorism responsibilities.

Mexico made some investments in border security, although a steady illicit flow of people and goods continued along its southern border. The Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) supported the Mexican government's effort to establish a secure telecommunications network for the southern border and helped develop the first standardized basic training course for Mexico's immigration service, the National Migration Institute (INM). Mexico improved its technical capacity to collect biometric data on migrants, thanks to an INL-funded program under the Mérida Initiative. While Mexico improved port security procedures, corruption still plagued Mexican ports of entry, and INM remained underfunded and understaffed.

In November, the Government of Mexico announced that it would strengthen its border controls. The new López Obrador administration committed to identifying and screening all migrants entering Mexico.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Mexico is a member of FATF and the Financial Action Task Force of Latin America (GAFILAT), a FATF-style regional body. Additionally, Mexico is a cooperating and supporting nation of the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force and is an observer of the Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures (MONEYVAL), two other FATF-style regional bodies. Mexico's FIU, Unit of Financial Intelligence (UIF), is a member of the Egmont Group and proactively shares financial intelligence on shared threats with its U.S. Department of the Treasury counterpart, the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN).

FATF published its 2017 evaluation of Mexico in January 2018, and the report noted Mexico had a mature CFT regime but failed to take a systemic approach to addressing money laundering. In March, Mexico reformed its laws regulating financial technological institutions, requiring them to demonstrate compliance with policies to prevent terrorism financing.

UIF continued to operate with diminished authorities after a 2017 Mexican Supreme Court decision found it was unconstitutional for UIF to maintain a blocked persons list. The Mexican Congress did not approve a legislative fix in 2018. Still, from September 2017 to June 2018, the Mexican government reported opening four investigations into terrorism financing and blocked 34 individuals from accessing the Mexican finance and banking system based on UN designations linking these individuals to terrorism financing.

The Mérida Initiative's training and capacity-building programs targeted focused units from the states of Puebla, Guanajuato, Jalisco, and Tamaulipas as well as some federal entities. Training programs help investigators and regulators earn certification from SEGOB and the National Banking and Securities Commission on the way to obtaining international certification by the end of 2019. The INL-developed curriculum and agenda for these courses allow regulators, investigators, and prosecutors to share and learn the latest global techniques and best practices for investigations into the illicit financing of transnational organized crime.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: There were no changes in 2018. Mexico lacks official CVE policies, initiatives, or programs.

International and Regional Cooperation: Mexico participated in the UN High-Level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies, as well as the Organization of American States Regional Conference to Prevent and Combat Terrorism and Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction and Their Means of Financing in Latin America and the Caribbean. Mexico is also an active member of the Organization of American States/Inter-American Committee against Terrorism. Mexico also received bilateral counterterrorism training from a range of partners including Israel, the United Kingdom, and Spain. Mexico is a member of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC).

PANAMA

Overview: Panama remained a willing partner for bilateral and multilateral counterterrorism cooperation. As a transit country for illicit goods, money, and migrants, Panama's geographic location makes its willingness to engage on counterterrorism important for regional security. Panamanian President Varela approved the creation of the Special Interest Alien (SIA) Joint Task Force, which established a bilateral mechanism with the United States to share information on special interest aliens (non-U.S. persons who, based on an analysis of travel patterns, potentially pose a national security risk to the United States or its interests) and known and suspected terrorists with the objective of detaining and/or deporting them as appropriate. The Panamanian government cooperated with U.S. authorities on several such cases. Additionally, the Panamanian government facilitated the multilateral investigation and elimination of ISIS-controlled servers found in Panama.

Panama is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and remained involved in the Defeat-ISIS Coalition's Counter-ISIS Finance Group.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: There were no terrorist attacks reported in Panama in 2018.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Panama does not have comprehensive counterterrorism legislation or a robust counterterrorism legal framework. Officials from the Panamanian National Security Council, the border service, the immigration service, and the police meet frequently among themselves and with U.S. government officials to coordinate and act on migration alerts and to detain and deport travelers who represented a security risk.

The SIA Joint Task Force Executive Decree established a bilateral interagency mechanism to share information on special interest aliens and known and suspected terrorists and to respond to specific cases more adequately. The Task Force includes Panama's National Police, National Border Service (SENAFRONT), National Air and Naval Service, National Migration Service (SNM), and intelligence service officials, as well as the U.S. Embassy's Department of Homeland Security's Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection. While its own special interest alien intelligence capacity is limited, the Government of Panama acted as a willing partner in responding to U.S. alerts. Logistical challenges, such as

routing flights for deportations and the lack of diplomatic relationships with some migrants' countries of origin, continued to limit Panama's ability to deport individuals without U.S. government assistance.

In July and August, SNM apprehended and deported known and suspected terrorists in two separate incidents. In July, a suspected terrorist attempted to transit the Panama Canal on a cargo ship. SENAFRONT apprehended the individual on the Panamanian border with Colombia and he was subsequently deported to Pakistan. In August, two known and suspected terrorists and 13 others with ties to al-Shabaab traveled as tourists to Panama from Spain via Colombia. Watchlisting information flagged both individuals, but only after they had left the airport, and the entire group was subsequently expelled from Panama.

Both incidents demonstrate the varied routes of entry that known and suspected terrorists and special interest aliens used to transit Panama and the successful coordination and results from the newly formed SIA Joint Task Force. The Ministry of Security and the National Customs Authority drafted an action plan and solicited bids to address the country's lack of cargo scanners. As of the end of 2018, funding had not been secured to purchase scanners. The lack of scanners significantly limits the government's ability to analyze cargo transshipping or transiting the country, including at the international airport and entry and exit of the Colón Free Trade Zone.

Panama continued to cooperate with U.S. law enforcement on various counterterrorism cases this year, including individuals linked to Hizballah.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Panama is a member of the Financial Action Task Force of Latin America (GAFILAT), a FATF-style regional body, and assumed the GAFILAT presidency in 2018. Panama's FIU, the Financial Analysis Unit Panama (UAF), is a member of the Egmont Group.

In January, GAFILAT published its [Mutual Evaluation Report of the Republic of Panama](#), which identified Panama as a jurisdiction with AML/CFT deficiencies and placed the country on a one-year enhanced review period. GAFILAT's report specifically noted that Panamanian public and private sector institutions lacked a general understanding of the risk factors related to the financing of terrorism, as well as the capacity to detect possible cases of such acts. GAFILAT required Panama to continue reporting on the progress made to strengthen its implementation of AML/CFT measures during 2019, after which it will reassess Panama's progress and determine next steps.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: There were no changes in 2018.

International and Regional Cooperation: Panamanian authorities played a critical role in shutting down ISIS propaganda web servers with IP addresses based in Panama. Once alerted by

U.S. law enforcement, the Government of Panama worked with a Panamanian company to eliminate ISIS's use of its web-hosting servers. Further, Panama's cooperation facilitated investigations by law enforcement services of eight countries that identified end users and uncovered ISIS networks in those countries.

Panama is also an active participant in UN and regional security initiatives such as the Organization of American States/Inter-American Committee against Terrorism (OAS/CICTE). Panama held the chair of OAS/CICTE from March 2017 to May 2018. In November, Panama hosted OAS/CICTE for a U.S. Department of State-funded workshop – Technical Assistance Project for Implementation of Financial Sanctions against Terrorism – to develop national countering the finance of terrorism legislation for Panama.

Separately, Panama has steadily increased its cooperation with its neighbors to better secure its borders against transnational criminal organizations. In 2018, Panamanian security forces conducted operations with Costa Rica and Colombia to identify transnational criminal organizations routes and networks.

PARAGUAY

Overview: 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 (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 Concepción, San Pedro, and Amambay. Paraguayan authorities officially consider EPP and its offshoot Marsical Lopez's Army (EML) organized criminal groups rather than terrorist organizations, but in public discourse, Paraguayan leaders occasionally refer to EPP and EML as terrorist organizations. At the end of 2018, authorities believed both EPP and EML held one hostage each, Edelio Morínigo and Félix Urbietta, respectively. Morínigo, the longest-held victim, was captured in 2014. EPP released Mennonite farmers Franz Hiebert and Bernhard Blatz on February 5, 2018, after less than one year in captivity.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: Alleged elements of the EPP continued to conduct kidnappings, killings, and sabotage operations:

- On November 19, alleged EPP members killed one person, and they assaulted and detained seven others for a few hours in northeastern San Pedro. Pamphlets were found at the site stipulating rules, prohibitions, and threats to local farmers. One pamphlet threatened farmers with execution for using "agrochemicals."
- On November 24, the same EPP group reportedly involved in the November 19 attack unsuccessfully attempted to burn down a storage facility housing soybean processing machinery. Then, they machine-gunned the main building and water tank, leaving

behind similar pamphlets with new threats. The attack took place eight miles away from the previous attack, also in San Pedro.

- On December 7, at least 15 alleged EPP members attacked a farm in Naranjito, San Pedro, burning a tractor, a truck, and three planes used for fumigation. According to media reports, the group briefly detained one person during the attack.

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 Internal Operational Defense Command (FTC), the joint task force charged with countering EPP, consists of an estimated 1,000 military and 200 police personnel. 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.

On November 26, Paraguayan President Mario Abdo Benítez inaugurated the new headquarters of the National Intelligence System (SINAI), composed of a National Intelligence Council (CNI) and a National Intelligence Secretariat, which report directly to the President. The purpose of the SINAI is to “detect, neutralize, and counterbalance the actions of domestic and international terrorist groups, and of transnational criminal organizations.”

Military forces and police officials continued to operate jointly against EPP in the departments of San Pedro, Concepción, and Amambay, with limited success. On November 22, the Abdo Benítez administration introduced draft legislation that would increase prison sentences for terrorist acts to up to 30 years. It also would broaden the definition of “terrorist organization” to include individuals or entities that provide economic and logistical support to terrorist organizations, and broaden the definition of “terrorist” to include individuals who recruit, indoctrinate, or advocate terrorism.

On August 30, the Paraguayan government offered a US \$170,000 reward for information on the whereabouts of five EPP leaders: Osvaldo Villalba, Manuel Cristaldo Mieres, Alejandro Ramos, Magna Meza, and Liliana Villalba. The Paraguayan government had 29 active arrest warrants for individual EPP members.

The TBA has been an attractive region to individuals engaged in terrorist financing, as the minimal, and often corrupt, police, military, customs, and migration agency 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.

Following the 2017 establishment of Paraguay’s Seized and Forfeited Asset Management Secretariat (SENABICO), more than US \$100 million in seized goods is now under SENABICO

administration. SENABICO administers confiscated property and assets associated with criminal activity, including terrorism financing.

In September, Paraguayan judges, prosecutors, analysts, and investigators participated in a regional counterterrorism workshop – funded by the Department of State and organized by the Department of Justice – and shared knowledge with counterparts from Argentina and Brazil. The workshop focused on preventing terrorism and transnational crime in the TBA, with an emphasis on Hizballah.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Paraguay is a member of the Financial Action Task Force of Latin America (GAFILAT), a FATF-style regional body. Paraguay’s FIU, Financial Intelligence Unit-Paraguay, is a member of the Egmont Group. Paraguay continued its preparations for a GAFILAT mutual evaluation, scheduled for September 2019. Paraguay has counterterrorist financing legislation and the ability to freeze and confiscate terrorist assets immediately. Paraguay has an adequate legal framework for its AML/CFT regime but continues to work on improving implementation. As of early December, the Paraguayan Senate was debating more than a dozen legal changes that would tighten enforcement of its counterterrorist financing regime.

Paraguay’s Central Bank increased actions against illegal exchange houses in the TBA, ordering the closure of more than 50 unauthorized exchange houses in September. The operation to close the exchange houses was conducted in response to Central Bank investigations and carried out in cooperation with the National Police.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: Paraguay had no CVE program in 2018.

International and Regional Cooperation: Paraguay participated in the Organization of American States/Inter-American Committee against Terrorism. 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 TBA by means of their Trilateral TBA Command.

PERU

Overview: The Shining Path (Sendero Luminoso or SL), a designated FTO, operated in the Apurímac, Ene, and Mantaro River Valleys (VRAEM) – a remote and rugged region that accounts for more than two-thirds of the cocaine produced in Peru. Estimates vary, but most experts and the Peruvian security services assess SL membership to number between 250 and 300 members of which 60 to 150 are armed fighters. Deadly SL attacks against Peru’s security forces in 2018 held steady compared with the previous year. In some instances, SL may have set ambushes in revenge for successful counternarcotic operations. SL helps fund its terrorist activities through its involvement in the drug trade. The group collects “revolutionary taxes”

from those involved in the drug trade, and, for a price, provides security and transports narcotics for drug trafficking organizations.

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. Two members returned to prison under new sentences in 2018. Others are due to be released in the coming months and years. On September 11, Peru's National Criminal Court issued life sentences to 10 former leaders of the SL's Central Committee, including Guzmán and his wife Elena Iparraguirre, who are already serving life sentences, for the 1992 Tarata Street car bombing that killed 25 people in Lima's residential Miraflores district. Guzmán and other captured SL figures from the 1980s and 1990s claimed they are no longer associated with the active SL group in the VRAEM emergency zone.

According to local press, Víctor Quispe Palomino (known as Comrade José) claimed in an audio intercepted in June that, after five years of hiding, he was restructuring his remnant of SL, which he called the Militarized Communist Party of Peru (MPCP) in the VRAEM. The son of an SL founder, Victor Quispe Palomino allegedly oversees all MPCP's illicit activities in the VRAEM, including extortion, murder, and drug trafficking. The Department of State is offering a reward of up to US \$5 million for information leading to his arrest and/or conviction.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: The overall number of terrorist attacks decreased, but the number of deaths of security forces attributable to terrorism rose slightly. Terrorist incidents in 2018 included the following:

- On June 7, SL members detonated a roadside bomb, killing four police officers as their vehicle passed a sector of the VRAEM known as Huajoto.
- On June 11, SL members killed five soldiers and wounded another in an attack at the Nueva Libertad military base outside Satipo in the Junín region of the VRAEM.
- On August 9, SL terrorists killed a soldier during a confrontation with the Joint Command of the Armed Forces in the district of Canayre, Huanta province, in the VRAEM.
- On October 6, in an apparent attempt to disrupt regional and municipal elections the next day, SL members seriously wounded a naval officer during an attack on the Special Command of the VRAEM.
- On October 18, SL snipers killed a soldier during an attack on a military patrol in the district of Canayre, Huanta province, in the VRAEM.

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. There were no significant changes to counterterrorism legislation in 2018.

The most significant Peruvian government actions against terrorism this year were:

- On June 19, Peru and the United States signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) under Homeland Security Presidential Directive 6 (HSPD-6) to share information about known and suspected terrorists.
- On September 19, Peruvian security forces killed two SL members and wounded two others during an operation in the Ayacucho region. One of those killed was the mid-level leader “Basilio,” who reportedly provided security for SL leadership. Two other SL members were wounded and detained.
- On November 7, 34 years after SL terrorists massacred 26 farmers in Peru’s mountainous Ayacucho region, Peruvian authorities identified and handed over the victims’ remains to their families.

Regarding border security, immigration authorities collected limited biometrics information from visitors. Record numbers of migrants fleeing Venezuela and entering Peru prompted the government to require passports for Venezuelans entering the country. There was no visa requirement for citizens of most countries from Europe, Southeast Asia, and Central America (except El Salvador and Nicaragua).

Muhammad Ghaleb Hamdar, a Lebanese citizen suspected of links to Hizballah, remained in custody. His April 2017 conviction was subsequently overturned by the Peruvian Supreme Court, with a retrial scheduled for January 2019.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Peru is a member of the Financial Action Task Force of Latin America (GAFILAT), a 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.

On June 26, the Permanent Mission of Peru to the UN, along with the Permanent Missions of France and Nigeria and the UNODC organized an event, “Challenges Identifying, Monitoring and Countering the Financing of Terrorist Groups and Individuals,” on the margins of the UN General Assembly Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy Review and the UN High-Level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States. Participants exchanged views on the different means through which terrorist organizations and individuals finance themselves and their activities, and current challenges in identifying, investigating, disrupting, and monitoring financial flows aimed at financing terrorism.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: On October 12, the Government of Peru approved the VRAEM 2021 Development Strategy, a multi-sectorial plan to consolidate opportunities for sustainable social and economic development as part of its bicentennial vision. The National Commission for Development and Life without Drugs will coordinate the comprehensive development strategy.

International and Regional Cooperation: Peru participated in counterterrorism activities in international and regional organizations, including the UN, the Organization of American States/Inter-American Committee against Terrorism, the Union of South American Nations, and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation. On January 1, Peru assumed the chair of the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee for two years. The Counter-Terrorism Directorate, a branch of the National Police of Peru, coordinated with police agencies in other countries to track the activities of domestic terrorist organizations abroad. In December, a Peruvian delegation participated in the “Practitioner’s Workshop on Hizballah’s Evolving Modus Operandi for its Terrorist and Illicit Activities” held in Lyon, France.

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Overview: The Trinidad and Tobago government took steps to implement a national counterterrorism strategy adopted in November 2017, including establishment of an inter-ministerial implementation committee chaired by the country’s Chief of Defense staff. The threat from the possible return of FTFs who traveled, or attempted to travel, to Syria and Iraq to fight with ISIS remains a primary concern. In February 2018, the government disrupted an ISIS-inspired terror attack against the country’s Carnival celebrations.

In April, Trinidad and Tobago, in cooperation with the United States, hosted Fused Response 18, a training exercise to enhance emergency preparedness for responding to natural disasters and combating transnational challenges, including terrorism, illicit trafficking, and organized crime.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: There were no terrorist attacks reported in Trinidad and Tobago in 2018.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: In July, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago passed legislation to amend its existing Anti-Terrorism Act. The amendments create several new terrorism-related criminal offenses; increase the criminal penalties for certain offenses; and allow the government to designate certain geographical zones as “conflict areas,” requiring notice to the government before one travels to those areas. The amendments entered into effect in August and apply to conduct carried out inside or outside Trinidad and Tobago. In November, the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service arrested and charged a person for the first time under the amended Anti-Terrorism Act for inciting acts of racial violence by means of social media.

The government also continued its efforts to reform the criminal justice system to allow for more timely prosecutions; a lengthy judicial process can mean years before criminal prosecutions are resolved. In June, the government passed legislation to restructure the country’s judiciary as it relates to criminal matters. In November, the government introduced legislation to abolish preliminary inquiries, a remnant from the United Kingdom common law that has been identified as a major drain on prosecutors’ time and resources; it has been abandoned in the United Kingdom and many other Commonwealth countries.

In August, the government named a new Minister of National Security and appointed its first permanent Commissioner of Police since 2012. A variety of initiatives are underway to enhance police effectiveness, including a broad restructuring of the police service and the establishment of new operational units, which could positively affect counterterrorism efforts. In July, the government introduced 12 kiosks at Piarco International Airport in Trinidad that scan machine-readable passports and capture biometric information.

Since the disrupted Carnival plot, the United States and other international partners have offered training to increase the government's capacity to investigate and prosecute terrorism-related offenses and expose key Trinidad and Tobago officials to global counterterrorism strategies and trends.

Trinidad and Tobago continued to list individuals and organizations domestically using the amended Anti-Terrorism Act that have been designated under the UN Security Council ISIL (Da'esh) and al-Qa'ida sanctions regime. More than 360 individuals and organizations have been listed since November 2015.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Trinidad and Tobago is a member of the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force (CFATF), a FATF-style regional body. The Financial Intelligence Unit of Trinidad and Tobago (FIUTT) is a member of the Egmont Group. In November 2017, FATF placed Trinidad and Tobago on its list of jurisdictions with strategic deficiencies in their AML/CFT regimes (the "grey list"). Trinidad and Tobago developed an action plan at that time – including a high-level political commitment – with FATF to address these deficiencies. Throughout 2018, Trinidad and Tobago have done much to improve its AML regime, though its work with FATF and CFATF continues.

Trinidad and Tobago's Parliament passed legislation that improves the ability of FIUTT and other agencies to cooperate with international partners on tax matters. The bill also broadens the FIUTT's authority and facilitates the prosecution of standalone money laundering cases. The primary law enforcement unit responsible for conducting financial investigations increased its staffing and created policies to prioritize certain investigations, including terrorism financing cases.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: The Government of Trinidad and Tobago is developing a national CVE action plan, and the counterterrorism strategy adopted in November 2017 includes CVE elements. Several members of the Trinidad and Tobago government also form part of the U.S. Embassy-led "SafeCommuniTT," a cross-societal network of nearly 80 stakeholders who have traveled on U.S. exchanges and received training in CVE best practices.

In March 2017, the city of Chaguanas joined the Strong Cities Network and is currently participating in a Strong Cities exchange program with Orlando, Florida. With support from the U.S. Embassy, a robust Sports Caravan Program brought together U.S. and Trinidad and Tobago

athletes to engage with at-risk communities, along with members of municipal governments, the Trinidad and Tobago Defense Force, Fire Services, and Police Service. In addition, the U.S. Embassy worked closely with the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service to conduct training and exchanges on enhancing police and community relations.

International and Regional Cooperation: Trinidad and Tobago is a member of the Organization of American States/Inter-American Committee against Terrorism, 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 implement a regional counterterrorism strategy adopted by CARICOM in February.

VENEZUELA

Overview: In May 2018, for the 13th consecutive year, the 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, including Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) dissidents (who remain committed to terrorism notwithstanding the 2016 peace accord with the Colombian government) and the Colombian-origin National Liberation Army (ELN). Financial ties among FARC dissidents, ELN, and other paramilitary groups facilitated public corruption and graft schemes of Venezuelan government officials and members of the armed forces. Of concern, there were reports noting cooperation between FARC dissidents and ELN in the areas of road checkpoints, subsidized food distribution, recruitment of indigenous communities, as well as trafficking of illegal narcotics and gold. Credible reports indicate Venezuela maintained a permissive environment for known terrorist groups. Individuals linked to FARC dissidents and ELN, as well as Hizballah supporters or sympathizers, were present in the country.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: Terrorist incidents in Venezuela reflected ELN's growing presence and territorial control. There were increased confrontations between ELN, other Colombian and Venezuelan illegal armed gangs, and Venezuelan government forces. According to the NGO InSight Crime, as well as local and international media, ELN was present in Amazonas, Apure, Bolívar, Guárico, Táchira, and Zulia states, extending beyond its historic base in the border zone with Colombia. On November 3, three Venezuelan National Guard (GNB) officers were killed and 10 injured after a confrontation between ELN and GNB in a sparsely populated border region in Amazonas state. Colombian authorities publicly confirmed ELN involvement, assessing that the confrontation was in response to the GNB's arrest of ELN members, including ELN leader Luis Ortega, who had an INTERPOL Blue Notice (requesting additional information on his identity and whereabouts) for crimes committed in Colombia.

Additionally, on October 13, media reported the "Bochinche Massacre," in which 16 mineworkers were killed in Tumeremo, in Bolívar state, hundreds of miles from Colombia and a short distance from the Guyana border. According to multiple media sources and Bolívar contacts, the massacre resulted from clashes between the El Coporo criminal organization (a local illegal armed group) and the ELN over control of gold mining areas.

During a nationally televised 81st anniversary celebration of the GNB on August 4, there was an alleged assassination attempt against President Nicolás Maduro by two drones carrying explosives. Government authorities concluded that it was a terrorist attack and blamed the opposition and “ultra-right” groups operating out of Colombia and the United States. The Venezuelan government has used this incident to detain illegally numerous political opponents.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: There were no changes to Venezuela’s counterterrorism legislation in 2018.

Some Venezuelan military and civilian agencies perform counterterrorism functions. Within the Venezuelan armed forces, the General Directorate of Military counterintelligence and the Commando 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 counterterrorism responsibilities. The degree of interagency cooperation and information sharing among agencies is unknown because of a lack of government transparency.

Venezuela’s porous border with Colombia has made the country attractive to FARC dissidents and ELN movements in and out of the country. Border security at ports of entry was vulnerable and susceptible to corruption. Biometric screening is not conducted at Venezuelan ports of entry. There is no automated system to collect API records on commercial flights or to crosscheck flight manifests with passenger disembarkation data.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Venezuela is a member of Caribbean Financial Action Task Force, a FATF-style regional body. Venezuela’s FIU, the National Financial Intelligence Unit, is a member of the Egmont Group.

Venezuela’s existing AML/CFT 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 additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism: There were no known CVE efforts underway in 2018.

International and Regional Cooperation: Previously, the Venezuelan government participated as official observers in peace negotiations between the Colombian government and the FARC.

Chapter 2

State Sponsors of Terrorism

This report provides a snapshot of events during 2018 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 DPRK government repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism, as the DPRK was implicated in assassinations on foreign soil.

The DPRK was previously designated as a State Sponsor of Terrorism in 1988 primarily because 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 the DPRK met the statutory requirements for rescission. In 2017, the Secretary of State determined the DPRK had repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism since its State Sponsor of Terrorism designation was rescinded in 2008.

IRAN

Designated as a State Sponsor of Terrorism in 1984, Iran continued its terrorist-related activity in 2018, including support for Hizballah, 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 region. Iran has acknowledged the involvement of the IRGC-QF in the Iraq and Syria conflicts, and the IRGC-QF is Iran's primary mechanism for cultivating and supporting terrorists abroad. Iran also uses regional proxy forces to provide sufficient deniability to try to shield it from the consequences of its aggressive policies.

In 2018, Iran supported various Iraqi Shia terrorist groups, including Kata'ib Hizballah. It also bolstered the Assad regime in Syria, and Shia terrorist groups operating there, including Hizballah. Iran views the Assad regime in Syria as a crucial ally and Syria and Iraq as vital routes to supply weapons to Hizballah, Iran's primary terrorist proxy group. 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. Iran-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-Hizballah conflict, Iran has supplied Hizballah with thousands of rockets, missiles, and small arms in direct violation of UNSCR 1701. Israeli security officials and politicians expressed concerns that Iran was supplying Hizballah 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 Lebanon and Syria. Iran has provided hundreds of millions of dollars in support of Hizballah and trained thousands of its fighters at camps in Iran. 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 2018, Iran provided support to Hamas and other designated Palestinian terrorist groups, including Palestine Islamic Jihad and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command. These Palestinian terrorist groups were behind numerous deadly attacks originating in Gaza and the West Bank, including attacks against Israeli civilians in the Sinai Peninsula.

The Iranian government maintains a robust offensive cyber program and has sponsored cyber attacks against foreign government and private sector entities.

Iran remained unwilling to bring to justice senior al-Qa'ida (AQ) members residing in the country and has refused to publicly identify 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.

In 2018, the Iranian government continued this pattern of behavior, supporting terrorist plots to attack Iranian dissidents in several countries in continental Europe. In June 2018, the Netherlands expelled two Iranian diplomats associated with the November 2017 assassination of an Iranian diplomat on Dutch soil. In October 2018, Belgian authorities arrested an Iranian diplomat and two Belgian citizens of Iranian heritage for plotting to bomb an Iranian opposition group rally that occurred in June 2018 outside Paris. In October 2018, Denmark recalled its ambassador from Tehran and condemned an Iran-backed plot to assassinate an Iranian dissident in Denmark. Finally, in December 2018, the Albanian government expelled Iranian diplomats in retaliation for Iran-sponsored attempts to conduct terrorist attacks in Albania.

SUDAN

The Secretary of State designated Sudan as a State Sponsor of Terrorism in 1993 for supporting international terrorist groups, including the Abu Nidal Organization, Palestine Islamic Jihad, Hamas, and Hizballah. The Government of Sudan asserts that it no longer supports them or any terrorist organization. Sudan has taken some steps to work with the United States on counterterrorism. In 2018, 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.

In January 2018, an ISIS inspired individual approached U.S. Embassy Khartoum and repeatedly stabbed a Sudanese police officer guarding the embassy. The severely injured police officer, although maimed and permanently disfigured, survived the attack due to the immediate response from embassy staff. The attacker, who was subdued by another police officer and Local Guard Force, was fined and sentenced to the maximum term of three years. Terrorist groups continue plotting attacks in Sudan, especially in Khartoum. In June 2018, according to open press and police sources, a young woman was allegedly rescued after being recruited by ISIS. Despite the absence of high-profile terrorist attacks, ISIS appears to be active within Sudan, though the extent to which is unclear.

The Sudanese government continues to develop a national strategy for countering violent extremism and anticipates a parliamentary decision on the strategy and implementation in May 2019. The strategy will combine government and civil society resources and use a social, economic, and religious approach towards strengthening Sudan's population against internal or external extremist influences. Sudan's de-radicalization programs will run concurrently with the new national strategy. De-radicalization programs in Sudan focus on reintegration and rehabilitation of returned foreign terrorist fighters and those espousing terrorist ideologies. Sudan repatriated a small number of women and children who are or had been affiliated with foreign terrorist fighters, mostly the spouses and children of ISIS members killed in Libya, and incorporates them in Sudanese rehabilitation programs.

In October 2018, the United States and Sudan launched the Phase II framework for bilateral engagement, which is designed to lay the foundation for normalized relations. This framework includes the expansion of counterterrorism cooperation and adherence to UNSCRs concerning North Korea, especially the cessation of any governmental ties to North Korea. Phase II also includes the Sudanese government taking steps to address outstanding terrorism-related claims and judgements against Sudan held by victims of terrorism, including U.S. court judgements related to the 1998 embassy bombings in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam and the 2000 attack on the *USS Cole*.

SYRIA

Designated in 1979 as a State Sponsor of Terrorism, Syria continued its political and military support to various terrorist groups. The regime continued to provide weapons and political support to Hizballah and continued to allow Iran to rearm the terrorist organization. The Assad

regime's relationship with Hizballah and Iran grew stronger in 2018 as the regime became more reliant on external actors to fight opponents and secure areas. 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 Hizballah and vice versa.

Over the past decade, the Assad regime's permissive attitude towards AQ and other terrorist groups' foreign terrorist fighter facilitation efforts during the Iraq conflict fed the growth of AQ, ISIS, and affiliated terrorist networks inside Syria. The Syrian government's awareness and encouragement for many years of terrorists' transit through Syria to Iraq for the purpose of fighting U.S. forces before 2014 is well documented. Those very networks were among the terrorist elements that brutalized the Syrian and Iraqi populations in 2018. 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. Marxist groups, including affiliates of the Kurdistan Workers' Party, also operated on Syrian soil, presenting a security concern for Turkey.

As part of a broader strategy during the year, the regime portrayed Syria itself as a victim of terrorism, characterizing all 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.

Chapter 3

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

The use of chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear (CBRN) materials and expertise remained a terrorist threat in 2018. The repeated use of sulfur mustard by ISIS in Iraq and Syria before the loss of much of its territory by 2018 vividly exemplified this threat, and terrorists' intentions to acquire, develop, and use these materials has not waned. The United States recently published a National Strategy for Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) Terrorism and continued to work proactively to disrupt and deny ISIS's—and other nonstate actors'—CBRN capabilities.

The international community has established numerous international partnerships to counter the CBRN threat from terrorists and other nonstate actors. The United States routinely provides technical and financial assistance and training to partner nations and international organizations to help strengthen their abilities to adequately protect and secure CBRN-applicable expertise, technologies, and material.

The Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction (GP) was launched in 2002 to prevent terrorists—or states that support them—from acquiring or developing weapons of mass destruction. Today, the GP has expanded its membership to 30 countries and the European Union, and remains a vital forum for countries to exchange information on national priorities for CBRN programmatic efforts worldwide and coordinate assistance for these efforts.

The United States continued to support the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Division of Nuclear Security (DNS), which helps member states prevent, detect, and respond to threats of nuclear terrorism through the development of guidance as well as the provision of training, technical advice, peer reviews, and other advisory services.

The Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT) is an international partnership of 88 nations and six official observer organizations dedicated to strengthening global capacity to prevent, detect, and respond to a nuclear terrorist incident. In 2018, partner nations hosted 10 multilateral activities 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, nonbinding framework.

Through the Global Threat Reduction Program (GTR), the Department of State worked to prevent states and terrorist groups from acquiring or proliferating WMD to attack the United States. In 2018, GTR's chemical, biological, and nuclear security programs implemented more than a hundred capacity-building projects to ensure that foreign partners could detect and counter WMD terrorism threats. To counter ISIS, GTR continued to train and equip Iraqi counterterrorism and security forces to detect and respond to WMD attacks, and supported Iraqi partners in formerly ISIS-controlled territory to secure weaponizable chemical and biological materials to prevent future WMD attacks. In response to the threat of transnational terrorists

conducting chemical weapons (CW) attacks using unrestricted, commercially available material, GTR collaborated with European security forces to train law enforcement in partner countries to detect and prevent CW attacks against railways and subways.

To help partner countries intercept foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) attempting to carry out WMD plots, GTR partnered with INTERPOL to augment an existing FTF database with WMD–applicable information and trained partner countries to help INTERPOL populate the database and use the information to interdict WMD–capable FTFs. GTR also worked with personnel from Libyan, Egyptian, and other countries’ nuclear facilities to promote the adoption of security measures to prevent employees from diverting nuclear material and technology.

The Department of State’s Export Control and Related Border Security (EXBS) Program funds capacity building programs aimed at strengthening legal and regulatory systems, developing licensing tools, enhancing border security and trade enforcement, providing outreach to key industrial and business sectors, and encouraging the sharing of information within governments and across national borders. As part of a core national security strategy to combat ISIS and other terrorist organizations, a key objective of the EXBS Program is to provide substantive knowledge, skills, and tools to prevent state and nonstate actors from acquiring WMD, conventional arms, and explosives or using those materials against U.S. citizens and interests. To achieve this objective, EXBS instituted a new curriculum in 2018 to train partner governments in the Middle Eastern and North African regions to detect, interdict, and counter the materials, technologies, and tactics that terrorists could use to carry out low-technology attacks on public transportation. EXBS also provided comprehensive training to Egyptian and Libyan border security officials on border security, cargo and passenger interdiction, and counter–IED training. The program also funded commodity identification and customs inspection training for border security officials in Turkey and Jordan to increase these countries’ capabilities to interdict illicit items entering and leaving Syria. Finally, EXBS furnished equipment and training to strengthen aviation security and mitigate threats to civilian aviation, and refurbished border security infrastructure—including at Rabia, on Iraq’s border with Syria—to stem the flow of illicit materials and maintain gains made against ISIS.

At a special session held in June 2018, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) Conference of the States Parties adopted a decision titled “Addressing the Threat from Chemical Weapons Use” that provides the OPCW’s Technical Secretariat with additional tools to respond to chemical weapons use, including by nonstate actors. This landmark decision will help guide the work of OPCW in deterring chemical weapons use and responding if it is used. Specifically, the OPCW is considering options for further assistance to States Parties to help prevent the chemical weapons threat posed by nonstate actors and to aid contingency planning of States Parties in the event of a chemical weapons attack.

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 terms “terrorist sanctuary” and “sanctuary” exclude 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. (For information regarding the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Iran, Sudan, and Syria, see Chapter 2, State Sponsors of Terrorism.)

TERRORIST SAFE HAVENS

AFRICA

Somalia. In 2018, terrorists used under-governed areas throughout Somalia as safe havens to plan, conduct, and facilitate operations within Somalia and in neighboring countries, mainly in Kenya. The Federal Government of Somalia’s Comprehensive Approach to Security partnership with the international community includes military, law enforcement, and CVE-specific “strands” to address Somalia’s security challenges at the federal, state (Federal Member State), and local levels. Somali law enforcement took several actions in 2018 in Mogadishu and other major cities that disrupted plots and led to prosecutions and convictions.

In 2018, terrorists used under-governed areas throughout Somalia as safe havens to plan, conduct, and facilitate terrorist operations, including mass-casualty bombings in major urban areas. Somali officials failed to implement vital 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.

Al-Shabaab retained much of its safe haven in Somalia, although it faced increased pressure from counterterrorism operations. With the notable exception of targeted operations carried out by U.S.-trained and -equipped units of Somali military forces, the Somali National Army as a whole remained incapable of independently securing and retaking towns from al-Shabaab. This critical gap allowed al-Shabaab to continue to extort local populations and forcibly recruit fighters, some of whom were children.

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 Kenya. The group retained control of several towns throughout the Jubaland region, including Jilib and Kunyo Barow, and maintained operations in the Gedo region to exploit the porous Kenya-Somalia border and attack targets in Kenya. The Kenyan government maintains a strong

presence throughout the border region, but Kenyan security officials continued to struggle with border security and crisis response in the more remote areas of northeastern Kenya.

In northern Somalia, ISIS-linked fighters used the limited safe haven they established in Puntland to launch small-scale attacks.

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 regarding the presence of WMD in Somalia.

The Lake Chad Region. In 2018, Boko Haram (BH) and its offshoot ISIS-West Africa (ISIS-WA) maintained limited safe havens in parts of northeast Nigeria and on islands in Lake Chad, and they prevented the reestablishment of state administration, service delivery, and humanitarian relief in broader territory surrounding Lake Chad. These safe havens are reduced from the territory BH controlled in 2014-15. Forces from Nigeria and other members of the Multinational Joint Task Force (Benin, Cameroon, Chad, and Niger) lack the capability to clear these safe havens, and they lack the capacity and resources to secure borders and hold and administer liberated territory. Both BH and ISIS-WA continued to conduct asymmetric attacks against civilians, military, and government personnel, including through suicide bombers, VBIEDs, raids, ambushes, kidnappings, and other means. As a result of this insecurity, at year's end more than 1.8 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 WMD in or through its territory.

The Trans-Sahara. In 2018, al-Qa'ida affiliate Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM), and other groups, including Ansural Islam and ISIS in the Greater Sahara (ISIS-GS), continued to stage asymmetric attacks in the Trans-Sahara region. These terrorist groups have freedom of movement in northern and central Mali and have pushed into northern Burkina Faso. JNIM successfully inserted itself into long-standing ethnic conflicts such as the Fulani herder versus Dogon farmer conflict over grazing land and water. The Malian government struggles to combat these terrorists, notwithstanding the presence of the UN peacekeeping mission, Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), and a French presence in the region consisting of 4,500 military members. In Burkina Faso, the government is struggling to combat the relatively new terrorist presence there. There has been a significant influx of Western aid as part of the effort to increase the capacity of the G-5 Sahel Joint Force, of which Burkina Faso is a member. Niger and Chad continue to combat terrorism on their borders. Mauritania has not experienced a terrorist attack since 2011.

No government in the region was known to support or facilitate the proliferation or trafficking of WMD 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 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 periodic 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. Limited political will, incomplete legal and regulatory frameworks, insufficient strategic trade controls, inadequate law enforcement and security capabilities, emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases, and a burgeoning bioscience capacity make Southeast Asia an area of concern for WMD 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 (EXBS) program.

The Southern Philippines. Since defeating groups affiliated with ISIS in the siege of Marawi in October 2017, the Philippine government has closely tracked terrorist groups that continue to operate in some areas, particularly in the southern Philippines. The government has sustained aggressive military and law enforcement operations to deny safe haven to such groups and prevent the flow of FTFs through its territory. The government further deepened close counterterrorism cooperation with the United States, enhancing military and law enforcement efforts to address the full spectrum of terrorist threats, including from WMD. The government welcomed support from the U.S. Defense Threat Reduction Agency to help reduce the risk of non-state actors acquiring or using improvised chemical weapons.

International reconstruction assistance focused on Marawi continues, but concerns remain that efforts are not including local stakeholders and adjudicating competing land claims – both factors that terrorists can exploit.

Although 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. The continued ability of terrorist organizations to operate in the southern Philippines reflects the centuries-long challenge of governing effectively in the country's more remote areas and establishing consistent security in a region characterized by a strong separatist identity, endemic poverty, and religious differences.

THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Egypt. In 2018, ISIS-Sinai Province (ISIS-SP) used portions of Egypt's Sinai region as a base to conduct attacks against military and civilian targets in the Sinai and mainland Egypt. On April 14, ISIS-SP attacked an Egyptian Army camp in central Sinai, killing eight Egyptian soldiers. On November 2, ISIS-SP attacked a bus carrying Coptic Christians in mainland Egypt, killing seven and wounding at least 13. A December 28 roadside bomb attack on a bus carrying Vietnamese tourists in Giza killed four and injured at least 11, but no group claimed responsibility for the attack.

In response to escalating ISIS-SP attacks, the Egyptian military launched its most recent and largest Sinai campaign against ISIS-SP in February 2018 with some success, but the tempo of the campaign slowed by mid-year. Since July 2018, ISIS-SP began to reconstitute and increase its attacks to near pre-campaign levels. Egyptian security forces face frequent small arms and IED attacks. These repeated attacks indicate that ISIS-SP remains intent on expanding its influence and operations 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 and ambush-protected vehicles, counter-IED 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 security situation in Sinai and the potential effects on the Multinational Force and Observers peacekeeping mission located there.

Through the Department of State's Export Control and Related Border Security (EXBS) program, the United States worked with the Government of Egypt to enhance its border security capabilities. EXBS funded land, air, and maritime border enforcement 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 funded the provision of X-ray scanners to inspect cars and trucks at external and internal border crossings for WMD-related materials, conventional weapons, and other illicit items.

Iraq. Supported by the 79-member Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, the Government of Iraq retook the remaining territory held by ISIS in 2018. ISIS remained a terrorist threat in Iraq in 2018, carrying out suicide, hit-and-run, and other asymmetric attacks throughout the country. ISIS continued to seek to produce sulfur mustard and IEDs filled with chlorine. The United

States has worked proactively with its 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.

The terrorist organization Kata'ib Hizballah continued to maintain an active presence in Iraq.

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 terrorist groups in both under-governed and Hizballah-controlled areas. Hizballah used the areas under its control for terrorist training, fundraising, financing, and recruitment. The Government of Lebanon did not take significant actions to disarm Hizballah, even though Hizballah maintained its weapons in violation of UNSCR 1701. 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 2018, which operated in mountainous, mostly uninhabited zones where the government had limited reach. The Lebanese government continued to take action to curtail these groups' activities. Terrorist groups, including Hizballah, 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 Lebanese Armed Forces (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 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 EXBS program 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 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, under-governed territories remain safe havens for al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant-Libya (ISIL-Libya). The Government of National Accord (GNA), although a reliable and willing U.S. counterterrorism partner, lacks the capacity and reach to project authority into many areas of Libya and had limited ability to eliminate terrorist safe havens, prevent the flow of FTFs, or ensure effective counter-proliferation efforts. U.S. airstrikes conducted in cooperation with the GNA applied pressure to AQIM and ISIL-Libya networks in Libya. Because of the difficulties of controlling the southern and desert borders in particular, the GNA remained unable to effectively track flows of FTFs in and out of its territory. Rival factions and political stakeholders outside of the GNA, including in the House of Representatives-aligned forces had also not stemmed the flow of FTFs.

The Department of State's EXBS program provided training to the Libyan Ministries of Defense, Customs, Interior, and Foreign Affairs; Libyan Airport Authority; and Libyan Intelligence Service officials. The training aimed to enhance Libya's contribution to preventing 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 this effort a priority. In 2018, targeted technical training included airport security and cargo interdiction training, basic and advanced land border security training, counter-proliferation investigations training, fraudulent documentation training, and counter-IED training. These activities encourage interagency cooperation within Libya and promote regional and international cooperation to counter illicit trafficking in strategic items.

The Department of State's Bureau of Counterterrorism airport and aviation security program provided training, support, and equipment to the Libyan Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Transportation, Libyan Airport Authority, Libyan Civil Aviation Authority, Libyan Intelligence Service, and other airport security officials in Mitiga and Misrata international airports. The program assists the Libyan government to achieve international standards and enhanced security by completing airport security assessments, developing and implementing standard operating procedures, installing airport security equipment, and providing necessary training and mentorship to airport security personnel. The program also will promote interagency cooperation and coordination by helping to stand up a Libyan airport and aviation steering committee.

Yemen. Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), on behalf of the Republic of Yemen Government, are fighting to reclaim territory currently held by Iran-backed 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 instilling 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 Government of Yemen has been as cooperative with U.S., Saudi, and UAE

counterterrorism operations as its limited capacity will allow. In 2018, counterterrorism operations, led primarily by UAE-supported forces, targeted AQAP safe havens for clearance in Abyan Shabwah and Hadhramawt 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, including weapons emanating from Iran. Nonetheless, the Department of State's 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 exploit Afghanistan's ungoverned spaces, including the border region of Afghanistan and Pakistan. Islamic State's Khorasan Province (ISIS-K), elements of al-Qa'ida, and terrorist groups targeting Pakistan, such as Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), continued to use the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region as a safe haven. 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 participating in joint operations against insurgents in districts bordering Pakistan.

The potential for WMD trafficking and proliferation remained a concern. In 2018, the United States and Afghanistan continued to work 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 that focus on attacks outside the country continued to operate from Pakistani soil in 2018, including the Haqqani Network, Lashkar-e-Tayyiba, and Jaish-e-Mohammad. The government and military acted inconsistently with respect to terrorist safe havens throughout the country. Authorities did not take sufficient action to stop certain terrorist groups and individuals from openly operating in the country.

Pakistan is committed to combating the trafficking of items that could contribute to the development of WMDs and their delivery systems. Pakistan was a constructive and active participant in International Atomic Energy Agency-hosted meetings and in the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism. The Department of State's Export Control and Related Border Security (EXBS) 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 Department of Energy and the Department of Homeland Security.

EXBS also sponsored regional collaboration through nonproliferation fellowships and cross-border coordination with Pakistan and Afghanistan through the UNODC-World Customs Organization's Container Control Programme (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 terrorist groups to operate, 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. However, ongoing challenges to peace accord implementation and continued security vacuums have created risk for terrorist activity and attacks on civilians, security forces, and infrastructure in some areas in 2018. A troubling number of FARC dissidents, estimated to total 1,000 to 1,700 individuals who chose not to participate in the peace process or have since abandoned the peace process, continued engaging in terrorist and other criminal activities, particularly in border regions and areas previously controlled by the FARC.

The ELN perpetrated armed attacks across the country for much of the year, particularly following the conclusion of a brief bilateral cease-fire, which lasted from October 1, 2017, through January 9, 2018. Peace talks between the ELN and the Santos government concluded without resolution in August 2018. Following the election and inauguration of President Ivan Duque, the Duque administration paused the talks indefinitely, effective August 7, until the ELN releases all kidnapping victims and ceases criminal activity.

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 efforts to implement its Integrated Border Monitoring System to monitor its entire border, and in continued cooperation with the Government of Colombia, attempted to address potentially problematic areas along their shared borders.

Venezuela. Venezuela's porous border with Colombia, as administered by members of the former Maduro regime, have made the country attractive to FARC and the National Liberation Army (ELN) movements in and out of the country. In addition, Hizballah supporters and sympathizers were present in Venezuela.

COUNTERING TERRORISM ON THE ECONOMIC FRONT

In 2018, the Department of State designated six new FTOs and amended two existing FTO designations by adding aliases. In addition, the Department designated 37 organizations and individuals as Specially Designated Global Terrorists (SDGTs) under Executive Order (E.O.) 13224. The Department also reviewed and maintained the FTO designation of three entities.

The Department of the Treasury also designated organizations and individuals under E.O. 13224. For a list of all U.S. designations, see the [Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control](#).

2018 Foreign Terrorist Organization/Executive Order 13224 Group Designations

- On February 28, the Department of State designated ISIS-Bangladesh under E.O. 13224 and as an FTO. (See Chapter 5, Foreign Terrorist Organizations, for further information on ISIS-Bangladesh.)
- Also on February 28, the Department of State designated ISIS-Philippines under E.O. 13224 and as an FTO. (See Chapter 5, Foreign Terrorist Organizations, for further information on ISIS-Philippines.)
- Also on February 28, the Department of State designated ISIS-West Africa under E.O. 13224 and as an FTO. (See Chapter 5, Foreign Terrorist Organizations, for further information on ISIS-West Africa.)
- On April 2, the Department of State amended the E.O. 13224 and FTO designations of Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (LeT) to include the aliases Milli Muslim League (MML) and Tehreek-e-Azadi-e-Kashmir (TAK). (See Chapter 5, Foreign Terrorist Organizations, for further information on LeT.)
- On May 23, the Department of State designated ISIS in the Greater Sahara (ISIS-GS) under E.O. 13224 and as an FTO. (See Chapter 5, Foreign Terrorist Organizations, for further information on ISIS-GS.)
- On May 31, the Department of State amended the E.O. 13224 and FTO designations of al-Nusrah Front to include Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) and other aliases. (See Chapter 5, Foreign Terrorist Organizations, for further information on al-Nusrah Front.)
- On July 11, the Department of State designated al-Ashtar Brigades (AAB) under E.O. 13224 and as an FTO. (See Chapter 5, Foreign Terrorist Organizations, for further information on AAB.)
- On July 19, the Department of State amended the E.O. 13224 designation of al-Shabaab to include al-Hijra and other aliases. (See Chapter 5, Foreign Terrorist Organizations, for further information on al-Shabaab.)

- On September 6, the Department of State designated Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM) under E.O. 13224 and as an FTO. (See Chapter 5, Foreign Terrorist Organizations, for further information on JNIM.)

2018 Executive Order (E.O.) 13224 Designations

- On January 4, the Department of State designated Muhammad al-Ghazali, Abukar Ali Adan, and Wanas al-Faqih. These three individuals are associated with al-Qa'ida affiliates al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), al-Shabaab, and al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). Al-Ghazali is a senior member of AQAP who is involved in internal security and in training the group's operatives. Abukar Ali Adan is deputy leader of al-Shabaab. Wanas al-Faqih is an AQIM associate who planned the March 18, 2015 Bardo Museum attack in Tunis, Tunisia that killed at least 20 people.
- On January 23, the Department of State designated Siddhartha Dhar and Abdelatif Gaini, both members of ISIS. In late 2014, Dhar left the United Kingdom to travel to Syria to join ISIS and is believed to be the masked leader who appeared in a January 2016 ISIS video of the execution of several prisoners ISIS accused of spying for the UK. Abdelatif Gaini is a Belgian-Moroccan citizen believed to be fighting for ISIS in the Middle East.
- Also on January 23, the Department of State designated Khaled Batarfi, a senior member of AQAP. Batarfi was the top commander for AQAP in Abyan Governorate, Yemen, and was a former member of AQAP's shura council. In April 2015, Batarfi was released from prison in Yemen during an AQAP attack.
- On January 31, the Department of State designated Ismail Haniyeh, Harakat al-Saireen, Liwa al-Thawra, and Harakat Sawa'd Misr (HASM). Ismail Haniyeh is the leader and President of the Political Bureau of Hamas. Haniyeh has close links with Hamas's military wing and has been a proponent of armed struggle, including against civilians. Harakat al-Sabireen is an Iran-backed terrorist group that operates in Gaza and the West Bank and has carried out terrorist activities targeting Israel. Liwa al-Thawra is a terrorist group active in Egypt that claimed responsibility for the October 2016 assassination of Egyptian brigadier general Adel Ragai and other, more recent, attacks in Egypt. HASM is a terrorist group also active in Egypt that claimed responsibility for the assassination of Egyptian National Security Agency officer Ibrahim Azzazy and the attempted assassination of Egypt's former Grand Mufti Ali Gomaa. HASM also claimed responsibility for a September 30, 2017, attack on Burma's Embassy in Cairo.
- On February 20, the Department of State designated Ansarul Islam, a terrorist group based in Burkina Faso. The group has launched numerous attacks in northern Burkina Faso near the border with Mali, including a December 2016 attack against an army squad that killed a dozen soldiers, one of the deadliest attacks against Burkina Faso's military.
- On February 27, the Department of State designated ISIS-Somalia and Mahad Moalim. Deputy Leader of ISIS-Somalia. ISIS-Somalia claimed responsibility for a May 2017 suicide bombing at a police checkpoint in northern Somalia that left five people dead and

injured 12 others and a February 2017 attack on the Village Hotel in Bosaso, Puntland, Somalia.

- Also on February 27, the Department of State designated ISIS-West Africa leader Abu Musab al-Barnawi. Under al-Barnawi's leadership, ISIS-West Africa has carried out numerous attacks in Nigeria and the Lake Chad region.
- Also on February 27, the Department of State designated ISIS-Egypt and the Maute Group. ISIS-Egypt has claimed responsibility for numerous attacks in Egypt; in December 2016, the group bombed a Coptic Christian cathedral in Cairo, killing 29 people. The Maute Group declared its allegiance to ISIS in 2014 and is responsible for the siege of the City of Marawi in the Philippines, which began in May 2017; the September 2016 Davao market bombing, which killed 15 people and wounded 70 others; and the attempted bomb attack in November 2016 near the U.S. Embassy in Manila.
- Also on February 27, the Department of State designated Ahmad Iman Ali, a prominent al-Shabaab commander who has served as the group's leader in Kenya since 2012. He is director of the group's Kenyan operations, which have included acts of terrorism targeting Kenyan African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) troops in Somalia such as the January 2016, attack in El Adde, Somalia.
- Also on February 27, the Department of State designated the ISIS-linked Jund al-Khilafah-Tunisia (JAK-T). The group has carried out several attacks in Tunisia, including the November 2015 beheading of a shepherd and the June 2016 land-mine attack on the national army and security units.
- On March 8, the Department of State designated Abdifatah Abubakar Abdi. Abdi is wanted in connection with the June 2014 attack in Mpeketoni, Kenya that claimed more than 50 lives.
- On March 22, the Department of State designated Joe Asperman, a French national and a senior chemical weapons expert for ISIS. Asperman oversaw chemical operations production within Syria for ISIS and the deployment of these chemical weapons at the battlefield.
- Also on March 22, the Department of State designated Katibat al-Imam al-Bukhari (KIB), the largest Uzbek fighting force in Syria. KIB has played a significant role in the violence in northwestern Syria, fighting alongside groups including al-Nusra Front.
- On May 16, the Department of State designated Adnan Abu Walid al-Sahrawi, leader of ISIS-Greater Sahara. ISIS-Greater Sahara is primarily based in Mali, operating along the Mali-Niger border, and has claimed responsibility for several attacks under al-Sahrawi's leadership, including the October 4, 2017, attack on a joint U.S.-Nigerien patrol in the region of Tongo Tongo, Niger, which killed four U.S. soldiers and five Nigerien soldiers.

- On July 31, the Department of State designated Abdul Rehman al-Dakhil, a longtime member of Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (LeT). Al-Dakhil was an operational leader for LeT's attacks in India between 1997 and 2001. In 2016, he was the LeT divisional commander for the Jammu region in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. As of early 2018, al-Dakhil remained a senior commander in LeT.
- On August 13, the Department of State designated Qassim Abdullah Ali Ahmed, also known as Qassim al-Muamen, an Iran-based leader of the al-Ashtar Brigades (AAB). Al-Muamen has recruited terrorists in Bahrain, facilitated training on weapons and explosives for AAB members, and supplied AAB members with funding, weapons, and explosives to carry out attacks.
- On November 13, the Department of State designated Jawad Nasrallah and the al-Mujahidin Brigades (AMB). Jawad Nasrallah is a rising leader of Hizballah and is the son of Hizballah leader Hassan Nasrallah. Jawad Nasrallah has recruited individuals to carry out terrorist attacks against Israel in the West Bank. AMB is a military organization that has operated in the Palestinian Territories since 2005. AMB members have plotted numerous attacks against Israeli targets. AMB has ties to Hizballah, and Hizballah has provided funding and military training to AMB members.
- On November 20, the Department of State designated Hajji 'Abd al-Nasir. Al-Nasir has held several leadership positions in ISIS. Within the past five years, he has served as an ISIS military emir in Syria.

MULTILATERAL EFFORTS TO COUNTER TERRORISM

In 2018, 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. Examples of U.S. multilateral engagement are described below.

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 violent extremism. The GCTF aims to diminish terrorist recruitment and increase countries' capacity to deal with terrorist threats within their borders and regions. The GCTF comprises three thematic and two regional working groups: Countering Violent Extremism, Criminal Justice and the Rule of Law, Foreign Terrorist Fighters, Capacity Building in the East Africa Region, and Capacity Building in the West Africa Region. In September 2017, the United States and Jordan became co-chairs of the Foreign Terrorist Fighters Working Group for an initial two-year term. The working group formally adopted a work plan at its April 2018 plenary meeting.

The UN is a close partner of, and participant in, the GCTF and its activities. In 2018, the GCTF co-chairs, Morocco and the Netherlands, issued a report on recommendations for the UN and GCTF to increase cooperation and partnership in both GCTF and UN activities. In September,

GCTF ministers endorsed a joint GCTF-UN statement marking the enhanced cooperation between the two bodies. The GCTF serves as a mechanism to further the implementation of the universally agreed-upon 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 OSCE, the AU, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

In September 2018, GCTF ministers formally endorsed four new framework documents, including two co-led by the United States:

- **“Rabat-Washington Good Practices on the Prevention, Detection, Intervention, and Response to Homegrown Terrorism.”** Morocco and the United States, in coordination with the International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law (IIJ), developed good practices to help policymakers and practitioners improve domestic efforts to identify and address homegrown terrorism.
- **“Good Practices on Addressing the Challenge of Returning Families of Foreign Terrorist Fighters.”** The Families Initiative, co-led by the Netherlands and the United States, produced a set of good practices for governments to draw upon when they handle FTF families returning in their country of origin or traveling to a third country.
- **“Abuja Recommendations on the Collection, Use and Sharing of Evidence for Purposes of Criminal Prosecution of Terrorist Suspects.”** Nigeria and Switzerland, as co-chairs of the GCTF Criminal Justice and Rule of Law Working Group, produced a set of good practices to help investigators and prosecutors build cases based on strong and admissible evidence including evidence collected from the battlefield.
- **“The Hague Good Practices on the Nexus between Transnational Organized Crime and Terrorism.”** The Netherlands led an initiative to discuss the links between terrorism and transnational crime. The resulting good practices raise awareness of the nexus and how to expand and tailor available tools to deal with its manifestations in different regional contexts.

Also in September 2018, the GCTF launched three new initiatives, including two co-led by the United States:

- **Initiative on Improving Capabilities for Detecting and Interdicting Terrorist Travel through Enhanced Terrorist Screening and Information Sharing (“Terrorist Travel Initiative”).** Co-led by Morocco and the United States, this initiative is raising awareness of the resources states have available to meet the obligations under UNSCR 2396, including facilitating the development of watchlists. The initiative will result in a set of non-binding good practices to enable countries and organizations to build broader and more efficient watchlist and terrorist screening infrastructures.

- **Initiative to Counter Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) Threats.** Co-led by Germany and the United States, this initiative is developing a set of non-binding good practices to help a variety of stakeholders, including national and local governments, international organizations, and private industry, to address UAS use by terrorists against civilian targets.
- **Development of a Memorandum on the Use of Rule-of-Law-Based Administrative Measures in a Counterterrorism Context.** Co-led by the Criminal Justice and Rule of Law Working Group co-chairs, Nigeria and Switzerland, this initiative is addressing the legal basis, scope, procedures, authority and oversight, and other dimensions related to the use of administrative counterterrorism measures within a rule-of-law framework.

During 2018, the GCTF continued work on two earlier initiatives, the International Counterterrorism and Countering Violent Extremism Capacity-Building Clearinghouse Mechanism, and the *Policy Toolkit on the Zurich-London Recommendations on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Terrorism Online*.

GCTF-Inspired Institutions. The following three institutions were developed to operationalize GCTF good practices and to serve as mechanisms for strengthening civilian criminal justice responses to terrorism:

- **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 2018 trained roughly 800 practitioners on issues such as detecting and addressing homegrown terrorism, combating prison radicalization, increasing international cooperation in terrorism investigations and prosecutions, and dealing with juveniles charged with terrorism-related offenses.
- **Hedayah.** On December 14, 2012, ministers and senior officials from GCTF member countries inaugurated *Hedayah*, the first-ever international center of excellence for 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. *Hedayah* has organized capacity-building programs and expert workshops on community policing and community engagement, CVE and education, CVE and communications, prison disengagement and reintegration, victims of terrorism, security and development, and the development of national and regional CVE strategies. Since 2016, the United States has funded a U.S. secondee based in Abu Dhabi to serve as *Hedayah's* director of dialogue and CVE communications.
- **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 2018, GCERF

funded local CVE programs in Bangladesh, Kenya, Kosovo, Mali, and Nigeria. Thirteen countries, plus the EU, have contributed funds to GCERF, totaling more than US \$70 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 to its system for sending messages and notices. The United States supports programs through INTERPOL's U.S. National Central Bureau (USNCB) and General Secretariat (IPSG) to help countries affected by the FTF phenomenon extend I-24/7 connections from their National Central Bureaus to air, land, and sea ports of entry, thereby increasing their ability to screen and interdict FTFs and other transnational criminals.

Acknowledging the value of this initiative and the importance of addressing the remaining connectivity gaps in countries at risk of FTF travel, in 2016 the G-7 committed to extending I-24/7 connectivity to 60 priority 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. In 2018, at the mid-way point of the five-year deadline, INTERPOL reported that 32 countries now have full or partial funding to conduct the connectivity work. Specifically, 20 countries are on track to expand connectivity to key ports of entry and to law enforcement agencies, and 12 countries are receiving partial support to meet that goal. In the coming year, U.S. funds will enable further expansion of this program to additional priority countries.

The United States continued to support the INTERPOL Counter-Terrorism Fusion Centre's FTF project, which manages an analytical database containing identity profiles of FTFs 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 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 also has offered seed funding to support an INTERPOL project that will enhance the organization's analytical capability by allowing its databases to cross-reference data that link, for example, individual terrorist profiles with lost and stolen travel documents, or fingerprints found on IEDs. This capability will improve and speed up member states' investigative capacity. The United States also continued to support a range of counterterrorism capacity-building activities through INTERPOL's Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosive Materials (CBRNE) sub-directorate.

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 2018, the EU's strengthened external border checks continued to help prevent the travel of FTFs. Europol has officers and personnel in Italy and Greece who work alongside border security and immigration officers to assist in screening incoming migrants against Europol databases. In addition, the EU Commission continued work on its Action Plan to Support the

Protection of Public Spaces, which aims to enhance the capacity of member states to protect and reduce the vulnerability of soft targets, such as malls, restaurants, hotels, and other public spaces, against terrorist attacks. EU and UK officials discussed how the UK's exit from the EU would affect each organization's access to certain shared databases.

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 Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The OSCE concentrated on building support for a comprehensive approach to addressing terrorism-related challenges, particularly regarding FTFs, information sharing, and countering radicalization to violence under Italy's 2018 Chairmanship-in-Office. The May 10-11 OSCE Counterterrorism Conference in Rome focused on the challenges posed by returning and relocating FTFs. The conference included interventions and side events on strengthening border security and information sharing; rehabilitating and reintegrating FTFs within and outside the criminal justice system; and addressing the challenges of FTF family members. The OSCE's Leaders against Intolerance and Violent Extremism effort is a train-the-trainer program that mobilizes groups to speak out and address terrorism-related challenges at the community level. In 2018, the OSCE conducted a scenario-based, multi-stakeholder tabletop exercise to develop practical recommendations, promote whole-of-society collaboration, and address challenges posed by returning and relocating FTFs in Bosnia and Herzegovina. OSCE staff members actively participated in global and regional efforts supported by the United States through the IJ and GCTF.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). NATO's counterterrorism efforts, including improving awareness of the threat, developing response capabilities, and enhancing engagement with partner countries and organizations, are an integral part of the Alliance's 360-degree approach to deterrence, defense, and projecting stability. At the July 2018 Brussels Summit, NATO members agreed to a new biometric data policy which, consistent with applicable national and international law and subject to national requirements and restrictions, supports Allies' ability to identify terrorist travelers, including FTFs, and support implementation of UNSCR 2396. Allies also agreed to enhance NATO's Airborne and Early Warning Control System and air-to-air refueling support for Coalition forces. At the December 2018 Foreign Ministers meeting, NATO Allies endorsed an update to the 2017 NATO Counterterrorism Action Plan. The Plan continued support for the Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan and for standing up NATO Mission Iraq to support Iraq's efforts to stabilize the country and fight terrorism. NATO is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS.

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 July, the Council adopted a new counterterrorism strategy for 2018-2022 "based on prevention, prosecution, and protection, including assistance to victims." The strategy aims to assist national authorities to prevent and counter terrorist public provocation, propaganda, radicalization to violence, recruitment, and training, including on the internet; and disseminate best practices on de-radicalization, disengagement, and social reintegration. The Council continued to operate the 24/7 Network of Contact Points on Foreign

Terrorist Fighters, a voluntary network that 45 member states and the EU use to exchange counterterrorism case information. The Council of Europe Committee on Counter-Terrorism (CDCT), formerly called the Committee of Experts on Terrorism, held plenary meetings in May and November. On November 14, CDCT held a Thematic Session on Terrorism and the Internet that brought together experts and practitioners from the member states with representatives from internet and telecommunications firms and associations, social media platforms, and internet search engines. Participants shared information and exchanged best practices to prevent and combat terrorist-related offenses and radicalization leading to terrorism on the internet.

Group of Seven (G-7). Canada served as the 2018 G-7 President and hosted a joint Foreign and Security Ministers Meeting in April that resulted in new joint commitments focusing on managing the travel of FTFs and their families. Within the G-7 Roma-Lyon Group meetings on counterterrorism and combating 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 PNR systems, which were reflected in UNSCR 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 34 member states and 70 observers, made strides in 2018 across its focus areas: cybersecurity, border management, preventing the financing of terrorism, preventing the proliferation of WMD, preventing violent extremism, and addressing the FTF phenomenon. Working closely with its member states, OAS/CICTE establishes policies and implements programs to address these issues, and it bolsters counterterrorism partnerships, cooperation, and information sharing through promoting counterterrorism policies, training, and capacity building. In February, under the auspices of OAS/CICTE, cyber security policy experts agreed to two inaugural hemispheric confidence-building measures in cyberspace to facilitate cyber cooperation and promote international stability in cyberspace. In May, OAS/CICTE's 18th Regular Session in Washington, D.C., with Argentina as incoming chair, focused on CVE, FTFs, and countering the use of the internet for terrorist purposes. Member states reiterated their commitments to fulfill obligations under relevant UNSCRs, enhance information sharing, strengthen border controls, and prioritize prevention measures to counter radicalization to violence.

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and the East Asia Summit (EAS). Counterterrorism activities with the 10-member ASEAN and 27-member ARF countries included annual meetings on counterterrorism and transnational crime and capacity building through ARF institutions. The U.S.-ASEAN Summit released a Leaders' Statement on Cybersecurity Cooperation to affirm the applicability of international law to state behavior in cyberspace and the promotion of voluntary, non-binding norms of responsible state behavior in cyberspace. The EAS, which includes the 10 ASEAN members plus Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Russia, and the United States, issued five statements in 2018, three of which had a counterterrorism nexus: a Russian-led statement on

FTFs; an Australia-sponsored statement on the security of information and communication technologies and the digital economy; and a Singapore-sponsored statement on Smart Cities.

Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). APEC continued to implement and update its comprehensive Consolidated Counter-Terrorism and Secure Trade Strategy in 2018. The Strategy, adopted in 2011, endorses the principles of security, efficiency, and resilience, and it advocates for risk-based approaches to security challenges across supply chains, travel, finance, and infrastructure. Members also focused on furthering the APEC Counter-Terrorism Working Group Strategic Plan 2018-2022, which set priorities in areas such as the evolving threat of FTFs, terrorist financing, border and critical infrastructure security, and information sharing. In 2018, the United States hosted a workshop on soft targets in a counterterrorism context in Tokyo, Japan. The workshop produced a set of recommendations that was endorsed by APEC economies in August 2018.

The African Union (AU). The U.S. Mission to the African Union and the AU, in partnership with the Institute for Security Studies, co-hosted the second annual U.S.-AU Countering Violent Extremism Week in October 2018. This event brought together professionals from across the world to discuss ways of deepening CVE partnerships in Africa. The focus was on developments and best practices in the Lake Chad Basin and Horn of Africa. The conference helped build and strengthen relationships between governments and civil society organizations, and it increased the capacity of CVE practitioners to challenge terrorist narratives on the African continent.

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). The OIC operates Sawt Al-Hikma (The Voice of Wisdom), a counterterrorism and CVE messaging center. The OIC's International Islamic Fiqh Academy issues perspectives on violent extremism in Arabic. In addition, the OIC's 2025 Programme of Action adopted in April 2016 recognizes the importance of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) to counter terrorist and violent ideologies. 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 second year of operations in 2018. Based in Djibouti, the Center held multiple workshops, conducted analysis and research, and established networking opportunities for civil society organizations. In April, the Center released its Regional Strategy for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism.

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 2018, the G-5 Sahel continued 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, including the United States, and the EU have pledged donor support to the G-5 Sahel Joint Force.

The United Nations (UN). Sustained and strategic engagement at the UN on counterterrorism issues is a priority for the United States. Throughout 2018, 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, including UNSCR 2419 to address youth, peace, and security.

The United States participated in the June 2018 UN General Assembly's biennial review of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the inaugural High-Level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States. The United States also co-hosted three expert side-events with member states and UN agencies on the margins of the high-level meetings in June that focused on disrupting terrorist travel through: implementation of Passenger Name Record (PNR) and Advance Passenger Information (API) requirements; lawful access to digital data across borders to successfully investigate and prosecute terrorist offenses and other crimes; and the rehabilitation and reintegration of FTFs. In August 2018, to observe the first International Day of Remembrance of and Tribute to Victims of Terrorism, the United States, together with Afghanistan, Belgium, Iraq, Nigeria, and the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism and the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, launched a multimedia exhibit at the UN Headquarters in New York that featured the voices of victims, experts, and civil society leaders who have been affected by a terrorist attack or have worked with victims of terrorism.

Other U.S. engagement with UN actors on counterterrorism and CVE included the following:

- **The UN Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) and Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED).** The United States supported CTC and 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 support included participating in the December 2018 review and updating of the Madrid Guiding Principles (first adopted in 2015 to assist member states in stemming the flow of FTFs to conflict zones) and contributing to the CTC's regular thematic debates on a range of issues including strengthening aviation and border security measures, preventing terrorists from acquiring weapons, and countering terrorist narratives.
- **The UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT).** The United States supported the creation of UNOCT in 2017 to provide leadership on all UN General Assembly counterterrorism mandates; enhance coordination and coherence across the 38 Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact (former CTITF) Task Force entities to ensure the balanced implementation of the four pillars of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy; strengthen the delivery of UN counterterrorism capacity-building assistance to member states; and promote and improve visibility, advocacy, and resource mobilization for UN counterterrorism efforts. In keeping with this mandate, UNOCT developed the Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact by which 36 UN entities plus INTERPOL and the World Customs Organization coordinate their work on counterterrorism. UNOCT also concluded memoranda of understanding with both UN and non-UN bodies, including the African Union Commission, OSCE, and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

- During 2017-18 the Department of State contributed more than US \$20 million to fund a range of activities undertaken by the UNODC, UNDP, and the International Office for Migration, including:
 - Supporting implementation of UNSCR 2396 obligations to address the challenges of terrorist travel and of returning and relocating FTFs in Africa and South and Central Asia;
 - 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, courts, and probation services;
 - Work with Mali's Special Judicial Pole;
 - Building the capacity of states to obtain digital evidence for terrorism investigations and prosecutions;
 - Developing a counterterrorism prison database in Bangladesh;
 - Border community engagement in Niger and Senegal;
 - Supporting CVE in the Balkans; 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 2018 by proposing listings, providing amendments, engaging the Committee's ombudsperson regarding 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 2018, nine individuals and four entities were added to the 1267 Sanctions List, resulting in a total of 265 individuals and 83 entities as of December 31, 2018. 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 2018, no individuals or entities were removed from the sanctions list. The Committee approved amendments to the existing entries of five individuals and four entities.

- **The UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).** The UNODC's Terrorism Prevention Branch (TPB) continued to assist countries seeking to ratify and implement the universal legal instruments against terrorism, and it provided assistance for countering the financing of terrorism in conjunction with the UNODC's Global Programme Against Money Laundering, Proceeds of Crime and the Financing of Terrorism. The United States has engaged UNODC/TPB as a counterterrorism assistance implementer, and it supported programming focused on strengthening the criminal justice system's response to terrorism by member states. In 2018, 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 Development Programme (UNDP).** The UNDP engages countries to mitigate and prevent conflicts by developing national and regional strategies to counter and prevent violent extremism and by deepening research on preventing violent extremism (PVE) through its Oslo Governance Centre (OGC) in Norway. In May 2018, the OGC, in partnership with the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, held a two-day meeting titled “Assessing Progress Made, and the Future of Development Approaches to Preventing Violent Extremism.” The sessions focused on lessons learned about the role of the media, women, and youth in PVE, as well as effective reintegration of disengaged FTFs. The UNDP signed a memorandum of understanding with UNOCT on the margins of this meeting to enhance collaboration and improve cooperation in information sharing, outreach, and support to the development and implementation of national PVE action plans to member states that requested assistance. In 2018, the United States continued providing funding to UNDP to help strengthen community-police partnerships in high-risk communities.
- **The UN Security Council (UNSC) 1540 Committee.** The Committee monitors and facilitates efforts to implement the obligations and recommendations of UNSCR 1540 (2004), 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 UNSC in December 2018. The Committee’s Group of Experts also participated in the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact, and cooperated with INTERPOL, UNODC, the Financial Action Task Force, and other multilateral counterterrorism bodies. The United States is one of eight countries, plus the EU, that have contributed to the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) Trust Fund for Global and Regional Disarmament Activities that funds a range of UNSCR 1540 initiatives, including the establishment of a 1540 regional coordinator position in OAS/CICTE to promote the full implementation of the resolution in the Western Hemisphere. U.S. funds continued to be used to conduct five projects designed to assist African and Asian countries to strengthen 1540 implementation by developing national implementation plans.

The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). In November 2018, ICAO hosted its second 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, including the expeditious development of PNR data as a standard in accordance with UNSCR 2396. ICAO also strengthened its efforts to address international terrorist threats by joining the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact in May 2018 to enhance both agencies’ cooperation and information sharing related to border controls, aviation security, and counterterrorism response consistent with a wide range of UNSCRs. Member states pursued UNSCR 2309 implementation, which calls on UN members to prioritize aviation security and ensure that effective, risk-based measures are in place at the airports within their jurisdiction, in accordance with international standards and recommended practices. UNSCR 2309 further calls on all states to strengthen terrorism-related information sharing and requires airlines operating in their territories to provide API 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 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 six international observer organizations committed to strengthening national and global capacity to prevent, detect, and respond to the shared threat of nuclear terrorism. In 2018, the GICNT conducted 10 multilateral activities that improved the plans, policies, procedures, and inter-operability 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

CVE 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 radicalization and recruitment to violence.

The Department of State and USAID leverage a range of available diplomatic, development, and foreign assistance tools to prevent and counter terrorist radicalization and recruitment, both online and offline.

The following five objectives guide U.S. 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 terrorism, including changing unhelpful practices where necessary.
3. Employ foreign assistance tools and approaches, to address specific factors that contribute to individual or community support of terrorism in targeted areas or that put segments of a population at high risk.
4. Empower and amplify locally credible voices that can change the perception of terrorist groups and ideologies that promote intolerance or violence.
5. Strengthen the capabilities of government and non-governmental actors to isolate, intervene with, and promote the rehabilitation and reintegration of individuals who are caught in the cycle of terrorist radicalization or who are returning from foreign conflict zones.

The Department of 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 CVE action plans, 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 terrorist 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 CVE in specific local contexts and identify effective interventions. The United States also works with GCTF 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 terrorist recruitment and radicalization, improve community policing, support police deployed to peace and stabilization operations, improve prison management, and contribute to justice sector reform. 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 GCERF, the first multilateral fund supporting community-based projects that counters local drivers of terrorist radicalization and recruitment. The United States works to build the capacity of our government partners so that they are more responsive and responsible to their citizens.
- **Enhancing Civil Society's Role in CVE.** 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, while recognizing that women engage with terrorism in multifaceted ways, as mitigators involved in prevention; as perpetrators conducting attacks, recruiting, and fundraising; and as targets and victims.
- **Countering Terrorists' Use of the Internet.** The Department of State also works to counter the use of the internet for terrorist purposes, including countering terrorist

recruitment and radicalization online, while respecting freedom of expression and promoting an open, interoperable, reliable, and secure internet. The United States through a whole-of-government approach has worked to strengthen and expand our ongoing voluntary collaboration and partnerships with private sector technology companies to help the companies better identify and remove online terrorist content. In 2018, there was a remarkable decline in the volume of readily available terrorist propaganda on major social media platforms while the speed and accuracy with which terrorist content is being identified and removed by technology companies have greatly increased, owing partly to companies' use of machine learning and artificial intelligence. The industry-led *Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism*, in partnership with UN-affiliated *Tech Against Terrorism*, has contributed to these efforts by assisting smaller technology companies, which terrorist groups are trying increasingly to exploit.

- **Counter-Messaging and Promoting Alternative Narratives.** With the leadership of the Department of State's Global Engagement Center, the United States supports efforts to help government and non-government partners counter the propaganda and related disinformation of ISIS and other terrorist organizations. The United States supports a network of messaging centers such as the Sawab Center, a joint U.S.-UAE initiative that exposes, refutes, and provides alternatives to online terrorist propaganda. These centers harness the creativity and expertise of local actors to generate positive content that challenges the narratives of ISIS and its supporters.

CIVILIAN COUNTERTERRORISM CAPACITY-BUILDING PROGRAMS

As the terrorist threat has evolved and significantly expanded geographically in recent years, it has become clear that mitigating this threat depends on the political will and enhanced capabilities of our partners to counter terrorism. To succeed over the long term, we must have partners who not only prevent, disrupt, and degrade networks militarily or through law enforcement, while comporting with international laws and norms, but also leverage robust civilian capabilities. We need partners in law enforcement, the justice sector, and corrections who can disrupt attacks and investigate, arrest, prosecute, and incarcerate terrorists and their facilitation networks. Additionally, reintegration programs are critical to ensure that individuals are less likely to engage in recidivism once they are no longer incarcerated.

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 2018, CTPF allowed the Department of State 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 FTFs, prevent and counter terrorist safe havens and

recruitment, and counter Iranian-sponsored terrorism. For further information on these programs, we refer you to the [Annual Report on Assistance Related to International Terrorism](#).

REWARDS FOR JUSTICE

The 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 RFJ's inception in 1984, the United States has paid more than US \$145 million to more than 100 people who provided actionable information that put terrorists behind bars or prevented acts of international terrorism worldwide.

In 2018, the RFJ program announced the following reward offers for information:

- **March 8.** Rewards for information leading to the identification or location of three key leaders associated with the terrorist organization Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and affiliated factions – up to US \$5 million for information on TTP leader Maulana Fazlullah (who died subsequent to the announcement), and up to \$3 million each for information on Abdul Wali and Mangal Bagh.
- **August 8.** Increased offer to up to US \$10 million for information leading to the location, arrest, or conviction of al-Qai'da leaders Abdullah Ahmed Abdullah and Sayf al-Adl.
- **October 2.** Rewards for information on two Moro National Liberation Front commanders – up to US \$250,000 for information on Ahadon Adak, and up to \$500,000 for Tahir Sali.
- **October 18.** Up to US \$5 million for information leading to the identification or location of Al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) senior regional leader Khalid Saeed al-Batarfi.
- **October 18.** Increased offer to up to US \$10 million for information leading to the identification, location, arrest, and or conviction of AQAP leader Qasim al-Rimi.
- **November 6.** Rewards for information leading to the identification or location of three senior Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) leaders – up to US \$5 million for information on Murat Karayilan, up to US \$4 million for information on Cemil Bayik, and up to US \$3 million for information on Duran Kalkan.
- **November 13.** Up to US \$5 million for information leading to the identification or location of Hamas leader Salih al-Aruri.

- **November 13.** Up to US \$5 million each for information leading to the identification or location of Lebanese Hizballah leaders Khalil Yusif Mahmoud Harb and Haytham ‘Ali Tabataba’i.
- **November 26.** Up to US \$5 million each for information leading to the arrest or conviction in any country of any individual who committed, conspired to commit, or aided or abetted the execution of the 2008 Mumbai attack.

SUPPORT FOR PAKISTAN

The President announced a new South Asia strategy on August 21, 2017, emphasizing Pakistan’s important role with respect to regional security and the need for Pakistan to address the threat posed by the Haqqani Network and other terrorist groups operating in Pakistan. Counterterrorism cooperation between the United States and Pakistan continued with the aim of defeating Islamic State’s Khorasan Province (ISIS-K) and Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan.

In January 2018, the U.S. government suspended most of its security assistance to Pakistan over the government’s failure to adequately address the threat posed by militant and terrorist groups operating on Pakistani soil.

Civilian assistance continued in 2018 and strengthened Pakistan’s civilian institutions by helping Pakistan address the threat of terrorism, including on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, bolstering civilian government and law enforcement capacity, fostering trade and economic growth, and building education systems and people-to-people ties.

U.S. support for civilian law enforcement and rule of law helped Pakistan provide security and justice for Pakistani citizens, and disrupt transnational organized crime and terrorism networks that operated within Pakistan’s borders.

Account	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018
Total Bilateral Foreign Assistance	527.4	266.3	73.8
Economic Support Fund	200.0	200.0	48.0
Global Health Programs	22.5	22.5	0.0
Intl. Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement	40.0	38.0	21.0
Nonproliferation, Antiterrorism, Demining	2.8	1.0	1.8
Foreign Military Financing	255.0	0.0	0.0
International Military Education and Training	4.8	4.8	0.5
Food for Peace Title II	2.3	.04	2.5

*Figures in millions, US \$

COUNTERTERRORISM COORDINATION WITH SAUDI ARABIA

Saudi Arabia was a committed counterterrorism partner in 2018, closely coordinating with the United States on a range of counterterrorism initiatives and enhancing the bilateral security partnership with the United States. Senior officials highlighted Saudi Arabia's continued focus on counterterrorism efforts with statements of condemnation against major acts of terrorism and advanced collaboration on border security, terrorism financing efforts, and counterterrorism and CVE challenges. Saudi Arabia and the United States held multiple counterterrorism dialogues to discuss a broad range of threats in the region. Saudi Arabia's lead counterterrorism agency worked closely with the United States to assess and mitigate potential terrorist threats.

Because of the continuing conflict in Yemen, Saudi Arabia faced enhanced threats from the Iran-backed Houthis along its southern border with Yemen and from terrorist groups including al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and ISIS. The United States worked closely with Saudi Arabia to identify and develop capabilities to deter terrorist and militant attacks, including those posed by Houthi unmanned aerial systems and ballistic missiles. The United States productively collaborated with Saudi law enforcement to exchange best practices that will enhance technical capacities to better identify threats at its borders, thereby improving crisis response. In 2018, Saudi Arabia remained concerned about the threat posed by foreign and domestic terrorist fighters and welcomed closer cooperation and information exchanges with agencies that have counterterrorism jurisdiction.

During 2018, Saudi Arabia continued to regularly engage with U.S. officials to prevent acts of terrorism both through bilateral programs and through information-exchange arrangements with the United States. This was particularly evident in 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 2017. In May and October, Saudi Arabia joined the United States and the other TFTC member countries in jointly announcing sanctions against individuals and entities supporting Hizballah, the Taliban, and the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps-Qods Force. The Saudi government continues to pursue full membership in the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and the country's mutual evaluation report was reviewed by FATF in June.

There were no significant changes to Saudi Arabia's legal framework for terrorism-related legislation in 2018, but Saudi security forces took numerous significant law enforcement actions against suspected domestic terrorists, terrorist groups, and affiliates operating in Saudi Arabia. The State Security Presidency played key roles in securing Saudi Arabia from terrorist threats and engaged frequently with the U.S. government.

Saudi Arabia continued to enact domestic religious sector reforms, including the development of more stringent guidance and approval for Saudi religious personnel traveling overseas to conduct proselytization. As part of what Saudi Arabia describes as its "moderate Islam" initiative, Saudi clerics and religious attachés sent abroad were vetted for observance to principles of tolerance and peaceful co-existence and were forbidden from undertaking proselytization efforts beyond host country Sunni Muslim communities. However, some support for intolerant views in third

countries persisted, and some Saudi textbooks continued to include language that promoted discrimination, intolerance, and violence.

Saudi Arabia expanded the scope of CVE programs it launched in 2017 to continue to counter terrorist recruitment and propaganda messaging, reform educational curriculum, provide oversight of the religious sphere, and rehabilitate former terrorists. Several government institutions, including the Prince Khaled Al-Faisal Center for Moderation, the Mohammed bin Nayef Counseling and Care Center, and the Ideological Warfare Center were present at numerous conferences addressing international terrorism, with a special emphasis on countering terrorist recruiting and deradicalization. Throughout the year, Saudi Arabia hosted multiple conferences and symposiums, opening potential new avenues for counterterrorism coordination with the Organization of Islamic States (OIC) and the Riyadh-based Global Center for Combating Extremism Ideology (Etidal). Since its founding in 2017, Etidal has accelerated its mission to deploy messaging initiatives through use of social media technologies to identify potential terrorist radicalization content. The organization has established a social media presence and welcomed U.S., foreign, and domestic delegations to review ongoing projects.

In 2018, senior Saudi officials, including Secretary-General of the Muslim World League Dr. Mohammed al-Issa, increased the Kingdom's CVE outreach and underscored messages of peace, tolerance, and coexistence aimed at countering extremist trends and rhetoric. Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman's visit to the Coptic Christian Saint Mark's Cathedral in Cairo in May sought to enhance interfaith dialogue, in a continuing effort to cultivate an image of greater tolerance with followers of other faiths. In 2018, this outreach was extended to the Kingdom itself, through the invitation to Coptic Christian Pope Tawadros II to visit Riyadh in December. On December 1, Coptic leader Bishop Ava Morkos met with Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman and the following day led the first Coptic Christian mass in Saudi Arabia, an event that was widely praised by the expatriate Egyptian Coptic community.

Saudi Arabia remained active in regional organizations and international bodies, including the Global Counterterrorism Forum. They are an active member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, serving as a co-lead for the Counter-ISIS Finance Working Group and are also a member of the Communications and Stabilization Working Groups. Saudi Arabia participated in the Defeat ISIS Ministerial held on July 12 in Brussels, Belgium. Discussions included efforts to eliminate ISIS in Iraq and Syria, obtain pledges for stabilization assistance to support areas of Syria liberated from ISIS, and address drivers of extremism. Saudi Arabia hosted the 16th meeting of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre Advisory Board in Riyadh.

Saudi Arabia was an active partner in post-ISIS stabilization and reconstruction efforts in Syria. In October 2018, Saudi Arabia contributed US \$100 million to stabilize communities devastated by ISIS terrorists in northeastern Syria.

U.S. AGENCY FOR GLOBAL MEDIA INITIATIVES: OUTREACH TO FOREIGN MUSLIM AUDIENCES

This section is provided by the U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM).

Four of the five broadcast entities under the supervision of the U.S. Agency for Global Media Initiatives (USAGM) provided programming for countries with large Muslim populations in 2018. The entities are Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), the Voice of America (VOA), the Middle East Broadcasting Networks, Inc. (MBN) (Alhurra TV and Radio Sawa), and Radio Free Asia (RFA).

- RFE/RL produces content in 15 languages targeting markets with majority-Muslim populations, including the following: Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, the Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. It also creates content for, and disseminates content to, Muslim-majority regions in the Russian Federation, including 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.
- RFE/RL and VOA provided news and information to Afghanistan and the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region in Dari and Pashto. Together, these two entities reached 39 percent of Afghan adults each week.
- MBN revamped Alhurra TV to create distinctive programming that offers a moderate voice to audiences throughout North Africa and the Middle East on topics such as politics, religion, and culture.
- 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.
- RFA broadcasts to the more than 16 million religious and ethnic minorities, including Uighur Muslims, in and around the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region of northwestern China.
- In partnership with RFA, 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.
- MBN's *Raise Your Voice* in Iraq, VOA's *Maghreb Voices* in North Africa, RFE/RL's *Not in Our Name* in Central Asia and the Balkans, and VOA's documentaries and call-in programs in Nigeria, gave audiences a platform to speak out against terrorism.

USAGM 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: The Middle East Broadcasting Networks, Inc. (MBN) broadcasts in Arabic to the Middle East and North Africa region, home to an estimated 317 million Muslims, 19.8 percent of the global Muslim population (according to Pew Research Center). MBN has seven bureaus/production centers in the region in addition to its main studios in Virginia and a network of regional correspondents. MBN used three platforms: television (Alhurra TV and Alhurra-Iraq TV), radio (Radio Sawa and Radio Sawa Iraq), and digital (Alhurra.com, RadioSawa.com, MaghrebVoices.com, Irfasaatak.com, and corresponding social media pages). Topics include freedom of speech, religion, and the role of women in society and politics.

MBN opens the door to moderate and independent voices discussing topics not covered in the mainstream press. For example, *Forbidden*, hosted by Lebanese writer and activist Joumana Haddad, highlights the artistic and literary works of controversial voices that have been suppressed in the region for delving into topics considered taboo, such as government corruption, political and social oppression, religion, and social issues. Alhurra.com augmented its op-ed section, *From a Different Angle*, by bringing together renowned journalists, intellectuals, and human rights advocates from the Middle East and the United States to exchange ideas on political, social, and cultural issues, provoking discussion and debate on reformist topics.

Other major initiatives at MBN in 2018 included:

- **Hosting a Conference on Human Dignity in the Region.** MBN partnered with the U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP) to host a conference on the state and future of human dignity in the Middle East and North Africa region. A first for MBN, the one-day conference took place at USIP's regional hub in Tunis and included many Alhurra.com op-ed writers. The goal of the conference was to support an alternative discourse led by liberal voices in the Middle East on the topic of human dignity.
- **High Definition (HD) Broadcasting.** MBN launched HD channels for Alhurra TV and Alhurra Iraq TV on Eutelsat 7 (in addition to Arabsat) and transitioned its output to be completely HD, providing a better viewing experience for the audience.
- **Increased News Production.** Alhurra TV has more than doubled the number of newscasts, to 12 hours per day, coming live from studios outside of Washington, D.C. and Dubai.
- **New Digital Platform Targeting Egypt.** ElSaha is a digital channel that targets Egyptian youth, both living in Egypt and abroad. The channel provides a platform for Egyptian youth to speak out and have their ideas heard regarding the most relevant issues in their lives. ElSaha focuses on expanding horizons and exploring new ideas, as it incorporates the diversity of Egyptian voices.

Iraq: Every week, 35 percent of Iraqi adults – some 7.9 million people – consumed USAGM content in Arabic or Kurdish. One-third (34 percent) of Iraqis said they relied on Alhurra-Iraq TV, Radio Sawa Iraq, and MBN's digital properties for news and information during the past week. The VOA Kurdish Service reached 8.5 percent of Kurdish-speaking Iraqis weekly.

Alhurra-Iraq TV and Radio Sawa Iraq reported on citizens' efforts to rebuild Iraq following the devastation caused by ISIS. The network also covered Iraq's parliamentary elections and the government formation process. *Raise Your Voice*, a multi-platform campaign for Iraqi audiences across television, radio, and digital platforms, continued to provide an Arabic-language, non-sectarian platform for citizens to exchange ideas and speak out about the fight against terrorism. Citizens also discussed the effects of terrorism, extremism, and intolerance on Radio Sawa Iraq's program, *What's Your Opinion*.

Kurdish Regions: VOA's Kurdish Service reported on the aftermath of the ISIS occupation of the Iraqi Kurdistan region with interviews, analysis, and stringer reports from the region. VOA Kurdish reports were shared with VOA's Watch Desk and newsroom. VOA Kurdish also reported extensively on Iraq's parliamentary elections from the ground, and interviewed officials and analysts in Washington to provide context and explain events.

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's Kurdish Service staffers who discussed events in the region.

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 45 language services, VOA's News Center, and other USAGM networks. In 2018, VOA's Extremism Watch Desk expanded its coverage beyond South and Central Asia to other regions, including North Africa, the Sahel, and East and Southeast Asia.

The Watch Desk maintains a social media presence on Twitter and YouTube and has established a blog on VOANews.com. Their Facebook page generated 3.6 million views and more than 450,000 comments in 2018. 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.

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 2018 and the most recent audience survey research included:

- VOA reaches 15.9 percent of adults (age 15+) – roughly 9.6 million people – in Iran each week through a combination of satellite TV and digital platforms (based on a July-October 2017 survey).
- Nearly 60 percent of VOA's weekly audience in Iran – almost six million people – say their understanding of current events is enhanced by VOA programming and 52 percent of VOA's audience in Iran say that VOA helps them understand U.S. foreign policy.
- In 2018, VOA Persian focused on covering widespread protests in Iran as citizens called for economic and political change in more than 90 cities across Iran. VOA Persian curated citizen journalism reports and expanded its live TV coverage to provide footage

of the protests, as well as reactions from U.S. officials including Vice President Mike Pence, U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley, and numerous regional experts. VOA's News Center worked with VOA Persian to version the best content into English for use by other services. VOA Persian's website hit a new record with more than 800,000 visits per day during the first weekend of citizen protests. In the week that followed, content consumption surged by 211 percent and 394 percent in article and video views, respectively.

- VOA Persian provided in-depth broadcast and digital coverage of the U.S. withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

RFE/RL's Radio Farda produces news and information on radio, TV (on a shared stream with VOA), and digital media, including several popular social media sites. According to USAGM's 2017 survey data, one in seven Iranian adults (15.7 percent or 9.6 million people) consume Farda content weekly on one or more platforms. Farda finds its largest audience share among the critical 15- to 24-year-old audience segment. Coverage in 2018 included:

- Extensive reporting on economic instability in Iran, including coverage of street clashes and other protests that hit major cities, featuring videos and content provided by Iranians.
- Comprehensive monitoring of human rights inside Iran, with a focus on human rights abuses in the Iranian prison system.
- An interview with Israeli Defense Minister Avigdor Lieberman to discuss Syria, Israeli-Russian relations, and Iran, among other topics.
- In-depth reporting on the re-imposition of sanctions against Iran, including foreign policy and regional stability implications.

SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA

South Asia: VOA and RFE/RL report on South Asia in Bangla, Dari, Pashto, and Urdu. The VOA South and Central Asia Division has been active in its coverage around the world. During 2018, VOA provided news coverage of ISIS and other terrorist activities, as well as U.S. policies and activities to address the threat. Broadcasts spanned radio, television, online, and social media. RFE/RL's South Asia broadcast operations are among the most effective in the region, with reporters on the ground in both Afghanistan and Pakistan reporting local stories that would otherwise go uncovered.

Afghanistan: VOA Afghan devoted a significant amount of coverage across all broadcast platforms – TV, radio, online, and social media – to President Trump's Strategy for Afghanistan and U.S. Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad's efforts to revive the Afghan peace process.

VOA Afghan interviewed key leaders including VOA Afghan CEO Abdullah, National Security Advisors Mohammad Hanif Atmar and Hamdullah Mohib, and former President Hamid Karzai. These interviews were complemented by comments and analysis from U.S. military and NATO leaders, among other experts.

VOA Dari and VOA Pashto saw a significant increase in audience engagement on social media sites regarding the Service's reporting on terrorism. Short videos of the April 30 suicide

bombings in Kabul generated more than 373,000 video views on Facebook and the coverage garnered nearly 1,000 engagement actions (comments, likes, or shares).

In 2018, RFE/RL's Radio Free Afghanistan, known locally as Radio Azadi, launched a new online project, *Who Was the Victim*, to highlight the damage to Afghan families caused by terrorism. Short video profiles posted to Radio Azadi's Pashto and Dari homepages and social media platforms showed terrorism's true impact on citizens. In April 2018, two Radio Free Afghanistan journalists and a trainee were killed in a targeted attack against journalists.

Afghanistan/Pakistan Border Region: VOA Deewa Radio broadcasts to millions of Pashtuns in the critical northwestern tribal and semi-tribal region of Pakistan, close to the Afghan border where militant and terrorist groups maintain a presence. VOA Deewa's broadcasts focus on countering terrorist narratives and engaging leading influencers in the region, with particular outreach to women. The Service's digital operations challenged material produced by ISIS, ISIS-K, and other terrorist groups. VOA Deewa is credited regularly for mobilizing pro-democracy and anti-terrorist voices in the region.

RFE/RL's Radio Mashaal also targets audiences in the border region. The service regularly reports on topics that local domestic media will not cover out of fear of violent retribution. The Pakistani government shut down Radio Mashaal's offices in Islamabad in January 2018; however, RFE/RL continues to report to a large audience in the country despite interference from both the Pakistani government and terrorists. In 2018, Radio Mashaal launched a weekly program, *Wrorwali* ("*Brotherhood*") that features interviews with Pashtuns living in large European and American cities and highlights their experiences as Muslims engaging in tolerant, friendly relationships with people of other faiths.

Urdu Service: VOA Urdu's coverage has concentrated on terrorism in Pakistan. In 2018, the Service provided comprehensive coverage of elections in Pakistan, which had major implications for U.S. foreign relations. VOA Urdu shed light on Pakistani electoral politics with original stories on abducted peace activists, violence targeting local candidates, and the influence of fake news.

Bangla Service: In 2018, the Bangla Service focused on the Rohingya refugee crisis and the threat of violent extremism and human trafficking inside the camps involving the Rohingya youth. Greta Van Susteren, host of VOA's *Plugged In*, traveled to Bangladesh in August to report on the Rohingya refugee camps and subsequently testified before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs on "Genocide Against the Burmese Rohingya."

Central Asia: In Central Asia, RFE/RL and VOA engaged audiences with exclusive reporting about events in the region. RFE/RL is the only western media outlet in Central Asia that operates in all major Central Asian languages (Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Tajik, Turkmen, Uzbek, and Russian). Each language service has consistently reported on terrorism. In 2018, RFE/RL produced and launched *Not in Our Name*, a comprehensive regional program that provides people – especially youth ages 16 to 22 – with the knowledge and tools necessary to resist becoming affiliated with terrorist groups and activities. RFE/RL traveled to several regions of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, exploring how residents work together on the local and

national levels to prevent the spread of violence and extremism through town halls, facilitated discussions, and video portraits of those who had lost loved ones to terrorism. The resulting documentary video series was distributed and screened throughout the region and online.

In late 2015, RFE/RL launched its Central Asia Newswire to provide objective news to media outlets in a region ranked among the most restrictive media environments in the world. Central Asia Newswire provided content, free of charge, in four local languages and Russian, to interested media outlets in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. The Newswire has more than 1,200 subscribers, and its content is regularly published by 270 media outlets. It averages 1,100 content citations weekly, and its stories are republished or re-posted on average more than 5,500 times each month, including by nationwide broadcasters with audiences in the millions.

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 distribution of reporting and digital TV programs. The Service covered stories that were suppressed otherwise or did not receive widespread attention, such as ISIS recruitment and radicalization of Kazakh youth.

Kyrgyz Republic: RFE/RL's Kyrgyz Service, Radio Azattyk, connects Kyrgyz society with informed reporting and debate on topics such 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. Radio Ozodi has recently come under public scrutiny for their editorial and professional integrity.

Turkmenistan: RFE/RL's Turkmen Service, Radio Azatlyk, offers Turkmen-speaking audiences locally sourced information about current affairs within their society. It reports on breaking news, human rights and civil society, freedom of the press and expression, and religious and ethnic minorities.

Uzbekistan: RFE/RL's Uzbek Service is one of the few sources of reliable news and information for people in Uzbekistan. The Service relies on a wide network of local sources to uncover news and engage 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. RFE/RL Uzbek recently has come under attack by the Government of Uzbekistan, which accuses the service of journalistic deficiencies, inaccurate reporting, and weak sources.

VOA also broadcasts in Uzbek to Uzbekistan and the surrounding region, providing regional and international news, along with American policy and perspectives. In 2018, a VOA journalist

received accreditation from the Republic of Uzbekistan for the first time since the service launched in 1972.

EAST ASIA AND PACIFIC

China: VOA and RFA delivered news, including coverage of religious and local issues affecting more than 23 million Chinese Muslims, through satellite television, radio, internet, social media, and mobile channels in Cantonese, Mandarin, and Tibetan. Coverage included Chinese government policies and treatment of ethnic Uighurs. Both networks reported on the Chinese government's detention of an estimated more than 1 million people from western China's largely Muslim population under the guise of counterterrorism.

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 and around the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region in northwestern China. 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, analyses, interviews, commentary, a weekly news review, and feature stories.

In 2018, RFA's Uighur Service was at the forefront of covering the detention of Uighurs and other Muslim minorities in Xinjiang, which has been estimated to exceed 1 million people since April 2017. RFA's reporting has been widely cited by the *Washington Post*, the *Wall Street Journal*, human rights groups, the Department of State, the Congressional-Executive Committee on China, and academic experts. As a result of this reporting, families of RFA Uighur reporters have been targeted by the Chinese government and detained in camps.

Indonesia: VOA's Indonesian Service broadcasts to the country with the largest Muslim population in the world. Based on research from 2016, it reaches more than 48 million people (28.4 percent of adults). In 2018, the Service continued reporting on Islam in America, giving context and insight to the freedom of religion and speech in the United States. VOA Indonesian continued to cover terrorist threats in Indonesia.

Thailand: VOA's Thai Service has 25 affiliate radio stations across Thailand, an increase from 16 in 2017, and broadcasts nearly 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 collaborated with Thai PBS and VOICE TV on special events. VOA Thai broadcast to southern Thailand through nine radio affiliates. VOA Thai also expanded its online platform, sharing its news and content on its website and on Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube.

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.

Major stories covered by BenarNews in 2018 included the following:

- The ISIS-linked riot at a high-security Indonesian prison in May, and in the same month, the suicide bombings at churches and a police station that left 51 dead.
- Violence in the insurgency-wracked, predominantly Muslim southern parts of Thailand and the Philippines, as well as efforts to forge peace with militant groups in the two regions.
- The Rohingya refugee crisis stemming from neighboring Burma's brutal crackdown on the stateless minority Muslim group following deadly attacks by a militant group, the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army. BenarNews contributed a significant amount of content to the RFA hub page, *The Rohingya: World's Least-Wanted People*, which won a Gracie award and a New York Festivals Finalist award.

EUROPE AND EURASIA

In February 2017, USAGM 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 provides viewers with informed and up-close coverage of major news and events that are not reported, or are misrepresented, elsewhere.

Research shows that in 2018, Current Time content was consumed by an estimated 4.2 million people weekly in Russia. In 2018, the Current Time 24/7 channel was available through 78 distributors in 18 countries and worldwide through currenttime.tv and streaming video on demand. Individual Current Time programs also were carried by 42 affiliates in 14 countries. In addition to its TV operation, Current Time Digital engages audiences with its content through social media. Current Time is active on multiple social platforms, including Facebook, YouTube, VKontakte, Twitter, Instagram, Odnoklassniki, and Telegram. Current Time Digital received roughly 500 million video views across social media platforms in 2018.

The Russian Federation and Ukraine: VOA's Russian Service regularly addressed terrorism-related issues and threats in Europe, the United States, and other areas of interest to the target audience. VOA's Ukrainian Service covered Russia's occupation of Crimea as well as occupation forces' repression of Crimean Tatars because of their opposition to the occupation, among other topics.

In 2018, VOA Russian journalists produced more than 300 original reports and exclusive interviews focusing on U.S.-led counterterrorism efforts and terrorism-related threats to U.S. national security. These stories often were picked up by Russian-language media outlets and discussed in social media forums.

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 it 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.

Azerbaijan: RFE/RL's Azerbaijani Service, known locally as Azadliq, continued to offer coverage of under-reported events in the country by leveraging social media and mobile applications to provide critical regional news to audiences in Azerbaijan. Despite the blocking of its website in Azerbaijan, and numerous attacks on its social media channels, Azadliq has continued to gain significant online audiences.

VOA Azerbaijani continued its coverage of issues associated with religious radicalization to violence and efforts to counter terrorism by interviewing current and former officials, as well as political experts and civil society activists.

The Balkans: RFE/RL's Balkan Service is one of the rare news media to engage all sides with its reporting and analysis of developments in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Kosovo. The Balkan Service has provided comprehensive coverage of issues affecting the region, including the refugee crisis; political tensions between Serbia and Kosovo and in North Macedonia and Montenegro; Russia's destabilizing influence throughout the Balkans; and the recruitment of foreign fighters to Syria and Iraq from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo. The Balkan Service also engages young audiences in conversations regarding the harmful effects of radicalization to violence within their societies. In 2018, RFE/RL created a Balkans-oriented digital media team, as well as the campaign, *Not in My Name*, for Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo that directly engages social media audiences in responsible dialogue about violent extremism and terrorism. RFE/RL also launched a newswire for the Balkans and a newswire for Russian-language media, providing RFE/RL reporting free of charge to subscribing media outlets.

VOA's Balkan Service provided comprehensive and accurate coverage regarding U.S. and Defeat-ISIS Coalition operations. VOA's coverage, reaching more than four 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 have made it into the hands of ISIS fighters and other terrorists in Europe.

Turkish Service: VOA's Turkish Service coverage of counterterrorism and ISIS operations in Turkey, Europe, and the Middle East continued in 2018. VOA Turkish maintained a strong presence in the Turkish news market and continued to serve as 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 used VOA Turkish's exclusive live coverage with full attribution. In

2018, overall video views on Facebook experienced significant growth, rising to 97 million (from 71 million in 2017).

VOA Turkish produced a 30-minute weekday program, *Studio Washington*, for EgeTürk TV. *Studio Washington* included news, interviews, a U.S. press opinion roundup, health, science, technology, lifestyle features, and diaspora stories. VOA Turkish also produced a Monday-through-Friday newscast for the website and a 30-minute weekly Americana program for the internet.

AFRICA

Northern Nigeria and the Lake Chad Basin: 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. VOA's 60-minute television documentary, *Boko Haram: Journey from Evil*, won the 2018 Gold World Medal from the New York Festivals' International TV and Film Awards gala at the National Association of Broadcasters show in Las Vegas. The documentary shows the group's brutality in a video shot by the terrorists themselves, while also presenting the counter-narrative of four women who stood up to 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. 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.

Somalia: VOA Somali engaged young people, women, and community leaders with news, information, and appealing educational and cultural programming that offered alternative views and countered terrorist narratives. The Somali Service provided a bridge between the United States and Somalia through reporting on the Somali diaspora. Somali-American Congresswoman Ilhan Omar gave her only election night interview to the VOA Somali service. VOA also covered the first anniversary of the 2017 bombing that killed 587 people in Mogadishu. Special programming on the anniversary included interviews with survivors, first responders, families of victims still missing, and those caring for the more than 1,500 children orphaned. Somalia's deadliest terror attack killed VOA freelance cameraman Ali Nur Siad and wounded reporter Abdulkadir Mohamed Abdulle.

West Africa and the Sahel: VOA's French-to-Africa Service broadcast to Muslim populations in Francophone Africa through television, radio, and digital media. The service has FM programming on USAGM-owned transmitters in Abidjan, Bamako, Bangui, Brazzaville, Bukavu, Dakar, Gao, Goma, Lubumbashi, Matadi, Ndjamena, Niamey, Ouagadougou, Pointe Noire, and Timbuktu. In addition to French-language content, the service reached marginalized populations vulnerable to terrorist messaging with programming in Bambara (for Mali) and Sango (for the Central African Republic).

VOA French and VOA Bambara covered the reported killing of Hamadoun Jouffa, a leader in Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM), a U.S.-designated Foreign Terrorist Organization.

VOA French and VOA Bambara also reported on programs in Niger to help convince terrorists to surrender their weapons and join re-education programs.

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 on radio, on television, and online. VOA Swahili coverage of the U.S. Embassy-run American Space in Mombasa highlighted the center's success in helping turn around the neighboring Masjid Musa Mosque, which was raided by Kenyan security forces to break up its youth radicalization to violence campaign. One of the men who escaped that raid is the suicide bomber who led the 2019 Nairobi Riverside attack. VOA Swahili television reporting on the American Space focused on U.S. programs to redirect young Kenyans toward positive economic and academic activities.

VOA NEWS CENTER COVERAGE IN IRAQ, SYRIA, AFGHANISTAN, AND EUROPE

The VOA News Center enhanced 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.

Iraq: Middle East Correspondent Heather Murdock traveled to al-Shoura district in Mosul, Iraq, which was previously a hotbed of ISIS activity. At least half of the town's residents either joined the terrorist group or had a family member killed by ISIS. While much of Iraq is torn by recriminations over ISIS atrocities, this town is working to achieve reconciliation. Murdock is working with the News Center to turn her first-person accounts, videos, and music from local musicians into a 30-minute documentary to be released in 2019.

Syria: In another innovative project, Murdock teamed up with graphic artist and designer Brian Williamson to prepare a comic book-style presentation of the story of a Syrian woman who fled Raqqa with her husband, a former ISIS fighter, and ended up in a refugee camp while her husband was sent to prison. Her story, similar to the experiences of so many other ISIS wives in the camp, provided insight into how the terrorist group recruits and the disillusionment that followed.

Afghanistan: Correspondent Ayesha Tanzeem reported from Kabul on the October elections, where several stories on youth voting and electoral issues were overtaken by bomb blasts and assassinations. In Islamabad, reporter Ayaz Gul covered the region's struggle with terrorist attacks and political jockeying by terrorist organizations.

Europe: Correspondents Jamie Dettmer, Sabrina Castelfranco, and Henry Ridgewell filed multimedia reports from the Balkans, Rome, Spain, and elsewhere in Europe on tensions between Muslims and Christians in the region; and on the flow of mainly Muslim migrants across the Mediterranean, many of whom were fleeing terrorist violence. Other stories explored countries' responses to ISIS attacks, de-radicalization efforts, outreach to local Muslims, and tightened security.

VISAS FOR PARTICIPANTS IN UNITED STATES PROGRAMS

The Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs' 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 missions both safeguards our nation's borders and ensures timely adjudications of visa applications for individuals seeking to participate in exchange visitor programs.

Visa applicants are subject to a robust interagency screening process that draws on biographic and biometric data. 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 advise applicants to obtain passports immediately and visit www.travel.state.gov for instructions on applying for U.S. visas.

BASIC EDUCATION IN MUSLIM COUNTRIES

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2018, USAID allocated US \$224.5 million for basic education in countries with large Muslim populations. Estimated amounts for each region were:

- **Asia:** US \$23.6 million was allocated to Bangladesh, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Philippines (Mindanao), and Tajikistan. An additional US \$31 million was allocated to Afghanistan and US \$2 million was allocated to Pakistan.
- **Middle East and North Africa:** US \$119.2 million was allocated to Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, and Yemen.
- **Sub-Saharan Africa:** US \$50.7 million was allocated to Djibouti, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, and Somalia.

ASIA

Afghanistan: United States assistance is part of a multi-donor collaborative effort to implement the Increasing Access to Basic Education and Gender Equality program, which introduces multiple pathways to basic education and offers accelerated learning programs for children in Afghanistan whose education has been interrupted by conflict or cultural barriers. USAID trained more than 1,333 teachers who now teach more than 147,031 children. USAID's support to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), led to the production and distribution of more than 120,201 teaching and learning materials. The Global Partnership for Education enrolled another 12,195 students (50 percent girls) in community-based schools, and 3,295 students (50 percent girls) in accelerated learning classes.

Through the Afghan Children Read activity, USAID distributed 397,330 teaching and learning materials in Dari and Pashto for grades 1-3 to 194,314 students and 4,397 teachers at pilot schools in Herat and Kabul provinces. More than 125,000 students and 16,500 teachers and parents participated in 345 reading festivals hosted by Afghan Children Read in collaboration with national and provincial media and outreach grantees. Strengthening Education in

Afghanistan (SEA II) activity prepared girls in 300 secondary schools to improve their learning achievements. More than 60,000 secondary school girls received test preparation and support for the Kankor examination, the required entrance exam to gain admission to public universities in the country. Additionally, USAID distributed 1,197 tablets and 900 solar panels to 450 public schools to support exam preparation. SEA II supported more than 428 school libraries across the country. Under the Capacity Building activity, USAID supported the Ministry of Education's efforts to deliver higher quality education services to the Afghan people, and it worked with community-based organizations to develop their ability to provide oversight of the education sector.

Bangladesh: The USAID/Bangladesh basic education program aimed to increase access to education and improve reading skills for children in lower primary grades. Reading Enhancement for Advancing Development provided reading interventions to 419,610 children in 1,406 schools nationwide; trained 4,450 teachers in best practices for delivering reading instruction; and provided 117,600 supplementary teaching and learning materials to primary classrooms. Community reading camps targeted students who were non-readers and focused on remedial instruction for struggling students; 67 percent of students (35,579 in total) who attended the camps during the winter holidays became readers. Innovations for Improving Early Grade Reading Activity (IIEGRA) provided reading interventions in formal and non-formal schools. In 445 government primary schools, IIEGRA reached 105,174 students with targeted literacy interventions to improve early-grade reading. IIEGRA also continued providing access to quality education for marginalized students in urban slums. Through 1,000 one-room school houses managed by a local non-governmental organization, 26,684 students who were previously out of school continued to receive accelerated primary education.

Kyrgyz Republic: The USAID/Kyrgyzstan basic education program, Time to Read (TTR), continued to focus on improving children's reading skills. Newly established reading training modules were used to train 7,000 teachers, 810 librarians, and 1,380 school principals and their deputies in 900 primary schools across the country. These trained teachers make up 50 percent of all grade 1-4 primary school teachers who teach 210,000 students.

The U.S. Embassy's Public Affairs Section encouraged early-age literacy 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. The rural outreach campaigns of the Department of State's American Corner initiative also distributed the translated titles in overlooked and remote areas of the Kyrgyz Republic. Several Democracy Commission small grants supported basic education, including a grant to raise awareness of students' right to a civil education and two projects that provided skills training for school social workers to increase their capacity to support vulnerable students and decrease gender-based violence in school settings.

Pakistan: The U.S. Embassy's Public Affairs Section trained 3,817 youths (ages 13-17) through the English Access Microscholarship Program. Through its agreement with the Power 99 FM radio station, the Public Affairs Section trained more than 13,000 young learners in reading, and indirectly reached an additional three to 4 million listeners, according to Power 99. USAID

completed construction or rehabilitation of 205 primary and secondary schools and enrolled more than 785,000 children (43 percent girls) through the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Reconstruction Program. More than 28,000 students, 391 teachers, and 57 education officials benefitted from the Temporarily Displaced Persons Education Support Program, which provided teacher training, distribution of instructional materials, and student support services. The Sindh Basic Education Program's community mobilization component worked closely with school communities in marginalized and vulnerable areas by creating enrollment campaigns to ensure that children, especially girls, were enrolled in school. In FY 2018, 3,063 girls were newly enrolled. The Pakistan Safer Schools Program supported government and local organizations to empower school children, teachers, and parents through training to prevent or reduce damage during disasters and cope with emergency situations. The program also promoted advocacy to improve policies, plans, and communications for education and its role in disaster risk resilience, and supported development and updates to School Safety Action Plans. The Sindh Reading Program and the Pakistan Reading Project created and distributed more than 1.2 million student learning materials and teacher instructional materials in local languages and trained more than 15,000 teachers in instructional techniques, effectively boosting the reading skills of more than 650,000 children.

Philippines: USAID/Philippines continued to focus on education service delivery and early-grade reading by bolstering the capacity of educators and administrators, education governance, and community engagement. More than 1.8 million teaching and learning materials were distributed and 15,571 primary school classrooms received a complete set of essential reading instructional materials. To advance the capacity of Filipino educators and officials, U.S.-funded activities trained 4,547 local authorities and school administrators, and 5,765 primary school educators completed professional development activities that strengthened their ability to implement evidence-based reading instruction. To boost local education governance, training courses reached 1,946 parent-teacher associations or community-based school governance structures. Basa Pilipinas improved the reading skills of 1 million, early-grade learners in Filipino, English, Ilokano, and Sinugbuanong Binisaya. In its final year, Basa Pilipinas directly reached 426,201 learners with primary-level reading programs and provided 1,882,648 textbooks and other teaching and learning materials to target schools.

USAID's Education Governance Effectiveness (EdGE) program worked with local government units, local school boards, and school governing councils to strengthen fiscal management, transparency, and accountability for education. It trained 1,946 Parent-Teacher Associations or community-based school governance structures while delivering 4,506 textbooks and other teaching and learning materials.

In addition, a USAID and U.S. Peace Corps project engaged 130 youths in a weeklong, life skills training and leadership session, and trained teachers to improve youth management strategies and teaching practices.

Tajikistan: USAID/Tajikistan continued to support education programs by supporting revisions of obsolete Soviet training practices. The five-year Read with Me project reached more than 265,162 students in 1,307 schools, representing about 40 percent of primary schools nationwide. Given that teachers are the single most influential force for increasing equity, access, and quality

in education, USAID education programming in Tajikistan places a high priority on teachers' professional development. Read with Me provided 72 hours of training to 4,453 teachers, who then received a formal certification from the Republic Teacher Training Institute. In addition, the project provided 6,149 supplementary teaching materials for trained educators at the national, regional, and local levels for Tajik and Russian language schools. More than 7,200 age-relevant books were donated to 30 summer camps to promote out-of-school activities to increase the culture of reading.

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 96 schools provided mentoring for more than 1,000 teachers and 141 administrators, benefiting more than 12,000 learners.

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Egypt: USAID/Egypt provided technical assistance to the Ministry of Education to improve reading and mathematics in primary schools, with a focus on upgrading the curriculum and materials, and on strengthening teacher professional development. To eradicate illiteracy, USAID worked with the Ministry of Education to launch summer reading camps in nearly 800 community schools. Camps provided more than 12,000 students with continuous learning opportunities to improve reading and writing skills through entertaining and interactive activities run by 1,500 facilitators. USAID continued its support for Egypt's network of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) schools, focusing on teacher development, school strengthening, and expanding STEM education efforts.

Jordan: USAID/Jordan improved the quality of basic education for children in Jordan and expanded access to quality learning and productive opportunities by engaging communities and improving infrastructure, training, education policy, and institutions. USAID constructed and repaired 685 classrooms, benefiting 24,512 students nationwide, and strengthened the capacity of the central ministries, governorates, and field directorates to better plan, manage, and maintain their schools. USAID's Early Grade Reading and Mathematics Project (RAMP) continued efforts to improve literacy and numeracy for students in kindergarten through grade 3, reaching 365,543 learners reading at the primary level with U.S. government assistance. USAID also supported 11,432 early-grade teachers and administrators nationwide to participate in special education and disabilities inclusion training. With more than 660,000 UNHCR-registered Syrian refugees in Jordan, USAID continued to support the Jordan Compact Education Fund, a multi-donor funding mechanism that enrolled 129,809 Syrian children in the formal education system and 3,172 previously out-of-school students in the Ministry of Education's Catch-Up Program. USAID efforts ensured that 3,292 teachers gained professional development skills to address the psychosocial support needs of 70,271 students nationwide.

Lebanon: USAID/Lebanon continued to improve the quality of, and access to, basic education. USAID provided Arabic reading instruction training to 318 teacher trainers and coaches, benefiting more than 55,000 students in 260 public schools. The Quality Instruction Towards Access and Basic Education Improvement (QITABI) program reduced the barriers to schooling for vulnerable Lebanese and non-Lebanese children by providing transportation solutions to 100

schools nationwide. USAID procured 100 buses and began delivery to 100 public schools. An estimated 5,000 students will benefit from this program. To improve access to education, USAID covered the school fees of 53,122 Lebanese and non-Lebanese students. To support learning outcomes, USAID provided remedial and homework support to 30,786 struggling students who are most at risk of dropping out of school. USAID continued funding education research in Lebanon.

Morocco: USAID/Morocco continued its program to improve students' reading skills. The Reading for Success—Improving Deaf Children's Reading Through Technology program refined the software to produce reading materials for deaf and hard-of-hearing children in grades 1-3. USAID influenced the Ministry of Education to register deaf students in the official school system, which will allow them to earn a primary education certificate and move on to secondary education. The Government of Morocco created an office dedicated to inclusive education as a result of this program. 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 Morocco's Ministry of Education.

Syria: Although Syria was not allocated basic education funding in FY 2018, USAID supported 26 civilian organizations, developing capacity, enhancing communication with constituents and other actors, organizing advocacy campaigns, providing essential services, and advancing transition-planning and CVE efforts with FY 2017 funds. Additionally, USAID and the Department of State's Bureau of Near East Affairs supported teachers and education administrators, minimizing the ability of extremists to exert influence over education, and ensuring schools had the human capital and supplies necessary to provide moderate education for Syrian youth outside regime-held areas. Other interventions included teacher training, light refurbishment of damaged schools, and psychosocial support and training for educators and students.

West Bank and Gaza: USAID/West Bank and Gaza was not allocated basic education funding in FY 2018; however, USAID continued to focus on infrastructure, teacher development, and schools in marginalized areas of East Jerusalem and the West Bank with FY 2017 funding.

The School Support Project supplied 48 school libraries with books, 50 computers, 49 science labs, and internet connectivity. The project also offered expanded extracurricular activities for youth during and after school hours. Thirteen schools benefited from the installation of solar panels, ensuring self-reliant sources of electricity. Through the Leadership and Teacher Development Program and the School Support Project, USAID continued to upgrade the qualifications of in-service teachers, principals, supervisors, and other administrators, in collaboration with the Ministry's National Institute for Educational Training. USAID also leveraged funds from the Joint Financing Partners (five European countries) for teacher training activities. Through this activity, USAID provided assistance to 151 schools, benefiting around 20,000 students, by securing internet connectivity, delivering laptops and interactive smartboards to targeted schools, and providing LCD projectors to schools and training centers. USAID, through the Early Grade Reading (EGR) Project, conducted a time-on-task study that determined how much time students truly were practicing reading and writing during the school day in target schools. After analyzing the data, EGR developed training material for strengthening reading

skills, reviewed reading standards and curriculums, designed an early-grade reading book leveling tool, created 28 decodable readers, and produced a manual for reading remediation programs.

Yemen: USAID/Yemen helps to stabilize communities while ensuring that children have access to safe classrooms and remedial education opportunities. USAID expanded and extended its partnership with UNICEF, enabling U.S. government resources to improve education outcomes in key parts of Yemen. Achievements included refurbishing schools, starting a back-to-school campaign, providing recreation kits for psychosocial support, training teachers to identify post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms, and developing a self-learning program for children to guide their own learning when conflict prevents them from going to school. Through these activities, USAID reached more than two million children. In 2018, 231,000 students benefited from improved learning conditions; 44,144 children received school bag kits, and 205 trained social workers referred 1,332 vulnerable children to receive appropriate services. In August 2018, USAID launched a program to reach out-of-school children and youth through International Rescue Committee and Save the Children. This program will reach 75,000 out-of-school children and youths in the north and south of Yemen over a three-year period, and it will enable these students to integrate into the mainstream public education system or gain the skills to matriculate.

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Djibouti: USAID awarded a five-year contract to improve reading achievement for Djiboutian children at the primary school level (grades 1-5). The Djibouti Early Grade Reading Activity (DEGRA) supports the Government of Djibouti's strategy to improve quality basic education and children's learning achievements in primary education. DEGRA will: 1) update curricula and define guaranteed minimum knowledge and skills for all pupils in basic education; 2) develop training for teaching staff; 3) strengthen the quality of the environment and school life to maintain favorable conditions for learning; and 4) develop evaluation as a tool for learning.

Mali: USAID/Mali continued to improve reading skills for early-grade learners, increase equitable access to quality education for conflict-affected children, and promote education for children with disabilities. The Selective Integrated Reading Activity aims to improve reading outcomes for first- and second-grade learners and has reached 264,169 students. USAID also provided reading kits to 3,986 schools, trained 11,277 teachers and school directors on balanced literacy, and instructed 324 pedagogical counselors on monitoring and supporting teachers. USAID also trained 65,792 parents, including 23,692 women, on "how to help your child to learn to read" and set up 112 community libraries. Through the Equitable Access to Quality Education for Children in Conflict-Affected Regions project, USAID provided access to education opportunities for 5,006 students, including 2,118 girls, and distributed 44,823 learning and recreational kits. USAID enrolled 141,056 learners, trained 2,284 teachers, and distributed 25,906 kits to learners through the Emergency Education Support Activity. The project also completed the construction of 222 classrooms, exceeding its annual target by 31 percent. The Education Recovery Support Activity established 68 Accelerated Education Programs to enroll 4,424 learners, and it trained 43 facilitators and 26 officials to support Accelerated Education Programs. In addition, USAID distributed 20,624 teaching materials.

USAID continued to promote inclusive education and the rights of children with disabilities through the Inclusive Education for Persons with Disabilities project, enrolling 129 students (52 girls) into mainstream schools. The Inclusion of Deaf and Blind Children in Mainstream Schools project improved access to quality education and reading skills for 50 deaf and blind children. Schools received specialized educational resources according to their specific needs. Thirty-eight new ramps were constructed and 11 were rehabilitated in schools, in line with the Malian accessibility norms. The Inclusive Education for Visually Impaired Primary School Children project improved access to quality education for 252 children with visual impairments. A total of 338 children (182 girls), received ophthalmic and optometric screenings. Low-vision children were equipped with glasses.

Niger: USAID/Niger's local-language reading intervention, the Niger Education and Community Strengthening (NECS) project, benefited 41,229 students in grades 1-2. In addition, USAID printed and distributed 29,547 pedagogical materials for grade 2 to support schools and trained 551 mentors to support 4,050 mentees identified according to academic needs. USAID provided support to library managers to improve reading materials management, and 14,746 learners benefited from reading interventions at the primary level. At the end of the 2017-2018 school year, 36 percent of grade 2 students reached the required level of reading competency with a national target of 50 percent. This is a significant improvement compared with the 0.6 percent of grade 2 students who reached the required level at the end of the 2016-2017 school year. A USAID activity implemented by the National Democratic Institute and Search for Common Ground focused on improving girls' protection, reducing early marriage, and increasing retention rates in school. This advocacy paved the way for a Young Girl Protection Presidential Decree in FY 2018 that signaled the importance of girls' education and protection. The Participatory, Responsive Governance – Principal Activity project, implemented by Counterpart International, focused on improving local-level governance and service delivery based on citizen-identified priorities in health, education, and security.

Nigeria: USAID/Nigeria continued to improve reading outcomes for primary school-age children and to increase access to education. The Northern Education Initiative Plus (NEI+) program, which operates in the northern states of Sokoto and Bauchi, printed and distributed 2.6 million textbooks and teaching manuals, which are used to train more than 2,000 teachers and instruct nearly 654,000 primary-age children. The Education Crisis Response program supported the needs of 49,045 internally displaced children and their host communities, in the northeastern states of Yobe, Adamawa, Gombe, Bauchi, and Borno. 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 also mainstreamed 30,154 learners into formal schools and funded 21 non-formal learning centers. Lastly, USAID, through the UN Development Programme, is working to rehabilitate 10 schools that were destroyed by Boko Haram and ISIS-West Africa violence in the northeastern states of Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe.

Senegal: Low access and poor academic achievement inhibit the development of the human capital that Senegal needs for its development. USAID/Senegal worked with the Government of Senegal to address poor access to education and poor academic achievement through the

Program for the Improvement of Quality, Equity, and Transparency (PAQUET). This initiative emphasizes strengthening foundational reading skills and increasing access to education for marginalized and out-of-school children. In close partnership with the Ministry of Education, USAID continued to roll out Reading for All, a five-year, US \$71 million activity using local languages (Wolof, Pulaar, or Serer) as the medium of reading instruction. Reading for All started implementation in four regions (Kaolack, Fatick, Matam, and Kaffrine) and worked in nearly 1,000 primary schools to reach 70,000 grade 1 students. USAID and the Ministry of Education adapted materials from the national curriculum, then they printed and distributed more than 100,000 teaching and learning materials to teachers and principals. USAID partnered with a local organization in the Fatick region to promote community engagement in favor of early-grade reading. In FY 2018, the activity reached 17,412 persons through home visits, held 1,782 awareness and information sessions with parents and community members, and trained 1,670 parents on coaching techniques to help their children from home. USAID also awarded a new activity that will increase access to education for marginalized and out-of-school children in the conflict-affected southern region of Casamance. The activity will provide alternative education services that are more responsive to communities' needs, strengthen the relevance of the formal education system, and reinforce parent and community engagement.

Somalia: USAID/Somalia supported the provision of education in a country where three million children are out of school. The Alternative Basic Education program, implemented by UNICEF, continued to support non-formal education by enrolling 3,294 new students, bringing the total to 19,615 students, from 96 agro-pastoralist and pastoralist communities in the regions of Gedo, Bakool, and Bay that were acutely affected by the recent drought and food insecurity, where children are particularly vulnerable to al-Shabaab recruitment efforts. Other notable achievements included the creation or rehabilitation of 18 safe and sustainable learning centers; the distribution of 17,777 textbooks and teaching and learning materials; the training of 459 community teachers; and the training of 26 regional and district education officers and ministry personnel. USAID also worked with 96 Community Education Committees to build their capacity to manage their schools and increase school enrollment.

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 USAID's economic reform programs.

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 2018, the Department of State designated al-Ashtar Brigades, ISIS-Bangladesh, ISIS-Greater Sahara, ISIS-Philippines, ISIS-West Africa, and Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin as FTOs. The Department of State also amended the designations of the al-Nusra Front to include the alias Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham, of al-Shabaab to include the alias al-Hijra, and of Lashkar-e-Tayyiba to include the aliases Milli Muslim League and Tehreek-e-Azadi-e Kashmir.

Legal Criteria for Designation under Section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (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)
Al-Ashtar Brigades (AAB)
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)
 ISIS-Bangladesh
 ISIS-Greater Sahara
 Islamic State's Khorasan Province (ISIS-K)
 ISIL-Libya
 ISIS-Philippines
 ISIS Sinai Province (ISIS-SP)
 ISIS-West Africa
 Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM)
 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

Also known as (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 FTO 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.

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, 2017, and 2018, 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 U.S. announcement recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital. There were no attacks claimed by AAB in 2018.

Strength: Precise numbers are 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 FTO 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.

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 a German citizen 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.

In July 2018, ASG detonated a car bomb at a military checkpoint on Basilan Island that killed 10, including a Philippines soldier and pro-government militiamen. In late December, the group was suspected of kidnapping three men from a fishing vessel operating in the Sulu-Celebes Sea and was also suspected of a September 11 attack on another fishing vessel operating in the same area, indicating ASG remains committed to piracy and armed robbery in the Southern Philippines maritime area.

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 FTO 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. In addition, 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. AAMB claimed responsibility for two rockets fired at Israel from the Gaza Strip in March 2017 and six rockets in June 2018, 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.

AL-ASHTAR BRIGADES

Aka Saraya al-Ashtar.

Description: Al-Ashtar Brigades (AAB) was designated as a FTO on July 11, 2018. AAB is an Iran-backed terrorist organization established in 2013 with an aim to overthrow the ruling family in Bahrain through violent militant operations. In January 2018, AAB formally adopted Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps branding and reaffirmed its loyalty to Tehran to reflect its role in an Iranian network of state and non-state actors that operates against the United States and its allies in the region.

Activities: In March 2014, AAB conducted a bomb attack that killed two local police officers and an officer from the United Arab Emirates. In January 2017, AAB shot and killed a local police officer. Using social media, AAB also promotes violent activity against the British, Saudi Arabian, and U.S. governments. Since 2013, AAB has claimed responsibility for more than 20 terrorist attacks against police and security targets in Bahrain.

Strength: The size of AAB is unknown.

Location/Area of Operation: The group is located in Bahrain.

Funding and External Aid: AAB receives funding and support from the Government of Iran.

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 FTO 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 (which 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 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 AQIM, AAD, al-Murabitoun, and the Macina Liberation Front came together to form Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM).

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 2013, 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 responsibility for 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 IED 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. In February 2017, AAD claimed responsibility for an attack on the Malian Gendarmerie in Tenenkou, Mali. AAD did not claim any attacks in 2018.

Strength: The group's exact membership numbers were unknown at the end of 2018.

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 FTO 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 2018. 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 conducted attacks against a wide range of targets including Iraqi government and security forces, and U.S. and Coalition forces from 2003 to 2011. AAI also 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 opposed joining ISIS.

Strength: Precise numbers are unknown.

Location/Area of Operation: AAI is active primarily in northern Iraq, but also maintains a presence in western Iraq and in 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 FTO 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 the U.S. Ambassador to Libya, J. Christopher Stevens.

In 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 trained members of other terrorist organizations, some of which operate in Syria, Iraq, and Mali.

In May 2017, AAS-B announced its formal dissolution because of heavy losses, including the group's senior leadership, as well as defections to ISIS in Libya. AAS-B claimed no attacks in 2018.

Strength: Precise numbers are unknown.

Location/Area of Operation: The group 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 FTO 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 the 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 2018, there were unconfirmed reports that AAS-D was involved in clashes with the "Libyan National Army."

Strength: Precise numbers are unknown.

Location/Area of Operation: The group operated in Darnah, Libya.

Funding and External Aid: The group's sources of funding are 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 FTO 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.

Since 2016, Tunisian authorities have continued to confront and arrest AAS-T members. AAS-T did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2018.

Strength: AAS-T's size is unknown.

Location/Area of Operation: The group operates in Tunisia and Libya.

Funding and External Aid: The group's sources of funding are unknown.

ARMY OF ISLAM

Aka Jaysh al-Islam; Jaish al-Islam.

Description: Designated as a FTO on May 19, 2011, the Army of Islam (AOI), founded in late 2005, 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 a violent Salafist ideology.

Note: AOI is a separate and distinct group from the Syria-based Jaysh al-Islam, which is not a designated FTO.

Activities: AOI is responsible for several 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 a short post attributed to the group, AOI declared itself an inseparable part of ISIS-Sinai Province. Since then, AOI has continued to express support for ISIS. The group released a video in October 2017 in an effort to encourage ISIS fighters defending Mosul. AOI claimed responsibility for no attacks in 2018.

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 FTO 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, in part because of concerns of losing its safe haven in the Ain al-Hilwah Palestinian refugee camp. AAA remained active in Lebanon but claimed no attacks in 2018.

Strength: The group has at least 650 members.

Location/Area of Operation: AAA'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 FTO on October 8, 1997. It was established in 1987 by 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.

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. AUM leader Shoko Asahara was executed in July 2018.

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 comes primarily 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 FTO 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 more than 800 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. In May 2018, ETA released a letter announcing the dissolution of its organizational structures.

Strength: Since 2004, more than 900 ETA militants have been arrested both in Spain and abroad. It is unknown how many ETA members remained at the time of its announced dissolution but it was likely in the hundreds.

Location/Area of Operation: The group operates 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 2018.

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 FTO on November 14, 2013. The group is responsible for numerous attacks in northern and northeastern Nigeria and in 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, while al-Barnawi’s group is now separated and designated as ISIS-West Africa.

Activities: BH 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. Since 2009, BH has killed an estimated 20,000 people and displaced more than two million others.

In 2014, BH killed about 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 BH’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 [2018 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.

In February 2016, the group conducted 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 2017 and 2018, BH increased its forced abduction of women and girls and ordered them to carry out suicide attacks on civilians, including the January 2017 attack against the University of Maiduguri in Borno State, and twin attacks against a mosque and market in Adamawa State, Nigeria in May 2018, killing 86.

In April 2018, 18 BH militants launched an attack using suicide bombers, mortars, and gunmen, targeting two villages and a military base, killing 14 civilians and one soldier. In July 2018, BH insurgents ambushed a convoy of vehicles in Borno State, torching 27 vehicles and killing 30 people. In January 2018, Abubakar Shekau claimed responsibility for a series of attacks in northeast Nigeria in December 2017, including attacks on Nigerian soldiers and suicide bombings in crowded markets.

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 FTO 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, 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.

Throughout 2016, several attempts were made to establish a cease-fire 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 cease-fire in late 2016, the CPP/NPA terminated its unilateral cease-fire after several earlier clashes between the group and the Philippine Armed Forces. President Duterte responded with ending its cease-fire and peace talks with the CPP/NPA. Attempts to reach a cease-fire continued in 2017 without success, as a conflicts and skirmishes 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 2017, although the decision was still pending court approval at the end of 2018.

In August 2018, seven suspected members of CPP/NPA were killed in a shootout with Philippine police in the town of Antique; authorities found a cache of cellphones, laptops, firearms, and explosives at the site. In December 2018, CPP/NPA members attacked a military patrol in the city of Catarman using an anti-personnel mine. The attack killed four soldiers and two civilians.

Strength: The Philippine government estimates the group has about 4,000 members. CPP/NPA also retains a significant amount of support from communities in rural areas of the Philippines.

Location/Area of Operation: CPP/NPA operates in 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 FTO 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 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 it would disband and decommission some of its arms over the following three months, describing the conflict as a “futile war.” CIRA did not publicly claim any attacks in 2017 and 2018.

Strength: Membership is small, with possibly fewer than 50 members. 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 FTO 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: During 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 2018.

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: IG’s area of operation is unknown.

Funding and External Aid: The source of IG’s funding is 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 FTO 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. In 2017, the group selected a new leader, Ismail Haniyeh, who is based in Gaza. Hamas remained the de facto ruler in Gaza in 2018.

Activities: Before 2005, Hamas conducted numerous anti-Israeli attacks, including suicide bombings, rocket launches, 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 through 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 cease-fire 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 Israel; the rocket fire from Gaza had increased following earlier Israeli military operations that targeted Hamas for the kidnapping and murder of 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.

Since 2007, Hamas and Fatah have made several attempts to reconcile, though all attempts through the end of 2018 have failed. Hamas-organized protests at the border between Gaza and Israel continued throughout much of 2018, resulting in clashes that killed Hamas members, Palestinian protestors, and Israeli soldiers. Hamas claimed responsibility for numerous rocket attacks from Gaza into Israeli territory throughout 2018.

Strength: Hamas comprises several thousand Gaza-based operatives.

Location/Area of Operation: Since 2007, Hamas has controlled Gaza and 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 from its own charity organizations.

HAQQANI NETWORK

Aka HQN.

Description: Designated as a FTO on September 19, 2012, the Haqqani Network (HQN) was formed in the late 1980s, 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 numerous 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 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 more than 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.

HQN carried out multiple terrorist attacks in 2018. HQN was believed to be responsible for a January 2018 ambulance bombing in Kabul that killed more than 100 people. Afghan officials blamed HQN for a January 2018 attack on the Intercontinental Hotel in Kabul that killed 22 people, including Americans. HQN was also blamed for a May 2018 attack on the Afghan interior ministry that resulted in the death of a police officer.

Strength: HQN is led by a small cadre of family members, but is believed to have several hundred core members. However, it is estimated that the organization is able to influence a network 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 some funds from donors in Pakistan and the Gulf, but mostly from taxing local commerce, 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 FTO 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 into Pakistan and the expulsion of Coalition Forces from Afghanistan, and has supplied fighters to the Taliban in Afghanistan.

HUJI historically focused its activities on the Afghanistan-Pakistan front, and was composed of Pakistani terrorists and veterans of the Soviet-Afghan war. HUJI experienced internal splits, and a portion of the group has aligned with al-Qa'ida.

Activities: 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 2018.

Strength: The size of HUJI is unknown.

Location/Area of Operation: HUJI's area of operation historically extended throughout South Asia, with its terrorist operations focused primarily in Afghanistan, India, and Pakistan.

Funding and External Aid: HUJI's sources of support are 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 FTO 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, including HUJI-B leader Mufti Abdul Hannan, 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 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 2018.

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 NGOs 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 FTO on October 8, 1997, Harakat ul-Mujahideen (HUM) seeks the annexation of the state of Jammu and Kashmir into Pakistan 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 numerous operations against Indian troops and civilian targets in the state of Jammu and Kashmir, as well as in India's northeastern states. 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 Sheikh as a result of the hijacking. Sheikh was later convicted of the 2002 abduction and murder of U.S. journalist Daniel Pearl.

HUM has conducted attacks targeting Indian interests including the late December 2015 strikes in Handwor and Poonch, which resulted in the deaths of five Indian army personnel. HUM did not publicly claim any attacks in 2018.

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 FTO 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 2018 was Ali Khamenei. Hizballah is closely allied with Iran and the two often work together on shared initiatives, although Hizballah also acts independently in some cases. Hizballah shares a close relationship with the Syrian regime of Bashar Assad, 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 reserve officer abducted in Dubai as well as the bodies of the three Israeli soldiers were returned to Israel.

Hizballah assisted Iraq Shia militant and terrorist groups in Iraq, and in January 2007, attacked the Karbala Provincial Joint Coordination Center, killing five American soldiers.

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 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 May 2013, Hizballah publicly admitted to playing a significant role in the ongoing conflict in Syria, rallying support for the Syrian regime of Bashar Assad. Hizballah's support for Syria's Assad regime continued into 2018. As of 2018, 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 weapons 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. In May 2015, Cypriot authorities arrested and convicted a Hizballah member after finding 8.2 tons of liquid ammonium nitrate in the basement of a residence in Larnaca. In August 2015, Kuwaiti authorities arrested three Hizballah operatives who had stored weapons and explosives under a residential house. In 2017, Bolivian authorities identified a Hizballah-affiliated warehouse, seizing explosive precursor materials and a VBIED.

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.

In September 2018, Brazil arrested a Hizballah financier, and in December 2018, tunnels reportedly built by Hizballah were discovered on Israeli territory along the boundary with Lebanon.

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 2012, Hizballah fighters have assisted Assad regime forces in many areas across Syria.

Funding and External Aid: Iran continues to provide Hizballah with most of its funding, training, weapons, and explosives, as well as political, diplomatic, monetary, and organizational aid. Iran's annual financial backing to Hizballah – an estimated \$700 million per year – accounts for the overwhelming majority of the group's annual budget. The Assad regime has furnished training, weapons, and diplomatic and political support. Hizballah also receives funding in the form of private donations from Lebanese Shia diaspora communities worldwide, 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 FTO 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 the state of Jammu and Kashmir from Indian control and its accession to Pakistan, although some cadres are pro-independence. The group focuses its attacks on Indian security forces and politicians in the state of Jammu and Kashmir, and has conducted operations jointly with other Kashmiri militants. HM 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: HM 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 the state 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.

HM continued conducting attacks in 2018. On August 29, 2018, HM reportedly killed four policemen in the Shopian district of south Kashmir. In addition, on September 21, 2018, HM claimed responsibility for abducting and killing three police officials 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: HM's sources of support are unknown, but it is suspected to receive funding from sources in Pakistan.

INDIAN MUJAHEDDEEN

Aka Indian Mujahidin; Islamic Security Force-Indian Mujahideen (ISF-IM).

Description: The Indian Mujahedeen (IM) was designated as a FTO 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 frequented by tourists in Pune, India; 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 India's 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. IM did not publicly claim any attacks in 2018.

Strength: Precise numbers are 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 FTO 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 five-month long 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. A second video was released by IJU in April 2018 showing a joint raid with the Taliban in northern Afghanistan. The video, which is dated October 2017, shows a night clash with Afghan forces.

Strength: The group consists of 100 to 200 members.

Location/Area of Operation: IJU historically operates in Uzbekistan, with members scattered throughout Central Asia and Europe. In 2018, reports confirmed that IJU was active in northern Afghanistan.

Funding and External Aid: IJU's sources of support are unknown.

ISLAMIC MOVEMENT OF UZBEKISTAN

Aka IMU.

Description: Designated as a FTO 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. 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 been focused predominantly on attacks against international forces in Afghanistan. In late 2009, NATO forces reported an increase in IMU-affiliated FTFs 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 in 2016 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 the 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. IMU did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2018.

Strength: The group consists of 200 to 300 members.

Location/Area of Operation: The group operates in Central Asia, Iran, Afghanistan, and 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

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'adat al Jihad/Bilad al Raafidaini; Tanzim Qa'adat 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 FTO 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 that 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. 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 ISIS's so-called "caliphate." In December 2017, then Iraqi Prime Minister Haidar al-Abadi announced the territorial defeat of ISIS in Iraq. In September 2018, the Syrian Democratic Forces, with support from the U.S.-led Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS began a final push to oust ISIS fighters from the town of Hajin and its surrounding areas that constitute the last area under the group's control in Syria.

Activities: As AQI, ISIS conducted numerous high-profile attacks, including IED 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 most of the 12,000 Iraqi civilian deaths that year. ISIS is heavily involved in the fighting in Syria, and has participated in numerous kidnappings of civilians, including aid workers and journalists. In 2015 and 2016, ISIS claimed responsibility for several large-scale attacks in Iraq and Syria. For example, in mid-May 2016, 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 2016, ISIS claimed responsibility for 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.

ISIS continued its attacks throughout 2017. In February, 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. In June, ISIS gunmen and suicide bombers killed more than 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 FTFs 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. Further, since 2015, ISIS abducted, raped, and abused thousands of women and children, some as young as eight years old. 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 [2018 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 about 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.

In March 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 2017, ISIS claimed a suicide bombing in Manchester, England, that killed 22 people outside of a live concert.

In April 2018, ISIS claimed responsibility for targeting an Iraqi Turkman politician in the northern province of Kirkuk. In July 2018, ISIS attacked the city of Suweida and nearby towns and villages in southwestern Syria, conducting multiple suicide bombings and simultaneous raids in a brutal offensive, killing more than 200 people.

Strength: Estimates suggest ISIS fighters in Iraq and Syria number between 14,000 and 18,000, including up to 3,000 FTFs. This number was likely reduced during 2018 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 around the world. 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 smuggling oil, looting and selling antiquities and other goods, as well as extortion, human trafficking, and kidnapping-for-ransom. ISIS continues to use "hawalas" – a system of couriers who maintain an informal international banking system that functions by word of mouth and is difficult to uncover and interdict – to transport money in support of ISIS operations. Before ISIS's territorial defeat, targeted counterterrorism operations and airstrikes served to sever critical financial networks and reduce ISIS's ability to exploit local resources such as oil. In 2018, the further reduction in ISIS's control of territory significantly reduced ISIS's ability to generate, hold, and transfer revenue. Despite this, ISIS continues to generate revenue from criminal activities and provides financial support to its network of global branches and affiliates.

ISIS–BANGLADESH

Aka Caliphate in Bangladesh, Caliphate's Soldiers in Bangladesh, Soldiers of the Caliphate in Bangladesh, Khalifa's Soldiers in Bengal, Islamic State Bangladesh, Islamic State in Bangladesh, ISB, ISIB, Abu Jandal al-Bangali, Neo-JMB, New JMB, Neo-Jammat-ul Mujahadeen-Bangladesh.

Description: ISIS-Bangladesh was designated as a FTO on February 28, 2018. ISIS-Bangladesh has described itself as ISIS's official branch in Bangladesh and was born out of ISIS's desire to expand its campaign to the Indian Subcontinent. Coinciding with the announcement of the caliphate in Iraq and Syria, a group of Bangladeshi nationals pledged allegiance to ISIS and vowed to organize Bengal Muslims under the leadership of ISIS chief, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.

Activities: Since its inception in 2014, ISIS-Bangladesh has claimed numerous attacks carried out across the country. In September 2015, gunmen belonging to ISIS-Bangladesh shot and killed an Italian aid worker in Dhaka. In December 2015, ISIS-Bangladesh claimed responsibility for injuring 10 people during a Christmas Day suicide attack at mosque packed with Ahmadi Muslims. In July 2016, the group claimed responsibility for an assault on the Holey Artisan Bakery in Dhaka that killed 22 people, including one American. In March 2017, ISIS-Bangladesh claimed responsibility for twin explosions that targeted a crowd in Sylhet,

Bangladesh, killing six people. ISIS-Bangladesh did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2018.

Strength: ISIS-Bangladesh has at least several hundred armed supporters.

Location/Area of Operation: The group is located in Bangladesh

Funding and External Aid: Although the source of ISIS-Bangladesh's funding is largely unknown, it does receive some support from ISIS.

ISIS-GREATER SAHARA

Aka ISIS in the Greater Sahara (ISIS-GS); Islamic State in the Greater Sahel (ISGS); Islamic State of the Greater Sahel; ISIS in the Greater Sahel; ISIS in the Islamic Sahel.

Description: ISIS in the Greater Sahara (ISIS-GS) was designated as a FTO on May 23, 2018. ISIS-GS emerged when leader Adnan Abu Walid al-Sahrawi and his followers split from al-Murabitoun. Al-Sahrawi first pledged allegiance to ISIS in May 2015, which was acknowledged by ISIS in October 2016.

Activities: In September 2016, ISIS-GS claimed responsibility for an attack on a gendarmerie post in Markoye, Burkina Faso, that killed two people. In October 2016, ISIS-GS claimed responsibility for an attack on a military post in Intangom, Burkina Faso, that killed three Burkinabe soldiers. In October 2017, ISIS-GS claimed responsibility for an attack on a joint U.S.-Nigerien patrol in the region of Tongo, Niger, which killed four U.S. soldiers and five Nigerien soldiers. In 2018, ISIS-GS was reportedly involved in numerous skirmishes and attacks in Mali and Niger, including those in May that targeted French troops and civilians.

Strength: Precise numbers are unknown.

Location/Area of Operation: ISIS-GS is primarily based in Mali, Niger, and Burkina Faso.

Funding and External Aid: ISIS-GS's sources of support are unknown.

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 FTO 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, Abu Sayeed Orakzai, was killed in August 2018.

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 2016, the group conducted a bomb attack at a peaceful protest in Kabul, Afghanistan, that killed an estimated 80 people and wounded another 230. In August 2016, ISIS-K claimed it carried out a shooting and suicide bombing at a hospital in Quetta, Pakistan, targeting lawyers, which killed 94. It also claimed responsibility for a November 2016 suicide bombing at the Shah Noorani Shrine in Balochistan province, Pakistan, killing more than 50 people.

In July 2017, ISIS-K attacked the Iraqi Embassy in Kabul, killing two people and 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. In July 2018, ISIS-K claimed responsibility for an attack on an election rally in Balochistan province in Pakistan that killed 149 people. In September 2018, ISIS-K claimed responsibility for a double suicide bombing in a Shiite majority neighborhood in Kabul, leaving more than 20 dead and 70 injured.

Strength: Estimates of ISIS-K strength ranged from 2,000 to 5,000 fighters in 2018

Location/Area of Operation: The group mainly operates in eastern Afghanistan and western Pakistan. ISIS-K operated in northern Afghanistan until its surrender to Afghan Security Forces in that region in August 2018.

Funding and External Aid: ISIS-K receives some funding from ISIS. Additional funds come from illicit criminal commerce, taxes, and extortion on the local population and businesses.

ISLAMIC STATE OF IRAQ AND THE LEVANT-LIBYA

Aka Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant in Libya; Wilayat Barqa; Wilayat Fezzan; Wilayat Tripolitania; Wilayat Tarablus; Wilayat al-Tarabulus.

Description: The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant-Libya (ISIL-Libya) was designated as a FTO 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 becoming 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, Libya, that killed eight people, including a U.S. contractor.

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.

From 2015 to 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 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-Libya fighters in Libya.

In May 2018, ISIL-Libya claimed an attack on Libya's electoral commission headquarters in Tripoli that killed 14 people. In September, ISIL-Libya claimed responsibility for a suicide attack on Libya's National Oil Company headquarters that left two dead and 10 others wounded. In October, ISIL-Libya was implicated in an attack on a town in central Libya that resulted in five people killed and 10 others kidnapped. In December, ISIL-Libya attacked the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, killing three people, and later claimed responsibility for the attack.

Strength: Earlier estimates of ISIL-Libya suggest the group has fewer than 500 fighters.

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 central and 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.

ISIS-PHILIPPINES

Aka ISIS in the Philippines; ISIL Philippines; ISIL in the Philippines; IS Philippines; ISP; Islamic State in the Philippines; Islamic State in Iraq and Syria in South-east Asia; Dawlatul

Islamiyah Waliyatul Masrik (DIWM); Dawlatul Islamiyah Waliyatul Mashriq; IS East Asia Division; ISIS Branch in the Philippines; ISIS’ “Philippines province.”

Description: ISIS-Philippines (ISIS-P) was designated as a FTO on February 28, 2018. In July 2014, militants in the Philippines pledged allegiance to ISIS in support of ISIS’s efforts in the region under the command of now-deceased leader Isnilon Hapilon.

Activities: ISIS-P has claimed responsibility for numerous attacks in the Philippines. In May 2016, ISIS-P claimed responsibility for an attack on Basilan Island, which killed one soldier and injured another. In 2017, ISIS-P participated in five months of fighting in Marawi that claimed more than 1,000 lives and forced at least 300,000 residents to flee the area. ISIS-P leader Hapilon was killed by Philippine forces during this fighting in October 2017. In July 2018, ISIS-P claimed responsibility for a suicide bomb attack at a military checkpoint in Basilan, killing 10 people.

Strength: ISIS-P is estimated to have a small cadre of fighters in the southern Philippines, but exact numbers are unknown.

Location/Area of Operation: ISIS-P operations are based out of the southern Philippines, especially in and around Basilan and Lanao del Sur province.

Funding and External Aid: ISIS-P receives financial assistance from ISIS in Syria.

ISLAMIC STATE-SINAI PROVINCE

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 FTO on April 9, 2014, Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis (ABM, as it was known then) 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 claimed responsibility for numerous attacks against Israeli and Egyptian interests from 2012 through 2014, including attacks on Israeli economic and military assets, as well as attacks on the Egyptian military and tourist sectors. 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 July 22 in the western desert, approximately 20 kilometers 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 December 11, 2016, an attack on St. Mark's Cathedral, a Coptic Christian church in Cairo, killed 29 people.

In 2017, ISIS-SP attacked two Coptic Christian churches on Palm Sunday (April 9), killing 30 people at St. George's Church in Tanta and killing 17 people at St. Mark's Church in Alexandria. In May 2017, the group's attack on a bus of pilgrims en route to St. Samuel the Confessor, a Coptic monastery near Minya, killed 29 people. In September 2017, ISIS-SP attacked an Egyptian police convoy in an ambush that killed 18 soldiers and injured others. In November 2017, an attack on the al-Rawda mosque in North Sinai—Egypt's deadliest in modern history—killed more than 300 individuals at prayer. While the attack was unclaimed, press reported the Egyptian Prosecutor General's office as attributing the attack to ISIS-SP and alleging that attackers carried an ISIS flag. The group's December 2017 attack on St. Mina, a Coptic Christian near Cairo, killed 11 people.

In 2018, the group continued operations against the Egyptian military. ISIS-SP attacked an Egyptian army base in April and attacked an Egyptian police checkpoint in December, killing 15 soldiers in each attack. On November 2, 2018, the group's attack on a bus of pilgrims traveling from St. Samuel the Confessor killed seven and wounded 14 others.

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 the group's 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 ISIS in Syria.

ISIS-WEST AFRICA

Aka Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP); Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant-West Africa (ISIS-WA); Islamic State of Iraq and Syria West Africa Province; ISIS West Africa Province; ISIS West Africa; ISIS-West Africa (ISIS-WA).

Description: ISIS-West Africa (ISIS-WA) was designated as a FTO on February 28, 2018. In March 2015, a faction of Boko Haram 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 become the new leader of ISIS-WA.

Activities: ISIS-WA has been responsible for numerous attacks in Nigeria and the Lake Chad region since 2016. In January 2017, ISIS-WA conducted a midnight attack against Nigerian troops in the village of Kamuya resulting in the death of three Nigerian soldiers. In February 2018, ISIS-WA abducted a Christian student in Nigeria and in March kidnapped three aid workers during an attack that killed dozens of other people. ISIS-WA killed one of the three aid workers in September and another in October. In November, ISIS-WA claimed responsibility for five attacks in Chad and Nigeria that resulted in 118 deaths. Throughout 2018, ISIS-WA was involved in numerous attacks on Nigerian army bases.

Strength: ISIS-WA has an estimated 3,500 members.

Location/Area of Operation: ISIS-WA operates in Nigeria and the Lake Chad region.

Funding and External Aid: ISIS-WA receives funding from local sources, the capture of military supplies, taxes, and kidnapping-for-ransom payments.

JAMA'AT NUSRAT AL-ISLAM WAL-MUSLIMIN

Aka Jamaat Nosrat al-Islam wal-Mouslimin; Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims; Group to Support Islam and Muslims; GSIM; GNIM; Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimeen.

Description: Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM) was designated as a FTO on September 6, 2018. JNIM has described itself as al-Qa'ida's official branch in Mali and has claimed responsibility for numerous attacks and kidnappings since it was formed in March 2017. 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 JNIM. JNIM is led by Iyad ag Ghali.

Activities: JNIM has continued to commit numerous attacks against civilian and military targets as well as kidnappings. In June 2017, JNIM carried out an attack at a resort frequented by Westerners outside of Bamako, Mali, and was responsible for the large-scale coordinated attacks in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, on March 2, 2018.

In 2018, JNIM claimed responsibility for several attacks including a June suicide attack against an African Coalition base in Mali that killed at least six people. In July, JNIM claimed responsibility for a suicide bombing in Gao, Mali, which targeted a French military patrol that killed civilians. In November 2018, JNIM claimed responsibility for the detonation of a truck bomb in a residential complex in Gao, killing three and injuring 30.

Strength: JNIM is estimated to have between 1,000 and 2,000 fighters.

Location/Area of Operation: The group is located in Mali.

Funding and External Aid: JNIM receives funding through kidnapping-for-ransom and extortion, and from smugglers and traffickers who pay a tax in exchange for permission and safe transit through JNIM-controlled trafficking routes in Mali.

JAMA'ATU ANSARUL MUSLIMINA FI BILADIS-SUDAN

Aka Ansaru; Ansarul Muslimina Fi Biladis Sudan; Vanguard for the Protection of Muslims in Black Africa; JAMBS; Jama'atu Ansarul Muslimina Fi Biladis Sudan.

Description: Designated as a FTO 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 Africa by fighting against the Nigerian government and international interests. Ansaru claims to identify with Boko Haram's objectives and struggle, but 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 owing to French involvement in Mali. In early 2013, Ansaru kidnapped and subsequently killed seven international construction workers.

On April 4, 2016, the Nigerian army announced the capture of Ansaru leader Khalid al-Barnawi. Ansaru did not publicly claim any attacks in 2018.

Strength: Ansaru's total size is unknown. Given its narrower scope of operations, its membership is estimated to be much smaller than that of Boko Haram.

Location/Area of Operation: The group operates in northern Nigeria.

Funding and External Aid: Ansaru's sources of support are 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 FTO 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, 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 where one civilian and seven Indian security force personnel were killed. In June 2017, Indian police stated JeM conducted multiple attacks against security forces in five locations across the state of Jammu and Kashmir, injuring more than a dozen people. Another attack in October left one member of the Indian Border Security Force and three JeM militants dead.

In February 2018, JeM claimed responsibility for killing nine Indian officers at the Sunjuwan military station. In December 2018, several JeM militants stormed a police outpost in the state of Jammu and Kashmir killing four police officers and injuring one.

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

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 FTO in September 30, 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 responsibility for numerous attacks on U.S. bases and forces. JRTN also is known to have used VBIEDs against Iraqi government security forces.

In 2014, elements of JRTN joined military forces with ISIS in opposition to the Iraqi government. JRTN played a major role in the capture of Mosul from Iraqi security forces in 2014. However, fissures between ISIS and JRTN quickly emerged after ISIS's advance in Baiji and Tikrit. Although some elements of JRTN splintered off, the majority of the organization was subsumed by ISIS. JRTN did not publicly claim any specific attacks from 2016 through 2018.

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: Jemaah Anshorut Tauhid (JAT) was designated as a FTO 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, 2017, or 2018, 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. 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 also has 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 FTO 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 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.

In July 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 policemen and three civilians were killed when a police counterterrorism squad was ambushed while conducting a raid in Mamasapano on the island of Mindanao in the southern Philippines, 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, 2017, or 2018.

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 it is beginning to regain its strength there. The group also has carried out attacks in Malaysia and the Philippines.

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; Jundallah; Jondallah; Jundollah; Jondollah; Jondallah; Army of God (God's Army); Baloch Peoples Resistance Movement (BPRM).

Description: Jundallah was designated as a FTO on November 4, 2010. Since its inception in 2003, Jundallah, which operates primarily in Sistan VA Balochistan province 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. Jundallah adopted the name Jaysh al-Adl in 2012 and has since claimed responsibility for attacks under that name.

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 responsibility for 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 about 30 people and injuring an estimated 300. In June 2018, Jundallah, operating under the name Jaysh al-Adl, reportedly killed three Iranian security personnel while trying to enter Iran from Pakistan. In October 2018, Jaysh al-Adl claimed responsibility for abducting 12 Iranian security personnel on the border with Pakistan.

Strength: Jundallah's size is unknown. Iran's 2010 execution of Jundallah's leader in 2010, and the killing and arrest of many Jundallah fighters seriously diminished the group's capacity to operate.

Location/Area of Operation: Jundallah has traditionally operated throughout the Sistan va Balochistan province in southeastern Iran and in the Balochistan area of Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Funding and External Aid: Jundallah's sources of support are 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 FTOs 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 2018.

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 Hezbollah; 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 FTO 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 from Iraq in 2011, the group conducted attacks against Iraqi, U.S., and Coalition targets in Iraq, and it threatened the lives of Iraqi politicians and civilians supporting the legitimate political process in Iraq. KH is notable for its extensive use of media operations and propaganda. For example, it has filmed and released 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 IED attacks, 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, 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, but it operated outside the Iraqi government's command-and-control structure. In 2017, the group threatened to fight "American occupiers" in Iraq, in an article published on the group's official website. In 2018, the group issued a warning statement threatening the U.S. presence in Iraq in retaliation for a non-Coalition airstrike that hit KH members in Syria.

Strength: KH's exact size is unknown.

Location/Area of Operation: The group is based predominately in Iraq, but it also fights alongside pro-Assad regime forces in Syria.

Funding and External Aid: KH depends heavily 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 FTO 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 engage in 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 cease-fire. 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 December 2012 and July 2015, the Turkish government and the PKK resumed peace negotiations, dubbed the "solution process." They made significant progress, but the negotiations ultimately broke down – owing partly to domestic political pressures and the war in Syria.

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 VBIED 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 2017, the PKK attacked a military convoy in southeastern Turkey, using mortar and machine gun fire to kill more than 20 soldiers.

In 2018, numerous attacks by the PKK were reported against Turkey's security forces including an attack claimed by the PKK in November 2018 against a Turkish army base, which resulted in dozens of casualties. Turkey's Ministry of the Interior claimed that the PKK killed 27 civilians in Turkey in 2018.

Since 2015, the group has been responsible for the deaths of more than 1,200 Turkish security officials and civilians.

Strength: The PKK is estimated to consist of 4,000 to 5,000 members, 3,000 to 3,500 of whom are located in northern Iraq.

Location/Area of Operation: The group is located primarily in Turkey and Iraq. Affiliated groups operate in Syria and Iran.

Funding and External Aid: The PKK receives financial support from the large Kurdish diaspora in Europe.

LASHKAR E-TAYYIBA

Aka al Mansoorien; 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; Jamaat-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; Tehreek-e-Azadi-e-Kashmir; Kashmir Freedom Movement; Tehreek Azadi Jammu and Kashmir; Tehreek-e-Azadi Jammu and Kashmir; TAJK; Movement for Freedom of Kashmir; Tehrik-i-Azadi-i Kashmir; Tehreek-e-Azadi-e-Jammu and Kashmir; Milli Muslim League; Milli Muslim League Pakistan; MML.

Description: Designated as a 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 sanctions. LeT disseminates its message through JUD's media outlets. Since 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 to mount anti-India attacks. The Pakistani government banned LeT in January 2002 and temporarily arrested Hafiz Saeed following the 2008 Mumbai attack. On January 30, 2017, Pakistan placed Saeed under house arrest; however, he was released in November 2017 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 also has 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, in the state of 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, in the state of 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, in the state of 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, in the state of 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. In June 2018, LeT claimed responsibility for a suicide attack against an army camp in Jammu and Kashmir's Bandipora district that killed three soldiers.

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.

Location/Area of Operation: LeT has global connections and a strong operational network throughout South Asia. LeT maintains numerous 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 2018, 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 FTO 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 them with 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.

On May 16, 2018, LJ's Balochistan chief, Salman Badini, and two other LJ militants were killed during a police raid in Quetta, 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 an LJ attack 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 that included the murder of Pakistani singer Amjad Sabri, as well as army and police personnel. LJ did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2017 or 2018.

Strength: LJ's membership is assessed to be in the low hundreds.

Location/Area of Operation: The group is based primarily in Pakistan's Punjab province, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province (formerly known as the Federally Administered Tribal Areas), Karachi, and Balochistan.

Funding and External Aid: Funding comes from wealthy donors in Pakistan, and 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 FTO 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 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 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: The LTTE's financial network of support continued after the group's military defeat in 2009. The LTTE has 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 FTO 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 2018.

Strength: MSC is estimated to have several hundred fighters.

Location/Area of Operation: The group operates in Gaza.

Funding and External Aid: MSC's sources of support are 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 FTO 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 responsibility for 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. Nearly 27 people were killed in the attack, among them a U.S. international development worker.

AMB reportedly was involved in the AQIM January 2016 attack on a popular tourist hotel in Burkina Faso that killed nearly 30, including a U.S. citizen. In addition, AMB claimed responsibility for a suicide car bombing at a military camp in Mali that killed more than 47 people and injured at least 115 in January 2017. In July 2018, AMB was involved in fighting against French forces in Mali.

Strength: AMB's size is 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; Ejército de Liberación Nacional.

Description: The National Liberation Army (ELN) was designated as a FTO on October 8, 1997. The ELN is a Colombian Marxist-Leninist group formed in 1964. The ELN remains focused on attacking the security services and 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 addition, the ELN continued to kidnap civilians and members of the security services.

Throughout 2017, the Government of Colombia and the ELN conducted peace talks but did not ultimately reach an agreement. Peace talks were intermittent throughout 2018 after being suspended in January following a series of bombings that killed several police officers and injured dozens more. The government indefinitely suspended talks in August 2018.

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, and the border regions with Venezuela.

Funding and External Aid: The ELN draws its funding from the illicit narcotics trade, extortion of oil and gas companies, and illegal mining. Additional funds are derived from kidnapping-for-ransom payments.

AL-NUSRAH FRONT

Aka Jabhat al-Nusra; Jabhet al-Nusra; The Victory Front; al-Nusra Front for the People of the Levant; al-Nusra 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; Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham; Hay'et Tahrir al-Sham; Hayat Tahrir al-Sham; HTS; Assembly for the Liberation of Syria; Assembly for Liberation of the Levant; Liberation of al-Sham Commission; Liberation of the Levant Organization; Tahrir al-Sham; Tahrir al-Sham Hay'at.

Description: Al-Nusra Front (ANF) is al-Qa'ida's affiliate in Syria and was designated as a FTO on May 15, 2014. It is led by Abu Muhammad al-Jawlani, also known as 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, and exerts varying degrees of influence over local governance and external plotting.

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 used its Salvation Government in parts of Syria's Idlib province to exert control and offer governance services.

Activities: ANF has been active in operations against other factions in the Syrian conflict. 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 ANF. The Department of State amended the designation in November 2016 to add additional aliases, including Jabhat Fath al-Sham.

ANF continued to 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. In March, the group carried out multiple suicide bombings in Damascus, including suicide attacks using VBIEDs. ANF took control of significant portions of Idlib during 2017 and 2018, exerting severe military pressure over other local groups such as Ahrar ash-Sham and Nur ad-Din al-Zinki as it continued plotting against U.S. and allied interests.

ANF also operated in and around East Ghouta and Homs, Syria. In 2018, the group engaged in numerous skirmishes with the Assad regime and other rebel forces.

Strength: ANF influence and capability is believed to have shrunk in 2018, but the group still has an estimated 12,000 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, taxes and fees on border crossings it controls, and donations from external Gulf-based donors. It also generates revenue by collecting fees from commercial traffic entering and exiting Idlib.

PALESTINE ISLAMIC JIHAD

Aka PIJ; PIJ-Shaqqi 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 FTO 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 roughly 200 new recruits between ages 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. 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 numerous shootings, bombings, and other attacks in Israel that resulted in multiple deaths. In May and October of 2018, PIJ claimed responsibility for launching rockets into Israel from Gaza.

Strength: PIJ has close to 1,000 members.

Location/Area of Operation: PIJ operates primarily in Gaza, with a 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 Iran- and Syria-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 FTO on October 8, 1997. In the late 1970s, the PLF splintered from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command. It later split into pro-Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), pro-Syrian, and pro-Libyan factions. The pro-PLO faction was led by Muhammad Zaydan (aka Abu Abbas) and was based in Baghdad before 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 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 has not publicly claimed any attacks since 2016, but it continues 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: PLF's sources of support are 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 FTO 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 Lebanese-Israel frontier.

In August 2016, the Abu Ali Mustafa Brigades, the PFLP's military wing, 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 PFLP members, although ISIS claimed responsibility for the attack. The PFLP did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2018.

Strength: The group's membership size is unknown.

Location/Area of Operation: The PFLP operates in Gaza, Israel, Lebanon, Syria, and the West Bank.

Funding and External Aid: The PFLP's sources of support are 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 FTO on October 8, 1997. The PFLP-GC split from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) in 1968, claiming it wanted to concentrate 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 has close ties 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, Israel.

In November 2012, the PFLP-GC claimed responsibility for a bus bombing in Tel Aviv that injured 29 people, although four Palestine Islamic Jihad and Hamas operatives later were

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 frontier with Israel. Although the PFLP-GC did not carry out any attacks in 2018, the group remained an active participant in the Syrian conflict.

Strength: The group has several hundred members

Location/Area of Operation: The PFLP-GC's 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 FTO 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. As of 2018, AQ's leader, Ayman al-Zawahiri, remained at-large. In a 2018 video message, al-Zawahiri, called for jihad against the United States after the U.S. Embassy in Israel moved from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

Activities: AQ and its supporters conducted three bombings targeting U.S. troops in Aden, Yemen, 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, Kenya, and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, 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 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 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, 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.

In February 2017, AQ senior leader Abu al-Khayr al-Masri was killed in Syria. In September 2017, a U.S. citizen 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 2017, al-Zawahiri released a video calling for jihadists around the world to conduct attacks against the United States. Al-Zawahiri released multiple recordings and videos in 2018 in which he continued to call for 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 Usama bin Laden, has disrupted communication, financial support, facilitation nodes, and several terrorist plots. AQ, however, remains a focal point of "inspiration" for a worldwide network of affiliated groups. Among them, al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), al-Nusrah Front, al-Shabaab, al-Qa'ida in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS), and other terrorist groups, including the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, Islamic Jihad Union, Lashkar i Jhangvi, Harakat ul-Mujahideen, and Jemaah Islamiya. In September 2014, al-Zawahiri announced the establishment of AQIS. Ongoing counterterrorism efforts by South Asian governments have seriously degraded AQIS. The Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan and the Haqqani Network also have ties to AQ. In addition, supporters and associates worldwide who are "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 Taliban from power in late 2001. Subsequently, the group's core leadership was based largely in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province (formerly known as the 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, and 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 FTO 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 by 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, 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 IED.

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 responsibility for the attack on behalf of AQAP.

Also in 2015, AQAP took advantage of Yemen's deteriorating political and economic environment after the Houthis took over – and pushed the Government of Yemen out of – the capitol, Sana'a. 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. The group lost control of Mukalla in April, when forces backed by the Saudi-led Coalition retook the port city, but these territorial losses did not significantly degrade AQAP's capabilities, although they deprived 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 2017, AQAP conducted an attack using a car bomb and guns at a Yemeni army camp, killing at least two soldiers. In 2018, AQAP senior leader, Khaled Batarfi, called on its supporters to "rise and attack" Americans "everywhere."

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 historically has 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

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 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-Mujahideen.

Activities: AQIS claimed responsibility for the September 6, 2014, attack on a naval dockyard in Karachi, Pakistan, in which militants attempted to hijack a Pakistani Navy frigate to attack nearby U.S. warships. 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. AQIS did not claim responsibility for attacks in 2017 or 2018.

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 FTO 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. The group aspires to overthrow "apostate" African regimes and create an Islamic state. Abdelmalek Droukdel, also known as 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. Terrorists 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, Mali, which wounded seven peacekeepers. Also in 2015, AQIM twice attacked UN convoys near Timbuktu, Mali, with small arms and rocket-propelled grenades; three peacekeepers were killed in a May attack and six peacekeepers were killed in a July attack. In November 2015, AQIM, in cooperation with other terrorist groups, attacked the Radisson Blu Hotel in Bamako, Mali, taking more than 170 hostages, including U.S. citizens. As many as 27 people were killed in the attack, among them a U.S. international development worker.

In January 2016, AQIM carried out an attack on a hotel in Burkina Faso that resulted in 28 deaths; 56 people were injured. In March 2016, AQIM claimed responsibility for a strike on a popular tourist beach resort in Cote d'Ivoire that killed at least 16 people and wounded another 33.

AQIM also has 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 national and a French national), who were later released in December 2014.

In January 2017, AQIM conducted a suicide attack that left more than 50 people dead in Gao, Mali. In July 2018, AQIM claimed responsibility for a vehicle suicide attack on an army patrol in Gao that killed four civilians and wounded 31 others, including four French soldiers.

Strength: AQIM has an estimated 1,000 fighters operating in the Sahel, including Algeria, northern Mali, southwest Libya, and Niger. 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. 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.

Funding and External Aid: AQIM members engage in kidnapping-for-ransom and other criminal activities to finance their operations. AQIM also successfully fundraises globally, and the group 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 Oglagh Na hEireann.

Description: The Real Irish Republican Army (RIRA) was designated as a FTO 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 cease-fire 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 likely was responsible for the majority of the attacks that occurred after the Irish Republican Army (IRA) was decommissioned in Northern Ireland.

In May 2015, Irish police carried out 20 searches aimed at known dissident republicans across Ireland. Six individuals with links to the 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 a cache of explosives they found in Dublin in April 2016.

In January 2017, RIRA gunmen fired at police officers in north Belfast, injuring one officer. RIRA did not publicly claim responsibility for any attacks in 2018.

Strength: The Irish government reports that the RIRA has roughly 100 active members. The organization may receive limited support from IRA hardliners and sympathizers who are dissatisfied with the IRA's cease-fire 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: Founded in 1964 and designated as a FTO on October 8, 1997, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) was Latin America's oldest, largest, and best-equipped terrorist organization. The FARC was responsible for large numbers of kidnappings-for-ransom in Colombia and held as many as 700 hostages in the past. In November 2016, after four years of negotiation in Havana, Cuba, the Colombian government and FARC reached a peace agreement, which later was approved by Colombia's Congress, putting in motion a disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration process. In accordance with the peace agreement, the great majority of FARC combatants disarmed and demobilized between December 2016 and August 2017 under UN supervision, with roughly 7,000 FARC members turning in more than 9,000 weapons. Roughly 3,500 additional ex-combatants are participating in peace accord reincorporation programs. Nevertheless, a troubling number of FARC members chose not to participate in the peace process and others have since abandoned the process. These individuals are often referred to as FARC dissidents.

Activities: Over the years, the FARC has perpetrated many 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.

The FARC did not claim any attacks in 2018, but there have been reports of continued extortion and violent criminal activities by FARC dissidents not participating in the 2016 peace agreement.

Strength: Before the peace accord, the FARC was estimated to have 7,000 armed members, with several thousand additional supporters.

Location/Area of Operation: FARC leaders and combatants were located in Colombia.

Funding and External Aid: Before the peace accord, the FARC has been funded primarily by extortion and the international drug trade. FARC dissidents continue such activities.

REVOLUTIONARY PEOPLE’S LIBERATION PARTY/FRONT

Aka DHKP/C; Dev Sol; Dev Sol Armed Revolutionary Units; Dev Sol Silahlı Devrimci Birlikleri; Dev Sol SDB; Devrimci Halk Kurtulus Partisi-Cephesi; Devrimci Sol; Revolutionary Left.

Description: Designated as a FTO on October 8, 1997, the Revolutionary People’s Liberation Party/Front (DHKP/C) was formed originally 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 and “Front” alludes to the group’s militant operations. The group advocates a Marxist-Leninist ideology and opposes the United States, NATO, and the Turkish establishment. 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 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 IEDs 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 many 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 died from multiple gunshot wounds inflicted 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.

In November 2018, a court in Istanbul issued an arrest warrant for members of the DHKP/C who were believed to be in Europe and connected with the 2015 death of Turkish prosecutor Mehmet Selim Kiraz.

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 reside 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 FTO on May 18, 2009, Revolutionary Struggle (RS) is a radical Marxist extremist group that has conducted attacks against both Greek and U.S. targets in Greece. RS emerged in 2003 following the arrests of members of two other Greek Marxist 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 IED attacks that included a March 2004 attack outside 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 the group's 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 RS members 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. Before 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. In July 13, 2018, his partner, Roupa, was sentenced to life and 25 years imprisonment for the 2014 bomb attack.

Strength: The group's size is unknown.

Location/Area of Operation: RS is based in Athens, Greece.

Funding and External Aid: The group's funding sources are unknown, but it most likely supports itself by means of 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; al-Hijra, Al Hijra, Muslim Youth Center, MYC, Pumwani Muslim Youth, Pumwani Islamist Muslim Youth Center.

Description: Al-Shabaab was designated as a FTO 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 engaged in 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 owing 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 a U.S. citizen. 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 VBIED and small arms fire, al-Shabaab massed against a Kenyan AMISOM base and killed more than 100 soldiers. In February 2016, al-Shabaab attempted to down Daallo Airlines Flight 321 with 74 passengers on board, but only the suicide bomber was killed in the explosion. Al-Shabaab carried out a series of raids in northeast Kenya in October 2016, 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 the capital, Mogadishu. A similar attack in the capital killed more than a dozen people in March. In June, an estimated 20 people were killed by means of a car bomb and shooting at a hotel and adjacent restaurant. In October, although the group did not 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 more than 500 people and injured 300 others.

In July 2018, al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for an attack on Somalia's interior ministry compound, killing at least nine people. In September 2018, al-Shabaab was implicated in an attack on Somalia's capital that left at least six people dead. In November 2018, al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for an attack in which suicide attackers set off two car bombs at a hotel near the headquarters of Somalia's Criminal Investigations Department in Mogadishu, killing at least 17 people.

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 2018, 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. Al-Shabaab 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 in 2018.

Funding and External Aid: While al-Shabaab has seen its income diminish owing 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 by means of 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; Ejército Guerrillero Popular (People's Guerrilla Army); EGP; Ejército Popular de Liberación (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 FTO 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 as a principal enemy.

Activities: SL committed 13 terrorist attacks in 2015, in comparison with 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.

In June 2018, six soldiers were wounded by SL sharpshooters at the Nueva Libertad military base. Also in June, a group of SL members killed five soldiers and wounded one in an attack at the Nueva Libertad military base in the region of Junín. In the same month, SL members attacked a police vehicle using a roadside bomb, killing four policemen.

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. Almost all its activity takes place in rural areas, specifically the Apurimac, Ene, and Montaro River Valleys of eastern Peru, often referred as the VRAEM.

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 FTO 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 Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province (formerly known as 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. Mullah Fazlullah headed the group until his death in June 2018. TTP then named Mufti Noor Wali Mehsud as the group's new leader. 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 Khyber Pakhtunkhwa 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 the group 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 its members' operational expertise.

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 involvement in the 2007 assassination of former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto. TTP directed and facilitated Faisal Shahzad's failed attempt to detonate an explosive device in New York City's Times Square on May 1, 2010.

Between 2011 and 2018, TTP continued to carry out attacks against the Government of Pakistan and Pakistani civilian targets, and 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. The group carried out 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 conducted 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.

TTP attacks in 2017 included several suicide bombings, among them a February attack that targeted a protest in Lahore, a March attack on a mosque in northwestern Pakistan, and a July

attack in Lahore that killed 26 people. In December 2017, TTP militants disguised as women stormed an agricultural training school in Peshawar, leaving nine dead including the attackers.

TTP's attacks continued in 2018. In February 2018, TTP claimed responsibility for a suicide bombing that resulted in the deaths of at least 11 Pakistani security personnel in Swat, Pakistan. TTP also claimed responsibility for a March 2018 suicide bombing that targeted a checkpoint on the outskirts of Lahore, resulting in the deaths of four police officers and two civilians.

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-for-ransom payments, extortion, and other criminal activity.

Chapter 6

Legislative Requirements and Key Terms

Country Reports on Terrorism 2018 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 [deemed under Section 1768(c)(2) of the National Defense Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 2019 (NDAA FY19) to refer to section 1754(c) of the NDAA FY19 as of August 13, 2018]; 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 are therefore specific to the statutory and other requirements of the report, and 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 Development Services Group, Inc. (DSG). The statistical annex includes a discussion of the methodology employed by DSG 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.