



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE**

# **COUNTRY REPORTS ON TERRORISM 2020**

**December 2021**

# Country Reports on Terrorism 2020

## **BUREAU OF COUNTERTERRORISM**

Country Reports on Terrorism 2020 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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# Foreword

During 2020 the United States and its partners made significant major strides against terrorist organizations; however, the terrorism threat has become more geographically dispersed in regions around the world. Together with international partners, the United States has responded to the evolving threat, including by expanding the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, which now counts 83 members. The Defeat-ISIS Coalition worked to consolidate gains in Iraq and Syria, while broadening efforts to counter the growing ISIS threat in West Africa and the Sahel. In March the United States designated the new leader of ISIS, Amir Muhammad Sa'id Abdal-Rahman al-Mawla, as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT). U.S.-led military operations in 2020 resulted in the deaths of Qassim al-Rimi, the emir of al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), and of senior al-Qa'ida (AQ) leaders in Syria. The United States continued to address threats posed by state-sponsored terrorism, sanctioning Iran-supported groups such as Iraq-based Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq and Bahrain-based Saraya al-Mukhtar. Nine countries across the Western Hemisphere and Europe took significant steps in 2020 to designate, ban, or otherwise restrict Hizballah — following the lead of four other governments that took similar actions the previous year. Reflecting the growing threat from racially or ethnically motivated violent extremism (REMVE), the Department of State also designated a white supremacist terrorist organization for the first time in 2020, imposing sanctions against the Russian Imperial Movement (RIM) and three of its leaders in April.

Despite important counterterrorism successes, terrorist groups remained a persistent and pervasive threat worldwide. Although ISIS lost all the territory it had seized in Iraq and Syria, the organization and its branches continued to mount a worldwide terrorism campaign, carrying out deadly attacks globally. Illustrating the evolving threat, ISIS affiliates outside Iraq and Syria caused more fatalities during 2020 than in any previous year. ISIS maintained an active presence and low-level insurgency in Iraq and Syria, with increased attacks in both countries during the first half of 2020. In South and Southeast Asia, ISIS radicalized individuals to violence, inspiring them to conduct attacks. In Africa, ISIS-affiliated groups increased the volume and lethality of their attacks across West Africa, the Sahel, the Lake Chad Basin, and northern Mozambique. Deaths attributable to ISIS-affiliated attacks in West Africa alone almost doubled from around 2,700 in 2017 to nearly 5,000 in 2020. In Mozambique, an estimated 1,500 deaths were due to ISIS-Mozambique attacks.

In 2020 the United States and its partners continued to battle AQ and its affiliates around the world. The organization faced significant leadership losses with the elimination of Abdelmalek Droukdel, the emir of al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, and AQ's number two, Abu Muhammad al-Masri. Yet, AQ's networks continued to exploit undergoverned spaces, conflict zones, and security gaps in the Middle East to acquire terrorist resources and conduct terrorist attacks. AQ further bolstered its presence abroad, particularly in the Middle East and Africa, where AQ affiliates AQAP, al-Shabaab in the Horn of Africa, and Jama'at Nasr al-Islam wal Muslimin in the Sahel remain among the most active and dangerous terrorist groups in the world. In January 2020, al-Shabaab attacked a military base shared by U.S. and Kenyan military forces in Manda Bay, Kenya, killing one U.S. servicemember and two U.S. contractors. This incident marked the deadliest terrorist attack against U.S. military forces in Africa since 2017.

Iran continued to support acts of terrorism regionally and globally during 2020. Regionally, Iran supported proxies and partner groups in Bahrain, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, and Yemen, including Hizballah and Hamas. Senior AQ leaders continued to reside in Iran and facilitate terrorist operations from there. Globally, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Qods Force remained the primary Iranian actors involved in supporting terrorist recruitment, financing, and plots across Europe, Africa, and Asia, and both Americas.

The REMVE threat also continued to expand rapidly, including growing transnational links between REMVE actors around the world. The UN Security Council's Counterterrorism Committee noted a 320 percent increase in "extreme right-wing terrorism" globally in the five years preceding 2020. White supremacist, anti-government, violent conspiracy theorist, and like-minded individuals and groups targeted perceived enemies and conducted deadly attacks around the world. U.S.-based REMVE actors have communicated with and traveled abroad to engage in person with foreign REMVE actors. In February, a racially motivated violent extremist in Hanau, Germany, shot nine patrons in two shisha bars and then returned home to shoot his mother and finally himself, underscoring the recent surge in violence by REMVE actors.

The global COVID-19 pandemic complicated the terrorist landscape, creating both challenges and opportunities for terrorist groups. While the pandemic disrupted terrorist travel, financing, and operations, terrorist groups adapted their approaches and appeals, using the internet to continue radicalizing others to violence and inspiring attacks worldwide. ISIS exploited the crisis to reinforce violent extremist narratives, proclaiming to followers that the virus was "God's wrath upon the West." AQ affiliate al-Shabaab demonstrated an ability to raise and manage substantial resources. Al-Shabaab also engaged in disinformation campaigns to exacerbate COVID-19-related grievances and undermine trust in the Government of Somalia. REMVE actors used the pandemic to incite violence, advocating for followers to actively spread the virus to members of religious or racial minority groups. The pandemic posed additional risks to some U.S. partners, who were less able to focus on counterterrorism efforts and other national security issues given the immediate need to address the COVID-19 crisis.

Amid this diverse and dynamic threat landscape, the United States played an important role in marshaling international efforts to counter global terrorism. In 2020 the United States led the UN Security Council's 1267 Sanctions Committee's efforts to designate ISIS affiliates in West Africa, the Greater Sahara, Libya, Yemen, and Indonesia and assign designations to Muhammad Sa'id Abdal-Rahman al-Mawla, the new ISIS leader, and Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan leader Noor Wali Mehsud. In November the United States and Nigeria co-hosted the first Defeat-ISIS Coalition meeting on combating ISIS threats across West Africa and the Sahel. At this meeting, Mauritania announced its membership in the Defeat-ISIS Coalition, becoming its 83rd member and the 13th from sub-Saharan Africa. Additionally, the United States continued high-level diplomatic engagement to counter Hizballah across Central America, South America, and Europe. In January the United States participated in the third Western Hemisphere Counterterrorism Ministerial in Bogota, Colombia — a high-level process launched by the United States in 2018 to confront terrorist threats in the region. This ministerial has been critical in advancing U.S. efforts against Hizballah, with five South and Central American countries

recognizing the group as a unitary terrorist organization in the last several years. In 2020, Germany also banned Hizballah domestically with numerous other European governments, including Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Slovenia, following suit with steps of its own.

The United States continued to play a major role in the repatriation, rehabilitation, reintegration, and prosecution of ISIS foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) and family members. The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) have detained about 2,000 non-Syrian and non-Iraqi fighters who remain in Syria. In addition, there are roughly 5,000 Syrian and 2,000 Iraqi fighters in SDF custody. Tens of thousands of FTF family members, primarily women and children, remain in displaced persons' camps in Syria. To ensure that ISIS fighters and family members captured by the SDF never return to the battlefield, the United States continued to lead by example in bringing back its citizens and prosecuting them when appropriate. As of December, the United States had repatriated 28 U.S. citizens from Syria and Iraq — 12 adults and 16 children — and the Department of Justice charged 10 of the adults with a variety of terrorism-related crimes.

The United States also urged countries of origin to repatriate, rehabilitate, reintegrate, and, where appropriate, prosecute their fighters and associated family members. The U.S. government also assisted several countries in doing so with their citizens or nationals. Additionally, in October, the United States supported the United Kingdom in the transfer of Alexandra Amon Kotey and El Shafee Elsheikh, two of the four ISIS militant fighters known as the “Beatles,” to the United States for prosecution. The two individuals were charged for their involvement in a hostage-taking scheme that caused the deaths of four U.S. citizens, as well as the deaths of British and Japanese nationals, in Syria.

Another major line of effort for 2020 was to strengthen partner capabilities to detect, disrupt, and dismantle terrorist networks. The United States supported governments on the front lines against terrorist threats in critical areas, including information sharing, aviation and border security, law enforcement capacity building, and countering the financing of terrorism. To restrict terrorist travel, the United States signed seven arrangements either with new partner countries or new agencies in existing partner countries, under Homeland Security Presidential Directive/HSPD-6, to share information on known and suspected terrorists, bringing the total number of partner countries to 78. The Personal Identification Secure Comparison and Evaluation System (known as PISCES) border security platform grew to include 227 ports of entry in 24 countries, with international partners using it to screen hundreds of thousands of travelers each day.

The United States continued to emphasize to its partners — both publicly and privately — the critical responsibility of governments engaged in counterterrorism operations to ensure that their security forces respect international human rights and humanitarian law and hold their security forces accountable for violations and abuses committed against civilians during these operations.

The United States also engaged with multilateral organizations, including the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, and *Hedayah*, to advance U.S. counterterrorism priorities, bolster partner capacity to implement international obligations and commitments, and promote greater burden sharing among key partners. The United States partnered with the United Kingdom and the International Institute of Justice and Rule of Law to launch a new REMVE-focused initiative that gathered

more than 40 practitioners and subject-matter experts from 15 countries and nine international organizations to share best practices and identify concrete steps to confront this threat more effectively. In September the 30-member Global Counterterrorism Forum adopted two important framework documents focused on strengthening coordination between national-level and local-level efforts to counter violent extremism and enhance criminal justice responses at the nexus of terrorism and organized crime.

The United States engaged a host of international partners — from governments to local religious leaders and tech companies — to prevent and counter violent extremism, both online and offline. The Department of State supported international initiatives, including the Strong Cities Network and the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund, and focused on building local resiliency to terrorist radicalization and recruitment misinformation and disinformation, most recently through funded programs in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Kenya, Somalia, the Philippines, the Sahel, and the Western Balkans. The United States also integrated countermessaging strategies with critical stakeholder partners, including the tech sector. For example, the Department of State engaged with U.S.-based technology companies in 2020, after designating RIM as an SDGT. In response, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Google/YouTube subsequently decided to remove RIM accounts and content from their platforms. In addition, the United States enhanced efforts through the Global Internet Forum to Counterterrorism to support voluntary collaboration with technology companies to deter terrorist access to their platforms.

This brief overview of the United States' ongoing work to protect our people and our allies from the ongoing threat of terrorism reflects the breadth and depth of our efforts. Country Reports on Terrorism 2020 provides a detailed review of last year's successes and the ongoing challenges facing our country and our partners around the world, challenges that will require a continued commitment to and investment in global counterterrorism efforts going forward.

John T. Godfrey  
Acting Coordinator for Counterterrorism

# Abbreviations

AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia
AML/CFT	Anti-Money Laundering and Countering Financing of Terrorism
APEC	Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation
APG	Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering
API	Advance Passenger Information
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ATA	Anti-Terrorism Assistance
ATS-G	Automated Targeting System-Global
AU	African Union
BH	Boko Haram
CBP	U.S. Customs and Border Protection
CFT	Countering the Financing of Terrorism
CICTE	Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism
CPP/NPA	Communist Party of the Philippines/New People's Army
CT	Counterterrorism
CTED	United Nations Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate
CVE	Countering Violent Extremism
DHS	U.S. Department of Homeland Security
DoD	Department of Defense
DOJ	U.S. Department of Justice
EAG	Eurasian Group on Combatting Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing
EU	European Union
EUROPOL	European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation
EXBS	Export Control and Related Border Security Program
FARC	Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia
FATF	Financial Action Task Force
FIU	Financial Intelligence Unit
FTF	foreign terrorist fighter
FTO	Foreign Terrorist Organization
GAFILAT	Financial Action Task Force of Latin America
GCERF	Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund
GCTF	Global Counterterrorism Forum
GICNT	Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism
GTR	Global Threat Reduction Program
IDP	internally displaced person
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
IDP	internally displaced persons
IED	improvised explosive device
INTERPOL	International Police Criminal Organization
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria



JNIM	Jama-at Nusrat al-Islam wal Muslim
MFT	Measures and the Financing of Terrorism
MINUSMA	UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
MONEYVAL	Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering
MOU	memorandum of understanding
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	nongovernmental organization
OAS	Organization of American States
ODNI	Office of the Director of National Intelligence
OPCW	Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PKK	Kurdistan Workers' Party
PNR	Passenger Name Record
PISCES	Personal Identification Secure Comparison and Evaluation System
PREACT	Partnership for Regional East Africa Counterterrorism
REMVE	racially or ethnically motivated violent extremism
TSCTP	Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNOCT	United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism
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
VBIED	Vehicle-Borne Improvised Explosive Device
WIT	white identity terrorism
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

## **For More Information**

### **The Human Rights Report**

In the countries listed below, significant human rights issues influenced the state of terrorist activity in the country and may have impeded effective counterterrorism policies and programs or supported causes and conditions for further violence. Such human rights issues included, among others, unlawful and arbitrary killings, including extrajudicial killings, forced disappearances, torture, and arbitrary detention (all of the preceding by both government and nonstate actors); harsh and life-threatening prison conditions; violence against and unjustified arrests of journalists; substantial interference with the rights of peaceful assembly and freedom of association; widespread and pervasive corruption; repression of religious freedom and violence against religious minorities; and forced and bonded labor.

Please see the U.S. Department of State *2020 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* and the *2020 Report on International Religious Freedom* for more information:

<https://www.state.gov/reports/2020-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/>

<https://www.state.gov/reports/2020-report-on-international-religious-freedom/>

Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Egypt, India, Iraq, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyz Republic, Lebanon, Libya, Maldives, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Syria, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Yemen.

**The International Narcotics Control Strategy Report**

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes regarding the countries listed below, see the *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report, Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*: <https://www.state.gov/2020-international-narcotics-control-strategy-report/>.

Albania, Azerbaijan, Brazil, China, Cyprus, Hong Kong, Macau, Malaysia, Mexico, the Netherlands, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Russia, Thailand, Turkey.

## Members of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS

<b>Country or Organization</b>	<b>Continent or Region</b>
Afghanistan	South and Central Asia
Albania	Europe
Australia	East Asia and the Pacific
Austria	Europe
Bahrain	Middle East and North Africa
Belgium	Europe
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Europe
Bulgaria	Europe
Cameroon	Africa
Canada	Western Hemisphere
Central African Republic	Africa
Chad	Africa
Croatia	Europe
Cyprus	Europe
Czech Republic	Europe
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Africa
Denmark	Europe
Djibouti	Africa
Egypt	Middle East and North Africa
Estonia	Europe
Ethiopia	Africa
Fiji	East Asia and the Pacific
Finland	Europe
France	Europe
Georgia	Europe
Germany	Europe
Greece	Europe
Hungary	Europe
Iceland	Europe
Iraq	Middle East and North Africa
Ireland	Europe
Italy	Europe
Japan	East Asia and the Pacific
Jordan	Middle East and North Africa
Kenya	Africa
Kosovo	Europe
Kuwait	Middle East and North Africa
Latvia	Europe
Lebanon	Middle East and North Africa
Libya	Middle East and North Africa
Lithuania	Europe
Luxembourg	Europe

Malaysia	East Asia and the Pacific
Mauritania	Africa
Moldova	Europe
Montenegro	Europe
Morocco	Middle East and North Africa
Netherlands	Europe
New Zealand	East Asia and the Pacific
Niger	Africa
Nigeria	Africa
Norway	Europe
Oman	Middle East and North Africa
Panama	Western Hemisphere
Philippines	East Asia and the Pacific
Poland	Europe
Portugal	Europe
Qatar	Middle East and North Africa
Republic of Guinea	Africa
Republic of North Macedonia	Europe
Romania	Europe
Saudi Arabia	Middle East and North Africa
Serbia	Europe
Singapore	East Asia and the Pacific
Slovakia	Europe
Slovenia	Europe
Somalia	Africa
South Korea	East Asia and the Pacific
Spain	Europe
Sweden	Europe
Taiwan	East Asia and the Pacific
Tunisia	Middle East and North Africa
Turkey	Europe
Ukraine	Europe
United Arab Emirates	Middle East and North Africa
United Kingdom	Europe
United States	Western Hemisphere
Yemen	Middle East and North Africa
Arab League	Middle East and North Africa
Community of Sahel-Saharan States	Africa
INTERPOL	Global
NATO Western Hemisphere	Europe
The European Union	Europe

## Chapter 1. Country Reports on Terrorism

### AFRICA

**Overview:** African countries and regional organizations sustained ongoing counterterrorism (CT) efforts against threats in East Africa, the Sahel, and the Lake Chad region while increasing emphasis on preventing the expansion of terrorist groups, their affiliates, and associated organizations into new operating areas in West, Central, and Southern Africa.

In East Africa, Al-Qaeda-affiliate al-Shabaab (AS) retained access to recruits, the ability to raise and manage substantial resources, and de facto control over large parts of Somalia through which it moved freely and launched external operations attacks in neighboring Kenya, including a January attack that killed three Americans in Manda Bay, Kenya. The group conducts high-profile, sophisticated attacks on Somali civilian and government targets throughout southern Somalia, including in Mogadishu. It frequently targets African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) troops and ambushes security forces along supply routes. At times, AS also tried to contain the northern Somalia-based group of ISIS-linked fighters responsible for local suicide bombings and other attacks against Somali security forces in greater Mogadishu.

AMISOM and Somali security forces continued cooperation with the United States to exert pressure on AS, primarily through coordinated CT operations and small advances in governance in southern Somalia. The United States continued to support East African partners across the Horn of Africa in their efforts to build CT capacity, including in aviation and border security, advisory assistance for regional security forces, countering terrorist finance, advancing criminal justice sector reforms, and training and mentoring of law enforcement to manage crisis response and conduct investigations. East African partners undertook efforts to develop and expand regional cooperation mechanisms to detect and interdict terrorist travel and other terrorism-related activities.

In the Lake Chad region, ISIS-West Africa (ISIS-WA) and, to a lesser extent, Boko Haram (BH), continued to conduct attacks against civilians, government personnel and facilities, and security forces, which resulted in deaths, injuries, abductions, and the capture and destruction of property. 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, deradicalization from violence, and reintegration programming. Continued attacks by ISIS-WA and BH have taken a heavy toll on the civilian population, especially in northeast Nigeria, where attacks have displaced more than 2 million people and left roughly 10 million in need of humanitarian assistance.

In the broader Sahel region, terrorist groups expanded their operations in Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger. These include affiliates of al-Qa'ida and ISIS, such as Jama'at Nasr al-Islam wal Muslimin (JNIM) and ISIS-Greater Sahara (ISIS-GS), respectively. Partner countries often lacked the means to contain or degrade the threat on a sustained basis. The G-5 Sahel Joint Force (Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger), launched in 2017 to coordinate CT operations among member countries, is not yet capable of disrupting the growing terrorist

footprint across the Sahel. France's Operation *Barkhane* continued to play a crucial role in countering terrorist groups while MINUSMA promoted a level of basic security.

Terrorists routinely manipulate intercommunal conflicts by supporting longstanding claims against other groups to gain support for terrorist operations. Terrorists continued to carry out attacks on military outposts; kidnap or attack western private citizens and humanitarian workers; attack churches, mosques, and schools teaching western curricula; and assassinate civil servants and politicians. In Mali the government showed an inability to regain control of northern and central parts of the country. In Burkina Faso, terrorists have increased their operations nationwide. There was also a notable uptick in violence in the tri-border region shared by Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger, marked by a surge in fighting between JNIM and ISIS-GS, which affected all three countries.

Terrorist activities increased in central and southern Africa in 2020. In eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the ISIS-affiliate in the DRC (ISIS-DRC), also known as the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) and Madina at Tauheed Wau Mujahedeen (MTM), attacked Congolese civilians, the FARDC, and UN peacekeepers. According to the UN Joint Human Rights Office in the DRC (UNJHRO), the deaths of at least 849 men, women, and children were attributed to the ADF in North Kivu and Ituri provinces during 2020.

According to the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (or ACLED), since 2017 there have been a reported 697 violent events in Cabo Delgado Province in Mozambique and 2,393 fatalities associated with the ISIS branch in Mozambique (ISIS-Mozambique). Sixty-three percent of all ISIS-Mozambique activity since 2017 occurred in 2020, while 66 percent of all ISIS-Mozambique-related fatalities occurred in 2020. Attacks attributed to ISIS-Mozambique in 2020 were more than 130 percent higher than in 2019. Similarly, fatalities attributed to ISIS-Mozambique in 2020 were 172 percent higher than in 2019 and ISIS-Mozambique-associated violence led to the internal displacement of more than 500,000 people.

ISIS facilitation networks and cells remain a threat in South Africa, after the South African government first publicly acknowledged the group's existence in the country in 2016. In July, ISIS threatened to expand its "fighting front" into South Africa if South Africa entered the ISIS conflict in Mozambique.

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## BURKINA FASO

**Overview:** Terrorist attacks continued to increase steadily in 2020. Security incidents included the use of IEDs, kidnapping, small-arms attacks, and targeted killings in an expanding part of the country in the North, the East, and the South. Targets appeared to shift from military and gendarme units to civilians and volunteer defense forces. The African Center for Strategic Studies noted in its July 21 report that the majority of violent attacks in the Sahel from July 2019 to June 2020 were in Burkina Faso (516 versus 361 in Mali and 118 in Niger). The active terrorist organizations remain ISIS-GS, the homegrown Ansaroul Islam, and JNIM (the last an incorporation of the Sahara Branch of al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb, al-Murabitoun, Ansar al-Dine, and the Macina Liberation Front). Activity is concentrated in Est, Nord, and Sahel regions and along the borders with Mali and Niger. There are more than one million internally

displaced persons in Burkina Faso, the great majority of whom were driven from their homes by instability caused by extremist violence.

Early 2020 saw a sharp increase in terrorist attacks directed at the civilian population. In the first month of the year, more than 100 civilians were killed in targeted attacks in northern provinces. No group claimed responsibility for any of the incidents. In July, presumed terrorists conducted three attacks in three different parts of the country, targeting civilians and burning more than a dozen schools to the ground. Terrorists continued to target traditional and political leaders for assassination, with about two dozen incidents in the first six months of the year.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** Violent extremists concentrated their attacks on civilians, humanitarian assistance programs, and volunteer defense forces, expanding from prior attacks that largely targeted military and police personnel and other associated facilities.

- On May 30, assailants who self-identified on social media as members of JNIM, attacked a gendarme-escorted convoy contracted by the World Food Program (WFP) to deliver food aid to internally displaced persons. Gendarmes and civilians were reportedly killed. This was one of three attacks on WFP convoys in a two-month period.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** There were no significant legislative changes since 2019. The antiterrorist judicial police (*Brigade Spéciale des Investigations Antiterroristes*, or BSIAT) continued to prepare cases for prosecution, and the specialized CT court referred numerous completed investigative cases for trial, but no terrorism-related cases have been adjudicated and more than 900 terror suspects remain in pretrial detention at the High-Security Prison.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Burkina Faso is a member of the Intergovernmental Action Group Against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA), a Financial Action Task Force (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. The cash-intensive nature of Burkina Faso's economy complicates the investigation of terrorist financing activities. Terrorist groups fund their activities primarily through the trafficking of illicit goods in coordination with organized criminal groups, robbery, and kidnapping, often targeting gold mining operations, rather than through sophisticated money laundering schemes. CENTIF-BF tracks terrorist financing and refers cases to the specialized financial or terrorism courts for prosecutions. No criminal terrorist financing cases were charged in 2020, according to the CENTIF-BF chief.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** There were no significant updates since 2019.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Burkina Faso continues its participation in the G-5 Sahel — along with Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger — which promotes security, development, and governance within and across Sahel member countries. Burkinabe investigators participated in regional cybersecurity programs, and the U.S. Department of Justice

brought Nigerien judges to Ouagadougou to mentor Burkinabe judges on handling terrorism trials.

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## CAMEROON

**Overview:** In 2020, terrorist activity increased in Cameroon in the Far North Region. Terrorists launched at least 400 attacks during the year, a 90 percent increase since 2019. The government attributed these terrorist attacks to Boko Haram and ISIS-West Africa. According to reports, terrorists mostly targeted civilians. In November, Caritas Maroua-Mokolo, a Catholic humanitarian organization based in the Far North Region, reported that terrorist attacks on civilians were “grossly underreported.” The International Organization of Migration estimated the number of displaced persons as of October at 321,886, while UNHCR reported 114,710 Nigerian refugees in October. Boko Haram and ISIS-WA carried out significantly more suicide attacks, compared with 2019. Terror attacks appeared to target communities and locations that hosted internally displaced persons (IDPs).

Terrorists attacked vigilance committee members and local community leaders in the Far North Region. In July the government relocated 155 former Boko Haram and ISIS-WA fighters from the Multinational Joint Taskforce (MNJTF) camp in Mora to a demobilization, deradicalization, and reintegration (DDR) center in Meri. In September the government inaugurated a camp in Mozogo for the Rapid Intervention Battalion (BIR), an elite military force that has played a large part in the Cameroonian and regional war against Boko Haram.

Cameroon continued its CT cooperation with the international community. Over the course of the year, Cameroon contributed to operations of the MNJTF. Cameroon also remained a member of the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership. Countering terrorist threats remained a top security priority for the Government of Cameroon, which continued to work with the United States to improve the capacity of its security forces.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** On November 13 the African Center for Strategic Studies reported that Boko Haram and ISIS-WA carried out at least 400 attacks in 2020, compared with just over 200 in 2019. Attacks included raids in search of supplies, indiscriminate killings, targeted murders, beheadings, suicide bombings, abductions, arsons, and lootings. A representative sample of the deadliest attacks in the Far North Region included the following:

- On January 19, Boko Haram terrorists ambushed and killed at least six civilians in Ganse.
- On April 5, Boko Haram suicide bombers killed more than 10 civilians in Amchide.
- On August 1, two suicide bombers killed at least 17 civilians and injured 16 others in Nguetechewe.
- On August 25, according to authorities, ISIS-WA fighters killed 14 community leaders on Bulgaram, an island in Lake Chad.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** In 2020, Cameroon prosecuted numerous alleged Boko Haram-affiliated defendants for terrorism-related crimes. U.S. government officials observed greater adherence to fair trial principles in court, including the requirement of evidence to support convictions. In September a judge at the Yaoundé Military



Tribunal sentenced four Cameroonian soldiers to 10 years in prison for killing 13 unarmed civilians during a counter-Boko Haram operation in 2015 in the Far North.

Cameroon continued to use the 2014 antiterrorism law to suppress dissent and arrested journalists, activists, and opposition party members. In September the government banned a protest by the Cameroon Renaissance Movement opposition party and threatened to prosecute anyone who defied the ban under the antiterrorism law.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** There have been no significant updates since 2019. Cameroon is a member of the Task Force on Money Laundering in Central Africa (GABAC), a FATF-style regional body. Cameroon’s FIU, the National Agency for Financial Investigation, is a member of the Egmont Group.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** In July the government relocated 155 former Boko Haram and ISIS-WA fighters from the MNJTF camp in Mora to a temporary DDR center in Meri. In November, Far North Region DDR coordinator Oumar Bichair told media the government was financing apprenticeships and income-generating activities for ex-fighters at the Meri Center. In 2020 the government reintegrated at least 20 ex-Boko Haram and ex-ISIS-WA hostages kidnapped from Amchide and Limani in the Far North Region.

During a four-day operation in February dubbed “BIR Against Blindness,” the BIR, carried out more than 100 free eye surgeries in the Far North Region as part of a drive to strengthen collaboration with local communities in the fight against terrorism. Before school resumption in October, security forces who described education as the “most effective tool against terrorism” refurbished many schools destroyed by violent extremists.

In 2020 the Ministry of Youth and Civic Education and the United Nations Population Fund launched a project to stabilize and revive communities affected by terrorist attacks in the Far North Region. They organized a workshop to train youth to carry out actions aimed at preventing the terrorist radicalization of adolescents in the Far North Region.

In 2020, SADEC, a local NGO based in the Far North Region, launched a community radio program to inform communities affected by terrorist attacks about DDR programs and encourage host communities to forgive and accept ex-Boko Haram and ex-ISIS-WA fighters.

In 2020, ADELPA, a local NGO, implemented a project where youth associations carried out actions to promote peace in the areas of the Far North Region affected by terrorist attacks.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Cameroon continued its counterterrorism cooperation with the international community, contributing significantly to operations of the Multi-National Joint Task Force.

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## CHAD

**Overview:** In 2020, Chad experienced persistent terrorist attacks against military and civilian targets in the Lake Chad region. In March, suspected Boko Haram (BH) militants killed 98

Chadian soldiers near Boma in the Lake Chad region, the deadliest single attack in Chad's history. In April the Chadian government's "Wrath of Boma" military offensive, which stretched across Niger's and Nigeria's borders, repulsed BH fighters but failed to establish security in areas bordering Lake Chad. BH continued employing suicide bombers and IEDs, including the first documented use of a maritime IED in Chad. BH continued to be the most active terrorist organization in Chad, and ISIS-West Africa also maintained a presence. The Chadian government remained a reliable partner of U.S. and other CT missions even as the COVID-19 pandemic depressed government revenues. Security forces and basic government services remained underfunded, which limited the Chadian government's effectiveness, but Chadian armed forces led missions within the region to maintain security in the Sahel. Chad maintained a strong commitment to fight terrorists by deploying soldiers to Mali to support MINUSMA, bolstering the Lake Chad Region's MNJTF, and committing forces to the G-5 Sahel Joint Force. Chad continued to host the French Operation *Barkhane*, France's CT mission for the Sahel. The United States remained the largest direct supporter of Chadian security forces.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** BH and ISIS-WA continued attacks around the eastern and northern shores of Lake Chad. Many of these were small raids to plunder supplies, but terrorist groups also mounted several larger attacks on Chadian military outposts involving 100 or more terrorist fighters. Terrorists employed a host of techniques, including suicide bombings, IEDs, ambushes, and kidnappings. The following list details only a fraction of incidents that occurred:

- On January 20 a suspected BH female suicide bomber killed nine persons in Kaiga Kindjiria.
- On March 23, suspected BH militants killed 98 Chadian soldiers near Boma in the Lake Chad region, the deadliest single attack in Chad's history.
- On November 25, terrorists killed 4 Chadian soldiers and severely injured 16 others by employing a maritime IED, the first recorded use of this method against Chadian forces.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** On May 20, President Déby signed a new terrorism-related law banning capital punishment for terrorist acts. COVID-19 disruptions and capacity constraints limited the use of the law to investigate or reintegrate terrorist suspects.

Securing borders remains difficult. Porous borders, particularly across Lake Chad, provided easy passage for terrorists and criminal entities. Border security remained a shared task of the Gendarmes, Army, Customs, and the National and Nomadic Guard (GNNT), none of which was resourced sufficiently. The Army and GNNT comprised the front line in nearly all major incidents involving BH and ISIS-WA. At official ports of entry, both air and ground, Chad was a partner in the PISCES program, a border security platform to counter terrorist travel. The Chadian government launched biometric passports featuring public key infrastructure chips containing 16 biometric data points in compliance with International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and Central African Economic and Monetary Community standards.

Following the Wrath of Boma military operation, the Chadian government transferred 58 suspected terrorists to a Gendarmerie prison in N'Djamena. On April 16, 44 prisoners were found dead in their cell, a single room housing all 58 suspects. Chad's National Commission on Human Rights attributed the 44 prisoners' deaths to overcrowding in a cell designed for 20

people, the oppressive heat of Chad's dry season, and lack of adequate food and water. The Chadian government has yet to publish the results of its investigation, and the 14 survivors have yet to face trial.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** There were no significant updates in 2020. Chad is a member of GABAC. Chad's FIU, the National Agency for Financial Investigation, is a member of the Egmont Group.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** Chad undertook efforts to counteract violent extremism. The High Council of Islamic Affairs promoted peaceful coexistence and tolerance, and diverse faith groups engaged the Interfaith Dialogue Commission to mitigate conflict. The national coordination office for the G-5 Sahel stood up a violent extremism radicalization prevention unit that initiated coordination meetings of CVE practitioners. The Chadian government warned citizens of the dangers of communitarianism. In response to a violent incident in N'Djamena that sparked communitarian commentary on social media, including by and against the influential Zaghawa ethnic group, the Chadian government took the drastic step of banning social media and cutting internet access from July to October.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Chad engaged actively in CT activities of the United Nations, the MNJTF, the G-5 Sahel, and the Lake Chad Basin Commission. Surrounded by conflict, Chad is a leader in exporting security throughout the Sahel. Chad supported CT and peacekeeping forces and provided many of the most effective military units in the most dangerous parts of central Africa. Chad contributed 1,425 soldiers trained by the United States to the most challenging regions of Mali as part of MINUSMA, 2,000 soldiers in Chad and episodic commitments of up to 1,600 soldiers in northern Nigeria in support of the MNJTF, 1,450 soldiers in northern Chad as part of the G-5 Sahel, and 600 soldiers as part of the joint border security force with Sudan.

Chad maintains close working relationships with France, and the French Operation *Barkhane* launches CT missions throughout the Sahel from its base in N'Djamena. Several other European nations engaged militarily with Chad in 2020 as well, and the Chadian government also sought security support from near-peer competitors.

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## DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

**Overview:** ISIS's branch in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), ISIS-DRC, also known as ADF and MTM, has claimed responsibility for more than 80 incidents — 52 of them in 2020.

ISIS-DRC has operated in Beni, North Kivu province, for years. While the majority of its members are Congolese with Ugandan-origin leadership, the group recruits from around the Central Africa and East Africa regions. According to the United Nations, more than 100 armed groups and local militias operate in eastern DRC. President Felix Tshisekedi has publicly described the ADF — known for its asymmetric-style attacks and large-scale, systemic violence against civilians — as “terrorists” and noted they are a threat not only to the DRC but also to the broader region.

The U.S. government, in the context of its “Privileged Partnership for Peace and Prosperity” bilateral framework for engagement with the DRC, continues to work closely with the DRC government to address potential terrorist threats. Building on previous success offering training and exchanges for the FARDC on civil-military operations (CMO), strategic planning and messaging, asymmetric warfare, and human rights and the law of armed conflict in CT operations, the United States signed an MOU with the DRC government in October to launch new cooperation in CMO, strategic communications, engineering, and English-language training.

Despite promising signs of regional engagement during the Tshisekedi administration, antagonistic relations among DRC’s eastern neighbors and their reported armed interference in eastern DRC are a perennial source of conflict and instability. President Tshisekedi has raised the need for regional cooperation with these partners to combat armed groups and bring stability to the eastern DRC.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** ISIS-DRC attacked Congolese civilians, the FARDC, and UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) peacekeepers in North Kivu and southern parts of Ituri provinces.

According to UNJHRO, the deaths of at least 849 men, women, and children — among them civilians, the FARDC, and UN peacekeepers — were attributed to ADF in North Kivu and Ituri provinces during 2020. In contrast, in 2019, there were 119 incidents and 377 deaths attributed to the ADF in North Kivu alone, according to the Kivu Security Tracker.

- ISIS has claimed responsibility for more than 100 incidents in the DRC since 2019, and claims have increased in frequency since October. ISIS claims account for about one third of ADF-attributed attacks on the ground, and nearly half of ISIS claims convincingly correspond to a confirmed attack.
- 2020 saw an increase in mass-killings and abductions of civilians, with more than a dozen reports of 10 to 30 civilians killed in a single incident, including murders and beheadings. ADF-attributed attacks on civilians increased significantly at the beginning of 2020 after the FARDC conducted large-scale CT operations that began in 2019. The operations succeeded in some respect, dislodging the group from all their permanent bases.
- As of late 2020, ISIS-DRC is believed to be operating in at least three decentralized and mobile groups, over a broader operating area. There has been no significant change in perceived tactics, or weapons used since the ADF’s affiliation with ISIS. However, the group is now constantly on the move following Congolese military counter-ADF operations over the course of 2020, making them less predictable and more destructive — according to information gathered during MONUSCO protection of civilian patrols.
- Throughout the latter half of 2020, suspected ISIS-DRC elements continued to use rudimentary IEDs against FARDC targets.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** The DRC has no comprehensive CT legislation. The DRC’s National Assembly passed a draft CT bill in 2018 that stalled in the

Senate and has yet to be adopted. National police participated in Global Counterterrorism Forum border management training in December and in an INTERPOL CT event in March.

The DRC shares some 6,835 miles of land and lake borders with nine countries but lacks the capacity to effectively patrol them. The border authority, the Directorate General of Migration, uses the International Organization for Migration's Migration Information and Data Analysis System (MIDAS) at only a fraction of the DRC's more than 400 official border crossings.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** The government made efforts to strengthen its Anti-Money Laundering/Countering Terrorist Financing (AML/CFT) framework, although it still lacks resources and capacity. Notably, President Tshisekedi appointed a new executive secretary of the DRC's Financial Intelligence Unit, who revitalized engagement with international partners such as the United Nations and the U.S. Department of Treasury. The DRC is a member of GABAC. During 2020, GABAC visited the DRC in support of the mutual evaluation review. There continue to be deficiencies in freezing accounts and taking other action in response to U.S. sanctions and banking, and government officials continue to request additional support to strengthen oversight mechanisms.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** There were no significant changes in 2020.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** In October, Tshisekedi convened a virtual mini-summit with the heads of state of Angola, Rwanda, and Uganda, who all pledged greater cooperation on regional security. The DRC also held a bilateral ministerial in October with Burundi to improve border security. The DRC is a member of the Southern African Development Community and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and regularly engages to promote regional cooperation. In 2021, President Tshisekedi is to assume the chairmanship of the African Union (AU) and to underscore peace and security as one of his primary emphases.

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## DJIBOUTI

**Overview:** Djibouti remained a critical partner for the United States and the region in the fight against terrorism, and no terrorist incidents were reported in Djibouti in 2020. 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. Djiboutian law enforcement agencies continued to prioritize CT efforts throughout the country. As in previous years, Djiboutian government officials, particularly those in law enforcement and the Ministry of Islamic and Cultural Affairs, worked closely to identify and address terrorist activity. The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) is the regional organization for the Greater Horn of Africa, headquartered in Djibouti. IGAD's Center of Excellence for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (ICEPCVE) provides training and resources to counter violent extremism throughout the region. Djibouti's armed forces also deployed soldiers to the AMISOM campaign.

**2020 Terrorist Attacks:** There were no terrorist incidents reported in Djibouti in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** There were no terrorism-related legislative changes in 2020. Djibouti has a legal framework for prosecuting terrorism-related crimes and can try those charged of terrorism-related offenses in criminal courts, using its penal code. In November the Ministry of Justice issued life sentences to two accomplices in a 2014 suicide-bomber attack at a popular restaurant, La Chaumière. The government continued to use CT legislation to suppress anti-government criticism by arresting opposition figures and other activists.

Djiboutian law enforcement agencies consist of the Djiboutian National Police (DNP), the Djiboutian National Gendarmerie (Gendarmerie), the National Security Judiciary Police, and the Djiboutian National Coast Guard (Coast Guard) — all of which proactively detect, deter, and prevent acts of terrorism in the country. The DNP, the Gendarmerie, and the Coast Guard developed a biometric program that utilizes handheld biometric capture devices, which can generate a DNA profile. Once populated, the Gendarmerie and Coast Guard DNA database can be searched for identity and limited familial, including paternal, relationships. The DNP will manage and populate its own DNA database.

Djibouti continued to enhance border security and deter terrorist travel, with security protocols and increased use of criminal databases such as INTERPOL. The country also continued use PISCES to conduct traveler screening and process travelers through the international airport and seaports entry and exit points. While these entry points remain critical, the vast majority of travelers enter Djibouti by land at one of four border points, one of them at the Somali-Djibouti border. Djiboutian law enforcement agencies coordinate their CT functions and information sharing. The DNP controls border checkpoints, with support from the Gendarmerie patrolling between border posts, and the country's armed forces are responsible for patrolling land borders in remote locations. To screen for potential security threats, law enforcement agencies also maintain checkpoints and conduct vehicle cordon-and-search operations within the capital city.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Djibouti's financial intelligence unit (FIU) is *Le Service de Renseignements Financiers* (SRF). SRF oversees and enforces AML/CFT regulations. SRF conducted online trainings on detecting terrorism financing, including for financial institutions to identify potential terrorism financing threats among their NGO account holders. The FIU also signed MOUs with the Djibouti Tax Office and Djibouti Customs, intending to enhance cooperation between the two government agencies and SRF on countering terrorism financing. Djibouti is a member of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF), a FATF-style regional body.

Despite an economic slowdown brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic in the second six months of 2020, Djibouti has achieved relatively steady economic growth over the past several years, and its strategic trading location in the Horn of Africa has facilitated the creation of an active trader and broker network. As the country seeks to increase investment and promote itself as a regional financial hub, it is increasingly susceptible to potential money laundering and other illicit financial activities. The country's proximity to Somalia and Yemen remains a risk factor, as many Djibouti-based financial institutions continue to operate in neighboring countries that have weak or no AML/CFT legislation or other financial controls. In 2020 the World Bank funded a national risk assessment for money laundering and terrorist financing that covers all

public and private institutions in the country and will continue until the end of 2021. There were no published law enforcement cases involving suspected terrorism financing in 2020.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** The Ministry of Justice continued to convene the National Anti-Terrorism Taskforce, consisting of a national commission of experts, including from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the ICEPCVE. In 2020 the task force finalized work on a national Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE) strategy. The task force also held several terrorism-related exercises on responses to and the prevention of terrorist attacks, enhancing protection of soft targets such as restaurants, hotels, and grocery stores.

Although law enforcement measures constitute the bulk of Djibouti's national CT strategy, community engagement, including with youth, sports, and culture, is an increasingly important feature of its PCVE efforts. Law enforcement agencies continued to work with the High Islamic Council within the Ministry of Islamic and Cultural Affairs to identify and monitor activity that promoted violent extremism.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Djibouti hosts IGAD's headquarters offices and its executive secretariat. Additionally, the IGAD ICEPCVE is based in Djibouti and provided training and resources on PCVE throughout the region, including representatives from Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda. The Djiboutian military continued its participation in AMISOM, which counts Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda as the other four Troop Contributing Countries.

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## ERITREA

**Overview:** The Government of Eritrea took positive steps toward engagement with the United States on law enforcement and security in 2020. U.S. officials have a nascent, limited relationship with local law enforcement in Asmara, which allows for basic information sharing. However, a broader lack of transparency from the Eritrean government means there was no clear picture of the methods it used to track terrorists or protect its population.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in Eritrea in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** COVID-19 and the conflict in Tigray, Ethiopia, have challenged Eritrea's border security measures. With commercial passenger air service suspended since late March because of COVID-19, more than 26,000 Eritreans returned through "irregular routes," primarily from Sudan and Ethiopia. The conflict in Tigray also likely caused some residents of Tigray to seek safety in Eritrea; however, no figures are available and UN institutions have not been able to travel to the border region.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** No significant updates since 2019. Eritrea is an observer in the Eastern and Southern Africa Anti-Money Laundering Group (ESAAMLG), a FATF-style regional body. Eritrea is also a member of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, which has a maritime security program that concentrates on building the capacity of law enforcement agencies to combat money laundering and the financing of terrorism.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** The government employs awareness raising campaigns, early warning tools, and community-level engagement to prevent and counter terrorist radicalization and recruitment. It actively cultivates an ethos of social inclusion and mutual respect across the nine traditional ethnic groups, as well as among the four authorized religious denominations that make up a part of Eritrean society. There are no known Eritrean foreign terrorist fighters in Iraq or Syria.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Eritrea participated in the UN Security Council’s March 11 discussion on “Countering Terrorism and Extremism in Africa.” To the best of Department of State knowledge, COVID restrictions prevented Eritrean officials from physically attending international conferences this year.

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## ETHIOPIA

**Overview:** The Government of Ethiopia (GOE) continued to be a willing and active partner with the U.S. government on CT issues. The GOE passed significant amendments to the 2009 Antiterrorism Proclamation (ATP) that, inter alia, criminalizes certain terrorism-related offenses. The al-Shabaab and ISIS terrorist threats emanating from Somalia remain a high priority for the Ethiopian National Defense Force. Armed groups espousing ethnonationalist causes, primarily the Oromo Liberation Army-Shane (OLA-Shane), were the greatest and most persistent domestic threats.

During and after this reporting period, the United States has continually called for the immediate removal of Eritrean and Amhara regional security forces from Tigray, for an immediate end to hostilities by all parties, immediate action by all sides to facilitate unhindered humanitarian assistance to Tigray, and political reconciliation to achieve lasting peace and stability. The United States also has encouraged the Ethiopian government to facilitate full and independent investigations into all allegations of human rights abuses to hold those responsible accountable.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no terrorist incidents in Ethiopia in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** The GOE undertook many important legal reforms, including changes to laws governing, defining, and regulating CT activities. The GOE amended its 2009 ATP, which provided for the prosecution of certain crimes associated with terrorist activity, which was often broadly interpreted to include anti-government speech and political activity. As amended, the law prohibits warrantless searches and interception of private communications, no longer allows the police unlimited power to detain suspects, instructs the court to prioritize terrorism-related cases, and establishes the National Antiterrorism Coordinating Committee. However, adherence to the amended law remains inconsistent. Some human rights groups have criticized the GOE for not applying it fully in practice.

There were several high-profile arrests and criminal prosecutions brought under the ATP in 2020. In some cases, the courts ruled against the GOE, dismissing criminal complaints altogether or granting outright bail to defendants.



Ethiopian aviation security made some improvements to passenger and cargo security in 2020; however, lack of an effective access control system has created a potential vulnerability. Use of advanced imaging technology at the central screening checkpoint has enhanced passenger security. The insertion of biometric controlled access has enhanced cargo security, even though the system is not yet fully installed. The completion of a planned airport-wide automated access control system will greatly reduce insider risk. Owing to COVID travel restrictions, Bole International Airport is overdue for both an aviation security assessment and an air carrier inspection. Completing these in 2021 is a priority for the Transportation Security Administration.

Border security was a persistent concern for the GOE, and the government worked to tighten border controls with Eritrea, Kenya, Somalia, and South Sudan. To that end, Ethiopia employed the PISCES border control system at several ports of entry.

The GOE arrested more than a dozen ISIS and AS members in November. The government has accused several ethnonationalist groups, some of which it charged with violating its ATP, of making ethnic-based attacks intended to foment ethnic conflict. The June assassination of a popular Oromo nationalist singer, allegedly organized by OLA-Shane, sparked violent protests that resulted in more than 180 deaths and millions of dollars in property damage across Oromia Region.

Since November the Government of Ethiopia has been engaged in a protracted military conflict with the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front (TPLF), the former governing party of the Tigray Region. The government deemed a TPLF attack on Ethiopia military forces as a domestic terrorism incident and launched a military/law enforcement offensive in response. The TPLF asserted that its actions were self-defense in the face of planned Ethiopian government action to remove it from provincial government. Since the conflict erupted, the Ethiopian government has sought and received military assistance both from the State of Eritrea and from security forces under the control of the Amhara regional government. There were credible reports implicating all parties to the conflict in human rights abuses and pointing to atrocities committed by Amhara regional security forces, Ethiopian military forces, and the Eritrean military.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** No significant updates from 2019. Ethiopia is a member of ESAAMLG, and Ethiopia's FIU, the Ethiopian Financial Intelligence Centre, is a member of the Egmont Group.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** The Ministry of Peace is the GOE's lead on CVE, a priority for PM Abiy's government given the threat from al-Shabaab. The GOE's strategy focuses on reducing poverty and ethnic strife to eliminate factors that help al-Shabaab recruitment. The GOE remains engaged in local mediation and conflict mitigation strategies to defuse ethnic and religious tensions, especially in the Afar, Oromia, and Somali Regions. The GOE monitored violent extremist activities, particularly among the large Muslim youth population and given the significant economic migration of Ethiopians to the Middle East. Some economic migrants return as converts to Islam or as more radicalized adherents. The GOE also continues to work on formulating a national CVE strategy.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** U.S. engagement with the GOE concentrated on resolving the crisis in the Tigray Region and combating terrorist threats, particularly those posed by al-Shabaab and violent extremist organizations associated with ISIS, thereby reducing the direct military role the United States might otherwise play. The United States provides material, logistical, and training support to Ethiopia, which is the world's largest troop contributor to UN peacekeeping missions, including about 6,220 troops mainly in South Sudan and Sudan.

The GOE participated in African Union-led CT efforts as one of the largest troop-contributing countries to the AU Mission in Somalia, with more than 5,000 troops deployed under the AU mandate and a bilateral agreement with the Government of Somalia. Ethiopia participates in IGAD and its CT programs and trainings, including the IGAD Security Sector Program, which builds regional capacity to mitigate, detect, and deter terrorist activity. In multilateral efforts against terrorism, the GOE generally supports international directives that seek to stem terrorism. IGAD, recognizing that terrorism is a multinational issue, continued to encourage the cross-border dissemination of information concerning terrorist activity.

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## KENYA

**Overview:** In 2020, Kenya continued to suffer terrorist attacks primarily along the Kenyan-Somali border. The most notable attack — which demonstrated al-Shabaab's ability to conduct complex operations in Kenya — occurred on January 5, when AS fighters attacked the United States Armed Forces' Camp Simba in Manda Bay. IEDs and ambushes targeting Kenyan security forces and important infrastructure were the primary means of attack in the border regions. While Kenyan security forces were the principal targets, nonlocal teachers, other nonlocal professional, and key infrastructure were also targeted. The frequency of terrorist attacks decreased after the onset of COVID-19 in March.

Kenya is a willing U.S. partner in CT investigation, prosecution, and incident response and plays a leading role in regional CT cooperation. 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 AS and ISIS attack planning, recruitment, and travel. Reports of human rights violations and abuses by security forces during CT operations continued, including allegations of extrajudicial killings, forced disappearances, and torture. Kenyan security forces continued to demonstrate improved procedures in line with its international human rights obligations and commitments for protection of human rights in response to terrorist threats and attacks.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** Terrorist incidents in 2020 included the following:

- On January 5, AS operatives attacked Camp Simba at Manda Bay. They killed three Americans and destroyed aircraft and infrastructure.
- On January 13, suspected AS operatives killed three nonlocal teachers and destroyed a communications mast and police post in Kamuthe, Garissa County.
- On July 9, 20 AS gunmen attacked and destroyed a communication mast in Garissa County.
- On September 21, AS operatives attacked a KDF convoy with small arms and grenades in Mandera County. One KDF soldier and five AS operatives were killed.

- On October 6, eight civilians were injured when suspected AS operatives attacked a highway bus with small arms in Mandera County.

**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. Crowded court dockets and the lack of continuous trials slowed progress on many terrorism trials. However, 2020 saw some closure to the criminal proceedings in connection with the Westgate Mall attack of 2013. A court found two men involved in this attack — Mohamed Ahmed Abdi and Hussein Hassan Mustafah — guilty of conspiracy to commit terrorism and aiding AS. The court sentenced them to prison for 33 years and 18 years, respectively. A third man, Liban Abdullah Omar, was acquitted. Despite successes, challenges persist. Access to defense counsel for terrorism suspects is limited because the government has not fully funded the National Legal Aid Service. The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions has been working to develop a uniform and consistent nationwide policy on plea negotiations. The use of plea agreements could provide a mechanism for lower-level accomplices to cooperate against higher-level terrorism suspects.

Pending a proposed reorganization, CT functions are divided among the three branches of the National Police Service: 1) the Kenya Police Service (including the paramilitary General Service Unit (GSU); the Traffic Police; and regional, county, and local police); 2) the Directorate of Criminal Investigations (including the investigative Antiterrorism Police, Bomb Disposal, and Cyber Forensics Investigative Units); and 3) the Administration Police (including the Border Police Unit). The National Intelligence Service, elements of the KDF, and other Kenyan interagency stakeholders also shared responsibility. Uneven coordination, resource constraints, insufficient training, corruption, and unclear command and control continue to hinder CT effectiveness. Kenya's National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) continued to work with private security companies to prevent soft target attacks. Kenya's interagency Joint Terrorism Task Force has begun operations.

Terrorists continued to exploit Kenya's porous land borders to conduct attacks. In 2020, Kenyan officials continued to work to secure the border, but hurdles remain. Under a 2018 arrangement that is being finalized, Kenya is anticipated to receive U.S. Automated Targeting System-Global (ATS-G) software, which facilitates screening of air travelers using API/PNR. If deployed, ATS-G ideally would be integrated with PISCES, the U.S. government-provided frontline border management system, enhancing the capabilities of both systems to target potential threats and counter terrorist travel. However, the passage of a data protection law in 2019 has delayed implementation of ATS-G. While measures have been taken to improve aviation safety and security at Nairobi's international airport and at several points of entry with the establishment of Joint Operations Centers to promote information sharing, 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 AS or ISIS and those returning from abroad. Kenyan security services also detected and deterred terrorist plots and responded to dozens of terrorism-related incidents. The Kenyan government cooperated on threat information and security at Embassy Nairobi, including through a dedicated GSU CT response team funded by the United States.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Kenya is a member of ESAAMLG. There were no significant updates in 2020.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** Through the NCTC Kenya has established County Action Plans for CVE in all 47 counties to further implement its National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism. While County Action Plans continued to be the primary framework for U.S. and other international CVE programming at the local level, implementation of action plans in many counties remained hampered by a lack of funding. Police in Nairobi, coastal, and northeastern counties participated in community engagement training and early warning and response programs. Prison and justice sector stakeholders improved handling of terrorist suspects and convicts, and judicial officials are working to improve management of remand prisoners through plea bargaining and other methods. Kenya's second largest city, Mombasa, is an active member of the Strong Cities Network.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Nairobi hosts the UN headquarters in Africa. The KDF continued participation in AMISOM. Although not a member, Kenya participated in regional meetings of the Global Counterterrorism Task Force.

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## MALI

**Overview:** A coup d'état on August 18 resulted in the overthrow of the democratically elected government headed by President Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta. A military junta assumed control of the government until a transition government was inaugurated on September 25 for an 18-month term. Despite the extraconstitutional change in government, Mali's longstanding CT partnerships with foreign forces in country — particularly France's Operation *Barkhane* — continued. Terrorist activities increased in number and lethality throughout the country and continued to target civilians, Mali's Armed Forces (FAMa), international peacekeepers, and international military forces. Terrorist groups active in Mali include ISIS in the Greater Sahara and Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslim — the umbrella group that formed in 2017 after the Sahara Branch of al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb, al-Murabitoun, Ansar al-Dine, and the Macina Liberation Front merged.

Mali continued to rely heavily on MINUSMA and French forces in efforts to stabilize and secure the northern and central regions. The French military's Operation *Barkhane*, an integrated CT mission for the Sahel region, continued efforts to degrade terrorist elements operating in Mali.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** JNIM and ISIS-GS continued to conduct terrorist attacks, primarily targeting Malian and international peacekeeping and military forces. Attacks by terrorist groups continued to press farther south and intensified in the Mopti and Ségou Regions. In 2020, there were hundreds of terrorist attacks, including the following significant incidents:

- On March 25, members of JNIM kidnapped political opposition leader Soumaila Cisse. They held Cisse until the beginning of October, when the transition government agreed to release more than 200 prisoners, suspected jihadists and JNIM affiliates among them, in exchange for Cisse and three European citizens.
- At the beginning of October, suspected terrorists laid siege to Farabougou, a town roughly 260 miles northeast of Bamako. They encircled the town, allowing no one to

enter or leave. The government sent FAMA and Special Forces units to assist the population and retake the town but was unsuccessful. As of December the town remained under terrorist control.

- Throughout the spring, unidentified armed groups attacked several bridges in Mali's center region, damaging or destroying them. MINUSMA and FAMA established guard posts to protect the repairs of these major thoroughfares, but this did not deter subsequent attacks in later months, highlighting the desire of violent extremist groups to isolate local populations.
- On November 30, terrorists launched rocket attacks on three separate military installations spread over 400 miles, demonstrating a new level of sophistication and coordination. Orchestrated by JNIM, rockets landed simultaneously on FAMA and international bases, causing damage to infrastructure but no reported casualties.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** There were no changes to Mali's CT legal framework in 2020. Plans for a massive CT-related legislative overhaul in April were suspended indefinitely, although some 30 terrorism cases went to trial. Initially, this delay was due to the outbreak of COVID-19, and was later exacerbated by the coup in August.

Mali's vast and porous borders extend some 4,500 miles and touch seven neighboring countries. The Gendarmerie and the National Border Police both provide security and law enforcement support to prevent and deter criminal activity at borders; however, both agencies are understaffed, poorly trained, and lack essential equipment and resources. 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 access to the INTERPOL database is unavailable outside of Bamako. Exit and entry stamps used by border officials have inconsistent size and shape, undermining efforts to authenticate travel documents. The government receives Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) certificates for passport security information from the ICAO; however, the information sharing is done manually and inconsistently. Security features for Malian passports remain unchanged. Imposters obtain fraudulent documents, such as birth and marriage certificates, with relative ease, undermining the veracity of Malian identification documents.

The transition government has made little progress toward implementation of UNSCR 2396 regarding border security. Mali previously implemented biometric (that is, fingerprint and facial recognition) screening at established ports of entry. However, Mali has little or no control over its many and vast territorial borders, allowing terrorists to cross them with ease.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** There have been no changes since 2018. Mali is a member of GIABA. Mali's FIU, the National Financial Intelligence Processing Unit, is a member of the Egmont Group. Efforts to counter terrorism financing remain ineffective because of lack of resources, training, basic auditing tools, and automation.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** Despite the inclusion of armed group representatives in the transition government, progress on implementation of the 2015 Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Mali (Algiers Accord) was limited. The transition government has not yet announced its strategy to combat violent extremism. While FAMA continues their cooperation

with international forces to protect civilian populations, it is unclear what the transition government's plan will be moving forward and how it will integrate the efforts of civil society and religious leaders.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** As a result of the coup, Mali was temporarily suspended from the regional blocs, both the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the AU. Further, as a result of the military coup, U.S. foreign assistance, including security assistance, for the Government of Mali is restricted under U.S. law. Mali is a GCERF recipient country, with localized programs to prevent and counter violent extremism.

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## MAURITANIA

**Overview:** The country remained an excellent security and regional CT partner for the United States. Despite continued terrorist violence in neighboring Mali and regional threats that included those against Mauritania, the country has not suffered a terrorist attack on its soil since 2011. Countering terrorist activity remains the top priority for the Mauritanian government, and Mauritanian military leadership underscores this message when appealing to donor nations for additional equipment and training assistance. The United States lifted restrictions on assistance to Mauritania related to the Trafficking Victims Protection Act in October, which has allowed for the resumption of some U.S. CT assistance and training programs.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in Mauritania in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** The Mauritanian government did not pass or amend any laws regarding terrorism during the year. Mauritania continued working closely with the United States to install PISCES at all of Mauritania's land, air, and sea points of entry in an effort to promote border security by identifying, disrupting, and deterring terrorist travel.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Mauritania is a member of MENAFATF. In addition to its having the Central Bank's financial intelligence unit (known as CANIF), Mauritania has two national committees, the National Committee to Combat Terrorist Financing and the National Committee to Combat Money Laundering, which are tasked with improving internal government coordination on these issues. The Central Bank also began imposing new security requirements on money transfers to increase transparency on transactions. In November, Mauritania's newly organized Counterterrorism Commission hosted a workshop that aimed to raise awareness on Mauritania's international obligations in the fight against terrorism, including countering the financing of terrorism. The Mauritanian government also took some steps to regulate money transfers in the country's large informal market, including by limiting lawful money transfers to those conducted by licensed operators.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** Mauritania continued its efforts to counter violent extremism, including through several partnerships with the United States. The Mauritanian government also continued to make efforts to repatriate and reintegrate former terrorists and returning foreign terrorist fighters.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** In 2020, Mauritania assumed the presidency of the G-5 Sahel regional organization, which is headquartered in Nouakchott and whose membership consists of Mauritania, Burkina Faso, Chad, Niger, and Mali, and which promotes security, development, and governance within and across Sahel member countries. In June the Nouakchott-based G-5 Sahel Defense College graduated its second cohort, consisting of 44 officers from all G-5 Sahel countries. In February, Mauritania hosted U.S. AFRICOM's second largest joint multinational military exercise, the special operations-focused Flintlock '20. The exercise included 1,500 participants from more than 30 countries. Mauritania will provide airborne intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance support to Flintlock '21 in Senegal. Mauritania is a member of the following organizations that have CT equities: the United Nations, the AU, the G-5 Sahel, the Islamic Military Counterterrorism Coalition, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and NATO's Science for Peace and Security Program.

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## MOZAMBIQUE

**Overview:** Mozambique experienced a significant increase in terrorist activity in 2020. ISIS-Mozambique carried out hundreds of attacks in northern Mozambique and at least two in Tanzania. In 2020, ISIS-Mozambique-related violence resulted in 1,500 estimated deaths, more than 700 of them civilian deaths, and the internal displacement of more than 500,000 people. ISIS-Mozambique attacks grew in frequency, complexity, and geographic scope, threatening the development of liquefied natural gas projects. The Government of the Republic of Mozambique (GRM) continued security operations against ISIS-Mozambique in 2020 and made numerous arrests of terrorist suspects. Reports indicated that the GRM contracted two South African private military companies to provide CT training and operational support and has increased outreach to bilateral partners for assistance.

With limited exceptions, ISIS-Mozambique conducted multiple attacks every week in Mozambique's Cabo Delgado Province. In 2020, attacks evolved to include complex and multipronged assaults, and attacks resulting in the destruction of public infrastructure, control of key roads, and sustained occupation of district capitals, in addition to smaller-scale resupply raids and attacks targeting civilians. Reports of kidnappings and forced displacement increased substantially in 2020, particularly in coastal areas. In 2020, there were limited and irregular reports of ISIS-Mozambique distributing food and money to civilians. ISIS-Mozambique conducted increasing attacks against security forces; in the second half of 2020, more deaths resulted from force-on-force events than violence against civilians. ISIS-Mozambique fighters are frequently reported to wear police or military uniforms and use weapons and equipment stolen from security forces. Access constraints and limited reporting on the violence render details of attacks difficult to verify.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** The following list details a small number of significant attacks:

- On January 24, ISIS-Mozambique attacked Mbau, Mocímboa da Praia District, killing 22 members of the security forces and injuring others.
- On March 25, ISIS-Mozambique attacked and occupied the capital of Quissanga District, destroyed administrative buildings, and displayed the ISIS flag.

- On April 8 in Xitaxi, Muidumbe District, ISIS-Mozambique beheaded and killed between 50 and 70 civilians.
- During August 9-11, ISIS-Mozambique attacked and occupied Mocímboa da Praia, Mocímboa da Praia District. Reports indicated between 60 and 90 security force deaths, more than 100 persons injured, and up to 40 missing. ISIS-Mozambique remained in control of the town.
- Between October 31 and November 8, ISIS-Mozambique conducted a series of attacks on villages in Muidumbe District. ISIS-Mozambique occupied the district capital, destroyed government buildings, and killed several members of the security forces. ISIS-Mozambique reportedly beheaded as many as 50 civilians over the course of the attacks, garnering international attention.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** Mozambique’s current CT legislation was passed in 2018. The law provides for the punishment of anyone committing, planning, preparing, or participating in terrorist acts and stipulates punishment for individuals who travel or attempt to travel to join a terrorist organization. As of September the government reported a total of 122 convictions and 133 acquittals related to terrorism in Cabo Delgado Province. Those convicted were sentenced to prison terms ranging from 2 to 40 years for crimes against state security, instigating violence, collective disobedience, and possession of prohibited weapons. In December, Mozambique’s Parliament amended the Penal Procedural Code to increase the time a suspect can be held in custody without charge from 4 to 6 months, and the period of detention without trial from 4 to 10 months for crimes such as “terrorism, violent crime, or highly organized crime.” Periods of preventive detention of 12 or 16 months can apply to crimes “of exceptional complexity.”

In 2020, Mozambican law enforcement entities — including the national police force, the Rapid Intervention Unit, and the National Criminal Investigative Service — engaged in CT operations and activity in northern Mozambique. Mozambique does not have a CT strategy to guide operations, and law enforcement agencies lack the training, equipment, and overall capacity to proactively detect, deter, or prevent acts of terrorism. Though law enforcement entities operate as part of a joint task force with military counterparts, coordination, strategic planning, interministerial communications, and intelligence sharing remain significant challenges.

Border security is a challenge for Mozambique. Terrorists are known to cross the porous border with Tanzania, which serves as a recruitment and transit point for terrorist and criminal organizations. Government representatives from Mozambique and Tanzania convened meetings following 2020 attacks in Tanzania that resulted in the deaths of Tanzanian citizens. In November, Mozambican and Tanzanian police commanders signed an MOU to conduct joint CT operations, increase information sharing, and extradite terror suspects. Under the MOU, Tanzania announced the extradition to Mozambique of 516 persons detained in Tanzania for alleged cooperation or involvement in attacks in Cabo Delgado.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** There are no significant updates since 2019. Mozambique is a member of ESAAMLG. Mozambique is also a member of the Asset Recovery Interagency Network for Southern Africa (known as ARINSA).



**Countering Violent Extremism:** Mozambique does not have a CVE national action plan, as recommended by the UN Secretary-General’s Preventing Violent Extremism Plan of Action, but it publicly acknowledges the need for a holistic response to terrorist violence that includes community engagement in addition to security activity. In 2020, Mozambique launched the Agency for Integrated Development in the North (ADIN). ADIN’s mandate does not explicitly mention CVE, though it aims to support long-term development priorities that would address grievances and terrorist recruitment.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Mozambique is a member of the African Union and the Southern African Development Community (SADC). In August, Mozambique held the rotating presidency of SADC and led several SADC summits on the situation in Cabo Delgado. The GRM increased bilateral engagement on CT assistance and publicly announced its willingness to cooperate with international partners, though no official CT support began in 2020 besides contracts with two South African private military companies. Mozambique is a member of the Partnership for Regional East Africa Counterterrorism and has security cooperation MOUs with regional and international partners to include India, Malawi, Portugal, Russia, Tanzania, Uganda, and the United Kingdom.

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## NIGER

**Overview:** Niger faces terrorist threats on each of its seven borders. Terrorist organizations take advantage of Niger’s extensive borders and sparsely populated desert regions to attack and recruit among populations where access to government services is limited and economic opportunity is negligible. Niger’s efforts to fight terrorism are constrained by budget shortfalls and continuing instability in Burkina Faso, Libya, Mali, Nigeria, and the Lake Chad Basin.

Terrorist groups active in Niger included ISIS in the Greater Sahara, Boko Haram, ISIS-WA, and JNIM. Niger is the only country in the world with ISIS-affiliate presence on three borders.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** Terrorist organizations carried out dozens of attacks in Niger during 2020. Two main fronts saw attacks from Boko Haram or ISIS-WA in the Southeast and from JNIM and the ISIS-GS in the West and the Northwest.

The following are some of the major terrorist incidents in 2020:

- On January 9, suspected members of ISIS-GS attacked a Nigerien military base in Chinagodrar, killing 89 members of the Nigerien military.
- On May 10, suspected members of ISIS-GS attacked two villages in the Tillabéri Region killing approximately 20 villagers and stealing cattle.
- On August 9, suspected members of ISIS-GS murdered six French humanitarian workers and two Nigeriens at the Kouré Giraffe Reserve south of Niamey. The attack was claimed by ISIS-associated media in its weekly newsletter.
- On December 4, suspected JNIM members swarmed a park ranger checkpoint in La Tapoa, at the entrance of the Parc W area, killing two park rangers, injuring three, and kidnapping two. Two vehicles were stolen, and an ammunition supply dump was looted.

- On December 13, suspected Boko Haram members attacked the village of Toumour in eastern Diffa Region, killed 30 villagers, and destroyed an estimated 800 homes and several vehicles.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** In 2018 the Government of Niger passed an amendment to its penal code providing either conditional amnesty or mitigated sentences for voluntary defectors from violent extremist organizations. Following rapidly evolving threats in the Liptako-Gourma region during 2020, key officials in the Ministries of the Interior and Justice are amending the National Framework to encompass the management of defectors from violent extremist organizations in any of Niger's affected zones. Once ratified, the National Framework will provide uniform defector screening to determine eligibility for rehabilitation, development of regional rehabilitation centers, and establishment of a National Disengagement, Disassociation, Rehabilitation, and Reintegration Steering Committee.

Nigerien law enforcement and security services were actively engaged in detecting, deterring, and preventing acts of terrorism. Counterterrorism investigations are the responsibility of the Central Service for the Fight Against Terrorism and Transnational Organized Crime, an interagency body composed of Niger's National Police, National Guard, and Gendarmerie. Niger continued to use rudimentary terrorism watchlists that it shares with the security services and at border checkpoints.

Niger reinforced its capacities to investigate and adjudicate terrorism-related cases and to imprison terrorists, consistent with rule-of-law principles and international human rights law. Niger continues to enhance its capacity to detect and deter terrorist incursions at its borders and ports of entry through the expansion of new technologies, critical infrastructure development, and additional specialized security forces assigned along the border; however, it remains dependent on international partners to fund and implement border security initiatives.

In late October a U.S. citizen was kidnapped near Birni-N'Konni along the Nigerian border. A *Compagnie Mobile de Contrôle des Frontières* border patrol unit was the first unit to respond and secure a helicopter landing zone for a U.S. investigation team as well as to provide introductions, translation, transportation, and security directly contributing to the successful recovery of a hostage.

Niger has expanded its border screening capabilities by implementing MIDAS and expanding the PISCES platform. MIDAS and PISCES are linked to INTERPOL's I-24/7 network sharing relevant traveler information with partner nations.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Niger is a member of GIABA. There are no significant updates from 2019.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** Niger launched a national CVE strategy in October, which strengthened the CVE capacity of the National Center for Strategic and Security Studies and supported CVE activities through small grants.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Niger is a member of the G-5 Sahel and the Sahel Alliance and manages the G-5 Sahel Joint Forces' Central Sector Command in Niamey. It also hosts a battalion in the Eastern Sector in Madama. In February, Niger hosted the one-year presidency of the G-5 Sahel. Niger contributes troops to the Lake Chad Basin Multinational Joint Task Force and MINUSMA.

Niger is a member of ECOWAS and is party to its agreements on countertrafficking and illicit financing. Niger is a member of the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP) and the Sahel Judicial Platform.

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## NIGERIA

**Overview:** Boko Haram and ISIS-West Africa continued attacks against government and security forces and civilians in the Northeast, which resulted in deaths, injuries, abductions, and the capture and destruction of property. Boko Haram attacks did not discriminate between civilians and government officials, whereas ISIS-WA generally, but not always, focused attacks on government and security forces. The implementation of the Nigerian military's "super camp" strategy, which began in 2019, was designed to stem losses when terrorists overran forward-operating bases. As a defensive military strategy, the decision to consolidate the posture into super camps is working. However, Boko Haram and ISIS-WA have exploited the military's inability to patrol open space outside the super camps to abduct aid workers, attack humanitarian operations hubs, and degrade security along roads. The deteriorating security environment has worsened conditions for civilians and further constrained relief operations in northeastern Nigeria.

Boko Haram and ISIS-WA carried out hundreds of attacks in Nigeria using small arms, captured military equipment, detonated IEDs (including person borne, vehicle borne, animal borne, and implanted), engaged in ambushes, operated illicit checkpoints and taxation systems, conducted kidnappings, and perpetrated executions.

Nigeria worked with affected neighbors in the Lake Chad Basin under the MNJTF to counter Boko Haram and ISIS-WA. Boko Haram and ISIS-WA continued to enjoy nearly complete freedom of movement throughout Borno State and eastern Yobe State. To date, terrorist actions by Boko Haram and ISIS-WA have contributed to the internal displacement of about two million people in the states of Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe, and the external displacement of more than 300,000 Nigerian refugees to neighboring countries, principally Cameroon, Chad, and Niger. According to the Bring Back Our Girls (BBOG) campaign, since the abduction of 276 students by Boko Haram from Chibok, Borno State, in 2014, 112 students remained missing at the end of 2020. BBOG organizers note that while most of the 113 students abducted from Dapchi, Yobe State in 2018 had been released, one student remains in the custody of insurgents.

Nigeria is a member of the TSCTP. The United States restarted coordination with the Nigerian military at the Nigerian Defense Intelligence Agency's (NDIA's) Joint Intelligence Fusion Center. Coordination is being led through the U.S. Department of State-funded Military Intelligence Advisor. Engagements had been stymied because of COVID-19 mitigation measures. However, the Military Intelligence Advisor arrived in October and has made

significant progress within a brief period. The Nigeria Defense Intelligence Agency has given the advisor significant access to the NDIA and asked that the advisor help build the capability of the Joint Intelligence Fusion Center and establish the AFRICOM-donated Africa Data Sharing Network.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** The following list details only a fraction of the terrorist incidents that occurred in 2020:

- On June 13, ISIS-WA fighters attacked the town of Monguno, killing at least 20 people, wounding at least 40 others, and destroying military vehicles before being driven off by Nigerian troops and aircraft.
- Also on June 13, ISIS-WA fighters shot 38 persons and set a truck ablaze with passengers inside in Goni Usmanti, Nganzai Local Government Area. Nganzai LGA is about 37 miles away from Monguno town.
- On August 18, ISIS-WA elements riding in at least 20 trucks entered Kukawa town, where 500 the Borno State government had resettled 500 IDPs on August 10, and attacked security forces there, abducting more than 100 people, including an unknown number of recent returnees.
- On November 28, Boko Haram massacred farmers in the fields near the villages of Koshobe and Zabarmari, Jere Local Government Area, Borno State, killing more than 100 people.
- On December 24 and December 26, Boko Haram killed 20 people and abducted 12 others in attacks in six villages of Borno and Adamawa State. The attackers burned down churches, schools, and police stations and looted hospital pharmacies and shops.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** There were no changes to Nigeria's CT legal framework in 2020. The draft Terrorism Prohibition and Prevention Bill of 2017 bill lapsed at the close of the 2018 National Assembly and must still be reintroduced.

The Nigerian government continued to participate in U.S. capacity-building programs and to work with the FBI to investigate specific terrorism matters, predominantly through Nigeria's Department of State Security (DSS). The Nigerian government has cooperated with the United States and other international partners to prevent further acts of terrorism in Nigeria.

The Office of the National Security Advisor is responsible for coordinating all security and enforcement agencies, including the DSS, the Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corps (NSCDC), the Ministry of Justice, and the Nigeria Police Force (NPF), which has a Counterterrorism Unit and Terrorist Investigation Branch. Border security responsibilities are shared among the NPF, the DSS, the NSCDC, Customs, Immigration, and the Nigerian military. Coordination among agencies was limited.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Nigeria is a member of GIABA. Nigeria's Financial Intelligence Unit (NFIU) was readmitted to the Egmont Group in 2018 after implementation of a law that made the NFIU independent of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), a change that intends to make the NFIU more effective at combating money-laundering

and corruption. Nigeria is still seeking FATF membership and has been working toward meeting its requirements. The NFIU, the EFCC, the Central Bank, the Securities and Exchange Commission, and other regulators in the financial services industry are collaborating to identify and freeze terrorist assets in Nigeria.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** The government continued its disarmament, deradicalization, and reintegration initiative, Operation Safe Corridor, aimed at identifying and reintegrating former low-threat supporters of terrorist organizations.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Nigeria continued high-level participation in regional security and CT conferences. Nigeria is a member of the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) and co-chairs with Switzerland the GCTF's Criminal Justice and Rule of Law Working Group. On November 10, Nigeria co-hosted with the United States a meeting of the Global Defeat-ISIS Coalition on ISIS threats in West Africa. 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 CT and CVE programming. Nigeria also is an International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law Board Member.

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## SENEGAL

**Overview:** Although there were no reported terrorist attacks in Senegal in 2020, the Government of Senegal increasingly considers itself a likely potential target given ongoing terrorist activities in West Africa and instability in neighboring Mali. In light of these concerns, Senegal continued to work closely with U.S. military and law enforcement officials to strengthen its CT capabilities.

The risk of terrorist activity in Senegal arises primarily from the growing terrorist threats across the region and the prevalence of multiple active terrorist groups and political instability in neighboring Mali. These factors increase the risk for violent extremism spilling across the border into Senegal and threatening stability. Senegal has taken steps to combat this threat by contributing troops to MINUSMA and establishing new military camps along its eastern border.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in Senegal in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** There were no significant changes to Senegal's CT legal framework in 2020. Senegal continued to enhance the capabilities of its Inter-Ministerial Framework for Intervention and Coordination of CT Operations (CICO). Formed in 2016, CICO is designed to coordinate the government's response to terrorism.

At the end of 2020, Senegalese courts were considering at least three cases with possible terrorist links. One case involved a French National of Senegalese decent, also wanted by French authorities, who was apprehended while trying to depart Senegal with the suspected intent of fighting for ISIS. A second case involved a Senegalese national accused of threatening to blow up a Dakar French restaurant to protest the display of blasphemous images of the prophet Mohammed in France. The third case involved another Senegalese national arrested for making

death threats against his father. Under police questioning, he admitted that after traveling to several northern African countries to advance his Quranic studies he joined a jihadist group in Libya and underwent accelerated training in military tactics. Additionally, Senegalese authorities arrested, detained, and deported a German terrorism suspect who was transiting through its international airport and was identified through an INTERPOL Red Notice.

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 and among the various governmental bodies that have CT functions in the country.

Senegal continued to improve its law enforcement capacity by participating in multilateral efforts, such as the GCTF's West Africa working group, AU programs, and ECOWAS. Additionally, Senegal continued to work with the International Organization for Migration to promote cooperation and coordination between border agencies.

In 2020 the Government of Senegal reported working to ensure that five Senegalese women, accompanied by their 11 children, who have been in Libyan custody since 2014 on charges they were married to and supported Islamic State fighters get fair trials and, if convicted, serve their sentences somewhere other than Libya. The government of Senegal, however, did not commit to repatriating these women or their children to Senegal.

Senegalese officials remained concerned that gaps in border protection resources and regional cooperation created security vulnerabilities. These vulnerabilities were exacerbated by the absence of systems to verify travel document security, to screen travelers using terrorist screening watchlists, and to capture biographic and biometric information for travelers entering the country outside major ports of entry. In January the Government of Senegal signed a memorandum of cooperation with the United States to implement U.S. Custom and Border Protection's Automated Targeting System-Global with the National Police, paving the way for Senegal to capture and analyze API/PNR data in a move to implement UNSCR 2396.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Senegal is a member of GIABA. Senegal's FIU, the National Financial Intelligence Processing Unit (CENTIF), is a member of the Egmont Group. In 2019, Senegal's Ministry of Finance issued three implementing decrees to clarify and fill gaps in the provisions of its 2018 AML/CFT law. These decrees created the National Anti-Money Laundering Committee to strengthen domestic coordination of AML/CFT efforts, strengthen oversight of certain businesses and professions that handle large volumes of money (attorneys, casinos, and NGOs), and reorganize and enhance the autonomy of CENTIF. The committee, in its new composition, developed and validated a workplan for 2020 and a five-year national strategy paper (2019-24). However, implementation of the 2020 workplan was constrained by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** There were no updates in 2020.

**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. France and the EU provided financial support and training to reinforce Senegal's CT and border security capabilities. In February, the Government of Senegal hosted an outstation for the U.S. Army's Flintlock '20, the largest multilateral CT training exercise in Africa, which in 2020 was headquartered in Mauritania. Senegal additionally agreed to host the overall exercise in 2021 and 2022.

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## SOMALIA

**Overview:** Al-Shabaab (AS) continued to pose a significant terrorist threat in Somalia and the region in 2020, despite shared efforts by the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS), the United States, AMISOM, and other partners to combat the group. AS leveraged its influence in southern and central Somalia to extort millions of dollars in revenue from residents and businesses, according to the UN Panel of Experts on Somalia. The group spent much of its money on operations, which this year included IED and indirect fire attacks, suicide bombings, complex attacks against government and civilian facilities, targeted assassinations, and ambushes along supply routes. AS maintained an ability to strike U.S. interests in the region and on January 5 attacked a U.S.-supported Kenya Defense Forces military base in eastern Kenya, killing three U.S. citizens.

The Islamic State branch in Somalia (ISIS-Somalia) faced battlefield setbacks because of CT pressure in Puntland, where the group is concentrated. ISIS-Somalia conducted sporadic attacks in Puntland and Mogadishu this year.

The FGS made modest, localized security gains with significant international assistance. The Somali National Army (SNA), including the U.S.-trained Danab Advanced Infantry Brigade, cleared AS militants from key locations in the Lower Shabelle region and transitioned control of these areas to local authorities. Political and logistical constraints prevented the government from achieving more durable progress on institutional reforms, force generation, and military operations targeting terrorists. AS fighters contested SNA control of defensive positions and supply lines. Somalia suffered from continual, low-intensity conflict between government-aligned forces and terrorists in 2020.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** Some higher-profile terrorist incidents in Somalia included the following:

- On November 27 a suicide bomber targeted a popular gelato shop near Aden Adde International Airport (AAIA), killing eight people. AS claimed responsibility.
- On August 16, militants detonated a vehicle-borne IED (VBIED) and conducted an armed assault on a beachside hotel in Mogadishu, killing 18 persons and injuring 25 others. AS claimed responsibility.
- On August 10, AS prisoners at the Mogadishu Central Prison staged a riot, allowing an AS member to escape. The prisoners had conspired with outsiders to smuggle weapons into the facility.
- On June 23 a suicide bomber attacked a Turkish military base in Mogadishu. AS claimed responsibility.

- On January 8, attackers detonated a VBIED near Parliament and other government buildings, killing at least 5 persons and wounding 10 more. AS claimed responsibility.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** The FGS and local authorities demonstrated a continued commitment to improve the quality of Somalia's law enforcement and judicial entities and made progress on U.S.-supported CT initiatives. In 2020 the Somali Police Force (SPF) increased its capacity to anticipate, investigate, and support the prosecution of terrorism cases. Airport police officers enhanced their observation and investigative skills in support of airport operations and improved screening of passengers, luggage, and cargo entering AAIA. FGS and state leadership continued to recruit and train criminal investigators throughout the country and improve Somalis' access to formal justice systems. Parliament has not yet passed the proposed Targeted Financial Sanctions Law, which would provide another tool to address illegal financial transactions.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Somalia is a member of MENAFATF. The FGS expanded its use of the Financial Reporting Center (FRC), a government-led FIU, to counter money laundering and the financing of terrorism. The FRC is now capable of referring cases for investigation to the SPF and international law enforcement and continues to monitor reports submitted by financial institutions. The government also enacted stricter mobile money regulations for Somalia-based banks and telecommunications companies, in accordance with legislation passed in 2019. In November the House of the People passed legislation to establish a national identification under a new government agency. The law will require presidential approval and funding before implementation. Uniform, national identification could enable financial institutions to vet customers and curb fraudulent financial activities.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** The Office of the Prime Minister is responsible for coordinating FGS efforts and international support for the Prevention and Countering of Violent Extremism. The PCVE coordinator, established in 2018, contributed to stabilization efforts that amplified credible voices for peace. The National Strategy for Public Awareness was established by the Ministry of Information, Culture, and Tourism in 2018 as a three-year strategy that includes specific lines of effort to counter violent extremism through the media. This year, the FGS and the SNA increased strategic communications that aimed to deny AS control of public media narratives. The FGS provided vocational training and rehabilitation services to select prison populations. The FGS, with U.S. support, launched a messaging campaign that increased enrollments in defector rehabilitation centers and provided training to community leaders and citizens to help defectors reintegrate into society.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** The FGS worked with AMISOM to prepare for a transition of security responsibilities from AMISOM to Somali security forces by the end of 2021, as mandated under the Somali Transition Plan (STP). As of December the FGS had not yet finalized a Somali-led revision of the STP that the United Nations had requested by the end of September. The United Nations will review AMISOM's mandate in 2021.



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## SOUTH AFRICA

**Overview:** There were no suspected terrorism-related incidents in South Africa during 2020, possibly owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. This continued a downward trend from 2019, following an unusually high number of incidents in 2018. ISIS facilitation networks and cells remained a threat, after the South African government first publicly acknowledged them in 2016. Regional dynamics remained an increasing concern as terrorist groups made gains in the South African Development Community region, including Mozambique. The South African government engaged in discussions with Mozambique on how to counter threats from ISIS and other terror groups. In July, ISIS threatened to expand its “fighting front” into South Africa if South Africa entered the ISIS conflict in Mozambique. The government continued to prosecute alleged terrorists charged in previous years and arrested members of an alleged white supremacist terrorist group.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** South African officials expressed interest in expanding CT information sharing with the United States to bolster border security. The Protection of Constitutional Democracy Against Terrorist and Related Activities Act criminalizes acts of terrorism and terrorism financing, and it specifies international cooperation obligations. The Regulation of Foreign Military Assistance Act of 1998 applies to nationals who attempt to or who join terrorist organizations like ISIS. The Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation’s “Crimes Against the State” Unit 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 CT, counterinsurgency, and hostage rescue. The National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) prosecutes terrorism and international crime cases. Parliament passed a cybercrimes bill in July, establishing more than 40 new criminal violations.

In July, South African police arrested individuals in South Africa with ISIS propaganda, weapons, and flags. Also in July, a South African magistrate dismissed prosecution of Farhad Hooper, a suspected ringleader in several deadly terrorist attacks in 2018, after investigators failed to complete analysis of computer and phone evidence after more than 20 months. The magistrate left open the possibility of reinstating the case.

South African border security is challenging because of its numerous land, sea, and air ports of entry for international travelers. Multiple South African law enforcement agencies police its borders, but they are often stovepiped. Inadequate communication and equipment limit their border control ability. The Department of Home Affairs in 2016 submitted to Parliament the Border Management Authority Bill to create an integrated and coordinated agency to ensure effective control of the border. President Ramaphosa signed the Border Management Authority Bill into law on July 22. CT measures at the international airports include screening with advanced technology X-ray machines, but land borders do not have advanced technology or infrastructure. Trafficking networks used these land borders for illicit smuggling, and South Africa does not require neighboring countries’ citizens to obtain visas for brief visits. SAPS

internal affairs office investigated corruption allegations related to illicit sale of passport and other identity documents in the Department of Home Affairs, but illegitimately obtained identity documents continued to be used.

In 2020, South Africa's NPA continued to prosecute terrorism crimes. To decentralize terrorism case prosecution and provide provincially based prosecutors with relevant experience, the NPA's Gauteng-based Priority Crimes Litigation Unit (PCLU) returned prosecutors who had been seconded to the central unit to their previous provincial assignments and reassigned terrorism cases to attorneys in judicial districts where the crimes occurred. While the PCLU retained an oversight role, it gave provincial prosecutors substantial autonomy to direct terrorism cases. Progress in several high-profile cases slowed as newly assigned NPA provincial prosecutors familiarized themselves with the cases and developed prosecution strategies. Affected cases included the previously reported prosecutions of the terrorist group allegedly responsible for the 2018 deadly attacks on a Shia mosque and firebomb attacks against commercial Durban interests, and the prosecutions of Sayfudeen Del Vecchio and Fatima Patel, charged in 2018 with murdering British-South African dual nationals Rodney and Rachel Saunders. In August a magistrate set a trial date for early 2021 for the Saunders' case, but the case was subsequently postponed pending police and prosecutors' evidence processing.

In 2019, South African Police arrested four members of the National Christian Resistance Movement, a white supremacist group that allegedly planned attacks on shopping malls, informal settlements, and government installations. In 2019, the four suspects were charged under the Protection of Constitutional Democracy Against Terrorism and Related Activities Act. Two members were found guilty and sentenced in December for an effective eight years' imprisonment for preparing and planning to carry out acts of terrorism. Charges against another individual were dropped. Harry Knoesen, the alleged leader of the group, is expected to face trial in 2021. Prosecutors charged a South African farmer with a terrorism-related offense after he allegedly led other rioters in storming and damaging courthouse property during an October 10 protest related to a hearing for suspects charged with murdering another farmer.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** South Africa is a member of FATF and of ESAAMLG. South Africa's FIU, the Financial Intelligence Centre, is a member of the Egmont Group. SAPS's Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation has struggled with a recent inspection related to terrorism financing cases, including South African officials' reluctance to label cases as terrorism financing.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** There are no updates in 2020.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** South Africa is a member of the AU, the GCTF, and Southern African Development Corporation.

## SUDAN

**Overview:** The United States formally rescinded Sudan's designation as a State Sponsor of Terrorism (SST) on December 14. The Secretary of State designated Sudan as an SST in 1993 for supporting international terrorist groups, including the Abu Nidal Organization, Palestine

Islamic Jihad, Hamas, Hizballah, and al-Qa'ida. The rescission of the designation came after a political transition in 2019, when Sudan officially formed the civilian-led transitional government (CLTG) after a popular uprising ended the 30-year regime of former President Omer al-Bashir. Rescission of Sudan's SST designation was a top priority for Prime Minister Hamdok and his cabinet, who have taken critical steps to work with the United States on improving Sudan's CT efforts. Addressing a policy condition for rescission of the SST designation, the CLTG agreed to provide \$335 million in compensation for victims of terrorism, to include victims of the 2000 USS *Cole* attack and the 1998 East African Embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania. As part of the SST statutory criteria, the CLTG also provided assurances that it will not support acts of international terrorism in the future.

Following the 2019 revolution, in 2020 the CLTG prioritized CT operations, arrested terrorist suspects, and continued its CT cooperation with the international community. The CLTG has made significant steps forward in CT cooperation with the United States, including increased information sharing, and is working to build its capacity to identify terrorists and deny them safe haven. Despite the absence of high-profile attacks attributable to identifiable terrorist groups, ISIS, al-Qa'ida, and Harakat Sawa'd Misr continue to use Sudan as a facilitation and logistics hub. Lone actors and low-level violent extremists, who lack direction from senior leadership of identifiable terrorist groups, remain a potential threat.

A worsening economic crisis since 2018 compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic created a permissive environment for terrorist groups to exploit. The CLTG continues to view FTFs as the predominant threat, but local violent extremist sympathizers and self-radicalized elements remain a concern.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no confirmed terrorist incidents during the year.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** On July 13 the CLTG published amendments to the Criminal Law Act of 1991, the Criminal Procedure Act of 1991, and the National Security Act of 2010. Among these amendments, Sudan removed the arrest and detention authorities of the General Intelligence Service (formerly the National Intelligence and Security Service), banned torture and forced confessions, and repealed criminal law provisions that prevented cooperation with the International Criminal Court. Sudan is also working on amending its overarching CT legal framework — the Counter Terrorism Act of 2001 — to provide protections for witnesses and whistleblowers and clarify ambiguous statutory language.

In May, Sudan signed an MOU with the UN Countering Terrorist Travel Program to build Sudan's capacities to detect and interdict terrorist travel in accordance with UNSCR 2396 (from 2017). Sudan is also working with UNOCT to operationalize "goTravel" at major Sudanese ports of entry for collecting and analyzing API/PNR data.

In 2020, Sudanese authorities successfully disrupted a significant number of terrorist plots, including the September arrest of 41 individuals for possession of explosive materials such as ammonium nitrate. Sudan also has increased its border security measures to track and interdict terrorist suspects traveling on fraudulent passports.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** In 2020 the CLTG developed an AML/CFT prioritization plan that includes legislative amendments to the 2014 AML/CTF law to ensure oversight of the financial sector, in line with FATF standards. Sudan is a member of MENAFATF and is preparing for its 2022 mutual evaluation. Sudan’s FIU has reached out to the World Bank and the IMF about ongoing AML/CFT assistance programs and potential for additional engagement, to include its National Risk Assessment toolkit, and taken steps to incorporate AML/CFT oversight of the real estate sector. The FIU remains a member of the Egmont Group.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** The CLTG continues to develop a unified National Action Plan on CVE. Previous government programs focused on the terrorist deradicalization and reintegration of individuals rather than preventing violent extremism and addressing the roots of terrorist radicalization. In 2020 the CLTG has broadened its relationships and engagement on CVE by seeking input from international bodies, civil society, and local experts.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** In 2020, Sudan continued to support CT efforts in regional and multilateral organizations. The CLTG has undertaken initiatives to bolster its CT capacity, including partnership with UNOCT to enhance border security and counter terrorist travel. Sudan is a member of the following groups which have CT equities: the United Nations (the UN Development Programme, or UNDP, and UNOCT); INTERPOL; the International and Ibero-American Foundation for Administration and Public Policies; and the Eastern Africa Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization.

**State Sponsor of Terrorism:** Rescission of Sudan’s designation as an SST was critical to bolstering Sudan’s ability to receive debt relief and addressed a major reputational impediment to international investment. It also means several related legal restrictions, including on certain U.S. exports of dual-use items to Sudan, no longer apply.

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## TANZANIA

**Overview:** In 2020 the Government of Tanzania (GoT) and the U.S. government engaged in limited CT and CVE cooperation. Tanzania faces terrorist threats on three of its borders — the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, and Mozambique. ISIS-Mozambique poses the greatest threat to Tanzania, having conducted at least two attacks inside Tanzania in 2020. Renewed assurances of Tanzania-Mozambique cross-border security cooperation have yet to materialize; however, bilateral cooperation will be important to securing Tanzanian citizens and territory.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** Tanzania experienced two notable terrorist attacks in 2020:

- On October 14 an estimated 300 ISIS-Mozambique fighters attacked Kitaya village in Mtwara Region, which borders Mozambique. Attackers looted and burned houses, shops, vehicles, and an administrative office building. Attackers killed an estimated 20 people, including two security personnel. On October 15, for the first time, ISIS media claimed the attack inside Tanzania.

- On October 28, ISIS-Mozambique fighters attacked Michenjele village in Mtwara Region, 25 miles from Kitaya. Attackers looted and burned homes, shops, and infrastructure. Attackers killed five people and kidnapped an unknown number more. In an exaggerated claim, ISIS issued a statement on October 30 saying its fighters had attacked three villages in Mtwara near the “artificial border” with Mozambique.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** The GoT did not pass or amend any laws regarding terrorism in 2020. In response to growing ISIS-Mozambique activity in early 2020, the GoT sent additional security personnel to the border regions of Mtwara and Ruvuma, as well as to neighboring Lindi Region. Following the October attacks in Mtwara, Tanzania’s Inspector General of Police (IGP) met his Mozambican counterpart to sign an MOU. The MOU allows for extradition of terrorist suspects, greater information sharing, and joint operations against terrorism in northern Mozambique. As part of the MOU, Tanzania planned to extradite to Mozambique 516 persons detained in Tanzania for alleged cooperation or involvement in attacks in Mozambique’s Cabo Delgado Province. In addition, Tanzania’s IGP announced that police had arrested an unspecified number of people from around Tanzania who were planning on travel to Mozambique to “join that group.”

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Tanzania is a member of ESAAMLG. Tanzania’s FIU, the Tanzania Financial Intelligence Unit, is a member of the Egmont Group. Throughout 2020 the United States funded AML/CFT for Ministry of Finance officials. In 2020 the GoT continued efforts to regulate the movement of foreign exchange. While the primary purpose of the restrictions appears to be reducing tax evasion, the measures also make it easier to trace transactions, including those associated with money laundering.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** Tanzania’s National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) is the GoT’s primary liaison with international partners on CVE. Since 2017, NCTC has partnered with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in a CVE project that includes pilot programming and the development of a national CVE strategy and action plan. Since 2018, NCTC and UNDP have assured donor countries the national strategy and action plan would be completed imminently. International partners have not been granted access to review or offer input on the national strategy.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** In 2020 the GoT pursued training from bilateral and multilateral donors to enhance CT-related security units. In a shift from previous years, the GoT signaled its preference to work through the Southern African Development Community on regional security and CT issues.

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## UGANDA

**Overview:** Uganda is considered to have one of the most effective militaries in the region in terms of CT capabilities and has not suffered a major terrorist incident since the 2010 World Cup bombings claimed by al-Shabaab. However, with al-Shabaab active to the East in Somalia and parts of Kenya and ISIS-DRC (also known as the Allied Democratic Forces, a historically anti-Kampala group) to the West in the DRC, Uganda remains vigilant against the persistent threat of terrorism. In 2020, Uganda continued its role as the top troop-contributing country to AMISOM,

the international effort to combat al-Shabaab in Somalia, with its most recent deployment on December 11.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in Uganda in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** Uganda did not pass significant legislation or alter its security posture as it pertained to terrorism during 2020. However, it did make dramatic changes to its border posture because of other political priorities that could have had effects on terrorist operability. The Rwanda-Uganda border remained mostly closed owing to ongoing political disputes. Uganda shut all of its borders, including its international airport, almost entirely for several months during 2020 to prevent the spread of COVID-19 into the country.

During 2020, Uganda's law enforcement entities focused much of their "antiterrorism" effort on harassing the political opposition ahead of elections scheduled for 2021. For example, security services ostensibly operating under Uganda's Antiterrorism Act froze the bank accounts of four highly reputable democracy- and governance-focused civil society organizations in November.

Despite its strong military capabilities relative to the region, Uganda is vulnerable to terrorism owing to porous borders, lack of trust and information sharing among disparate security services, corruption, and diversions in security force capabilities toward political concerns.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Uganda is a member of ESAAMLG, and Uganda's FIU, known as the Financial Intelligence Authority, is a member of the Egmont Group.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** As of December, Uganda had still not approved its draft 2020 national strategy to counter violent extremism. Additionally, any progress previously made in improving community policing has likely been lost through multiple violent crackdowns by security services in the lead up to 2021 elections, such as during the November 18-19 protests when reports suggest security forces killed more than 50 civilians. Violence and prolonged and unexplained detention at the hands of law enforcement are some of the major "push factors" of violent extremism in Uganda, reinforcing a key narrative employed by violent extremist recruiters to radicalize youths to violence.

**International and Regional CT Cooperation:** Uganda was a key leader and active CT partner in AMISOM during 2020. Uganda continued to be the largest troop-contributing country for AMISOM, with close to 6,000 personnel, and was responsible for the region in Somalia that sees the most violence, especially from IEDs. In September, Uganda deployed two of five U.S.-donated Huey helicopters in support of AMISOM. In early December the Ugandan military conducted its first air medical evacuation operations using these helicopters from Baledogle Airfield to the Level-2 hospital in Mogadishu.

## EAST ASIA AND PACIFIC

### Overview

During 2020, governments in East Asia and the Pacific strengthened legal frameworks, investigated and prosecuted terrorism cases, increased regional cooperation and information sharing, and addressed critical border and aviation security gaps. COVID-19 posed significant challenges to domestic law enforcement and judicial authorities. But governments continued to make arrests and use innovative virtual trial proceedings to ensure continuity of efforts. In addition, regional cooperation among countries throughout Southeast Asia was moved to virtual environments and resulted in high numbers of terrorism-related arrests and, in many cases, successful prosecutions.

In the Philippines, terrorists used suicide bombings and IEDs and deployed small arms to target civilians and security forces, including the August 24 attack in Sulu province, where the Abu Sayyaf Group killed more than a dozen people and injured more than 70 others. In Indonesia, Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)-inspired groups and lone actors continued to target the police, other government actors, and civilians. The Mujahidin Indonesia Timur carried out two of these attacks, which together killed six civilians.

Authorities in East Asia and the Pacific 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 Global Counterterrorism Forum (the GCTF).

Civil society organizations accused some governments in the region of using terrorism as a pretext to target members of religious minority groups and human rights defenders. A multitude of countries, along with civil society and the media, brought significant attention to the Chinese government's repressive approach to counterterrorism that undermined respect for human rights and relied heavily on mass surveillance, censorship, and mass internment of members of religious and ethnic minorities.

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### AUSTRALIA

**Overview:** In 2020, Australia introduced legislation to strengthen CT laws, investigated and disrupted suspected terrorist plots, and maintained high levels of cooperation with the United States and other international partners. Australia continued to play an active role in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and was a leading contributor to the Defeat-ISIS Coalition's military support, humanitarian assistance, and efforts to disrupt foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs). Australia extended its role as co-chair of the GCTF CVE Working Group with Indonesia; Australia's mandate was extended until 2022. Australia is a financial supporter and board member of the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF). At the end of 2020, Australia's National Terrorism Threat Advisory System remained at "Probable," the third-highest level on a five-level scale. In 2020 the Home Affairs Minister initiated a new parliamentary inquiry into "extremist movements and radicalism" in Australia to examine the

role of social media, encrypted messaging platforms, and the dark web in facilitating online terrorist communication and recruitment. Expected completion date of this inquiry is 2021.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in Australia in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** In 2020, the Australian government introduced into Parliament the Counter-Terrorism Legislation Amendment (High-Risk Terrorist Offenders) Bill 2020, which would lengthen the extended supervision order (ESO) scheme for high-risk terrorist offenders where a state or territory Supreme Court is satisfied they continue to pose a risk to the community at the end of their custodial sentence. The ESO will enable a person to be released into the community, subject to prohibitions and other conditions on their activities, associations, and movements.

Significant law enforcement actions in 2020 included the following:

- In March, Australian counterterrorism authorities raided and arrested an alleged right-wing violent extremist who was attempting to acquire military equipment and precursor materials for IEDs.
- Australian authorities prevented an Australian from leaving the country in early 2020 to fight with a violent extremist right-wing group on a foreign battlefield.
- The Home Affairs Minister announced on November 25 that Australia had revoked the citizenship of an Algerian-born Muslim cleric convicted of planning a terrorist attack in 2005, the first person to be stripped of Australian citizenship while still in the country.
- In December a 22-year-old male suspected of being “influenced by Islamic State” was shot dead in Brisbane after being confronted by police. He was linked to the killing of an elderly Australian couple, a crime Australian authorities labeled a “terrorism event.”
- An 18-year-old male alleged to be a neo-Nazi was arrested on December 9 for encouraging a mass casualty attack and looking up bomb making materials online.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Australia is a member of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and co-chairs the Asia/Pacific Group (APG) on Money Laundering, a FATF-style regional body. The Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (AUSTRAC), Australia’s FIU, is a member of the Egmont Group. Australia is also a member of the Defeat-ISIS Coalition’s Counter ISIS Finance Group. In 2020, Australia’s foreign minister listed one individual for the purpose of applying targeted financial sanctions connected with terrorism. As of December, Australia had applied sanctions to 37 individuals and 40 entities listed by the foreign minister. In its 2019-20 budget, the Australian government approved \$28.4 million over four years to AUSTRAC to expand the Fintel Alliance, a public-private partnership that links expertise in government, law enforcement, and the private sector to combat serious organized crime and build resilience in the financial system. The Fintel Alliance’s capabilities disrupt money laundering involved in transnational organized crime, child exploitation, and terrorism financing.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** Funding in the government’s 2019-20 budget included \$512.9 million from 2018-19 over five years to the Australian Federal Police (AFP) to enhance critical capabilities and operations, including counterterrorism activities, and \$41.6 million for 2019-20



for the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation to sustain current operations and enhance future operations, including for counterterrorism purposes.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Australia is a member of the United Nations, the GCTF, the Pacific Islands Forum, the East Asia Summit, the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the ASEAN Regional Forum, and the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism. In 2020, Australia’s Ambassador for Counter-Terrorism led whole-of-government consultations with regional partners in Southeast Asia, which strengthened operational relationships and provided technical assistance. Australia continues to engage with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) partners and in ASEAN-related fora on counterterrorism and law enforcement cooperation, including technical and regulatory assistance to develop and implement counterterrorism legislation. The AFP works with policing agencies in Southeast Asia.

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## CHINA (HONG KONG AND MACAU)

### CHINA

**Overview:** The PRC response to terrorism remained difficult to distinguish from the government and ruling Chinese Communist Party’s (CCP’s) suppression of peaceful activities that authorities deemed separatist or subversive in nature. The PRC’s counterterrorism attention remained on ethnic Uyghur so-called extremists, specifically alleging that the East Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM) is the primary source of terrorism in Xinjiang. The United States, however, has seen no credible evidence for more than a decade that the group still exists and removed ETIM from the Terrorist Exclusion List in November based on this lack of evidence. The United States continued to list ETIM as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist under Executive Order 13224 to maintain compliance with its obligations under the UN 1267 Committee. Beijing inaccurately labeled the “Turkistan Islamic Party” (TIP) as ETIM. TIP is a violent extremist group active in Syria and Afghanistan that shares some characteristics with the PRC’s description of ETIM. Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities have faced extreme oppression at the hands of China’s authoritarian government, which has used counterterrorism as a pretext to commit genocide and crimes against humanity in Xinjiang. The PRC since 2017 has detained more than one million predominantly Muslim Uyghurs, ethnic Kazakhs, and members of other religious and ethnic minority groups in internment camps, where officials subject them to torture, forced labor, persecution, and coercive family planning, among other abuses. The PRC continued to expand law enforcement tools and enhance its military and counterterrorism capabilities to justify and improve its ability to carry out this repressive campaign, respond to threats faced as a result of the PRC’s increasing global economic footprint, and garner international support for its counterterrorism-related policies.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** PRC officials maintain that no violent terrorist incidents have occurred in the country since 2016 owing to their Xinjiang policies.

Chinese citizens abroad were affected by terrorist attacks not specifically directed against PRC policies:

- On February 6, Islamic State sympathizers in the Maldives stabbed three persons, including two Chinese citizens. On November 2, a Chinese citizen was killed and another person of Chinese ethnicity injured by a gunman in a terrorist attack in Vienna, Austria, for which the Islamic State claimed responsibility. Four persons were killed and 23 injured in the Vienna attack.

International terrorist-related incidents targeting China and its interests also occurred in 2020 involving PRC infrastructure projects associated with the One Belt One Road initiative.

- In October, four Pakistani military and private security personnel guarding Chinese facilities related to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and the One Belt One Road initiative were killed in an attack by Baloch separatists.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** The PRC continued to advance and defend its policies on fighting terrorism, which included the use of political “re-education” camps in Xinjiang under the guise of vocational training and education centers. Authorities forced detainees to learn Communist Party ideology, Mandarin Chinese, and ideas to counter “extremist thinking.” International media reported on the expansion of these camps and on the continued mass transfer of Uyghur workers both within Xinjiang and to other provinces in China to fill labor shortages, and described draconian detention conditions in the facilities, including torture. A September State Council white paper on Xinjiang, however, lauded the PRC’s poverty alleviation efforts in Xinjiang as a successful model for combating terrorism. Throughout the year, the PRC continued to enhance and develop its military and counterterrorism capabilities as well as leverage its domestic technology sector to bolster surveillance capabilities, including for counterterrorism goals.

In 2020, to meet various UNSCR requirements, the Chinese government began collecting Passenger Name Record data and has collected Advance Passenger Information data since 2019.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** The PRC is a member of FATF, APG, and the Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing (EAG). China served as FATF president from July 2019 to July 2020. Brazil, China, India, Russia, and South Africa (BRICS) regularly cooperate on the topic of terrorist financing and have proposed institutionalizing the Anti-Money Laundering/Countering the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) BRICS Council.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** The PRC continued to implement broad repressive campaigns in Xinjiang under the guise of countering what the Chinese government called extremism, including mass “re-education” and “vocational training” of Uyghurs and other Muslims. The United States assesses the goal of these policies is to repress and Sinicize religious minorities. CCP General Secretary Xi Jinping delivered a keynote address at the Third CCP Central Symposium on Work related to Xinjiang in September, in which he said the CCP should continue to promote the Sinicization of Islam in Xinjiang. The PRC government’s broad definitions of terrorism, conflation of the exercise of freedom of religion or belief and violent extremism, as well as its unclear definition of “cyber terrorism,” continued to raise human rights

concerns. The Department of State's *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* contains further information on the topic.

**Regional and International Cooperation:** The PRC continued to promote the United Nations as the primary international forum for counterterrorism, where it actively advances a repressive approach to counterterrorism. It engaged in a range of multilateral, regional, and bilateral fora, presenting itself as a global leader on counterterrorism. China continued to work through the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure to pursue counterterrorism cooperation, including joint border operations, drills, and youth deradicalization efforts. In September, BRICS held a fifth Counterterrorism Working Group meeting and in November unveiled a new counterterrorism strategy. In bilateral and multilateral fora, the PRC cited terrorism concerns to counter international criticism of human rights abuses in Xinjiang and to justify repatriation requests and other law enforcement actions overseas. The PRC engages through bilateral channels with a variety of governments to aggressively lobby the forcible return of Uyghur and other ethnic and religious minority asylum seekers who fled repression in Xinjiang, often labeling these individuals as terrorists or violent extremists. During the year, units from the People's Liberation Army and the People's Armed Police held CT drills with a range of countries, including the September Kavkaz-2020 multinational antiterror strategic exercise in Russia.

China is a member of the following organizations:

- The Association of Southeast Asian Nations Regional Forum
- The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
- The East Asia Summit
- The Global Counter-Terrorism Forum
- The Shanghai Cooperation Organization

### Hong Kong

**Overview:** A major part of Hong Kong's CT cooperation with the United States centers on information sharing. Hong Kong continued security and law enforcement cooperation with the United States through the Hong Kong Customs and Excise Department's joint implementation of the Container Security Initiative. Hong Kong cooperated internationally on CT efforts through INTERPOL and other security-focused organizations.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in Hong Kong in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** Counterterrorism remained an operational priority for the Hong Kong Police Force. The Police Counterterrorism Response Unit provides a strong deterrent presence, assisting police districts with CT strategy implementation and complementing 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 June, the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress passed the Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security (NSL) in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. The NSL contains

new offenses that carry criminal penalties of up to life imprisonment, including offenses related to organizing, planning, committing, participating in, or threatening enumerated “terrorist activities.” The NSL has been widely criticized for its potential use against prodemocracy activists and other protestors in Hong Kong.

In 2018 the Hong Kong government set up the Inter-Departmental Counterterrorism Unit (IDCU) to strengthen overall CT efforts by monitoring global trends, reviewing and improving CT strategies in Hong Kong, developing specialized CT training, and optimizing emergency response plans. The IDCU held its most recent annual exercise in March.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Hong Kong is a member of FATF and APG. Hong Kong’s FIU, the Joint Financial Intelligence Unit, is a member of the Egmont Group.

In July the Hong Kong Monetary Authority issued circulars that shared observations and recommendations to help industry develop sustainable efforts to cope with the evolving COVID-19 situation and minimize any potential negative effects on businesses that support AML/CFT measures.

In September the Securities and Futures Commission launched a three-month consultation on its proposals to amend AML/CFT guidelines. The proposed amendments aim to facilitate the adoption of a risk-based approach to AML/CFT measures by the securities industry and to mitigate risks associated with cross-border correspondent relationships.

In November the Hong Kong government launched a three-month consultation on legislative proposals to enhance Hong Kong’s AML/CTF regime through the introduction of a licensing requirement for virtual asset services providers and a registration system for dealers in precious metals and stones. The government aims to introduce a bill into the Legislative Council in 2021.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** There were no changes to Hong Kong’s CVE programming in 2020.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** The Presidential Executive Order on Hong Kong Normalization ended U.S. government-sponsored capacity-building training programs for Hong Kong law enforcement in July. Owing to COVID-19 restrictions, the 2020 tripartite online meeting involving mainland China, Hong Kong, and Macau to foster cooperation on AML/CFT was postponed until 2021. Hong Kong is an APEC economy.

## Macau

**Overview:** A major part of Macau’s CT cooperation with the United States involves information sharing. Under the Macau Public Security Police Force is the Police Intervention Tactical Unit (UTIP), whose main mission is CT operations. UTIP is responsible for protecting important installations and dignitaries, and conducting high-risk missions, such as IED deactivation. Macau cooperated internationally on CT efforts through INTERPOL and other security-focused organizations.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in Macau in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** As a gambling center, Macau authorities are aware of the risks associated with junket promoters. They have indicated they are continually taking the necessary steps to strengthen the regulatory framework for market entry and to intensify AML/CFT oversight.

In October the Macau government devised and published Law No. 14/2020 and Administrative Regulation No. 35/2020. The new legislation created the Terrorism Crimes Alert Division under the framework of the Judiciary Police and empowered the new division to create an information system for combating terrorism and monitoring, alerting, and communicating information related to terrorism activities.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Macau is a member of APG. Macau's FIU, the Financial Intelligence Office (GIF), is a member of the Egmont Group. The GIF's Director was appointed as Co-Chair of the Asia/Pacific Joint Group by the International Anti-Money Laundering Organization in April. The GIF also provided AML/CFT training sessions to Banco Comercial de Macau -, the Bank of Communications (Macau Branch), the Bank of China (Macau Branch), and Tai Fung Bank in 2020.

The Macau's Interdepartmental AML/CFT Working Group, which was established in 2010 and currently consists of 15 government agencies, held two AML/CFT plenary meetings in June and December. The Working Group is responsible for tracking the development of AML/CFT international standards and best practices, and formulating overall policies against money laundering, terrorism financing, and financing for WMD proliferation. In the second plenary meeting, the Working Group formulated the Five-Year Strategic Plan for Anti-Money Laundering (2021-25) to further implement and reinforce the AML/CFT laws and regulations in the territory.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** There were no changes to Macau's CVE programming in 2020.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Owing to COVID-19 restrictions, the 2020 tripartite online meeting among mainland China, Hong Kong, and Macau to foster cooperation on AML/CFT was postponed until 2021.

In September the GIF visited the AML Bureau of the People's Bank of China and the China Anti-Money Laundering Monitoring and Analysis Center to strengthen cooperation and exchange.

In October the Macau government signed a Reimbursable Advisory Services Agreement Concerning Risk Assessment of Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing Risks with the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. This voluntary move asked the World Bank to assess the effectiveness of the Macau AML/CFT regime, including any threats and vulnerabilities from money laundering and terrorism financing activities.

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## INDONESIA

**Overview:** Indonesia applied sustained pressure to detect, disrupt, degrade, and deny safe haven for terrorist groups operating within its borders. ISIS-affiliated Mujahidin Indonesia Timur (MIT), Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD), and JAD 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 the importance of CVE efforts to complement law enforcement counterterrorism efforts. Indonesia is an active member of the GCTF and co-chairs the CVE Working Group with Australia. The Indonesian, Malaysian, and Philippine militaries continued their cooperation to improve joint operation capabilities to prevent terrorism and transnational crimes through coordinated air and sea patrols.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** ISIS-inspired groups and lone actors continued to target civilians and law enforcement:

- In April, MIT killed two civilians in Poso.
- In June, a sword-wielding ISIS supporter killed an Indonesian policeman in South Daha district, Kalimantan.
- On November 27, MIT members killed four civilians in Sigi district, Central Sulawesi.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** On July 7, the Government of Indonesia issued Regulation No. 35/2020 on Providing Compensation, Restitution, and Assistance to Witnesses and Victims (including victims of terrorism) as an implementing regulation under the 2018 Law on Terrorism. The regulation ensures victims' right to seek compensation from the government for damages incurred attributable to past terrorist attacks.

According to the National Counter-Terrorism Agency (BNPT), from January to December, police arrested approximately 260 terror suspects and killed at least 10 who were resisting arrest. Among those arrested was Zulkarnaen, alias Aris Sumarsono, an alleged military commander in the al-Qa'ida-linked Jemaah Islamiyah terrorist organization believed to have been involved in planning the 2002 Bali bombings and other attacks. Indonesia convicted at least 23 terror suspects, and 189 remain under investigation or on trial.

The government extended the joint police-military Operation Tinombala offensive against MIT in Sulawesi province through December 31.

Border security improved, but challenges remain. Indonesia connected its 36 most-traveled international airports, seaports, and land ports of entry to INTERPOL's law enforcement data network, enabling the Customs and Excise Directorate General to screen 99 percent of all international passenger traffic against INTERPOL databases. Indonesia also actively contributed stolen and lost travel document (SLTD) records to the INTERPOL global database through automation. Police and other agencies maintain watchlists of suspected terrorists, but lines of communication and coordination among stakeholder agencies were not always clear. The U.S. government worked in coordination with BNPT and other Indonesian border security and law

enforcement agencies to develop and consolidate these efforts through the Watchlisting Assistance and Support Program.

In March, Indonesia participated in the Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines Trilateral Security Conference. The conference addressed the tri-border operational environment, kidnapping trends on the high seas, tactics used by threat groups, government initiatives and efforts, and gaps and challenges in securing common borders.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Indonesia is a member of APG. Indonesia’s FIU, the Indonesian Financial Transaction Reports and Analysis Center, is a member of the Egmont Group. Indonesia acquired observer status in FATF in 2018 and is on track toward full membership by 2021. The nation is also a member of the Defeat-ISIS Coalition’s Counter-ISIS Finance Group. In 2020, Indonesia arrested, prosecuted, and convicted individuals for financing terrorism and added five entities and 19 individuals to its List of Terrorism Suspects and Terrorist Organizations.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** BNPT in 2020 submitted a draft CVE national action plan for anticipated release as a presidential executive order. BNPT also managed “deradicalization” programs for terrorist convicts. Indonesians deported from third countries for attempted travel to Iraq and Syria were enrolled in a one-month deradicalization 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 boarding schools to educate children of former terrorists. Indonesia issued a “Ministerial Joint Decree on Handling Radicalism Among Civil Servants in November 2019” and formed a dedicated task force to monitor, investigate, and report online behavior of civil servants accused of “radicalism.” On October 19, BNPT launched the Indonesia Knowledge Hub on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (or I-KHub) digital platform to improve coordination, collaboration, cooperation, planning, and implementation of CVE programs among donors.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Indonesia continued to support CT efforts in several regional and multilateral organizations, including the United Nations, ASEAN, the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the ASEAN Defense Ministerial Meetings (ADMM), and APEC. Indonesia remained active in the ARF Inter-Sessional Meetings on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime and the APEC Counter-Terrorism Working Group. Indonesia continued to use the Jakarta Centre for Law Enforcement Cooperation as a regional training center. Indonesia is a member of the GCTF and co-chairs the GCTF CVE Working Group with Australia.

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## MALAYSIA

**Overview:** There were no terrorist attacks in Malaysia in 2020, but the country remained a transit point and, to a lesser extent, a destination country for members of terrorist groups including ISIS, Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), al-Qa’ida, and Jemaah Islamiyah. Individuals linked to ISIS or ASG planning travel to the southern Philippines or the Middle East 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 at

airports and in the Sulu Sea, to counter terrorist recruitment, and to improve prosecution of terrorism-related crimes.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** While no terrorist attacks were carried out in 2020, Malaysia remained a transit point for terrorist group members and a hub for kidnap-for-ransom activities perpetrated by terrorist networks. On January 16, five Indonesian fishermen were kidnapped off the coast of Lahad Datu in Sabah state by ASG militants, according to media reports.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** The Malaysian government did not make any changes to its security-related laws, including the Security Offense Special Measures Act, the Prevention Against Terrorism Act, and the Sedition Act, which were under government review in 2019. Human rights organizations again advocated for a repeal of the laws, citing concerns that provisions of the law that allow detention without trial were not in line with international law. The Eastern Sabah Security Command reinstated a “heightened alert” status for the East Sabah area, increased maritime patrols, and extended curfew to safeguard against kidnappings. Authorities reported 40 foiled kidnapping attempts within the Eastern Sabah Security Zone between 2018 and 2020.

The Royal Malaysia Police (RMP) Special Branch Counterterrorism Unit has the lead counterterrorism law enforcement role. RMP officials reported a significant decline in terrorist-related arrests, noting seven arrests in 2020 compared with 72 in 2019. Authorities noted that border closures and restricted in-country movements during the COVID-19 pandemic limited transit of terrorist networks and were a contributing factor to the decline but shared that terrorist recruitment through online platforms remained a concerning trend. In February, authorities reported the arrest of a group of Malaysian citizens for attempting to establish an ISIS-affiliated cell, Ansarullah At-Tauhid, and to recruit through online chat groups.

The Ministry of Home Affairs reported the return of 16 Malaysian citizens (12 adults and 4 children) to Malaysia from Syria and Iraq, with 8 of the adults serving criminal sentences. Those released were admitted to a rehabilitation program administered by the government. The Malaysian government has allowed its citizens to return, provided they comply with checks, enforcement, and a government-run rehabilitation program. Malaysia has reportedly worked with other countries to facilitate repatriations and estimates that 56 terrorist fighters and their families remain in the Middle East. Malaysia has 10 ports of entry connected to INTERPOL SLTD and nominal databases, which have greatly enhanced passenger-screening measures of incoming and transiting international travelers. Additionally, Malaysia actively contributed SLTD records to the INTERPOL global database through automation.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Malaysia is a member of FATF and APG. Malaysia’s FIU is a member of the Egmont Group. In January, Malaysia enacted a policy document for its central bank (Bank Negara Malaysia, or BNM), the Anti-Money Laundering, Countering Financing of Terrorism and Targeted Financial Sanctions for Designated Non-Financial Businesses and Professions and Non-Bank Financial Institutions. The policy document supersedes previous guidance last issued in 2013. In September, BNM published further guidelines on the Verification of Customer Identity for Customer Due Diligence and Beneficial



Ownership as a supplement to the Policy Document. Taken together, the updated guidance revises reporting institutions with respect to AML/CTF requirements with the objective of “ensuring areas of higher risk are subject to enhanced controls,” according to BNM.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** In 2020 the Southeast Asia Regional Center for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs hosted webinars and virtual trainings focused on CT and CVE. These efforts included a series of webinars in collaboration with Deakin University in Australia and the National University of Singapore on terrorism trends in the COVID-19 era and separate discussions to address the rising trend of hate speech through online platforms. SEARCCT also organized a roundtable discussion with civil society organizations in East Malaysia to understand the drivers of violent extremism in Sabah. SEARCCT partnered with the United Nations Office of Counterterrorism to facilitate a training program on open-source investigation techniques for law enforcement officials.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Malaysia continued to support counterterrorism efforts in regional and multilateral organizations, including the United Nations, the Global Counterterrorism Forum, ASEAN, ARF, ADMM, and APEC. The Government of Malaysia hosted the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Counterterrorism Working Group meetings in February and October.

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## PHILIPPINES

**Overview:** The Philippine government placed significant resources toward countering threats from terrorist groups that operate primarily in the country’s South. A new antiterrorism law increased police and prosecutorial tools. Philippine military forces remained engaged in counterterrorism operations. The government enjoyed close counterterrorism cooperation with the United States that enhanced law enforcement and CVE efforts.

Groups affiliated with ISIS remained the deadliest terrorism threat in the Philippines. These groups continued to recruit, fundraise, and stage attacks on security forces and civilians alike, including suicide attacks that used female relatives of previous attackers. ISIS affiliates active in 2020 included elements of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF), Ansar al-Khalifa Philippines, and the Maute Group. The Philippines remained a destination for FTFs from Indonesia, Malaysia, and countries in the Middle East and Europe. The Communist Party of the Philippines/New People’s Army (CPP/NPA) continued attacks on both security forces and civilians.

The government intensified actions against CPP/NPA through military operations and legal actions to cut off financing. The government’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including strict travel regulations, limited the ability of terrorist groups to travel and conduct operations.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** Terrorist attacks using suicide bombings, IEDs, and small arms continued to target civilians and security forces.

On August 24, in Jolo, Sulu province, ASG killed more than a dozen people and injured more than 70 others in twin bombings. A female suicide bomber detonated a motorcycle bomb near a

military truck next to a food market. An hour later, another female suicide bomber approached the area and detonated a bomb, likely targeting first responders.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** On July 3, President Duterte signed into law the Antiterrorism Act (ATA), replacing the 2007 Human Security Act. The Philippine government developed the ATA with assistance from the United States and other governments to criminalize predicate offenses, remove procedural obstacles to charging terrorists, and provide additional investigative tools to law enforcement. Opponents of the ATA, worried the law could be used against political rivals and human rights defenders, have petitioned the Supreme Court to invalidate the law as unconstitutional. According to human rights groups, government officials label activists and others as terrorists to silence criticism of the government or intimidate opponents in local disputes. Many such individuals are later killed or targeted with alleged politically motivated criminal charges.

The country's legal framework also includes antiterrorism financing laws. The government maintained a published list of groups designated as terrorist organizations that included ISIS affiliates and the CPP/NPA. Investments in personnel and training for the Philippine National Police Special Action Force and other specialized law enforcement units improved government capacity to detect, deter, and prevent terrorist acts. The government continued law enforcement and judicial responses to terrorism, disrupting plots and investigating and prosecuting terrorists. On September 28 a regional court convicted seven defendants for a 2016 terrorist bombing at a Davao City night market that killed 17, sentencing them to life imprisonment. Although ASG claimed responsibility for the attack and the perpetrators had links to ASG and the Maute group, prosecutors cited weaknesses in the Human Security Act and charged the seven instead with murder.

The government made progress toward implementing UNSCR 2396, taking steps to curb terrorist travel and improving information sharing with foreign partners. The Bureau of Immigration (BI) used deportation and exclusion authorities to remove several FTFs. Although the BI screened against domestic and international watchlists at select ports of entry, additional capacity is needed to collect passenger information data and extend access to INTERPOL databases at critical ports of entry beyond the Manila International Airport. The Philippines improved aviation security with enhanced screening technologies and training, strengthened oversight programs and information sharing, and through closer collaboration with foreign partners.

Government forces made several significant enforcement actions against terrorists and terrorist groups, including disruptions and arrests.

On October 10, Philippine authorities arrested four ASG members in Jolo, including one Indonesian: Rezky "Cici" Fantasia Rullie, the pregnant daughter of the couple responsible for the 2019 Jolo Cathedral bombing and widow of terrorist leader Andi Baso. Rullie reportedly was planning to give birth before committing her own suicide bombing. The law enforcement units involved in this and other terrorist disruptions benefited from U.S.-provided capacity-building assistance.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** The Philippines is a member of APG. Its FIU, the Anti-Money Laundering Council, is a member of the Egmont Group. The September APG Follow-Up Report to the 2019 Mutual Evaluation Report of the Philippines noted improvements in technical compliance since 2019 as well as continued vulnerabilities in light of the continued high terrorism-finance-risk profile and mature support networks that sustain terrorist groups in the Philippines. The September follow-up also indicated that multiple legislative amendments to the 2001 Anti-Money Laundering Act were introduced that would address some of the deficiencies identified by APG. The government has a domestic sanctions regime, and the new antiterrorism law automatically adopts the UN Security Council Consolidated List of designations, allowing the government to impose sanctions and freeze the assets of those designated. The Joint Terrorism Financial Investigations Group continued to work with the United States to investigate terrorism finance cases. For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report, Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** The government has a National Action Plan on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and developed and implemented CVE training for security forces and civil servants. Local governments, NGOs, and the private sector partnered on CVE programs. The Armed Forces of the Philippines worked with local stakeholders to encourage defections from the ASG, BIFF, and the Maute Group and to rehabilitate former terrorist fighters. The government also supported strategic communications efforts to counter terrorist messaging. GCERF provides funds for local implementers across the Philippines for programs to prevent and counter violent extremism.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** The Philippines continued to support CT efforts in several regional and multilateral organizations, including the United Nations, ASEAN, ARF, ADMM, and APEC. 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.

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## SINGAPORE

**Overview:** Singapore continued to identify counterterrorism as the nation's top security policy priority and has a comprehensive CT strategy based on global and regional trends. The strategy included vigilant security measures, regional and international law enforcement cooperation, efforts to counter radicalization to violence, and a campaign to prepare the populace for possible attacks. Singapore was a committed, active, and effective CT partner in 2020. CT remained a pillar of the security relationship between Singaporean and U.S. law enforcement and security services. Cooperation on CT and information sharing continued during 2020. Singapore's domestic CT apparatus and its ability to detect, deter, and disrupt threats remained effective.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in Singapore in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** Singapore uses its Internal Security Act (ISA) to arrest and detain suspected terrorists. The ISA authorizes the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), with the consent of the president, to order arrests and detentions without a warrant, trial,

or full judicial due process, if it is determined that individuals pose a threat to national security. There were no legislative changes in 2020.

Singapore detained several individuals under the ISA for terrorism-related activities in 2020, including a 17-year-old Singaporean in January for allegedly supporting ISIS by assisting in online propaganda efforts and calling for the beheading of Singapore's president on social media. MHA arrested a 16-year-old Singaporean male in December under the ISA for reportedly plotting to attack two mosques with a machete on the anniversary of the 2019 Christchurch, New Zealand, mosque shootings, making him the youngest ISA detainee to date. The arrest marked the first known instance of right-wing-inspired terrorism plotting in the country. Singapore also detained a work permit holder from Bangladesh in November for disseminating pro-ISIS propaganda, donating to organizations to benefit the Syria-based Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, and promoting armed violence. Singapore released at least three Singaporeans who were previously detained under the ISA after assessing their rehabilitation progress and determining the individuals no longer posed a security threat that required preventive detention. Singapore allowed restriction orders against six Singaporeans to lapse.

Security forces were on heightened alert following terrorist attacks in Europe in September, and the Singapore Police Force and Immigration and Checkpoints Authority (ICA) enhanced border security measures and patrols. Singapore's law enforcement and security services were capable of proactively detecting, deterring, and preventing acts of terrorism, including through interagency cooperation, regular exercises, and information sharing. In March the Ministry of Defense announced it would restructure the Singapore Armed Forces' military intelligence units to better detect and respond to terrorist plots.

Singapore maintains a "not if, but when" stance regarding the likelihood of terrorist attacks within the country. The government's SGSecure public awareness campaign, which aims to enhance emergency preparedness and community resilience, introduced new online programs and training sessions during the COVID-19 global pandemic. In January the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth launched a new Crisis Preparedness for Religious Organizations program under the SGSecure Community Network to help religious organizations prepare for terrorist threats and other crises. The program seeks to help religious organizations protect sites of worship and congregants, prepare emergency plans, and support the larger community during a crisis.

To detect possible terrorist movements by air into or transiting through the country, Singapore's primary border security agency, ICA, implemented Advance Passenger Information and Passenger Name Record data collection in 2019. ICA also enhanced its border capabilities by equipping all immigration checkpoints with iris and facial biometric scanners.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Singapore is a member of FATF and APG, and its Suspicious Transaction Reporting Office is a member of the Egmont Group. The Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS) announced in November that it will stop issuing S\$1,000 notes in 2021 to reduce money laundering and terrorism financing risks. There were no legislative changes in 2020.

Singapore convicted and sentenced three Indonesian foreign domestic workers under the Terrorism (Suppression of Financing) Act in February and March. The accused were sentenced to between 18 months and 3 years and 9 months in prison for contributing up to \$915 to support an Indonesia-based terrorist group Jamaah Ansharut Daulah. In January a Singaporean was sentenced to 33 months' imprisonment for transferring \$330 to fund ISIS. In March, MAS fined TMF Trustees Singapore Limited \$300,000 for noncompliance with AML/CFT requirements and, in July, revoked the capital markets services license of Apical Asset Management for serious breaches of the same requirements.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** Through entities such as the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research and the Religious Rehabilitation Group (RRG), Singapore serves as a regional CVE hub. The government encourages interreligious and interethnic dialogue through Interracial and Religious Confidence Circles, the interagency Aftercare Group, and local community fora that bring leaders from Singapore's religious and ethnic communities together to discuss issues of concern and build trust. The Islamic Religious Council of Singapore (MUIS), the Islamic authority in charge of Muslim affairs, maintains a social media presence and holds outreach and educational events to counter terrorist propaganda and recruitment efforts. MUIS manages the Asatizah Recognition Scheme that vets Islamic Religious Council teachers and scholars in Singapore.

RRG, a volunteer organization made up of religious scholars and teachers, has had success in counseling detainees held under the ISA through a comprehensive program involving religious and psychological counseling. RRG also operates a resource and counseling center for the Muslim community and held virtual community events and engagement sessions during the COVID-19 pandemic, including to raise awareness about the threats of online radicalization to violence.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Singapore is an active participant in CT cooperation efforts in ASEAN, ARF, ADMM, and APEC. The nation is a strong advocate for the ASEAN "Our Eyes" regional initiative, which strives for ministerial-level CT information sharing. Singapore participated in the Third Sub-Regional Meeting on Counterterrorism in December, the Aqaba Process Virtual Meeting in September, and INTERPOL's Project Pacific working group to discuss CT issues in November. Singapore opened the Counter-Terrorism Information Facility in December, a Singapore-led initiative to increase information sharing between military and law enforcement agencies.

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## THAILAND

**Overview:** Thailand's principal vulnerability to international terrorism continues to be as a transit and facilitation hub given the high volume of travelers through Bangkok and available market of illegal goods, although that vulnerability was reduced in 2020 because of COVID-related travel restrictions and border closures. Thailand did not experience any attacks attributed to transnational terrorist groups in 2020, and violence was limited to attacks attributed to ethno-nationalist insurgents in the country's Deep South (the southernmost provinces of Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat, and parts of Songkhla). Violence in the Deep South in 2020 was at the lowest level since the violence reignited in 2004. Thai security officials remain concerned about the potential

for international terrorist groups to infiltrate domestic insurgent groups, while maintaining that there is no evidence to date of any operational linkages between domestic insurgents and international networks. Thailand remained a productive counterterrorism partner, although the Thai government continues to concentrate on domestic political challenges as its primary security priority.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** Overall, the number of insurgent attacks and related fatalities in 2020 decreased from the previous year and were confined to the Deep South. Insurgents predominantly used small arms, IEDs, and vehicle-borne IEDs (VBIEDs).

- On January 12 a group of armed men threw pipe bombs and launched M79 grenades into a subdistrict defense operation base in Narathiwat province. The group stormed the base, killed a volunteer, and wounded seven others. Paramilitary rangers exchanged gunfire with the attackers during pursuit, killing one of them.
- On February 24 a VBIED ostensibly targeting a deputy district chief and a group of territorial defense volunteers detonated outside a school and a Buddhist shrine in Songkhla province. Ten were wounded in the blast, including the deputy district chief, three volunteers, four civilians, and two students.
- On February 28 an IED targeting a para-military unit exploded on a road in Narathiwat province, wounding six rangers. One ranger died later in a hospital.
- On March 17 a small IED followed by a VBIED detonated outside the Southern Border Provinces Administration Center in Yala province. Twenty-eight persons were wounded in the blast, including police officers and reporters.
- On July 15 an IED targeting a paramilitary patrol squad went off on a road in Pattani province. Six paramilitary rangers and four civilians were wounded. A similar attack took place on October 1, in Songkhla province, wounding seven military personnel, one of whom died later in a hospital.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** There have been no changes since 2019.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Thailand is a member of the APG, and the Anti-Money Laundering Office Thailand is a member of the Egmont Group. There were no major changes in 2020.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** The national counterterrorism strategy published in 2017 includes a CVE component. Thailand lacks a national CVE action plan, but the National Security Policy and Plan (2019-22) published in November 2019 includes regionally specific security plans that focus on extremism.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Thailand continued to support CT efforts in several regional and multilateral organizations, including the United Nations, ASEAN, ARF, ADMM, and APEC.

## EUROPE

### Overview

Europe continued to face ongoing terrorist threats and concerns in 2020, including from U.S.-designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTOs), racially or ethnically motivated violent extremists (REMVE), and terrorists inspired by ISIS. ISIS proved its ideological influence, even in the absence of controlling physical territory, and continued to project its power by recruiting from European countries and inspiring attacks against symbolic European targets and public spaces. Most of these incidents involved simple plots with easily executable tactics, using knives, guns, or vehicles to injure or kill targets of opportunity in France, Germany, and the UK. One of Europe's highest-profile attacks was the decapitation of Samuel Paty, a French teacher who showed his class *Charlie Hebdo* caricatures of the Prophet Mohammad. Paty was murdered by a Russian refugee of Chechen origin, who had been in contact with Syrian violent extremists.

Many foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) from Europe remained in the custody of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) in Syria at the end of 2020. The SDF lacks the resources to sustainably detain ISIS fighters and family members for the long term. The United States urged countries of origin, including in Europe, to repatriate their citizens — including FTF family members — to rehabilitate, reintegrate, and, where appropriate, prosecute them. However, most Western European governments were consistently reluctant to repatriate and prosecute adult citizen FTFs, citing concerns that domestic judicial proceedings would not yield convictions or long sentences for defendants and FTFs could pose a threat in their countries of origin. Over the past few years, several Western European countries revoked the citizenship of citizens who traveled to Syria or Iraq to join ISIS. Countries in southeast Europe — including Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and North Macedonia — successfully repatriated numerous ISIS-affiliated citizens, including FTFs and family members.

Many European governments are increasingly concerned about the threat posed by REMVE actors. In 2020, European countries saw a rise in REMVE activity and plotting, including against religious, ethnic, or other minority groups. A right-wing violent extremist killed 10 people and himself in February in targeted attacks on two immigrant-frequented bars in Hanau, Germany. Numerous European governments expanded law enforcement and other government efforts to combat the threat posed by REMVE individuals and groups. In Turkey, terrorist groups espousing a range of violent extremist and ethnonationalist political ideologies, such as the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party/Front, continued to plot against police and military targets in Turkey and raise funds throughout the rest of Europe.

In 2020, several European countries took concrete steps toward designating Hizballah a terrorist organization beyond the EU designations of Hizballah's military wing. In April, Germany banned all Hizballah activities and set an example for other European countries. In June, Kosovo formally designated Hizballah in its entirety, both its political and military wings, as a terrorist organization. In August, Lithuania publicly declared Hizballah a terrorist organization in its entirety and banned all Hizballah affiliates from entering the country. In October, Estonia recognized Hizballah as a terrorist organization in its entirety. And in December, Slovenia designated Hizballah a terrorist organization. Latvia automatically adopts all U.S. FTO

designations, including for Hizballah, and also issued a formal statement on Hizballah in December. In September a Bulgarian court sentenced in absentia two Hizballah operatives to life in prison for their role in the 2012 Burgas bus bombing.

The Police Service of Northern Ireland thwarted an attempted truck bombing on January 31 (“Brexit Day”) in County Armagh. Allegedly, members of the Continuity Irish Republican Army (CIRA) attached an explosive device to the exterior of a truck and attempted to put it on a ferry bound for Scotland. The CIRA is also suspected of conducting presence patrols in County Fermanagh. Both incidents occurred before the UK-EU border agreement. With a new “soft border” in the Irish Sea, instead of a hard border between Northern Ireland and Ireland, threats of an Irish Republican resurgence appear to be tamped down.

European countries were integral to worldwide counterterrorism efforts in 2020. Seven European countries, plus the European Union, remain financial supporters of the Global Community Engagement & Resilience Fund (GCERF). Thirty-seven European countries, the EU, INTERPOL, and NATO were active in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. In December, NATO provided an update on implementation of the NATO Counterterrorism Action Plan, which includes efforts to increase resilience, expand cooperation with NATO partners and international organizations, and improve information sharing. Key developments in 2020 included the approval of a NATO policy on battlefield evidence and a practical framework for technical exploitation, as well as the publication of NATO’s first-ever Counter-Terrorism Reference Curriculum, designed to support allies and partners in enhancing their capacities to develop national skills and improve counterterrorism strategies. The Counterterrorism Action Plan also addresses NATO’s Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan, its Defeat-ISIS support, and NATO Mission Iraq. Many of NATO’s 40 partner countries — spanning from Mongolia to Colombia, and in particular the 11 partner nations in the Middle East and North Africa — consistently seek increased engagement with NATO on counterterrorism.

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## ALBANIA

**Overview:** Albania continued its strong support of international counterterrorism efforts in 2020 and contributed to the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. The terrorism threat in Albania includes FTFs returning from Iraq and Syria and ISIS sympathizers’ attempts to radicalize Albanian youth to violence, as well as Iran’s state-sponsored activity directed primarily against the Iranian resettled opposition group Mujahedeen-e-Khalq, members of whom resettled in Albania.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in Albania in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** Albania criminalizes terrorist acts, to include financing of terrorism, conducting transactions with persons on UN sanctions lists, recruiting and training people to commit terrorist acts, the incitement of terrorist acts, and establishing, leading, and participating in terrorist organizations or armed conflicts outside the country. Albania sustains a port security oversight system to comply with requirements under the International Maritime Organization’s International Ship and Port Facility Security Code.



The Albanian State Police Counterterrorism Unit (CTU) worked closely with U.S. agencies to align Albanian government requirements with U.S. expertise and resources, ensuring the Albanian government develops focused counterterrorism capabilities. Through participation in the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance program, the CTU received training on counterterrorism investigations, surveillance operations, identification and seizure of digital evidence, and associated equipment grants. Despite capacity challenges, 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.

On October 27, Albania successfully repatriated an Albanian woman and four children from Syria. Efforts continue to repatriate more citizens from the Syrian camps. Following a national action plan, stakeholder ministries organized both their reception and accommodation and are working on deradicalization from violence and reintegration efforts. On December 14, one suspect was indicted by the Durres Prosecution Office for "incitement to terrorism against the Jewish people." In a separate case in June, the Tirana Basic Court issued a guilty verdict sentencing a defendant to three years for the same criminal offenses. On July 23 a suspected agent sponsored by Iranian authorities was declared "unwanted" by the Government of Albania and subsequently expelled from the country.

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. Implementation of deep reforms in the judicial sector continues, beginning with the vetting of Albania's 800 judges and prosecutors for corruption, competence, and ties to organized crime. The Special Anti-Corruption and Organized Crime Structure (or SPAK) has jurisdiction over terrorism cases involving organized groups. District prosecution offices prosecute all other counterterrorism cases.

Albania has committed to enhancing its border security and screening efforts to interdict terrorist travel, in line with international standards, and with support from U.S. experts and programs. Albanian law enforcement services cooperate extensively with INTERPOL and other international law enforcement bodies. Albania continues work to implement UNSCR 2396 regarding Advanced Passenger Information (API) and Passenger Name Records (PNR) data, which enhances screening of air passengers entering the country. A national API/PNR law was adopted in March, and the United States and Albania solidified commitment to deepen cooperation in support of implementing this law.

In 2020, Albania started implementing a stricter prison regime for dangerous convicts, called Article 41-bis of the Prison Administration Act, including for a convict jailed for terrorist recruitment.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Albania is a member of the Council of Europe's Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism (MONEYVAL), a Financial Action Task Force (FATF)-style regional body. Albania's Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU), the General Directorate for the Prevention of Money Laundering, is a member of the Egmont Group. Albania's FIU works to prevent and combat money laundering and financing of terrorism. The country continued to work with

FATF and MONEYVAL to address identified weaknesses in its Anti-Money Laundering/Countering Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) regime. Of the 40 FATF Recommendations, Albania is “compliant” on 5, “largely compliant” on 28, remains “partially compliant” on 5 others, and “noncompliant” on 1. In 2019, MONEYVAL decided that Albania would remain in “enhanced follow-up” status and should continue to report back to MONEYVAL on further progress to strengthen its required implementation of AML/CFT measures.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** The Government of Albania’s National CVE Center remains active in coordinating CVE programming among international donors and seeks to ensure all ministries cooperate effectively and avoid duplication of efforts. The cities of Bulqize, Cerrik, Elbasan, Librazhd, and Tirana are members of the Strong Cities Network. The Albanian State Police has incorporated CVE into the portfolio of 26 community police units around the country. The chiefs of these units received training from the U.S. government and implement projects with local government counterparts aimed at detecting and countering terrorist radicalization efforts. The Department of State supports CVE efforts with a wide range of assistance programs and diplomatic engagement, including to local community groups that identify and mitigate factors underlying violent extremism. Embassy Tirana oversees the implementation of the fourth iteration of a CVE grant to the Albanian Muslim Community, which includes engagement by Islamic clergy with at-risk youths and their parents to steer youth away from paths to radicalization to violence, and informing youth about democratic principles, human rights, civic duties, and tolerance. 2020 was the final year of the U.S. Agency for International Development’s CVE programming in Albania.

**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 United Nations. Albanian criminal-justice officials participated regularly in various regional associations, conferences, and other counterterrorism information-sharing exchanges.

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## AUSTRIA

**Overview:** U.S.-Austrian law enforcement cooperation remained strong. Leaders thanked the FBI for cooperation in investigating the November 2 terrorist attack in Vienna in which a lone attacker killed 4 and injured 23. The government submitted draft counterterrorism legislation to Parliament in December. Reform of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution and Counterterrorism (BVT), Austria’s key counterterrorism agency within the Ministry of the Interior, continued in 2020, including plans for better staffing of the agency’s violent extremism section and overall hiring of more qualified personnel. Austria’s counterterrorism efforts focused on “Islamist extremism,” members of the Muslim Brotherhood, “radical right-wing” networks, and REMVE groups promoting anti-Muslim and anti-migrant violence (which Austria refers to as “New Right” groups). Austrian courts continued to impose strong sentences for convicted terrorists.

The BVT monitors an estimated 90 persons who returned to Austria from conflict zones, and the Interior Ministry estimated at the end of 2019 that 100 Austrian FTFs were still in Syria and

Iraq. Overall, the BVT noted that terrorist mobilization to conflict zones 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. Law enforcement agencies focused on intelligence gathering and investigations, as well as on sharing information with international partners.

### **2020 Terrorist Incident**

A 20-year-old Austrian of North Macedonia origin shot and killed 4 persons and seriously injured 23 others in downtown Vienna on November 2. Police killed the attacker and in the days after the attack made 15 arrests and conducted 18 house searches. Authorities worked with counterparts in Switzerland, Germany, and other countries to identify and arrest the attacker's associates. While police did not verify a claim of responsibility by ISIS, Austrian officials noted the gunman had previously been convicted of trying to travel to Syria to join ISIS.

**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 as well as symbols related to the Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas, the Grey Wolves, the PKK, and the Croatian Ustasha. Austria's Parliament unanimously adopted a resolution on May 29 calling for a stronger EU policy on Hizballah and stronger action against Hizballah's activities in Austria.

In response to the November attack in Vienna, the government submitted to Parliament changes to strengthen existing counterterrorism legislation on associations, weapons, and terrorism financing. The changes would criminalize "religiously motivated extremist associations," establish a registry of those convicted of terrorism offenses to block them from jobs in infrastructure, expand the existing ban of symbols to additional violent extremist groups, and better monitor violent extremist mosques and their financing.

Austrian law enforcement and BVT officials routinely cooperated with U.S. law enforcement in a range of areas, including joint investigative projects and enforcement operations.

Austria has taken a whole-of-government approach to implement UNSCRs related to counterterrorism as well as the Global Counterterrorism Forum's (the GCTF's) Good Practices on Addressing the Challenge of Returning Families of FTFs. Austrian law criminalizes "travel for terrorism purposes" with prison sentences of six months to five years, extends domestic jurisdiction to individuals in Austria who committed a crime abroad, and ensures legal counsel for terror victims. This law implements the EU Directive on Combating Terrorism and the United Nations' International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism.

In 2020, Austria extended temporary border checks with its Schengen neighbor countries, introduced in 2016, and continued to deploy up to 1,000 soldiers at its eastern borders, in

addition to those deployed to implement COVID-19 related restrictions. Regulations allow border authorities to prevent minors from leaving Austria upon suspicion they will participate in fighting activities abroad. Border security forces made effective use of security measures, including biographic and biometric screening at ports of entry and information sharing internally and with other EU countries.

Justice authorities conducted raids in November against 229 prison inmates detained on terrorism or “radicalization” charges. Special police also raided 60 sites nationwide associated with the Muslim Brotherhood or Hamas, charged 70 individuals with money laundering or membership in a terrorist organization, and took 30 of them into custody. Authorities coordinated with Austria’s Islamic faith community to close two Islamic centers believed to promote radicalization to violence.

Austria has rigorous processes in place to register and screen individuals applying for asylum, lawful residence, and citizenship. Authorities can analyze asylum seekers’ phones and storage devices to obtain data on the routes traveled. Authorities check applicants’ fingerprints against the EU’s asylum fingerprint database (Eurodac) and, in select cases, against criminal databases. Authorities screen individuals against national and international law enforcement databases before citizenship is approved. Officials welcomed cooperation on counterterrorism but have cited EU and Austrian privacy statutes as one of the factors limiting their ability to utilize tools available through international cooperation beyond the EU.

Austrian leaders thanked the FBI and others for supporting investigators after the November attack in Vienna. Chancellor Kurz said it was a “mistake” the attacker received early release in 2019 after being convicted for a failed attempt to travel to Syria to join ISIS. Justice Minister Zadic pledged a full review of judicial processes and “deradicalization programs.” An independent panel is reviewing actions by law enforcement related to the attack.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Austria is a member of FATF. Its FIU, the Austrian Financial Intelligence Unit, is a member of the Egmont Group. There were no significant updates in 2020.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** Austria reexamined its CVE efforts in response to the November attack in Vienna. In addition to proposed legislation, the Justice Ministry pledged €8 (\$9.5) million for post-prison programs to prevent re-radicalization to violence. The Ministry of European and International Affairs continued its cooperation with the Islamic faith community to conduct information campaigns in mosques, Islamic organizations, community centers, and prisons.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Following the November attack in Vienna, Austria and France jointly proposed expanding counterterrorism cooperation at the EU level, including use of EU-wide information systems and cooperation with non-EU countries on border protection, review and exchange of data, and preventing radicalization to violence. Austria participates in Eurojust’s EU-wide terrorism register, which lists ongoing terrorism investigations by EU member states.

Austria's membership:

- The United Nations
- The Council of Europe
- The EU
- The OSCE
- The Salzburg Forum
- The Central European Initiative
- The Western Balkans Counter-Terrorism Initiative

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## AZERBAIJAN

**Overview:** In 2020 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 historically have 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.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in Azerbaijan in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** In 2020, Azerbaijan made no significant changes to its legislation on combating 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), Azerbaijan's primary law enforcement agency, 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. Law enforcement and security agencies continued to exhibit wide discretion in determining what activities qualify as "terrorism" or "extremism," leaving political opponents and religious activists vulnerable to prosecution, detention, and physical mistreatment. Such individuals have been especially vulnerable to physical abuse by the MIA's organized crime unit. For further information, see the Department of State's *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* and *International Religious Freedom Report*.

In March, President Aliyev signed an order to dissolve the Special State Protection Service and establish three new government organizations in its place: the Presidential Security Service, tasked with protecting the Azerbaijani president and visiting foreign heads of state and government; the State Service for Special Communications and Information Security, responsible for the Cyber Emergency Response Team and communications safety; and the State Agency for the Protection of Strategic Objects, responsible for protecting offshore oil platforms against terrorism. The State Border Service and the State Customs Committee jointly manage border security and interdict terrorist efforts to move people, money, and materials — including

weapons of mass destruction — across Azerbaijan’s land and maritime borders. The 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. Azerbaijan used terrorist and criminal watchlists and biographic/biometric screening at ports of entry. Azerbaijan’s law enforcement and security services share information regarding terrorism matters among themselves and with regional and international partners.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Azerbaijan is a member of MONEYVAL. Its FIU, the Financial Monitoring Service, is a member of the Egmont Group. In 2020, President Aliyev signed an order approving the National Action Plan for the Promotion of Open Government for 2020-22. Following the provisions of the plan, the Cabinet of Ministers established the Coordination Council for Combating Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** In March, the State Council for Support to NGOs under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the State Committee for Work With Religious Organizations, jointly funded a website, [www.drem.az](http://www.drem.az), run by the Azerbaijan Democratic Reforms Development Center, to combat religious radicalism and extremism through education and awareness.

**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 CT initiatives as one of the Alliance’s Partnership for Peace countries.

Azerbaijan participated in NATO’s Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan, where it deployed 120 peacekeeping troops, and contributed to the Afghan National Army Trust Fund.

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## BELGIUM

**Overview:** Belgium has an active counterterrorism policy that includes robust domestic security efforts, engagements in international information sharing — including with the United States through the Visa Waiver Program — and support for multilateral efforts. The caretaker status of Belgium’s government during most of 2020 hampered its ability to make meaningful policy advancements, but the new government, seated in October, made strong commitments to improving the resources and legislation supporting these sectors. The country’s greatest terrorism threat remains homegrown terrorism carried out by lone actors, whether inspired by Islamist violent extremism or, to a lesser extent, the far right, which Belgium calls “violent right-wing extremism.” There was no change in the threat level in 2020, nor did authorities note a change in tactics.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no terrorist attacks in Belgium during 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** Belgium’s primary CT-related agencies include the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Justice, Interior, Finance, and Defense, together with both federal and local police, the civilian and military security and intelligence services, the Office of the Federal Prosecutor, the Financial Intelligence Processing Unit, and the National

Security Council. The Ministry of Interior maintains a Crisis Center. The interagency Coordination Unit for Threat Analysis (CUTA), consisting of representatives from the organizations listed above, plus Treasury and Transport, assesses and sets nationwide threat level ratings and maintains Belgium's database of individuals with a nexus to terror. Belgium's law enforcement capacity, although underfunded, is capable and experienced in responding to and deterring terrorist activity.

In 2020, security forces interrupted a small number of attacks in the planning stages, and the court system advanced important cases. The following list provides a sampling of successful interventions:

- On October 31, police arrested two minors (ages 16 and 17) in the province east of Liège on suspicion of planning a terror attack. The two had reportedly recorded a video pledging allegiance to ISIS and planned to attack police.
- On December 4, a two-day trial concluded for Matthew Govaert, a 23-year-old from the suburbs of Brussels arrested in 2019 for allegedly planning a terror attack on Embassy Brussels. Govaert had reportedly pledged allegiance to ISIS.

In late 2020 the government budgeted additional financial resources to security, justice, and law enforcement agencies. Belgium's highly devolved government structure presents challenges to effective internal communication and cooperation between Belgium's numerous law enforcement and criminal justice entities. During 2020, Belgium's Parliament did not pass any legislation that would alter Belgium's ability to investigate, prosecute, or deter terrorism. There remained hurdles to the effective use of civil informants, and Belgium's short prison sentences continued to reduce the efficacy of plea bargaining. Belgium implements UNSCR 2396, in part, through the implementation of the EU PNR directive for airport travelers, through its aggressive prosecution of known FTFs, often in absentia, and through its maintenance of databases to track known and suspected terrorists. It established the Belgian Passenger Information Unit in 2018 and has continued to add airlines and test the possibility of broadening to additional transport modes.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Belgium has been a member of FATF since 1990. Its FIU, the Belgian Financial Intelligence Processing Unit, is a member of the Egmont Group. Belgium is also a member of the Defeat-ISIS CIFG. In 2006, in response to UNSC 1373, the country created a domestic designation regime that allows it to freeze the assets of listed terrorists. Belgium implemented the EU's Fourth Anti-Money Laundering (AML) Directive in 2017 and added the Fifth AML Directive into its civil code on July 20.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** Belgium originally drafted a plan to counter radicalization to violence, "Plan R," in 2005 and updates it regularly. Under Plan R, local task forces coordinate the CVE response among local security, municipal, NGO, and social services personnel. This helps clear the hurdle posed by complex overlapping federal, regional, and local CVE and CT responsibilities. For example, while the Ministry of Justice is responsible for prison deradicalization from violence plans, released prisoners fall under the jurisdiction of local deradicalization from violence efforts and are tracked and assisted through the local task forces. Resources for both were limited. Belgium launched an imam training program in 2019

to lead to a centrally certified cadre, but participation was low. Management of Brussels' Grand Mosque was transferred to an administrative board in 2019 because of concerns about Saudi influence, but accusations surfaced in late 2020 of undue Moroccan influence. On October 22, the Flemish Minister of Civic Integration and Equal Opportunities announced a fivefold increase in the region's investment in CVE, to more than €2.5 million. On November 13, Flanders' regional government passed legislation aimed at reducing foreign financing of mosques, which in some cases in the past had been linked to extremism. The Belgian cities of Antwerp, Liège, and Vilvoorde are part of the Strong Cities Network (SCN). All three, plus the municipality of Verviers, participated in CVE City Pair Exchange Programs. Belgium remains opposed to the repatriation of adult FTFs from Iraq and Syria, but it accepted five adult FTFs and their 13 children deported from Turkey during the year.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Belgium participates in CT efforts with the EU, NATO, the OSCE, and the Council of Europe, and Belgium is a member of the advisory board of the UN Counterterrorism Center. The country is also an active contributor to the subcommittees of the UNSC that deal with counterterrorism. Belgium is a troop-contributing member of Operation Inherent Resolve in Jordan, the European Union Training Mission in Mali, and the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali. 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. The nation is not a member of the GCTF but often participates as an observer. CUTA represents Belgium on the newly created EU Network of Prevent Policy Makers, which is primarily dedicated to the fight against violent extremism.

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## BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

**Overview:** Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) remained a cooperative counterterrorism partner. There were no known registered BiH citizens who attempted to travel to foreign battlefields in 2020, although some foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) and their family members remain in Iraq and Syria. BiH continues to be a willing partner in repatriation of FTFs and is in the process of establishing an interagency coordinating body to oversee future repatriation efforts. Lenient sentencing in terrorism cases remained a challenge, with recent sentences averaging three and a half years for terrorism-related charges. On investigations, interpersonal and interagency infighting and stove-piping undermine fully effective cooperation. While more coordinated efforts on rehabilitation and deradicalization are still necessary, diverse civil society groups, the Interreligious Council, and individual religious leaders made notable efforts to prevent and counter radicalization to violence and recruitment.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in BiH in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** BiH has not yet started to draft the new Strategy for Prevention and Fight Against Terrorism despite the current strategy expiring at the end of 2020. Additionally, Parliament rejected draft amendments introduced in 2018 to further align BiH law with EU directives on the suppression of terrorism owing to political disputes over the alleged transfer of competencies from entity to state level. The State Investigation and Protection Agency (SIPA) continues to be the lead law enforcement unit performing CT



functions; however, its effectiveness is limited by poor cooperation with the State Prosecutor's Office (SPO) and, at times, poor investigatory practices. Further, BiH does not have regulations and guidelines that govern cooperation between and among prosecutors, law enforcement, and the intelligence community in national security investigations. SIPA is finalizing an internal reorganization that will include upgrading the CT Unit to a directorate. These changes, however, still require multiple approvals from the BiH interagency.

The SPO and SIPA continue to receive training funded by the U.S. Department of State and Department of Defense Special Operations Command Europe. An SPO-led task force met twice in 2020, but law enforcement cooperation at a more strategic level continues to suffer from bouts of interpersonal, institutional, and political infighting, as well as from the impediments from BiH's complex governmental structure.

There is a lack of political will to implement U.S.-funded initiatives, despite a desire from BiH law enforcement to have these tools. The Serb member of the BiH presidency invoked Vital Entity Interest provisions to block the completion of a memorandum of agreement that would have assisted BiH in implementing key border screening enhancements in line with international standards related to airline passenger information, because of a dispute over state-versus-entity competencies. There was some progress, however, on border security initiatives, particularly related to the continued, proactive efforts by the Foreigners' Affairs Service to screen and share information with international partners on the high number of migrants entering BiH.

BiH continued its efforts to disrupt terrorist activity in 2020 through prosecutions of repatriated FTFs. In 2020 the SPO indicted seven alleged FTFs, all of whom were repatriated to BiH in 2019. Two were convicted and received three-and-a-half-year prison sentences, while proceedings against the remaining five defendants are ongoing. Separately, in 2020, the Court of BiH sentenced one FTF, also repatriated from Syria in 2019, to four years' imprisonment. BiH, in cooperation with Turkish authorities, repatriated a suspected FTF from Turkey. The case is still in the investigation phase. The SPO also indicted a BiH citizen for posting racist, anti-LGBTI, and anti-Semitic content, and urging attacks on buildings in New York City, on social media. This is the first-ever terrorism indictment of a suspect not ISIS related. The U.S. Department (DOJ) Overseas Prosecutorial Development, Assistance and Training program (OPDAT) provides case-based mentoring and guidance to BiH partners in these investigations and prosecutions. There are continual challenges in the prosecution of fighters returning from the Donbas region of Ukraine, activity the BiH government considers terrorism. In 2020 the Court of BiH acquitted the only BiH citizen prosecuted, to date, for fighting in the Donbas.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** BiH is a member of MONEYVAL. Its FIU, the Financial Intelligence Department, is a member of the Egmont Group. BiH is also a member of the Defeat-ISIS CIFG. In 2020, BiH was delisted from the EU's list of high-risk third countries. There were no designations for asset freezing based on UNSCRs in 2020, nor were there any prosecutions for financing of terrorism.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** Violent extremist ideology and regional nationalist groups remain potential sources of terrorism in BiH. In 2020 the main religious communities

in BiH (Catholic, Islamic, Jewish, and Orthodox) continued to work together through the Interreligious Council (IRC) to promote tolerance and confront acts of bigotry or violence directed at any of these communities. The IRC also increased its coordination and activities with its 15 regional chapters, with an emphasis on engagement with women and children. Individual religious leaders and civil society groups across the country also increased efforts to identify “extremist influences” and sources of resiliency in their communities, supported by a range of international donors. In 2020, USAID’s Office of Transition Initiatives completed its third year of programming to prevent and counter violent extremism. This involves small grants to bolster positive alternatives to violent extremist influences, including developing a nationwide network of youth centers to mobilize young people against division in target areas, supporting the IRC in responding to hate-based attacks, and bolstering community media outlets to challenge violent extremist narratives. The Embassy Public Affairs section continues to use assistance funding to support interethnic reconciliation programs that are also intended to help prevent radicalization to violence. International and local actors working on countering violent radicalization and terrorist recruitment made significant efforts in broadening their analysis beyond so-called radical Islam to include extreme ethnonationalism and foreign influence, as well as domestic drivers of “extreme ideologies.” Bihać, Bijeljina, Centar (Sarajevo), Doboj, Jablanica, Prijedor, Srebrenik, and Tuzla are members of the Strong Cities Network.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** The SPO continues to work frequently with the United States, regional neighbors, and EU countries on CT investigations. BiH is a member of or participating state in the United Nations, the OSCE, the Regional Cooperation Council for Southeast Europe, and the Council of Europe.

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## **BULGARIA**

**Overview:** Bulgaria remains a strong counterterrorism partner of the United States. While the threat of terrorism in Bulgaria remains relatively low, the government has continued its CT capacity building, including through close and ongoing cooperation with U.S. government agencies, though some capability gaps remain. Given Bulgaria’s strategic location, many of these efforts have focused on disrupting the transit of FTFs through enhanced border security, traveler screening, and information sharing.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in Bulgaria in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** In June, Bulgaria’s Parliament amended the Law on Countering Terrorism and established a new interagency counterterrorism unit at the State Intelligence Agency. The unit comprises representatives of the State Intelligence Agency, the Ministry of Interior, the State Agency for National Security (DANS), the Military Intelligence Service, the Customs Agency, and the Prosecution Service. The unit is responsible for ensuring timely exchange of information among the participating agencies to prevent and disrupt terrorist acts. The new counterterrorism unit complements the National Counterterrorism Center, housed within DANS since 2014.

Bulgaria continues to implement strong migration controls and makes widespread use of available biographic and biometric screening programs to help identify suspect persons crossing

their borders or illegally present in their country. U.S. government agencies continued to work closely with Bulgarian counterparts through a variety of CT capacity-building programs. The Departments of Homeland Security and State have partnered with Bulgaria to implement key screening programs in border and aviation security.

On February 24, Bulgaria's Specialized Criminal Court sentenced an FTF to five years in prison. The Swiss national had been arrested on the Bulgarian-Turkish border in 2018 and was allegedly traveling to join ISIS in Syria.

In April, prosecutors filed an indictment against a student who self-radicalized to violence and was arrested in 2019 for allegedly plotting a terrorist attack in the city of Plovdiv. He is currently awaiting trial before the Specialized Criminal Court.

On September 21 the Specialized Criminal Court sentenced two suspects to life in prison without parole — the maximum possible penalty — for providing logistical support for the 2012 Burgas bus bombing that killed five Israeli tourists and a Bulgarian bus driver. Although Hizballah was not named in the indictment, prosecutors affirmed there was sufficient evidence to link the attack to Hizballah. The defendants — a Lebanese-Australian dual national and a Lebanese-Canadian dual national — were tried in absentia. The Bulgarian government has not fully designated Hizballah as a terrorist organization.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Bulgaria is a member of MONEYVAL. Its FIU, the Financial Intelligence Directorate-State Agency for National Security is a member of the Egmont Group. Bulgaria is also a member of the Defeat-ISIS CIFG. There were no significant updates in 2020.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** In 2020 the Center for the Study of Democracy partnered with Intelday Solutions and the Safer Internet Center to launch the EU-funded “Find Another Way” campaign, which aims to build youth resiliency against far-right violent extremist messaging online and to promote alternative messages.

In August the Ministry of Interior conducted police training as part of an EU-funded project aimed at increasing the ministry's capacity to prevent radicalization to violence. However, some activists and politicians criticized the training for targeting and stigmatizing Bulgaria's Roma community.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Bulgaria is a member and active contributor to CT initiatives at the United Nations, the EU, NATO, the OSCE, and the Organization for Black Sea Economic Cooperation. The country participated actively in the September meetings of the Aqaba Process chaired by Jordan's King Abdullah. Bulgaria had initially offered to host the 2020 event, but the meetings were held virtually because of the COVID pandemic.

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## 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

2020. In particular, Cyprus continued to make progress on strengthening its banking sector's counterterrorism financing (CTF) efforts. The Republic of Cyprus is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS.

Since 1974 the island of Cyprus has been de facto divided into the Republic of Cyprus government-controlled area in the southern two thirds of the island and the northern third, which is administered by the Turkish Cypriots. A UN peacekeeping force patrols a buffer zone, also called "the Green Line," separating 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. This report covers only the Republic of Cyprus. It does not address terrorism or counterterrorism efforts in the areas under the administration of Turkish Cypriots.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in the Republic of Cyprus in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** In November the United States and the Republic of Cyprus marked the second anniversary of the joint Statement of Intent on Security Cooperation, noting progress on several fronts.

In June the FBI and the Cyprus National Police finalized the technical details that would allow the secure exchange of fingerprints under the U.S.-Cyprus Preventing and Combating Serious Crime agreement.

In September, Secretary Pompeo and Foreign Minister Christodoulides signed an MOU between the United States and the Republic of Cyprus to build a regional border security training facility. This U.S.-funded \$5 million training facility, known as the Cyprus Center for Land, Open-seas, and Port Security (CYCLOPS), will strengthen regional border security and counterterrorism efforts, including customs and export controls, port and maritime security, and cybersecurity. Construction of the facility is set to begin and be completed within the 2021 calendar year.

The United States donated an underwater camera system to the Republic of Cyprus Port and Marine Police, primarily for use at the Port of Limassol, in September. The camera is used to ensure the safety of ships, piers, and infrastructure from terrorist activity, particularly from mines and IEDs. The camera also will be used to train regional Middle East and North African partners as part of CYCLOPS.

The Republic of Cyprus terminated its controversial citizenship-by-investment scheme in October, following an Al Jazeera exposé that revealed widespread corruption in the application process. Termination of the program will help prevent terrorists, and their sponsors and financiers, from buying an EU passport and the enhanced access to EU financial systems that comes with it.

In November the United States donated equipment for a mobile cyber lab to the Republic of Cyprus's Digital Security Agency's National Computer Security Incident Response Team. The donation includes 26 state-of-the-art laptop computers, each capable of both forensic analyses and cyber investigations, as well as presentation equipment such as projectors, portable interpretation equipment, and other computer lab accessories. The cyber partnership is meant to strengthen both the republic's internal cybersecurity capacity and its ability to cooperate with the United States and other partners on critical cybersecurity efforts.

In December the Republic of Cyprus and the United States initiated talks on a bilateral pilot program to allow the Republic of Cyprus to improve screening of travelers and identify serious criminals and terrorists, which will help it implement UNSCR 2396. The pilot is expected to start in 2021.

Republic of Cyprus law enforcement officials participated in several U.S.-sponsored training programs on border security, counterterrorism, and CTF.

Cyprus is working with international consultants to mitigate risks by conducting a national AML/CFT risk assessment on virtual assets.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** The Republic of Cyprus is a member of MONEYVAL and underwent a Mutual Evaluation Report by MONEYVAL that was released in 2019. The Republic of Cyprus's Financial Intelligence Unit, known as the Unit for Combating Money Laundering (or MOKAS), is a member of the Egmont Group. There were no other significant CTF-related changes in 2020.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** There were no significant changes in Cyprus's CVE efforts in 2020.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** There were no significant changes in 2020.

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## DENMARK

**Overview:** The Kingdom of Denmark, which includes Greenland and the Faroe Islands, remains an important U.S. partner in the global fight against terrorism. As an active participant in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and the Global Counterterrorism Forum, Denmark cooperates closely with the United States on counterterrorism initiatives. Denmark devoted significant assets to counterterrorism programs and countering violent extremism initiatives, domestically and abroad. In January, Denmark hosted a meeting of the political directors of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS.

According to the Center for Terror Analysis (CTA), administered by the Danish Security and Intelligence Service (PET), the terror threat to Denmark is "significant," the fourth of a five-level ranking system (none, limited, general, significant, very significant). The CTA characterizes the terror threat to Greenland and the Faroe Islands as "limited." CTA assesses that the primary threat to Denmark is attacks perpetrated by individuals in Denmark and neighboring countries

who sympathize with ISIS. According to PET, at least 159 people from Denmark have traveled to Iraq or Syria to join Islamic militant groups since 2012. PET remains concerned that Danish fighters returning to Denmark with terrorism training would seek to radicalize others to violence. CTA assesses that right-wing terror threats, often radicalized to violence online, have increased.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in Denmark in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** Denmark continues 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 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.

According to the Danish Institute for Human Rights — an independent, state-funded national human rights institution — there are more than 20 Danish children in displaced persons camps for family members of ISIS foreign terrorist fighters in Syria. In 2019 the government intervened to bring two such children (one orphaned and the other with a life-threatening injury) home to Denmark. According to a PET report released in March, bringing the children back to Denmark would not pose a security threat. However, the government has ruled out intervening on behalf of other children, citing their parents’ choice to leave Denmark and support ISIS.

In 2020, legal developments in cases involving attacks in Denmark or Danish citizens garnered public and media attention:

- In July, Danish courts sentenced Swedish citizens Zacharias Tamer Hamzi and Nurettin Nuray Syuleyman to five and four years in jail, respectively, for bombing the Danish Tax Agency in 2019.
- In November, former Danish citizen Said Mansour was sentenced to death in Morocco for his role in a 2003 terrorist attack in Casablanca that killed 45 people. Mansour, often referred to as the “bookseller from Brønshøj,” was stripped of his Danish citizenship in 2016 after a Danish court found him guilty of promoting terror.
- In December, Turkey deported terror suspect and Danish citizen Jacob El-Ali to Denmark. According to the terrorism charges, El-Ali traveled to Syria in 2013 to fight on behalf of ISIS.
- Also in December, Danish citizen Ahmed Samsam returned to Denmark after more than three years in jail in Spain. Samsam was sentenced to eight years in prison in Spain for joining ISIS. According to Danish media and Samsam, he served as an undercover intelligence officer for PET in Syria. The Danish government has not publicly acknowledged whether Samsam worked for PET.

- And also in December the Danish Supreme Court upheld a lower court’s guilty verdict for Syrian citizen Moyed Al Zoebi. The court found Al Zoebi guilty of terrorism for planning to detonate explosive devices on behalf of ISIS in Copenhagen in 2016. Al Zoebi was sentenced to 12 years in prison.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Denmark has a robust legal framework to combat the financing of terrorism. Denmark is a member of FATF. Its FIU, the Money Laundering Secretariat, is a member of the Egmont Group. Denmark is also a member of the Defeat-ISIS CIFG. According to FATF’s most recent report on Denmark, released in 2019, further steps are needed to ensure money laundering and terrorist financing prevention mechanisms fully cover Greenland and the Faroe Islands.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** The Danish Centre for Prevention of Extremism has the lead on implementing prevention efforts outlined in the government’s National Action Plan for Preventing and Countering Extremism and Radicalization. The Centre is tasked with strengthening prevention of violent extremism nationally, locally, and online. Copenhagen is a member of the Strong Cities Network, a global network of mayors, municipal policymakers, and practitioners working together to counter violent extremism. Aarhus, Copenhagen, Gentofte, Guldborgsund, and Viborg are members of the Strong Cities Network.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Denmark continued to strongly support counterterrorism efforts in regional and multilateral organizations, including the CTF, NATO, the Council of Europe, the OSCE, INTERPOL, the Bern Club, and the European Counterterrorism Center. In November, Denmark took over leadership of NATO Mission Iraq. Denmark continues to contribute personnel to NATO Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan, the UN peacekeeping mission in Mali, and the French-led counterterrorism mission in the Sahel.

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## FRANCE

**Overview:** France remained a key partner of the United States in the global fight against terrorism, and their bilateral CT cooperation is strong. France is a longstanding and important member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and provides financial support to GCERF. France is also a founding member of the Christchurch Call to Action to Eliminate Terrorist and Violent Extremist Content Online. The country continued to conduct CT operations in Iraq, Libya, Mali, Syria, and the Sahel region.

The terrorist threat in France remained high, with President Macron raising the national alert system to the highest level in late October, following brutal terrorist attacks. Security services remained concerned with lone-actor attacks, carried out by individuals already in France, inspired by or affiliated with ISIS. The government introduced a bill to counter “Islamist separatism” to enhance its ability to tackle manifestations of this movement, including in community associations, schools, religious organizations, and cyber space.

French law enforcement and intelligence agencies thwarted at least eight attacks in 2020 and arrested at least 16 individuals, including 8 linked to what France considers far-right violent extremism and 7 linked to far-left violent extremist groups.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** At least eight suspected terrorist attacks took place in 2020, with limited casualties. Below are the details on the five most prominent attacks.

- On April 4 a Sudanese male asylee carried out a knife attack in Romans-sur-Isère killing two persons and injuring five others. The assailant was unknown to security services and had no known ties to any terrorist organization.
- On April 27 a French man who pledged allegiance to ISIS intentionally rammed his car into two police officials, gravely injuring both, near Paris.
- On September 25 a Pakistani refugee carried out a knife attack outside the former headquarters of satirical newspaper *Charlie Hebdo*, injuring two persons, over *Charlie Hebdo*'s reprinting cartoons of the prophet Muhammad.
- On October 16 an 18-year-old Chechen refugee beheaded a schoolteacher in a Parisian suburb for showing cartoons of the prophet Muhammad during class. The terrorist reportedly learned about the teacher in a social media post.
- On October 29 a 21-year-old Tunisian migrant carried out a knife attack at a church in Nice, brutally killing three people, one of whom was decapitated.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** On June 19 the Constitutional Council ruled that the law against “concealing justification for terrorism” (downloading and possessing files that approve of terrorism) was unconstitutional.

In October, France raised the national attack alert system to the highest level, following the attack at a church in Nice and the beheading of a schoolteacher. On December 9 the government unveiled its “Anti-Separatism” bill, renaming it “Upholding Republican Values” to address the concern that “radical Islamists” were creating parallel societies that break away from French society and indoctrinate members with ideas contrary to the values of the French republic.

President Macron increased domestic CT patrols under the Ministry of Defense’s Operation Sentinel from 3,000 to 7,000 troops nationwide. France maintained extraordinary border controls, in place since the 2015 attacks, with its Schengen neighbors.

In December, France proposed new measures to “radically overhaul” the Schengen border security measures in light of terrorist attacks in France and Austria.

On December 14 Parliament extended the controversial 2017 law on internal security and counterterrorism (SILT) until 2021. SILT codifies certain measures of the 2015-17 State of Emergency, including search and seizures, restricting and monitoring movements of certain individuals, and closing religious sites suspected of promoting “radical Islam.”

France maintained its policy against the repatriation of adult FTFs, but government sources confirmed France repatriated 11 children on a case-by-case basis in 2020, for a total of 28 since 2019. In accordance with the 2014 French-Turkish agreement known as the Cazeneuve Protocol, Turkey departs in coordination with French authorities all suspected French FTFs and



their children to France. As of July, Turkey had deported an estimated 281 French FTFs and their children under this agreement. For all adult FTFs, French authorities arrest and place them in pretrial detention upon their landing in Paris. For minors, the government arranges their rehabilitation and reintegration, including medical and psychological care and placing them in appropriate homes, including foster care, that are specially trained to care for them. Returning children older than 13 may face charges, depending on their known or suspected activities in the Iraq-Syria region.

According to French government sources, France thwarted at least eight attacks in 2020, including attacks linked to both far-right and far-left violent extremism. On May 26, security services arrested a white supremacist suspected of planning an attack against the Jewish community in the central city of Limoges. On December 8, intelligence security services disbanded a small far-left group suspected of planning an attack targeting law enforcement, placing seven of its members under investigation for terrorism.

On December 4, Norway extradited to France Walid Abdulrahman Abou Zayed, a suspected shooter in the 1982 anti-Semitic terrorist attack in Paris, which killed six persons, including two U.S. citizens.

On December 17 the Special Criminal Court sentenced Moroccan national Ayoub al-Khazzani to life in prison for the 2015 Thalys train attack, in which U.S. citizens helped stop the attacker.

High-profile terrorist cases in the judicial system included the following:

- On July 3 the Special Criminal Court sentenced Tyler Vilus to 30 years of prison for overseeing the executions of detainees in Syria between 2013 and 2015 while he served as a senior ISIS leader. He is the first French national to be tried in France for crimes committed in Syria.
- On October 14 the Special Criminal Court sentenced Algerian national Farid Ikken to 28 years in prison for attempted terrorist murder when he attacked and injured one police officer with a hammer outside the Notre-Dame Cathedral in 2017. Ikken had pledged allegiance to ISIS.
- On December 16 the Special Criminal Court convicted all 14 defendants for providing support to the three deceased terrorists responsible for the 2015 attacks against satirical weekly *Charlie Hebdo*, police officers, and a kosher supermarket that killed 17 people. The accomplices, including three tried in absentia, were given sentences ranging from four years to life in prison.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** France is a member of FATF. Its FIU, the Intelligence Processing and Action Against Illicit Financial Networks Unit (or Tracfin), is a member of the Egmont Group. France is also a member of the Defeat-ISIS CFIG.

In February, France adopted the EU's anti-money laundering and terrorist financing law, which aims to harmonize due diligence measures regarding high-risk third countries or in cases of remote business relationship. On December 9, France adopted a measure where all virtual asset service providers must check their customers' identities, verify "beneficiary owners," prohibit anonymous crypto accounts, and cooperate with intelligence and asset freezing services.

France continued to investigate and prosecute financing of terrorism cases in 2020. On September 29, French authorities carried out a raid against a terrorist financial network suspected of transferring “hundreds of millions of euros” using cryptocurrencies to suspected terrorists affiliated with ISIS and Hay’at Tahrir al-Sham in Syria, resulting in 29 arrests.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** The government presented a draft bill on December 9 “to uphold republican values” and counter Islamist separatism. Within four years, the government will end foreign government funding of imams from Algeria, Morocco, and Turkey and to serve as religious leaders in France. The government banned at least three organizations and closed one mosque for suspected ties to violent Islamist movements in 2020. On December 3 the government announced it would inspect 76 mosques suspected of Islamist separatism.

To counter “cyber Islamism,” the government announced October 23 the creation of a countermessaging unit. In response to a surge of online content promoting or justifying terrorism, the government will strengthen the Ministry of Interior’s online platform (PHAROS) for the public to report suspicious or illegal online content. Bordeaux, Montreuil, Paris, and Sarcelles are members of the Strong Cities Network.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** France is a founding member of the GCTF and plays a key role on the UN Security Council ISIL (for Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant) and al-Qaeda Sanctions Committee. The French government undertook joint CT operations with several EU partners and played an active role in CT capacity building in other countries, particularly in West Africa’s Sahel region with the creation of the Coalition for the Sahel in January and the launch of Task Force Takuba in July.

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## GEORGIA

**Overview:** Georgia continued its robust engagement across a range of counterterrorism issues in 2020. Owing to COVID-19 constraints, Georgia participated in a limited number of bilateral CT-related exercises and trainings with the United States in 2020 but remained a strong U.S. security partner. The State Security Service of Georgia (SSSG) is the agency responsible for terrorism-related incidents and investigations. Georgia tried and convicted one Georgian citizen on terrorism charges for his involvement in ISIS-related activities abroad. Georgia further refined its AML/CFT laws in 2020 and strengthened its border security infrastructure.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in Georgia in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** Georgia is generally capable of detecting, deterring, and responding to terrorism incidents. SSSG has the mandate for terrorism-related incidents and investigations and works in close cooperation through its Counterterrorism Center with the Ministries of Internal Affairs, Justice, and Defense and the Prosecution Service of Georgia, among others. SSSG is generally well equipped and well trained; in January, SSSG established its Training Center, which provides training to counter terrorism, violent extremism, and radicalization. The SSSG’s Counterterrorism Unit continues to receive regular training and equipment. The National Strategy of Georgia on the Fight Against Terrorism 2019-21 remains

Georgia's guiding counterterrorism document, and the SSSG-chaired Permanent Interagency Commission is responsible for strategy and action plan oversight. Georgia worked in 2020 to update its chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) Threat Reduction Strategy and Action Plan, which reached the interagency approval stage by the end of 2020. The strategy will be approved by a Georgian government resolution, which the prime minister signed.

In 2020, Georgia worked to enhance its border, maritime, and aviation security through infrastructure projects and legislation. Georgia's Border Police and Coast Guard, both well organized and highly competent, provide the initial response capability along Georgia's land and maritime borders, respectively. The Border Police completed infrastructure projects along borders with Russia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Turkey, all of which will increase year-round patrolling, surveillance, and deterrence capabilities. Georgia also installed a video surveillance and monitoring system on one sector of its land border with Azerbaijan and added additional vehicles and helicopters to its border patrol fleets. Approximately 350 Georgian border and patrol police received basic counterterrorism tactics training from the U.S. Department of State's Diplomatic Security Office of Criminal Investigations. Georgia also participated in a multi-agency training on countering WMDs in the maritime domain and various international CBRN trainings and projects. The Department of Defense's Office of Defense Cooperation is working with the Georgian Coast Guard to bolster its ability to reduce waterborne smuggling of all types of illicit contraband.

Georgia continues to work with relevant state authorities, air carriers, and international partners for further technical implementation of API/PNR systems. In 2020, Georgia adopted Rules on the Exploitation of Unmanned Aircraft Systems to help protect Georgian airspace.

Border closures enacted because of the COVID-19 pandemic helped stem the travel of known or suspected terrorists to, from, and through Georgia. No Georgian citizens were observed traveling to Syria or Iraq in 2020 for terrorist activities. Georgian border patrol agents check individuals, vehicles, and travel documents against national and INTERPOL databases.

In May, Georgian citizen Tsezar Tokhosashvili was extradited to Georgia from Ukraine for his involvement in ISIS-related activities. Georgian courts tried and convicted Tokhosashvili for participating in a terrorist organization and sentenced him to 10 years' imprisonment.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Georgia is a member of MONEYVAL. Georgia's FIU, the Financial Monitoring Service of Georgia, is a member of the Egmont Group. Georgia is also a member of the Defeat-ISIS CIFG. In September, MONEYVAL approved an evaluation report on Georgia conducted in 2019, noting Georgia's progress in recent years and determining that Georgia's counterterrorism-financing investigations and prosecutions reached a substantial level of effectiveness. In March, Georgia participated in the Warsaw Process Working Group on Counterterrorism and Illicit Financing — led by the United States, Poland, Morocco, and Kenya in Morocco.

In June and July, Georgia further refined its AML/CFT laws, including by designating the National Bank of Georgia as the AML/CFT supervisor, mandating that Georgian financial institutions screen against UNSC sanctions lists, and adopting two bylaws related to reporting,

recordkeeping, and customer identification. To implement UNSC sanctions lists, Georgia as of mid-December had submitted nine motions requesting that the assets of seven individuals and five entities be frozen, as well as five motions to unfreeze the assets of four individuals and 27 entities.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** In 2020, Georgia continued ongoing CVE efforts focused on education, civic participation, access to media and information, gender equality, youth empowerment, socioeconomic and regional integration, justice and law enforcement activities, and promoting cultural diversity and interreligious dialogue.

Georgia continued to work with international and local partners on multi-year CVE projects, including the USAID Pankisi Community Links Activity, which aims to integrate communities with diverse ethnic or religious backgrounds in the Pankisi Gorge region. Program implementation slowed somewhat because of COVID-19, but certain activities were moved to virtual or distanced platforms. In September and December, SSSG and a Georgian NGO organized training on terrorism and violent extremism to promote best practices in CVE.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Georgia is actively engaged on CT issues at international, regional, and bilateral levels and expanded its partnerships in 2020. Georgia cooperates closely with NATO, the United Nations, the Council of Europe, the OSCE, the Organization of Black Sea Economic Cooperation, INTERPOL, and the Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldova Organization for Democracy and Economic Development. In January, SSSG established an interagency cooperation agreement with France. In May, Georgia and the EU agreed to an implementing arrangement to further support the process for the reciprocal protection of classified information.

Georgia participated in the February Foreign Terrorist Fighters Conference organized by the United Nations, the OSCE, and Switzerland. It also participated in the July UN Virtual Counter-Terrorism Week; and the September online OSCE Counter-Terrorism Conference, among other events. Georgia also attended the Council of Europe's Steering Committee on Counter-Terrorism's online fifth plenary session in November and participated in the session's working group on gathering evidence from conflict zones to use in prosecutions. Georgia continued to participate in multiple NATO and EU-led CT trainings in 2020. SSSG representatives took part in several George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies and Naval Postgraduate School CT seminars and workshops.

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## GERMANY

**Overview:** Germany continued its CT cooperation with the United States and the international community as a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and the Global Counterterrorism Forum and in multilateral CT operations in Africa and the Middle East. In 2020, Germany allocated more resources toward combating all forms of terrorism, including REMVE. Law enforcement targeted a range of suspects, including Islamist terrorists and REMVE actors. German officials consider the latter to be the greatest threat to national security. The Cabinet Committee to Combat Right-Wing Extremism and Racism agreed on a package of awareness-raising measures, aimed at more prevention and protection against discrimination and greater

recognition of a pluralistic society. The government plans to commit approximately \$1.2 billion for these projects between 2021 and 2024, with another \$183 million pending budget committee agreement.

The 2019 report by Germany’s domestic security agency (the most recent statistics available) reported there were 32,080 REMVE actors, compared with 24,100 in 2018, of whom 13,000 were considered “potentially violent,” which Germany classifies as violent, willing to use violence, supporting violence, or advocating violence. The number of violent crimes committed by “right wing” actors declined by 15 percent, from 1,088 in 2018 to 925 in 2019. The number of “left wing” violent extremists increased from 32,000 in 2018 to 33,500 in 2019, of whom 9,200 are considered potentially violent. Though violent acts decreased by 8.8 percent to 921, overall left-wing violent extremist crimes increased by 39.5 percent — from 4,622 in 2018 to 6,449 in 2019.

## 2020 Terrorist Incidents

- In February a far-right violent extremist killed 10 people and wounded 5 others in an ethnically motivated terrorist shooting in Hanau, before killing his mother and himself. The attacker posted a manifesto and videos on his website expressing xenophobic and misogynistic motivations.
- In May, police raided the home of an elite special operations unit soldier, uncovering a cache of weapons and explosives. The unit (*Kommando Spezialkräfte*, or KSK) was officially disbanded in August when more than 70 KSK members were linked to right-wing violent extremism.
- In October a man wearing army fatigues and wielding a shovel attacked and wounded a Jewish man exiting a synagogue in Hamburg during the Jewish holiday of Sukkot.
- Also in October a 20-year-old Syrian asylum seeker stabbed a German same-sex couple in Dresden, killing one man and seriously injuring the other. The suspect had been released in September after serving a three-year sentence and undergoing a deradicalization-from-violence program.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** In June the government approved a change to the Legal Status of Military Personnel Act, which would make it easier to dismiss soldiers who engage in “extremist activities.” The proposed changes must be approved by the Bundestag.

Both federal and state-level law enforcement agencies conduct CT investigations, coordinated through the Joint Counterterrorism Center, consisting of 40 internal law enforcement and security agencies. In 2020 the Federal Prosecutor’s Office opened approximately 490 new terrorism investigations and filed 10 indictments. Germany’s numbers of *Gefährder* (potentially violent persons) increased in 2019. Germany prioritized asylum reform and border security under its EU presidency.

Significant law enforcement actions in 2020 included the following:

- The Federal Ministry of the Interior banned all Hizballah activity in Germany in April. Police raided multiple mosque associations suspected of providing financial and propaganda support. In July, authorities alleged 50 members of Bremen's al-Mustafa community center were involved in financial support of Hizballah.
- The Federal Ministry of the Interior banned four right-wing violent extremist organizations under the Law on Associations: Combat 18, *Geeinte deutsche Völker und Stämme*, *Nordadler*, and *Sturmbrigade 44*. This occurred in January, March, June, and December, respectively.
- Germany repatriated a small group of ISIS-affiliated women and children in late December; however, Germany law enforcement only took one of the women into custody and released her shortly thereafter.

The Federal Criminal Police Office (*Bundeskriminalamt*, or BKA) further developed its counterterrorism strategy and associated organizational structure to combat right-wing violent extremism. It will take a three-level approach:

- Increasing enforcement pressure and the development of risk-assessment instrument “RADAR-rechts” (first level)
- Identifying networks faster and more efficiently (second level)
- Combating online hate crime with the establishment of a Central Reporting Unit for Criminal Contents on the Internet (third level)

Strengthening interagency cooperation among various security authorities complements this three-level approach. The BKA has restructured its State Security Division and increased staffing levels to implement these changes.

In July the trial against Halle attacker Stephan Baillet began. The court sentenced him to life imprisonment for murder, attempted murder, and incitement in December.

In October the *Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz* released a report recording more than 1,400 cases of suspected right-wing extremists among soldiers, police officers, and intelligence agents. Covering a period beginning in 2017 and ending in March, the report is the first attempt to document “right-wing infiltration” of German security services.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Germany is a member of FATF and has the presidency from 2020 until 2022. Its FIU, the Financial Intelligence Unit Germany, is a member of the Egmont Group. The FIU is working to eliminate a backlog of cases and is undergoing a FATF mutual evaluation in 2020-21. Germany is also a member of the Defeat-ISIS CIFG.

The North Rhine-Westphalia Task Force Against Terror Financing, Organized Crime, and Money Laundering and the Düsseldorf public prosecutor increased efforts to investigate “hawala” operations, announcing 149 new investigations in July.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** In 2019, Germany increased funding for existing counterterrorist radicalization and recruitment programs. Federal funding for measures to prevent radicalization to violence and promote deradicalization from violence has steadily increased over the past five years, from about \$52 million in 2015 to \$188 million in 2019. The

German government provides additional funds for programs and measures in the field of primary prevention and civic education. Final figures for 2020 are not yet available. Most 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 giving special attention to prevention and deradicalization from violence through the internet, refugee integration, and prisons. These programs have mandatory evaluation requirements and local research institutions have begun to review efforts to counter terrorist radicalization and recruitment. The federal government announced it will continue funding for preventing extremism in the 2020 budget plan, including training for German speaking imams.

The federal Live Democracy! program is a cornerstone of the government's strategy to counter terrorist radicalization, prevent hate crimes, and promote democracy. In 2020 the government allocated about \$140 million for related projects in Germany.

The German cities of Augsburg, Berlin, Dresden, and Düsseldorf are members of the Strong Cities Network.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** In 2019, Germany assumed co-leadership of the GCTF West Africa Working Group and in November dedicated \$8.2 million for border management projects in West Africa. The United States and Germany were co-leaders of the GCTF Initiative to Counter Unmanned Aerial System Threats, which led to the Berlin Memorandum on Good Practices for Countering Terrorist Use of Unmanned Aerial Systems. Germany remains an active participant in other GCTF initiatives. The country organized a workshop, "Strengthening Capacities to Prevent and Counter Terrorism by Enhancing Cross-Border Collaboration and Information Exchange on Foreign Terrorist Fighters Between Law Enforcement Agencies," under the auspices of the GCTF FTF Working Group. Germany also cooperates with other OSCE-participating states in the fight against terrorism.

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## GREECE

**Overview:** The Greek government remained a highly collaborative CT partner in 2020. Consistent with its responsibilities as a participant in the Visa Waiver Program, Greece operationalized its Passenger Information Unit by Presidential decree and hoped to shortly begin screening air passengers in accordance with international standards. The government moved forward on a tender that will help provide Greeks with more secure, biometric ID cards, since existing ID cards are a major vulnerability. Greece also passed legislation in accordance with an EU directive that criminalizes terrorist travel and ensures medical assistance to victims of terror. There were no major terrorist incidents in Greece in 2020; however, there were several arrests of suspected terrorists. Greece is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in Greece in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, Border Security:** Greece implemented EU Directive 541 by passing legislation that criminalizes organizing or facilitating travel for the purposes of terrorism as well as theft, extortion, and forgery related to terrorist activity. The legislation has a special

provision for victims of terrorism to ensure they are able to receive appropriate medical care immediately after a terrorist attack.

Since Greece's national identification card remains vulnerable to alteration and photo substitution, Greek authorities moved forward in the process to provide citizens with biometric-enabled ID cards. Five consortiums bid on the Ministry of Citizen Protection's €515 million tender for an integrated online system for security documents, including the new ID cards. On September 23, Greek President Sakellariopoulou issued a decree to create the Passenger Information Unit (PIU) as the fifth department in the intelligence division of the Hellenic Police. Greece indicates the decision provides the legal basis for the PIU to operate and will help to ensure Greece uses passenger name records and advanced passenger information to screen airline travelers according to international standards and recommended practices. The PIU expected to receive airline data in 2021.

On December 9, Greece passed legislation that will stop convicted terrorists from being transferred to lower security "agricultural prisons." The bill will ensure that Dimitris Koufontinas, a leader of the domestic terrorist group 17 November and currently serving multiple life sentences on an agricultural farm, is transferred to a higher-security prison.

Greek authorities carried out many arrests in 2020, including the following:

- In March, police arrested 11 Turkish citizens accused of participating in the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party/Front, a Turkish Marxist-Leninist group designated as a terrorist organization by the EU, the United States, and others. Along with association with a terrorist organization, the arrested were accused of weapons possession, including rocket-propelled grenades, a Kalashnikov rifle, pistols, and hand grenades. The group is thought to have been trying to smuggle the weapons to Turkey.
- In September, authorities arrested three alleged members of the Popular Fighters Group (OLA), a Greek leftist terrorist group, in Athens. OLA was the group behind an attack on the Israeli Embassy in 2014, as well as a Eurobank branch and the Athens Court of Appeals in 2017. Police found 10 kilos of gelignite, detonators, and raw materials for making explosives in a warehouse unit belonging to one of the suspects.
- In November, authorities arrested a 27-year-old Syrian in a refugee and migrant camp in western Athens for his suspected membership in ISIS. The suspect reportedly admitted to interrogators that he directly participated in terrorist attacks, and there is allegedly a video showing him participating in terrorist activities. He traveled to Greece in 2018 and applied for asylum, which was still pending at the time of the arrest.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Greece is a member of FATF. Its FIU, the Anti-Money Laundering Counter-Terrorist Financing and Source of Funds Investigation Authority, is a member of the Egmont Group. In October, Greece implemented EU Directive 2018/843 on the prevention of the use of the financial system for money laundering and terrorist funding. The directive aims to prevent money laundering by increasing transparency of company/trust ownership, addressing risks linked to virtual currencies, and improving checks on transactions involving third countries, among other aims. The Ministry of Finance is also working on



legislation for the adoption of EU Directive 2019/1153 to establish rules to facilitate the use of financial and other information to prevent, detect, investigate, and/or prosecute certain criminal offenses.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** In July, Greece passed a law creating a new division to prevent violent extremism reporting directly to the Minister of Citizen Protection. The division will focus on violent Islamic extremism and both far-right/far-left groups and anarchists. It will have five units — 1) strategy and policy, 2) research and analysis, 3) action/implementation, 4) dissemination/networking, and 5) logistics — and will be made up of a police officer, prison/probation staff, and officials from other ministries, including the Ministries of Education and Migration. The group will also draft a national countering-violent-extremism strategy. Greece began training to familiarize police and prison staff with the tenets of Islam and to prevent violent extremism across Greece in 2020. These trainings will continue next year. Greece also created a new open-source analysis framework, which intelligence, state security, and cybercrime divisions are using to better monitor and analyze groups online.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Greece is a member of various international bodies and of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS.

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## ITALY

**Overview:** Italy collaborated closely with the United States and international partners in its international counterterrorism efforts during 2020. Domestically, Italy aggressively investigated and prosecuted terrorist suspects and regularly deported foreign nationals for terrorism-related security reasons. As a member of the Defeat-ISIS Coalition, Italy was the second-largest contributor of troops in Iraq, where it heads the Defeat-ISIS police training subgroup and leads efforts to train Iraqi police and security forces. Italy is a framework nation and remains the fourth-largest troop contributor to NATO's Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan. It also hosts NATO's Hub for the South.

Italian authorities have identified several potential threats to the country, including terrorists from North Africa, returning foreign fighters, homegrown violent extremists, and fighters from the Western Balkans passing through Italy en route to other European countries.

Italian and U.S. authorities regularly share counterterrorism best practices under the auspices of the U.S.-Italy Counterterrorism Working Group, a component of the U.S.-Italy Strategic Dialogue.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in Italy in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** Italian law enforcement has advanced capacity to detect and deter terrorist activity, links, and associations within its borders. Authorities employ those capabilities to counter terrorist recruitment, radicalization to violence, and networking. The police (specifically the Central Directorate of the Prevention Police), ROS Carabinieri (the investigative unit of the gendarmerie), Guardia di Finanza (financial police), other specialized law enforcement agencies, and the intelligence services coordinate their

counterterrorism efforts and meet on a regular and systematic basis to review terrorist threats and share information.

Italy continued to repatriate citizens and their family members who joined ISIS in Iraq and Syria. On September 29, Italian authorities repatriated Alice Brignoli, an Italian national who joined ISIS in Syria, to be prosecuted in Italy. Her four minor children were also repatriated and placed in a rehabilitation program.

The Italian government continued to make use of 2005 legislation facilitating the detention of terrorist suspects and expedited procedures for expelling noncitizens suspected of endangering national security. The Ministry of Interior has the authority to swiftly expel noncitizens for “seriously disturbing public order, endangering national security, or religious discrimination,” even if insufficient evidence exists to prosecute the individual. Prominent arrests and expulsions included the following:

- On January 4, Italian authorities arrested and expelled a 41-year-old Moroccan imam by order of the Minister of the Interior. The imam, a Padua resident, expressed support for the Islamic State and jihadists fighting in Syria and shared ISIS propaganda videos over Facebook. He was extradited from Bologna to Casablanca on a military plane.
- On March 26, Italian authorities announced that Mullah Krekar, a militant Islamic scholar, had been extradited from Norway to Italy, where he is currently serving a prison sentence. Italian authorities requested the extradition on suspicion that Krekar was a leader of Rawti Shax, an offshoot of Ansar al-Islam.
- On June 12, Carabinieri regiments in Rome arrested seven anarchists for association with the aim of terrorism and subversion of democratic order, as well as acts of violence with explosives and other crimes.

A Tunisian national who entered Europe on October 29 through the southern Italian island of Lampedusa traveled to France and was later suspected of carrying out a knife attack in a church in Nice. Italy is working to improve its screening of migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees in consultation with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Italy is a member of FATF. Its FIU, the Financial Intelligence Unit of Italy (UIF), is a member of the Egmont Group. Italy is also a member of the Defeat-ISIS CIFG. Italy remained a strong advocate of the UN Security Council sanctions regime against ISIL and al-Qa’ida.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** No new legislation was passed. The Penitentiary Administration’s Central Investigative Center continued to carry out investigations and respond to cases of possible radicalization to violence in Italian jails and prisons. Italian authorities also increased monitoring and prevention efforts to identify hostile “lone actors” online. Palermo is a member of the Strong Cities Network.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Italy continued to support counterterrorism efforts in regional and multilateral organizations, including the following:

- The United Nations
- NATO
- The European Union
- The G-7
- The G-20
- The OSCE
- The GCTF
- The Council of Europe
- FATF

Italy continued its capacity building efforts in Libya, focusing on coast guard cooperation, investigative training for law enforcement, and border security measures. The Italian military continued its training activities in Niger with local security forces in support of the efforts of Nigerien authorities and G-5 Sahel member states to strengthen border security, counter illicit trafficking, and combat threats to regional security.

Italy made a substantial contribution to the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund, an institution of the GCTF, and finalized a project to provide technical assistance on battlefield evidence to multiagency stakeholders in Burkina Faso. The project will be carried out in 2021 in cooperation with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime.

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## 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. The Government of Kosovo is drafting a new combined strategy and action plan for Counterterrorism (CT) and Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) through 2025. The CT/CVE Coordinator's Office was abolished in February. In July, however, the new Hoti government appointed Interior Minister Agim Veliu as the national CT/CVE coordinator.

Kosovo continues to address the ramifications of the 2019 repatriation of four suspected FTFs and 106 family members from Syria, one of the largest civilian repatriations to date from the conflict zone. All adults have been prosecuted or otherwise adjudicated by law enforcement, and two of the male FTFs remain in prison. The women and children continue to receive reintegration assistance through U.S.- and European-funded programs and the Interior Ministry's Prevention and Reintegration Division (PRD). The PRD and Education Ministry assisted 37 of the 74 children returnees with school enrollment and, with the assistance of international donors, is assisting women returnees with reintegration and employment.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in Kosovo in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** Kosovo's legislative framework is among the most forward-leaning in the Balkans for prosecuting individuals suspected of committing or supporting terrorist activities, but short sentences, early release from prison, and a lack of organized postrelease supervision raise questions for long-term security. Kosovo

supports the implementation of UNSCR 2396 to counter terrorist travel and is working to put it into practice; the September 4 Washington commitments signed at the White House codified Pristina's commitment to enhancing border security and screening to interdict terrorist travel, including through U.S.-provided assistance and partnership. Kosovo has designated the entirety of Hizballah as a terrorist organization.

The European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (EUROPOL) entered into a formal arrangement with the Kosovo Police in July. The appointment of a Kosovo Police liaison to EUROPOL and an agreement on secure communications are planned in the near future. Kosovo remains excluded from membership in INTERPOL, owing in part to Serbian opposition stemming from the lack of normalized relations.

Through participation in the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance program, Kosovo Police — and specifically the Counterterrorism Department — have received training in counterterrorism investigations and identification and seizure of digital evidence, and have received associated equipment grants. U.S. mentorships have succeeded in increasing the cooperation and information sharing between Kosovo Police and the Kosovo Correctional Service.

On December 11 the Pristina Basic Court acquitted all defendants involved in the "Hurricane" case of terrorism-related charges. This is the second time the defendants were acquitted of terrorism, although they were convicted of illegal possession and trade in weapons. This case was first indicted in 2015 by international prosecutors and then passed to the local judicial system, lingering in Kosovo courts for five years.

On October 30, convicted FTF Agon Misini was released from prison after serving 18 months of his four-year sentence for participating in a terrorist group (ISIS). Misini was the first repatriated FTF convicted in 2019; however, the Court of Appeals granted him credit for time spent in detention in Syria after his 2017 arrest by the Syrian Democratic Forces.

On October 20 the Kosovo Police Counterterrorism Department arrested a man who threatened the Kosovo Ambassador to France, following the Ambassador's retweet of a *Le Figaro* article that outlined a chronology of the attacks on the *Charlie Hebdo* satirical magazine. Prosecutors unsealed an indictment for incitement to commit terrorism on December 8.

On September 30, prosecutors indicted Igballe Huduti for incitement to commit terrorist acts. Huduti was arrested on January 7 for her social media posts criticizing Washington for the killing of Iranian commander Qasim Soleimani and calling for revenge.

On September 24 the Supreme Court of Kosovo upheld a five-and-a-half-year prison sentence for Visar Qukovci's participation in a terrorist group (ISIS), while ordering a retrial on charges of child abuse. Qukovci, one of the FTFs repatriated from Syria in 2019, had filmed propaganda videos in which he placed a suicide vest on his 3-year-old son.

On January 10, FTF Arian Kryeziu was sentenced to 46 months' imprisonment for participating in a terrorist group (ISIS).

Of the 32 women repatriated from Syria in 2019, 29 pleaded guilty to participating in ISIS and received short, suspended sentences. The women will avoid time in prison if they do not commit further crimes, regularly check in with the Kosovo Police, and attend psychotherapy. Since November, another seven women have been indicted for participating in ISIS.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Its FIU, the Financial Intelligence Unit of Kosovo, is a member of the Egmont Group. Kosovo has drafted a legal framework for targeted financial sanctions against terrorist organizations, which upon approval by the National Assembly will enhance the tools available to the FIU to restrict terrorist financing.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** Kosovo’s previous CVE strategy, a five-year roadmap for stemming the growing threat of terrorism through a whole-of-government approach, emphasized the critical role of local stakeholders and civil society. Implementation has been uneven across government ministries and challenges continue, owing to a lack of capacity, inadequate resources, and an overly securitized approach to CVE. An interministerial working group is drafting a new strategy and action plan, which aims to merge CT and CVE into a unified strategy; the government expects to unveil the strategy in 2021.

The Kosovo Correctional Service continued to implement a program — assisted by U.S. experts — to enhance management of terrorists in prison. This program involves collecting, analyzing, and sharing prison information within correctional service decisionmakers and other relevant law enforcement, and managing the rehabilitation and eventual reintegration of convicted terrorists. The PRD continued to implement programs to reintegrate individuals who served time in prison on terrorism charges, FTF returnees, and their family members, while chronically understaffed and underfunded.

Kosovo continues cooperative activities through GCERF, a public-private global fund to support local, grassroots, counterterrorist radicalization and recruitment efforts in at-risk communities. Thirteen Kosovo municipalities are members of the Strong Cities Network.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** The Government of Kosovo works closely with officials in Albania and North Macedonia to support CT capacity building and regional cooperation.

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## THE NETHERLANDS

**Overview:** The Netherlands continues to respond effectively to the global terrorist threat in border and transportation security, counterterrorist financing, CVE, and bilateral and multilateral CT cooperation. The national threat level remained “significant” (Level 3 of 5) throughout the reporting period. The main threat is Islamist terrorism, followed by REMVE, which the Dutch refer to as “violent right-wing extremism.” The Dutch assess the threat of REMVE violence as less acute in the Netherlands than in other European countries. The Netherlands has a comprehensive national CT strategy that implements policies to counter all forms of terrorism at the local level through multidisciplinary interagency cooperation.

The Netherlands is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, participates in Defeat-ISIS working groups, and is co-chair of its FTF Working Group with Turkey and Kuwait. The Netherlands has liaisons embedded at various operational command centers, deployed force protection units, and contributed military personnel and trainers in Iraq. The Dutch training mission was suspended temporarily in late March because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Netherlands is a member of the GCTF.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** Although authorities indicated there was “terrorist intent” related to some crimes, they did not identify any incidents with direct nexus to terrorist organizations.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** The Netherlands implemented CT legislation in line with relevant UNSCRs. There were no significant changes in law enforcement structures, capacity, international cooperation, or border security legislation in 2020. Draft legislation that would make it a punishable offense to reside in an area controlled by a terrorist organization without prior permission has been pending in the First Chamber of Parliament for the duration of the reporting period.

Significant law enforcement and judicial actions related to CT included the following:

- On March 20, Gokman Tanis was sentenced to life in prison for murder, attempted murder, and making threats with terrorist intent, for the 2019 attack on a train in Utrecht killing four people.
- On October 8, six individuals in the “Arnhem group,” who were arrested in 2018, received sentences ranging from 10 to 17 years on charges of preparing a multitarget terrorist attack in the Netherlands.
- On October 27, authorities arrested two Dutch citizens on charges including incitement, carrying a weapon, and participation in an organization that has the intention of committing terrorist crimes. Both individuals were active on REMVE social media channels.
- On November 16 the Amsterdam Court of Appeal sentenced Jawad Sultani, convicted of the 2018 terrorist stabbing of two American citizens, to 25 years in prison. The court overturned the conviction for threatening Dutch police officers but upheld the conviction for the stabbing with terrorist intent.

The government does not actively repatriate FTFs and their children from camps in Syria, but it escorted about five FTFs who reported to Dutch diplomatic missions in the region. All persons known to have traveled to the conflict areas in Syria and Iraq are under criminal investigation. The courts considered several cases involving female FTFs who wished to be repatriated, along with their children, from displaced persons camps in Syria to stand trial in the Netherlands. In each instance, the court upheld the 2019 decision that the government is not obligated to actively repatriate FTFs.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** The Netherlands is a member of FATF and is one of the Cooperating and Supporting Nations of the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force, a FATF-style regional body. Its FIU, the Financial Intelligence Unit-Netherlands, is a member of the Egmont Group and contributes to EUROPOL’s financial intelligence team. The Netherlands is

also a member of the Defeat ISIS CFIG. There have been no changes to the Netherlands' membership in FATF and FATF-style regional bodies in 2020.

In 2020, Dutch courts convicted one individual for terrorist financing.

The Dutch framework for countering the financing of terrorism applies to all EU-designated terrorist organizations and the UN Security Council ISIL and al-Qa'ida Sanctions Committee. As of December the government's national terrorist watchlists include 150 individuals and four organizations whose assets were frozen. A law ensuring alignment with EU antiterrorist financing laws was enacted October 7.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** The Netherlands' 2016-20 National Counterterrorism Strategy contains measures to strengthen communities, build resilience to terrorist radicalization, and prevent persons from becoming FTFs. The strategy prioritizes prevention, among other themes. The government uses a local, multidisciplinary approach for prevention and develops tailored plans of action to intervene with individuals suspected of radicalization to violence.

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 exist to rehabilitate former terrorists. To counter terrorist messaging, local governments use outreach efforts with community and religious leaders to amplify alternative narratives.

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 United Nations, the GCTF, the EU, the Council of Europe, the OSCE, and NATO. The GCTF Administrative Unit is housed in The Hague. The country 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, and GCERF. The Netherlands contributed to the EU's Counter-Terrorism Agenda announced December 9. 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 supports regional security coordinators at six embassies that are dedicated to capacity building to identify terrorist radicalization. The Netherlands is an active participant in EUROPOL's European Counter Terrorism Centre and the Counter Terrorism Group (the intelligence services of all EU member states plus Norway and Switzerland) to improve cooperation and information exchange between and among European CT services.

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## 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 2020 and no reported departures to join ISIS, the main counterterrorism issue North Macedonia faced consisted of returned FTFs from Syria and Iraq, given their ability without rehabilitation to establish violent extremist cells, plan attacks, and radicalize others to violence. The National Committee for Countering Violent Extremism and Countering Terrorism (NCCVECT) estimated that 143 citizens of North Macedonia (excluding children) previously traveled or attempted to travel to Syria and Iraq to join terrorist groups. Of the 126 adults who spent time in Syria and/or Iraq, 38 were killed, 69 returned to North Macedonia, and 19 remain. Authorities assessed the terrorist threat level to be “average,” or medium, as ISIS members and sympathizers maintained a presence in country. In June the government adopted a national reintegration plan for FTFs and their family members.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in North Macedonia during 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** North Macedonia’s legislative framework is adequate to prosecute individuals suspected of committing or aiding terrorist activities or participating in foreign wars. Low sentencing for terrorism-related offenses remains a challenge.

Authorities repatriated one male FTF from Turkey in February and three females, who had resided in Syria, from Turkey in March. In September the male received a five-year prison sentence for attempting to join a foreign army. The U.S. Department of Justice provided mentoring to the prosecutor, who utilized battlefield evidence provided by U.S. interagency partners.

The Ministry of Interior’s (MOI’s) “Terrorism and Violent Extremism Sector” led law enforcement-related CT efforts. In August the unit arrested three individuals in Kumanovo in a joint operation with the Agency for National Security (ANS); they have not yet been indicted on terrorism charges. The MOI stated that the three served jail time following their extradition from Turkey in 2016 for attempting to join ISIS and, following their release from prison in 2019, were plotting terrorist attacks in the country and possessed weapons and explosives. The unit, alongside ANS, then arrested eight individuals, three in Skopje and five in Kumanovo, in December on suspicion of terrorism and in connection to the August arrests. Through participation in the Department of State’s Antiterrorism Assistance program, the MOI has received training in counterterrorism investigations and identification and seizure of digital evidence, and has received associated equipment grants. The unit experienced staffing shortages throughout 2020 but continued efforts to enhance its capacity. ANS marked its first anniversary as a separate entity from the MOI in September and retained its significant CT investigatory capacity. A new Secretariat in charge of coordinating the security and intelligence communities became functional in 2020. An EU-funded twinning project worked to strengthen North Macedonia’s coordinating capacities.



North Macedonia continued its partnership with the United States on traveler screening tools and continues to take steps to enhance border security and screening efforts to include systematic use of Advanced Passenger Information and Passenger Name Record data in line with international standards.

The National Coordinator on Border Administration and ANS in November signed an MOU for quick exchange of terrorism-related information at border crossings. North Macedonia's authorities cooperated with INTERPOL, EUROPOL, the European CT Centre, and the FBI.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** The country's AML/CFT legal framework follows international standards. North Macedonia is a member of MONEYVAL, a FATF-style regional body. Its FIU, the Financial Intelligence Office (FIO), is a member of the Egmont Group. The government in September adopted amendments to the Law on Prevention of Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing to transpose the provisions of Directive V (2018/843) and harmonize the law with the EU acquis; Parliament must still adopt the amendments. The FIO launched a national risk assessment on terrorism financing of non-profit organizations (NPOs) to effectively implement FATF Recommendation 8 in support of measures to protect NPOs from terrorism financing activities. Embassy Amsterdam launched a project assisting the FIO in strengthening its capacity, updating suspicious terrorism financing indicators, and developing a legal framework on virtual currencies in accordance with FATF recommendations and EU directives. The FIO in 2020 received two suspicious transaction reports for terrorist financing and eight informal reports; it submitted nine reports to relevant institutions for further investigation. DOJ/OPDAT resident legal advisors trained prosecutors and investigators on terrorism financing.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** The NCCVECT conducted awareness-raising activities around the national CVE strategy and action plan to strengthen implementation capacity. The NCCVECT assisted the multistakeholder Community Action Teams (CATs), currently operational in four municipalities, in developing and implementing their Action Plans, focusing on preventing violent extremism. With support from the Strong Cities Network, Kumanovo's CAT set a national example, developing policy measures to strengthen social cohesion and build community resilience to violent extremism.

The United States supported the NCCVECT through an imbedded CVE expert, and the Women Without Borders' Mothers' Circles program expanded to three additional municipalities. Following U.S. engagement, the NCCVECT formed an interagency working group on reintegration. The working group drafted the country's first whole-of-government National Plan for Reintegration, Resocialization, and Rehabilitation of FTF Returnees and Members of Their Families, which the government adopted in June. This was a critical step in preparing for repatriation of FTFs and family members from Syria; the plan's implementation has just begun, as COVID-19 delayed implementation. A Dutch-funded project engaged families of convicted terrorist offenders to provide a clearer picture of their challenges and needs, and the International Organization for Migration used this analysis, as well as the national plan, to help inform its own Dutch- and EU-funded reintegration program.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** In 2020, North Macedonia continued its close cooperation with other Western Balkan countries on CT and CVE issues. North Macedonia finalized a draft MOU on CT and CVE cooperation with Kosovo, which is awaiting official signature, expected in 2021. The country offered investigative support to Austrian authorities following the November 2 Vienna terrorist attack, in which the perpetrator, three suspects, and a victim had familial ties to North Macedonia. In 2020, North Macedonia joined the Swiss-based GCERF's Regional Accelerated Funding Panel for the Western Balkans, to support reintegration and rehabilitation efforts.

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## NORWAY

**Overview:** Norway's law enforcement capacity for proactively detecting, deterring, and preventing acts of terrorism in its territory is strong despite some underfunding issues. Norway is responsive to information requests and postured to prevent acts of terrorism, and its bilateral counterterrorism cooperation is strong. Norway is a supporter and donor to GCERF. The Police Security Service's (PST's) annual threat assessment rated an "even chance," the third on its five-tier threat scale, that REMVE actors will try to carry out a terrorist attack in Norway. The threat from Islamist terrorists increased to "probable," its fourth tier, following attacks elsewhere in Europe in October.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no terrorist incidents reported in Norway in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** It is illegal to conduct or plan to conduct a terrorist attack, receive terrorism-related training, provide material support to a terrorist organization, or travel or intend to travel to fight on behalf of a terrorist organization. The maximum prison sentence is 21 years, after which the convicted person may be placed in a mental health facility as long as the person is deemed a danger to others.

The PST's activities focus on information collection, threat assessments, and investigations. The civilian police tactical unit responds to terrorist attacks and is on 24-hour standby. An independent investigation into Norway's handling of a 2019 domestic terror attack on a mosque criticized PST and police coordination, a lack of transparency that a right-wing attack on a Muslim target was highly probable, and the police's response time.

The Police Department (PD) requires large municipalities and private sector companies that operate hotels, stadia, and public centers to conduct their own risk assessments and contingency planning. Oslo PD conducts its own soft target contingency planning and bolsters security at venues as needed.

After terrorist attacks elsewhere in Europe, the Ministry of Justice in November approved the temporary armament of Norwegian police task forces, which was in effect during the reporting period. Police at Oslo's Gardermoen International Airport are permanently armed.

Norway shares information on criminal investigations with the EU and the parties to the Prüm Convention. The Norwegian Immigration Database contains biographic data and facial photos for all applicants for admission into Norway. Norwegian passports contain biometric data

accessible by border security officials. Norway coordinates with INTERPOL and EUROPOL and has access to suspected terrorist information in the Schengen Information System and the Visa Information System.

The PST estimates 20 out of 200 Norwegian-affiliated individuals who traveled to Syria and Iraq to fight on behalf of ISIS remain in those countries. The PST and the Norwegian Intelligence Service coordinate to identify, track, and take action against Norwegian citizens intending to travel to and from Syria or Iraq to fight for a terrorist group. Norway immediately took into custody a Norwegian-Pakistani woman with known ISIS connections upon her repatriation from the Syrian al-Hol camp in January.

Philip Manshaus received a 21-year sentence for the attempted terrorist attack on a mosque and the racially motivated murder of his stepsister in 2019. The sentence is the maximum allowable and strictest ever given by a Norwegian court. Manshaus must serve 14 years before parole consideration.

Norway extradited a man convicted for leading the ISIS-connected Kurdish Rawti Shax network to Italy after previously denying extradition petitions by Italy, Iraq, and the United States. Norway extradited a man to France who was connected to a 1982 Parisian terrorist bombing attack after originally rejecting France's 2015 extradition request.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Norway is a member of FATF. Its FIU, the Financial Intelligence Unit Norway, which operates within the National Authority for the Investigation and Prosecution of Economic and Environmental Crimes, is a member of the Egmont Group. The PST economic crimes unit investigates terrorist financing. Norway is also a member of the Defeat-ISIS CFIG.

Norway released its second strategy to combat the financing of terrorism on June 12, following a national risk assessment on terrorist financing. Norway will research a registration system for fundraising organizations under its June 17 Revised Action Plan Against Radicalization and Violent Extremism (APRVE).

The country implements sanctions adopted by UNSC and has largely supported restrictive measures adopted by the EU. Sanctions must be adopted into Norwegian law to be binding on private legal entities in Norway. Sanctions adopted by UNSC are implemented into Norwegian law as a general rule under a 1968 legal framework.

Norwegian authorities arrested and charged a Syrian-Norwegian resident in May with financing terrorism connected to multiple money transfers to an ISIS-connected man in Syria. The trial is pending.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** The APRVE expands the 2014 plan's focus on violent extremism, creating a national CVE center, guidelines on caring for children of FTFs, and new methods to reintegrate extremists after prison. A 2020 religious funding law removes funding from groups that practice or give support to violent activities or receive funding from abroad.

Oslo and Kristiansand are members of the Strong Cities Network. Ten cities are part of the Nordic Safe Cities Network.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Norway is active in multilateral counterterrorism efforts. The country began its two-year tenure on the UNSC in 2021, during which time it will chair the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea Sanctions Committee, the ISIL and al-Qaida Sanctions Committee, and the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict and will be penholder for issues in Afghanistan and Syria. Norway supports the UN Secretary-General’s Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism and provides resources support to the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali. Norway supports the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund. The country was a member of the troika nations that led the Sudan and South Sudan peace process, along with the United States and Great Britain. Norway also contributes to INTERPOL’s capacity-building programs on border security and rule of law in North Africa and the Sahel. Norway is a strong ally in NATO. It is a member of the EU’s Radicalization Awareness Network, the OSCE, and the Christchurch Call to Action. Norway participates in the Global Counterterrorism Forum Working Group on Capacity-Building in East Africa. Norway provides troop support to Operation Inherent Resolve and NATO Mission Iraq and current has Norwegian Special Forces in the Afghanistan Resolute Support Mission. Norway is a large donor country. It contributed \$1.2 million to the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism for the 2018-21 period. Norway earmarked \$74 million to Afghanistan and \$75 million to Syria in 2021 development assistance. Norway also has provided \$213.5 million in humanitarian aid to Iraq since 2010 and provides an annual \$7.1 million to Afghan security forces.

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## RUSSIA

**Overview:** The Russian Federation continued to prioritize counterterrorism efforts in 2020 and remained a target of both domestic and international terrorist groups, particularly those tied to longstanding separatist groups in the North Caucasus region. Russia, however, also used counterterrorism and “extremism” as pretexts to suppress the exercise of human rights, or for other objectives in both domestic and foreign policy. Violent extremist Islamic groups, including those with ideological ties to ISIS and those consisting of fighters returning from Syria, remain a top government concern. Though the United States and Russia continued to share information on terrorist threats at the working level, the formal counterterrorism dialogue framework remained on hold because of public, unfounded statements by Russian security officials alleging U.S. support for ISIS.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** Militants targeted government buildings and law enforcement officers during the year. While the vast majority of these attacks were prevented, several terrorist incidents occurred.

- On December 11 a suicide bomber detonated himself while law enforcement officers attempted to detain him in the village of Ucheken, Karachay-Cherkess Republic, in the North Caucasus region. The detonation injured six officers, none seriously. The incident occurred outside the regional Federal Security Service (FSB) headquarters.

- On December 28, two assailants armed with knives killed one policeman and wounded another in Grozny, Chechnya. Police officers killed both assailants while trying to apprehend them.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** Under the coordination of the National Antiterrorism Committee, the FSB, with aid from the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) and Rosgvardiya when appropriate, perform counterterrorism functions. Russia properly applied its antiterrorism legislation in numerous terrorism cases during the year. In other cases, however, Russia continued to use its antiterrorism 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*.

The U.S. Department of State designated the Russian Imperial Movement (RIM) and members of its leadership as Specially Designated Global Terrorists on April 6. RIM has provided paramilitary-style training to white supremacists and neo-Nazis in Europe from facilities in St. Petersburg. Russia's communications regulator, Roskomnadzor, blocked access to RIM's website; however, the Russian government has not reported any additional restrictions on RIM or its leaders.

Russia's FSB Director General Alexander Bortnikov reported in a December meeting of the National Antiterrorism Committee that in 2020 law enforcement agencies and special services prevented 41 terrorist attacks, killed 49 militants, detained 753 suspects, and dismantled 55 terrorist cells. These numbers represented a slight increase, compared with 2019. Bortnikov also reported that, in coordination with Roskomnadzor, law enforcement agencies restricted access to 66,500 materials containing content relating to or promoting terrorism and blocked the activities of 110 foreigners disseminating such materials on the internet.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Russia is a member of FATF and two FATF-style regional bodies: MONEYVAL and the Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism (EAG). Its FIU, the Federal Financial Monitoring Service (Rosfinmonitoring), is a member of the Egmont Group. In addition, according to the federal law "On the Central Bank of Russia (CBR)," the CBR has the authority to monitor activities of Russian financial organizations to assess their compliance with provision of the federal law "On the Prevention of Criminal Proceeds Legalization and Terrorist Financing." The CBR monitors the implementation of AML/CFT laws and imposes liability for the violations committed by the banking institutions. Criminal cases involving money laundering are investigated by the MVD, the Russian Investigative Committee, and/or the FSB.

Several significant laws were passed in 2020. On July 13, President Putin signed into law an amendment to Article 6 of the federal law "On the Prevention of Criminal Proceeds Legalization and Terrorist Financing." The amendment was designed to improve the mandatory measures taken by legal entities in specific circumstances to prevent the laundering of criminal proceeds and to cooperate with law enforcement agencies on issues related to combating the financing of terrorism and money laundering.

On July 20, he signed the federal law “On Financial Platforms.” This law amended Articles 5 and 7 of the federal law “On the Prevention of Criminal Proceeds Legalization and Terrorist Financing,” by subjecting online financial platforms subject to national AML/CFT policies and regulations.

On December 8, Putin signed into law an amendment to Article 10.2 of the federal law “On the Prevention of Criminal Proceeds Legalization and Terrorist Financing,” to stipulate that “decisions of intergovernmental bodies based on international agreements with Russia as a party that contradict the Russian Constitution shall not be enforced in Russia.”

In October the CBR reported that the total amount of funds moved offshore through Russian commercial banks from suspicious transactions had declined 72.2 percent year-on-year in the first half of 2020 to \$259.5 million (18 billion rubles), down from \$474.4 million (31 billion rubles) in the same period of 2019. The CBR noted that Russian banks had apparently continued meeting their AML/CFT obligations, despite operational challenges caused by COVID-19.

In December, Rosfinmonitoring reported that in 2020 it had blocked the financial assets of more than 1,200 persons suspected of involvement in terrorist activities, totaling more than \$755,750 (57 million rubles). It also detected and prevented 184 terrorist financing cases. For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report, Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** The government amended the federal law “On Countering Extremist Activities.” The amendment, which entered into force on August 11, expanded what qualifies as “extremism” to include the forcible “violation of the territorial integrity of Russia.” Under the updated law, demonstrations or rhetoric in support of a territory’s separation from the Russian Federation (which, according to the Russian Constitution, includes Crimea), could be considered extremist. Incidents of large-scale persecution of certain religious minorities, such as Jehovah’s Witnesses and certain Muslim groups, for purported extremism increased during the year.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Russia is a member of the Global Counterterrorism Forum and an active participant in several multilateral organizations, including the OSCE, the Eurasian Economic Community, the East Asia Summit, and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation.

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## SERBIA

**Overview:** With no terrorist attacks in 2020 and low levels of ISIS recruitment activities, the main terrorism concerns in Serbia remain the movement of money and weapons through the region, recruitment and return of FTFs, and terrorist self-radicalization through racially or ethnically motivated ideologies often related to nationalism or nationalist groups. Serbia has built on its efforts to counter terrorism and continues cooperation with the United States and international partners. Serbia pledged in September to designate Hizballah as a terrorist organization and to expand cooperation through implementation of traveler screening systems. The country is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in Serbia in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** Serbia's Criminal Code criminalizes terrorism-related offenses including international terrorism, incitement, recruitment, using a deadly device, destruction and damage to a nuclear facility, terrorist financing, and terrorist association. Amendments to the Criminal Code in 2019 introduced life imprisonment for acts of terrorism resulting in the death of one or more persons and extended the application of terrorist financing to other crimes. The Criminal Code outlaws unauthorized participation in a war or armed conflict in a foreign country, prescribing incarceration from 6 months to 10 years for citizens who participate in foreign armed conflicts. In recent years, Serbia has sentenced individuals for participating in terrorist-related activities in Syria and for participating in the Russia-Ukraine conflict in eastern Ukraine, although the Ministry of Interior (MOI) appears to apply different standards to foreign fighters in the two conflicts, with returnees from Syria facing up to 15-year sentences and most returnees from Ukraine receiving suspended sentences. Serbia lacks legislation that more broadly covers conduct related to receiving terrorist training, funding terrorist organizations, and terrorist recruitment activities.

Although UNSCR 2396 calls upon member states to develop systems to screen PNR data, currently API and PNR screening programs are not in place in Serbia. Serbia pledged in September, as part of the Washington-brokered commitments on Serbia-Kosovo economic normalization, to implement information sharing agreements with the United States, strengthening screening measures. Serbia is integrating with the European Common Aviation Area and cooperates with international partners to enhance capacities in accordance with UNSCR 2309.

Also as part of the September Washington Commitments, Serbia pledged to designate Hizballah in its entirety as a terrorist organization, and fully implement measures to restrict Hizballah's operations and financial activities in Serbian jurisdictions. Serbia has not yet made this designation or implemented measures.

There was no change to the way the courts address terrorism in 2020. Current law stipulates that the Belgrade Higher Court's Special Department for Organized Crime hears terrorism-related offenses, and the Organized Crime Prosecutor's Office prosecutes them. The Belgrade 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, and the Prosecutor's Office. Soft targets are required to have terrorism contingency plans, with TES officers providing consultation and oversight.

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.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Serbia is a member of MONEYVAL, a FATF-style regional body, and has observer status in the EAG. Its FIU, the Administration for the Prevention of Money Laundering (APML), is a member of the Egmont Group. In May the government implemented new legislative amendments to the Law on the Prevention of Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism to further align Serbia’s existing AML/CFT regime with recommendations of MONEYVAL and the EU’s Fifth AML Directive. In July, domestic and international organizations criticized an APML probe (later rebranded by APML as a “sectoral risk assessment”) of at least 57 NGOs and individuals as politicized use of AML/CFT measures to target groups critical of the government. In November the government proposed additional amendments to further improve AML/CFT measures — for example, measures related to virtual currencies. Serbia is in negotiations with the EU under Chapter 4 of the EU acquis (Free Movement of Capital), which requires alignment with international standards and improved administrative AML and CFT capacity.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** Serbia is implementing its National Strategy for the Prevention and Countering of Terrorism for the Period 2017-21 and accompanying Action Plan, which seeks to identify early factors leading to terrorist radicalization, enhance the security of its citizens, and intercept threats from social media activities. The Serbian intergovernmental CT working group meets regularly. The municipalities of Bujanovac, Novi Pazar, Presevo, and Tutin are members of the Strong Cities Network.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Serbia is engaged in some regional and international cooperation on CT issues. The MOI and the Security Information Agency cooperate with INTERPOL and EUROPOL on CT activities, including watchlists. A participant in NATO’s Partnership for Peace, Serbia routinely participates in international law enforcement training. Police officers from the MOI’s Service for Combating Terrorism participated in a cyber training implemented by the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Justice’s International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (or ICITAP).

Serbia cooperated with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) for arms control and border security programs that bolstered regional CT efforts. In March, Serbia cooperated with UNODC on a scoping mission for enhancing border security to enforce the UN conventions on drugs, crime and terrorism, and separately hosted the Regional Steering Group of the UNODC Global Firearms Program, which combats weapons trafficking in the region.

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

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## SPAIN

**Overview:** Spain continues to respond effectively to the global terrorist threat in border and transportation security, counterterrorism financing, countering violent extremism, and bilateral and multilateral cooperation. Spain remained on “high” national alert for terrorism throughout



2020, for the sixth year in a row. Spanish authorities continued to arrest individuals suspected of planning terror attacks, facilitating terrorist financing, and engaging in ISIS- and al-Qa'ida-related recruitment and radicalization to violence, both online and in their communities. During the year, Spain passed and implemented a law regarding the collection and analysis of Advance Passenger Information (API) and Passenger Name Record (PNR) data that includes sharing the data with partners, including the United States. Spanish CT cooperation with the United States was excellent.

Spain maintained its contribution to the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, with about 150 personnel deployed to Iraq throughout the year in military and police training missions. Spain continued to exercise leadership in regional and global CT fora, including the GCTF and the 5+5 Defense Initiative.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in Spain in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** On September 16, Spain passed a law regarding the collection and analysis of API and PNR data that includes a provision to allow sharing those data with partner countries, including the United States. The law went into effect on November 17. Spain's Center for Intelligence against Terrorism and Organized Crime (CITCO) plans to collect and analyze 100 percent of API and PNR data from commercial carriers. Spanish officials found visits to the Customs and Border Protection National Targeting Center and the Terrorist Screening Center were particularly helpful in establishing its own screening process.

During the year, the Spanish government continued to implement its National Strategy Against Terrorism. The Ministry of Interior, through CITCO, with contributions from the Ministries of Defense, Foreign Affairs, and Justice, developed the document to align with the four pillars of Counter-Terrorism Strategies of the EU and the United Nations: Prevent, Protect, Pursue, and Prepare the response.

The Spanish criminal code punishes any act of "collaboration with the activities or purposes of a terrorist organization," including promotion of terrorism on social media, terrorist self-radicalization on the internet, training remotely, operating without clear affiliation, or traveling in support of nonstate terrorist actors. As of December 21, Spanish authorities reported they had undertaken 22 counterterrorist operations and detained 36 suspects for counterterrorism during the year.

Significant law enforcement actions related to CT included the following:

- On January 28, Spanish National Police (SNP) arrested a Moroccan national living in Spain and charged him with the crime of disseminating messaging in support of terrorist groups. Dubbed a "cyber soldier" by the media, the accused was alleged to have identified people who have made critical statements against Islam in social media, as a step toward physically harming them. At the time of his arrest, he had amassed more than 25,000 social media followers.

- On April 27, SNP arrested three individuals, including a former rapper and ISIS member considered to be one of the most wanted militants in Europe.
- On July 5, SNP arrested three brothers and charged them with the crimes of terrorist recruitment and indoctrination. The government alleged the suspects were radicalized to violence and posed an imminent risk to the safety of the citizenry.
- On July 14, as part of “Operation Alexandria,” Catalan regional police arrested two Algerian nationals and charged them with the crime of membership in and active collaboration with a terrorist organization, as well as with terrorist training, radicalization, and preparing for a terrorist attack. The two allegedly sought to stage an attack in the city of Barcelona.
- On September 30 the Civil Guard arrested an Algerian national and charged him with supporting the terrorist activities of ISIS through social media.
- On October 14, SNP arrested two individuals and charged them with belonging to a terrorist network and luring vulnerable women into polygamous marriages.
- On December 15, SNP arrested a Spanish citizen and charged him with the crimes of “radicalization” and glorifying terrorism. In social media postings, the man claimed he sought to become “the best Da’esh sniper.”

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Spain is a member of FATF and has observer or cooperator status in the following FATF-style regional bodies: the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force (CFATF), the Financial Action Task Force of Latin America, and the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF). The country 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 CIFG.

Significant law enforcement actions related to CT financing included the following:

- On April 27, Spanish courts convicted a Bangladeshi national living in Spain to seven years of prison for his role in facilitating ISIS financing.
- On November 24, SNP arrested a Syrian and a Moroccan national and charged them with financing terrorism. The arrested individuals are alleged to have collected money from ISIS sympathizers and transmitted it to ISIS in Syria and other conflict zones using money servicing businesses.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** Spain continued implementation of its national CVE plan, developed in 2015, adjusted annually, and led by CITCO. The plan identifies potential for terrorist radicalization and recruitment down to census district level, using an algorithm based in socioeconomic factors, and seeks to build partnerships at the local level between civil society leaders from vulnerable communities and representatives of law enforcement and other public services. The Spanish cities of Fuenlabrada and Málaga are both members of the Strong Cities Network.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Spain is a founding member of the GCTF and supports CT initiatives in the United Nations, the Council of Europe, NATO, and the OSCE. The country maintained forces throughout 2020 in EU training missions in Mali and Somalia. Spain continues to support the 5+5 Defense Initiative bringing together European (France, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Spain) and North African (Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia) countries to build capacity on CT, maritime and aviation security, and disaster management. Spain cooperated with regional partners on CT investigations and arrests.

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## SWEDEN

**Overview:** The National Center for Terrorist Threat Assessment gauged that the main threat to Sweden remained Islamist-motivated and right-wing extremist-motivated terrorism. The assessment noted that a small number of Islamist- or right-wing extremist-motivated individuals could develop both the intent and the capability to carry out terrorist attacks on targets on the homeland. The assessment further stated, “Sweden has seen a growth in violence-promoting Islamist circles for several years in a row.” The Swedish Security Service reported that violent right-wing extremism, which used to consist of a limited circle of organized white supremacists, has gained ground and attracted more supporters, and there was an increasing risk that people inspired by this ideology would carry out attacks or commit other violent crimes. At the end of 2020, the national alert level remained Level 3 (elevated threat, no evidence of planning) on a scale of 5 (attack imminent, evidence of planning).

The government continued efforts to strengthen its CT framework. Parliament enacted laws that criminalized collaboration with terrorist organizations and authorized law enforcement agencies to access encrypted data on computers and mobile devices.

Sweden is a member of the Defeat-ISIS Coalition. In addition to being a leader in humanitarian support to ISIS-affected communities, Sweden authorized deployment of up to 70 military instructors to Iraq in support of Defeat-ISIS efforts.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in Sweden in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** Swedish CT legislation evolved in recent years, partly in response to Swedish FTFs and a terrorist attack in central Stockholm in 2017. In March a new law authorized law enforcement agencies to install software and take other measures to allow them to access information on suspects’ electronic devices. In April a new law criminalized collaboration with terrorist organizations, including providing weapons, ammunition, flammable or explosive goods, means of transportation, facilities, or land to a terrorist organization. The law also criminalized certain actions related to recruiting for a terrorist organization, traveling abroad to have contact with a terrorist organization, and financing a terrorist organization. The law did not apply retroactively to the actions of those who traveled to Syria or Iraq to support and fight for ISIS before 2020.

The Swedish Security Service (*Säkerhetspolisen*) is responsible for proactively detecting, deterring, and preventing acts of terrorism, including recruitment and financing.

Sweden is party to the EU's identity verification and border management tools such as the Schengen Information System and the Visa Information System. The country collects and uses API and some PNR, and exchanges information with other member states on irregular immigration and border control. Sweden used the "serious threat to public policy or internal security" justification permitted under the Schengen Border Code to unilaterally prolong the temporary border controls first introduced in 2015 in response to the influx of asylum seekers until 2021.

According to the *Säkerhetspolisen*, about half of the 300 or so people who left Sweden to join ISIS have returned. In November a woman was arrested upon her return on charges of "gross arbitrary conduct concerning a child," related to taking her 2-year-old child with her when she allegedly went to join ISIS in Syria. Around 40 criminal investigations of alleged FTFs were ongoing. A Center Against Violent Extremism survey showed that about one fourth of Sweden's 290 municipalities had plans for handling returning FTFs.

Using a new law against training for terrorism, a man in Västerås was prosecuted for training himself to commit acts of terrorism. He was in possession of ISIS propaganda and instructions for bomb making and executions. The trial court acquitted the man in July, saying it was not proven that he had the intent to commit terrorist crimes. The prosecutor appealed the case.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Sweden is a member of FATF. Its FIU, the National Financial Intelligence Service, is a member of the Egmont Group. There have been no significant changes since 2019. The *Säkerhetspolisen* reported, "[E]fforts must also be made to counter the institutionalization that has taken place within violent extremist circles, where radicalization to violence, recruitment, and financing may now be carried out [by] companies, foundations, and associations with a turnover of hundreds of millions of Swedish kronor [tens of millions in U.S. dollars]."

**Countering Violent Extremism:** The National Center for Preventing Violent Extremism promoted and coordinated preventive efforts against violent extremism at the national, regional, and local level. The center supported municipalities, government agencies, and others in preventing violent extremism. Malmö and Stockholm are members of the Strong Cities Network.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Sweden is a member of the EU and supports CT efforts in regional and multilateral organizations, including the European Commission's Radicalization Awareness Network, the EU-9 (focusing on FTFs), the Counter-Terrorism Group (30 European countries), the Police Working Group on Terrorism, and EUROPOL.

Sweden funded international CT capacity-building projects through development assistance from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (or SIDA), funding to the UN Office on Drugs and Crime-Terrorism Prevention Branch, and funding to the OSCE. Sweden provided an armed force of 220 troops to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali and extended the mission through 2021. The nation participated in the Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan, providing up to 50 service members, and extended

the mission through 2021. Sweden was a member of the Defeat-ISIS Coalition and made humanitarian contributions to ISIS-affected populations in Iraq, in addition to development aid funding to Iraq (\$105 million for 2017-21). Sweden extended its deployment of up to 70 military instructors in Iraq in support of Defeat-ISIS efforts through 2021. Sweden contributed humanitarian support to Syria (\$54 million for 2020). Since 2016, Sweden also has implemented a regional crisis strategy for Syria (\$190 million) that included resilience support for groups affected by ISIS.

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## TURKEY

**Overview:** Turkey continues its efforts to defeat terrorist organizations both inside and outside its borders, including the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party/Front, and ISIS. Turkey is an active contributor in international counterterrorism fora, including the GCTF and the Defeat-ISIS Coalition.

Turkey is a source and transit country for FTFs seeking to join ISIS and other terrorist groups fighting in Syria and Iraq, as well as for FTFs who seek to depart Syria and Iraq. Turkey co-chairs the Defeat-ISIS Coalition FTF Working Group and continues to provide access to its airspace and facilities for Defeat-ISIS counterterrorism operations in Iraq and Syria. According to the Ministry of Interior, from 2015 until December, Turkey deported 8,143 individuals for suspected terrorism ties, with Turkey's "banned from entry" list reportedly containing around 100,000 names. Public data indicated that at year's end Turkish authorities had detained 2,343 suspected ISIS supporters for questioning and pressed charges against 333 of them. Turkish press alleged that one suspect, Mahmut Ozden, detained in August, was the ISIS emir for Turkey; he has reportedly been detained in Turkey at least four previous times.

The PKK continues to conduct terrorist attacks in Turkey and against Turkish interests outside of Turkey including by taking hostages. Turkey's security forces conducted operations domestically along with military operations in northern Iraq and northern Syria. The International Crisis Group, an NGO, assessed that, at year's end, 35 civilians, 41 security force members, and 265 PKK militants had been killed in eastern and southeastern provinces in PKK-related clashes. Politically motivated detentions and arrests of individuals — including journalists, human rights activists, lawyers, and politicians accused of supporting or aiding the PKK — continued in 2020.

In the aftermath of the 2016 coup attempt, the government labeled the movement of self-exiled cleric and political figure Fethullah Gulen as the Fethullah Terrorist Organization (FETO). FETO is not a designated terrorist organization in the United States. The Turkish government continues to detain and arrest Turkish citizens as well as foreign citizens residing in Turkey — including 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. The government also continued to dismiss military, security, and civil servants from public office in 2020. Since the 2016 failed coup attempt, the government has dismissed or suspended more than 125,000 civil servants from public office, arrested more than 96,000 citizens, and closed more than 1,500 NGOs for alleged FETO links.

## 2020 Terrorist Incidents

- On February 28 a rocket attack on the Gurbulak customs gate with Iran killed two Turkish Customs officials. The PKK claimed responsibility for the attack.
- On March 31 a suicide bomber struck a natural gas pipeline near the Turkish-Iranian border, taking the pipeline offline for months. A PKK affiliate claimed responsibility for the attack.
- On October 28 a bombing in Mardin province temporarily disabled an oil pipeline running from Iraq to Turkey. The PKK claimed responsibility for the attack.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** Turkey has a broad definition of terrorism that includes so-called crimes against constitutional order and internal and external security of the state, which the government regularly used to criminalize the exercise of freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. According to the Ministry of Interior, in the first seven months of this year, it examined 14,186 social media accounts and took legal action against more than 6,743 social media users whom it accused of propagandizing or promoting terror organizations, inciting persons to enmity and hostility, or insulting state institutions. Legal actions taken by Turkey against the accused included a mix of charges related to terrorism or other criminal activity under Turkish law. Turkey has advanced law enforcement capacity to combat terrorism, and efforts continue to streamline interagency information sharing. Turkey sometimes deports suspected FTFs without providing advance notice to the destination countries, but coordination with receiving countries has improved following a 2019 ultimatum to European countries to take back their citizens.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Turkey is a member of FATF. Its FIU, the Financial Crimes Investigation Board (called MASAK), is a member of the Egmont Group. Turkey is also a member of the Defeat-ISIS CIFG. In December, Turkey promulgated a new law on terrorism finance, money laundering, and nonproliferation that addressed many of the deficiencies identified in the FATF 2019 mutual evaluation.

**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 for intervening to undermine terrorist messaging and to prevent recruitment. The Ministry of Justice implements some rehabilitation and reintegration programs for convicts and former criminals. The Ministry of Interior claimed that by year's end 321 PKK members had surrendered to Turkish security forces, including 243 PKK members who were persuaded to surrender by their family members.

Turkey's Religious Affairs Presidency (Diyanet) reports that it works to "undermine terrorist messaging by promoting its inclusive version of Islam." Antalya is a member of the Strong Cities Network.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Turkey is a member of the United Nations, NATO, the Committee of Experts on Terrorism of the Council of Europe, and the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. It 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 in training for judges and prosecutors handling terrorism cases. Turkey participates in 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.

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## UNITED KINGDOM

**Overview:** The UK remains a key U.S. partner in the global fight against terrorism, and their bilateral counterterrorism cooperation is excellent. As a partner in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, the UK continued to contribute to Iraq and northeastern Syria stabilization efforts. The UK is a supporter and donor to GCERF and *Hedayah*.

The UK's terrorism threat level was at the third-highest rating (substantial) for most of 2020. On November 3, following terrorist attacks in France and Austria, the UK increased the threat level to severe, raising its threat assessment of an attack from "likely" to "highly likely." UK officials categorize Islamist terrorism as the greatest threat to national security, though they recognize the growing threat of racially and ethnically motivated violent extremism (REMVE), also referred to as "extreme right-wing" terrorism. Since 2017, police and security services have disrupted 27 plots, including eight categorized as REMVE.

The terrorist threat level for Northern Ireland, set separately from England, Scotland, and Wales, remains severe, because of threats from dissident republican groups, which remain opposed to British governance and use paramilitary-style attacks and intimidation to exert control over communities. In November the Independent Reporting Commission published the third of four annual reports assessing loyalist and republican paramilitarism remains a serious concern, while noting a reduction in recorded paramilitary-related incidents in 2020, owing in part to COVID-19.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** The UK suffered three terrorist incidents in 2020:

- On January 9, two Islamic violent extremist inmates at a maximum-security prison in Cambridgeshire, using makeshift bladed weapons and fake suicide vests, stabbed one prison officer. Five prison staff were injured.
- On February 2 a recently released convicted terrorist under active counterterrorism surveillance stabbed two persons in Streatham, London. Police shot the terrorist to death, and debris injured one bystander.
- On June 20 a Libyan refugee fatally stabbed three men and injured at least three others in Reading. Though counterterrorism officials had twice flagged him, they did not think he posed a danger of staging an attack. The judge who sentenced the attacker to life in prison confirmed it was a terrorist attack.

## Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security

- In February, Parliament passed the Counter-Terrorism and Border Security Act to end early release without a Parole Board review for terrorist offenders.
- Parliament introduced in May and is currently reviewing the Counter-Terrorism and Sentencing Bill, which would increase maximum sentences for terrorism offenses; create a new, extended, postrelease probationary regime for terrorism offenders; and make it easier to impose stringent restrictions on individuals suspected of terrorist activity but not yet charged with a crime.

UK law enforcement made 215 arrests for terrorism-related activity, of which 55 were charged with terrorism-related offenses from October 2019 to September 2020, according to Home Office statistics. Of the 49 persons convicted of terrorism-related offenses, 34 received sentences of less than 10 years and 5 received life sentences. As of June, 243 people in the UK are in custody for terrorism-related offenses.

In September the UK shared evidence with the United States against UK-origin ISIS fighters known as the “Beatles,” Alexandra Kotey and El Shafee Elsheikh. They were subsequently brought to the United States for prosecution.

The UK launched the 2025 Border Strategy consultation in June to seek views on strengthening UK border security by 2025, using new digital systems. The country uses advanced biometric screening at some points of entry but may lose ready access to real-time EU information on automated DNA and fingerprint comparisons after the Brexit transition period ends December 31. The UK may lose the ability to widely retain and access historical Passenger Name Record data with information on terrorists trying to enter the UK after December 31.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** The UK is a member of FATF and has observer or cooperating status in the following FATF-style regional bodies: observer of the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering, observer of the Eastern and Southern Africa Anti-Money Laundering Group, observer of MENAFATF, and a cooperating and supporting nation of CFATF. Its FIU, the UK Financial Intelligence Unit, is a member of the Egmont Group. The UK is a member of the Defeat-ISIS CIFG.

The 2018 Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act provided the legal framework to implement sanctions after the UK left the EU. The Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing (Amendment) Regulations 2019 took effect in January. The UK’s new domestic counterterrorism sanctions regime — The Counter-Terrorism (Sanctions) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 — will replace the Terrorist Asset-Freezing etc. Act 2010 when the Brexit transition period ends December 31.

As of March, when the latest data are available, the UK had \$92,985 of terrorist assets frozen under EU Regulation 881/2002, which implements the UN Security Council ISIL and al-Qa’ida Sanctions Committee, and an additional \$11,158 frozen under the Terrorist Asset



Freezing etc. Act 2010. It also had \$22,316 frozen under Council Regulation (EU) No 2580/2001.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** The Commission for Countering Extremism (CCE), a nonstatutory expert committee of the Home Office, published a June report on how violent extremists have exploited COVID-19 to spread conspiracy theories and disinformation about ethnic and religious minority groups to incite hatred and violence. The CCE launched the Academic-Practitioner Counter Extremism Network (APCEN) in November to convene experts in countering violent extremism from the CCE, government, and academia to align policy, practice, and research. The November meeting focused on “extremism and conspiracy theories.” APCEN will meet six times a year to identify gaps in understanding violent extremism and counter violent extremism.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** The UK continued to strongly support counterterrorism efforts in regional and multilateral organizations, as well as through the Global Counterterrorism Forum. The UK is a key member of the Five-Country Ministerial, which promotes multilateral ministerial dialogue on border security and counterterrorism. The country leads Five Eyes efforts to prevent new European data laws from interfering with lawful government access to suspected terrorist content and voluntary industry efforts to report suspected criminal content on their platforms. The UK cooperates with other participating OSCE states in countering terrorism.

Birmingham, Derry/Londonderry, Leicester, London, Luton, and Manchester are members of the Strong Cities Network.

## THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

### Overview

Significant terrorist activities and safe havens persisted in the Middle East and North Africa throughout 2020. The 83-member U.S.-led Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS continued its comprehensive efforts to prevent a resurgence of ISIS's so-called physical caliphate in Iraq and Syria and the activities of its branches and networks. Al-Qa'ida and its affiliates, Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Qods Force (IRGC-QF), and Iran-backed terrorist groups like Hizballah also remained active throughout the region.

While ISIS remains unable to control territory and its leadership ranks have been significantly degraded, the group remains a serious threat to U.S. interests, security in the region, and beyond. In Iraq and Syria, ISIS fighters continued to wage a low-level insurgency, seeking to destabilize the region, recruit new members, and regain territory. More than 10,000 ISIS fighters, including some 2,000 foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) remained in Syrian Democratic Forces-controlled detention facilities in northeast Syria. More than 70,000 associated foreign family members, most of them children, remain in humanitarian camps for displaced persons. The COVID-19 pandemic presented logistical challenges to repatriations, but the United States continued to encourage allies to repatriate their citizens and to prosecute or to rehabilitate and reintegrate them, as appropriate. Beyond Iraq and Syria, ISIS branches, networks, and supporters across the Middle East and North Africa remained active, including in the Arabian Peninsula, Libya, the Sinai Peninsula, Tunisia, and Yemen.

In Libya, local security forces conducted ground operations to neutralize threats posed by ISIS and al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) fighters and facilitators, including a September operation by the self-styled Libyan National Army that eliminated the emir of ISIS in Libya. ISIS-Sinai Province, one of the first ISIS branches to swear allegiance to the new ISIS self-proclaimed caliph following Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi's death, continued its terrorist campaign in North Sinai. In the Maghreb, separate counterterrorism efforts and operations by Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia thwarted the activities of ISIS and other terrorist groups. Algerian forces conducted a steady stream of operations to prevent terrorist groups, including AQ and ISIS affiliates, from planning or conducting attacks.

Al-Qa'ida's leadership ranks in the Middle East and North Africa were significantly degraded, starting with the death of al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) emir Qassim al-Rimi, killed in Yemen in January. Abu Muhammad al-Masri, al-Qa'ida's number two, was killed in Tehran in August. Despite these setbacks, al-Qa'ida remained a resilient adversary and actively sought to reconstitute its capabilities and maintain safe havens in the region amid fragile political and security climates, particularly in Egypt, Libya, Syria, and Yemen.

In Yemen, AQAP and ISIS's Yemen branch continue to linger in the seams between the various parties to Yemen's civil war, despite pressure from the Houthis' military campaign in al-Bayda governorate. Both ISIS-Yemen and AQAP suffered leadership losses and claimed a smaller number of attacks inside Yemen in 2020. Globally, AQAP sought to capitalize off the claim it supported the perpetrator of the 2019 shooting at U.S. Naval Air Station Pensacola as well as to

exploit the controversy over a French schoolteacher's depiction of the Prophet Mohammed. The Houthis continue to receive material support and guidance from Iranian entities, including to enable attacks against Saudi Arabia. These attacks have utilized armed drones and ballistic missiles, which damaged airports and critical infrastructure.

Iran continued to use the IRGC-QF to advance Iran's interests abroad. Iran also continued to acknowledge the active involvement of the IRGC-QF in the conflicts in Iraq and Syria, the latter in support of the Assad regime. Through the IRGC-QF, Iran continued its support to several U.S.-designated terrorist groups, providing funding, training, weapons, and equipment. Among the groups receiving support from Iran are Hezbollah, Hamas, the Palestine Islamic Jihad, al-Ashtar Brigades and Saraya al-Mukhtar in Bahrain, and Kata'ib Hezbollah and Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq (AAH) in Iraq. Iran also provided weapons and support to other militant groups in Iraq and Syria, to the Houthis in Yemen, and to the Taliban in Afghanistan. Iran-backed militias escalated the pace of attacks on Embassy Baghdad and Iraqi bases hosting U.S. and other Defeat-ISIS forces.

Countries in the Gulf region continued to take important steps to combat terrorism. Following the U.S.-Qatar Strategic Dialogue in September, the two governments committed to shared counterterrorism priorities for 2021, including security preparations for Qatar's hosting of the FIFA World Cup in 2022, combating the financing of terrorism, and countering violent extremism. Saudi Arabia and the United States continued to co-lead the Terrorist Financing Targeting Center (TFTC), an initiative founded in 2017 to increase U.S.-Gulf multilateral collaboration to counter terrorist financing. In 2020, TFTC members imposed sanctions against six individuals and entities affiliated with ISIS.

In the Levant, several terrorist groups, most notably Hezbollah, continued to operate in Lebanon and Syria. Hezbollah remained Iran's most dangerous terrorist partner and the most capable terrorist organization in Lebanon, controlling areas across the country. Iran's annual financial backing to Hezbollah — which in recent years has been estimated to be in the hundreds of millions of dollars — accounts for most of the group's annual budget. Hezbollah's presence in Lebanon and Syria continued to pose a threat to Israel. Israel continued to warn the international community about Hezbollah's efforts to produce precision-guided missiles (PGMs) within Lebanon, including through media presentations detailing potential production sites. Hezbollah has said that it possesses enough PGMs for a confrontation with Israel, but it has denied missiles are being developed in Lebanon. 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.

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## ALGERIA

**Overview:** The United States and Algeria built on their counterterrorism (CT) partnership through regular dialogue and exchanges of technical expertise. Algeria continued its significant efforts to prevent terrorist activity within its borders and as a result remains a difficult operating environment for terrorist groups. Algerian armed forces and internal security forces published figures that showed continued pressure on terrorist groups, conducting a steady drumbeat of operations to arrest and eliminate terrorist suspects, dismantle and disrupt terrorist cells, and destroy hideouts, arms, and other equipment. These ongoing operations significantly degraded the capacities of terrorist groups to operate within Algeria. AQIM and ISIS's Algeria branch remained in the country but were under considerable pressure from Algerian security authorities. The elimination of several leaders and high-profile members of terrorist groups inside and outside of Algeria, particularly AQIM, further diminished their capacity. These groups aspire to impose their interpretations of Islamic law on the region and to attack Algerian security services, local government targets, and Western interests. Terrorist activity in Libya, Mali, Niger, and Tunisia — as well as human, weapons, and narcotics trafficking — contributed to the overall threat, particularly in border regions.

Algeria's domestic efforts to defeat ISIS through counter-messaging and their capacity-building programs with neighboring states contribute to the Global Defeat-ISIS Coalition mission.

**2020 Terrorist Incident:** On February 9 an individual conducted a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device (VBIED) suicide attack targeting a military outpost in southern Algeria, near the border with Mali, killing himself and one Algerian soldier. ISIS took credit for the attack, the first of its kind in Algeria since 2017, in retaliation for an earlier Algerian CT operation against the group.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** There were no significant changes to Algeria's CT legal framework in 2020. The Ministry of Justice established a small unit to prosecute international terrorism and transnational crime and started investigating its first case in November. In 2020 the Algerian judicial system tried and convicted several terrorists and their supporters. The government maintained its strict "no concessions" policy with regard to individuals or groups holding its citizens hostage.

Algerian military forces and multiple law enforcement, intelligence, and security services addressed counterterrorism, counterintelligence, investigations, border security, and crisis response. These included the various branches of the Joint Staff, the Algerian army, the National Gendarmerie, and border guards under the Ministry of National Defense (MND); and the 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, dismantled and disrupted terrorist cells, and seized equipment, arms, ammunition caches, and drugs.

Several clashes took place between terrorists and security forces during sweeping operations in which AQIM and ISIS primarily used IEDs and small arms. On March 7, a homemade bomb

exploded during an army sweeping operation in Chlef, killing two soldiers, and on June 20 a corporal was killed in a clash with an unidentified likely AQIM-aligned terrorist group in the Aïn Defla province, during which an alleged terrorist surrendered to Algerian forces. A homemade bomb exploded during an army sweeping operation in Médéa province on June 27, killing two soldiers. Algerian forces killed three alleged terrorists — one of them a high-profile leader — during a December 1 operation in the northeastern province of Jijel. An army sergeant was killed in the operation.

Border security remained a top priority. Media reported on continued close CT cooperation between Algeria and Tunisia targeting ISIS strongholds in the border area, resulting in the destruction of terrorist hideouts and homemade bombs. The Algerian government closely monitored passenger manifests of inbound and outbound flights. Algeria also has a national Advance Passenger Information (API) and Passenger Name Record (PNR) strategy and has established an API/PNR commission. Algeria has a Passenger Information Unit operating under the General Directorate of Customs. Government officials made active use of INTERPOL databases at ports of entry.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Algeria is a member of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF). Its FIU, the Financial Intelligence Processing Unit, is a member of the Egmont Group.

In December the Algerian government approved the creation of a new regulatory and technical committee to assess Algeria's money laundering, and terrorism and weapons proliferation financing risks.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** There were no significant changes in 2020.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Algeria continued to support counterterrorism efforts through regional and multilateral organizations. Algeria is a member of the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) and, as co-chair of the GCTF's West Africa Region Capacity-Building Working Group, participated in joint working group meetings with other GCTF elements. Algeria plays a leadership role in the Algiers-based AFRIPOL, an AU mechanism that seeks to enhance African police cooperation and prevent transnational crime and terrorism. Algeria also continues to host the AU's Center for Study and Research on Terrorism.

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, the United Nations, and other multilateral organizations. Algeria also participated in a national-level workshop hosted by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime's (UNODC's) Terrorism Prevention Branch on implementation of UNSCR 2396 on detecting and preventing terrorist travel.

The nation also continued diplomatic engagement to promote regional peace and security. Algeria remains chair of the implementation committee for the peace accord in Mali and continued to support the UN political process in Libya. Algeria also participated in various Sahel-Saharan fora to discuss development and security policies and the evolution of regional

terrorism threats. Regional tensions between Morocco and Algeria continued to impede bilateral and regional counterterrorism cooperation.

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## BAHRAIN

**Overview:** There were no successful terrorist attacks in Bahrain in 2020, but domestic security forces conducted numerous operations to preempt and disrupt attack planning. Bahrain is a major non-NATO ally, hosts the U.S. Navy's Fifth Fleet and U.S. Naval Forces Central Command, and participates in U.S.-led security initiatives, including the International Maritime Security Construct to protect commercial shipping in the region. In December the United States and Bahrain launched the inaugural U.S.-Bahrain Strategic Dialogue, which reviewed bilateral cooperation across sectors and surveyed emerging and transnational threats. Bahrain continued to offer its support for countering Iran's malign activities in the region. Reports of mistreatment, arbitrary and unlawful detention, and security force-perpetrated abuse continued over the rating period. According to international media and NGO reports, confessions have been obtained through torture. The Government of Bahrain initiated numerous programs intended to improve relations between communities and security forces.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no terrorist attacks reported in Bahrain in 2020.

The Bahraini government continued to prosecute, convict, and sentence individuals on terrorism-related charges. On November 3, the High Criminal Court sentenced 51 defendants to prison terms ranging between five years and life imprisonment on charges of forming and joining a terrorist group that acted under orders from Iran's IRGC. Twenty-seven of the 51 defendants were tried in absentia.

In July the Court of Cassation, Bahrain's highest court, reaffirmed the death sentences of Mohammed Ramadan and Hussain Moosa for their principal roles in the 2014 killing of a police officer. Before the ruling, the Special Investigations Unit had determined that additional forensic evidence not available during the initial trial prompted the court's reconsideration of evidence, which had included torture allegations. A final decision regarding the death sentence was pending a determination by King Hamad at year's end.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Bahrain is a member of MENAFATF and the Riyadh-based Terrorist Financing Targeting Center, and it supports U.S. government counterterrorism finance efforts. Its FIU, the Financial Intelligence Directorate, is a member of the Egmont Group. Bahrain is also a member of the Defeat-ISIS Coalition's Counter-ISIS Finance Group (CIFG).

In August, Bahrain implemented several recommendations outlined in its 2018 FATF Mutual Evaluation Report, notably establishing an interagency ministerial-level Counterterrorism Committee to develop policies and strategies to combat terrorism financing and money laundering, as well as implementing sanctions and designations. In October the Bahraini government created a dedicated Financial Crimes Unit within the Public Prosecution Office.

Bahrain's National Counterterrorism Committee is chaired by the interior minister and its members include the ministers of justice; Islamic affairs and endowments; foreign affairs; finance and national economy; information affairs; and defense affairs; as well as the Central Bank of Bahrain Governor, National Intelligence Agency Chief, Chief of Public Security, and Deputy Secretary-General of the Supreme Defense Council. The stated goal of the committee is, "combating extremism, fighting terrorism and its financing, as well as countering money laundering." The committee will identify individuals and entities on the national terror list; assess the sources and threats of "extremist ideology," terrorism, and money laundering; and suggest legislation and policies to counter these threats.

On March 31, Bahrain's High Criminal Court sentenced three former officials at Future Bank, an entity designated by the United States under domestic counterterrorism authorities, to 25-year sentences on money-laundering charges and levied individual fines of \$1.3 million. All three are Iranian citizens residing outside of the country. In addition, the court fined each of Future Bank's shareholding banks, Iran-based Bank Saderat and Bank Melli, as well as Bank Saderat Doha, \$1.3 million, for assisting the Government of Iran in circumventing international financial sanctions. In July the Court convicted an additional former Future Bank employee in absentia and imposed additional fines in relation to wire-stripped transactions.

In July, in collaboration with other TFTC member states, Bahrain sanctioned six individuals and entities affiliated with ISIS terror-support networks in the region.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** The Ministry of Justice and Islamic Affairs heads the country's efforts to counter terrorist radicalization pursuant to the 2016 National Countering Violent Extremism Strategy.

The Bahraini government continued public outreach initiatives such as the community police program, which works to bridge the divide between the Bahraini Shia community and the police force, in both neighborhoods and public schools. The Ministry of the Interior continued to implement the *Bahrainuna* ("We are Bahrain") initiative to promote a shared, national Bahraini identity.

There is no overall strategic messaging campaign to counter terrorist narratives, although Bahraini leaders publicly promote peaceful coexistence and national harmony in public awareness messaging. Government restrictions on freedoms of expression, peaceful assembly, and association may increase the possibility of violent extremist radicalization.

In December the Justice Minister announced that more than 4,200 prisoners had received alternative sentences since 2017 and were released from prison before the end of their prison terms. The minister confirmed that 1,069 prisoners were placed in jobs as part of their community service requirement. Bahrain applied alternative penalties to priority groups, which includes juvenile detainees. The King also announced pardons during the reporting period, including of 169 prisoners on December 16. Prison conditions may increase the likelihood of radicalization to violence, though alternative or reduced sentencing likely reduces the risk of prisoner exposure to violent extremist recruitment and radicalization.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** As of December, members of the Bahrain Defense Force remained deployed — but in reduced numbers — in Yemen as part of the Saudi-led coalition’s operations against Houthi militants and AQAP. Bahrain is a member of the Gulf Cooperation Council, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and the Arab League.

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## EGYPT

**Overview:** All terrorist attacks in Egypt during the year took place in the Sinai Peninsula. Egyptian counterterrorism efforts continued, as ISIS-Sinai Province conducted regular small arms and IED attacks against security forces, civilians, and critical infrastructure. ISIS-Sinai Province also continued to execute individuals suspected of collaborating with the Egyptian government and military. Throughout the year, the Egyptian security forces reportedly uncovered and destroyed more than 750 weapons caches and killed more than 150 suspected terrorists through a combination of ground assaults, air strikes, and special operation raids, according to a series of official government publications.

Based on open-source reporting, there were an estimated 234 terrorist attacks across the country in 2020, of which the vast majority were claimed by ISIS-SP. In late July, ISIS-SP led a westward offensive that overran and infiltrated villages near Bir al-Abd, 37 miles east of the Suez Canal in the Sinai Peninsula. The offensive and subsequent three-month security operation to reestablish security and remove ISIS-planted booby traps displaced an estimated 10,000 local residents. In October the North Sinai governor released the first official Egyptian government statistics on civilian casualties in the governorate, reporting 1,004 civilian deaths and 2,800 civilian injuries over the past six years. The report did not distinguish whether civilian casualties resulted from terrorism or government CT operations, or from both. The North Sinai governor reported in June paying more than \$220 million in compensation for residents harmed by counterterrorism operations from 2015 to 2020.

There were no major attacks outside of the Sinai Peninsula, though terrorist attacks targeting civilians, tourists, and security personnel in mainland Egypt and the greater Cairo region remained a concern, particularly from Harakat Sawa’d Misr (HASM) and al-Qa’ida-allied groups such as Ansar al-Islam. Security forces reported foiling several militant threats, including

- A HASM plot on National Police Day — the ninth anniversary of the 2011 protests that sparked the Egyptian revolution.
- On April 14 a shootout with militants in the Amiriyah neighborhood of Cairo disrupted a plot against Coptic Orthodox Easter celebrations.

The United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, as well as local and international NGOs, continued to maintain that Egyptian authorities unjustly used counterterrorism and state-of-emergency laws and courts to prosecute journalists, activists, lawyers, politicians, university professors, and critics for exercising freedom of expression.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** Attack methods largely remained the same as in recent years, including small arms attacks, IEDs, VBIEDs, kidnappings, executions, complex assaults, ambushes, and targeted assassinations. ISIS-Sinai Province’s offensive near Bir al-Abd



demonstrated the terrorist group's sustained capabilities and the continued inability of Egyptian forces to permanently degrade the group. Other notable terrorist incidents conducted by ISIS-Sinai included the following:

- On February 9, ISIS-SP attacked a government checkpoint near Zilzal in North Sinai resulting in the deaths of seven Egyptian Armed Forces (EAF) soldiers.
- On April 30, ISIS-SP attacked an EAF vehicle with an IED, killing 10 EAF members in Bir al-Abd, North Sinai.
- On June 19, multiple ISIS-SP IEDs killed seven local tribesmen in al-Barth, North Sinai.
- On August 6, ISIS-SP attacked an EAF checkpoint with small arms resulting in the deaths of 15 EAF soldiers near Wasit in South Sinai.
- On November 20 and December 24, ISIS-SP claimed responsibility for separate attacks against an Egypt-Israel gas pipeline.

From October to December, at least 15 civilians returning to Bir al-Abd after the July offensive were killed by booby-trapped IEDs left behind by ISIS-Sinai Province.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** The Egyptian government continued to use emergency laws and counterterrorism authorities to prosecute activists, journalists, political candidates, and critics. In March the Egyptian government ratified amendments to the 2015 Antiterrorism Law, expanding the definitions of terrorist entities and terror financing for the purposes of this law. The amendments also broadened the definition of funds to include a variety of assets tied to entities promoting what the Egyptian government determines to be “extremist” ideology, established a compulsory requirement for local authorities to cooperate and provide information relating to money laundering, and outlined requirements for the authorities to publish statistics on its activities countering terror financing.

Egypt's most significant physical border security concerns remained Libya, Sudan, and Gaza. In December the Egyptian military announced that air strikes destroyed a convoy of 21 vehicles attempting to illegally cross Egypt's border with Libya. At border crossings and airports, Egyptian authorities continued to authenticate travel documents by verifying the presence of advanced security features. They also conducted checks of some individuals and shared derogatory information among border security authorities for further action. Egypt maintains a terrorist watchlist for Egyptian immigration officials at the ports of entry, 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 and security services.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Egypt is a member of MENAFATF, serving as the chair in 2020. Its FIU, Egypt's Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Combating Unit, is a member of the Egmont Group and the National Council of Payments. Egypt is also a member of the Defeat-ISIS CIFG.

In 2020, Egypt amended its 2015 Antiterrorism Law to expand the definition of the crime of funding terrorist acts to include providing a place for terrorist training; providing terrorists with

weapons or documents; and offering support and financing for terrorist travel, even if there is no direct link to a terrorist crime.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** The Egyptian government continued to organize and promote CVE programs, including through curriculum reform.

Al-Azhar Grand Imam Ahmed al-Tayyeb and other religious leaders continued to promote more-inclusive public messaging throughout the year regarding the importance of interfaith dialogue between Muslims and non-Muslims, and regularly produced messaging and fatwas to counter violent extremist narratives. The Al-Azhar International Center for Electronic Fatwa, Dar Al-Iftaa, and other organizations produced messaging denouncing violent extremism. In June the Ministry of Awqaf formed a committee “to counter violent extremist ideology” and dismiss preachers it considered “extremist.”

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Egypt served a second term as co-chair of the GCTF East Africa Working Group. The United Nations selected Egypt to serve alongside Spain as co-facilitators for the seventh periodic review of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Egypt continued to participate in numerous counterterrorism organizations, including regional-level entities focused on border security as a means to combat the flow of foreign fighters.

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## IRAQ

**Overview:** The primary terrorist threats within Iraq included ISIS remnants and Iran-aligned militia groups, including U.S.-designated Harakat al-Nujaba, Kata’ib Hizballah, and Asa’ib Ahl al-Haq as well as the smaller Iranian-aligned militias claiming to be a part of Iraq’s “resistance.” The Kurdistan Workers’ Party (or PKK), a terrorist group headquartered in the mountains of northern Iraq, also conducted multiple attacks in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region (IKR) that resulted in the deaths of several Kurdish security forces personnel.

Despite its territorial defeat, ISIS continued to conduct operations on a smaller scale, particularly in the North and West, including rural areas with limited presence of the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF). ISIS sought to reestablish footholds in Anbar, Diyala, Kirkuk, Ninewa, and Salah al-Din provinces, especially in the areas of disputed control between the Kurdistan Regional Government and the federal government. Although ISIS maintained its capability to conduct deadly terrorist attacks in Iraq, these attacks resulted in fewer casualties in 2020 than in previous recent years. Attack methods included bombings, indirect fire, IEDs, and ambushes. Iraq remains 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). The Counter Terrorism Service (CTS) conducted more than 253 operations against ISIS during 2020, often with Defeat-ISIS support.

Iraqi counterterrorism functions are principally executed by the CTS, a cabinet-level entity reporting directly to the prime minister, as well as by various security forces under the Ministries of Defense and Interior and the Kurdish Peshmerga. In limited instances, Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF) augment Iraqi Army and CTS-led operations. While all PMF are required by law to operate as part of the ISF, many PMF groups continued to defy central government command

and control and engaged in violent and destabilizing activities in Iraq and neighboring Syria, including killing and abducting protesters. Attacks by Iran-aligned militias against U.S. interests increased in 2020, resulting in the killing and wounding of U.S., Iraq, and other Defeat-ISIS service members.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** Terrorists conducted more than 100 IED attacks on Defeat-ISIS-contracted convoys and launched at least 40 indirect fire attacks against U.S. interests in Iraq. The following is a representative list of terrorist incidents:

- On January 4, Iran-aligned militias conducted indirect fire attacks on Embassy Baghdad and Balad Air Base, as well as on Embassy Baghdad on January 21 and 26, resulting in material damage and injuries.
- On March 11, Iran-aligned militias conducted indirect fire attacks on Camp Taji, killing three Defeat-ISIS personnel and wounding others. This was followed by a second rocket attack on Camp Taji on March 14, wounding several Iraqi and other Defeat-ISIS personnel.
- During October 29-30, ISIS conducted extended attacks by sniper and mortar fire on security forces and civilians from nearby orchards in Diyala province.
- On November 9, ISIS conducted an attack at Radhwaniyah Village on the outskirts of Baghdad, killing 11 persons and wounding responding ISF units.
- On December 20, Iran-aligned militias conducted indirect fire attacks on Embassy Baghdad with 20 rockets, resulting in material damage.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** Iraq made no significant changes to its counterterrorism legal and law enforcement framework in 2020. Human rights groups reported that authorities arrested suspects in security sweeps without warrants, particularly under the antiterrorism law, and frequently held such detainees for prolonged periods without charge or registration. Courts routinely accepted forced confessions as evidence; in some ISIS-related terrorism cases this was the only type of evidence considered.

Beginning in October, the Iraqi government started efforts to improve the security situation of the International Zone. These efforts, combined with diplomacy, resulted in a significant decline in the number of indirect fire attacks against U.S. facilities in Baghdad in the last quarter of 2020.

Border security remained a critical vulnerability, as the ISF has limited capability to fully secure Iraq's borders with Syria and Iran. Border security along the periphery of the IKR is administered by the ISF and Peshmerga. The border with Syria south of the IKR remained porous. In July the Prime Minister deployed forces at the border as part of a three-phase initiative to enhance border security. The Iraqi government reopened the al-Arar border crossing with Saudi Arabia after a 30-year closure. Iraq and the United States partnered to close a gap in border security through broader deployment of and upgrades to the U.S.-provided PISCES (Personal Identification Secure Comparison and Evaluation System) integrated border security management system. While the Ministry of Interior shared biometric information upon request on known and suspected terrorists with the United States, INTERPOL, and other international

partners, there remained no legal instrument implementing a U.S. program to facilitate biometric information-sharing on both terrorist and criminal suspects.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Iraq is a member of MENAFATF and the Defeat-ISIS CIFG. The Government of Iraq (GOI) — including the Central Bank of Iraq, law enforcement, security forces, and the judiciary in Baghdad and the IKR — continued to target ISIS financial networks and safeguard Iraq’s financial institutions from exploitation by ISIS.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** Iraq continued its strategic messaging to discredit ISIS, including through its membership in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS Communications Working Group. Many Iraqi ISIS fighters remained in Iraqi custody, along with ISIS-affiliated family members. Iraq acknowledged that the return and reintegration of family members of suspected ISIS supporters, as well as the provision of fair and equal justice, are important to prevent future terrorist radicalization and violence. However, almost 1.3 million Iraqis remain displaced within Iraq, and some 30,000 — mainly women and children — reside in al-Hol refugee camp in Syria. The GOI made no significant efforts to facilitate the return of Iraqi women and children from Syria in 2020. Iran-aligned militias routinely used threatening messaging to promote violent extremism.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Iraq continued to work with multilateral and regional organizations — including the United Nations, the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, NATO, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, INTERPOL, and the Arab League — to support counterterrorism efforts.

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## ISRAEL, WEST BANK, AND GAZA

### Israel

**Overview:** Israel remained a committed counterterrorism partner, closely coordinating with the United States on a range of counterterrorism initiatives. Owing to COVID-19, Israel and the United States held numerous interagency counterterrorism dialogues virtually to discuss and collaborate on regional threats. Counterterrorism issues were also at the center of the agenda during numerous high-level U.S. visits to Israel.

Israel faced threats from the North from Hizballah and along the northeastern frontier from Hizballah and other Iran-backed groups, including as many as 150,000 rockets and missiles aimed at Israel, according to some Israeli estimates. Israeli officials expressed concern that Iran was supplying Hizballah with advanced weapons systems and technologies, including precision-guided missiles. This concern included Iran’s work to assist Hizballah and other proxies in indigenously producing rockets, missiles, and drones.

To the South, Israel faced threats from terrorist organizations including Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), and ISIS-Sinai Province. Rocket attacks originating from Gaza resulted in several injuries and property damage. There were sporadic attempts to infiltrate Israel from Gaza by armed militants, none of which resulted in Israeli casualties. Other sources of terrorist threats included the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and lone-actor attacks.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** In December, Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) Chief of Staff Aviv Kochavi said 2020 registered the lowest number of Israelis killed by terrorism in the country's history. Nonetheless, Israel still experienced terrorist attacks involving weapons ranging from rockets and mortars to vehicular attacks, small arms, and knives. The following is a representative list of IDF-announced terrorist and ethno-religious attacks:

- In February, Palestinian Sanad at-Turman carried out a ramming attack against IDF soldiers in Jerusalem, injuring 12.
- In April, on the national Memorial Day for Israeli victims of terrorism, a 20-year-old Palestinian stabbed a 62-year-old Israeli woman in Kfar Saba. The assailant was shot by a bystander and was hospitalized in serious condition; the victim was hospitalized in moderate condition.
- In August a 23-year-old Palestinian man from Jenin stabbed a Rosh Ha'ayin man 20 times, leaving him in serious condition.
- Hamas and other terrorist groups including the PIJ launched more than 175 rockets and more than 150 incendiary balloons from Gaza toward Israel, some of which landed in civilian areas. Iron Dome, Israel's air defense system, intercepted many of the rockets.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** Israel has a robust legal framework to combat terrorism and promote international legal assistance in the investigation and prosecution of terrorists. For a portion of 2020, the Palestinian Authority (PA) suspended security coordination with Israel; for details, see "The West Bank and Gaza" section below. Israeli security forces took numerous significant law enforcement actions against suspected terrorists and terrorist groups, including the following:

- On April 7, Israeli law enforcement arrested an Israeli Arab citizen, Ayman Haj Yahya, for allegedly collaborating with Iranian intelligence and with a PFLP operative. Israeli authorities assert that Yahya received funding, training, and instructions to establish a terrorist cell.
- In April, Israeli authorities discovered and thwarted planned IED attacks at a soccer stadium in Jerusalem and against IDF vehicles and posts near Ramallah by a Hamas cell from Bir Zeit University.
- In September the Israeli Security Agency arrested an East Jerusalem woman, Yasmin Jaber, for allegedly heading a cell to recruit Israelis and Palestinians for IRGC-QF and Hizballah.
- In October, Israel's General Security Service arrested two minors in Beit Umar near Hebron in connection with allegations that Hamas had recruited them for terrorism. Israeli authorities assert that they had received from Hamas weapons, ammunition, uniforms, and money for West Bank attacks.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Israel is a member of FATF and the Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism. FIU, the Israeli Money Laundering and Terror Finance Prohibition Authority, is a member of the Egmont Group.

The 2019 Israeli Deduction Law requires the Ministry of Finance to withhold from its monthly tax revenue transfers to the PA the amounts Israel estimates the PA pays to Palestinians connected to terrorism, including to the families of terrorists who died in attacks. The PA calls these prisoner and “martyr” payments, and argues they are social payments for families who have lost their primary breadwinner. The United States and Israel argue the payments incentivize and reward terrorism, particularly given the higher monthly payments the longer an individual remains imprisoned, which corresponds to more severe crimes. Because of the COVID-19 crisis, the Israeli security cabinet did not approve the 2019 prisoner/martyr report until November.

In May, some Palestinian banks closed relevant prisoner and “martyr” payment accounts for fear of criminal liability resulting from an Israeli military order extending such liability to banks facilitating payment transfers, though the Israeli government later suspended the order’s implementation until the end of the year. In October, Defense Minister Gantz signed an order confiscating an undetermined sum (described in the media as “hundreds of thousands of new Israeli shekels”) that Hamas and the PA had sent a group of “martyr” families inside Israel. In December, after the PA announced a resumption of cooperation with Israel, the Israeli government transferred all pending tax revenue to the PA but declared it would deduct \$184 million for prisoner and martyr payments, to be prorated monthly in the coming year.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** Although the COVID-19 pandemic constrained activities during the year, the Israeli government continued work on its “City Without Violence” and “Israeli Hope” initiatives. The Ministry of Community Empowerment adopted City Without Violence and widened the scope of the program to more municipalities, with additional tools in different fields to counter violence and crime. The Ministry of Community Empowerment also supported and funded Israel’s national community-based prevention initiative, “The Israeli Authority for Community Safety,” in collaboration with the Israeli National Police. More than 250 municipalities implemented community, education, and social welfare projects to counter violence, crime, and substance misuse. The Community Safety Authorities’ principles include prevention and health promotion, local capabilities, and community engagement.

The Office of the President expanded its work on Israeli Hope programs and activities to develop and reinforce the partnership between various sectors of society, in areas such as education, academia, employment, sports, and local government. It did this in partnership with four population sectors: secular, modern Orthodox, ultra-Orthodox (Haredi), and Arab. Israeli Hope in Education and Israeli Hope in Academia encourage a more diverse and equitable higher education system, to prepare graduates for life in a society valuing coexistence and partnership. Israeli Hope in Employment concentrates on promoting employment diversity, representation, and cultural competence, placing emphasis on integrating the ultra-Orthodox and Arabs into the economy. The Israeli Hope in Sports program aims to encourage tolerance and seeking an end to violence and racism. In each area, the program attempts to create meaningful and broad cooperative efforts between individuals and public organizations, and in the private and the volunteer sectors in efforts to promote understanding and tolerance.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** In May, Israeli officials told reporters that Israel had provided sufficient intelligence to Germany regarding Hizballah’s activities on German soil to

influence Germany's decision to take further action against Hizballah. This was the latest in a series of collaborative counterterrorism efforts between Israeli intelligence services and their partners in Europe and Australia over the past several years. Israeli officials credited these efforts for successfully thwarting terrorist attacks by ISIS, Hizballah, and other violent extremist groups.

### **The West Bank and Gaza**

**Overview:** The Palestinian Authority continued its counterterrorism and law enforcement efforts in the West Bank, where U.S.-designated terrorist organizations Hamas, the PIJ, al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, and the PFLP remained active to various extents. PA officials expressed a commitment to nonviolence but halted security coordination with Israel in May, before officially resuming it again in November, proclaiming the decision as necessary to deter Israel's application of sovereignty to parts of the West Bank.

Despite stopping official coordination with Israel, PA security forces in the West Bank constrained the ability of terrorist organizations and individuals to conduct attacks, in part by arrests targeting those suspected of planning attacks against Israelis. Per Oslo Accords-era agreements, the PA exercised varying degrees of authority over the West Bank, with the IDF securing Areas B and C, as well as periodic Israeli entry into PA-controlled areas (Area A) for counterterrorism operations. The IDF and the Israeli Security Agency also arrested individuals and members of terrorist organizations operating in the West Bank, including a group of 21 Hamas members in early September in the largest operation in the West Bank since 2014.

The United States, through the multinational office of the U.S. Security Coordinator for Israel and the Palestinian Authority (USSC), worked with the PA Ministry of Interior and PA security forces on training (including counterterrorism) and reform efforts (including professionalization and police primacy), except during the May-September cessation. During that period, USSC staff from other member states under U.S. leadership continued to assist the PA until the resumption of security coordination with Israel, as it developed professional security forces capable of some, but not all, counterterrorism functions.

According to the IDF as reported in the *Times of Israel*, "the West Bank saw 60 terror attacks in 2020, up from 51 in 2019, but down from 76 in 2018 and 75 in 2017." Numbers vary slightly depending on the source — the IDF, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), or human rights groups such as B'Tselem. While this decrease is partially attributable to greater movement restrictions imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic, it also reflects a general downward trend in violence indicators since 2016, including deaths of Israelis, deaths of Palestinians, and terrorist attacks in the West Bank.

Israelis living in the West Bank also committed a variety of physical attacks and property crimes against Palestinians, some of which caused serious injury, according to Israeli human rights organizations and media reports. Over the course of 2020, UN OCHA documented 771 incidents of settler violence that brought injury to 133 Palestinians and damaged 9,646 trees and 184 vehicles, mostly in the areas of Hebron, Jerusalem, Nablus, and Ramallah. For example, in July, Israeli settlers allegedly poisoned more than 60 domestic animals in the Jordan Valley town of

al-Auja, north of Jericho. According to UN OCHA, Israelis destroyed more than 1,000 Palestinian-tended olive trees over the course of 2020.

In May, Israel's Lod District Court found Amiram Ben-Uliel guilty of a terrorist act in 2015 and sentenced him to three life sentences for killing a Palestinian family in a fire that erupted after he threw a Molotov cocktail through the window of the family's home in the West Bank village of Duma.

Israeli settlers also committed violent acts against Israeli law enforcement. According to news reports, during the year there were also 42 instances of violence against Israeli soldiers and police by right-wing extremists, compared with 29 such incidents in 2019. For example, in March, media reported that settlers threw Molotov cocktails at the Israeli Border Patrol near Yitzhar. In December a 16-year-old settler died in a car accident after police gave chase when he and his companions threw rocks at Palestinians in the central West Bank; the incident resulted in clashes between settler groups and police, including a December 21 attempt to storm a Jerusalem police station by 200 demonstrators.

Hamas, a U.S.-designated Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO), maintained control of Gaza in 2020. Several militant groups, including Sunni violent extremist groups and the PIJ, launched rocket attacks against Israel from Gaza. Hamas and its affiliates launched incendiary balloons and devices toward Israel, damaging farms and nature preserves. Hamas and PIJ tunneling activities continued. In October the IDF used new underground sensors to uncover a two-kilometer-long, 74-meter-deep tunnel running from the southern Gaza city of Khan Younis toward the Israeli community of Kibbutz Kissufim.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** Terrorist incidents during the year included the following:

- In May, the PIJ's militant wing al-Quds Brigades kidnapped 25-year-old Gazan journalist Yousuf Hassan in retaliation for his reporting on corruption, blackmail, and embezzlement related to aid distribution. He was ultimately handed over to Hamas and later released.
- On June 23, Israeli border police shot and killed Ahmed Erekat after his car crashed into a checkpoint. Israeli authorities described the incident as a car-ramming terrorist attack, a characterization disputed by Palestinian authorities and his family, which claimed it was an accident.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** The PA lacked comprehensive counterterrorism-specific legislation, although existing Palestinian laws criminalize actions that constitute terrorist acts. Presidential decrees prohibit incitement to violence, illegal associations, providing financial support to terrorist groups, and acts that run counter to Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) agreements with other states (a reference to the Oslo Accords with Israel). President Mahmoud Abbas has governed by presidential decree since 2007. NGOs claimed that at times the PA arbitrarily arrested individuals based on their political opinions, including for criticizing the PA online. Several anticorruption activists were jailed before they could begin a protest in July; they were released about one week later.



The Palestinian Preventive Security Organization is the key PA institution that works to prevent West Bank terrorist attacks and investigates security-related criminal conduct. Palestinian General Intelligence also plays a critical role in this effort, as does, to a lesser extent, the Palestinian Military Intelligence. Per previous agreements, Israel retained control of border security across the West Bank and general security throughout Area C, which encompasses most of the West Bank.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** The Palestinian Authority is a member of MENAFATF. Its FIU, the Palestinian Financial Follow-Up Unit, is a member of the Egmont Group. The PA’s MENAFATF mutual evaluation was postponed from 2020 to 2022-23 because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** Official PA traditional and social media accounts affiliated with the ruling political faction Fatah featured content praising or condoning acts of terrorism. For example, on June 25, Fatah Secretary General Jibril Rajoub made a variety of statements on PA TV, saying, “If there will be annexation, then we won’t suffer alone and we won’t die alone.” Problems with misleading textbooks, some with maps not depicting Israel, and public ceremonies celebrating Palestinian “martyrs” continued. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas stated a commitment to nonviolence, a two-state solution, and previous PLO commitments, but others in the Palestinian leadership have avoided making such commitments. The Palestinian leadership continued to offer so-called martyr payments to families of Palestinians who were wounded or died while committing terrorist acts or in connection with terrorism.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Palestinian Authority justice, security leaders, and PA security force personnel continued to participate in regional conferences and meetings to combat terrorism, though in 2020 these opportunities were limited — given COVID-19 pandemic restrictions.

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## JORDAN

**Overview:** Jordan remained a committed partner on counterterrorism and countering violent extremism. As a regional leader in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, Jordan played an important role in Defeat-ISIS successes by preventing the terrorist group from regaining any territorial control and restricting its operational reach.

Though Jordan experienced a decrease in terrorist activity in 2020 compared with previous years, the country faced a continued threat from terror groups. Border security remained an overarching priority for the Jordanian government, given fears that violence from the conflict in neighboring Syria might spill over into its territory. Jordanian security forces thwarted several terrorist plots and convicted numerous people on charges of plotting terrorist attacks. The threat of domestic radicalization to violence, especially online, persisted.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in Jordan in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** There were no significant changes in counterterrorism legislation, law enforcement capacity, or the State Security Court this year.

The General Intelligence Directorate (GID) is the primary government agency responsible for counterterrorism. It operates with support from the Jordan Armed Forces and the Public Security Directorate. The Jordanian government continues to implement measures and conduct joint exercises to improve interagency coordination among its security agencies, although COVID-19 prevented most training in 2020. Jordan participated in the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance program strengthening law enforcement counterterrorism capabilities. Enhanced overt security measures are in place across Jordan, most visibly at hotels and shopping malls.

Security authorities disrupted terrorist plots, including the following:

- In February the GID foiled a plot to target a liquor store and a church using Molotov cocktails. According to the charges, the perpetrator was a supporter of Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham, an al-Qa'ida-affiliated terrorist group based in northwest Syria, and an adherent of the group's terrorist ideology.
- On June 2 the GID reported it thwarted terror attacks against its headquarters in Amman and a GID patrol in Zarqa. Both attacks would have involved the use of explosive material and firearms. The GID noted that the terrorists, who were arrested in late February, were ISIS sympathizers who believed security forces are infidels.
- Also in June the GID announced that it foiled a terror plot in February in which two terrorists planned to target an Irbid police station. The GID arrested the two suspected assailants and a third individual who had knowledge of the plot. The three suspects were ISIS sympathizers who turned to local targets after failing to join the group in Sinai.

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 its 112-mile border with Iraq.

On January 16, Jordan published the API decree in the official gazette. The Jordanian government is adopting an API and PNR departure control system, which will screen inbound and outbound passengers for potential terrorists and criminal actors.

During 2020, Jordanian authorities took legal action against individuals accused of terrorism under Jordanian law, including rulings on terrorism cases from previous years. In at least two cases, the government charged journalists under terrorism laws for their reporting but later released them.

The United States continued to press Jordan to extradite Jordanian citizen Ahlam al-Tamimi for her role in a 2001 suicide bomb attack at a pizzeria in Jerusalem that killed 15, including 2 U.S. citizens.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Jordan is a member of MENAFATF. Its FIU, the Anti-Money Laundering and Counter Terrorist Financing Unit, is a member of the Egmont Group. Jordan is also a member of the Defeat-ISIS Coalition's CIFG.

The 2019 MENAFATF Mutual Evaluation Report of Jordan identified deficiencies in both effectiveness and technical compliance. For example, Jordan's national counterterrorism strategy did not include measures to deal with finance risks. MENAFATF also concluded UNSCRs related to terrorism finance, and targeted financial sanctions were not being implemented effectively because of poor coordination between Jordanian authorities. The report identified the lack of clear and sufficient criteria to identify non-profit organizations vulnerable to misuse for terrorism finance purposes. Jordan is addressing the report's findings and plans to complete a follow-up report with MENAFATF in 2021.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** Jordan released its national strategy on preventing violent extremism (PVE) and began implementation efforts coordinated by an office within the Prime Ministry. Priority areas for engagement include countering violent extremist ideology, building social cohesion among civil society, and assisting law enforcement. Officials regularly engaged experts on topics such as the role of women and girls in terrorism prevention as well as the monitoring and evaluation of PVE programs. Civil society organizations have undertaken work across the country to address root causes of violent extremism and to offer youth positive alternatives through activities that build critical thinking skills, encourage civic participation, increase awareness of online safety, and address the needs of returning terrorist fighters and their families.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Jordan is a major non-NATO ally and founding member of the GCTF. It is a member of the United Nations, the Arab League, the Organization for Islamic Cooperation, the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, and the Proliferation Security Initiative. Jordan participated as an observer to Saudi Arabia's G-20 presidency in 2020. Jordan also participates in the United Nations' Group of Friends of Preventing Violent Extremism and in the Strong Cities Network through the municipalities of Karak, Irbid, and Zarqa.

On September 2, King Abdullah chaired a new round of the Aqaba Process meetings with participation by senior officials from Asia, Europe, Africa, the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. The meetings covered the security challenges emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic and integrating efforts to counter the threats of terrorism and violent extremism.

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## KUWAIT

**Overview:** Kuwait is a major non-NATO ally, an active participant in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, a member of the Defeat-ISIS Coalition Small Group, and co-leads (with Turkey and the Netherlands) Defeat-ISIS's Foreign Terrorist Fighters Working Group. The Government of Kuwait has frequently participated in or conducted training programs to build counterterrorism and counterterrorism financing capabilities.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in Kuwait in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** Kuwaiti government officials participated in CT capacity-building workshops. Several of these were supported by the U.S. Department of State and implemented through the U.S. Department of Justice Overseas Prosecutorial Development Assistance and Training program. In November Kuwait FIU participated in a virtual workshop on Understanding Money Laundering Crimes. In December the Kuwaiti anticorruption authority Nazaha participated in a virtual workshop on corruption, money-laundering crimes, and investigative techniques. Kuwait also concentrated on law enforcement and judicial capacity-building across a broad spectrum of government agencies.

In March the Court of Cassation, the country’s highest court, upheld the 10-year prison sentences of three Kuwaiti citizens and the two-year prison sentence of one Syrian national for joining ISIS and plotting to blow up mosques. In July, authorities arrested six individuals, including an Iranian national accused of participating in a money-laundering ring tied to Hizballah. In October the Court of Cassation upheld a sentence of life imprisonment for an Egyptian who had joined ISIS and was arrested in 2016 for attempting to kill five U.S. soldiers. In December, authorities arrested three Kuwaitis for possessing unlicensed weapons and promoting an “extremist ideology” connected to ISIS.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Kuwait is a member of MENAFATF. Its FIU, the Kuwaiti Financial Intelligence Unit, is a member of the Egmont Group. Kuwait is also a member of the Defeat-ISIS CIFG and the Riyadh-based TFTC.

In collaboration with other TFTC member states, in July, Kuwait sanctioned six individuals and entities affiliated with ISIS terror-support networks in the region. Kuwait is currently preparing its National Risk Assessment, which is one of the key requirements of FATF. The nation is scheduled to deliver its FATF Mutual Evaluation Report in 2022.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** As part of the government’s National Plan to Reinforce Moderation, the Ministry of Information continued to run a television channel with programming aimed at audiences believed to be at higher risk of radicalization to violence. The Kuwait Moderation Center, which operates under the supervision of the Ministry of Religious Endowments, continued a variety of programs designed to promote religious tolerance. The center also sponsored radio programs to promote tolerance among youth.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** As an active member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS Small Group, Kuwait participated in ministerial-level meetings throughout the year. Kuwait is also an active member of the Arab League, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and the Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition. As a member of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), Kuwait continued its leading role in the effort to mediate the dispute between Qatar and other GCC members.

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## LEBANON

**Overview:** Lebanon is a committed partner in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. In 2020 the United States provided security assistance and training to the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) and

worked with Lebanon's law enforcement organizations, such as the Internal Security Forces (ISF), to enhance their counterterrorism capabilities and investigate and prosecute local terrorism cases.

Terrorist groups operating in Lebanon included U.S.-designated FTOs such as Hizballah and ISIS.

On September 29, Israel publicly released information about Hizballah's efforts to manufacture precision-guided missiles (PGMs) in three residential areas of Beirut. Hizballah denied that these locations were PGM factories. In remarks on December 27, Hizballah leader Hassan Nasrallah claimed the terrorist group had doubled the size of its PGM arsenal in 2020.

Despite the Lebanese government's official policy of disassociation from regional conflicts, Hizballah continued its illegitimate military activities in Iraq, Syria, and Yemen. Separately, Lebanon's 12 Palestinian refugee camps remained largely outside the control of Lebanese security forces and posed a security threat owing to the potential for militant recruitment and terrorist infiltration. In addition, several individuals on the FBI's most wanted list or listed by the Department of State or Department of Treasury as Specially Designated Global Terrorists reportedly remained in Lebanon.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** Hizballah continues to plan attacks and engage in other illicit activities around the world. The following is a representative list of terrorist incidents in Lebanon:

- On September 27, two LAF soldiers were killed and another injured when two terrorists of unspecified affiliation opened fire on an LAF sentry post in the Minieh region of northern Lebanon. One terrorist escaped, but another was killed by the LAF and subsequently found to be wearing a suicide vest.
- On August 21, militants led by ISIS-affiliated terrorist Khaled al-Talawi killed two police officers and one civilian in the northern Lebanese town of Kaftoun. The LAF subsequently apprehended and killed al-Talawi on September 13 near Tripoli; four LAF soldiers were killed in that raid. On September 26, LAF and ISF units engaged militants linked to al-Talawi in the Wadi Khaled region of northern Lebanon, killing 14 terrorists and arresting 15 others.
- On August 25 the Israeli Defense Forces claimed that Hizballah fighters fired small arms across the Blue Line toward an IDF position in the Israeli town of Manara.

**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. No new laws related to terrorism were passed in 2020. The LAF, the ISF, the Directorate of General Security (DGS), and the General Directorate of State Security were the primary government agencies responsible for counterterrorism. Although cooperation between the services was inconsistent, they took steps to improve information sharing and were receptive to additional capacity building and reforms. Structural limitations in the justice system remained a barrier for conducting trials on terrorism cases in a timely manner. The Department of State funded programs to provide training to law enforcement

on counterterrorism skills. There were no indications that the government's counterterrorism actions were misused to suppress political opposition or dissent.

The LAF held primary responsibility for securing Lebanon's land and maritime borders, while DGS and Customs were responsible for official points of entry — though Hizballah maintained control of some informal border crossings and is widely believed to exercise influence at Beirut's Rafik Hariri International Airport and the Port of Beirut. The LAF improved its ability to control Lebanon's land border with Syria through the Land Border Security Project funded by the United States, the UK, and Canada. This project resulted in enhanced monitoring of the border and the arrest of ISIS members entering Lebanon from Syria.

Lebanon collected biographical data for travelers at the Beirut International Airport, PNR data for commercial flights, and API. The LAF supported a visit by Department of State -funded assessors to three ports of entry to assess cargo security protocols in 2020. The ISF neared completion of a Department of State-funded project to increase the ISF's biometric collection and storage capabilities, which will also give the ISF the capability to share biometric data with other Lebanese security services. Lebanese security services collaborated with the United States on numerous instances to investigate individuals involved in terrorism.

The presence of Hizballah in the Lebanese government continues to impede effective government action against terrorist incidents associated with Hizballah. For instance, despite repeated requests by the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) to gain access to private properties in southern Lebanon — from which Hizballah is suspected to have dug cross-border tunnels into Israel or housed or manufactured weapons — the Government of Lebanon declined to permit UNIFIL to investigate these areas. In international fora, Lebanon argued that acts taken against what it characterized as “foreign occupation” are not terrorism. This characterization was used to justify Hizballah's acts against Israel as resistance to occupation rather than terrorism. In December the Netherlands-based Special Tribunal for Lebanon sentenced in absentia Hizballah terrorist Salim Ayyash for the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri. Ayyash remains at large.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Lebanon is a member of MENAFATF. Its FIU, the Special Investigation Commission (SIC), is a member of the Egmont Group. Lebanon is also a member of the Defeat-ISIS Coalition's CFIG.

In 2020 the SIC supported the implementation of terrorism-related sanctions against numerous Hizballah members and financiers, including the sanctioning of two Lebanese companies subordinate to Hizballah's Executive Council. The SIC also took actions in response to the U.S. government's implementing sanctions against former government ministers Yusuf Finyanus and Ali Hassan Khalil for material support to Hizballah.

During the first nine months of 2020, the SIC received 13 terrorism and terrorism-financing cases. The SIC reported that Lebanon designated 117 individuals and 15 entities on its national terrorism-financing list in 2020. On October 8, one referral from Lebanon to the UNSCR 1267/2253 Sanctions Committee was officially designated.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** Lebanon published its national strategy for preventing violent extremism (PVE) in 2018. The National PVE Coordination Unit organized a series of workshops in 2019 to solicit inputs for a PVE national action plan (NAP) for implementation of the strategy. Owing to COVID-19 and delays in government formation in 2020, the NAP has not yet been endorsed by the Cabinet. In the meantime, local and international donor efforts in CVE included participation in the Strong Cities Network, which works to build early warning capacity in select Lebanese municipalities, as well as programs in prisons to reduce risks of radicalization to violence.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Lebanon supported counterterrorism efforts in regional organizations and participated in counterterrorism finance programs.

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## LIBYA

**Overview:** Libyan government officials continued to work with U.S. counterparts to combat terrorism, although civil conflict and fractured security institutions limited direct cooperation. Following the failure of the self-styled Libyan National Army's (LNA's) military assault on western Libya, military officials from the Government of National Accord (GNA) and the eastern-based LNA signed a ceasefire agreement October 23. Despite the ceasefire, the volatility of Libya's security and political dynamics allowed room for terrorist groups such as ISIS and al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) to regroup. While ISIS-Libya controls no territory in Libya and is significantly degraded in terms of numbers and capacity, it remains a threat. The GNA was a reliable and willing U.S. counterterrorism partner, although its capacity to eliminate terrorist safe havens, counter terrorist financing, deter the flow of foreign fighters, or ensure effective counter proliferation efforts across Libya's territory was limited. The LNA countered terrorism in the East and South of the country, but its counterterrorism gains were limited to areas under its direct control. At the end of 2020, UN-facilitated talks were underway to select a new, unified interim executive authority.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** Significant terrorist incidents included the following:

- In May, ISIS-Libya claimed responsibility for a VBIED attack against a security checkpoint in Taraghin, 600 miles south of Tripoli, marking the first attack by ISIS-Libya in more than a year.
- From May through June, ISIS-Libya claimed eight attacks in southern Libya targeting the LNA and civilians, including an apparent rocket attack on a local airbase. The claims were published in the Islamic State's weekly newsletter.
- In September an unknown group conducted a suicide bomb attack in western Tripoli, reportedly causing no casualties. No group claimed responsibility.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** In November, GNA Prime Minister Sarraj endorsed the CT strategy compiled by his national CT coordinator. In practice, however, coordination between relevant authorities still largely occurs on an ad hoc basis, and an implementation plan for the new strategy has yet to be promulgated. Following its defeat in Tripoli, the LNA undertook a series of realignments in its security forces, several of which were involved in CT operations.

Libya did not pass or implement any counterterrorism legislation in 2020. Libya lacks a comprehensive counterterrorism law, although the Libyan penal code (under Title 2, Section 1, Chapter 1, Article 170 and Title 2, Chapter 2, Article 207) criminalizes offenses that may threaten national security, including terrorism, the promotion of terrorist acts, and the handling of money in support of such acts. Libya has ratified the AU's Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism, which requires states to criminalize terrorist acts under their national laws. The GNA and LNA continued to seek international support to combat ISIS-Libya and AQIM.

Despite Libya's disjointed security institutions and ongoing civil conflict during part of 2020, Libyan authorities in the GNA undertook operations to disrupt terrorist groups. So did the LNA. In July the GNA announced the arrest of suspected ISIS members in Misrata and Zawiya. In September, LNA forces killed ISIS-Libya head Abu Muadh al-Iraqi and in November detained several individuals associated with AQIM in the vicinity of Ubari.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Libya is a member of MENAFATF. Libya is also a member of the Defeat-ISIS CIFG.

In August the Governor of the Central Bank of Libya, as chairman of the National Anti-Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Commission (AML/CFT), signed a letter of cooperation with the Ministry of Interior to reduce corruption and investigate crimes involving money laundering and terrorist financing. In November the Ministry of Interior contracted with K2 Integrity — a risk, compliance, investigations, and monitoring firm — to strengthen its AML/CFT framework to meet international standards.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** There were no changes in 2020.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** The European Union and the UK continued working to support the development of the Libyan National CT Strategy under the CT Coordinator. Libya is a member of the United Nations, the AU, the Organization of Islamic Coordination (OIC), and the Arab League.

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## MOROCCO

**Overview:** The United States and Morocco have a long history of strong counterterrorism cooperation. The Government of Morocco continued to implement its comprehensive strategy, which includes vigilant security measures, regional and international cooperation, and terrorist counter-radicalization policies. In 2020, Morocco's counterterrorism efforts largely mitigated its risk of terrorism — even as the numbers of arrests dropped significantly compared with 2019, likely because of COVID-19-related shutdowns. The country continued to face sporadic threats — largely from small, independent terrorist cells — most of which were claimed to be inspired by or affiliated with ISIS. Morocco is also a member of the GCTF and is currently the co-chair of the GCTF with Canada.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in Morocco in 2020.



**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** Morocco is still investigating, prosecuting, and sentencing defendants under its CT legislation, enacted in 2003 and expanded in 2015, to implement UNSCR 2178.

In 2020, Moroccan law enforcement under the coordination of the Ministry of Interior aggressively targeted and arrested at least 35 individuals, effectively dismantling seven terrorist cells reportedly in the early stages of planning attacks against a range of targets, including public buildings, prominent figures, and tourist sites. No major arrests took place between March 20 and June 20, when Morocco enforced a near-total lockdown, severely restricting movements in response to COVID-19. 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.

Notable arrests in 2020 include the following:

- In early March the BCIJ dismantled a cell of four men near Rabat led by an individual previously arrested on terrorism charges in 2014. The authorities seized electronic devices, bladed weapons, and ISIS propaganda.
- In July, Moroccan authorities dismantled an alleged ISIS cell of four men in Nador, who were planning to attack “sensitive targets” in Morocco.
- In September, Moroccan security officials carried out synchronized counterterrorism operations in four cities across Morocco (Skhirat, Tangier, Temara, and Tiflet), leading to the arrest of five individuals suspected of having links to ISIS. According to media reports, the Moroccan authorities reportedly seized numerous weapons and chemicals, including explosive belts, detonators, teargas canisters, and pressure cookers. The BCIJ director claimed this cell was one of the most dangerous that Morocco had ever dismantled. The ringleader, previously arrested on terrorism charges, subsequently killed a Moroccan prison guard in October.

Moroccan law enforcement agencies participated in a wide range of U.S.-sponsored programs to improve the country’s counterterrorism technical and investigative capabilities, including financial investigation, intelligence analysis, and cybersecurity.

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:** Morocco is a member of MENAFATF. Its FIU, *L'Unité de Traitement du Renseignement Financier*, is a member of the Egmont Group. Morocco is also a member of the Defeat-ISIS CIFG.

In 2020, Morocco worked to enact reforms in response to its 2019 Mutual Evaluation Report, with legislation pending. In March, Morocco hosted the Warsaw Process Working Group on Counterterrorism and Illicit Financing, focused on countering al-Qa'ida.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** Morocco has a comprehensive CVE strategy that prioritizes economic and human development in addition to countering terrorist/violent extremist 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. The Ministry of Endowments and Islamic Affairs has developed an educational curriculum for Morocco's nearly 50,000 imams as well as for female guides (*les mourchidates*). Morocco's imam training center in Rabat trains imams mostly from West Africa. The Royal Mohammedan League of Ulema (Rabita Mohammedia) counters radicalization to violence by producing scholarly research, reviewing educational curricula, and conducting youth outreach on religious and social topics.

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. The DGAPR, in cooperation with other ministries, has conducted six offerings of its deradicalization program, *Moussalaha* (Reconciliation), and opened the program to female prisoners in 2020.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Morocco is currently a co-chair of the GCTF with Canada, is a member of the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership, and is a member of the AU and the OIC. A major non-NATO ally, Morocco traditionally hosts the annual African Lion exercise, but the exercise was canceled in 2020 because of COVID-19. In 2020, Morocco announced plans to establish a United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) Program Office for Specialized Counter-Terrorism and Law Enforcement Training in Africa. Morocco also participated in national-level workshops hosted by UNODC's Terrorism Prevention Branch on implementation of UNSCR 2396 on detecting and preventing terrorist travel. The nation also has strong cooperation with European countries, especially Belgium, France, and Spain, to thwart potential terrorist threats in Europe. Regional tensions between Morocco and Algeria continued to impede bilateral and regional counterterrorism cooperation.

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## OMAN

**Overview:** Oman is an important regional counterterrorism partner that actively worked to prevent terrorists from conducting attacks or using the country as a safe haven. The nation remains concerned about the Yemen conflict and the potential for AQAP and ISIS-Yemen to threaten Oman's land and maritime borders. Omani and U.S. officials regularly engaged on

efforts to counter violent extremism and terrorism. 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. The country welcomed U.S. security assistance to improve its crisis management capacity, as well as its counterterrorism tactics and procedures; however, some counterterrorism training and exercises were postponed or cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Oman issued several statements condemning terrorist attacks around the world in 2020.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in Oman in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** There were no changes to Oman's counterterrorism legislation in 2020.

Local capacity and a challenging operating environment owing to Oman's extensive coastline and long, remote borders with Saudi Arabia and Yemen remain obstacles for counterterrorism investigations, crisis responses, and border security capabilities. Nevertheless, Oman had adequate communication and coordination among its many counterterrorism-related agencies and the National Security Council. The Sultan's Special Forces and the Royal Oman Police (ROP) Special Task Force are Oman's primary counterterrorism response forces. The Royal Office Liaison and Coordination Service, the Internal Security Service, and ROP's Special Branch 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.

Oman continued to recognize the need to improve its counterterrorism capabilities and the value of U.S. counterterrorism and law enforcement training and assistance. However, owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) program postponed courses until 2021. ATA programming in Oman will target skills related to advanced counterterrorism operations and response, as well as crisis management exercise development. Omani security officials representing the ROP and their interagency will participate in the training.

The ROP Coast Guard, ROP Customs, the Maritime Security Center, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Royal Office participated in numerous virtual training activities through the Department's Export Control and Related Border Security (EXBS) program. EXBS programming supported the government's efforts to build its capacity to interdict weapons and conduct investigations at air and seaports of entry, including in Muscat, Salalah, and Sohar. EXBS programming also increased Omani government officials' understanding of UN sanctions implementation through virtual webinars and tabletop exercises.

The major impediments to effective law enforcement and border security in Oman remained limited resources, challenges to Omani interagency coordination, and the need for continued training to develop advanced law enforcement skills. The rugged, mountainous terrain along Oman's border with Yemen presents an additional challenge. Oman continued to seek opportunities for additional U.S. border security training.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Oman is a member of MENAFATF. Oman's Financial Information Processing Unit is a member of the Egmont Group. The nation also is a member of the Riyadh-based TFTC.

In collaboration with other TFTC member states, in July, Oman sanctioned six individuals and entities affiliated with ISIS terror-support networks in the region.

Oman made progress on the implementation and execution of its countering the finance of terrorism law, to include incorporating entities listed under the UNSC's 1267 Sanctions Committee 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 2020, but it is believed Oman continued to counter terrorist recruitment through tightly controlled, private initiatives.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Oman is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, the Saudi-led Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition, and the TFTC. Oman regularly votes in favor of counterterrorism measures in the UN General Assembly, the Arab League, and the OIC.

## **QATAR**

**Overview:** The United States and Qatar continued to increase counterterrorism cooperation, building on progress made after the U.S. Secretary of State and Qatari Foreign Minister signed a CT MOU in 2017. During the September U.S.-Qatar Strategic Dialogue's Virtual Counterterrorism Session, the two governments reviewed the significant progress made on CT cooperation and committed to maintaining ongoing momentum for 2021. Qatar is an active participant in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and all the Defeat-ISIS working groups. Qatar facilitated U.S. military operations in the region and hosts roughly 10,000 U.S. service members at two military installations critical to Defeat-ISIS efforts.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in Qatar in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** In 2019, Qatari authorities passed a new AML/CFT law that included language on targeted financial sanctions. In 2019 the Qatari government finalized new CT legislation that enhanced penalties for committing acts of terror and enabled the prosecution of Qataris who commit acts of terror. Both laws went into effect in February.

Qatar maintains an interagency National Counterterrorism Committee (NCTC) with representatives from more than 10 government agencies. The NCTC formulates Qatar's CT policy, ensuring interagency coordination, fulfilling Qatar's CT-related obligations under international conventions, and participating in multilateral conferences on terrorism. U.S. officials met regularly with the chairman of the NCTC to discuss overall CT cooperation. The Qatar State Security Bureau (SSB) maintained an aggressive posture toward monitoring internal terrorism-related activities. The Ministry of Interior (MOI) and the Internal Security Force (ISF) remained well positioned to respond

to incidents with rapid reaction forces that routinely engage in structured CT training and exercises, including with U.S. agencies.

The United States and Qatar continued to partner on terrorist screening and aviation security. MOI authorities continued to cooperate with officials from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Customs and Border Protection and Transportation Security Agency to enhance the capability to screen the near 40 million travelers who transit Hamad International Airport annually.

U.S. technical assistance to Qatari law enforcement and judicial agencies increased during 2020. The U.S. Departments of Justice (DOJ), State, and the Treasury, as well as the FBI, led or participated in several capacity-building initiatives involving the MOI, the ISF, the SSB, the Public Prosecution, the Central Bank, and other Qatari agencies. A DOJ resident legal advisor has been stationed in Qatar since 2018, providing technical assistance to Qatar's CT efforts and building prosecutorial capacity.

U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) and Embassy Doha coordinated multiple virtual planning conferences with their Qatar counterparts from the MOI, the ISF, and Qatar Joint Special Forces, for Invincible Sentry 21, a bilateral CT exercise. The exercise will take place in Doha in 2021 in preparation for the FIFA World Cup 2022 and will test a whole-of-government response to possible critical incidents associated with the quadrennial tournament.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Qatar is a member of MENAFATF. Its FIU, the Qatar Financial Information Unit, is a member of the Egmont Group. Qatar is also a member of the Defeat-ISIS CIFG and the Riyadh-based TFTC.

In collaboration with other TFTC member states, in July, Qatar sanctioned six individuals and entities affiliated with ISIS terror-support networks in the region.

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 four approved charities — to protect charitable giving from terrorist financing abuse.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** The core of Qatar's CVE strategy remained investment in education, sports diplomacy, and increasing economic opportunities for youth around the globe, largely through the Qatar Foundation and related organizations, such as Silatech and Education Above All. In December, Qatar partnered with UNOCT to open the first International Hub on Behavioral Insights to Counterterrorism in the Middle East and North Africa, to better understand the underlying roots of violent extremism and determine the best use of sports as a CVE tool. Qatar has made strides in addressing state-sourced internal support for educational and religious content espousing intolerance, discrimination, sectarianism, and violence, although examples are still found in textbooks and disseminated through satellite television and other media.

Qatar was a major funder of the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF) and sits on its Governing Board of Directors. The Qatar Fund for Development supported GCERF's efforts to build awareness among community leaders about the impact of terrorist radicalization and recruitment, to share information on how to respond to terrorism, to promote peace through community engagement activities, and to provide educational initiatives.

Qatar's Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) supported English-language programming in Ministry of Education schools to counter terrorist influence and messaging. The MEHE undersecretary, who also serves as chairman of the semigovernmental Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue, requested recommendations from the Department of State's International Religious Freedom Office on educational consultants to assist with further revisions of Qatar's Islamic studies public school textbooks to increase understanding of religious pluralism and tolerance.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Qatar is an active participant in the United Nations, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and the Arab League. Qatar is also a member of the GCTF and TFTC. The country was active in GCC activities, but the Gulf dispute that broke out in 2017 froze most GCC-wide engagements.

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## SAUDI ARABIA

**Overview:** Saudi Arabian government officials continued to work closely with their U.S. counterparts to deploy a comprehensive and well-resourced CT strategy that included vigilant security measures, regional and international cooperation, and counterterrorist radicalization measures. Houthi militants in Yemen posed the greatest security threat to Saudi Arabia. Houthi attacks increased in frequency and sophistication over the year, to include attacks with ballistic and cruise missiles, unmanned aerial systems (UAS), and unmanned surface vessels (USV). Saudi operations in Yemen included counterterrorism missions against AQAP and ISIS-Yemen.

Saudi Arabia was a full partner and active participant in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and provided significant operational and logistical support for Defeat-ISIS activities in Syria and Iraq.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** Saudi Arabia suffered numerous cross-border attacks in 2020, including nearly weekly Houthi attacks against targets in southern and western Saudi Arabia using ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, UAS, USV, and floating mines. Terrorist incidents also included small-scale attacks perpetrated by ISIS sympathizers. Significant terrorist incidents included the following:

- On September 10, Houthi militants attacked Riyadh using ballistic missiles and multiple UAS. No deaths or casualties were reported.
- On November 11 an IED wounded at least three persons in an attack on a ceremony organized by the French consulate in a non-Muslim cemetery in Jeddah. ISIS sympathizers were responsible for the attack.
- On November 23, Houthi militants struck a Saudi Aramco petroleum storage facility in Jeddah. The land attack cruise missile strike damaged a 550,000-barrel diesel storage tank. No casualties were reported.
- On November 25 a USV attack damaged a Greece-flagged oil tanker at an Aramco fueling terminal in Shuqaiq, in southern Saudi Arabia. Authorities did not report any casualties.

- On December 14 a USV attacked a Singapore-flagged oil tanker at an Aramco fueling terminal. The attack caused significant damage and some injuries.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** The State Security Presidency and its Saudi General Investigations Directorate conducted terrorism-related investigations in 2020. On January 7, Saudi Arabia arrested Muhammad bin Hussein Ali al-Ammar, one of the top terrorist targets in the country. Al-Ammar was wanted for several crimes including the kidnapping of a judge and other terrorist activities. Many international human rights groups continued to assert that the Saudi Arabian government misused CT laws and courts to prosecute lawful dissidents, women’s rights activists, and prominent clerics.

Saudi Arabia remained committed to securing its borders and denying safe haven to terrorists. With an extensive border security network, the Ministry of Interior monitored passenger manifests for inbound and outbound flights and used travel document security technology, traveler data, and biometric screening capabilities at ports of entry. The General Directorate of Border Guards took command of Combined Task Force (CTF) 152 responsible for maritime interdiction in the Arabian Gulf and the Royal Saudi Naval Forces took command of CTF-150 for operations in the Red Sea and Indian Ocean.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Saudi Arabia is a member of FATF and MENAFATF. Its FIU, the Saudi Arabia Financial Investigation Unit, is a member of the Egmont Group. Saudi Arabia is also a co-lead of the Defeat-ISIS CIFG and a co-lead with the United States of the Riyadh-based TFTC.

In collaboration with other TFTC member states, in July, Saudi Arabia sanctioned six individuals and entities affiliated with ISIS terror-support networks in the region.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** CVE efforts expanded under Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman’s Vision 2030 reform efforts. The Saudi Arabian government continued making progress in revising textbooks used in the public K-12 curriculum, to reduce intolerant and “extremist” content; however, problematic language remained. Mecca-based Muslim World League Secretary General Dr. Mohammed al-Issa spoke out against those who have harmed Islam’s reputation with their violent extremist views and conducted interfaith outreach in promotion of tolerance.

Saudi Arabia reported on CVE efforts to foster moderation and regulate religious activities. Ministry of Islamic Affairs officials continued to conduct outreach to imams across the country, encouraging them to refute what the government perceives to be extremist ideology in their sermons, and replacing imams preaching inflammatory rhetoric in mosques. Deradicalization programs in Saudi prisons and at the Mohammed bin Naif Care and Counseling Center in Riyadh remained a main feature in the reintegration of former violent extremists into Saudi society with ongoing monitoring. Saudi Arabia also supported the Jeddah-based Sawt Al-Hikma Center at the OIC in its public-messaging efforts to combat extremism. The Saudi Arabian government also operated the “Etidal” Global Center for Combating Extremist Ideology, which works with governments and other groups to combat and refute extremism.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Saudi Arabia continued regional diplomatic efforts to fight terrorism, as the country partnered with several nations on bilateral and regional bases to improve information sharing related to counterterrorism activities. Saudi Arabia is the largest donor to the UN Counter-Terrorism Center (UNCCT). And Abdallah Yahya al-Mouallimi, Saudi Arabia's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, is the chair of the Consultative Council of UNCCT. The Saudi Arabian government also worked through the Riyadh-based Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition to strengthen international efforts by hosting several symposia and signing cooperation memoranda with U.S. Central Command and the OIC. Saudi Arabia is also a member of the GCTF, the OIC, and the GCC.

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## TUNISIA

**Overview:** Counterterrorism and border security continued to be top priorities of the Government of Tunisia. The risk of terrorist activity remained high, exacerbated by sustained instability in Libya, although the frequency and scale of terrorist attacks in 2020 decreased from 2019. Tunisian strides in professionalizing its security apparatus in partnership with the United States and its commitment to joint Ministry of Interior (MOI) and Ministry of Defense (MOD) CT operations have steadily degraded violent extremist organizations' capacity within the country. Despite COVID-19 challenges' affecting national resources, Tunisia demonstrated consistent security force readiness and carried out proactive CT operations throughout the year. Tunisia continued work on implementation of a national preventing/countering violent extremism (PVE/CVE) strategy and the freezing of terrorist assets and, as evidenced by the responses to the terrorist attack near Embassy Tunis and to the Sousse attack, demonstrated improvements in CT crisis response, coordination, and investigation.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** The following is a representative list of terrorist incidents:

- On March 6, two Tunisians on a motorbike carried out a suicide attack targeting a police checkpoint near the perimeter of Embassy Tunis. The attack killed one police officer and injured five other security personnel as well as a Tunisian civilian.
- On September 6, three Tunisians carried out a combined vehicular attack and stabbing, targeting two National Guard officers on patrol in Sousse. MOI forces killed the three attackers, and security officers subsequently arrested 11 individuals for suspected ties to the operation.
- On December 20 a shepherd was found beheaded near the Algerian border region of Jebel Salloum in west-central Tunisia. According to local media, Jund al-Khilafah-Tunisia (JAK-T), the ISIS branch in Tunisia, killed the man for being a suspected security forces informant.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** There were no changes to Tunisia's counterterrorism legislation. The Tunisian government's CT efforts continue to demonstrate advances in successful, proactive CT operations and improved coordination between MOI and MOD security elements. There is substantive cooperation with the embassy on investigations, prosecutions, and prevention of terrorist activity aimed at U.S. interests in Tunisia.



Interior Minister Taoufik Charfeddine reported during a November parliamentary hearing that MOI and MOD CT units arrested 1,020 people for belonging to terrorist groups, with 876 of those transferred to the CT judicial pole and 112 eventually imprisoned in 2020. The minister also reported 33 terrorist cells dismantled and 48 preventive CT operations carried out in 2020. Significant CT-related law enforcement actions and arrests reported publicly included the following:

- On January 25, investigations related to a leader of JAK-T led to MOI security forces uncovering multiple locations used to hide ammunition, landmines, and explosive material on Arbata Mountain in Gafsa governorate.
- On February 25, MOI National Guard and MOD military units conducted a CT operation in Kasserine governorate killing two suspected terrorists, one of whom was confirmed to be Bassem Ghenimi of JAK-T.
- During September 11-12, MOI National Guard units arrested 73 individuals suspected of links to terrorism in the governorates of Beja, Ben Arous, Bizerte, Sidi Bouzid, and Sousse.

Border security remained a top priority. The Tunisian Armed Forces, along with the MOI's National Guard, successfully employed U.S.-funded patrol craft, vehicles, and weapons in joint operations throughout 2020. Phase 2 of the southern electronic border surveillance system is currently underway with German assistance and is expected to be completed in 2021. Talks for a third phase are currently underway with the Tunisian Ministry of Defense. In 2020 the maritime coastal surveillance system began to provide full coverage along the entire Tunisian coast.

Safeguarding tourist zones remained a Tunisian government emphasis, with work continuing in the context of the G-7+7 Tourist and Cultural Sites Protection project group. The Ministry of Tourism reported Tunisia experienced a 77 percent decline in tourist arrivals by October 2020 because of COVID-19.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Tunisia is a member of MENAFATF. Its FIU, the Tunisian Financial Analysis Committee (CTAF), is a member of the Egmont Group. Tunisia is also a member of the Defeat-ISIS Coalition's CIFG.

In 2020 the Tunisian National Counterterrorism Commission (CNLCT) announced renewed asset freezing for 23 Tunisians linked to terrorist activities. These measures are part of the CNLCT's fight against financing terrorism in accordance with the 2019 CT and Counter-Terrorist Finance Law, as well as the 2019 government decree No. 419 on the implementation of the UN Security Council measures on Countering the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction and the Financing of Terrorism. CTAF also announced the launch of "Hannibal," an online platform dedicated to the exchange of information on hard currency transfers in real time to improve cooperation between law enforcement and the private sector, planned for 2021.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** Tunisia remained committed to preventing terrorist radicalization through youth and educational programs coordinated among its ministries and civil society organizations. In 2019 the CNLCT secured Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund financing for several CVE projects led by Tunisian civil society organizations

that continued implementation through 2020. The U.S. Agency for International Development's five-year, \$48.5 million Youth/PVE program begun in 2018 continued, as did the Ministry of Justice's Tawasol Project. USAID is also assisting the CNLCT in planning and executing strategic PVE/CVE interventions nationwide. Despite continued concerns about returning FTFs and their family members from Iraq and Syria, the government remained committed to working with the international community on building local capacity to effectively rehabilitate and reintegrate these individuals back into their communities.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Tunisia holds a nonpermanent seat on the 2020-21 UN Security Council representing both Africa and the Middle East. The nation hosted the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum in November. Tunisia agreed to host the GCTF's 2020 regional workshop on returning families of FTFs, but the event was cancelled because of COVID-19. Tunisia also participated in a national-level workshop hosted by UNODC's Terrorism Prevention Branch on implementation of UNSCR 2396, on detecting and preventing terrorist travel.

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## UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

**Overview:** The United Arab Emirates advanced counterterrorism efforts in 2020, particularly in the field of countering terrorist financing. U.S.-UAE security agencies continued to finalize a new information sharing memorandum of cooperation to make travel safer. The UAE seeks to be a leader in countering violent extremist narratives on a global level, supporting CVE and participating in and hosting international fora to promote tolerance and coexistence. The government continued to apply restrictive laws as part of its security and counterterrorism efforts. NGOs and other observers criticized these laws as overreaching and as having the potential to stifle political speech. The UAE continued valuable support for counterterrorism efforts in Yemen against AQAP and ISIS-Yemen, including support to local forces in CT operations.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in the UAE in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** In May the UAE passed a law to protect witnesses of crimes, to include witnesses of terrorist activities. In October the Cabinet issued Resolution No. 74 and relevant resolutions defining the roles of the Supreme Council for National Security and concerning the UAE list of terrorists and implementation of UN Security Council decisions relating to preventing and countering financing terrorism and leveraging nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

The State Security Directorate (SSD) in Abu Dhabi and the Dubai State Security (DSS) remained primarily responsible for CT law enforcement efforts. Local, emirate-level police forces, especially Abu Dhabi Police and Dubai Police, were the first responders in such cases and often provided technical assistance to SSD and DSS. 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.

As in previous years, the UAE worked closely with the United States, through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), to improve its border security posture. Information sharing between Abu Dhabi Police's Criminal Investigations Division and DHS Investigations helped counter transnational criminal organizations and terrorist groups. The United States and the UAE, to prioritize and strengthen long-term response for proactively detecting, deterring, and preventing terrorism, transnational crime, and other threats to border security, signed an information sharing memorandum of cooperation that demonstrates a shared commitment to facilitating lawful international travel.

According to press reports, the Federal Appeal Court's State Security Court examined 4 terrorism-related cases in 2020, in comparison with 14 in 2019. Most cases involved defendants accused of promoting or affiliating with UAE-designated terrorist organizations. In February the Federal Supreme Court sentenced an individual to 10 years in prison, followed by deportation, for carrying out arson for the purposes of terrorism at a site of worship.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** The UAE is a member of MENAFATF. Its FIU, the Anti-Money Laundering and Suspicious Cases Unit, is a member of the Egmont Group. The UAE is also a member of the Defeat-ISIS CIFG and the TFTC.

In collaboration with other TFTC members, in July, the UAE sanctioned six individuals and entities affiliated with ISIS terror-support networks in the region.

In April, FATF published its Mutual Evaluation Report of the UAE. The report identified that the UAE's AML/CFT framework requires major improvements to demonstrate that the system cannot be used for money laundering, terrorist financing, or the financing of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The report noted, however, that UAE authorities do investigate and prosecute terrorist financing offenses and activities to a large extent. The UAE must show progress in specifically defined areas to avoid being placed under increased monitoring by FATF.

The UAE took steps to strengthen its domestic AML/CFT regime. The government created a ministerial-level body in August to monitor the National Strategy to Combat Money Laundering and Counterterrorism. The UAE also published Cabinet Decision No. 58/2020 requiring all new and existing UAE companies to maintain a register of "Real Beneficial Owners" and transmit the information to the relevant regulatory authority. In September the Central Bank (CBUAE) announced the introduction of a mandatory registration framework for informal value transfer systems known as hawaladars. In September the UAE also rolled out a new case management software named "Fawri Tick" to investigate and enforce proliferation and terrorism financing violations.

In October, CBUAE imposed administrative sanctions on two exchange houses, fining them for having "weak anti-money laundering and combating [of] financing of terrorism compliance frameworks." In November, CBUAE issued the "Stored Value Facilities Regulation" that sets out AML/CFT procedures and requires licensees to exercise due diligence when onboarding customers and continue to report suspicious transactions.

According to official media outlets, the Ministry of Justice in November suspended the licenses of 200 law firms for one month for noncompliance with AML/CFT requirements. In response, 193 of the 200 law firms rectified their compliance shortcomings, which resulted in a lifting of the imposed suspensions. Seven of the 200 firms failed to implement the necessary corrective actions, resulting in a \$27,250 fine (100,000 dirhams) from the ministry.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** The UAE government continued to play a leadership role in global efforts to counter terrorist radicalization and recruitment. The UAE hosts the Sawab Center, a bilateral partnership with the United States to amplify credible voices to counter terrorist messaging online and continued to support *Hedayah*, the International Center of Excellence for Countering Violent Extremism. Prominent UAE officials, religious leaders, and think tanks continued to publicly criticize and highlight the dangers of what they viewed as terrorist narratives, most notably that of the Muslim Brotherhood, which the UAE designated as a terrorist group.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** The UAE participated in AML/CFT workshops with the European Union and the United Kingdom. The UAE also supported the Blueprint of a Rehabilitation and Reintegration Center, which was co-presented with the United States on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly.

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## YEMEN

**Overview:** AQAP, ISIS-Yemen, and Iran-backed terrorist groups such as Hizballah and the IRGC-QF continued to exploit the political and security vacuum created by the ongoing conflict between the Republic of Yemen government under the leadership of President Abd Rabu Mansour Hadi, internationally recognized as the legitimate Government of Yemen, and Houthi militants, as well as the ongoing south-south conflict between the Republic of Yemen government and the Southern Transitional Council (STC). Additionally, IRGC-QF continued to exploit the conflict to expand Iran's influence in Yemen. UN and other reporting have highlighted connections between the IRGC-QF and the Houthis, including the provision of lethal aid used by the Houthis to undertake attacks against critical infrastructure sites in Saudi Arabia. Media reports suggest that Hizballah may also be supporting the Houthi militants.

The Republic of Yemen government, in partnership with the Saudi-led coalition, controlled less Yemeni territory at the end of 2020 than it did in 2019. The Republic of Yemen government's loss of control over additional parts of its territory resulted from political and military tensions in the South and Houthi advances in other governorates of the country. In the South the STC temporarily declared "self-administration" between April and July, which was not recognized by the international community. Negotiations to implement the 2019 Riyadh Agreement culminated in the December 30 return of a newly formed government to Aden, but this failed to eliminate tensions in the South, where AQAP and ISIS-Yemen maintained significant areas of influence. Concurrently, Houthi militants who controlled the de jure capital of Sana'a and surrounding northwest highlands, as well as the port city of Hudaydah, made key advances eastward and southward to parts of the governorates of al-Jawf, al-Bayda, and Ma'rib.

The Republic of Yemen government cooperated with the U.S. government on CT efforts; however, because of the instability and violence, as well as its own degraded capabilities, the Republic of Yemen government could not fully enforce CT measures or reliably undertake operations across the country. A large security vacuum persists, which provides AQAP and ISIS-Yemen room to operate. Although there were few CT gains in 2020, Yemeni security forces undertook a successful raid against suspected AQAP members in al-Mahra's capital, al-Ghayda, on October 2, resulting in the death of three suspected terrorists and the arrest of two others. Security Belt Forces loyal to the STC continued to play an important role in CT efforts, as they exercised control over significant parts of Aden, Abyan, and Shabwah. ISIS-Yemen remained considerably smaller in size and influence compared with AQAP but remained operationally active and continued to claim attacks. AQAP remained active in central Yemen, most notably in al-Bayda, demonstrating its ability to move within the country.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** Attacks attributed to AQAP and ISIS-Yemen decreased in 2020, compared with 2019. Methods included suicide bombings, vehicle-borne IEDs, ambushes, armed clashes, kidnappings, and targeted assassinations. Notable terrorist incidents included the following:

- On August 15, AQAP militants executed and then crucified a dentist in al-Bayda governorate and later bombed his clinic. AQAP accused him of participating in an alleged espionage network on behalf of the U.S., Saudi, and Emirati governments and the Houthi militia.
- On August 27, AQAP militants executed six persons in al-Bayda. AQAP accused the victims of belonging to the Houthi militia.
- On December 7, suspected AQAP militants killed six persons affiliated with the STC in Abyan governorate.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** Yemen made no significant changes to its CT legal framework in 2020. Yemen does not have comprehensive CT legislation. Owing to a lack of resources and organization, police forces throughout the country struggle to exert authority.

Draft CT legislation has been pending in Parliament since 2008. Before the political instability in Sana'a that forced the 2015 relocation of the Republic of Yemen government, the draft was under review by the three parliamentary subcommittees responsible for counterterrorism (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 UNSCRs 2178 and 2396 related to countering foreign terrorist fighters and terrorist travel, although the Republic of Yemen government continues to institute some noteworthy measures to combat terrorist travel. There are limited commercial flights operating out of airports in Yemen, and the government does not have the capacity or resources to implement UNSCR 2309 mandates on aviation security.

Before March 2015, Yemen's National Security Agency and the President's Office drafted a National Counterterrorism Strategy. A ministerial committee reviewed the draft but was unable

to finalize it because of political instability. Thus, Yemen's National Counterterrorism Strategy had not been officially adopted or implemented by the end of 2020.

Yemen enhanced its border security procedures in November, when the Ministry of Interior's Office of Immigration, Passport and Naturalization Authority began upgrading its traveler screening process at some government-controlled points of entry. Yemen employs the U.S.-provided PISCES integrated border security management system to secure borders and identify fraudulent travel documents, but deployment to all points of entry controlled by the Republic of Yemen government was still in progress at year's end.

The Republic of Yemen government worked with international partners to reestablish the rule of law in government-controlled areas. Yemen, with the United States, the UK, the UAE, and Saudi Arabia, participates in the Yemen Security Working Group, which includes military and diplomatic representatives from member states and develops cooperative capacity-building initiatives for Yemeni military and security forces. This year, EXBS funded the training of 15 Yemeni Coast Guard officials on small motor maintenance, 19 port officials on port operations, and 89 Border Guardsmen on vehicle interdiction, as well as the participation of 12 senior officials in various security conferences. Most of the conferences and all the port operation training occurred virtually, because of COVID-19 restrictions.

The Yemeni Coast Guard played a role in interdicting weapons and other illegal materials destined for Yemen-based terrorist groups, although the nation's maritime borders remained extremely porous. The central-southern coast remains highly vulnerable to maritime smuggling of fighters, weapons, materials, and goods used to support AQAP and ISIS-Yemen.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Yemen is a member of MENAFATF.

The Republic of Yemen government-controlled Central Bank of Yemen (CBY) continued incremental efforts to implement International Monetary Fund Diagnostic Report recommendations to enhance AML/CFT capacity, but owing to a lack of judicial capacity and territorial control the Republic of Yemen government is unable to fully implement IMF recommendations and 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, and the Republic of Yemen government has limited capacity to resolve these deficiencies. For example, the CBY in Aden sought transactional information from commercial banks for AML/CFT compliance. Commercial banks, however, resisted complying owing to Houthi pressure on their Sana'a-based bank headquarters. In November the Aden CBY referred some bank branch managers for criminal prosecution over their refusal to comply. Houthi leaders in Sana'a retaliated by dispatching security forces to seize computer servers and enforce a temporary closure of several large commercial banks. A mediated resolution saw Sana'a-based banks resume providing basic compliance information to CBY Aden, but not at the level of detail needed to meet international AML/CFT standards.

In January the Prime Minister reconstituted the National Committee for Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism. The committee includes 17 members from relevant

ministries and concerned institutions, as well as representatives from the Yemen Banks Association and the Chambers of Commerce.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** There were no significant changes in 2020.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Yemen is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. The Republic of Yemen government continued to cooperate with the GCC, the United States, and other donor countries, as it focused on working toward a political solution to the conflict. Yemen is a member of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Arab League.

## SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA

### Overview

South Asia in 2020 saw, in addition to continued terrorist activity in Afghanistan and Pakistan, a volatile mix of insurgent attacks punctuated by incidents of terrorism in the Indian Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir as well as in Maldives and Bangladesh. Although ISIS lost its territory in Syria, new branches that surfaced in 2019 in Pakistan and India continued to operate. Other ISIS-affiliated groups claimed responsibility for attacks in the Maldives and Bangladesh in 2020. Though al-Qa'ida has weakened, its regional affiliate in the Indian subcontinent (AQIS) continued to operate from remote locations that have served as safe havens.

Afghanistan continued to experience aggressive and coordinated terrorist attacks by ISIS's branch in the region, the Islamic State's Khorasan Province (ISIS-K). The Afghan Taliban, including the affiliated Haqqani Network (HQN), continued a high pace of insurgent attacks against the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF). The Taliban also conducted attacks targeting government officials. 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. In 2020 the ANDSF and the Taliban separately maintained pressure against ISIS-K and prevented the group from reclaiming lost territory. ISIS-K continues to regroup and retains the ability to conduct high-profile attacks against civilian and government targets.

Pakistan continued to experience terrorist attacks in 2020. Pakistani military and security forces undertook CT operations against groups that conducted attacks within Pakistan, such as Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), ISIS-K, and the Balochistan Liberation Army. Pakistan took steps in 2020 to counter terror financing and restrain India-focused militant groups from conducting attacks. Pakistan convicted Lashkar e-Tayyiba (LeT) founder Hafiz Saeed and four other senior LeT leaders in multiple terrorism financing cases. The Sindh High Court overturned the 2002 convictions of Omar Sheikh and three co-conspirators for the 2002 kidnapping and murder of U.S. journalist Daniel Pearl on April 2 and ordered their release on December 24. Sheikh remained detained while provincial and federal officials' appeals continued through the end of the year.

Regionally, however, terrorist groups continued to operate from Pakistan. Groups targeting Afghanistan — including the Afghan Taliban and affiliated HQN, as well as groups targeting India, including LeT and its affiliated front organizations, and Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) — continued to operate from Pakistani territory. Pakistan did not take action against other known terrorists such as JeM founder and UN-designated terrorist Masood Azhar and 2008 Mumbai attack “project manager” Sajid Mir, both of whom are believed to remain free in Pakistan. Pakistan did make positive contributions to the Afghanistan peace process, such as encouraging Taliban reductions in violence. Pakistan made additional progress in 2020 toward completing its Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Action Plan, but did not complete all Action Plan items, and remained on the FATF “gray list.”



The United States continues to build its strategic partnership with the Government of India, including through bilateral engagements such as the 17th Counterterrorism Joint Working Group and Third Designations Dialogue in September, as well as the third 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue in October. Indian counterterrorism forces, at the federal and state levels, actively detected and disrupted transnational and regional terror forces. The National Investigation Agency examined 34 terrorism-related cases related to ISIS and arrested 160 persons, including 10 alleged Al Qaeda operatives from Kerala and West Bengal, in September.

In the wake of the 2019 Easter Sunday suicide attacks by ISIS-inspired terrorists, Sri Lanka continued efforts to enhance its counterterrorism capabilities and improve border security, including through engagement with the United States and other international partners, though progress on some cooperative initiatives stalled in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Sri Lankan police continued to cooperate with the FBI on the ongoing investigation into the 2019 Easter attacks. More than 100 suspects remain in custody. Sri Lankan indictments remained pending at year's end. The U.S. Department of Justice announced charges against three individuals for their roles in the killing of five U.S. citizens during the 2019 attacks.

In Maldives, the government continued to make progress bolstering its CT efforts. During 2020, the government focused its CT efforts on countering violent extremism and the arrest of Maldivians suspected of arson attacks, stabbings, and other terrorist activities. In October the Government of Maldives placed the first returning FTF into the newly established National Reintegration Center to facilitate rehabilitation and reintegration. However, the individual was later released owing to insufficient evidence. The center is preparing to open officially in the fall of 2021.

Bangladesh experienced a decrease in terrorist activity in 2020, accompanied by an increase in terrorism-related investigations and arrests. ISIS claimed responsibility for a February 28 IED blast near a police box in Chattogram and a July 31 attack at a Hindu temple in the Naogaon district. On July 24, a third attack occurred involving a small IED planted on a police motorcycle in Dhaka. Throughout 2020 the Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime Unit (CTTCU) and Rapid Action Battalion established deradicalization and rehabilitation programs, in addition to conducting investigations and arrests of suspected FTFs and community policing efforts.

Central Asian countries remained concerned about the potential spillover of terrorism from Afghanistan, because of instability in some Afghan provinces bordering Central Asian states, as well as the potential threat posed by the return of their citizens who traveled to Iraq or Syria to fight with terrorist groups, including ISIS. Additionally, Central Asian governments expressed concerns over the risk of radicalization to violence and recruitment by terrorist use of the internet and transnational terrorist networks among migrant workers traveling to Russia and other countries for employment. In December, Uzbekistan repatriated 98 family members of FTFs from Syria, providing them with rehabilitation and reintegration services.

Throughout 2020 some Central Asian governments engaged the United States on repatriation efforts of ISIS-associated family members, mostly women and children, from Iraq and Syria. Through the C5+1 (the United States plus the Central Asian countries), 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 issues.

International human rights organizations continued to express concern that some Central Asian governments used “extremism” laws to prosecute and convict political dissidents or religious activists with no ties to terrorism or violent extremism.

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## AFGHANISTAN

**Overview:** The United States partnered with Afghanistan on a bilateral counterterrorism effort through Operation Freedom’s Sentinel. The U.S. military, along with 37 other Defeat-ISIS Coalition nations, supported the ANDSF through NATO-led Resolute Support’s “Train, Advise, and Assist” mission. In 2020 the Taliban and the affiliated HQN continued attacks targeting Afghan civilians and government officials. Drawing largely from information compiled in 2019, the UN Security Council reported on May 27 that relations between al-Qa’ida and the Taliban remained close. ISIS-K continued to perpetrate high-profile attacks against civilians, journalists, religious minorities, and members of the international community. The attack trend in 2020 remained high, apart from a seven-day period before the signing of the U.S.-Taliban Agreement and three-day ceasefires for Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Qurban. ISIS-K, elements of al-Qa’ida (including affiliate AQIS), and terrorist groups targeting Pakistan, such as TTP, continued to use the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region as a safe haven.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** Attacks attributed to insurgent and terrorist activity continued at high levels in 2020. Militants conducted high-profile complex attacks involving multiple attackers, vehicle-borne IEDs (VBIEDs), and magnetically attached IEDs (or MAIEDs) to target ANDSF, government buildings, public infrastructure, and other civilian targets. However, attacks against provincial capitals and district centers declined. In addition, direct targeting of U.S. interests dropped significantly in 2020 owing to stipulations within the U.S.-Taliban agreement that prohibited Taliban attacks on foreigners. At year’s end, no U.S. servicemember had been killed on the battlefield since the February 29 signing of the agreement and announcement of the U.S.-Afghanistan Joint Declaration. Terrorist groups continued to torture, recruit, and use child soldiers and target attacks against religious minority groups and journalists. According to Resolute Support Mission reporting, between January 1 and September 30, insurgent and terrorist attacks were responsible for killing 1,818 civilians and wounding 3,488. Significant terrorist incidents in 2020 included the following:

- On March 7, after attacking a progovernment militia outpost in Herat province, the Taliban kidnapped and killed seven civilians.
- On March 6, at least 32 civilians were killed when gunmen attacked an event in Kabul attended by opposition leader Abdullah Abdullah.
- On March 25, ISIS-K gunmen attacked a Sikh temple in Kabul, killing 25 and injuring 11.
- On May 12, three ISIS-K gunmen killed 24 persons, including mothers and babies, and injured at least 20 in a complex attack involving gunmen and grenades at a Médecins Sans Frontières hospital maternity ward in a predominantly Shia neighborhood of Kabul.

- Two gunmen attacked Kabul University on November 2, killing 20 persons and wounding 28. ISIS-K took responsibility for the attack.
- On December 26, armed men killed women's rights activist Freshta Kohistani and her brother in Kapisa province. The government arrested two Taliban members in connection with the murders.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** The Afghan Attorney General's Office investigated and prosecuted violations of the laws prohibiting 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. General Command of Police Special Units continued to respond to militant attacks throughout Afghanistan. In October, President Ashraf Ghani tasked First Vice President Saleh with oversight of Kabul security, later adding 10 provinces under the government's "Security Charter" plan, launched in July in an effort to strengthen security and combat crime by building cooperation between Afghans and their security forces. Afghanistan's Security Charter was modeled on the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)-funded Citizen's Charter, which seeks to make service delivery more effective and citizen-centric.

Afghanistan continued to face significant challenges in protecting its borders, particularly those with Pakistan and Iran. Resource constraints, lack of training, corruption, and the COVID-19 pandemic impeded Afghan law enforcement and border security efforts. Afghan and Pakistani officials met August 31 under the bilateral Afghanistan-Pakistan Action Plan for Peace and Security (APAPPS) to discuss cross-border violence, potential intelligence sharing, and increased regional cooperation. President Ghani and Prime Minister Khan reaffirmed their commitment to APAPPS during Khan's November 19 visit to Kabul.

Afghanistan continued to process traveler arrivals and departures at major points of entry using the U.S.-provided Personal Identification Secure Comparison and Evaluation System (PISCES), a border security management system.

The Afghan government achieved some success in tracking and arresting terrorist suspects. On November 14 the National Directorate of Security announced the arrest of the alleged architect of the November Kabul University attack. On November 30, Afghan officials arrested two suspected would-be suicide bombers, one with links to the Taliban and the other to ISIS-K, before they reached their target in Nangahar province. OFS and ANDSF operations in January successfully denied ISIS-K the ability to regain a regional headquarters in Kunar province.

On December 10 the Ministry of Interior announced it had arrested the suspected killers of two prominent Afghan journalists: Ilyas Dayee, who died in a targeted bomb blast in Helmand province on November 12 after being threatened by the Taliban, and female news anchor Enikas Malala Maiwand, who was gunned down in an ISIS-K-claimed attack in Nangahar province on December 10. ANDSF benefited from Resolute Support's Train, Advise, and Assist capacity-building efforts.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Afghanistan is a member of the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering (APG). In line with FATF recommendations, Afghanistan's Financial

Intelligence Unit, the Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Center of Afghanistan, conducted a national money laundering and terrorist financing risk assessment in 2020.

**Afghan Peace Process:** Under the February 29 U.S.-Taliban Agreement, the Taliban committed to taking specific steps to prevent any group or individual, including al-Qa'ida, from using Afghan soil to threaten the security of the United States and its allies, including preventing any such group or individual from recruiting, training, and fundraising, and not hosting them or facilitating their entry into areas of Afghanistan controlled by the Taliban. The Taliban also committed to entering into intra-Afghan negotiations to determine the date and modalities of a permanent and comprehensive ceasefire and to reaching an agreement over the future political roadmap of Afghanistan. As part of the U.S.-Afghanistan Joint Declaration, announced on February 29, Afghanistan also reaffirmed its ongoing commitment to prevent any terrorist groups or individuals, including al-Qaida and ISIS-K, from using Afghan soil to threaten the security of the United States, its allies, or any other country. As confidence-building measures before the launch of peace negotiations, the Afghan government released 5,000 Taliban prisoners and the Taliban released 1,005 Afghans it had held hostage. Negotiations commenced in Doha, Qatar, on September 12.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** The Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs prioritized the countering of violent extremist theology throughout Afghanistan and educating imams to ensure they have a full understanding of Islam, reject extremism, and embrace tolerance.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** In May Foreign Minister Haneef Atmar participated in a trilateral meeting with Uzbekistan and the United States and discussed security cooperation, cross-border threats, and terrorism. In October, Atmar participated in a trilateral meeting with Turkmenistan and the United States and discussed improving security cooperation and information sharing.

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## BANGLADESH

**Overview:** Bangladesh experienced a decrease in terrorist activity in 2020, accompanied by an increase in terrorism-related investigations and arrests. In 2020 there were three specific terrorist incidents, resulting in no deaths. As in prior years, the Bangladeshi government denied Bangladesh-based terrorists have meaningful ties to transnational terror groups, including ISIS or AQIS. An appeal is pending before the Bangladeshi Supreme Court following the CT Special Tribunal's 2019 sentencing of seven individuals to death for supporting roles in the 2016 Holey Artisan Bakery attack, in which attackers claiming allegiance to ISIS killed 20 people, including one American. Ongoing deficits in Bangladesh's judicial system, magnified by the constraints of operating during a global pandemic, contribute to a decade-long backlog of terrorism cases and a conviction rate estimated at less than 15 percent. The Bangladesh government continued to articulate a zero-tolerance policy toward terrorism and the use of its territory as a terrorist safe haven. In January the government's new national Antiterrorism Unit began standing up operations, to eventually assume a role as a lead counterterrorism agency.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** Terrorist attacks in 2020 included the following:

- On February 28 there was an IED blast near a police box in Chattogram, and on July 31 there was an attack at a Hindu temple in the Naogaon district where a crude bomb was planted. ISIS claimed responsibility for both attacks. Two police and one civilian were injured in the Chattogram attack. No injuries or deaths resulted from the Naogaon attack.
- On July 24 a third attempted ISIS-inspired attack occurred involving a small IED planted on a police motorcycle in the Gulistan area of Dhaka, which later turned out to be fake.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** In 2020, Bangladesh's criminal justice system was still working to fully implement the Antiterrorism Act of 2009 as amended in 2012 and 2013. The seven CT Special Tribunals authorized under the Act adjudicated cases in 2020, including the 2015 murder of blogger and science writer Ananta Bijoy Das claimed by al-Qa'ida affiliate Ansar al-Islam. 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 may implement UNSCR 2396 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. U.S.-trained explosive detection K9 teams remain available to patrol Dhaka's international airport but are not a permanent presence. Bangladesh actively shared law enforcement information with INTERPOL but does not have a dedicated terrorist Alert List. However, the United States and Bangladesh continue to work on building Bangladesh's technical capacity to develop a national-level Alert List of known or suspected terrorists. Bangladesh does not systematically review or analyze Advance Passenger Information/Passenger Name Records (API/PNR). Bangladesh participated in a national-level workshop administered by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime's (UNODC's) Terrorism Prevention Branch to help strengthen implementation of these and other obligations to detect and prevent terrorist travel established in August under UNSCR 2396 .

Elements of the Bangladesh Police continued a campaign of arrests and raids against suspected militants. U.S. government-trained investigators used actionable intelligence to prevent an attack at the Hazrat Shajalal Shrine in Sylhet. Bangladesh law enforcement arrested six individuals in Sylhet who have been linked to the Naogaon and Chattogram attacks.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Bangladesh is a member and outgoing co-chair of the APG. The Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit is a member of the Egmont Group. There were no significant updates in 2020.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** Bangladeshi organizations continued cooperative activities through the Country Support Mechanism under the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund. The Ministry of Religious Affairs and the National Committee on Militancy, Resistance, and Prevention worked with imams and religious scholars to build public awareness about terrorism. The government included CVE in its National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security, and a U.S.-funded grantee mentored and developed the skills of at-risk youths to reduce the risk of their joining terrorist organizations. Law enforcement authorities worked with

local universities to identify missing students and curb terrorist radicalization among university students. Local research institutions, including private think tanks and both public and private universities, continued to engage in CVE-related research.

Throughout 2020 the CTTCU and the Rapid Action Battalion established “deradicalization and rehabilitation programs,” in addition to conducting community policing efforts and investigations and arrests of suspected FTFs.

The police engaged religious leaders to counter terrorist propaganda with scripture-based messages and engaged imams to speak to surrendered militants with their own messaging to explain that the Quran does not support terrorist violence.

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 2020.

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## INDIA

**Overview:** In 2020, terrorism affected the Indian Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), in northeastern India, and Maoist-affected parts of central India. Major terrorist groups that have been active in India include Lashkar-e-Tayyiba, Jaish-e-Mohammed, Hizbul Mujahideen, ISIS, al-Qa’ida in the Indian Subcontinent, and Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen. The Indian government made significant efforts to detect, disrupt, and degrade the operations of terrorist organizations within its borders. CT and security cooperation with the United States expanded in 2020. During September the United States and India held the 17th meeting of the Counterterrorism Joint Working Group and Third U.S.-India Designations Dialogue. In December, India proposed holding another Quad counterterrorism tabletop exercise alongside the United States, Australia, and Japan.

Indian forces arrested several members of al-Qa’ida ally Ansar Ghazwat-ul-Hind in J&K. Although insurgent groups operate in India’s northeastern states, levels of terrorist violence there are low and decreasing. The many organizations involved in the Sikh separatist (Khalistan) movement have not engaged in significant recent activities within India’s borders.

### 2020 Terrorist Incidents

- On May 2, armed men who had infiltrated across the Line of Control from the Pakistan-administered side of Kashmir took civilian hostages in a nearby village. Two army officers and three police personnel were killed in a gunfight in the resulting hostage rescue operation. Lashkar-e-Tayyiba and its offshoot, the Resistance Front, claimed that the hostage takers were members of the group.
- On July 8, terrorists killed a local politician along with his father and brother at their home in J&K. The Resistance Front took responsibility for the killing.
- On March 21, Maoists killed 17 members of Chhattisgarh’s District Reserve Guards and counterterrorism Special Task Force officials in an ambush in Sukma.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** There have been no changes in terrorism-related legislation since 2019.

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) is the lead agency for handling terrorism cases. State-level law enforcement agencies play a significant role in detecting, deterring, and preventing terrorism. Most states have created antiterrorism squads and “anti-Maoist” units for prevention, detection, and first response, with varying capabilities.

The National Security Guard (NSG) is the sole federal authority responsible for national counterterrorism response. With five regional hubs operational across India, the NSG has improved its response time and reduced past dependence on other agencies for logistics. Challenges include budget constraints and dependence on temporary details and volunteers from the armed forces.

Indian security agencies are effective in disrupting terror threats, although gaps remain in interagency intelligence and information sharing. The Indian Multi-Agency Centre (MAC) collaborates with the United States on exchanging terrorist screening information. In the absence of a National Counter Terrorism Center, the MAC conducts real-time collation and sharing of intelligence among federal and state security agencies. Several Indian states have established state-level MACs to disseminate terrorism information to law enforcement. Indian security forces demonstrate limited capacity to patrol and secure extensive maritime and land borders. India is implementing UNSCR 2396 to improve detection and deterrence of terrorist travel by using watchlists, implementing biographic and biometric screening at ports of entry, and expanding information sharing.

India collaborates with the United States on implementing UNSCR 2309 and is enforcing compliance with the dual-screen X-ray mandate for cargo screening at airport locations. There were 66 known Indian-origin fighters affiliated with ISIS, as of November. No FTFs were repatriated to India during 2020.

Indian counterterrorism forces, at the federal and state levels, actively detected and disrupted transnational and regional terrorist groups. The NIA arrested 10 alleged al-Qa’ida-affiliated operatives from Kerala and West Bengal on September 19 and 26. Through the end of September, the NIA had investigated 34 terrorism cases it indicated were related to ISIS and arrested 160 persons. The Kolkata Police counterterrorism Special Task Force on May 29 arrested Abdul Karim, the second-in-command of Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh, on suspicion of involvement in a 2013 bombing in Bodh Gaya.

India responds to U.S. requests for information related to terrorism investigations in a timely manner and makes efforts to mitigate threats in response to U.S. information. Over the past two years, collaborative efforts have disrupted terrorist travel and alerted U.S. authorities to possible threats in the United States and against U.S. interests.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** India is a member of FATF, APG, and the Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism (EAG). India’s Financial

Intelligence Unit is a member of the Egmont Group. In 2020 there were no major changes in legislation on countering terrorism financing.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** The Ministry of Home Affairs is the lead agency for CVE and maintains a counterterrorism and counter-radicalization division. There is no national CVE policy. State governments have the lead on CVE strategy. Consequently, efforts are uneven and led by local police departments, which often have limited interactions with community organizations and civil society. Five states (Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Maharashtra, Telangana, and Uttar Pradesh) have reportedly formulated CVE strategies.

CVE programs continued to target demographics considered to be at the highest risk of vulnerability for terrorist recruitment by groups such as al-Qa’ida in the Indian Subcontinent and ISIS.

Officials remain concerned about internet use for terrorist recruitment and radicalization to violence, as well as for fomenting interreligious tensions. In 2020 there were multiple reports in the media and from the NIA of suspected cases of online terrorist radicalization, particularly in southern Indian states. Mumbai is India’s only member of the Strong Cities Network.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** India is active in leadership roles in the following regional and international fora in 2020, where it has promoted multilateral CT cooperation:

- The Global Counterterrorism Forum (the GCTF)
- The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum
- The UN Counterterrorism Centre Advisory Board
- UNODC
- The Shanghai Cooperation Organization
- G20

India has agreed to share intelligence on terrorism with Sri Lanka and Maldives. India’s long-standing defense relationship with Russia extends to counterterrorism issues.

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## KAZAKHSTAN

**Overview:** Kazakhstan remained on guard against the potential for both externally directed and homegrown terrorist attacks. The government continued rehabilitation and reintegration efforts for more than 600 Kazakhstani FTFs and family members repatriated from Syria and Iraq in 2019, several dozen of whom faced criminal prosecution for participation in terrorist activity abroad. The government continued to implement its five-year (2018-22) program against “religious extremism” and terrorism, but ongoing restrictions on religious practice continued to prompt concerns among some outside experts that the government’s efforts may be counterproductive. NGOs expressed concern that laws aimed at countering extremism were used arbitrarily.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in Kazakhstan in 2020.



**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** Kazakhstan has a comprehensive CT legal framework. The country's lead CT agency is the Committee for National Security (KNB), which coordinates efforts at both the central and local levels. In 2018 the government approved an ambitious five-year, \$900 million program to counter "religious extremism" and terrorism. Law enforcement officers and prosecutors continued to have wide discretion to determine what qualifies as terrorism or extremism, leaving political opponents and promoters of unsanctioned religious groups vulnerable to prosecution.

Kazakhstani law bans its citizens from fighting in foreign wars. The government has taken a two-pronged approach to citizens returning from Iraq and Syria, prosecuting fighters and others suspected of active participation in terrorism while enrolling the remainder in rehabilitation programming and allowing them to reintegrate into their communities, where they had access to state-supported theological counseling and psychological, social, and educational services. In May, President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev signed amendments formalizing the legal basis for such assistance. In June, KNB publicly estimated that 90 Kazakhstani citizens remained in conflict zones in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria.

Law enforcement units demonstrated a strong capacity to detect, deter, and respond to terrorist incidents. Throughout 2020, KNB announced arrests of terrorist suspects, including two alleged supporters of the ISIS who were detained separately in Almaty and Nur-Sultan in March on charges of preparing attacks, as well as two alleged members of a "destructive religious movement" who were detained in Zhanaozen in August on charges of illegally manufacturing and distributing firearms. Courts continued to deliver harsh sentences for the promotion of "extremism" online. For example, in July, a man in Baikonur was sentenced to 3½ years in prison on charges of "inciting religious hatred" after distributing material deemed extremist on popular social networks. Local researchers have estimated that as much as 90 percent of charges filed under laws against terrorism and extremism do not involve violent acts or planned violent acts, and in some cases such charges appeared to be connected to political opposition activity. In November, officials publicly reported that about 1,000 Kazakhstani citizens had been imprisoned for terrorism and "extremism" in recent years.

Kazakhstan's Border Guard Service (part of the KNB) and other agencies proactively worked to prevent Kazakhstanis and foreign citizens with suspected terrorist links from traveling to, from, or through Kazakhstan in keeping with UNSCR 2396. These efforts included the use of specialized equipment to interdict suspicious or unauthorized travelers at both official and unofficial air, land, and sea crossing points. For example, in June, the Border Guards detained 12 Afghan citizens crossing Kazakhstan's southern border on foot after detecting their movement by drone. In November the Border Guards reported stopping nearly 100 individuals for violations of Kazakhstan's border along the Caspian Sea. Kazakhstan is also working to acquire and implement an API/PNR system to screen travelers.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Kazakhstan belongs to the EAG, and the Committee on Financial Monitoring of the Ministry of Finance is a member of the Egmont Group. In May, President Tokayev signed amendments to Kazakhstan's legislation on penalizing activities relating to money laundering and financing terror, in preparation for an EAG mutual evaluation in 2022. The amendments included changes to monitoring procedures for financial institutions, such as customer due diligence requirements, internal controls, and reporting of suspicious

transactions. The amendments also require more types of financial institutions, such as pawn shops and microfinance organizations, to implement these procedures. The Prosecutor General's Office reported that three terrorist financing cases were transferred to the court system during the first 10 months of 2020.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** Even as Kazakhstan's five-year strategy places a heavy emphasis on law enforcement, it also includes efforts to promulgate officially approved versions of Islam to youth and provide alternatives to what it describes as "extremism" through social programs and economic opportunities. Working with religious experts, psychologists, and theologians, the Ministry of Information and Social Development conducted direct outreach in communities across the country; maintained an educational website on religion, state policy, and prevention of terrorism; and operated a nationwide hotline offering consultations on religious questions. At the same time, the government continued to block online content it considered extremist. In November, officials publicly reported they had deleted 25,000 "illegal" materials from the internet and over the course of the year limited access to 13,000 others. The government also continued to implement rehabilitation and reintegration programs for individuals convicted of extremism-related offenses and their relatives, including those repatriated from Syria and Iraq. Kazakhstan supported 17 regional rehabilitation and reintegration centers for FTFs and family members repatriated from Syria and Iraq. Aktau and Karaganda became the first two cities in Kazakhstan to join the Strong Cities Network.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Kazakhstan partnered with the United States and international organizations such as UNDP, UNODC, and the OSCE on a variety of CT and CVE projects. For example, USAID piloted a life-skills curriculum for 75 technical and vocational students in Zhezkazgan to address specific vulnerabilities of youth in at-risk communities to violent extremism. The Department of State's CT Bureau also initiated technical assistance projects focused on prison-based and community-based rehabilitation and reintegration efforts for returnees from Syria and Iraq. As a member of the C5+1 diplomatic platform, Kazakhstan participates in the associated C5+1 Security Working Group, which concentrates on regional CT and CVE cooperation. Kazakhstan also participated in a national-level workshop implemented by UNODC on compliance with UNSCR 2396 in February.

Kazakhstan also participates in CT-related exercises and training through membership in the Collective Security Treaty Organization, the Commonwealth of Independent States, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). Kazakhstan's Parliament in February ratified the SCO Convention on Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism. The same month, KNB publicly reported that, since 2015, Kazakhstan had detained and extradited about 200 citizens of other SCO member states suspected of terrorist, "separatist," or "extremist" activity, while 30 Kazakhstani citizens had been similarly detained in other SCO countries. In May an Austrian court sentenced a Kazakhstani citizen to 12 years in prison for fighting with a group affiliated with the Islamic State in Syria; Kazakhstan requested his extradition, but Austria denied the request on the grounds that court proceedings in Kazakhstan would be inconsistent with the European Convention on Human Rights.

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## KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

**Overview:** The Kyrgyz Republic’s counterterrorism efforts continue to concentrate on rooting out “extremists,” CVE, limiting the flow of Kyrgyz FTFs, and preventing those returning from conflicts abroad from engaging in terrorist activities, by bolstering reintegration and rehabilitation efforts. Terrorist attacks in the country remain rare, but reports of terrorism-related arrests in 2020 underscore the potential threat. The Kyrgyz government restricts public information on national security issues, making it difficult to assess the efficacy of its CT operations and the extent of the threat. The country remains 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. According to government statistics, some 850 Kyrgyz citizens have left the country to join ISIS or other terrorist groups, but the true number is likely higher. The government faces limitations on its ability to investigate, prosecute, and rehabilitate returning FTFs owing to a lack of expertise, resources, and potential shortcomings in the legal framework.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in the Kyrgyz Republic in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** There were no significant changes to terrorism-related legislation in 2020. However, the penalty for “participation of a citizen of the Kyrgyz Republic in armed conflicts or hostilities on the territory of a foreign state or for terrorist training” was increased from five years’ imprisonment to a maximum of seven years, six months. There were no reports in 2020 of the government using CT laws to prosecute political opponents, although human rights observers note that courts sometimes stretch the definition of “intent to distribute” violent extremist material in a way to circumvent the 2019 decriminalization of possession of such materials.

The Kyrgyz Republic does not currently issue biometric passports but took steps in 2020 to establish them and expects to begin issuance in 2021. The government is working with the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism to acquire an API/PNR system for commercial flights. International organizations and Kyrgyz government officials have expressed concerns that the Prosecutor General’s Office and the State Committee for National Security (GKNB) lack the adequate tools and legal framework to properly prosecute citizens suspected of committing terrorist acts abroad. In November the State Border Service was moved under the control of the GKNB.

Authorities reported several “extremism” - or terrorism-related arrests in 2020, including of individuals accused of recruiting Kyrgyz citizens to fight in Syria. According to media reports, 44 people are currently in prison since voluntarily returning from fighting in Syria, although the Kyrgyz government has not repatriated any FTFs or family members to date. The GKNB arrested a Kyrgyz citizen on December 16 who had fought in Syria.

The Kyrgyz government made significant strides in regularly providing information to the U.S. government about Known or Suspected Terrorists and reporting lost and stolen travel documents to INTERPOL.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** The Kyrgyz Republic is a member of the EAG, and the State Financial Intelligence Service is a member of the Egmont Group. There were no significant changes to the Kyrgyz government's efforts and capacity related to countering the financing of terrorism in 2020. From January through September, the Financial Intelligence Unit sent 47 investigative requests on money laundering and financing terrorism to law enforcement bodies.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** The Kyrgyz government's national program and action plan on countering terrorism was in its third year of implementation in 2020. The government has done little to counter terrorist radicalization and recruitment. Civil society organizations have expressed concerns that the government used the national program and action plan to muzzle free speech and to stigmatize members of ethnic minority groups. Human rights NGOs reported that security services used laws pertaining to so-called extremist materials on the internet to disproportionately target for prosecution ethnic Uzbeks, especially those who followed social media accounts focused on Islam.

The Ministry of Education, with the State Commission for Religious Affairs (SCRA), continues to implement a curriculum for high school-aged students on "moderate" Islam and to identify terrorist recruitment tactics. The Ministry of Interior and the SCRA, in cooperation with local religious leaders and civil society, host CVE roundtables and seminars and produce public awareness and countermessaging material distributed across a range of media platforms, with much of the attention on countering radicalization to violence among youth and women. The SCRA works with the United Nations Population Fund on a project focused on countering radicalization to violence and extremism. The project, which is being implemented in 11 madrassas, concentrates on civic education, the role of Islam in Kyrgyz society, and recognition of recruitment of religious youth by terrorist groups. The SCRA and Mutakalim, an organization focused on peace building through religious tolerance, started a program on the internet on recruitment, especially the recruitment of vulnerable youth. A local NGO reported the government has blocked 371 "extremist" websites, including relatively large domains. The Kyrgyz government cooperates with the United Nations, the OSCE, and other international organizations and foreign governments to facilitate CVE training and other CVE-related assistance programs.

UNODC continues to work with the prison administration to secure violent extremists, while developing a system to ensure they are not able to radicalize other inmates. This includes developing strategies to manage the spread of violent extremism among prisoners and radicalization to terrorism. The program includes training, security upgrades, and implementation of internationally recognized best practices for the incarceration of terrorists. The SCRA and various government ministries participated in a conference to learn from Kazakhstan's experience of building rehabilitation and reintegration programs for women and children, to understand the challenges of repatriation and rehabilitation of returnees, and to

develop recommendations for the prevention of violent extremism. Bishkek became the first Kyrgyz city to join the Strong Cities Network.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Because of COVID-19, the Kyrgyz Republic was unable to participate in the usual slate of CT-related trainings. The People’s Republic of China (PRC) and Russia provided financial, organizational, and methodological assistance to law enforcement agencies in Central Asian countries including the Kyrgyz Republic, regularly conducting joint antiterrorist exercises, providing information on persons suspected of terrorism, and providing military technical assistance. Russia maintained a military base in the country. The Kyrgyz Republic, through the multilateral C5+1 framework, also participated and hosted a series of conferences on best practices for the return of FTFs and their families from Iraq and Syria.

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## MALDIVES

**Overview:** The Government of Maldives is cognizant of the threat of terrorist attacks and in 2020 concentrated its CT efforts on CVE and the arrest of Maldivians suspected of arson attacks, stabbings, and “supporting or promoting a terrorist organization.” Those within the penal system or involved in criminal gangs are at a heightened risk of terrorist radicalization. Maldives cooperates with international partners, including the United States, to strengthen CT efforts and capacity. In October, Maldives established a National Reintegration Center (NRC) to facilitate the rehabilitation and reintegration of returning FTFs and their family members. On October 15 the government placed a first, unexpected, returning FTF into the center. The individual was later released because of insufficient evidence, and the center is preparing to open officially in 2021.

### 2020 Terrorist Incidents

- In February, attackers stabbed three foreign nationals — two Chinese and one Australian at several locations in Hulhumalé. Following the attacks, three masked men claimed responsibility and affirmed their support for ISIS in an online video. Eight persons were subsequently arrested for their alleged involvement in the attack.
- In March, a police speedboat in Laamu Atoll was set on fire. There were no injuries or fatalities. Three individuals were charged in connection with the incident under the Antiterrorism Act.
- ISIS claimed responsibility for an April arson incident on Mahibadhoo Island in Alifu Dhaalu Atoll that destroyed eight sea vessels, including one police boat, according to ISIS’s online newsletter *al-Naba*. There were no injuries or fatalities, and no suspects have been arrested.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** The Antiterrorism Act is the primary legislation for preventing and prosecuting terrorism. Investigation, prevention, and responding to terrorist attacks fall under the mandate of the Maldives Police Service (MPS) and the National Counter Terrorism Center (NCTC), which is the leading government agency to prevent and respond to terrorist attacks. MPS transfers cases to the Prosecutor General’s Office for the duration of trials stemming from terrorism investigations. Responsibility for CT operations,

including investigations, primarily rests with MPS. Civil society sources and defense lawyers reported the need to define properly “probable and reasonable grounds” within the law to avoid misuse of the provision. The Maldives National Defense Force (MNDF), including the marines and coast guard, are also involved in CT response, and MNDF conducted multiple cooperative engagements with U.S. forces focused on CT operations. These engagements also enhance maritime security capabilities to increase Maldives’ maritime domain awareness and border security. The Government of Maldives continued cooperation with the United States to strengthen border security, including through the continued use of the U.S.-provided PISCES integrated border security management system to screen arriving and departing travelers, and through the Customs Department’s use of the World Customs Organization’s Global Travel Assessment System.

Police arrested eight suspects in relation to the February stabbing attacks in Hulhumalé; one individual remains in custody while the rest are subject to a one-year Monitoring and Controlling Order. The individuals were charged under the Antiterrorism Act. Three individuals were charged under the Antiterrorism Act in relation to the March attack in Laamu Atoll.

In August the criminal court, citing “detention for an excessive period of time” and a lack of sufficient evidence, released from police custody six men arrested and charged with supporting a terrorist organization and possession of materials supporting a terrorist organization, following a January raid on Maduvvari Island in Raa Atoll.

In November, MPS announced the arrest of eight Maldivian men following the “prevention of an alleged act of terrorism.” MPS had made no additional public announcement about the case by the end of the year.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Maldives is a member of the APG. The Maldives Monetary Authority has the mandate to notify police and relevant authorities in terrorist finance-related cases. In December the INTERPOL National Central Bureau in Malé signed an MOU with the Maldives’ Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) to allow the FIU access to INTERPOL’s secure information network. In August the Regulation on the Management of Confiscated Funds and Properties Related to Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism came into effect. The United States has worked with the Government of Maldives to strengthen its Anti-Money Laundering and Countering Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) efforts.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** Although President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih announced Maldives’ intent to facilitate the return and prosecution of Maldivian FTFs and families in Syria in 2019, there were no repatriations during 2020. In July, President Solih endorsed the National Action Plan on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE). In October the Minister of Home Affairs announced the establishment of the NRC for returning FTFs and the placement of the first FTF, a 34-year-old Maldivian man who had returned from Syria, into the NRC. The government did not formulate a rehabilitation and reintegration program for FTFs during the year but began plans to coordinate with the United States on these efforts. NCTC held multiple regional workshops and capacity-building exercises with both public and private sector groups, to include counternarrative creation and the role of the media in countering what it considers “violent extremism and terrorism.” It also formulated a communications strategy to guide

national efforts on CVE narratives. In partnership with the Ministry of Islamic Affairs and the Ministry of Family, Gender and Social Services, MPS launched PCVE programs in islands with “extremist” activities. Malé is a member of the Strong Cities Network.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** COVID-19 reduced the ability of government officials to participate in or host international and regional workshops on CT efforts. However, the Government of Maldives continued to work with multilateral and bilateral partners to strengthen CT efforts. In February, USAID launched its \$5 million Promoting Resilience in Maldives (or PRIME) program to reduce the threat and influence of terrorist organizations through activities that increase the resilience of vulnerable populations. Also, in February, a visiting EU delegation announced the launching of a new €2.5 million project to support Maldives’ efforts to counter terrorism and violent extremism. In May, Japan announced a roughly \$4.7 million grant to bolster Maldives Immigration and Maldives Customs Service border security efforts. NCTC, in collaboration with UNODC, conducted national- and regional-level capacity-building consultations and workshops focusing on addressing the rehabilitation and reintegration of returning FTFs and their families. NCTC also worked with UNDP Maldives, UNODC, and the United Nations Counter Terrorism Executive Directorate to increase capacity of law enforcement agencies and the legal sector and the resilience of civil society organizations.

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## NEPAL

**Overview:** Nepal experienced no acts of international terrorism directed against U.S. targets in 2020. While 2020 saw many small incidents of politically motivated violence, most incidents targeted large-scale infrastructure, government offices, or locations affiliated with political parties or officials. The Government of Nepal attributed most of the attacks to the Communist Party of Nepal, a political faction better known as Biplav, led by Netra Bikram Chand and which split from the former mainstream Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Center) in 2014. Nepal’s security services continue to monitor the Biplav Group, an insurgent group that sometimes engages in politically motivated acts of violence to attempt to achieve its goals. Throughout the year, Biplav organized numerous nationwide protests, which were frequently accompanied by IED attacks and other forms of violence throughout Nepal. In 2021, both government and Biplav sources confirmed that they were in negotiations aimed at bringing Biplav back into the political process through its renunciation of violence. Because of the open border with India and insufficient security protocols at the country’s sole international airport in Kathmandu, Nepal has and could be used as a transit or staging point for international terrorists.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** Domestic incidents included small bombings in various locations throughout the country, for which authorities blamed the Biplav Group. None of these attacks were directed against U.S. targets. The attacks employed real, hoax, or small IEDs. In total, Embassy Kathmandu, with assistance from Nepali law enforcement contacts, attributed to Biplav an estimated 21 arson attacks, 13 IEDs, 3 hoax IEDs, two abductions, four physical attacks, and one targeted torture and murder in 2020.

- From January 1 through 28, Biplav targeted private mobile phone company Ncell, carrying out numerous arson and IED attacks on cell towers in the central region of Nepal as part of a nationwide protest. The attacks destroyed 12 cell towers.
- During the March-June COVID lockdown, although limited in abilities and movement, Biplav carried out approximately four IED attacks, including several hoax IEDs, primarily directed at political targets. It is widely assessed that the attacks were intended to intimidate political candidates and rally support among marginalized populations.
- A particularly notable incident was the recent kidnapping, torture, and murder of a local schoolteacher, on December 8 in southeastern Nepal, who was targeted by Biplav for being a police informant. This incident likely was intended as a message to the community that suspected collaborators will be dealt with harshly.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** During the first two weeks of November, the Nepal Police arrested 14 leaders of the group. On November 23, police arrested more than 40 people associated with Biplav’s seventh anniversary celebration in an apparent crackdown on the entity. Elsewhere in Nepal, security forces defused or destroyed numerous IEDs, discovered multiple hoax IEDs, and responded to arson attacks that damaged or destroyed eleven vehicles.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Nepal is a member of the APG, and Nepal’s Financial Intelligence Unit is a member of the Egmont Group. There were no significant changes to report in 2020.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** Nepal does not employ strategic communications to counter violent extremist ideology. There are no government or civil society programs in Nepal to counter recruitment into violent extremism or rehabilitate former violent extremists. The government generally does not view terrorism — specifically violence motivated by extremist ideology originating from conflict/instability in the Middle East — as a significant threat in Nepal. Nepal is largely infertile soil for violent extremism propagated by international terrorist organizations. A more significant threat is non-Nepali international terrorist groups using Nepal as a transit/staging point or soft target.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Nepal is a signatory of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism. INTERPOL hosts an annual regional counterterrorism seminar, to which the Nepal Police sends two to three officers.

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## PAKISTAN

**Overview:** Pakistan experienced significant terrorist threats in 2020. The number of attacks and casualties was slightly higher than in 2019. Major terrorist groups that focused on conducting attacks in Pakistan included TTP and ISIS-Pakistan. Separatist militant groups conducted terrorist attacks against varied targets in Balochistan and Sindh provinces. Terrorists used a range of tactics to attack targets, including IEDs, VBIEDs, suicide bombings, and targeted assassinations.



Pakistan took steps in 2020 to counter terror financing and to restrain India-focused militant groups. The Pakistani government also continued to support the Afghan peace process. Pakistan made limited progress on the most difficult aspects of its 2015 National Action Plan to counter terrorism, specifically in its pledge to dismantle all terrorist organizations without delay or discrimination.

In February and again in November, a Lahore antiterrorism court convicted Lashkar-e-Tayyiba founder Hafiz Saeed on multiple counts of terrorism financing and sentenced him to five years and six months in prison. Pakistan did not, however, take steps under its domestic authorities to prosecute other terrorist leaders residing in Pakistan, such as JeM founder Masood Azhar and LeT's Sajid Mir, mastermind of the 2008 Mumbai attacks.

On April 2 the Sindh High Court overturned the 2002 convictions of Omar Sheikh and three co-conspirators for the 2002 kidnapping and murder of U.S. journalist Daniel Pearl. While the Supreme Court of Pakistan sustained the Sindh High Court's April decision, provincial and federal officials' appeals continued through the end of the year.

At the October FATF plenary, FATF member states acknowledged Pakistan's progress on its action plan and agreed to keep Pakistan on the FATF gray list through the 2021 plenary.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** Pakistan experienced numerous terrorist attacks in 2020, including the following:

- On January 10, a suicide bombing in a Taliban-linked mosque in Quetta killed at least 15 people and wounded 18 others. ISIS claimed responsibility for the attack.
- On June 29, four Balochistan Liberation Army militants carrying guns and grenades charged the security barrier of the Pakistan Stock Exchange in Karachi. In the ensuing gun battle with security personnel, eight persons — the four terrorists, three security guards, and a police official — were killed, while seven others were injured.
- On October 27, a five-kilogram IED with ball bearings exploded in Peshawar's Spin Jamaat Sumeria Madrassa during a religious lecture, injuring 136 present and killing 8. No group has claimed responsibility.
- On November 24, Counterterrorism Division (CTD) police killed a suspected terrorist carrying an explosive vest, a pistol, and two hand grenades as he tried to force his way into a Lahore CTD police station. There were no other casualties. TTP claimed responsibility for the thwarted attack.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** The Pakistani government continued to implement the Antiterrorism Act of 1997, the National Counterterrorism Authority (or NACTA) Act, the 2014 Investigation for Fair Trial Act, and major 2014 and 2020 amendments to the Antiterrorism Act, all of which give law enforcement, prosecutors, and courts enhanced powers in terrorism cases.

Military, paramilitary, and civilian security forces conducted CT operations throughout Pakistan against anti-state militants. Pakistani law allows for preventive detention, permits the death penalty for terrorism offenses, and authorizes specialized courts to try terrorism cases.

Pakistan collects biometric information at land crossings through 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.

Consistent with UNSCR 2178, returning FTFs may be prosecuted under Pakistani law.

In 2019, Pakistan implemented the World Customs Organization's Global Travel Assessment System and is collecting API data from at least two airlines.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Pakistan is a member of the APG. In 2018, FATF identified Pakistan as a jurisdiction with strategic deficiencies in its AML/CFT system and agreed to an action plan with the government to address deficiencies. At the October FATF plenary, FATF member states acknowledged Pakistan had largely addressed 21 of its 27 action plan items and partially addressed the remaining 6. FATF member states agreed to keep Pakistan on the FATF gray list through FATF's 2021 plenary.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** The government operated five "deradicalization" camps offering "corrective religious education," vocational training, counseling, and therapy. A Pakistani NGO administered the juvenile-focused Sabaoon Rehabilitation Center in Swat Valley, which it founded in partnership with the Pakistani military.

Some madrassas continued to teach violent extremist doctrine. While the government continued efforts to increase madrassa regulation, some analysts and madrassa reform proponents observed that many madrassas failed to register with the government, provide documentation of their sources of funding, or comply with laws governing acceptance of foreign students.

The Pakistani cities of Nowshera, Peshawar, and Quetta are members of the Strong Cities Network.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Pakistan participated in several multilateral fora where CT cooperation was discussed, including the GCTF, the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process, and the ASEAN Regional Forum.

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## SRI LANKA

**Overview:** In the wake of the 2019 Easter Sunday suicide attacks by ISIS-inspired terrorists, Sri Lanka continued efforts to enhance its CT capacities and architecture and improve border security, including through engagement with the United States and other international partners, though progress in some cooperative initiatives was stalled in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and parliamentary elections. The government continued an inquiry into the failures to act on available intelligence and take other measures that might have prevented the 2019 attacks. Criminal investigations into the attacks continued, with more than 100 suspects remaining in

custody, many of whom are detained under Sri Lanka's Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA). There have been no indictments to date. Human rights groups reported at least 22 PTA arrests were unrelated to the 2019 Easter Sunday attacks during 2020. Under the PTA, the ability to challenge detentions is limited.

While ISIS-inspired terrorists are considered the main terrorist threat in Sri Lanka, the government has expressed concerns about diaspora groups linked to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) — a designated Foreign Terrorist Organization that fought the government for 26 years until its military defeat in 2009 — trying to instigate violent extremist actions in Sri Lanka. Media and government officials reported on arrests of at least three LTTE-inspired or -linked Sri Lankan nationals found with explosive devices.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in Sri Lanka in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** The Government of Sri Lanka continued to use the PTA, enacted in 1979 as a wartime measure, which enables the police to exercise broad powers to search, arrest, and detain terrorist suspects without charges. On the final day of 2019, following the election of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa the previous month, the government withdrew from Parliament the draft Counter-Terrorism Act, intended to repeal and replace the PTA, citing the views of various stakeholders and lack of consensus on the text.

The Sri Lanka Police, moved under the authority of the Ministry of Defense in 2020, includes the Counter-Terrorism Investigation Division, which sits under the Criminal Investigation Division, and the Special Task Force, a paramilitary unit specializing in CT and counterinsurgency operations. The government reactivated the mandate of the Chief of National Intelligence, who reports to the Secretary to the Ministry of Defense, as coordinator for all intelligence agencies to address gaps in information-sharing highlighted by the 2019 Easter Sunday terrorist attacks.

Sri Lanka made efforts to bolster border and maritime security. The government set up two special surveillance units at Colombo's international airport, one to prescreen all electronic travel authorizations sent online by foreign nationals seeking entry visas, the other a plainclothes unit to observe passengers throughout the airport premises. The Sri Lanka Ports Authority was added as a member of the National Border Management Committee, which oversees all aspects of border management. In partnership with the International Organization for Migration, the government set up an integrated system for border management.

Sri Lanka conducted a national assessment to identify gaps in addressing the threat of IEDs in the areas of legislation, institutional arrangements, and investigative and forensic capacities.

Sri Lanka expanded its partnership with the United States to secure its maritime border. The U.S. Coast Guard, under the Department of State's Export Control and Related Border Security program, continued to train Sri Lankan Coast Guard and Navy personnel on maritime law enforcement and security operations, and the Government of Sri Lanka continued to cooperate with U.S. Customs and Border Protection and the Department of Energy through the container security "Megaports Initiative." The U.S. Department of Defense continues regular engagements with the Sri Lanka Navy Special Boat Squadron and Fast Attack Flotilla to enhance maritime security through the expansion of vessel board, search, and seizure capabilities.

Throughout the year, police investigated and arrested multiple individuals found with weapons and ammunition for alleged ties to the LTTE. These cases included an incident in which a former LTTE member sustained fatal injuries when an IED detonated while he was assembling it as part of an alleged plot to commemorate “Black Tiger Day” on July 5 with bomb attacks. His common law wife was later arrested, and a cache of weapons was recovered from her home. In another case, a couple was apprehended on December 2 while transporting a claymore mine on a bus traveling from Jaffna to Kandy; additional weapons and ammunition were recovered from their home in connection with an alleged plot to carry out attacks in the North and East.

Sri Lanka Police continued to cooperate with the FBI on the ongoing investigation into the 2019 Easter attacks. Police made several additional arrests during the year under the PTA in connection with those attacks. At year’s end, more than 100 suspects related to these attacks remained in custody. Indictments remained pending at year’s end.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Sri Lanka belongs to APG, and the FIU of Sri Lanka is a member of the Egmont Group. In 2020 the government reviewed and updated its list of designated persons and entities, under 2012 regulations, to implement UNSCR 1373, to include those related to the Easter Sunday attacks and others they identify as “Islamic extremists.” In 2020, Sri Lanka underwent its Mutual Evaluation report follow-up and was found to be either compliant or largely compliant in 31 out of 40 recommendations.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** The government collaborated with the multidonor Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund to design an investment strategy for a pilot program on preventing violent extremism in the country, concentrating primarily on ethnic and religious tension. The program is set to launch in 2021 through the selection of small subgrants to local civil society organizations.

The government carried out a buy-back program in February as a measure to reduce the number of small arms and light weapons (SALW) in circulation. With UNODC assistance, the government is preparing a comprehensive SALW abatement plan.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** UNODC implemented projects on CVE and preventing violent extremism, including creating a regional network of CVE practitioners.

The United States, the EU, the United Kingdom, Australia, Japan, and India have all pledged CT assistance, including through UNODC. Additionally, several other regional actors reportedly approached Sri Lanka on CT cooperation, including the PRC, Russia, and Pakistan. Sri Lanka is also a partner nation in the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism.

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## TAJIKISTAN

**Overview:** The Tajik government faced constraints in its efforts to improve the capacity of law enforcement agencies to combat terrorism, enhance border security, and detect terrorist financing owing to the outbreak of COVID-19. The government continued to assert that northern Afghanistan was a primary source of terrorist activity, and Tajik security officials continued to allege that thousands of militants, including FTFs, were present in Afghanistan’s northern

provinces. Tajik officials reported there were approximately 23 confrontations with militia groups along the 843-mile border with Afghanistan in 2020. There were no terrorist incidents reported in Tajikistan in 2020.

The Tajik government cooperates with international organizations such as the EU, the OSCE, and the United Nations, on combating terrorism.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in Tajikistan in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** Tajikistan's Parliament did not ratify any new security agreements.

The OSCE's Border Management Staff College in February held a roundtable discussion titled "Strengthening the Capacity of Border Security and Management Through Innovation in Education Approaches." Participants from Central Asian countries, including Tajikistan, discussed how education can be used to enhance the capacity of their border security and management agencies.

Travel document security and biographic and biometric screening capabilities were still lacking at ports of entry, particularly land crossings. Major entry points had access to INTERPOL data and other lists, but connectivity issues at smaller border posts remained a standing issue.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Tajikistan is a member of the Eurasia Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism (EAG), and the Financial Monitoring Department is a member of the Egmont Group. In 2020 the government continued to make efforts to improve the capacity of its banking sector to combat terrorism financing.

In February, the OSCE's Transnational Threats Department and UNODC convened a seminar in Dushanbe on disrupting the financing of terrorist networks. The seminar aimed to assist Tajik banking officials in implementing international standards on combating terrorist financing.

The National Bank of Tajikistan (NBT) Department of Financial Monitoring website continued to maintain a list of individuals and entities involved in terrorism, including those sanctioned under relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions. The NBT launched a national money transfer center that centralized the receipt of remittances from abroad. With the addition of this system, the NBT asserted it can monitor and regulate alternative remittances services, collect data on wire transfers, and monitor nonprofit organizations to guard against misuse of financing to sponsor terrorist activities. The NBT sometimes lists names of individuals who are not tied to terrorism but are members of banned political parties functioning outside of Tajikistan.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** In November the OSCE's Transnational Threats Department arranged a seminar where Tajik representatives from the Prosecutor General's Office presented the country's new draft national strategy and action plan on countering terrorism and violent extremism for 2021-25.

*Hedayah*, an internationally backed Countering Violent Extremism Center of Excellence, proposed assisting Tajikistan with implementing its Countering Violent Extremism National Action Plan and developing an effective communications strategy to counter radicalization to terrorism and recruitment of FTFs by building strategic communications capacity.

Tajikistan amended its criminal laws in 2015, allowing authorities to pardon Tajik FTFs who voluntarily return home from Iraq or Syria, express remorse for their actions, and renounce ties to foreign militant groups. Tajikistan continues to support the approximately 84 children of FTFs it repatriated from Iraq in 2019.

The Tajik government continued to place heavy restrictions on and imprison groups it classifies as extremist, including those groups' political and religious expression and activities. Panjakent became the first Tajik city to join the Strong Cities Network. With the addition of Panjakent to the network, the government took a step toward developing, implementing, and coordinating rehabilitation and reintegration initiatives that involve local authorities, communities, and civil society organizations.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** The government is a strong supporter of the C5+1 framework and serves as co-chair of the C5+1 Security Working Group. On November 12, Tajikistan hosted the most recent security working group, where participants from across Central Asian countries discussed efforts to strengthen border security and repatriate and integrate foreign terrorist fighters. Tajikistan also actively participated in regional security arrangements such as the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. The nation continued bilateral cooperation with other countries related to CT issues, including Russia and the PRC. Additionally, Tajikistan hosts Russia's largest foreign military base while the PRC maintains a border outpost in the country.

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## TURKMENISTAN

**Overview:** In 2020 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. Turkmenistan actively cooperates with international organizations and participates in the C5+1 regional framework to counter international terrorism, even as it continued to claim in 2020 that no nationals of Turkmen origin were in custody in northeast Syria. Turkmen authorities maintain close surveillance on the country's population and its borders.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in Turkmenistan in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** There were no reported changes in 2020.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** In 2020 the Turkmen government worked with the United Nations and the OSCE on countering terrorism finance, and Turkmen government officials attended trainings on responding to terrorist threats and combating money laundering. The government regulates alternative remittance services, collects data on wire transfers, and monitors non-profit organizations as part of a broader effort to prevent misuse of

financing and sponsorship of terrorist activities. Turkmenistan belongs to the EAG. In November, representatives from the Ministry of Finance and Economy took part in the 33rd EAG meeting to enhance cooperation among member states and strengthen anti-money laundering and counterterrorism finance measures at the national level, in particular in the context of the coronavirus pandemic. The Financial Monitoring Service of Turkmenistan became a member of the Egmont Group in July 2019.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** In 2020 the Government of Turkmenistan cooperated with international organizations and participated in the C5+1 regional framework on countering violent extremism. In February the Permanent Mission of Turkmenistan to International Organizations in Vienna presented the National Strategy for the Prevention of Violent Extremism and the Fight Against Terrorism for 2020-24. The strategy was developed with the assistance of the UN Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia and the UN Counter-Terrorism Office and was approved by the President of Turkmenistan in December 2019. The Government of Turkmenistan continued to place heavy restrictions on and imprison groups it classifies as extremist, including those groups' political and religious expression and activities.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Turkmenistan works with international and regional organizations such as the UN Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia, UNODC, the UN Counter-Terrorism Centre, the EU, and the OSCE.

As a member of the C5+1 diplomatic platform, Turkmenistan participates in the associated Security Working Group, which focuses on regional CT cooperation. In June the U.S. Secretary of State and the Foreign Ministers of the five Central Asian states met virtually in the C5+1 format to discuss multilateral efforts to build economic resilience and strengthen security in the region. The participants agreed to continue within the framework of the C5+1 Security Working Group to increase border security and counter terrorism and violent extremism. In October, Turkmenistan participated in a trilateral meeting with the United States and Afghanistan and expressed support for expanding cooperation with Afghanistan on border security, counternarcotics, and counterterrorism. The Government of Turkmenistan stated its full support for the Afghan peace process and offered to host peace talks in Ashgabat.

In February, Turkmenistan and Russia held consultations at the deputy foreign minister level to discuss countering terrorism finance and transnational crime in the Caspian region. The talks focused on identifying and suppressing sources and channels of financing terrorism, countering the spread of violent extremism and cross-border movements of foreign terrorist fighters, and coordinating positions within key multilateral platforms.

In 2020, Turkmen Foreign Minister Rashid Meredov held several virtual meetings with multilateral organizations to discuss regional security and counterterrorism in Central Asia. In November, FM Meredov took part in a videoconference with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan to discuss progress in the intra-Afghan peace talks and the importance of combating terrorism and cross-border crime. Later that month, FM Meredov also met virtually with UNODC to discuss increasing cooperation to counter transnational organized crime, terrorism, and illicit drug trafficking. FM Meredov also took part in November's 16th EU-

Central Asia Ministerial Meeting, which covered regional cooperation in addressing drug trafficking, transnational organized crime, human trafficking, and cybersecurity threats. During the ministerial, the EU and Central Asian foreign ministers agreed that an immediate ceasefire was necessary to advance the intra-Afghan reconciliation process and that a prosperous Afghanistan free of terrorism was vital for the development of the entire region.

During the December U.S.-Turkmenistan Annual Bilateral Consultations, both sides emphasized the significance of the Afghan peace process for regional security and the importance of formats such as the C5+1 and the recent trilateral U.S.-Turkmenistan-Afghanistan talks. The two sides also discussed expanding cooperation on border protection and combating drug trafficking.

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## UZBEKISTAN

**Overview:** The Government of Uzbekistan remained concerned about the potential spillover of terrorism from Afghanistan and its Central Asian neighbors, the return of ISIS fighters from Iraq and Syria, and terrorist radicalization of Uzbekistanis abroad. The government repatriated 98 FTF family members from Syria in 2020. The government has actively worked to improve its implementation of existing laws, including updating existing anti-money laundering/countering financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) legislation, but it has not yet adopted a draft national CT strategy and action plan. Uzbekistan continued its active cooperation with others in the region and beyond, including in security. Uzbekistan remains an active participant in the C5+1 diplomatic platform, which includes a focus on CVE.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in Uzbekistan in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** There were no significant changes to nonfinancial terrorism-related legislation and law enforcement practices in 2020. The Law on Combating Terrorism governs terrorism-related investigations and prosecutions and identifies the State Security Service (DXX) as the lead CT law enforcement agency. The DXX, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the National Guard have dedicated CT units. Uzbekistan also criminalizes terrorism under its criminal code, and the National Development Strategy for 2017-21 targets corruption, extremism, and terrorism.

Uzbekistani 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 implemented an international biometric passport. Also, while Uzbekistan had mostly completed the conversion of all internal passports to a new biometric version, in 2020 it adopted a resolution to replace all internal passports with a new ID card. Uzbekistan will begin issuing the new ID cards in 2021 and completely phase out internal passports by 2030.

Uzbekistan has reported the development of an API/PNR system in line with requirements under UNSCRs 2309 and 2396. The government expects to complete the pilot phase by 2021. Additionally, Uzbekistan participated in a national-level workshop implemented by UNODC on compliance with UNSCR 2396 in December.



International human rights NGOs criticized Uzbekistani laws relating to extremism, arguing these laws allowed for arbitrary interpretation and application.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Uzbekistan belongs to the EAG, and Uzbekistan’s FIU is a member of the Egmont Group. Existing AML/CFT legislation was amended in 2020 to require commercial banks to report on transfers abroad of more than \$10,000 per month by individuals and to require payment processing services and electronic money platforms to conduct customer due diligence, risk management for money laundering, and the detection of suspicious transactions. These two developments should enhance Uzbekistan’s ability to combat terrorist financing. But serious questions remain about the effectiveness of Uzbekistan’s battle against terrorist financing. Government officials received U.S.-funded training in 2020 that will support the ability to conduct financial investigations, improve interagency coordination on AML/CFT, and prepare for the upcoming EAG assessment of Uzbekistan’s compliance with international FATF standards in 2021.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** Uzbekistan remains concerned about the so-called radicalization of Uzbekistanis, including among labor migrants in Russia and other countries. Local government organizations continued to educate citizens about the dangers of what they call religious extremism. International human rights observers have voiced concerns that authorities have in the past used extremism laws to arbitrarily suppress religious practice. The government has developed advertisements and funded other projects specifically targeting migrants deemed to be at high risk of terrorist radicalization. Official media and civil society organizations produced public messages about the dangers of so-called extremism and posted them on social media platforms and messaging apps.

The Government of Uzbekistan has publicly endorsed the repatriation and formal prosecution of citizens previously engaged or suspected of being engaged in terrorist activities. It has also endorsed the repatriation, rehabilitation, and reintegration of all family members of FTFs. In 2020 the government repatriated 98 FTF family members from Syria, bringing the total number of Uzbekistani nationals repatriated from Syria and Iraq in the government’s “Mehr” operations to 318. The government continues to work to reintegrate FTF-associated family members into their home communities and has identified suitable families for unaccompanied minors or placed them in orphanages. In close cooperation with UNICEF, the government provided a mix of national- and local-level social services to help reintegrate the returnees and continually monitors their progress.

The national strategy on “Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Terrorism,” developed in 2019 by an interagency working group coordinated by the Uzbekistani National Security Council and supported by the OSCE, remains under review by the Cabinet of Ministers. Formal adoption is expected in 2021. The government continued to play an active role in the Central Asia + United States regional CVE framework. This included a virtual C5+1 regional workshop on CVE.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Uzbekistan is a member of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. In 2020, Uzbekistan continued its participation in the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee and the OSCE Action Against Terrorism Unit. During the 2020 SCO Summit, President Mirziyoyev proposed increased cooperation and information sharing among

member states in countering the threats of terrorism and extremism. SCO's Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure remains headquartered in Tashkent, and Uzbekistan participated in its Peace Mission 2020 exercise, held in Russia. Uzbekistan also remains engaged in CT-related activities with the Commonwealth of Independent States, of which it held the Chairmanship of the Executive Committee in 2020. In December, Uzbekistan and Russia conducted a joint military exercise in Uzbekistan with a CT focus. In addition, Uzbekistan continued bilateral cooperation with other countries related to CT issues, including India and the PRC.

In 2020, U.S. Central Command in coordination with supporting DoD agencies conducted CT and border security activities with the Ministry of Defense, the National Guard, and the State Border Troops of the DXX. These included exchanges and CT-focused seminars. From February 24 through March 2, Uzbekistan hosted the bilateral Invincible Sentry 20 exercise with USCENTCOM and other U.S. government agencies. The exercise was designed to build readiness and interoperability between U.S. and Uzbekistan forces in response to regional crises or contingencies. Uzbekistan continued its active engagement in the C5+1 diplomatic platform, including a Security Working Group meeting in November. The government also hosted or participated in U.S.-funded regional lessons-learned workshops on repatriation and reintegration, including a large event attended by all Central Asian countries in March that was hosted in Tashkent.

## WESTERN HEMISPHERE

### Overview

During 2020, terrorism presented challenges to the security of countries throughout the Western Hemisphere. Global terrorist organizations — including ISIS, al-Qa'ida, and Hizballah — have a limited presence or small pockets of supporters in the region that include nationally or locally oriented groups, such as the National Liberation Army (*Ejército de Liberación Nacional*, or ELN) and Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), dissidents in Colombia and Shining Path/*Sendero Luminoso* in Peru. Compounding the global COVID-19 pandemic, corruption, weak government institutions, insufficient interagency cooperation, weak or nonexistent legislation, and a general lack of resources remained obstacles to improving security in 2020. Nevertheless, governments in the Western Hemisphere made significant progress in their counterterrorism efforts and strengthened regional cooperation against terrorism.

The Lebanon-based and Iran-backed terrorist group Hizballah continued its long history of activity in the Western Hemisphere, including fundraising by its supporters and financiers in the region, such as in the Tri-Border Area where the borders of Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay meet. Hizballah supporters generate funding through licit and illicit activity and donate undetermined amounts to Hizballah in Lebanon, which uses the funds to advance its broader terrorist agenda. In recent years, Hizballah supporters and members have been identified in Chile, Colombia, Peru, and Panama and in the United States. In January, Colombian President Iván Duque declared Hizballah a terrorist organization. In July, Argentina's domestic terrorist registry effectively extended the listing of Hizballah, Hizballah's External Security Organization, and senior Hizballah leaders for at least another year.

While most Western Hemisphere countries reported no terrorist incidents in 2020, Colombia, Paraguay, Peru, and Venezuela all experienced significant terrorist activity. Colombian FARC dissident groups and the ELN continued to commit acts of terror throughout Colombia, including bombings, violence against civilian populations and demobilized FARC members, kidnappings, attacks against utilities infrastructure, and violent attacks against military and police facilities. Paraguay reported alleged elements of the Paraguayan People's Army continued to conduct kidnappings and sabotage operations. Peru's overall numbers of terrorist attacks and deaths of security forces attributable to terrorism increased in 2020. Security forces died in five terrorist incidents. In September, Venezuelan press reported 19 persons died, including 4 military personnel, in a shootout between the Venezuelan Armed Forces and the FARC dissident 10th front, associated with dissident leader Gentil Duarte, in Apure state.

Foreign terrorist organizations remained actively engaged in illicit finance schemes in the Southern Cone. On December 16 the Argentine federal police arrested a Russian woman in Mar del Plata with an outstanding INTERPOL Red Notice for financing ISIS. Brazil reported progress mitigating the shortcomings identified in the Financial Action Task Force's (FATF's) third-round mutual evaluation report from 2010 and worked to address the remaining deficiencies ahead of its mutual evaluation, scheduled for 2021. Panama updated Chapter 5 of its National Risk Assessment, which relates to terrorism financing. Since the beginning of 2020, the Panama Maritime Authority de-flagged more than 40 vessels for violating U.S. or UN

sanctions relating to Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Syria, and Venezuela. Paraguay continued to implement a 2019 package of 10 anti-money laundering laws and passed new legislation to improve the administration of seized assets in preparation for the Financial Action Task Force of Latin America mutual evaluation. That evaluation began in 2019, but completion was delayed until 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Paraguay also passed two Presidential Decrees related to money laundering and terrorist financing investigations and National Country Risk Assessments. The FIU of Peru published a guide for the implementation of the Asset Laundering and Terrorist Financing Prevention System in the foreign exchange trading sector. Illegal gold mining is the number-one source of money laundering in Peru, at an estimated \$927 million from January through September. In February, FATF removed Trinidad and Tobago from countries listed as Jurisdictions Under Increased Monitoring (the FATF “gray list”). Trinidad and Tobago had been subject to heightened oversight since 2017. The Government of Trinidad and Tobago also listed nine individuals and entities under the Antiterrorism Act and froze their assets, including Emraan Ali, a U.S. citizen born in Trinidad and Tobago, who was charged in U.S. federal court for providing and attempting to provide material support to ISIS.

Many countries in the region are concerned with and took steps toward countering violent extremism (CVE). The Government of Argentina systematically issued statements of condemnation against major acts of terrorism. The Brazilian Congress and various government agencies, including the Brazilian Federal Police and the Ministry of Foreign Relations, organized or participated in conferences addressing international terrorism, with an emphasis on countering “online radicalization and preventing the use of the internet for terrorist purposes.” Colombia continued to employ a modern, multi-agency approach to CVE. President Iván Duque of Colombia signed decrees in April and July allowing individual demobilization for members of organized armed groups, including FARC dissidents. Peru’s multisectoral Valleys of the Rivers Apurímac, Ene, and Mantaro Rivers (VRAEM) 2021 Development Strategy, part of Peru’s bicentennial vision, fostered alternative development and social inclusion to complement aggressive action against *Sendero Luminoso* (SL) terrorism, propaganda, and recruitment.

Several Western Hemisphere governments took concrete steps to enhance legislation, law enforcement, and border security, while others faced challenges. Canada reported eight legal activities affecting the investigation and prosecution of terrorism offenses and six new terrorism prosecutions. In January, Colombian and U.S. agencies concluded a memorandum of understanding to exchange terrorism screening information to enhance border security in both countries. Panama used an executive decree to control dual-use goods and adopted a national control list for dual-use goods in accordance with UNSCR 1540 obligations. The country also established an executive decree to address chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear incidents. Panama continued to cooperate with U.S. law enforcement on CT cases involving individuals linked to Hizballah. The Paraguayan government made use of a 2013 counterterrorism law that allows for the domestic deployment of the Paraguayan military to counter internal or external threats and collaborated with Argentina and Brazil on border security initiatives, regional exchanges, and law enforcement projects, although the closure of borders during the COVID-19 pandemic hindered in-person exchanges. Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay coordinated law enforcement efforts in the Tri-Border Area through their Trilateral Tri-Border Area Command. Peru highlighted four joint military and police counterterrorism operations. Argentina’s plans to introduce changes to the criminal code to reform its legal framework for

terrorism cases remained delayed in 2020. Citing peace negotiation protocols, Cuba refused Colombia's request to extradite 10 ELN leaders living in Havana after that group claimed responsibility for the 2019 bombing of the National Police Academy in Bogotá that killed 22 persons and injured 87 others. Cuba harbored several U.S. fugitives from justice wanted on charges related to political violence, many of whom have resided in Cuba for decades. A December reform to Mexico's National Security Law regulated the interaction between Mexican officials and foreign agents, which could potentially slow information exchanges on law enforcement and counterterrorism efforts. Trinidad and Tobago's counterterrorism institutions faced challenges related to staffing, funding, and coordination.

Authorities in the Western Hemisphere actively participated in multilateral and regional efforts to counter terrorism. Colombia in January hosted the third Western Hemisphere Counterterrorism Ministerial in Bogotá in January, where Colombian President Iván Duque declared Hizballah a terrorist organization. Also in January, President Duque chose to declare every entity on the U.S. Foreign Terrorist Organization list a terrorist organization, except for the FARC, which signed the 2016 Peace Accord and which the Colombian government no longer considers a terrorist organization. Peru offered to host the next ministerial conference in 2021. The Organization of American States' Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism (OAS-CICTE) held its 20th regular session September 25. The Dominican Republic was confirmed as 2020-21 chair and Guyana as co-chair. Fourteen OAS member states, including the United States, participated in the OAS-CICTE Inter-American Network Against Terrorism. This network helped partners to implement UNSCR 2396 information sharing obligations and increased communication among OAS member states on terrorist travel, terrorist designations, and efforts to address terrorism financing.

The OAS-CICTE hosted virtual workshops on cybersecurity in Panama. The Governments of Panama and Paraguay partnered with and completed the OAS-CICTE's three-year project, "Technical Assistance for Implementation of Financial Sanctions Against Terrorism." Trinidad and Tobago was scheduled to host a regional conference on counterterrorism and CVE in partnership with the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the UN Office of Counterterrorism in March that was postponed because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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## ARGENTINA

**Overview:** In 2020, Argentina concentrated its counterterrorism strategy on the Tri-Border Area (TBA) of Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay, where suspected terrorism financing networks operate. U.S.-Argentine law enforcement and security cooperation continued in 2020. No terrorist acts occurred in Argentina in 2020. The investigation into the 1994 terrorist attack on the Argentine Jewish Mutual Association (AMIA) continued but did not yield any convictions for accused perpetrators. Argentina maintained Hizballah's listing on its domestic designation registry of terrorist groups and entities for the second year.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in Argentina in 2020.

The lack of justice for the 1994 AMIA bombing remained in the news, as did developments in several investigations of the attack itself and the failures of justice in the aftermath. On June 25,

a Federal Appeals Court decided to extend the investigative stage of the core AMIA case for at least six months, rejecting a motion from the defense to close the case because of the statute of limitations. On November 25 the AMIA Special Prosecutors Unit charged Carlos Telleldín as a participant in the attack and requested a sentence of life imprisonment for allegedly and knowingly providing the vehicle used in the bombing to members of Hizballah. On December 23 a federal trial court announced that it had acquitted Telleldín, although the court's arguments for acquittal were not released at the time. Lawyers for AMIA announced their intent to appeal.

In August, federal prosecutors formally requested that the court begin the oral trial stage for Vice President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner and several former associates accused of treason for allegedly engaging in a 2013 bilateral agreement with Iran to cover up Iran's involvement in the AMIA attack, a case commonly referred to as the "Iran MOU" case. Oral debate is expected to begin in 2021.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Argentina is a member of the FATF and of the Financial Action Task Force of Latin America (GAFILAT), a FATF-style regional body. Its FIU, the Financial Information Unit Argentina, is a member of the Egmont Group. The TBA is one of the principal routes into Argentina for multi-billion-dollar trade-based money laundering (TBML), counterfeiting, drug trafficking, and other smuggling operations. In addition, many of the money laundering organizations in the TBA have known or suspected links to the terrorist organization Hizballah. Argentina lacked adequate controls at points of entry to prevent cross-border transport of contraband and bulk cash, particularly with respect to outbound enforcement; however, reduced cross-border volume attributable to coronavirus restrictions netted increased seizures of narcotics and other contraband in border areas. The cash-intensive economy and large informal financial sector in Argentina created additional opportunities for criminals to launder illicit proceeds, and authorities detected numerous TBML schemes. In Mar de Plata, on December 16, the federal police arrested a Russian woman with an outstanding INTERPOL Red Notice for financing ISIS.

The U.S. Department of State funded the Department of Justice to implement capacity-building activities and training focused on counterterrorism. These programs strengthened Argentina's ability to identify and disrupt trade-based money laundering, smuggling, and other transnational crimes linked to terrorist financing and shared best international practices on judicial cooperation to combat terrorism and its financing. Argentine law enforcement, border security, judiciary, and prosecutorial agencies participated in activities to combat the financing of terrorism, including money laundering. Further information on money laundering and financial crimes is presented in the *2020 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report, Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

In July the listing of Hizballah, Hizballah External Security Organisation, and senior Hizballah leaders on Argentina's domestic terrorist registry was effectively extended for at least another year.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** There were no major changes to counterterrorism legislation in 2020.

Multiple security agencies maintained specialized law enforcement units with substantial capabilities to respond to terrorist incidents. Argentina continued to develop its nationwide network of law enforcement Intelligence Fusion Centers. The Ministry of Security and its federal security forces incorporated biometric data into their fight against international terrorism and transnational crime.

Argentina contributed intelligence and analysis activities through participation in the Tripartite Command, an interagency security mechanism created by Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay to exchange information and combat transnational threats, including terrorism, in the TBA.

Argentina maintained prosecution and analysis capabilities within the Attorney General's Office through the Counter Terrorism Secretariat, created in 2018 to support federal prosecutors in the investigation of terrorism and terrorist financing cases. The Attorney General's Office Special Prosecutors Unit for Economic Crimes led the investigation of terrorist financing in coordination with the FIU.

In 2019, Argentina approved the National Terrorist Financing and Financing of Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction Risk Assessment. The National Committee for Combating Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing started to develop the National Money Laundering Risk Assessment as a part of the national strategy to prepare for the Fourth Round FATF Mutual Evaluation in 2021.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** The Government of Argentina systematically issued statements of condemnation against major acts of terrorism.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Argentina participated in the third Western Hemisphere Counterterrorism Ministerial in Bogotá in January and the OAS-CICTE annual meeting in September. Argentina participated in the first experts-level meeting of the Regional Security Mechanism (RSM) with the United States, Brazil, and Paraguay, in 2019, in Asunción. The RSM, established earlier that year to facilitate security coordination, including counterterrorism, among member states, did not hold any meetings in 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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## **BRAZIL**

**Overview:** Brazil and the United States maintained strong counterterrorism cooperation in 2020, building on collaborative efforts underway since the 2016 Summer Olympics. The Brazilian Federal Police (PF), 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 supported CT activities through third-country technical assistance to control sensitive technologies and investigate fraudulent travel documents.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in Brazil in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** There were no major changes to counterterrorism legislation in 2020.

On February 6, Carlos García Juliá was extradited to Spain after being convicted of participating in a 1977 terrorist attack in Madrid and imprisoned in Brazil since December 2018. A former member of the far-right group Fuerza Nueva, García Juliá was convicted in Spain in 1980 as one of the authors of a terrorist action targeting a local Communist Party leader in which three labor lawyers, a law student, and an administrative official were killed. García Juliá, who had been a fugitive from Spanish justice since the early 1990s, was arrested in 2018 in São Paulo, where he lived under a fraudulent Venezuelan identity and worked as an Uber driver.

In 2019 the Brazilian Ministry of Justice and Public Security and the FBI completed an information-sharing arrangement that creates a framework for Brazil to adopt a U.S.-standard biometrics collection system. The joint biometrics program's mission is to counter identity fraud-based travel in São Paulo's Guarulhos International Airport and in the Tri-Border Area (TBA) of Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay, with training and the program launch scheduled to take place in 2021.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Brazil is a member of FATF, as well as the 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 work to address the remaining deficiencies ahead of its mutual evaluation scheduled for 2021.

On March 6, President Bolsonaro established the Working Group on the National Assessment of Money Laundering Risks, Financing of Terrorism, and Financing for the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction to meet FATF obligations.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** The Brazilian Congress and various government agencies, including PF and Ministry of Foreign Relations, organized or participated in conferences addressing international terrorism, with a particular emphasis on countering "online radicalization and preventing the use of the internet for terrorist purposes."

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Brazil participated in regional counterterrorism fora, including the OAS-CICTE, the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) Joint Working Group on Counterterrorism, and the Southern Common Market's working group on terrorism, notably the sub-working group on financial issues. Brazil actively coordinated law enforcement efforts with Argentina and Paraguay in the TBA by means of the Trilateral Tri-Border Area Command.

Brazil remained an active member of the Regional Security Mechanism (RSM) established in 2019. The RSM, which did not hold any meetings in 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic, aims to facilitate security coordination, including counterterrorism, between member states.



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## CANADA

**Overview:** During the summer and fall, media reported several cases of Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) members' association with right-wing violent extremist groups, an issue that has plagued CAF for several years. In October, Defense Minister Sajjan publicly denounced violent "extremists" and promised swift action to address this challenge.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** The following terrorist attacks occurred in Canada:

- On February 21, Saad Akhtar allegedly killed a Toronto woman in a hammer attack inspired by violent radical Islamic beliefs. He faces a charge of "first-degree murder — including terrorist activity."
- On February 24 a minor stabbed two victims, one fatally, at a Toronto erotic massage parlor in an attack linked to the involuntary celibate movement. The individual faces charges of "first-degree murder — terrorist activity" and "attempted murder — terrorist activity."
- On September 12, Guilherme Von Neutegem killed a volunteer caretaker at a Toronto mosque. Authorities have charged him with first-degree murder. Neutegem is allegedly a neo-Nazi supporter, based on review of his social media activity.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** In 2020 the following legal activities affecting the investigation and prosecution of terrorism offenses occurred:

- The National Security and Intelligence Review Agency received a complaint in January concerning Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) actions in the U.S. arrest of Toronto resident Abdulrahman El Bahnasawy. El Bahnasawy's parents have alleged the RCMP knew of their son's medical conditions and should have sought treatment for him.
- Ottawa professor Hassan Diab in January filed a lawsuit against the Canadian government for CAD 90 million in damages based on his extradition to France and subsequent imprisonment connected to a 1980 bombing near a Paris synagogue. French officials later dropped the investigation for lack of evidence.
- An Ontario Superior Court in February ordered Omar Khadr to answer questions related to a wrongful death suit emanating from a confession he signed during his time as a detainee at Guantanamo Bay. Khadr claimed he did not present a defense to the Utah-based suit, owing to lack of funds, and argued that enforcement of the Utah judgment would be contrary to Canadian public policy.
- In an opinion published in July, Canada's Federal Court ruled May 15 that the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) obtained some terrorism-related warrants for alleged foreign fighters based on illegally acquired information. The government later announced it had begun to address the court's recommendations.
- In July, Mohamed Mahjoub filed a legal request for information the government used as the basis for a national security certificate that would require his deportation to Egypt. The filing marks the latest step in the two-decade case.
- In November, the Quebec Court of Appeals ruled Alexandre Bissonnette, convicted and sentenced to life in prison in 2019 for the murder of six people at a Quebec City mosque,

would be eligible to request parole after 25 rather than 40 years. The court found consecutive life sentences unconstitutional.

- In December the Parole Board granted “closed day parole” to Shareef Abdelhaleem, a member of the Toronto 18 convicted of terrorism offenses and sentenced to life in prison for plotting to blow up CSIS Headquarters, a Canadian military base, and the Toronto Stock Exchange in 2006.

Canada opened several new terrorism prosecutions, while others remain ongoing:

- In July, Calgary resident and accused ISIS fighter Hussein Borhot was released on bail following four terrorism-related charges and a seven-year investigation. Law enforcement alleged Borhot visited Syria in 2013 and 2014 for ISIS training and participated in an ISIS-led kidnapping.
- On July 28 a Kingston, Ontario, minor pled guilty to four terrorism charges. The minor, initially charged in 2019, admitted to viewing ISIS as his inspiration for seeking martyrdom. The Crown sought his sentencing as an adult.
- In August, CSIS admitted in federal court it had obtained some evidence illegally and failed to provide exculpatory evidence in the case against alleged ISIS recruiter Awso Peshdary.
- On August 26, authorities arrested Toronto resident Haleema Mustafa on two terrorism-related charges, alleging she departed Canada in 2019 for Turkey to join ISIS in Syria. Her husband, Ikar Mao, was arrested later that year on the same charges.
- On October 8 the Supreme Court of Canada ruled VIA Rail terror offenders Raed Jaser and Chiheb Esseghaier did not require new trials because of improper jury selection. Additional appeals are still pending.
- On November 10, Alek Minassian faced trial for 10 counts of first-degree murder and 16 counts of attempted murder stemming from a 2018 van attack in Toronto.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Canada is a member of FATF and the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering, a FATF-style regional body. Its FIU, the Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre (or FINTRAC), is a member of the Egmont Group. There were no significant changes in 2020.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** Media and experts reported terrorism offenders often leave prison still radicalized to violence. According to February media reports, at least three terrorism offenders were due to be released in 2020. The Parole Board reported several offenders released in 2019 owing to statutory requirements remained “radicalized” and posed “significant” risks to public safety. While most terrorism sentences are seven years or less, according to Public Prosecution Service of Canada records, many individuals serve substantially less time, owing to credit for pretrial custody and statutory requirements that federal offenders who have served two thirds of their sentences be released under supervision. Canada is a financial supporter and board member of the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (or GCERF), a multilateral organization based in Geneva, that funds local programs to prevent and counter violent extremism.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Canada is an active participant in the OAS-CICTE and served as chair until the Dominican Republic assumed the chairmanship in September during the 20th regular session.

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## COLOMBIA

**Overview:** Following the 2016 Peace Accord between the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the Colombian government, some FARC dissidents continued to operate in Colombia — although most FARC ex-combatants have laid down their weapons. As of December, roughly 13,000 FARC ex-combatants had participated in the reintegration process based on the 2016 Peace Accord. Challenges to Peace Accord implementation and continued security vacuums created ongoing risk for terrorist activity and attacks on civilians, security forces, and infrastructure in 2020. Open-source reporting suggested membership in the Segunda Marquetalia FARC dissident group and FARC dissidents aligned with Gentil Duarte and Ivan Mordisco numbered around 2,500. Armed members of the ELN also remained an active threat in Colombia and were estimated to number around 2,300.

Colombian-U.S. counterterrorism cooperation remains strong. While Colombia is not a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, the nation has openly condemned ISIS and its objectives.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** FARC dissident groups and the ELN continued to commit acts of terror throughout the country, including bombings, violence against civilian populations, kidnappings, attacks against utilities infrastructure, and violent attacks against military and police facilities.

- ELN called for an “armed strike” over February 14-17, and authorities reported that ELN executed 23 attacks across the country during the strike, killing one soldier and injuring seven police officers.
- Since the signing of the 2016 Peace Accord, FARC dissident groups aligned with Gentil Duarte and Ivan Mordisco increased narco-trafficking and territorial control in Cauca department, where around one third of all killings of social leaders (community activists defending human, environmental, and land rights) in Colombia in 2020 took place.
- Ecopetrol, Colombia’s majority state-owned oil company, reported that 31 of its 50 vehicles in the Catatumbo region were stolen in 2020, and its employees were regularly threatened by members of ELN, FARC dissident factions, and other armed groups. Ecopetrol also noted that, because of the violence in the Catatumbo region, employees could not travel to perform maintenance on oil wells, resulting in up to 15 percent of daily potential extraction being lost to unrepaired leaks and seepage in some areas.
- In September, Colombian authorities captured four Segunda Marquetalia FARC dissidents who organized violence in conjunction with the 2019 national strikes in Bogotá. Authorities stated that Segunda Marquetalia urban cells recruited students and trained them to use violence against police and other authorities, resulting in six deaths, more than 700 injuries, the destruction or damage of 76 of Bogotá’s TransMilenio bus stations, and an estimated \$10.7 million in overall damages. Colombian authorities also noted the coordinated violence against police substations during the September 9-10 protests was strikingly similar to the 2019 protests, suggesting terrorist urban cell

planning. The September protests resulted in 11 deaths and 571 injuries, 72 substations and 91 government vehicles vandalized or destroyed, and an estimated \$4.5 million in overall damages.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** There were no changes to terrorism-related legislation and investigation procedures in 2020. In January, Colombian and U.S. agencies concluded a memorandum of understanding to exchange terrorism screening information to enhance border security in both countries.

Colombian border security remained vulnerable as military and law enforcement agencies faced the challenge of working in areas with porous borders, difficult topography, illegal armed groups, and drug trafficking.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Colombia is a member of the GAFILAT, a FATF-style regional body. Colombia's FIU, the Financial Analysis and Information Unit, is a member of the Egmont Group. There were no significant changes in countering the financing of terrorism in 2020.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** Colombia employed a modern, multi-agency approach to CVE. President Iván Duque signed decrees in April and July, allowing individual demobilization for members of organized armed groups, including FARC dissidents. Colombian regulations in place after the signing of the 2016 Peace Accord did not permit FARC dissidents to legally demobilize without such decrees. The members of armed groups — including ELN, FARC dissidents, Clan del Golfo, Los Pelusos, and Los Caparrapos who demobilized individually in 2020 — numbered 301, including 100 children.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Colombia hosted the third Western Hemisphere Counterterrorism Ministerial in January, during which President Duque declared Hizballah a terrorist organization. President Duque also declared every entity on the U.S. Foreign Terrorist Organization list a terrorist organization, except for FARC, which signed the 2016 Peace Accord and which the Colombian government no longer considers to be a terrorist organization. Colombia and Ecuador cooperated to address terrorism threats along their shared border. Colombia is a member of the OAS-CICTE and the Global Counterterrorism Forum.

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## CUBA

**Overview:** Cuba was designated as a State Sponsor of Terrorism in 1982 because of its long history of providing advice, safe haven, communications, training, and financial support to guerrilla groups and individual terrorists. This designation was rescinded in 2015 after a policy review found Cuba met the statutory requirements for rescission. Cuba maintains close and collaborative ties with designated state sponsors of terror such as Iran and North Korea. Citing peace negotiation protocols signed by Colombia in 2016 that stipulated safe passage for ELN negotiators back to Colombia, the Cuban regime continued to permit ELN negotiators associated with now-defunct peace talks to reside in Cuba, despite Colombia's repeated requests for their extradition. Cuba also continues to harbor multiple fugitives who committed or supported acts of terrorism in the United States.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no terrorist attacks within Cuba in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** Citing peace negotiation protocols, Cuba refused Colombia's request to extradite 10 ELN leaders living in Havana after that group claimed responsibility for the 2019 bombing of a Bogotá police academy that killed 22 persons and injured 87 others. The Cuban government did not formally respond to the 2019 extradition requests for ELN leaders Victor Orlando Cubides (aka "Pablo Tejada") and Israel Ramírez Pineda (aka "Pablo Beltrán") filed by Colombia.

Cuba also harbors several U.S. fugitives from justice wanted on charges related to political violence, many of whom have resided in Cuba for decades. For example, the Cuban regime refused to return Joanne Chesimard, aka Assata Shakur, a fugitive on the FBI's Most Wanted Terrorists List, who was convicted of executing New Jersey State Trooper Werner Foerster. Cuba also refused to return William "Guillermo" Morales, a fugitive bomb maker for the Armed Forces for National Liberation, who is wanted by the FBI and escaped detention after being convicted of charges related to domestic terrorism; Ishmael LaBeet, aka Ishmael Muslim Ali, who received eight life sentences after being convicted of killing eight persons in the U.S. Virgin Islands in 1972 and hijacking a plane to flee to Cuba in 1984; Charles Lee Hill, who has been charged with killing New Mexico state policeman Robert Rosenbloom in 1971; Ambrose Henry Montfort, who used a bomb threat to hijack a passenger aircraft and fly to Cuba in 1983; and Víctor Manuel Gerena, a Puerto Rican militant who stole \$7 million in a bank heist. Cuba is also believed to host or has hosted U.S. fugitive terrorists Catherine Marie Kerkow and Elizabeth Anna Duke.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Cuba is a member of the GAFILAT, a FATF-style regional body. Its FIU, the Directorate General of Financial Transactions Investigation, is a member of the Egmont Group. There were no significant updates in 2020.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** Cuba conducted no CVE efforts in 2020.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Cuba is not an active member of the OAS.

## MEXICO

**Overview:** Counterterrorism cooperation between Mexico and the United States remained strong in 2020. 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 in 2020. Still, the U.S. government remains vigilant against possible targeting of U.S. interests or persons in Mexico by those inspired by international terrorist groups. The U.S. southern border remains vulnerable to terrorist transit, but to date there have been no confirmed cases of a successful terrorist attack on U.S. soil by a terrorist who gained entry to the United States from Mexico.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in Mexico in 2020. Still, many loosely organized violent anarchist groups continue to pose a domestic terror threat in

Mexico. In particular, an active Mexican ecological violent extremist group called *Individualistas Tendiendo a lo Salvaje*, or Individuals Tending to the Wild, placed numerous rudimentary timed explosive devices in commercial centers in 2018 and 2019.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** There were no changes to Mexico's counterterrorism legislation in the past year. Still, a December reform to Mexico's National Security Law regulating the interaction between Mexican officials and foreign agents could potentially slow information exchanges on law enforcement matters, including counterterrorism efforts. The government lacked adequate laws prohibiting material support to terrorists and relied on counterterrorism regimes in other countries to thwart potential threats. The Center for National Intelligence, housed within the Secretariat of Security and Citizen Protection, was the lead agency for detecting, deterring, and preventing terrorist threats in 2020. The Mexican Prosecutor General's Office was the lead agency for investigating and prosecuting terrorism-related offenses. Impunity remained a problem, with extremely low rates of prosecution for all crimes.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Mexico is a member of FATF, as well as the GAFILAT, a FATF-style regional body. Mexico is also a cooperating and supporting nation of the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force (CFATF) and is an observer of the Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism (or MONEYVAL), two FATF-style regional bodies. Its FIU, the Financial Intelligence Unit-Mexico (FIU-Mexico), is a member of the Egmont Group and proactively shared financial intelligence on shared threats with its U.S. Department of the Treasury counterpart, the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (or FinCEN). There have been no significant updates since 2019. Mexico passed an asset forfeiture law in 2019, but to date Mexican prosecutors have not applied the stronger tools to seize assets of illicit origin in a terrorism case. The Mexican Congress worked on legislation granting the FIU-Mexico authority to place individuals on its domestic sanctions list (known as the Blocked Persons List) without a request from an international partner or judicial blocking order, but the legislation did not pass in 2020.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** There was no action in 2020 to establish official CVE policies, initiatives, or programs.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** On the occasion of the 75th session of the UN General Assembly, Mexico reiterated its commitment to combating terrorism amid a possible increase in terrorist recruitment and proliferation of violent extremist ideologies, owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a member of the UN Human Rights Council, Mexico in 2020 participated in discussions aimed at promoting respect for human rights while countering terrorism.

Mexico is also a member of the OAS-CICTE. During the fall, the OAS-CICTE and Mexico partnered on a series of webinars on countering violent extremism.

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## PANAMA

**Overview:** As a transit country for goods, money, and migrants, Panama’s geographic location makes its willingness to engage on bilateral and multilateral counterterrorism (CT) initiatives important for regional security. Under President Laurentino “Nito” Cortizo, the Government of Panama (GoP) continued to cooperate on CT, namely related to maritime sanctions and migration. Through the Special Interest Alien (SIA) Joint Task Force, Panama cooperated with U.S. authorities on several CT-related cases this year and continued to lead the region in BITMAP (for Biometric Identification Transnational Migration Alert Program) enrollments. However, the pandemic has stalled progress on the GoP’s ability to address FATF concerns before a 2021 deadline, making only partial progress toward a 15-step phased Action Plan. Panama remained the first and only Latin American member of the Defeat-ISIS Coalition and continued contributions to the Defeat-ISIS Counter-Terrorism Finance Working Group.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in Panama in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** Although Panama does not have comprehensive CT legislation or a robust CT legal framework, it has an executive decree to control dual-use goods and has adopted a national control list for dual-use goods in accordance with UNSCR 1540. Panama also has an executive decree to address chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear incidents. While the country does not have a formal coordinating authority below the cabinet level, officials from Panama’s National Security Council, National Border Service (or SENAFRONT), National Migration Service, and National Police met frequently with U.S. government officials to coordinate and act on migration alerts and to detain and deport travelers who represented a security risk. Panama collected biographic and biometric data, shared information with regional partners (including advanced passenger information), and participated in INTERPOL, in accordance with UNSCR 2396. Panama used the CT-provided Personal Identification and Secure Comparison and Evaluation System (or PISCES) as its frontline passenger screening and integrated border management system.

Panama used the SIA Joint Task Force — a bilateral mechanism to share information on SIAs and Known or Suspected Terrorists and detain and/or deport them as needed — to cooperate on several CT-related cases. Since FY 2019 the SIA Joint Task Force has processed Panama’s BITMAP data and provided intelligence information, analytical products, and migration trends to Panamanian officers. The country’s biometric enrollments provided U.S. agencies information on foreign partners’ law enforcement and border encounters of SIAs, gang members, and other persons of interest. In 2020, Panama processed 6,782 enrollments, a decrease from 2019 because of COVID-19 border closures.

While Panama’s own intelligence capacity was 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, limited Panama’s ability to deport.

The Ministry of Security and the National Customs Authority made progress in a bidding process to address the country's lack of cargo scanners. At the time of this report, the scanners project was in the final stages of approval, with a 2021 anticipated delivery. The lack of scanners significantly limited Panama's ability to analyze cargo transiting the country, including at Tocumen International Airport, which had the highest number of passenger movements in the region, and entry and exit of the Colón Free Trade Zone.

Panama cooperated with U.S. law enforcement on ongoing CT cases this year, including individuals linked to Hizballah. However, Panama's ability to investigate financial support to terrorist-related organizations remained limited.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Panama is a member of the GAFILAT, a FATF-style regional body. Panama's FIU, the Financial Analysis Unit Panama (UAF-Panama), is a member of the Egmont Group. In August the United States and Panama signed an agreement to create a Joint Task Force to counter money laundering with support from the FBI.

With support from the World Bank, Panama updated Chapter 5 of its National Risk Assessment, which relates to terrorism financing. Since the beginning of 2020, the Panama Maritime Authority, which oversees the world's largest ship registry, de-flagged more than 40 vessels related to activity that may implicate U.S. or UN sanctions relating to Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Syria, and Venezuela. Panama has yet to identify and freeze assets belonging to terrorists or sanctioned individuals and organizations. It has not prosecuted any cases of terrorist financing.

Additional information on money laundering and financial crimes can be found in the *2020 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report, Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*: <https://www.state.gov/2020-international-narcotics-control-strategy-report/>.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** There were no changes in 2020.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Panama worked to strengthen implementation of UN resolutions that promote the nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The OAS-CICTE received funding in 2020 to strengthen Panama's implementation of UNSCR 1540 and to contribute to increasing the effectiveness of customs administration in Panama. The project will focus on providing legislative assistance to help Panama comply with its international obligations; promoting outreach to the private sector, industry, and academia to increase awareness of knowledge and potential proliferation risks; and providing capacity building to strengthen national capabilities to mitigate and combat potential risks.

Panama actively participated in regional security initiatives, co-hosting virtual workshops with the OAS-CICTE on cybersecurity and CFT. Panama also completed the OAS/CICTE's project, "Technical Assistance for Implementation of Financial Sanctions Against Terrorism." In January the OAS-CICTE trained Panama's Public Ministry and Judicial Branch, along with national and international experts, in the investigation of terrorist financing cases, reports of suspicious operations, financial intelligence reports, and judicial means of evidence. Panama praised the training, noting that more than 200 people gained skills in strategic and operation



analysis, and in special investigative techniques to support criminal prosecutions of terrorism-financing cases.

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## PARAGUAY

**Overview:** In 2020 the Government of Paraguay was a receptive partner in counterterrorism cooperation with the United States. Paraguay's challenges stem from ineffective immigration, customs, financial, and law enforcement controls along its porous borders, particularly the Tri-Border Area (TBA) with Argentina and Brazil, and its land border with Brazil — from the TBA to the city of Pedro Juan Caballero.

The Paraguayan People's Army (EPP) — a domestic criminal group initially dedicated to a socialist revolution in Paraguay — extorted and intimidated the population and local governments in the northern departments of Amambay, Concepción, and San Pedro. Paraguayan authorities officially consider the EPP and its offshoots — Mariscal López's Army (EML), and the Armed Peasant Association (ACA) — as organized criminal groups rather than terrorist organizations. However, Paraguayan leaders informally referred to the groups publicly as terrorist organizations. In September the Government of Paraguay's Joint Task Force (FTC) conducted an operation against an EPP camp, after which two 11-year-old girls were found deceased under opaque circumstances. The Government of Paraguay increased its FTC presence in the Concepción department after the EPP Indigenous Brigade wing kidnapped former Vice President Óscar Denis on September 9; as of December 31 the government had not been able to locate Denis or Félix Urbieto, the other hostage believed still to be in EPP custody. The Government of Paraguay believes the EPP is a small, decentralized group of between 20 and 50 members. EPP's, EML's, and ACA's activities have consisted largely of isolated attacks on remote police and army posts, or against ranchers and peasants accused of aiding Paraguayan security forces. Ranchers and ranch workers in northeastern Paraguay, including members of the Mennonite community, claimed the EPP frequently threatened both their livelihoods and personal security.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** Alleged elements of the EPP conducted kidnappings and sabotage operations:

- On May 9, five EPP members attacked a farm in Pedro Juan Caballero in Amambay department, where they burned a house, three tractors, and a pickup truck.
- On September 9, former Vice President Óscar Denis and his employee Adelio Mendoza disappeared from Denis's ranch in the Concepción department. EPP representatives claimed responsibility for abducting Denis and Mendoza and made ransom demands, including releasing two EPP leaders from prison within 72 hours and distributing \$2 million in foodstuffs to 40 indigenous communities. Denis's family complied with the distribution of foodstuffs, but the government did not release the two EPP leaders. Captors released Mendoza on the evening of September 14, but Denis remained missing through year's end.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** There were no changes in 2020.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Paraguay is a member of the GAFILAT, a FATF-style regional body. Its FIU, the Financial Intelligence Unit-Paraguay (known as UAF-SEPRELAD), is a member of the Egmont Group. Paraguay continued to implement a 2019 package of 12 anti-money laundering laws and passed new legislation to improve the administration of seized assets. The GAFILAT mutual evaluation, which started in 2019, was delayed until 2021 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Paraguay has counterterrorist financing legislation and the ability to freeze and confiscate terrorist assets immediately, if requested to do so by another government. FATF and GAFILAT experts have noted that Paraguay possesses an adequate legal framework, even though the country falls short on implementation. In particular, government agencies struggled to coordinate effectively to detect, deter, and prosecute money laundering and terrorism financing.

On January 16, Presidential Decree 3241 designated the finance ministry as the law enforcement authority of Law 6446/2019, which established an administrative register of legal persons and entities and a register of final beneficiaries to facilitate governmental tracking of persons of interest in money laundering and terrorist financing investigations.

Also on January 16, Presidential Decree 3265 required the government to conduct a National Country Risk Assessment Regarding Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism every three years, with a methodology review to be conducted every six years.

The Paraguayan government registers and has reporting requirements for NGOs, including a mandate that non-profit organizations and NGOs set up internal monitoring and training procedures to guard against criminal or terrorism financing. Paraguay also requires the collection of data for wire transfers. Despite these mechanisms, government agencies' efforts to enforce anti-money laundering/counterterrorist financing laws continued to lag.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2020 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** Paraguay had no CVE program in 2020.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Paraguay supported counterterrorism efforts in regional and multilateral organizations and remained an active member of the Regional Security Mechanism established in 2019, despite the cancellation of meetings in 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Paraguay also completed the OAS-CICTE's project, "Technical Assistance for Implementation of Financial Sanctions Against Terrorism," in 2020. The project contributed to training more than 500 individuals on the importance of implementing targeted sanctions regimes and how best to use the new laws to support this objective.

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## PERU

**Overview:** After a five-year investigation, the Peruvian National Police (PNP) on December 2 conducted a major operation targeting alleged Shining Path (*Sendero Luminoso* or SL) front organizations, notably SL's legal political branch called the Movement for Amnesty and

Fundamental Rights (*Movadef*). The PNP reportedly detained 77 people in raids across Lima that involved nearly 800 police and 100 prosecutors.

Virtual hearings in the terrorism trial against Muhammad Ghaleb Hamdar, a Lebanese citizen suspected of links to Hizballah, resumed July 22 after a COVID-19 hiatus. Hamdar was released from prison October 27 after completing a six-year sentence for document fraud but was barred from leaving Peru while his retrial is underway. If convicted, Hamdar would represent the first terrorism conviction of a Hizballah operative in South America.

Brian Eugenio Alvarado Huari, arrested for alleged links to ISIS in 2019 and plans to “attack foreigners,” was released from preventive detention late in 2019. However, the investigation is ongoing.

SL continued to operate in the Valleys of the Rivers Apurímac, Ene, and Mantaro Rivers (VRAEM). Estimates vary, but most experts and Peruvian security services assess SL numbered between 250 and 300 members, including from 60 to as many as 150 armed fighters. SL collected “revolutionary taxes” from drug trafficking organizations operating in the area to support its terrorist activities.

Víctor Quispe Palomino (aka Comrade José), a U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency Most Wanted Fugitive, continued to lead the SL’s VRAEM’s remnants, which he called the Militarized Communist Party of Peru (MPCP). The son of an SL founder, Quispe Palomino allegedly oversees all MPCP illicit activities, including extortion, murder, and drug trafficking. A U.S. Department of State reward offers up to \$5 million for information leading to his arrest and/or conviction, and the Department of Defense offers an additional \$1 million for information leading to his capture.

SL founder Abimael Guzmán and key accomplices are serving life sentences for terrorism acts conducted in the 1980s and 1990s. A superior court on June 23 rejected a habeas corpus petition requesting Guzmán’s release from prison because of the risk of COVID-19 contagion. Guzmán and other captured SL figures from earlier years deny association with the SL’s VRAEM group.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** The overall number of terrorist attacks and deaths of security forces attributable to terrorism in Peru increased in 2020. Six terrorist incidents resulted in the deaths of seven security forces:

- On March 4, SL ambushed a joint police-military patrol, killing two SL deserters and wounding four officers.
- On July 20, SL killed a soldier in the district of Pucacolpa, in the VRAEM Ayacucho’s Huanta province.
- Also on July 20 the military reported three SL terrorists were killed after they fired on a helicopter patrolling Ayacucho’s Huanta province.
- On August 24, SL killed one soldier and one police officer during a combined police and military operation in Chachaspata, a town in the department of Ayacucho.
- On October 29, two soldiers and a police officer were killed during a joint military-police patrol when one of them stepped on a landmine that the Government of Peru later said

had been placed by “terrorist criminals” in Ayacucho’s Huanta province in the VRAEM Emergency Zone.

- On December 21, SL attacked a joint Navy-National Police Hovercraft exercise from the banks of the Mantaro River in Junín’s Satipo province in the VRAEM, killing one police officer and injuring three others.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** Peru has adopted multiple counterterrorism laws over the past 30 years. CT measures have broad public support. Enforcement of the COVID-19 national lockdown took a heavy toll on security forces. Nevertheless, joint military and police counterterrorism operations kept apace, including the following:

- On January 26 the military deployed more than 48,000 soldiers nationally to prevent terrorist acts during special congressional elections, although primary attention was on the VRAEM.
- On August 24, a joint police and military operation killed four SL fighters in Ayacucho’s La Mar province of the VRAEM, including “Comrade Cirilo,” a key figure in SL’s security network supporting drug traffickers.
- On October 9, military and police authorities held the first meeting of a newly integrated joint command of intelligence units to increase integration and coordination to fight terrorism and drug trafficking in the VRAEM.

Immigration authorities collected limited biometrics information from visitors to protect Peruvian border security. Visas were not required for citizens of Europe, Southeast Asia, or Central America (except El Salvador and Nicaragua). The United States and Peru continue to work toward implementing an arrangement to exchange terrorist screening information.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Peru is a member of the GAFILAT, a FATF-style regional body. The Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) of Peru is a member of the Egmont Group. In January, GAFILAT published the first follow-up report analyzing Peru’s progress in addressing the technical compliance deficiencies identified in its Mutual Evaluation Report adopted in 2018. The FIU published a guide for the implementation of the Asset Laundering and Terrorist Financing Prevention System in the foreign exchange trading sector.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** The government’s multisectoral VRAEM 2021 Development Strategy, part of Peru’s bicentennial vision, aims to foster alternative development and social inclusion, and complements aggressive action against SL terrorism, propaganda, and recruitment. The Ministry of Justice continued to implement the 2005 Comprehensive Plan of Reparations for victims of the violence between the armed forces and the terrorist groups from 1980 and 2000 as part of Peru’s national policy of peace, reconciliation, and reparation.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Peruvian officials participated in CT activities in international organizations, including the United Nations, the OAS-CICTE, the Union of South American Nations, and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation. In July, Peru presented at the UN Virtual Counter-Terrorism Week. Peru sent a high-level delegation to the Third Western Hemisphere Counterterrorism Ministerial in Bogotá in January and offered to host the next

ministerial conference in 2021. The PNP Counterterrorism Directorate coordinated with police in other countries to track activities of domestic terrorist organizations abroad.

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## TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

**Overview:** The threat from ISIS supporters in Trinidad and Tobago and the possible return of individuals who traveled, or attempted to travel, to Syria or Iraq to fight with ISIS is the primary terrorism concern in the country.

Trinidad and Tobago and the United States cooperated on counterterrorism investigations involving Trinidad and Tobago nationals. In February the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) removed Trinidad and Tobago from its “gray list” of countries with deficient anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CTF) regimes.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** There were no reported terrorist incidents in Trinidad and Tobago in 2020.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** Trinidad and Tobago’s counterterrorism institutions faced challenges related to staffing, funding, and coordination. There were no arrests or prosecutions initiated against any terrorist groups or individuals suspected of terrorist activity during 2020. However, the government reported that there were several ongoing investigations under the Antiterrorism Act, including investigations for suspected terrorist financing. The country’s lengthy judicial process means that criminal prosecutions, including those related to terrorism, can take many years to be completed or otherwise resolved.

The government has undertaken reforms, including introducing plea bargaining and judge-only trials, aimed at speeding up the lengthy judicial process, which in the long term may lead to increased prosecutions of serious crimes — including terrorism.

The government passed the Interception of Communications (Amendment) Bill in June. The bill authorizes the interception of communications from prisons and prison transport vehicles and allows for intercepted information to be admitted as evidence in any legal proceedings. The new provisions also permit law enforcement officers to apply for warrants to obtain stored data from telecommunications service providers. The law applies to all criminal matters, including those that fall under the Antiterrorism Act.

The government continued to convene an interagency task force, known as Task Force Nightingale, which is charged with developing recommendations related to the possible return of foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) and others who traveled to the Middle East in an attempt to join ISIS. The task force comprises various law enforcement, judicial, foreign affairs, defense force, and immigration and border protection officers. The government also established an interagency focus group in 2020 to develop the country’s national counterterrorism operations plan, which will guide the implementation of the national counterterrorism strategy that was adopted in 2018.

Trinidad and Tobago's institutions demonstrated the capability to detect, deter, and prevent acts of terrorism with the assistance of international partners. The Trinidad and Tobago Police Service is the law enforcement agency with primary responsibility for investigating terrorism and terrorism-finance cases. The government conducted vulnerability assessments on important structures such as stadiums, airports, and monuments on a periodic basis. Trinidad and Tobago participates in the Advanced Passenger Information System and maintains a national watch list of persons of interest to national security, which can include persons suspected of engaging in terrorist activity. Nonetheless, the country's southern border, which is approximately 10 miles from the Venezuelan coast, remained porous and vulnerable to illegal migration, drug trafficking, and human trafficking and smuggling.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Trinidad and Tobago is a member of the CFATF, a FATF-style regional body. The Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) of Trinidad and Tobago (known as FIUTT) is a member of the Egmont Group.

The government continued to implement international obligations under the UN Security Council Resolutions as well as FATF Recommendations on combating terrorism and terrorist financing. Trinidad and Tobago developed an action plan in 2017 to address deficiencies in its AML regime. In February, FATF removed Trinidad from the list of jurisdictions subject to increased monitoring (the FATF gray list). The country had been subject to heightened oversight since 2017.

From January through September, the government listed nine individuals and entities under the Antiterrorism Act and froze their assets. The listed individuals included Emraan Ali, a U.S citizen born in Trinidad and Tobago, who was charged in U.S federal court for providing and attempting to provide material support to ISIS.

The government passed legislation to increase the detection of money laundering and terrorist financing, notably the Miscellaneous Amendments Act of 2020, which increased penalties for businesses and financial institutions that fail to comply with high court orders or produce documents requested by the FIU.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** The Trinidad and Tobago Prison Service offers programs that promote alternatives to violent extremism for inmates who have been exposed to violent extremist beliefs or organizations.

Members of Task Force Nightingale and representatives of the Muslim community participated in a virtual exchange program organized by U.S Embassy in Port of Spain that focused on repatriation and prosecution of FTFs and the rehabilitation and reintegration of their accompanying family members. Select leaders from the Muslim community and government participated in virtual programs with Homeboy Industries, the Islamic Center of Southern California, and the Sol Price Center for Social Innovation at the University of California, Los Angeles. The participants learned from program officers how to successfully reintegrate formerly incarcerated individuals, gang members, and individuals who were radicalized to violence.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Trinidad and Tobago is a member of the OAS-CICTE. The government continues to work with CARICOM partners on counterterrorism issues and received training from the Implementing Agency for Crime and Security (CARICOM IMPACS) and the OAS on cyber intelligence in prisons and AML/CTF. The government hosted a CVE Working Group in Port of Spain consisting of several diplomatic missions, including the United States, Canada, the EU, the UK, the Commonwealth Secretariat, and the United Nations, to coordinate and collaborate on CVE efforts within the country.

Trinidad and Tobago was scheduled to host a regional conference on counterterrorism and CVE in partnership with the UN Counterterrorism Committee and CARICOM. The conference was scheduled for March but was postponed because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The government participated in webinars on countering violent extremist ideologies organized by the International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism. The country's prison service maintained a close relationship with the U.S Embassy in Port of Spain, the UK High Commission, CARICOM IMPACS, and the OAS on issues related to CVE, terrorism, and radicalization to violence.

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## VENEZUELA

**Overview:** Venezuela remained a permissive environment for known terrorist groups, including dissidents of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the Colombian-origin ELN, and Hizballah sympathizers.

In 2020, Interim President Guaidó and the National Assembly condemned the regime's complicity with the ELN and FARC dissidents. In November the National Assembly passed a resolution declaring the regime's Special Action Force a terrorist organization for its role in extrajudicial killings inside Venezuela. The democratic opposition has warned that the regime lost control of Venezuela's borders and territory and was at risk of turning Venezuela into a "failed state." Some members of the illegitimate Maduro regime and armed forces maintained financial ties with FARC dissidents, ELN, and Venezuelan paramilitary groups. Analysts warned of increasing border clashes between these groups over illicit trade and for territorial control, particularly on Venezuela's border with Colombia. The ELN continued to expand its presence beyond its historic base in the border zone with Colombia and to consolidate its social control where its presence is strongest. According to local and international media, ELN was present in 12 of Venezuela's 23 states (with particular strength in Amazonas, Anzoátegui, Apure, Bolívar, Táchira, and Zulia states). Media reported an increasing role for the ELN in state-subsidized food distribution, contraband (gas, basic goods, meat), extortion, illegal mining, and recruitment propaganda, at times through control of radio stations.

**2020 Terrorist Incidents:** Maduro and his associates' complicated relationship with terrorist groups was characterized by both conflict and cooperation. Given increasingly scarce resources, there was greater confrontation among ELN, FARC dissidents, and regime-controlled government forces. In September the press reported that 19 persons died in a shootout between the Venezuelan Armed Forces and the FARC dissident Frente 10 group in Apure state, although Maduro's associates have refused to publicly acknowledge such skirmishes, preferring to blame generic criminal elements rather than the FARC dissidents.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** There were no changes to Venezuela’s counterterrorism legislation in 2020.

The illegitimate Maduro regime controlled the judiciary and used terrorism charges to suppress dissent and oppress the political opposition and civil society. In 2020, Interim President Guaidó’s uncle, Interim Government commissioners, and multiple National Assembly deputies aligned with the opposition were accused of terrorism without evidence. In June the regime initiated legal action to declare the Popular Will political party — one of four major opposition parties in Venezuela and Interim President Guaidó’s former party — a terrorist organization. NGOs and union leaders have also been falsely accused without evidence. In inventing these “terrorist plots,” the regime blamed the United States and Colombia, without merit.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Venezuela is a member of the CFATF, a FATF-style regional body. Venezuela’s National Financial Intelligence Unit is a member of the Egmont Group. There were no significant terrorism finance developments in 2020.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** There were no CVE efforts underway in 2020.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Venezuela is a member of OAS-CICTE. The Interim Government worked with regional partners to implement the Interamerican Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (also known as the Rio Treaty), invoked in 2019, to address the Maduro regime’s illegal activities, relating to terrorism and its financing. Interim President Guaidó participated in the January Western Hemisphere Counterterrorism Ministerial, hosted by Colombia, and pledged to work closely with Colombian President Duque on the regional threat posed by ELN, FARC dissidents, and other nonstate armed actors in Venezuela. During the ministerial, President Duque declared Hizballah a terrorist organization, which the Interim Government supported.



## Chapter 2. State Sponsors of Terrorism

**This report provides a snapshot of events during 2020 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 the following:

- 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.
- Restrictions on U.S. foreign assistance.
- 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 1987 bombing of a Korean Airlines passenger flight. The DPRK's designation was rescinded in 2008 after a thorough review found the DPRK met the statutory criteria 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. The DPRK also has failed to take action to address historical support for acts of international terrorism. Four Japanese Red Army members wanted by the Japanese government for participating in a 1970 Japan Airlines hijacking continue to shelter in the DPRK. The Japanese government also continues to seek a full accounting of the fate of numerous Japanese nationals believed to have been abducted by DPRK state entities in the 1970s and 1980s; only five such abductees have been repatriated to Japan since 2002.

### **IRAN**

Designated as a State Sponsor of Terrorism in 1984, Iran continued its terrorist-related activity in 2020, including support for Hizballah, Palestinian terrorist groups in Gaza, and various terrorist and militant groups in Iraq, Syria, and elsewhere 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 terrorist activity abroad. In 2019, the Secretary of State designated the IRGC, including IRGC-QF, as a Foreign

Terrorist Organization (FTO). Iran also used regional militant and proxy groups to provide deniability, in an attempt to shield it from accountability for its aggressive policies.

Iran supported various Iraqi Shia terrorist groups in 2020, including Kata'ib Hizballah (KH), Harakat al-Nujaba, and Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq. KH's March 11, 2020 rocket attack on international counter-ISIS forces at Camp Taji (Iraq) killed three members of Defeat-ISIS Coalition forces, including two U.S. servicemembers. Iran 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 Iraq and Syria as vital routes through which 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 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 in Lebanon with thousands of rockets, missiles, and small arms in 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 2020, 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.

In Bahrain, Iran has continued to provide weapons, support, and training to local Shia militant groups, including the al-Ashtar Brigades, a designated FTO and Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT), and Saraya al-Mukhtar, which was designated an SDGT under Department of State authorities in 2020.

In Yemen, Iran has provided weapons, advanced equipment such as unmanned aircraft systems, training, and other support to Houthi militants, who have engaged in attacks against regional targets. In February and June, the U.S. Navy and partner forces interdicted dhows carrying Iran-origin weapons intended for the Houthis, including 1,700 rifles and more than 170 missiles.

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 it knows to be living in Iran. 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, among other locales.

As in past years, the Iranian government continued supporting terrorist plots or associated activities targeting Iranian dissidents in Europe. In recent years, Albania, Belgium, and the Netherlands have all either arrested or expelled Iranian government officials implicated in various terrorist plots in their respective territories. Denmark similarly recalled its ambassador from Tehran after learning of an Iran-backed plot to kill an Iranian dissident in its country.

## **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 and finance the terrorist organization. The Assad regime's relationship with Hizballah and Iran remained strong in 2020 as the regime continued to rely heavily on external actors to fight opponents and secure areas. The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) remains present and active in the country with the permission of President Bashar al-Assad. 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 two decades, the Assad regime's permissive attitude toward AQ and other terrorist groups' foreign terrorist fighter (FTF) 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 2012 is well documented. The Assad regime released thousands of violent extremists from its prisons in 2011 and 2012, fueling a rise in terrorism within the country, in an attempt to justify its repression of the Syrian people and fracture international support for the Syrian opposition. Those very networks were among the terrorist elements that brutalized the Syrian and Iraqi populations in 2020. Throughout the Syrian conflict, terrorist groups in Syria have often cited the regime's egregious human rights abuses and violations to justify their activities and recruit members. The Assad regime has frequently used counterterrorism laws and special counterterrorism courts to detain and imprison protesters, human rights defenders, humanitarian workers, and others on the pretext of fighting terrorism. Additionally, Shia militia groups in Iraq, some of which are U.S.-designated terrorist organizations aligned with Iran, continued to travel to Syria to fight on behalf of the Assad regime. Affiliates of the Kurdistan Workers' Party also operated on Syrian soil and represent Turkey's primary counterterrorism concern in Syria. ISIS cells remained active in parts of Syria and launched attacks on civilians and U.S. partner forces. In October, U.S. forces completed an operation that resulted in the death of ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. ISIS members in Syria continued to plot or inspire external terrorist operations.

As part of a broader strategy used throughout the last decade, the regime continued to portray Syria itself as a victim of terrorism, characterizing all internal armed opposition members as "terrorists."

## Chapter 3. The Global Challenge of Chemical, Biological, Radiological, or Nuclear Terrorism

The use of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) materials and expertise remained a credible terrorist threat in 2020. As a countermeasure to this threat, the United States published a National Strategy for Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) Terrorism in 2018 and continues to work proactively to disrupt and deny ISIS 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 as well as training to international organizations and partner nations to help strengthen their abilities to protect and secure CBRN-applicable expertise, technologies, and material. Efforts to address CBRN terrorist threats through UNSCR 1540 and the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism are detailed in Chapter 4.

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 WMD. Today, the GP has expanded its membership to 30 countries and the European Union, sustaining a vital forum for countries to exchange information on national priorities for CBRN programmatic efforts worldwide and coordinate assistance for these efforts. The GP presidency is tied to the G-7 rotation; the United States presided over both bodies in 2020.

The United States continues to support the International Atomic Energy Agency Division of Nuclear Security, which helps member states develop the capacity to prevent, detect, and respond to threats of nuclear terrorism through the development of guidance as well as the provision of training, technical advice and assistance, peer reviews, and other advisory services.

Through the Global Threat Reduction Program (GTR), the Department of State continued its work to prevent states and terrorist groups from acquiring or proliferating WMD to attack the United States. In 2020 the GTR's chemical, biological, and nuclear security programs implemented dozens of capacity building projects to ensure that foreign partners could detect and counter WMD terrorism threats. To ensure the enduring defeat of ISIS and to help prevent future WMD attacks, GTR leveraged virtual reality platforms to train Iraqi civil and security sectors from both the central government and the Kurdistan Regional Government to identify and neutralize potential clandestine chemical and biological weapons laboratories in Iraq. In response to the threat of transnational terrorists conducting chemical weapons (CW) attacks using unrestricted, commercially available material, GTR collaborated with security forces around the world to train law enforcement in partner countries to detect and prevent CW attacks against vulnerable transportation hubs, such as railways and subways.

GTR's biosecurity efforts support partner capacity to prevent, detect, and respond to outbreaks of high-consequence pathogens — whether intentional, accidental, or natural — and have engaged human and animal health laboratories for safe and secure diagnostics and sample management.

GTR also worked with government, industry, and academic personnel in Egypt, Jordan, Libya, Nigeria, the Philippines, and other countries to promote the adoption of security measures to prevent individuals or nonstate actors from acquiring weaponizable chemical, biological, and nuclear material and technology.

The Department of State's Export Control and 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 information sharing within governments and across national borders. As part of a core national security strategy to combat terrorist organizations, a key objective of EXBS is to provide stakeholders with substantive knowledge, skills, and tools to prevent state and nonstate actors from acquiring WMD, explosives, and conventional arms (including Man-portable Air Defense Systems and Antitank Guided Missiles), or using those materials against U.S. citizens and interests. To achieve this objective, EXBS continued to train partner governments in the Middle East, North Africa, South Asia, Central Asia, East Asia, and Western Hemisphere regions to detect, interdict, and counter the materials, technologies, and tactics that terrorists could use to carry out low-technology attacks on public transportation. Additionally, in 2020, EXBS developed curricula for partner nation security forces to address threats posed by improvised threats, including the use of drones as delivery mechanisms and insider threats focused on the commercial aviation sector. EXBS also provided comprehensive training to Middle Eastern and North African border security officials on border security, cargo and passenger interdiction, and counter-IED training. EXBS partnered with the CT Bureau and the interagency to engage with key partners on aviation security programming. Finally, EXBS furnished equipment and training to strengthen aviation security and mitigate threats to civilian aviation, and provided land border security training for Egyptian, Iraqi, and Libyan security forces to stem the flow of illicit materials and maintain gains made against ISIS and other nonstate actors.

The U.S. government continues to work with the interagency and partners to take steps in response to the decision adopted at the 2018 special session of the Conference of States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention, titled "Addressing the Threat From Chemical Weapons Use." Such steps include measures aimed at facilitating the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons' (OPCW's) Technical Secretariat (TS) access to additional response tools against chemical weapons use, including by nonstate actors, and appropriate funding, such as for the OPCW's Investigation and Identification Team (IIT). In April the IIT issued its first report that found reasonable grounds to believe that the Syrian Arab Republic was responsible for three chemical weapons attacks in 2017. The IIT is responsible for identifying individuals or entities involved in the use of chemical weapons in certain cases, regardless of whether the perpetrators are state or nonstate actors. Also related to the 2018 Conference of the States Parties decision, the OPCW is pursuing options to further assist States Parties with preventing the threat posed by nonstate actor interest in and use of chemical weapons. Finally, the Department of State's Nonproliferation and Disarmament Fund has provided funding and personal protective equipment to support the OPCW's TS special missions and contingency operations related specifically to Syria through the OPCW's Trust Fund for Syria Missions.

## Chapter 4. Terrorist Safe Havens (Update to 7120 Report)

Terrorist safe havens described in this report include ungoverned, undergoverned, and 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 [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]; section 2371(a) of Title 22; or section 2780(d) of Title 22. (For information regarding the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Iran, and Syria, see Chapter 2, State Sponsors of Terrorism.)**

### Terrorist Safe Havens

**Somalia.** In 2020, terrorists continued to use undergoverned areas throughout Somalia as safe havens to plan, conduct, and facilitate operations within Somalia, including mass-casualty bombings in major urban areas, and attacks in neighboring countries. The Federal Government of Somalia’s Comprehensive Approach to Security partnership with the international community includes military, law enforcement, and CVE-specific “strands” to ameliorate Somalia’s security challenges at the federal, state (federal member state), and local levels. Somali law enforcement took several actions in 2020 that led to prosecutions of individuals suspected of terrorism-related activities. Despite critical gaps in its counterterrorism strategy, the Somali government remained a committed partner and vocal advocate for U.S. counterterrorism efforts.

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 them children.

As has long been the case, al-Shabaab maintained its safe haven in the Jubba River Valley as a primary base of operations for plotting and launching attacks.

Al-Shabaab leveraged its influence in southern and central Somalia to extort millions of dollars in revenue from residents and businesses, according to the UN Panel of Experts on Somalia. The group spent much of its money on operations, which this year included IED attacks, suicide bombings, complex attacks against government and civilian facilities, targeted assassinations, ambushes along supply routes, and indirect fire attacks. Al-Shabaab maintained an ability to strike U.S. interests in the region and on January 5 attacked the U.S.-supported Kenya Defense Forces military base, Camp Simba, in eastern Kenya, killing three U.S. citizens and destroying aircraft and infrastructure. Then, on January 8, attackers detonated a vehicle-borne IED (VBIED) near Parliament and other

government buildings, killing at least 5 persons and wounding 10 others. In August, al-Shabaab detonated a VBIED and conducted an armed assault on a beachside hotel in Mogadishu, killing 18 people and injuring 25 others, and in November a suicide bomber killed 8 people near Aden Adde International Airport.

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.

In northern Somalia, ISIS-linked fighters continued to maintain a limited safe haven in Puntland.

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 2020, Boko Haram (BH) and ISIS-West Africa (ISIS-WA) maintained safe havens in parts of northeast Nigeria and on islands in Lake Chad, preventing the reestablishment of state administration, service delivery, and humanitarian relief in broader territory surrounding Lake Chad. While those safe havens are reduced from the territory BH controlled in 2014-15, ISIS-WA in particular was able to take control of more territory in the course of the year, battling both government forces and those of BH. Forces from Nigeria and other members of the Multinational Joint Task Force (Benin, Cameroon, Chad, and Niger) continued to combat both terrorist groups, but still lack the capability to clear safe havens or to secure borders and hold and effectively administer territory regained from the militants. 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.

In March, BH militants killed 98 Chadian soldiers near Boma in the Lake Chad region, the deadliest single terrorist attack in Chad's history. BH continued employing suicide bombers and IEDs, including the first documented maritime IED. Then in December, BH members attacked the village of Toumour in eastern Diffa region, Niger, killing 30 villagers and destroying an estimated 800 homes.

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 2020, 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, to expand the areas under their control

and to prevent effective government provision of services. In addition to asymmetric attacks, these groups perpetrated a series of large-scale conventional attacks on both patrols and fixed positions of regional armed forces across the Sahel, while seeking to expand their operations to regions further south. These terrorist groups have freedom of movement in northern and central Mali, northern Burkina Faso, along the Mali-Niger border, and along the Burkina Faso/Niger border — demonstrated by their ability to quickly mass forces during the large-scale attacks and massacres seen this year and last. JNIM continued to insert itself into long-standing ethnic conflicts such as the Fulani herder versus Dogon farmer conflict over grazing land and water.

Niger faces a terrorist threat on each of its seven borders. In January, suspected members of ISIS-GS attacked a Nigerien military base in Chinagodrar, killing 89 members of the Nigerien military. In August, ISIS-GS murdered six French citizens and two Nigeriens at the Koure Giraffe Reserve, south of Niamey. In Burkina Faso alone, BH and ISIS-WA carried out at least 400 attacks in 2020, compared with just over 200 in 2019.

In Mali, members of JNIM kidnapped political opposition leader, Soumaila Cisse. They held Cisse until the transition government agreed to release over 200 prisoners, suspected jihadists and JNIM affiliates among them, in exchange for Cisse and three European citizens. In October, suspected terrorists laid siege to Farabougou, a town about 260 miles northeast of Bamako. They encircled the town, allowing no one to enter or leave. The government sent forces to retake the town but was unsuccessful. In November, terrorists launched rocket attacks on three separate military installations spread over 400 miles, demonstrating a new level of sophistication and coordination. Believed to be orchestrated by JNIM, rockets landed simultaneously on Malian and international bases, causing damage to infrastructure.

The Malian government struggles to combat these terrorists, notwithstanding the presence of the UN peacekeeping mission, the Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), and a robust French presence in the region. In Burkina Faso the government has failed to stem the tide of violence; attacks continued to increase in 2020 and areas dominated by terrorist groups expanded significantly. Large-scale massacres and attacks on security forces took place regularly. Western aid, as part of the effort to increase the capacity of the G-5 Sahel Joint Force, continued to increase. 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.

**Mozambique:** The Islamic State in Mozambique (ISIS-M), a terrorist group affiliated with ISIS, greatly expanded its attacks and seized control of significant amounts of territory in Cabo Delgado Province (CDP) in northern Mozambique. ISIS-M enjoyed considerable freedom of movement and was able several times to take and hold towns in the province, while threatening valuable natural gas facilities. Both the Mozambican government and regional partners struggled to respond effectively to the threat and by year's end, ISIS-M effectively enjoyed free rein in much of Cabo Delgado. With limited exceptions, multiple attacks occurred every week in CDP.



On January, ISIS-M attacked the town of Mbau, killing 22 members of the security forces and injuring others. In March they occupied the capital of Quissanga District, destroying administrative buildings, and in April in Xitaxi ISIS-M beheaded and killed between 50 and 70 civilians. During August 9-11, ISIS-M attacked and occupied Mocimboa da Praia, and 60 to 90 security forces were killed, with more than 100 injured and up to 40 missing. In late 2020 ISIS-M conducted a series of attacks on villages in Muidumbe District, reportedly beheading as many as 50 civilians over the course of the attacks. ISIS-M remained in control of several towns in Mozambique at the end of 2020.

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) and external partners ranging from Portugal to France sought ways to provide support to the Mozambican government. The United States assisted through provision of training activities to build capacity and initiatives aimed at increasing Government of the Republic of Mozambique's ability to address human rights issues in CDP. Despite positive developments within the security line of effort, the humanitarian situation remains grim as the number of IDPs in CDP continued to grow.

The government was not known to support or facilitate the proliferation or trafficking of WMD in or through its territory.

### **Southeast Asia**

**The Sulu/Sulawesi Seas Littoral.** The Government of Indonesia conducts monitoring and surveillance of suspected terrorist cells in its territory but acknowledges that a lack of resources hinders its ability to monitor maritime and remote parts of Indonesia, including the Sulu and Sulawesi Seas.

The Government of Malaysia sustained efforts to counter terrorist use of the Sulu/Sulawesi Seas as a safe haven by working with Indonesia and the Philippines to prevent the flow of FTFs through its territory. The Royal Malaysia Police special forces unit 69 Komando — which focuses on counterterrorism, search and rescue, and counterinsurgency — participated in a crisis response training exercise in August with U.S. Indo-Pacific Command to build capacity on addressing extended hostage rescue scenarios.

The governments were not known to support or facilitate the proliferation or trafficking of WMD in or through their territories.

**The Southern Philippines.** The Philippine government closely tracked terrorist groups that continued to operate in some areas, particularly in the southern Philippines. The government 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. During 2020 the government welcomed U.S. capacity building support and training for the Philippine forces to aid authorities' maritime domain awareness and interdiction skills.

International reconstruction assistance focused on Marawi continued, but concerns remained that terrorist groups continue to have the ability to operate in the areas around Marawi in Central Mindanao.

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 of establishing consistent security in a region characterized by a strong separatist identity, endemic poverty, and religious differences.

The government was not known to support or facilitate the proliferation or trafficking of WMD in or through its territory.

### **The Middle East and North Africa**

**North Sinai.** In 2020, ISIS-Sinai Province (ISIS-SP) continued to use portions of Egypt's Sinai region as a base to conduct attacks against military and civilian targets in the Sinai, though they claimed no attacks in mainland Egypt during the year. Nearly all of the estimated 212 terrorist attacks in Egypt in 2020 were in North Sinai, of which the great majority were claimed by ISIS-SP. Between January and December, 428 significant conflict events occurred in North Sinai, including 134 IED-related attacks, 153 airstrikes, and near weekly complex assaults on government-fortified positions by ISIS-SP. These events have exemplified ISIS-SP's freedom to maneuver during daytime hours and the continued expansion of its attacks westward, toward the Suez Canal Zone, and southward. In July, ISIS-SP overran and infiltrated several small villages south of Bir al-Abd, resulting in the displacement of thousands of civilians. Egyptian Armed Forces were eventually able to retake the territory though more than a dozen civilians were subsequently killed by IEDs left behind by ISIS-SP.

Counterterrorism operations in Sinai continued in response to an increased tempo of ISIS-SP attacks. Egypt continued to partner with U.S. counterterrorism efforts in this regard and continued its measures to prevent the proliferation and trafficking of WMD. At the same time, the Government of Egypt, including the Egyptian Armed Forces, broadened its counterterrorism strategy in Sinai to encompass development and humanitarian projects on the peninsula. ISIS-SP has continued to carry out attacks, and 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.

**Iraq.** Iran-backed Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq (AAH), Kata'ib Hizballah (KH), and Harakat al-Nujaba — all U.S.-designated terrorist organizations — and other Iran-backed Iraqi militias continued to maintain an active presence in Iraq targeting U.S., Defeat-ISIS Coalition, and Iraqi forces and logistics convoys. On March 11, KH launched dozens of rockets at Camp Taji, north of Baghdad, killing two Americans and one British servicemember. Camp Taji was attacked again on March 14. Several purportedly “new” Iran-aligned militias emerged in 2020 announcing their intent to target U.S. and Defeat-ISIS Coalition interests, though these are likely front groups for more established Iran-backed groups in Iraq. These groups claimed responsibility for multiple attacks on U.S. interests, including Embassy Baghdad, throughout the year.

While ISIS has been defeated territorially and its leadership ranks have been significantly degraded, the group remains a serious threat to the stability of Iraq and to U.S. and Defeat-ISIS Coalition interests in the region. ISIS fighters continue to wage a low-level insurgency in northern and central Iraq, seeking to regain territory while also endorsing violence abroad through ISIS's branches and networks and inspiring lone-actor attacks. Supported by the 83-member Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, the Government of Iraq maintained nominal control of the territory retaken from ISIS. ISIS continued to carry out assassinations, as well as suicide, hit-and-run, and other asymmetric attacks throughout the country. The United States continued to engage with the Government of Iraq to deny ISIS access to CBRN materials. The United States worked to strengthen the expertise and ability of Iraq's government, academic institutions, and private sector to secure weaponizable chemical and biological materials and to detect, disrupt, and respond effectively to suspected CBRN activity. This included providing CBRN detection, analysis, and investigation training at internationally recognized training centers of excellence, such as the Defense CBRN Center in Vught, Netherlands, and the National Institute for Nuclear, Chemical, and Biological Protection in the Czech Republic. 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 Hizballah-controlled areas. Hizballah used these areas for terrorist training, fundraising, financing, and recruitment. The Government of Lebanon did not take actions to disarm Hizballah, which continued to maintain its weapons without the consent of the Lebanese government, contrary to UNSCR 1701. The Lebanese government did not have complete control of all regions of the country, nor did it 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.

Al-Nusrah Front, ISIS, and other Sunni terrorist groups also continued to operate in ungoverned areas along the indeterminate Lebanese-Syrian border in 2020. The Lebanese government continued to take action to curtail these groups' activities. Other terrorist groups — including Hamas, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine General Command, Asbat al-Ansar, Fatah al-Islam, Fatah al-Intifada, Jund al-Sham, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and the Abdullah Azzam Brigades — continued to operate in areas with limited government control within Lebanon primarily inside Lebanon's 12 Palestinian refugee camps. These groups used the Palestinian refugee camps as safe havens to house weapons, shelter wanted criminals, and plan terrorist attacks.

The United States worked closely with the Lebanese Armed Forces and Internal Security Forces 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 border with Syria posed risks for the spread of WMDs.

**Libya.** Libya remained politically divided during the year between the Government of National Accord (GNA) and groups aligned with it and groups aligned with the self-styled Libyan National Army (LNA). Terrorist groups attempted to exploit a security vacuum in the southern region of the country but were limited in their ability to do so because of tactical gains by the LNA against these groups. Throughout most of 2020, GNA-aligned groups repulsed an LNA attempt to take control of Greater Tripoli, and the two sides signed a nationwide ceasefire on October 23. The GNA and aligned groups maintained control of the Western Mountains and the northwest coastal areas stretching from the Tunisian border to Sirte. LNA-aligned groups controlled the remainder of Libya, including Cyrenaica, and the central and southern districts of Jufra, Kufra, Sabha, and Murzuq. Libya's vast, sparsely populated desert areas, particularly in central and southern Libya, remain safe havens for al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant-Libya (ISIL-Libya). The GNA, although the internationally recognized government, lacked the capacity and reach to exercise control in most of Libya and relied on militias and other armed groups for security in areas it did not have the ability to effectively control, including the capital Tripoli. The GNA had limited ability to eliminate terrorist safe havens, prevent the flow of FTFs, or ensure effective counter-proliferation efforts. Because of the difficulties of controlling the southern and desert borders and a lack of respect for security procedures at air and seaports of entry by foreign state or Libyan substate groups, the GNA remained unable to effectively track flows of FTFs in and out of its territory. During the year, significant numbers of foreign mercenaries deployed to the country, including Turkey-backed Syrian opposition groups with ties to terrorist groups operating in Syria. Rival factions and political stakeholders outside of the GNA, including in the LNA-aligned forces, also were unable to stem the flow of FTFs.

**Yemen.** Iran-backed Houthi militants continued to control large portions of northern Yemen, where the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps continued to maintain a presence. The Saudi-led coalition, which includes Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), provided support to the Republic of Yemen government (ROYG) which continued to fight to reclaim territory held by Iran-backed Houthi militants. The ROYG, with the support of the Saudis and Emiratis, continued counterterrorism operations to degrade al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and ISIS-Yemen operations in the country. However, owing to the ongoing conflict, the ROYG was severely constrained in its ability to prevent terrorist training, funding, recruitment, and transit. Although AQAP and ISIS-Yemen have been degraded in recent years, the two groups 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. Further, AQAP continued to harbor external operations ambitions. Under President Hadi's leadership, the ROYG has been as cooperative with U.S., Saudi, and UAE counterterrorism operations as its limited capacity will allow.

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.

### **South Asia**

**Afghanistan.** Terrorist and insurgent groups, including ISIS-K and elements of al-Qa'ida, exploited Afghanistan's ungoverned spaces, including the border region of Afghanistan and Pakistan, throughout 2020. Despite making progress against ISIS-K, the Afghan government struggled to assert control over this remote terrain, where the population is largely detached from national institutions. The Afghan government cooperated with U.S. counterterrorism efforts through Operation Freedom's Sentinel and executed its own counterterrorism operations. Separately, the Taliban also conducted operations against ISIS-K in Kunar during this reporting period, claiming the group there had been defeated in March.

The potential for WMD trafficking and proliferation remained a concern. In 2020 the United States helped 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 to strengthen Afghanistan's border security.

**Pakistan.** The Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan and other designated terrorist groups continue to conduct attacks against Pakistani military and civilian targets. Although Pakistan's national action plan calls to "ensure that no armed militias are allowed to function in the country," several UN- and U.S.-designated terrorist groups that focus on attacks outside the country continued to operate from Pakistani soil in 2020, including the Haqqani Network, Lashkar-e-Tayyiba, and Jaish-e-Mohammed. The government and military acted inconsistently with respect to terrorist safe havens throughout the country. Authorities did not take sufficient action to dismantle certain terrorist groups.

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.

### **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, Panama, Peru, and Venezuela. Historically, these conditions have allowed terrorist groups — particularly Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) dissidents and the National Liberation Army (ELN) — to operate. The peace accord between the Government of Colombia and FARC in 2016 led to the demobilization of the majority of FARC combatants and the FARC's conversion into a political party. 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 2020. A troubling

number of FARC dissidents, estimated at around 2,600 individuals who chose not to participate in the peace process or who have subsequently joined the dissident ranks, 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 in 2020. The government was not known to support or facilitate the proliferation or trafficking of WMD in or through its territory.

**Cuba.** Cuba, citing peace negotiation protocols, refused Colombia's request to extradite 10 ELN leaders living in Havana after that group claimed responsibility for the 2019 bombing of the national police academy in Bogotá, killing 22 persons and injuring 87 others. During 2019, Colombia filed extradition requests for ELN leaders Victor Orlando Cubides, aka Pablo Tejada, and Israel Ramírez Pineda, aka Pablo Beltrán, with the Cuban government, to which Cuba has not acceded.

Cuba also harbors several U.S. fugitives from justice wanted on charges of political violence, many of whom have resided in Cuba for decades. For example, the Cuban government has refused to return Joanne Chesimard, aka Assata Shakur, a fugitive on the FBI's Most Wanted Terrorists List, who was convicted of executing New Jersey State Trooper Werner Foerster. Cuba also has refused to return William "Guillermo" Morales, a fugitive bomb maker for the Armed Forces for National Liberation (or FALN), who is wanted by the FBI and escaped detention after being convicted of charges related to domestic terrorism; Ishmael LaBeet, aka Ishmael Muslim Ali, who received eight life sentences after being convicted of killing eight people in the U.S. Virgin Islands in 1972 and hijacking a plane to flee to Cuba in 1984; Charles Lee Hill, who has been charged with killing New Mexico State Policeman Robert Rosenbloom in 1971. The Cuban government provides housing, food ration books, and medical care for fugitives residing there.

The government was not known to support or facilitate the proliferation or trafficking of WMD in or through its territory.

**Venezuela.** The illegitimate Maduro regime allows and tolerates the use of its territory by terrorist organizations. Much of Venezuela is ungoverned, undergoverned, or ill governed. At times, the regime has openly welcomed terrorist presence in its territory. In May, Seuxis Pausías Hernández, alias Jesús Santrich, appeared in photos in Caracas, with a security detail reportedly provided by the Maduro regime. Also in May, the regime expressed its solidarity for former official Adel El Zabayar, following the U.S. Department of Justice's announcement of his indictment on narco-terrorism charges for working with FARC guerrillas, Hizballah, and Hamas. However, Venezuelan security services have also clashed with FARC dissident groups, including killing a major front commander in November.

The government was not known to support or facilitate the proliferation or trafficking of WMD in or through its territory.

## White-Identity Terrorism

Pursuant to the FY 2021 National Defense Authorization Act, Section 1299F(h), the Department of State was directed to incorporate in the annual Country Reports on Terrorism all credible information about “white-identity terrorism” (WIT), including relevant attacks, the identification of perpetrators and victims of such attacks, the size and identification of organizations and networks, and the identification of notable ideologues.

In 2021, the CT Bureau instructed all Department diplomatic and consular posts to engage with their host governments regarding individuals or groups affiliated with racially or ethnically motivated violent extremism (or REMVE), with a particular focus on advocates for WIT who perceive that their idealized ethnically white identity is under attack from those who represent and support multiculturalism and globalization.

In response, European governments reported that REMVE, including WIT, was a growing counterterrorism priority but noted that many governments have decades of experience addressing these types of threats. Several European governments observed that groups engaged in REMVE, including WIT, lack hierarchical structures and typically do not have a central command. They assessed that lone actors pose a greater threat than formalized organizations, with these individuals communicating and influencing each other on social media, including closed chat groups and messaging platforms. Such groups also organize both virtually and in person in unofficial settings, such as employment groups, sports clubs, and concerts.

In April 2020 the U.S. government designated the Russian Imperial Movement, or RIM, and members of its leadership as Specially Designated Global Terrorists. This was the first time that the State Department designated a WIT group. RIM has provided paramilitary-style training to white supremacists and neo-Nazis in Europe and actively works to rally these types of groups into a common front against their perceived enemies. In 2016, two Swedish individuals attended RIM’s training course; thereafter, they committed a series of bombings in Gothenburg, Sweden, targeting a refugee shelter, a shelter for asylum seekers, and a café — crimes for which they were convicted in Sweden.

With regard to relevant WIT attacks during the reporting period, in February Tobias Rathjen attacked two shisha bars in Hanau, Germany. Rathjen killed nine people and injured several others in the attacks before killing himself and his mother. German prosecutors ascribed the attacks to “far-right extremism with xenophobic motives.”

In addition, foreign partners designated, proscribed, banned, or subjected to similar actions and/or authorities the groups below in 2020. Statutory criteria and domestic legal authorities to take such action differ greatly across governments. For example, other governments may rely solely on speech-related activity as the basis of the designation, proscription, or banning actions, which raises freedom of expression concerns and is not permissible in the United States under First Amendment protections.

International actions taken in 2020 included the following:

- **Brenton Tarrant** (designated by New Zealand) perpetrated the 2019 attack on two mosques in Christchurch, murdering 51 people. New Zealand authorities announcing his terrorist designation noted “the attacks were carried out for the purpose of advancing Tarrant’s ideological cause through acts of violence and terror, and with the intention of both inducing terror in the civilian population and inciting conflict and disorder with the ultimate goal of undermining and destabilizing democratic government.”
- **Combat 18 Deutschland** (banned by Germany), or “Combat 18 Germany,” is a German-based neo-Nazi organization promoting white supremacy, anti-Semitism, xenophobia, and National Socialism. The group’s goals and activities are contrary to German criminal laws against the propagation of Nazi ideology. According to media reports, as of 2020, there are thought to be approximately 20 members in the German organization. German authorities said the ban sent a clear message that “right-wing extremism” and anti-Semitism are serious threats to free society.
- **Feuerkrieg Division** (proscribed by United Kingdom) is a primarily internet-based white supremacist group, founded in 2018, and has an international footprint, with members across North America and Europe. In 2020 the United Kingdom proscribed *Feuerkrieg* for “promoting and inciting violence.” On February 8, *Feuerkrieg* Division announced on its Telegram channel that it would be dissolving. However, the group and its members appear to remain active and post messages to other public channels.
- **Golden Dawn** (ruled a criminal organization by Greece) was a Greek “ultra-nationalist political party” that Greek courts determined in 2020 had been operating as a criminal organization, finding 18 former members of Parliament guilty of participating in a criminal enterprise, and named 16 of its members guilty of the 2013 murder of anti-fascist activist Pavlos Fyssas.
- **Nordadler** (banned by Germany) is a German-based neo-Nazi group whose 30 members professed allegiance to Adolf Hitler and aimed to revive the National Socialist ideology. The group uses open and closed digital platforms to spread its views, with its leaders seeking to recruit and indoctrinate mainly young internet users. In banning the group, German authorities noted that it features strong anti-Semitism and a militant aggressive general attitude. German prosecutors allege that members of Nordadler had attempted to obtain weapons, ammunition, and explosive material and were found to have a list with the names of politicians they were planning to target.
- **Nordic Resistance Movement** (banned by Finland) is a Pan-Nordic neo-Nazi movement. It was established in Denmark, Finland, Sweden, and Norway, and also has members in Iceland. Finland’s Supreme Court found that “NRM’s activities are not protected under Finland’s right to freedom of speech because the purpose of the organization is to limit the constitutional freedoms of others, and that they have thereby abused the right to freedom of expression.” A Norwegian report issued by the Center for Research on Extremism estimated that the movement comprised an estimated 400 to 500 individuals in Sweden, 30 to 40 individuals in Norway, and just over 100 individuals in Denmark and Finland combined, the majority of whom are adult men between the ages of 20 and 50.



Although the group was banned, the organization continues to operate under the name “Toward Freedom!”

- **Sonnenkrieg Division** (proscribed by United Kingdom) is a UK-based white supremacist group established in 2018 as a splinter group of System Resistance Network (an alias of the proscribed group National Action). Members of the group were convicted of “encouraging terrorism and possession of documents useful to a terrorist” in 2019. The group encouraged and glorified acts of terrorism through its posts and images.
- **Sturmbrigade/Wolfsbrigade 44** (banned by Germany) is a German-based neo-Nazi organization, founded in 2016, which authorities allege was “sowing hatred” in Germany and “advocating for the reestablishment of a National Socialist state.” The ban notes that members strove to reestablish a Nazi state by abolishing the democratic constitutional state through a martial demeanor promoting racism and anti-Semitism.
- **System Resistance Network** (proscribed by United Kingdom) is an alias of National Action, a neo-Nazi group that was established in 2013 and proscribed by the UK in 2016. United Kingdom authorities note the group is virulently racist, anti-Semitic, and homophobic. Its ideology promotes the idea that Britain will inevitably see a violent race war, in which the group claims it will be an active part. According to UK authorities, the group “rejects democracy, is hostile to the British state and seeks to divide society by implicitly endorsing violence against ethnic minorities and perceived ‘race traitors.’”

## Countering Terrorism on the Economic Front

In 2020 the Department of State designated one new group as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO). In addition, 13 entities and individuals were designated as Specially Designated Global Terrorists under the Department’s authorities in Executive Order (E.O.) 13224.

The Department of the Treasury also designated entities and individuals under E.O. 13224, as amended. For a list of all U.S. designations, see the [Department of the Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control’s Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List](#).

### 2020 Foreign Terrorist Organization/Executive Order 13224 Group Designations

On January 3 the Department of State designated Asa’ib Ahl al-Haq (AAH) under E.O. 13224. The FTO designation of AAH became effective on January 10. (See Chapter 5, Foreign Terrorist Organizations, for further information on AAH.)

### 2020 Executive Order (E.O.) 13224 Designations

Also on January 3 the Department of State designated Qays al-Khazali and Laith al-Khazali. The Khazali brothers lead AAH, an Iran-backed militant organization that has claimed responsibility for more than 6,000 attacks against U.S. and Defeat-ISIS Coalition forces since its creation in 2006.

On February 26, the Department of State designated Ahmad al-Hamidawi. Al-Hamidawi is the Secretary General of Kata'ib Hizballah.

On March 18 the Department of State designated Amir Muhammad Sa'id Abdal-Rahman al-Mawla, also known as Hajji Abdallah. Following the death of former ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, al-Mawla succeeded him as the leader of ISIS.

On April 6 the Department of State designated the Russian Imperial Movement (RIM). RIM has provided paramilitary-style training to white supremacists and neo-Nazis in Europe and actively works to rally these types of groups into a common front against their perceived enemies.

Also on April 6 the Department of State designated three leaders of RIM: Stanislav Anatolyevich Vorobyev, Denis Valiulloevich Gariyev, and Nikolay Nikolayevich Trushchalov. RIM is led by Vorobyev, its founder and overall leader. Gariyev is the head of RIM's paramilitary arm, the Imperial Legion. Trushchalov is RIM's coordinator for external relations.

On November 17 the Department of State designated Abdullahi Osman Mohamed and Maalim Ayman. Both individuals are senior leaders in the al-Qa'ida affiliate, al-Shabaab. Mohamed is al-Shabaab's senior explosives expert responsible for the overall management of al-Shabaab's explosives operations and the leader of al-Shabaab's media wing, al-Kataib. Ayman is the leader of Jaysh Ayman, an al-Shabaab unit conducting terrorist attacks and operations in Kenya and Somalia.

On December 11 the Department of State designated Ashraf al-Qizani. Al-Qizani is the emir of Jund al-Khilafah in Tunisia, an ISIS affiliate in Tunisia.

On December 15 the Department of State designated Saraya al-Mukhtar (SaM). SaM's self-described goal is to depose the Bahraini government with the intention of paving the way for Iran to exert greater influence in Bahrain. The group has plotted attacks against U.S. personnel in Bahrain and has offered cash rewards for the assassination of Bahraini officials.

### **Multilateral Efforts to Counter Terrorism**

In 2020 the United States continued to work through multilateral organizations to promote U.S. approaches to countering terrorism, and to strengthen regional and international counterterrorism efforts, 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).** Founded in 2011 by the United States and Turkey, the GCTF aims to diminish terrorist recruitment and increase countries' capacity to deal with terrorist threats within their borders and regions by strengthening civilian institutions to counter terrorism. 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 2017 the United States and Jordan became co-chairs of the Foreign Terrorist Fighters Working Group for an initial two-year term. The United States and Jordan renewed their co-

chairmanship of the FTF Working Group in 2019 for another two-year term, now extended through September 2022 because of the global pandemic. Canada and Morocco will co-chair the GCTF until that date.

The United Nations is a close partner of the GCTF and a participant in its activities. The GCTF continued to increase cooperation and partnership as outlined in the 2018 joint GCTF-UN statement marking enhanced cooperation between the two bodies. The GCTF serves as a mechanism to further the implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and more broadly to complement and reinforce existing multilateral counterterrorism efforts, starting with those of the United Nations. The GCTF also partners with a wide range of regional multilateral organizations, including the Council of Europe, the OSCE, NATO, the AU, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, and ASEAN.

In September, GCTF ministers formally endorsed two new framework documents (found at [www.thegctf.org](http://www.thegctf.org)):

- *Memorandum on Good Practices on Strengthening National-Local Cooperation in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism Conducive to Terrorism*
- *Addendum to The Hague Good Practices on the Nexus between Transnational Organized Crime and Terrorism: Focus on Criminal Justice*

Moreover in 2020 the GCTF continued the work of the Forum by migrating initiatives to webinar formats, including two co-led by the United States:

- ***The Watchlisting Guidance Manual*** initiative, which is assembling a “toolkit” for countries to implement a whole-of-government approach to managing the watchlisting and screening of known and suspected terrorists (KSTs). This toolkit will be a useful resource for policymakers, law enforcement officials, immigration and consular officers, and agencies that manage and operate watchlists. As states adopt the practices put forth in the toolkit, it should not only increase border security but also, through the standardized management of watchlist information, increase trust in global information-sharing initiatives to stop terrorists. These practices also will help countries further implement recommendations in the *New York Memorandum on Good Practices for Interdicting Terrorist Travel* and UNSCR 2396. The United States and the United Nations co-chaired four global webinars in 2020 and planned to co-chair two in 2021 that will help inform the content in the toolkit.
- **‘The Initiative on Maritime Security and Terrorist Travel’** addresses potential vulnerabilities in the maritime sector that could be exploited by terrorists. Closely examining tools and best practices deployed in the aviation domain, this initiative looks at how best to replicate them in this specific sector and improve information sharing between and among governments on topics such as KSTs transitioning through official ports, the use of ships and small vessels as weapons, and the smuggling or trafficking of narcotics or arms. This includes subregional workshops focused on West Africa, East Africa, and East Asia Pacific’s tri-maritime border (Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines)

in 2020, continuing with the Caribbean, the Gulf, and the Mediterranean, and public-private partnerships workshops planned for 2021.

- **‘Initiative on Criminal Justice Responses to the Linkages Between Terrorism, Transnational Organized Crimes, and International Crimes.’** Co-chairs Nigeria and Switzerland launched the second phase of their initiative. In 2020 the Working Group held virtual workshops to examine the links between terrorism and what it is referring to as “international crimes,” a category that may include acts described as war crimes, genocide, torture, and “sexual and gender-based crimes.”
- **‘Initiative on National-Local Cooperation in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism Policy Toolkit Initiative’ and ‘Gender and Identity Factors Platform for Countering Violent Extremism and Counterterrorism Initiative’** (co-chaired by Canada and the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism [UNOCT]): Australia and Indonesia, as co-chairs of the CVE Working Group, are co-leading these two initiatives, holding workshops in 2020 and into 2021.
- **‘Strategic Vision Initiative’** launched by GCTF co-chairs Canada and Morocco. GCTF members reaffirmed the GCTF founding principles as reflected in the 2011 Political Declaration and emphasized the importance of the ongoing consultations on the “GCTF Strategic Vision for the Next Decade,” to be finalized and adopted in 2021. This Strategic Vision seeks to provide new momentum to the Forum’s work, to build on its achievements, and to strengthen its impact and relevance, including considering proposals on ways to support the implementation of GCTF Framework Documents.

**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).** Since its establishment in 2014 the IIJ has become a widely respected training institution for sustainable rule-of-law capacity building activities to criminal justice sector practitioners, including lawmakers, police, prosecutors, judges, corrections officials, policymakers, and other justice sector stakeholders on how to address terrorism and related transnational criminal activities. In the last five years, the IIJ has trained more than 5,500 criminal justice practitioners from 123 participating countries. In 2020 the IIJ continued its steady increase in investment from donors, including from Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the EU and welcomed Kuwait to join the 14-member Governing Board of Administrators. In addition to its continued collaboration with other related multilateral institutions, the IIJ continued to expand its formal institutional relationships, finalizing memoranda of understanding with UNOCT and Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund. Through funding from the United States, the IIJ trained more than 500 practitioners in 2020 on issues related to battlefield evidence, addressing homegrown terrorism, combating prison radicalization, successfully prosecuting terrorism, increasing international cooperation in terrorism investigations and prosecutions, using intelligence

to generate evidence for terrorism prosecutions and investigations, and juvenile justice. Despite the COVID-19 global pandemic, the IJJ has successfully conducted 16 trainings since April with more than 400 participants by leveraging virtual training platforms and a multiphased approach, and launched a new academic unit to develop baseline counterterrorism knowledge for midlevel practitioners from partner countries and further scholarship on practical criminal justice approaches to counterterrorism. In direct response to the COVID-related challenges facing criminal justice practitioners, the IJJ and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime collaboratively launched an initiative, with support from the United States, to identify practical approaches to managing remote access for judicial proceedings in terrorism cases. Finally, the IJJ, in partnership with the United States and the United Kingdom, launched a one-year initiative to develop a guide for criminal justice practitioners to address the threat posed by racially or ethnically motivated violent extremism.

- ***Hedayah***. Inaugurated in 2012 by key GCTF member countries, *Hedayah* is the first-ever international center of excellence for CVE, headquartered in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (UAE). *Hedayah* focuses on capacity building, dialogue and CVE communications, and research and analysis. *Hedayah* continued to organize capacity building workshops on CVE communications, education-based approaches to CVE, and CVE national action plans. For example, *Hedayah* developed and launched three new CVE training tools in 2020. These included “The Blueprint for Rehabilitation and Reintegration Center”; a CVE program monitoring and evaluation mobile application called MASAR 2.0, which means “path” or “trajectory” in Arabic; and an online animated game aimed as an alternative to online terrorist gaming. *Hedayah* trained local CVE NGOs and other relevant stakeholders on how to use MASAR 2.0. In 2020, *Hedayah* raised almost \$12 million for programs and operating expenses. Donors include the United States, the EU, Japan, Spain, the UAE, and the United Kingdom.
- **Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF)**. In 2013 the GCTF called for the establishment of GCERF to serve as the first global fund to strengthen community resilience to terrorism. Based in Geneva, Switzerland, GCERF focuses on preventing and countering terrorism by building the capacity of small, local, community-based organizations. GCERF has raised more than \$100 million from 18 governments. As of June, there were 32 active grants in Bangladesh, Kenya, Kosovo, Mali, Nigeria, the Philippines, and Tunisia, and grant making will soon commence in Somalia and Sri Lanka. During 2020, GCERF grants directly empowered an estimated 1.7 million people at risk of terrorist recruitment and radicalization, and indirectly engaged a further estimated 7.8 million individuals. The proportion of girls and women reached has increased to almost 50 percent since 2016. Since 2014, 14 countries, plus the EU, have contributed more than \$85 million to GCERF. In 2020, GCERF brought on two new donor countries.

**Strong Cities Network (SCN)**. In 2015 the SCN launched at the UN General Assembly with support from the United States. With 25 founding members, SCN now includes more than 150 local governments across six continents. SCN provides local governments with a forum to exchange best practices and lessons learned on CVE, including through global summits, regional

workshops, exchanges, and an online portal. The London-based Institute for Strategic Dialogue serves as the SCN secretariat and conducts in-depth capacity building training and mentorship to members in Central Asia, East and West Africa, the Middle East and North Africa, South and Southeast Asia, and the Western Balkans. With support from the United States, SCN members in Bangladesh, Kenya, and North Macedonia have developed local action plans.

**The International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL).** Through its I-24/7 secure global police communications system, INTERPOL connects member states' law enforcement officials to its investigative and analytical databases, and to its system for sending messages and notices. The United States funds programs through INTERPOL's General Secretariat and INTERPOL Washington, U.S. National Central Bureau (USNCB), to help countries affected by the FTF phenomenon provide access to I-24/7 to frontline officials. By extending these connections beyond a country's national central bureau to strategic, high-volume airports, seaports, and land ports of entry, as well as other government agencies with investigative responsibilities, national authorities are better enabled to identify, deter, and interdict FTFs and other transnational criminals. Acknowledging the value of this initiative and the importance of addressing connectivity gaps in countries at risk of FTF travel, in 2016 the G-7 pledged to extending I-24/7 connectivity to 41 priority countries by the end of 2021. Since that time, the United States has engaged INTERPOL and the USNCB to help fulfill the G-7 commitment by providing funding for projects aimed at extending connectivity in 15 countries.

Additionally, the United States has provided resources directly to INTERPOL to enhance its analytic capacity to receive, assess, analyze, and disseminate information regarding the identities and movements of FTFs. Developing the organization's capacity to process and disseminate this critical information supports the provision to member country law enforcement and border control authorities of actionable information to support screening procedures and investigations into terrorism-related crimes. To further support this initiative, the United States also has provided funding to support the development of an analytical platform that will enhance INTERPOL's analytical capability by allowing its disparate datasets to be easily filtered, queried, and cross-referenced to efficiently process associations, such as an FTF identity profile with a reported lost or stolen travel document. The United States recognizes the great value in its long partnership with INTERPOL and the role of the USNCB and will continue investing to ensure critical FTF data are shared and accessible throughout the global law enforcement community.

**European Union (EU).** In December the EU adopted a new "Counter-Terrorism Agenda: Anticipate, Prevent, Protect, Respond." Even during COVID, the U.S. government continued to encourage EU member states to take responsibility for their FTFs and FTF family members by repatriating, prosecuting, rehabilitating, and reintegrating them as appropriate. Although the EU institutions maintain that decisions related to repatriating FTFs and their family members from the battlefield in Syria are reserved for the member states, the EU has stated that rehabilitating and reintegrating returning citizens is a priority both at the EU and the national level. However, few repatriations took place during the last year, and human rights and humanitarian groups continue to criticize the inaction of EU member states to repatriate their citizens. In the Western Balkans, the EU initiated a project during the fall in partnership with host countries and local communities. Efforts by both the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) and the U.S. Department

of Justice to share battlefield evidence with the EU and its members states continued, and it was emphasized that counterterrorism cooperation, including battlefield evidence, is an important area for NATO-EU cooperation.

In updating its *Memorandum on Battlefield Evidence* in September, Eurojust reported an increase among EU member states in cases where battlefield evidence was used in criminal proceedings against foreign terrorist fighters and individuals suspected of criminal offenses during armed conflicts. In May the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) announced its first joint operation outside of the EU, deploying 50 officers to Albania in support of border security and managing migratory flows from Greece. In July and October, Frontex announced two additional operations in Montenegro to bolster the country's sea borders, with a particular focus on anti-smuggling for drugs and weapons, human trafficking, and terrorism. The European Commission also signed two nonbinding counterterrorism arrangements with Albania and North Macedonia in October, and in December proposed revising EUROPOL's mandate to improve the agency's ability to collect and analyze data relevant to cross-border crimes and terrorist offenses. The revised mandate would also allow EUROPOL to create its own special category of "information alerts" in the Schengen Information System, using information sourced from third countries or international organizations and subject to certain restrictions. 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.

The European 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. The EU's evolving data privacy framework also continues to make law enforcement and border security cooperation between EU member states and non-EU countries, including the United States, more challenging. In its December "Counter-Terrorism Agenda," the European Commission outlined its intention to propose revisions and updates to the Prüm Decisions that would help facilitate criminal and terrorist investigations by member states in light of the EU's evolving data privacy regulatory framework. 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. To date, the EU has pledged almost \$270 million for the G-5 Sahel Joint Force, a coalition of five West African nations providing border security and counterterrorism operations in the Sahel. The EU has also initiated the Partnership for Stability and Security in the Sahel to assess the security sector in West African countries and coordinate donor funding to fulfill their needs. The 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.

**Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).** Under Albania as the 2020 Chair in Office, the OSCE approach to counterterrorism focused on working with civil society to address terrorism's root causes; establishing public-private partnerships to protect critical infrastructure and promote resilience; countering terrorist financing; building international solidarity; promoting the rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders; and ensuring the protection of human rights. UNOCT and the OSCE co-hosted a conference, "Foreign Terrorist

Fighters: Addressing Current Challenges,” in Vienna. Officials from across the OSCE region discussed a whole-of-society approach to address FTF challenges, particularly the needs of children. Under the Albanian chairmanship, the OSCE held its annual OSCE-wide Counterterrorism Conference as a virtual/in-person hybrid in September. With a focus on building partnerships to Prevent and Counter Violent Extremism and Radicalization That Lead to Terrorism, common themes highlighted by the participating states included the importance of developing strong public-private partnerships, working closely with civil society and other actors, and incorporating gender-based approaches to countering terrorism. The United States also participated in the fourth OSCE-wide Seminar on Passenger Data Exchange in October, urging OSCE participating states to establish Passenger Name Record systems based on International Civil Aviation Organization standards and practices. OSCE staff actively participated in global and regional efforts supported by the United States through the GCTF, the IJ, and NATO.

**North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).** NATO is a member of the Defeat-ISIS Coalition and in 2020 continued its missions in Afghanistan and Iraq. Furthering efforts to expand NATO’s role in counterterrorism and the United States’ Global Battlefield Evidence Initiative, NATO adopted a Battlefield Evidence Policy and Practical Framework for Technical Exploitation. These initiatives help Allies have more information available in the fight against terrorism and can play a key role in helping bring foreign terrorist fighters to justice. In June, NATO formally launched a Counterterrorism Reference Curriculum to enhance countries’ capacities to develop national skills. More than 100 experts from nations across five continents, including the United States, as well as multiple international organizations, contributed to the writing, drafting, and editing of the final product. After years of detailed discussions, INTERPOL and NATO’s Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (or SHAPE) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to formalize collaboration. The MoU proposes sharing information to increase situational awareness and mitigate risks on certain nonmilitary-related activities, including FTF and other terrorist-related threats. It further calls for joint training on, among other topics, battlefield evidence preservation, collection, and dissemination. NATO international staff regularly collaborate with the African Union, the EU, the IJ, the OSCE, the United Nations, and other international and regional organizations.

**Council of Europe (CoE).** The CoE, as Europe’s regional organization advancing human rights, democracy, and the rule of law, has developed and reinforced legal standards to prevent and suppress acts of terrorism. It works to help member states fight terrorism more effectively by strengthening and improving their national legislation, as well as by facilitating international cooperation while respecting human rights and in full respect of the rule of law. The United States participates in the CoE as an observer. The CoE’s counterterrorism priorities, as established in its current 2018-22 Strategy, include preventing terrorism through criminal law and law enforcement measures, ensuring terrorist offenses are investigated in the most efficient and quickest manner possible, and protecting persons against terrorism. The CoE’s counterterrorism committee (CDCT) convened its inaugural meeting of the Network of Contact Points for the exchange of procedural information regarding the legal standing of victims of terrorism. The United States is also a member of the CoE’s 24/7 Network of Contact Points on Foreign Terrorist Fighters. Two new CDCT working groups, on emerging terrorist threats and risk assessment of convicted terrorists, will increase awareness, understanding, and coordination



among member states. The biennial CDCT plenary addressed topics including battlefield evidence, addressing radicalization, increasing information sharing, and bioterrorism. CoE staff regularly coordinate with countries and other multilateral organizations and entities such as the EU, the Organization of American States (OAS), the OSCE, and the United Nations.

**Group of Seven (G-7) Roma-Lyon Group on Counterterrorism and Counter-Crime (RLG):**

The United States served as the RLG secretariat during the U.S. Presidency of the G-7 in 2020, facilitating and advancing implementation of an average of 20 ongoing projects aimed at sharing experiences and developing good practices on counterterrorism, transportation security, high-tech crime, migration, criminal legal affairs, and law enforcement. Because of the back-to-basics approach of the U.S. G-7 Presidency, the United States did not hold any formal RLG meetings. However, informal sessions of nearly 200 policymakers and practitioners of the RLG met virtually during October 6-8 to discuss crime- and counterterrorism-related challenges associated with COVID-19, including measures G-7 countries are taking to address the impact of the global pandemic on existing G-7 security efforts at the national, state, and local levels, and how countries are combating the spread of COVID-related disinformation by terrorists and violent extremists. Heads of delegation also discussed security challenges in the Sahel, the evolving threat of racially or ethnically motivated terrorism, and challenges associated with foreign terrorist fighters and their accompanying family members detained in Iraq and Syria.

**Organization of American States' Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism**

**(OAS/CICTE).** OAS/CICTE, which has 34 member states and 70 observers, made strides in 2020 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. OAS/CICTE led the commemoration of June 3 as Inter-American Day Against Terrorism, encouraging member states to counter terrorism in the hemisphere and around the world. OAS/CICTE held its 20th regular session in a virtual format in September. In 2020, 13 member states including the United States formally joined the Inter-American Network on Counterterrorism. The network operates on a 24/7 basis to facilitate communication among points of contact designated by each member state, so they can respond more effectively to terrorist threats.

**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 in 2020 included annual meetings on counterterrorism and transnational crime and capacity building through ASEAN-related institutions. The United States is leading a three-part ARF workshop series on information sharing and aviation security, designed to raise awareness of countries' obligations under UNSCR 2396 and explain helpful tools for implementation. The first workshop was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in 2019, with the second to occur virtually in 2021. Building off the ARF workshops, the United States expects to co-host, along with Indonesia's National Counterterrorism Agency, a two-part workshop on aviation security in the time of COVID with the 10 ASEAN countries. This workshop was postponed from 2020 and is currently scheduled to occur in 2021.

The EAS — which includes the 10 ASEAN members plus Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, Russia, and the United States — issued several statements in

2020, including one on Women, Peace, and Security, noting the importance of women's roles to addressing root causes of terrorism. In 2020 the United States and ASEAN negotiated a new five-year "Plan of Action," which outlined continued and increased engagement on counterterrorism and countering violent extremism efforts. ASEAN in 2019 adopted the Bali Work Plan to Prevent and Counter the Rise of Radicalization and Violent Extremism 2019-25. The objective of this workplan is to provide an implementation framework to guide relevant ASEAN sectoral bodies, organs, and entities in carrying out the necessary activities and monitor effectiveness in preventing and countering terrorist radicalization and recruitment. The United States supported the process of developing the workplan through workshops and technical assistance and consulted with various stakeholders, such as ASEAN sectoral bodies and civil society organizations, to provide input on the workplan. Owing to COVID-19 conditions in the region, a planned meeting to further the Bali Work Plan was postponed. The United States also works on counterterrorism issues, including in the maritime space, through the ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting-Plus.

**Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC).** APEC continued to work under the Counter-Terrorism and Secure Trade Strategy adopted in 2019 and updated its annual workplan in 2020. 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 concentrated on furthering the APEC Counter-Terrorism Working Group Strategic Plan 2018-22, which set priorities in areas such as the evolving threat of FTFs, terrorist financing, border and critical infrastructure security, and information sharing.

**The African Union (AU).** There are two main bodies within the AU that lead its counterterrorism efforts — the Peace and Security Department's Defense and Security Division, located at the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa, and the African Center for the Study and Research of Terrorism (CAERT) in Algiers. CAERT is the lead for all the AU's CVE activity. CAERT priorities include 1) building capacity of member states on CT/CVE; 2) developing and/or implementing member-state CVE action plans; and 3) enhancing international cooperation to ensure relevant regional approaches are taken fully into account. In October the AU's Peace and Security Council (PSC) established the Special Unit on Counter-Terrorism within the framework of the African Standby Force, which has yet to be operationalized. Once in operation, the Special Unit will aim to strengthen cooperation and coordination between the PSC and the Regional Economic Communities. It also will share experiences and best practices, as well as lessons arising from continental and regional mechanisms deployed against terrorism and violent extremism, such as the African Union Mission in Somalia (or AMISOM), the Multinational Joint Task Force in the Lake Chad Basin, the G-5 Sahel, and the Nouakchott and Djibouti Processes. In 2020 the United States continued its engagement on shared counterterrorism priorities as part of the United States-African Union Peace and Security Technical Working Group.

Other U.S. engagements with the AU's Peace Support Operations include the following:

**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 2020 the G-5

Sahel Joint Force conducted military operations to disrupt the activities of terrorist operations in transborder regions of the five member states. Multiple countries, including the United States and France, and the EU, have provided or pledged donor support to the G-5 Sahel Joint Force.

**The League of Arab States (LAS):** A member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, LAS is a regional organization consisting of 22 member states that promotes the interests of the Arab world. LAS serves as a forum for member states to coordinate policy on matters of concern, including countering violent extremism and other threats.

**The United Nations.** Sustained and strategic engagement at the United Nations on counterterrorism issues is a priority for the United States. Throughout 2020 the United Nations remained actively engaged in addressing the evolving threat of terrorism to international peace and security, including through the adoption of the U.S.- and Indonesia-led UNSCR 2560, adopted unanimously on December 29, that encouraged member states to engage more actively in submitting listing requests of individuals, groups, undertakings, and entities associated with ISIS and al-Qa'ida to keep the ISIL/Da'esh and al-Qa'ida Sanctions List reliable and up to date.

Other U.S. engagement with UN actors on counterterrorism 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 assess evolving terrorist trends and 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. In 2020, CTED held six open briefings on issues including terrorist threats to civil aviation and the role of the criminal justice sector in bringing terrorists to justice through effective use of battlefield- or military-collected evidence. CTED also completed 67 Overview of Implementation Assessments and Detailed Implementation Surveys and shared 18 assessment visit reports with the Global Counterterrorism Coordination Platform, which was launched in March. To support UN capacity building activities, CTED shared its prioritized technical assistance needs from 2016 through 2020 with the UN Office of Counterterrorism.
- **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 2020 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 2020, five groups and three individuals were added to the 1267 Sanctions List, including five more ISIS affiliates and the new leader of ISIS, Amir Muhammad Sa'id Abdal-Rahman al-Mawla. Three individuals were de-listed, and 17 entities and 69 individuals had their existing entries amended during the year. The total figures on the list are 264 individuals and 89 entities, as of December 31. 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.

- **The UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT).** UNOCT continued to work closely with the 40 UN entities plus INTERPOL, the World Customs Organization, and the Inter-Parliamentary Union through the Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact, to ensure balanced implementation of the four pillars of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy: 1) strengthen the delivery of UN counterterrorism capacity building assistance to member states; 2) promote and improve visibility; 3) advocacy; and, 4) resource mobilization for UN counterterrorism efforts. In July, UNOCT held a virtual Counter-Terrorism Week under the overarching theme of “Strategic and Practical Challenges of Countering Terrorism in a Global Pandemic Environment.” The U.S. coordinator for counterterrorism participated in the closing panel and provided remarks that focused on Iran-sponsored terrorism, Chinese human rights abuses, and the role of the United States as a primary provider of global counterterrorism technical assistance and capacity building. The United States also participated in the development and implementation of several global initiatives being led by UNOCT that are aimed at helping member states implement the UN Global CT Strategy by creating global norms and providing necessary capacity building and training in areas such as the protection of soft targets from terrorist attack, challenges associated with foreign terrorist fighters and their accompanying family members, and countering terrorist travel. UNOCT launched the International Hub on Behavioral Insights to Counter Terrorism in Doha, Qatar, on December 7.
- **The UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).** 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 UNODC’s Global Program Against Money Laundering, Proceeds of Crime and the Financing of Terrorism. The United States supported UNODC/TPB as a counterterrorism assistance implementer, particularly for programming focused on strengthening the criminal justice system’s response to terrorism by member states. In 2020 the United States continued to support UNODC/TPB programs designed to strengthen legal regimes to combat terrorism within a rule-of-law framework globally and to support implementation of UNSCR 2396 obligations in North Africa and South and Central Asia. Activities in 2020 included both live and virtual training workshops in Algeria, Bangladesh, Kazakhstan, Morocco, Tunisia, and Uzbekistan.
- **The UN Security Council (UNSC) 1540 Committee.** The 1540 Committee monitors and facilitates efforts to implement UNSCR 1540 (2004) requirements, which address the nexus of proliferation concerns surrounding chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons and their means of delivery on the one hand, and activities by nonstate actors, who wittingly or unwittingly provide WMD-related assistance to terrorist organizations, on the other. The 1540 Committee’s Group of Experts (GoE) participates in a wide range of multilateral and regional activities designed to facilitate technical assistance to member states when they request it. Using Office for Disarmament Affairs Trust Fund resources to cover travel expenses, the GoE also has interacted with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, the World Customs Organization,

INTERPOL, UNODC, FATF, and other multilateral counterterrorism bodies, as well as with individual countries to this end. The United States is one of eight countries, plus the EU, that have contributed to the 1540 Trust Fund, which is used to support these activities and to financially support 1540 regional coordinator positions in the OAS and the OSCE. The United States is working with the EU to co-fund AU 1540 coordinators and likewise is in discussions with Northeast Asian partners to support an ASEAN 1540 coordinator position. U.S. funds also continued to be used to conduct projects that assist African, Middle Eastern, and Asian countries in strengthening national 1540 implementation by developing voluntary national action plans (NAPs). Given the key role played by current 1540 coordinators in GoE-supported peer-to-peer reviews, the United States will continue to promote the idea of establishing additional 1540 regional coordinators, to increase the number and quality of NAPs in the lead-up to a UNSCR 1540 Comprehensive Review, which is currently expected to be held in 2021.

**The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).** In June the Council of ICAO approved amendments to Annex 9 of the Chicago Convention to establish new Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) regarding states' development and use of Passenger Name Record (PNR) systems. This action came in direct response to UNSCR 2396 of 2017, which requires states to develop the capability to collect, process, and analyze PNR data, in furtherance of ICAO SARPs. UNSCR 2396 also requires states to ensure PNR data are used by and shared with all their competent national authorities, with full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for the purpose of preventing, detecting, and investigating terrorist offenses and related travel. Finally, it urged ICAO to set standards for the collection, use, processing, and protection of PNR data. Secretary General Dr. Fang Liu supported the work to develop these standards by promoting awareness of states' obligations and the importance of ICAO responding expeditiously to help implement UNSCR 2396.

**The Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT).** The United States serves as co-chair of the GICNT, a voluntary partnership of 89 nations and 6 international organizations committed to strengthening global capacity to prevent, detect, and respond to nuclear terrorism. In 2020, the GICNT held two in-person activities and then effectively pivoted programming to virtual engagements, hosting two multilateral workshops and a leadership meeting. The virtual workshops provided an interactive forum to share and discuss best practices around plans, policies, and procedures to detect and respond to terrorism incidents. The GICNT also updated its 2021-23 workplan and continued planning and finalizing additional exercises scheduled for 2021. In addition to serving as co-chair, the United States provides both financial and human resources to support the initiative's multilateral undertakings.

**Financial Action Task Force (FATF).** FATF is an intergovernmental body that sets standards and promotes effective implementation of legal, regulatory, and operational measures to combat money laundering, terrorism financing, and proliferation financing. FATF's efforts to improve understanding and compliance with global FATF standards are supported by FATF-style regional bodies around the world. In 2020, FATF continued to address terrorist financing through ongoing work. This included regular nonpublic updates to the FATF global network on ISIS and AQ financing, and the drafting of a best practices paper on investigating and prosecuting terrorist financing. Under the German FATF Presidency (which started in July ),

FATF also is conducting an assessment on financing associated with racially or ethnically motivated terrorism (sometimes referred to as right-wing terrorism in FATF).

## **Long-Term Programs and Initiatives Designed to Counter Terrorist Safe Havens and Recruitment**

### **Countering Violent Extremism**

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) refers to proactive assistance and engagements designed to reduce the ability of terrorist groups and their affiliates and adherents to radicalize, recruit, and mobilize individuals and communities to terrorism. Countering terrorist radicalization and recruitment is an essential counterterrorism tool. Our strategy to defeat terrorism includes efforts to build the capacity of local actors to defeat terrorism at its source. CVE requires a comprehensive rule-of-law-based and human-rights-respecting approach involving national and local governments, religious leaders, civil society, educators, women, youth, the private sector, and affected communities. In 2020, through bilateral and multilateral engagement, the Bureau of Counterterrorism (CT Bureau) emphasized four key areas in strategy formulation, diplomatic engagement, and foreign assistance programming: 1) countering all forms of terrorist ideologies, 2) countering use of the internet for terrorist purposes, 3) rehabilitation and reintegration, and 4) countermessaging. The CT Bureau partnered with government officials, community leaders, mental health professionals and social workers, religious figures, and others to build a prevention architecture to counter terrorist radicalization and recruitment.

### **Racially or Ethnically Motivated Violent Extremism**

The CT Bureau increased its efforts to combat racially or ethnically motivated violent extremism (REMVE). REMVE — in particular white supremacist terrorism — continues to be a threat to the global community, with violence both on the rise and spreading geographically, as white supremacist and nativist movements and individuals increasingly target immigrants; Jewish, Muslim, and other religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and/or intersex (LGBTI) individuals; governments; and other perceived enemies. The CT Bureau is working with our law enforcement and foreign partners to take concrete actions to address this growing threat.

### **Countering Use of the Internet for Terrorist Purposes**

The CT Bureau continued promoting U.S. policy on this issue in bilateral and multilateral engagements. As global attention on how terrorists exploit internet-based platforms continues to grow, the CT Bureau worked to ensure the U.S. response was measured, and in line with U.S. policy and legal frameworks for internet freedom and freedom of expression. The United States believes that protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression, is an important part of our counterterrorism strategy because increased censorship and other restrictions on human rights can lead to greater instances of terrorist radicalization. The CT Bureau played a leading role in coordinating and negotiating language that promoted U.S. policy consistent with our long-standing ideals.

While the United States did not endorse the Christchurch Call to Action in 2020, the CT Bureau worked to ensure the U.S. position and general support on the issue was reflected in the G-20

*Osaka Leaders' Statement on Preventing Exploitation of the Internet for Terrorism and Violent Extremism Conducive to Terrorism* and in the *G-7 Biarritz Strategy for an Open, Free, and Secure Digital Transformation*. The CT Bureau engaged regularly with technology companies to improve voluntary information sharing, particularly on the presence of designated terrorist organizations and their members who operate online. The CT Bureau also engaged regularly with the industry-led Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism (GIFCT) and UN-affiliated Tech Against Terrorism, demonstrating the U.S. approach in working collaboratively with the private sector to counter the use of the internet for terrorist purposes.

### **Rehabilitation and Reintegration**

Rehabilitation and reintegration of former terrorist fighters and their family members has become a pressing concern for the global community. The CT Bureau coordinated global engagement on the rehabilitation and reintegration of FTF families repatriated from Syria and Iraq, though pandemic restrictions complicated these efforts. The CT Bureau supported the travel of U.S. and international subject-matter experts to Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kyrgyz Republic, Maldives, North Macedonia, and Trinidad and Tobago to share best practices on rehabilitation and reintegration. These engagements, which emphasized the importance of providing returnees with psychosocial services and involving community-level stakeholders in the reintegration process, led multiple countries to agree to repatriate their citizens and update their approaches to rehabilitation and reintegration, which, in turn, could encourage other nations to agree to repatriate their citizens from Syria and Iraq.

### **Counternarratives**

The CT Bureau continues to work with the Global Engagement Center's Resiliency Campaign focused on Iraq, Syria, and Jordan as part of the Defeat-ISIS effort. This campaign focused on four areas: 1) creating a local environment inhospitable to ISIS; 2) sustaining global support to defeat ISIS; 3) portraying ISIS as another failed movement; and 4) reducing ISIS's ability to disseminate propaganda used to recruit, radicalize, or mobilize supporters. This campaign brought together elements within the DoD to coordinate messaging efforts within specified countries.

CT Bureau in coordination with *Hedayah*, the Abu Dhabi-based CVE Center of Excellence, trained and supported government and civil society officials from Kosovo and Kyrgyzstan in developing communication strategies to complement CVE national action plans, building positive messaging campaigns, and developing interventions and understandings around use of the internet for terrorist purposes.

### **International Platforms to Advance CVE**

In 2020 the CT Bureau maintained robust support for key international platforms that serve to push global CVE initiatives, while sharing the burden of CVE programs with global partners. In the past year, the CT Bureau has helped multilateral institutions raise millions of dollars for local CVE programming in targeted localities.

- **Strong Cities Network (SCN):** In 2015, the SCN launched at the UN General Assembly with support from the United States. With 25 founding members, SCN now includes more than 150 local governments across six continents. SCN provides local governments

with a forum to exchange best practices and lessons learned on CVE, including through global summits, regional workshops, exchanges, and an online portal. The London-based Institute for Strategic Dialogue serves as the SCN secretariat and conducts in-depth capacity building training and mentorship to members in Central Asia, East and West Africa, the Middle East and North Africa, South and Southeast Asia, and the Western Balkans. With support from the United States, SCN members in Bangladesh, Kenya, and North Macedonia have developed local action plans.

- **Global Community Engagement Resilience Fund (GCERF):** Since its inception in 2004 as the global CVE fund, GCERF has raised more than \$100 million from 18 governments. In 2020, GCERF was able to bring on Germany as a new donor. GCERF now actively partners with nine beneficiary countries. As of June, there are 32 active grants in Bangladesh, Kenya, Kosovo, Mali, Nigeria, Tunisia, and the Philippines, and grant making will soon commence in Somalia and Sri Lanka. GCERF estimates that its grants have empowered 1.7 million people at risk of recruitment to radicalization directly, and a further 7.8 million indirectly. The proportion of girls and women reached has increased to almost 50 percent.
- **Hedayah:** *Hedayah* continued advising and assisting governments and training civil society in CVE strategies and approaches, and providing them new tools. *Hedayah* recently launched MASAR 2.0, a mobile application that will help CVE practitioners and policymakers effectively monitor and evaluate CVE programs. In direct response to the global need to address returning FTFs, *Hedayah* developed the *Blueprint of a Rehabilitation and Reintegration Center: Guiding Principles for Rehabilitating and Reintegrating Foreign Terrorist Fighters and Their Family Members*. In 2020, *Hedayah* launched a CT Bureau-supported CVE program focused on Tunisia and Tajikistan to develop and disseminate countermessaging content for vulnerable communities, build resiliency to counter the use of the internet for terrorist purposes, and assist governments in implementing their CVE national action plans.

More broadly, the CT Bureau leveraged other U.S. and donor government support for *Hedayah* programming — including USAID support for CVE communications work in Kenya.

### **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, the United States 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. The United States needs partners in law enforcement, the justice sector, and corrections that can prevent and disrupt attacks and investigate, arrest, prosecute, and incarcerate terrorists and their facilitation networks.



The United States supports various programs to build the capacity of law enforcement to counter terrorism, including by strengthening the ability of justice and corrections officials to counter terrorism. The CT Bureau funds, plans, and oversees the following capacity building programs:

- The Antiterrorism Assistance program
- The Countering Terrorism Finance program
- Counterterrorism Engagement with Allies
- The Terrorist Interdiction Program
- The Counterterrorism Partnerships Fund

In FY 2020, CTPF resources allowed the Department of State to significantly expand civilian law enforcement counterterrorism capacity building activities with key partner nations in the Middle East, North Africa, 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 Iran-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 national security 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 generate information that helps protect U.S. national security.

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. Pursuant to a 2017 amendment, RFJ also provides rewards for certain information that leads to the disruption of financial mechanisms of persons supporting the North Korean regime or for information that leads to the identification or location of any individual who, acting at the direction or under the control of a foreign government, aids or abets a violation of the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act.

Since RFJ's inception in 1984, the United States has paid more than \$200 million to more than 100 people who provided actionable information that put terrorists behind bars or prevented acts of international terrorism worldwide.

In 2020 the RFJ program announced the following new reward offers for information:

- **April 10.** Reward of up to \$10 million for information on the activities, networks, and associates of Muhammad Kawtharani, a senior Hizballah military commander. This announcement was part of the Department's standing reward offer for information leading to the disruption of the financial mechanisms of the terrorist organization Hizballah.

- **May 8.** Reward of up to \$3 million for information leading to the location or identification of Muhammad Khadir Musa Ramadan, a senior leader of and key propagandist for ISIS.
- **June 24.** Increased reward of up to \$10 million for information leading to the identification or location of ISIS's new leader Amir Muhammad Sa'id Abdal-Rahman al-Mawla.
- **August 5.** Reward of up to \$10 million for information leading to the identification or location of any person who works with or for a foreign government for the purpose of interfering with U.S. elections through certain illegal cyber activities.
- **August 26.** Rewards of up to \$5 million each for information concerning the kidnappings of Mark Randall Frerichs and Paul Edwin Overby Jr., who both disappeared in Afghanistan.
- **October 23.** Reward of up to \$10 million for information on the activities, networks, and associates of Hizballah financiers and facilitators Muhammad Qasir, Muhammad Qasim al-Bazzal, and Ali Qasir. This announcement was part of the Department's standing reward offer for information leading to the disruption of the financial mechanisms of the terrorist organization Hizballah.
- **November 26.** Reward of up to \$5 million for information leading to the arrest or conviction in any country of Sajid Mir for his involvement in the 2008 Mumbai attacks. This announcement was part of the Department's standing reward offer for information about the individuals responsible for these attacks.
- **December 9.** Reward of up to \$5 million for information leading to the arrest or conviction in any country of Junzō Okudaira for his involvement in the 1988 United Service Organizations Naples bombing. This announcement was part of the Department's standing reward offer for information that brings to justice those responsible for this attack.
- **December 11.** Reward of up to \$5 million for information leading to the arrest or conviction in any country of ISIS-Greater Sahara terrorists Abu Houzeifa, Illiasou Djibo, Issa Barre, Poula N'Gordie, Issa Jimarou, Ibrahim Ousmane, and Al Mahmoud ag Baye for their involvement the 2017 attack in Tongo Tongo, Niger, which killed four U.S. and four Nigerien soldiers. This announcement was part of the Department's standing reward offer for information that brings to justice those responsible for this attack.

Throughout 2020, RFJ also launched special campaigns to amplify awareness of existing reward offers, including the following:

- **Syria:** Rewards of up to \$10 million for information on terrorists operating in or around Syria.

- **Hizballah:** Reward of up to \$5 million for information that brings to justice various Hizballah operatives and up to \$7 million for information on certain Hizballah leaders. Reward of up to \$10 million for information that disrupts Hizballah financial networks.
- **North Korea:** Rewards of up to \$5 million each for information leading to the disruption of financial mechanisms of any person or entity that supports the illicit activities of the North Korean government and that leads to the identification or location of any person who aids or abets a violation of the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act (CFAA) at the direction or control of the North Korean regime.
- **Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC):** Reward of up to \$15 million for information leading to the disruption of the financial mechanisms of Iran’s IRGC and its branches, including the IRGC-Qods Force.

### Support for Pakistan

The U.S. government recognizes Pakistan’s role in Afghanistan and broader regional security, and urges Pakistan to dismantle terrorist groups within its territory. The United States cooperates with Pakistan on counterterrorism operations, which has helped Pakistan reclaim parts of the country previously held by militant groups. The Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan and other designated terrorist groups continue to conduct attacks against Pakistani military and civilian targets. While Pakistan has taken some action against these designated terrorist organizations, some externally focused terrorist groups continue to find safe haven in Pakistan.

As such, the U.S. government continues to suspend most of its security assistance to Pakistan. That suspension remained in effect throughout 2020.

Separately, the U.S. government maintained a civilian assistance portfolio on a focused set of priorities. Civilian assistance continued to prioritize civil society; people-to-people exchanges; stabilization and development on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border; trade and economic growth, including partnering with U.S. businesses; law enforcement, counterterrorism — including countering terrorist financing and related anti-money laundering — and nonproliferation cooperation; and polio and other infectious diseases, including COVID-19.

The emphasis on sustainable development and capacity-building, and on leveraging trade and private sector investment where possible, encourages partnership and a long-term positive impact for the Pakistani people. People-to-people exchanges, which largely shifted to virtual exchanges during COVID-19, help promote mutual understanding and bilateral ties. The United States supported civilian law enforcement and the rule of law to help Pakistan disrupt transnational organized crime and terrorist networks and provide security and justice for Pakistani citizens.

Account	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY2020
<b>Total Bilateral Foreign Assistance*</b>	<b>73.8</b>	<b>76.4</b>	<b>72.8</b>
Economic Support Fund	48.0	44.0	46.0
Global Health Programs	—	—	3.0
Int’l Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement	21.0	26.0	21.0

Nonproliferation, Antiterrorism, Demining	1.8	0.8	0.8
International Military Education and Training	0.5	3.5	—
Food for Peace Title II	2.5	2.1	2.0

\*Figures in millions, US \$

## Counterterrorism Coordination With Saudi Arabia

**Countering Violent Extremism (CVE).** In 2020, Saudi Arabia continued to be a valuable counterterrorism partner of the United States. Saudi authorities worked closely with the United States to implement counterterrorism commitments and to develop capabilities to counter violent extremist messaging. Saudi officials remain eager to enhance defense and security cooperation and expand engagement with the United States, including on CVE issues. Regular high-level consultations and cooperation with the United States — including, notably, at the October U.S.-Saudi Strategic Dialogue — played a crucial role in the Saudi Arabian government’s (SAG’s) ability to address domestic and regional terrorism threats. Saudi Arabia maintained adequate legal frameworks, security forces, and institutional preparedness to combat “extremist threats.” Attacks by Iran and groups it sponsors or supports on Saudi Arabia and against international shipping targets along the Saudi coast increased the urgency of Saudi efforts to defend its territory against Iranian-backed terrorism. Saudi Arabia remained a regional leader in countering terrorist financing, hosting the Terrorist Financing Targeting Center that brings together the United States and Gulf partners to confront new and evolving networks and lead efforts on anti-money laundering and counterterrorist financing measures.

On the multilateral front, Saudi Arabia worked closely on capacity building efforts to increase regional cooperation, minimize duplication of efforts, enhance information sharing, and address border security gaps. SAG leadership worked to advance counterterrorism cooperation with Muslim-majority states, including through the Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition. Saudi Arabia participated actively in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and provided significant support in facilitating U.S. military operations in the region.

To promote a more comprehensive, collaborative, and proactive approach to CVE, Saudi activities concentrated on identifying pathways to terrorist radicalization and recruitment. SAG also focused on countering these through messaging that emphasized nationalism, by rejecting intolerant ideologies — including those based on religious interpretations — and by cultivating appreciation for Saudi culture and heritage as the basis for national identity. Saudi Arabia’s ideological approach to countering terrorist propaganda also included family outreach initiatives; integration of gender considerations in CVE work; and public messaging campaigns to amplify moderate voices in mainstream media, mosques, Islamic organizations, community centers, and prisons, to curb the appeal of “radical ideology” and to counter “extremist messages.” Security authorities continued to employ the Mohammed bin Naif Center for Care and Rehabilitation (the MbN Center) to deprogram, monitor, and rehabilitate former Saudi terrorists or foreign fighters.

The government also encouraged interreligious and interethnic dialogue through religious conferences and visits that brought Saudi religious scholars together with their counterparts from other faiths to promote dialogue and tolerance across world faiths. Saudi Arabia continued removing hateful or inflammatory content from public school textbooks and is encouraging

public school teachers to integrate CVE considerations in their instruction. However, social, legal, economic, and political discrimination against the country's Shia minority continued. The U.S. government continues to work with Saudi authorities to eliminate language that promotes discrimination, intolerance, or violence from textbooks and other government publications.

### **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).**

We refer you to <http://www.usagm.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/6-10-21-USAGM-CVE-4pager.pdf> for information on USAGM's outreach to foreign Muslim audiences.

### **Visas for Participants in United States Programs**

The Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs' visa policies and procedures have two fundamental missions: 1) protecting national security by helping secure U.S. borders against actual or potential threats, while 2) 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 visitor exchange programs.

Visa applicants are subject to a robust interagency screening process that draws on biographic and biometric data. Applications may be refused because they require further interagency screening and vetting 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 <http://www.travel.state.gov> for instructions on applying for U.S. visas.

### **USAID Basic Education in Muslim-Majority Countries**

USAID provided the following information about its basic education programs in Muslim-majority countries.

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2020, USAID allocated \$337.6 million for basic education in countries with large Muslim populations. Estimated amounts for each region were

- **Asia:** \$52.5 million was allocated to Bangladesh, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Philippines (Mindanao), Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. An additional \$33 million was allocated to Afghanistan, and \$5.2 million was allocated to Pakistan.
- **Europe and Eurasia:** \$2.9 million was allocated to Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- **Middle East and North Africa:** \$173.8 million was allocated to Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, Yemen, and USAID's Middle East Regional Operating Unit.
- **Sub-Saharan Africa:** \$85.9 million was allocated to Burkina Faso, Djibouti, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, and Somalia.

## Asia

**Afghanistan:** USAID’s Capacity Building Activity (CBA) supported the Ministry of Education (MOE) to increase transparency and accountability of its national and subnational systems, policies, and procedures. During FY 2020, CBA increased capacity and performance of 1,693 MOE staff at central and provincial levels on the educational management information system, or EMIS, specifically in teacher recruitment, payroll systems, internal audits, budget and finance, and civil society oversight. The Strengthening Education in Afghanistan II activity also developed institutional capacities, policies, and guidelines at MOE to establish a simplified regulatory environment for private schools and an Online Private School Licensing System.

USAID’s Afghan Children Read activity built the capacity of MOE to provide evidence-based early grade reading programs in Dari and Pashto for grades 1 through 3 in pilot provinces. In FY 2020 the project reached 985,063 early grade reading students and 9,621 teachers. USAID also contributed to the Education Quality Reform in Afghanistan pledge as part of the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund, through which 362 rehabilitation and new school projects were completed in FY 2020. In addition, USAID promoted girls’ education through a pledge to the United Kingdom’s Girls’ Education Challenge (GEC). The partnership improves learning opportunities and outcomes for girls in grades 1 through 12 by providing access to quality education through a range of interventions. In FY 2020, GEC provided education to 16,241 girls and 6,148 boys, as well as professional development opportunities to female and male primary and secondary educators.

**Bangladesh:** In Bangladesh, USAID supports improved learning outcomes for marginalized youths and children with disabilities. USAID’s activity *Shobai Miley Shikhi* (Everyone Learns Together) partners with the Government of Bangladesh’s Primary Education Development Program-Phase 4 to build the capacity of the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education to strengthen the service delivery of disability-inclusive education, creating inclusive school environments and instruction for children with disabilities, especially girls. In addition, USAID’s *Esho Shikhi* (Come and Learn) activity is designed to improve learning outcomes for Bangladeshi children in host communities affected by the Rohingya crisis in Cox’s Bazar, Bandarban, and the surrounding areas.

**Kyrgyz Republic:** Through the Time to Read (TTR) program, USAID employed an evidence-based approach grounded in establishing a reading curriculum for preservice institutions and strengthening teachers’ instructional practices through in-service and preservice training. During FY 2020, TTR completed pre-service piloting of this curriculum and, as a result, six preservice institutions incorporated USAID’s model curriculum in their reading instruction. As TTR ended, USAID launched its new basic education activity, *Okuu Keremet* (Learning Is Awesome), to continue to improve early grade learning outcomes in reading and math. In FY 2020, *Okuu Keremet* completed the development of three advanced reading modules and five math modules for teacher training in English, Kyrgyz, and Russian. Considering the COVID-19 pandemic, *Okuu Keremet* also prioritized the production of digital books that could be accessed online and over social media. More than 250 titles of books for grades 1-4 were produced online in Russian and Kyrgyz and illustrated by local authors.

In addition, USAID continued to support the Inclusive Education Activity implemented by UNICEF. In FY 2020, the activity worked in 48 primary schools with more than 4,200 underserved children, specifically those with special education needs and those with disabilities.

**Pakistan:** In Pakistan, USAID activities expanded access to quality basic education for all, particularly for marginalized and vulnerable populations. In FY 2020 the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Reconstruction Program completed construction and rehabilitation of 28 schools, benefiting 6,700 students. The Sindh Basic Education Program (SBEP) also made strong progress in school construction as well as in community involvement in schools. In FY 2020, SBEP completed the construction of three schools, bringing the total number of newly constructed schools to 73. To address challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Sindh Community Mobilization Program (CMP) component of SBEP developed innovative ways to continue its outreach and community mobilization efforts. With the Care for Community (C4C) initiative, CMP designed a campaign to promote use of digital platforms for the broader school community to stay connected and maintain community spirit. Through C4C, CMP reached 3,000 community leaders, headteachers, and local government officials in 400 schools and sites spread over 10 districts of Sindh.

In addition, the Pakistan Reading Project (PRP) provided institutional support in the form of workbooks, training materials, and classroom-based trainings to more than 38,700 classrooms for early grade reading instruction and 110 colleges and universities to deliver associate's and bachelor's degree programs in teaching, resulting in more than 6,600 graduates this fiscal year. PRP created and distributed more than 367,900 student learning materials and teacher instructional materials in local languages, trained 174 new administrators and education officials and 261 new teachers in reading instructional techniques, and enrolled 15,990 children in schools. Of these results, 83 percent were in conflict-affected regions. Additionally, PRP supported 428 Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) or community-based school governance structures engaged for the purpose of promoting reading in primary or secondary schools.

**The Philippines:** In FY 2020, USAID helped the Philippines Department of Education (DepEd) improve education service delivery and foster early grade reading. Despite the challenges of the pandemic, the Advancing Basic Education in the Philippines project (known as ABC+) successfully delivered training on language learning and transitions to 530 regional trainers and 4,960 teachers through online modalities. The All Children Reading (ACR)-Philippines activity also supported DepEd to improve reading outcomes for primary learners, with a focus on strengthening DepEd systems, increasing impact, scale, and sustainability. ACR-Philippines was able to provide training for 130 administrative, technical, and management staff and 99 educators.

Further, USAID's Education Governance Effectiveness (EdGE) activity worked with DepEd and local government units on fiscal management, using local education funds and grooming local education reform champions. EdGE reached 199,630 primary-level learners, and a total of 11,729 primary school educators completed professional development activities on implementing evidence-based reading instruction. More than 5,755 school administrators also completed professional development activities, and 749 PTAs or community-based school governance structures benefited from the activity. Finally, USAID's *Gabay* (Guide): Strengthening Inclusive

Education for Deaf, Blind, and Deafblind Children activity completed the first Early Grade Reading Assessment for Deaf Learners (known as EGRA-Deaf) in the country and the Asia-Pacific region. Evidence from this assessment helped *Gabay* develop and pilot a Filipino Sign Language curriculum with DepEd at the project sites.

**Tajikistan:** USAID education programs in Tajikistan support the revision of obsolete, outdated teacher-centered Soviet practices with modernized guidelines, methods, and training. In FY 2020 the Read With Me program reached 193,312 students in 941 schools, representing almost 40 percent of primary schools nationwide. USAID programming places a high priority and emphasis on teacher professional development and in FY 2020 distributed 40,210 training modules to teachers, directors, and librarians; 19,206 parental engagement guides; and 1,809 DVDs containing teaching and learning materials (TLMs). In addition, USAID developed around 200 supplementary reading instructional materials to more closely support effective teaching of reading in the classroom. Moreover, USAID collaborated with Tajikistan's national children's television station to promote literacy skills across the country through a television show called *Burro Burro Mehonam* (I Can Read Fluently). This show, aired for free by the Government of Tajikistan, allowed children to continue their education during COVID-19 school closures and continued to build a culture of reading between parents and children.

**Uzbekistan:** During FY 2020, USAID used scientific, technological, and innovative approaches to strengthen the Government of Uzbekistan's technical capacity to deliver basic education services. USAID is helping the Ministry of Public Education (MPE) prepare national assessments of early grade reading and math using the early grade reading assessment (EGRA) and early grade math assessment (EGMA). The instruments to be used for this survey were adapted collaboratively with the MPE during an in-country adaptation workshop in 2019. That year, USAID trained 21 MPE staff on EGRA/EGMA administration. Following the training, teams deployed to administer the pilot survey in 70 pilot schools in six provinces. USAID submitted the *Pilot Study Report* to MPE in January and identified recommendations for the government to improve the instruments and training in preparation for the national survey.

In April, USAID also deployed a global education advisor to MPE to provide advisory services relating to strategic planning and management of large-scale reform initiatives, resource allocation, and mobilizing external and internal resources to support MPE's ambitious reform program. Through the education advisor, USAID supported the MPE in managing the response to nationwide school closures caused by COVID-19 and in providing COVID-19 recovery support. In response to the MPE's request for immediate assistance in delivering important messages about COVID-19 to children, families, and school systems, USAID launched Phase 1 of the Sesame Workshop COVID-19 Response Activity in June. Sesame Workshop, the non-profit educational organization behind Sesame Street, developed the COVID-19 media content package to address the challenges faced by young children and their families during the pandemic, and combined existing water, sanitation, and hygiene (known as WASH) content as well as new Healthy Behavior content.



## Europe and Eurasia

**Bosnia and Herzegovina:** USAID worked to improve basic education in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) through two projects: Enhancing and Advancing Basic Learning and Education (ENABLE) and General Education Activity (TABLA). In FY 2020 the ENABLE activity improved STEM education by implementing the new operational teaching curriculum in model schools. The program first rolled out new standards and guidelines for improved STEM/PPDM (Pedagogy, Psychology, Didactics, and Methodology) teaching methods in preservice teaching programs in universities. Implementation in FY 2020 was achieved in 7 of the 12 model schools in the Federation of BiH and in Brčko District, benefiting 1,304 boys and 1,252 girls. The ENABLE activity also held a series of technical and consultative meetings with ministries/departments of education and the leaders and STEM/PPDM mentors and teachers from the pilot schools to promote the integration of STEM into the learning process and the educational system overall.

In FY 2020, USAID's TABLA continued to improve the learning context and the delivery of lessons and curricula in BiH and engaged students in shaping education policies and teaching approaches that form their learning ecosystems. Through this activity, USAID improved standards for preservice and in-service teacher training, improved the learning environment in the schools, and stimulated dialogue on education reform. In cooperation with two cantonal ministries of education, TABLA drafted a framework for education training with certification/accreditation for in-service teacher training programs in Sarajevo Canton and Herzegovina-Neretva Canton. In February, as the COVID-19 pandemic spread across the world, the TABLA team and participating educational institutions shifted operations from face-to-face to virtual platforms.

## The Middle East and North Africa

**Egypt:** USAID partners with the Ministry of Education and Technical Education (MOETE) to implement Egypt's education sector reform agenda, which includes shifting teaching methodology away from rote memorization and toward higher-order critical thinking skills. In addition, the STEM Teacher Education and School Strengthening Activity and MOETE counterparts developed plans for four new STEM schools in FY 2020 and designed a school-based STEM teacher coaching and mentoring program. Meanwhile, the intergenerational Literate Village activity, which works in underserved community schools to improve the reading and life skills of children and their illiterate mothers, reached 41,405 children in FY 2020 in three governorates. Moreover, 13,507 women enrolled in Literate Village's intergenerational literacy classes, and 7,056 of them graduated from the program and attended postliteracy classes to learn how to apply literacy skills to secure more economic opportunities. At the secondary level, the Workforce Improvement and Skills Enhancement Activity enhanced students' market-relevant skills by providing on-the-job-training at a local company to 2,428 youths in FY 2020. The activity provided entrepreneurship training to 34,498 students and enrolled 1,148 students in newly developed technical education specializations in fields demanded by the private sector.

**Jordan:** During FY 2020, USAID continued its partnership with the Ministry of Education (MOE) and the Ministry of Public Works and Housing to construct and repair 308 classrooms,

benefiting 8,111 students nationwide, while integrating best practices for disabilities inclusion and accessibility. In partnership with the MOE, USAID also strengthened literacy and numeracy for 387,117 kindergarten through grade 3 students through the provision of 967,804 TLMs, human resource development of 11,537 teachers and 1,841 administrators, and systems strengthening at the central and decentralized levels of the MOE. In addition, USAID supported the MOE in procuring equipment to film lessons, develop online content, and update the teacher training digital platform *Edraak*, allowing for a combination of in-person and online training. With USAID support, the MOE also addressed the needs of vulnerable first-grade students who had not attended kindergarten by distributing 3,600 early grade reading and math workbooks for the School Readiness program, including in refugee camps.

USAID continued to support the Jordan Compact Education Fund, a multidonor-funded mechanism that allowed Syrian children access to the formal education system. In FY 2020, USAID's Nonformal Education activity also provided a second chance to 484 students of all nationalities who had dropped out to reenroll in school or attend vocational training.

**Lebanon:** Under the Quality Instruction Towards Access and Basic Education Improvement 2 activity, USAID achieved significant results in FY 2020 despite all the contextual changes and challenges faced throughout the academic year. The activity completed the curriculum mapping for Arabic, English, French, and math by analyzing the national 1997 curriculum for grades 1 through 6 along with the accompanying teacher guides and student textbooks and identified gaps in the curriculum that warrant improvement. The activity also developed grades 2, 3, and 6 reading and math assessment tools for the national literacy and numeracy baseline to be implemented in the next academic year. In addition, around 125 trainers, curriculum specialists, and teacher coaches received training on the pedagogical strategies needed to create an effective distance learning environment. In response to the COVID-19 situation, and to keep children engaged in learning at home while schools are still closed, the activity distributed educational boxes to 148,201 students in all of Lebanon's 887 primary public schools. More than 280 e-lessons in English, Arabic, French, and math have been developed and posted online for teachers and students to access. Meanwhile, through the Community Support Program, USAID completed vital equipment provision and rehabilitation to five public schools, benefiting more than 2,700 students once schools are in session and pandemic restrictions are lifted.

**Middle East Regional:** In FY 2020, the Middle East Education Research, Training and Support II (or MEERS II) mechanism supported research, training, and other analytical activities that address pressing education issues in the Middle East and North Africa, focusing on the various crises, including COVID-19, and their effect on learners, teachers, education systems, and education outcomes. The research created new data and analysis to inform key partners' education plans for increasing access to higher-quality education for all children in the region, with an emphasis on vulnerable children and youth. This analysis contributed to U.S. policy interests by improving social stability and workforce readiness through enhanced education programming.

**Morocco:** In FY 2020, USAID's education activities continued enhancing educational attainment for Moroccan children at the primary level, supporting the Ministry of National Education, Vocational Training, Higher Education, and Scientific Research in its reform

initiative to improve access to quality education for all children. During the COVID-19 pandemic, USAID sustained its support to the MOE to continue building the capacity of educators, education inspectors, and teacher trainers under the National Program for Reading. This support was implemented through a series of online workshops focused on operationalizing new and improved reading instructional strategies and Arabic language instructional methods. As part of the COVID-19 response, USAID/Morocco also supported the MOE in adapting key courses into digital sign language courses. This was the first time such an effort had been made to extend the educational services to students who are deaf and hard of hearing.

**Yemen:** In FY 2020, USAID's school feeding project, implemented by the World Food Program, reached 702,739 children with a daily nutritious snack, helping keep children in school. A byproduct of the activity was its positive impact on the local economy: 60 percent of the commodities used for the school-feeding program were sourced locally. Additionally, USAID's education projects provided access to safe and quality education for out-of-school children ages 6 to 14 in Aden, al-Hudaydah, 'Amran, Dhale, Lahij, and Sana'a Governorates. In the second year of implementation, 7,807 learners were reached with alternative education methods. The projects also ensured family and community participation in the education of the learners, with 36 community governance structures reached in FY 2020. During the reporting period, USAID also supported UNICEF in providing equitable access to safe, inclusive, and equipped learning spaces. A total of 178,479 children (of which 45 percent are girls) were reached with activities to facilitate access to schools through the rehabilitation of WASH facilities in schools and hygiene promotion, provision of school desks and school bag kits, psychosocial support, and child-centered teaching methods.

## **Sub-Saharan Africa**

**Burkina Faso:** To mitigate the negative effects of COVID-19 on the Burkinabe education system, educators, and children during FY 2020, USAID funded the Education Cannot Wait First Emergency Response Phase 2 Program. A portion of this program directly supported the Government of Burkina Faso's COVID response efforts in the education sector. In particular, USAID funded awareness-raising campaigns on school-based infection prevention and response measures and implemented six months of radio-based instruction in reading, writing, and math for children in communities already affected by displacement and insecurity.

**Djibouti:** During FY 2020, despite the COVID-19 pandemic and other challenges, the Djibouti Early Grade Reading Activity (DEGRA) developed and distributed 81,700 teaching and learning materials (TLMs). Moreover, 24,000 primary school students benefited from the training received by 258 second-grade teachers on the use of the new materials, while 211 first grade teachers received refresher training. DEGRA also trained 22 Ministry of National Education and Professional Training (MENFOP) staff to develop reading standards and benchmarks for grades 1 through 5 and increased the capacity of MENFOP's evaluation team on data processing and analysis, using a dashboard designed by DEGRA to inform the decisionmaking processes. In addition, DEGRA worked with MENFOP's training institution to establish a document database including literature and articles on reading. Finally, in partnership with USAID's civil society activity, DEGRA trained 46 PTA representatives to increase awareness of the importance of gender and social inclusion in primary education.

**Mali:** In FY 2020, USAID, through the Selective Integrated Reading Activity (SIRA), continued to implement a bilingual balanced literacy approach to reading instruction in Bamako, Ségou, Koulikoro, and Sikasso regions, ensuring improved reading outcomes for 264,169 first and second grade students. SIRA trained and coached 323 pedagogical counselors and supported School Management Committees, PTAs, education commissions, and Mothers' Associations. Monitoring student attendance and performance to increase reading outcomes was also a part of FY 2020 activities. SIRA trained 359 community development agents and facilitators to mobilize communities and parents who then encouraged their children to read, and distributed home reading kits to 264,169 parents, further promoting a culture of reading outside the classroom. SIRA established 295 community libraries through private-public partnership and supported a local radio campaign with messages on reading, promotion of mother tongue instruction, and the importance of girls' access to education.

The Education Recovery Support Activity (ERSA) closed on July 31, having conducted 299 accelerated program classes through the Adapted Program for Resilience and School Entry (PARIS) initiative. ERSA constructed 149 classrooms and 149 latrines blocks with separate space for males and females. Classrooms were equipped with furniture and a handwashing station, serving about 11,000 participants (4,990 females) who were enrolled in the 70 centers opened throughout the life of the activity. A total of 347 facilitators (66 women) were selected from the communities where the centers are located, and then trained and supported to teach, using the specialized PARIS curriculum.

Through the Girls Leadership and Empowerment through Education activity, 5,564 out-of-school adolescent girls were enrolled and 5,448 successfully transitioned to formal public schools. Two hundred and thirty-three facilitators, 192 grandmothers and aunts, 40 teachers, 3 educational advisors, and 36 health workers helped beneficiaries attain knowledge about reproductive health, gender equality, and leadership, while their communities were made aware of how to overcome barriers to education and the negative impacts of sexual violence, early marriage, and pregnancy.

USAID also continued efforts to support children with disabilities by training 59 educators (30 females, 29 males) in inclusive education and preparatory training for 44 children (32 deaf children, of whom 14 were girls; 14 blind children, of whom 4 were girls). USAID purchased school kits for the hearing and visually impaired and referred eight children (six blind and two deaf) to health facilities for screening purposes. Finally, the COVID-19 pandemic generated the redirection of some planned activities to alternative methods such as monitoring children within their household, the provision of 52 households with handwashing kits, and the provision of 15 radios and 39 tablets to ensure the continuity of learning for beneficiaries.

**Niger:** In FY 2020, USAID focused on expanding literacy and numeracy classes to target participants (youth and adults) to improve the overall literacy levels in the intervention areas, and to improve the quality of implementation of its different interventions and ensure sustainability. The *Girma* activity started literacy and numeracy training for women, youths, and persons with disabilities in January, earlier than most other project activities. The beneficiaries learned basic math and themes (such as health, nutrition, the environment, agriculture, livestock, water and sanitation, and governance) in their native language. During the reporting period, 6,547 persons

participated in the training. Two thirds of the participants were women, one third were youths, and 2 percent were persons with disabilities.

The Participatory Responsive Governance Principal Activity (PRG-PA) concentrated on institutionalizing participatory approaches to support priority reforms in the education sector. In addition, PRG-PA supported the Ministry of Basic Education in conducting a rapid impact study on the closure of schools at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic and a needs assessment of municipal-level education services.

**Nigeria:** USAID continued to pursue its goal of improving education for children affected by conflict. In FY 2020, 45,000 previously out-of-school children benefited from nonformal education in places where formal schools do not exist, or where schools are too crowded to accommodate the influx of children fleeing insurgency in Borno and Yobe States. When learning was disrupted by COVID-19, the Addressing Education in Northeast Nigeria (AENN) activity shifted to radio instruction, reaching 25,000 more listeners than the original target of those attending nonformal learning centers (NFLCs). For 11,550 children in insurgent-affected remote areas that are beyond the reach of radio signals, AENN provided home learning kits for children and their caregivers to continue learning and reinforcing basic concepts. Overall, the activity reached 55,040 male and 57,460 female students in FY 2020.

During FY 2020, USAID also continued multiple activities and support to state governments in Bauchi and Sokoto States to increase access to quality learning and improve the reading skills of school-aged children. The Northern Education Initiative Plus activity produced and distributed 1.4 million textbooks and teachers' manuals to formal schools and NFLCs in 10 local government areas of each state. USAID also trained 50,000 out-of-school children and adolescent girls in 1,000 NFLCs before state-ordered closures caused by COVID-19. To that point, more than 672,223 children in formal schools were learning to read, 20 percent more than anticipated for this period. That accomplishment would have been impossible without the 10,730 teachers and learning facilitators whom USAID trained on best practices for reading instruction.

To address the postconflict educational needs of internally displaced children in Borno State, USAID's grant to the University of Maiduguri to design and implement activities to counter violent extremism in Borno State continued in FY 2020. And in Adamawa and Gombe States, the USAID-funded Strengthening Education in Northeast Nigeria States activity pivoted to a specific focus from English for grades 2 through 6 to early grade reading in a local language of the environment, Hausa, in grades 1 through 3, as part of efforts to improve the quality of learning for 200,000 pupils. Finally, in FY 2020, USAID celebrated the successful conclusion of a partnership with Florida State University and Nigeria's Bayero University in Kano (BUK) to promote early grade reading research and practice. The activity led to the establishment of the Nigeria Center for Reading Research and Development at BUK, which in March hosted 900 participants at its second conference on early grade textbooks and children's literature.

**Senegal:** In FY 2020, USAID's activities in the education sector redirected funding to support Senegal's Ministry of Education (MOE) efforts in the fight against COVID-19 and adapt programming toward alternative learning methods. The *Lecture Pour Tous (LPT)* activity

swiftly developed and implemented an SMS-based COVID-19 prevention communication campaign. More than 170,000 individual prevention messages were sent to more than 7,500 stakeholders not only to raise their awareness but also to guide them on how to support their children at home to mitigate learning loss. In addition, the program reconfigured its approach to teacher continuous professional development and coaching, benefiting 340,563 students from 3,572 schools as well as more than 18,500 parents and caregivers from 764 communities across its six regions of intervention. *LPT* also distributed a total of 767,352 teaching and learning materials for the 2019-20 school year to reinforce early grade reading and support both in-class and at-home instruction.

The *Nos Enfants Lisent* (Our Children Read) activity worked with 29 municipalities and six community radio stations to broadcast COVID-19 prevention messages and instruct parents and caregivers on how to best continue supporting their children's education at home. In addition, USAID's government-to-government direct financing activity to improve reading outcomes, implemented in the Saint-Louis region, reached 778 schools, 47 inspectors, 778 principals, and close to 1,800 teachers and 66,000 students.

Following school closures, the *Passerelles* activity also supported the MOE's communication efforts by disseminating close to 40,000 prevention messages over SMS to school personnel and education officials in targeted regions. Close to 1,500 posters were distributed in schools, health centers, and households, and messages from influential leaders were broadcast on 15 community radio broadcasts over a three-month period. In nonformal education structures such as Koranic schools and community-based classes, *Passerelles* distributed 10,000 cloth masks, 1,700 handwashing and soap kits, and thermometers. In formal schools, *Passerelles* reached 83,200 children (40,450 girls) in 349 primary and middle schools. Close to 2,000 teachers and school personnel (378 women) were trained in crosscutting themes such as positive learning environment, school-related gender-based violence, and inclusive education.

**Somalia:** In its last year of implementation, USAID's Alternative Basic Education (ABE) activity, implemented by UNICEF, enrolled 623 students, for a cumulative, life-of-project total of 20,248 students (11,582 boys and 8,666 girls). USAID supported 96 schools in agro-pastoralist and pastoralist communities in Jubaland and South West States, focusing in areas that were acutely affected by droughts and floods and where children are particularly vulnerable to Al-Shabab recruitment efforts. USAID also distributed 21,147 TLMs and trained 447 community teachers over the life of the activity, including dedicated leadership training for 96 headteachers in FY 2020. USAID also equipped community education committees for the 21 predominantly pastoralist communities with materials and supplies to establish and operate mobile schools, using donkeys, and maintaining pastoral students' ability to learn while on the move. Based on third-party monitoring data that indicated overcrowded classrooms in specific centers, ABE created eight additional classrooms to accommodate the additional demand.

To help Somali-led efforts to cultivate a culture of literacy, USAID supported Somali NGO New Horizons in hosting the Mogadishu Book Fair and associated book forums in Baidoa, as well as writers' and artists' workshops in ABE-supported schools. ABE also partnered with local organization Media Ink to create a pilot radio program to reinforce its classroom-based instruction. ABE's radio program reached more than 2.7 million people, 75 percent of the total

population in its targeted districts. A feedback mechanism collected more than 18,137 unique SMS messages by the stations from March to July, traced to 5,983 unique listeners. Some radio listeners outside of ABE-targeted districts also tuned in.

USAID also helped Somali youths develop the skills they need to lead productive lives, gain employment, and contribute positively to society. Through the Growth, Enterprise, Employment, and Livelihoods activity, the mission supported more than 30 private sector entities to train youth in the agriculture and agribusiness food processing value chains, as well as in the energy, construction, hospitality, and garment making sectors. USAID leveraged new investments from private sector entities to the benefit of more than 2,000 youths. In response to COVID-19, USAID worked with local training institutes to train young textile workers to produce nonmedical face masks, delivering more than 500,000 of them to the federal Ministry of Health and creating 304 full-time, permanent jobs at a time when the economy was contracting.

### **Economic Reform in Muslim-Majority Countries**

We refer you to <https://www.usaid.gov/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 governments.

In 2020 the Department of State designated Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq as an FTO.

### 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)  
 Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq (AAH)  
 Asbat al-Ansar (AAA)  
 Aum Shinrikyo (AUM)  
 Basque Fatherland and Liberty (ETA)  
 Boko Haram (BH)  
 Communist Party of the 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 Mujahadeen (HM)  
 Indian Mujahadeen (IM)  
 ISIL-Libya  
 Islamic Jihad Union (IJU)  
 Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU)  
 Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC)  
 Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)  
 ISIS-Bangladesh  
 ISIS-Greater Sahara  
 Islamic State's Khorasan Province (ISIS-K)  
 ISIS-Philippines  
 ISIS Sinai Province (ISIS-SP)  
 ISIS-West Africa  
 Jama'at Nasr al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM)  
 Jama'atu Ansarul Muslimina Fi Biladis-Sudan (Ansaru)  
 Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM)  
 Jaysh al-Adl  
 Jaysh Rijal Al-Tariq Al-Naqshabandi (JRTN)  
 Jemaah Ansharut Tauhid (JAT)  
 Jemaah Islamiya (JI)  
 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-Murabitoun  
 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 an FTO on May 30, 2012, the Abdallah Azzam Brigades (AAB) formally announced its establishment in a 2009 video statement claiming responsibility for a rocket attack against Israel earlier that year. 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 rockets fired into Israeli territory from Lebanon, often targeting population centers.

In 2013, AAB began targeting Hizballah for the organization's involvement in the Syrian conflict and support for Syrian regime forces. That year, AAB claimed responsibility for a suicide bombing outside the Iranian Embassy in Beirut, Lebanon, which killed 23 people and wounded more than 140. In 2014, AAB claimed twin suicide bomb attacks against the Iranian cultural center in Beirut that killed four persons. Also that year, AAB was blamed for a suicide bombing in the Beirut neighborhood of Tayyouneh that killed a security officer and wounded 25 people.

In 2015, the group released photos of a training camp for its "Marwan Hadid Brigade" camp in Syria, likely located in Homs province. From 2016 through 2018, AAB continued its involvement in the Syrian conflict and was active in Lebanon's Ain al-Hilweh refugee camp.

In 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. AAB announced its dissolution in Syria in 2019 and did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2020.

**Strength:** Precise numbers are unknown.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Lebanon

**Funding and External Aid:** Sources of funding are unknown.

### **Abu Sayyaf Group**

**Aka** al Harakat al Islamiyya (the Islamic Movement)

**Description:** The Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) was designated as an FTO on October 8, 1997. ASG split from the Moro National 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, and elements of the group have ties to ISIS's regional affiliate ISIS-Philippines.

**Activities:** ASG has committed kidnappings-for-ransom, bombings, ambushes of security personnel, public beheadings, assassinations, and extortion.

Throughout 2015, ASG was responsible for multiple attacks, kidnappings, and the killing of hostages. In 2016 and 2017, the group conducted kidnapping-for-ransom operations targeting Canadian, Filipino, German, and Norwegian citizens. In 2017, ASG members killed nine people and injured others in an attack on Basilan Island. In 2018, ASG detonated a car bomb at a military checkpoint on Basilan Island, killing 10 people, including a Philippine soldier and pro-government militiamen.

ASG continued conducting terrorist attacks and kidnappings in 2019. That year, ASG militants attacked Philippine soldiers on Jolo, resulting in the deaths of two children. That same year, ASG kidnapped two British nationals from a beach resort in the Zamboanga Peninsula region, but they were recovered on Jolo during the following month.

In August, ASG killed more than a dozen persons and injured over 70 in twin suicide bomb attacks in Sulu province.

**Strength:** ASG is estimated to have hundreds of members.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Malaysia and the Philippines

**Funding and External Aid:** ASG is funded primarily through its kidnapping-for-ransom operations and extortion. The group may also receive funding from external sources, including remittances from overseas Filipino workers and Middle East-based sympathizers. In the past, ASG also has 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 an 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 2000. AAMB strives to expel the Israeli military and settlers from the West Bank and establish a Palestinian state loyal to Fatah.

**Activities:** During the 2000 Intifada, AAMB primarily carried out small-arms attacks against Israeli military personnel and settlers. By 2002 the group was striking at Israeli civilians inside

Israel and claimed responsibility for the first female suicide bombing in the country. In 2010 and 2011, the group launched numerous rocket attacks on Israeli communities. In 2012, AAMB claimed that it had fired more than 500 rockets and missiles into Israel during an Israel Defense Forces operation in Gaza.

In 2015, AAMB declared open war against Israel and asked Iran to help fund its efforts in a televised broadcast. Throughout 2015, AAMB continued attacking Israeli soldiers and civilians.

In 2016, armed confrontation broke out in Nablus between Palestinian youths and Palestinian security officials following the arrest of an AAMB associate on murder charges; 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 2017 and six rockets in 2018, although these did not cause any casualties. AAMB did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2020.

**Strength:** AAMB is estimated to have a few hundred members.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Israel, Gaza, and the West Bank

**Funding and External Aid:** Iran has provided AAMB with funds and guidance, primarily through Hizballah facilitators.

### **al-Ashtar Brigades**

**Aka** Saraya al-Ashtar; AAB

**Description:** Al-Ashtar Brigades (AAB) was designated as an FTO on July 11, 2018. AAB is an Iran-backed terrorist organization established in 2013 with the goal of violently overthrowing the ruling family in Bahrain. In 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 nonstate actors that operates against the United States and its allies in the region.

**Activities:** Since 2013, AAB has claimed responsibility for more than 20 terrorist attacks against police and security targets in Bahrain. In 2014, AAB conducted a bomb attack that killed two police officers and an officer from the United Arab Emirates. In 2017, AAB shot and killed another local Bahrain officer. AAB also has promoted violent activity against the British, Saudi Arabian, and U.S. governments over social media. In 2019, AAB released a video statement promising more attacks in Bahrain to mark the anniversary of Bahrain's Arab Spring-inspired political uprising; however, the group did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2019 or 2020.

**Strength:** Precise numbers are unknown.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Bahrain, Iran, and Iraq

**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 an FTO on March 22, 2013. AAD was created in 2011 after its leader Iyad ag Ghali failed in his attempt to take over another secular Tuareg organization. Following the 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 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 it 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 2017 the Sahara Branch of AQIM, AAD, al-Murabitoun, and the Macina Liberation Front came together to form Jama'at Nasr al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM).

**Activities:** In 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 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 2013, Malian citizens in towns under AAD's control allegedly faced harassment, torture, and death if they refused to comply with the group's laws.

AAD was severely weakened by the 2013 French intervention, but it increased its activities in 2015 and 2016. In 2016, AAD claimed responsibility for attacks targeting the Malian Army and MINUSMA. Also in 2016, AAD attacked an army base, leaving 17 soldiers dead and six missing. 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. Still later in 2016, AAD claimed responsibility for a series of attacks on UN and French forces. In 2017, AAD claimed responsibility for an attack on the Malian Gendarmerie in Tenenkou, Mali. AAD did not claim responsibility for any attacks from 2018 through 2020.

**Strength:** Precise numbers are unknown.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Mali

**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 operations.

## **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 an FTO on March 22, 2004. AAI was established in 2001 in the Iraqi Kurdistan region through the merger of two Kurdish terrorist factions that traced their roots to the Islamic Movement of Kurdistan. AAI seeks to expel western interests from Iraq and establish an independent Iraqi state based on its interpretation of Sharia law.

**Activities:** From 2003 to 2011, AAI conducted attacks against a wide range of targets including Iraqi government and security forces, and U.S. and Defeat-ISIS Coalition forces. The group also carried out numerous kidnappings, murders, and assassinations of Iraqi citizens and politicians. In 2012, AAI 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 2014, part of AAI issued a statement pledging allegiance to ISIS, although later reports suggest that a faction of AAI opposed joining ISIS. In 2019, AAI claimed its first attack in Iraq in five years, placing two IEDs in Iraq's Diyala province. AAI did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2020.

**Strength:** Precise numbers are unknown.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Iraq and 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 an 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. The group has been involved in terrorist attacks against civilian targets as well as the assassination and attempted assassination of security officials and political actors in eastern Libya.

**Activities:** Members of AAS-B were involved in the 2012 attacks against the U.S. Special Mission and Annex in Benghazi, Libya. Four U.S. citizens were killed in the attack: Glen Doherty, Sean Smith, Tyrone Woods, and U.S. Ambassador to Libya J. Christopher Stevens.

Throughout 2016, AAS-B continued its fight against the “Libyan National Army” in Benghazi, resulting in the deaths of numerous Libyan security personnel and civilians. Additionally, AAS-B controlled several terrorist training camps in Libya and trained members of other terrorist organizations operating in Iraq, Mali, and Syria.

In 2017, AAS-B announced its formal dissolution owing to suffering heavy losses, including the group’s senior leadership and defections to ISIS in Libya. AAS-B has not claimed responsibility for any attacks since 2016.

**Strength:** Precise numbers are unknown.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Benghazi, Libya

**Funding and External Aid:** AAS-B obtained funds from al-Qa’ida in the Islamic Maghreb as well as through 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 an 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. The group has been involved in terrorist attacks against civilian targets as well as the assassination and attempted assassination of security officials and political actors in eastern Libya.

**Activities:** Members of AAS-D were involved in the 2012 attacks against the U.S. Special Mission and Annex in Benghazi, Libya. Four U.S. citizens were killed in the attack: Glen Doherty, Sean Smith, Tyrone Woods, and U.S. Ambassador to Libya J. Christopher Stevens.

Throughout 2013 and 2014, AAS-D was believed to have cooperated with Ansar al-Shari’a in Benghazi in multiple attacks and suicide bombings targeting Libyan security forces in that city. In 2016, AAS-D continued fighting in and around Darnah. Additionally, AAS-D maintained several terrorist training camps in Darnah and Jebel Akhdar, Libya, and trained members of other terrorist organizations operating in Iraq and Syria .

In 2018, there were unconfirmed reports that AAS-D was involved in clashes with the “Libyan National Army.” AAS-D did not claim any attacks in 2020.

**Strength:** Precise numbers are unknown.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Darnah, Libya

**Funding and External Aid:** 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 an FTO on January 13, 2014, Ansar al-Shari'a in Tunisia (AAS-T) was founded in 2011 by Seif Allah Ben Hassine. AAS-T has been implicated in attacks against Tunisian security forces, assassinations of Tunisian political figures, and attempted suicide bombings of popular tourist locations. AAS-T has also recruited Tunisians to fight in Syria.

**Activities:** AAS-T was involved in the 2012 attack against Embassy Tunis and the American school in Tunis, which threatened the safety of more than 100 U.S. embassy employees. In 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 2020.

**Strength:** Precise numbers are unknown.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Libya and Tunisia

**Funding and External Aid:** Sources of funding are unknown.

## **Army of Islam**

**Aka** Jaysh al-Islam; Jaish al-Islam

**Description:** Designated as an 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 the 2006 and 2007 kidnappings of civilians, including a U.S. journalist. AOI also carried out the 2009 attacks on Egyptian civilians in Cairo and Heliopolis, Egypt, and planned the 2011 attack on a Coptic Christian church in Alexandria that killed 25 persons and wounded 100. In 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 2013, an Israeli official reported that AOI leader Dughmush was running training camps in Gaza.

In 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. In 2017, the group released a video meant to encourage ISIS fighters defending Mosul. In 2019, AOI shared another video praising ISIS



that included training information for individuals to conduct suicide attacks. And in April, AOI published more than two dozen images of fighters conducting military training, but it did not claim any attacks in 2020.

**Strength:** Precise numbers are unknown.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Egypt, Gaza, and Israel

**Funding and External Aid:** AOI receives much of its funding from a variety of criminal activities in Gaza.

### **Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq**

**Aka:** AAH; Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq min Al-Iraq; Asaib al Haq; Asa'ib Ahl Al-Haqq; League of the Righteous; Khazali Network; Khazali Special Group; Qazali Network; The People of the Cave; Khazali Special Groups Network; Al-Tayar al-Risali; The Missionary Current

**Description:** Designated as an FTO on January 10, 2020, AAH — led by Qays and Laith al-Khazali — is an Iran-backed, militant organization. AAH remains ideologically aligned with Iran and loyal to its supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. The group seeks to promote Iran's political and religious influence in Iraq, maintain Shia control over Iraq, and expel any remaining western military forces from the country.

**Activities:** AAH has claimed responsibility for more than 6,000 attacks against U.S. and Defeat-ISIS Coalition forces since its creation in 2006. The group has carried out highly sophisticated operations, including mortar attacks on an American base, the downing of a British helicopter, and an attack on the Karbala Provincial Headquarters that resulted in the capture and murder of five U.S. soldiers.

In 2019, two 107-mm rockets were fired at the Taji military training complex, where U.S. personnel provide divisional training. Iraqi security forces arrested two individuals assessed to be members of AAH in connection with the attack.

Also in 2019, AAH members opened fire on a group of protestors trying to set fire to the group's office in the city of Nasiriya, killing at least six.

**Strength:** AAH membership is estimated at 10,000.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Iraq, Syria

**Funding and External Aid:** AAH is extensively funded and trained by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Qods Force (IRGC-QF). AAH also receives funding through illicit activities such as smuggling.

## **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 an FTO on March 27, 2002, Asbat al-Ansar (AAA) is a Lebanon-based Sunni terrorist group composed primarily of Palestinians that first emerged in the early 1990s. 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:** Throughout the mid-1990s, AAA assassinated Lebanese religious leaders and bombed nightclubs, theaters, and liquor stores. The group also plotted against foreign diplomatic targets. Between 2005 and 2011, AAA members traveled to Iraq to fight Defeat-ISIS 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-Hilweh Palestinian refugee camp. The group remained active in Lebanon but has not claimed responsibility for any attacks since 2018.

**Strength:** AAA membership is estimated in the low hundreds.

**Location/Area of Operation:** AAA's primary base of operations is the Ain al-Hilweh Palestinian refugee camp in southern Lebanon.

**Funding and External Aid:** AAA likely 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 an 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 the group's deadly 1995 sarin attack in Tokyo. Despite claims that the group has renounced violence and Asahara's teachings, concerns remain regarding its continued adherence to the violence. The group now consists of two factions, both of which have recruited new members, engaged in commercial enterprises, and acquired property.

**Activities:** In 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 that AUM was responsible for other chemical incidents in Japan in 1994, including a sarin attack on a residential neighborhood in Matsumoto that killed seven persons and injured about 500 others. Japanese

police arrested Asahara in 1995; in 2004, authorities sentenced him to death for his role in the 1995 attacks.

In 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 prison. In 2012, a Japan Airlines flight to the United States turned back after receiving a bomb threat demanding Asahara's release.

In 2016, Montenegro expelled 58 people associated with AUM found holding a conference at a hotel in Danilovgrad. One month later, Russian authorities carried out raids on 25 AUM properties and opened a criminal investigation into an AUM cell. In 2017, Japanese police raided the offices of a "successor" group to AUM. In 2018, AUM leader Shoko Asahara was executed. AUM did not claim any attacks in 2020.

**Strength:** AUM is estimated to have around 1,500 followers.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Japan and Russia

**Funding and External Aid:** AUM's 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; Epanastatiki Pirines; Popular Revolutionary Struggle

**Description:** Designated as an 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 Álava, Guipúzcoa, and Viscaya; the autonomous region of Navarre; and the southwestern French territories of Labourd, Lower Navarre, and Soule.

**Activities:** ETA primarily has conducted bombings and assassinations against Spanish government officials, businesspersons, politicians, judicial figures, and security and military forces; however, the group also has targeted journalists and major tourist areas. ETA is responsible for killing more than 800 civilians and members of the armed forces and police, as well as injuring thousands, since it formally began its campaign of violence in 1968.

In 2006, ETA exploded a massive car bomb, destroying much of the covered parking garage at Madrid-Barajas International Airport. ETA marked its 50th anniversary in 2009 with a series of high-profile and deadly bombings, including an attack on a Civil Guard barracks that injured more than 60 people, including children.

ETA has not conducted any attacks since it announced a "definitive cessation of armed activity" in 2011.

In 2016, authorities seized ETA weapons, including a cache found in a forest north of Paris, and captured the top ETA leader. In 2017, ETA reported that it had relinquished its last weapons caches. In 2018, ETA released a letter announcing the dissolution of its organizational structures. In a 2019 mass trial, a Spanish court accepted a plea deal for 47 ETA members to avoid prison sentences for membership in the group.

**Strength:** Precise numbers are unknown.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Spain and France

**Funding and External Aid:** Sources of funding are unknown.

## **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:** Boko Haram (BH) was designated as an FTO on November 14, 2013. The Nigeria-based group is responsible for numerous attacks in northern and northeastern regions of the country as well as in the Lake Chad Basin in Cameroon, Chad, and Niger that have killed thousands of people since 2009.

In 2015, BH pledged allegiance to ISIS in an audiotape message. ISIS accepted the pledge, and BH began calling itself ISIS-West Africa. In 2016, ISIS announced that Abu Musab al-Barnawi was to replace Abubakar Shekau as the new leader of the group. Infighting then led BH 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.

In 2014, BH kidnapped 276 female students from a secondary school in Chibok, Borno State. BH has continued to abduct women and girls in the northern region of Nigeria and the Lake Chad region, some of whom are subjected to domestic servitude, other forms of forced labor, and sexual servitude, including through forced marriages to its members.

During 2017 and 2018, BH increased its forced abduction of women and girls and ordered them to carry out suicide attacks on civilians, including the 2017 attack against the University of Maiduguri in Borno State and twin attacks against a mosque and market in Adamawa State, Nigeria, in 2018, killing 86. During 2019, BH reportedly killed at least 275 people, mostly civilians, and displaced thousands in the Far North Region of Cameroon.

In February, suspected BH fighters attacked trucks carrying passengers along a military checkpoint in Nigeria, killing at least 30 people. In March, BH launched an attack in Boma, Chad, that killed at least 92 Chadian soldiers. In June, suspected BH militants attacked a village in northeast Nigeria that killed at least 81 people. BH was alleged to be responsible for a November attack on a village in northeast Nigeria that killed at least 110 people. In December, BH claimed responsibility for the abduction of more than 330 students from an all-boys school in Nigeria's northern Katsina State.

**Strength:** BH is estimated to have several thousand fighters.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Cameroon, Chad, Niger, and Nigeria

**Funding and External Aid:** BH largely self-finances through criminal activities such as looting, extortion, kidnapping-for-ransom, and bank robberies.

### **Communist Party of the Philippines/New People's Army**

**Aka** CPP/NPA; Communist Party of the Philippines; CPP; New People's Army; NPA; NPP/PPP

**Description:** The Communist Party of the Philippines/New People's Army (CPP/NPA) was designated as an 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 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, the CPP/NPA has an active urban infrastructure to support its terrorist activities and, at times, has used city-based assassination squads.

**Activities:** The CPP/NPA primarily targets Philippine security forces, government officials, local infrastructure, and businesses that refuse to pay extortion, or "revolutionary taxes." The CPP/NPA also has a history of attacking U.S. interests in the Philippines. In 1987, for example, the group killed three U.S. soldiers in four separate attacks in Angeles. In 1989, the CPP/NPA issued a press statement claiming responsibility for the ambush and murder of Col. James Nicholas Rowe, chief of the Ground Forces Division of the Joint U.S.-Military Advisory Group.

Over the past several years, the 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 and 2017, 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 the CPP/NPA’s continued recruitment in the Philippines and attacks against government forces and civilians — stalled peace efforts through 2019. In 2018, seven suspected members of the 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 2018, CPP/NPA members used an antipersonnel mine to attack a military patrol in the city of Catarman. The attack killed four soldiers and two civilians.

In 2019 and 2020, the CPP/NPA continued attacks against security forces and civilians. The deadliest of these was a 2019 offensive in which CPP/NPA detonated bombs using an improvised land mine in a surprise early morning attack clash on Samar Island, killing six Philippine troops.

**Strength:** The Philippine government estimates that the CPP/NPA has about 4,000 members. The group also retains a significant amount of support from communities in rural areas of the Philippines.

**Location/Area of Operation:** The Philippines

**Funding and External Aid:** The CPP/NPA raises funds through extortion and theft.

### **Continuity Irish Republican Army**

**Aka** CIRA; Continuity Army Council; Continuity IRA; Republican Sinn Fein

**Description:** Designated as an 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 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 2016, CIRA claimed responsibility for a shooting at a boxing event in Dublin that left one person dead. In 2019, CIRA members conducted an attack on the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), setting off a bomb near the border of North Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Also in 2019, CIRA claimed responsibility for a grenade attack in west Belfast on a PSNI vehicle.

In February, CIRA claimed responsibility for attaching an IED to a truck destined for an unknown location in England; CIRA had allegedly planned for the bomb to go off on the day the United Kingdom left the European Union.

**Strength:** CIRA’s membership is small, with possibly fewer than 50 members.

**Location/Area of Operation:** United Kingdom and 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 an FTO on October 8, 1997. Formed in the 1970s, IG was once Egypt's largest terrorist group. The group's external wing, composed mainly of exiled members residing 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 2017.

**Activities:** During the 1990s, IG conducted armed attacks against Egyptian security, other government officials, and Coptic Christians. IG claimed responsibility for the 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 did not claim any attacks in 2020.

**Strength:** Precise numbers are unknown.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Egypt

**Funding and External Aid:** Sources of funding are 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

**Description:** Designated as an FTO on October 8, 1997, Hamas was established in 1987 at the onset of the first Palestinian uprising, or First 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 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 2020.

**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 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 beginning in 2008 and concluding in 2009.

During 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 that year, operatives from Hamas and the Palestine Islamic Jihad coordinated and carried out a bus bombing in Tel Aviv later that year 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 2014, including 16-year-old U.S.-Israeli citizen Naftali Fraenkel. In 2016, a Hamas member carried out a suicide attack on a bus in Jerusalem, killing 20 people.

Hamas-organized protests at the border between Gaza and Israel continued throughout much of 2019, 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, and the Israeli military reported that some rocket attacks in 2019 and 2020 came from Hamas launchers. In August the Israeli military accused Hamas of being responsible for launching incendiary devices tied to balloons into Israel, causing more than 400 blazes in southern Israel.

**Strength:** Hamas comprises several thousand Gaza-based operatives.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Gaza, the West Bank, and Lebanon

**Funding and External Aid:** Hamas has received funding, weapons, and training from Iran and raises funds in Gulf countries. The group receives donations from some Palestinians and other expatriates as well as from its own charity organizations.

## **Haqqani Network**

**Aka HQN**

**Description:** Designated as an 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, Haqqani retreated to Pakistan where, under the leadership of his son Sirajuddin, HQN continued



to direct and conduct terrorist activity in Afghanistan. In 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 Defeat-ISIS Coalition forces in Afghanistan, the Afghan government, and civilian targets. In 2011, HQN wounded 77 U.S. soldiers in a truck bombing in Maidan Wardak province and conducted a 19-hour attack on Embassy Kabul and International Security Assistance Force headquarters in Kabul, killing 16 Afghans. In 2012 an HQN suicide bomb attack against Forward Operating Base Salerno killed 2 U.S. soldiers and wounded more than 100 others.

In 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. Afghan officials also blamed HQN for a 2016 double-suicide attack outside of Kabul against Afghan police cadets and first responders; 30 people were killed.

In 2017, Afghan officials blamed HQN for a truck bomb exploded in Kabul, killing more than 150 people. Later that year, an American woman and her family were recovered after five years of HQN captivity.

HQN was believed to be responsible for a 2018 ambulance bombing in Kabul that killed more than 100 people. Afghan officials blamed HQN for a 2018 attack on the Intercontinental Hotel in Kabul that killed 22 persons, including Americans. In 2019, HQN released two hostages, including a U.S. citizen, who had been kidnapped at gunpoint in 2016.

In May, the Afghan government identified HQN as responsible for an attack on a military court in Paktika province killing at least five. In July the Afghan government identified HQN as responsible for killing three civilians in a bombing in Kabul.

**Strength:** HQN is estimated to have between 3,000 and 5,000 fighters.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Afghanistan and Pakistan

**Funding and External Aid:** HQN is funded primarily from taxing local commerce, extortion, smuggling, and other licit and illicit business ventures. In addition to the funding it receives as part of the broader Afghan Taliban, the group receives some funds from donors in Pakistan and the Gulf.

### **Harakat-ul Jihad-i-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

**Description:** Designated as an FTO on August 6, 2010, Harakat-ul Jihad Islami (HUJI) was formed in 1980 in Afghanistan to fight against the former Soviet Union. Following the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989, the group redirected its efforts toward India. HUJI seeks

the annexation of the Indian Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir into Pakistan and the expulsion of Defeat-ISIS 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. The group experienced internal splits, and a portion of the group has aligned with al-Qa'ida.

**Activities:** HUJI claimed responsibility for the 2011 bombing of the New Delhi High Court, which left at least 11 persons 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 claim responsibility for any attacks in 2020.

**Strength:** Precise numbers are unknown.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Afghanistan, India, and Pakistan

**Funding and External Aid:** Sources of funding 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 an FTO on March 5, 2008, Harakat ul-Jihad-i-Islami/Bangladesh (HUJI-B) was formed in 1992 by a group of former Bangladeshi Afghan veterans seeking to establish Islamist rule in Bangladesh. In 2005, Bangladeshi authorities banned the group. HUJI-B leaders signed the 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.

**Activities:** In 2008, three HUJI-B members, including HUJI-B leader Mufti Abdul Hannan, were convicted for the 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 2005 grenade attack. In 2013, Bangladeshi police arrested a group of terrorists, including HUJI-B members, who were preparing attacks on public gatherings and prominent individuals.

In 2017, Bangladeshi authorities executed HUJI-B leader Hannan and two associates for the 2004 grenade attack. In 2019, Dhaka police arrested three HUJI-B operatives reportedly attempting to revive the group's operations. In January, a court in Bangladesh sentenced 10 members of HUJI-B to death for a deadly bomb attack at a rally in Dhaka in 2001.

**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:** Bangladesh and India

**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 an FTO on October 8, 1997, Harakat ul-Mujahideen (HUM) seeks the annexation of the Indian Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir into Pakistan and the expulsion of Defeat-ISIS Coalition forces from Afghanistan. In 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 Defeat-ISIS Coalition air strikes destroyed them in 2001. In 2003, HUM began using the name Jamiat ul-Ansar; Pakistan banned the group in 2003.

**Activities:** HUM has conducted numerous operations against Indian troops and civilian targets in the Indian Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, as well as in India's northeastern states. In 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 2015 strikes in Handwor and Poonch, which resulted in the deaths of five Indian Army personnel. HUM did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2020.

**Strength:** After 2000 a significant portion of HUM's membership defected to JeM, and only a small number of cadres are reported to still be active.

**Location/Area of Operation:** HUM conducts operations primarily in Afghanistan and in the Indian Union Territory 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** 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; FRD; External Security Organization; ESO; Foreign Action Unit; Hizballah ESO; Hizballah International; Special Operations Branch; External Services Organization; External Security Organization of Hezbollah

**Description:** Hizballah was designated as an 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, Ali Khamenei. Hizballah is closely allied with Iran, and the two often work together on shared initiatives, although Hizballah also occasionally acts independently. 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 Embassy Beirut and the U.S. Marine barracks; the 1984 attack on the U.S. Embassy Beirut annex; 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 the 1994 bombing of the Argentine Israelite Mutual Association in Buenos Aires.

Hizballah assisted Iraq Shia militant and terrorist groups in Iraq and in 2007 attacked the Karbala Provincial Joint Coordination Center, killing five American soldiers.

In 2012, a suspected Hizballah operative was detained and later found guilty by Cypriot authorities for allegedly helping to plan an attack against Israeli tourists on the island. The group was also responsible for the July 2012 attack on a passenger bus carrying 42 Israeli tourists at the Burgas Airport in Bulgaria. The explosion killed 5 Israelis, 1 Bulgarian, and injured 32 others.

In 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 2020.

During 2013 through 2017, Hizballah operatives planning attacks or storing weapons and explosive materials were arrested in Bolivia, Cyprus, Kuwait, Nigeria, and Peru.

In 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 during 2011-12. Another operative arrested in New York had surveilled U.S. military and law enforcement facilities from 2003 to 2017.

In 2018, Brazil arrested a Hizballah financier and extradited him to Paraguay for prosecution in 2020. In 2019, Hizballah launched attacks directly on the Israeli military, firing antitank missiles targeting an army base and vehicles near the border.

In August, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) claimed that Hizballah fighters fired toward an IDF position in the Israeli town of Manara. In December, Hizballah leader Hassan Nasrallah claimed the terrorist group had doubled the size of its Precision Guided Missiles arsenal in 2020. Also in December, judges at the Netherlands-based Special Tribunal for Lebanon found Hizballah

member Salim Ayyash guilty for his central role in the bomb attack in Beirut in 2005 that killed the former Prime Minister of Lebanon Rafic Hariri.

**Strength:** Hizballah has tens of thousands of supporters and members worldwide.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Lebanon and 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 — which in recent years has been estimated at \$700 million — accounts for the overwhelming majority of the group's annual budget. The Assad regime in Syria has provided training, weapons, and diplomatic and political support. Hizballah also receives funding in the form of private donations from some 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 Mujahadeen**

**Aka** HM, Hizb-ul-Mujahideen

**Description:** Hizbul Mujahideen (HM) was designated as an FTO on August 17, 2017. The group was formed in 1989 and is one of the largest and oldest militant groups operating in the Indian Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. HM is led by Mohammad Yusuf Shah, also known as Syed Salahuddin, and officially supports the liberation of Jammu and Kashmir from Indian control and its accession to Pakistan, although some cadres are pro-independence. The group concentrates its attacks on Indian security forces and politicians in Jammu and Kashmir and has conducted operations jointly with other Kashmiri militants. HM is made up primarily of ethnic Kashmiris.

**Activities:** HM has claimed responsibility for several attacks in the Indian Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. In 2015, the group 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. In 2017, HM killed seven persons — including five policemen — when it attacked a bank van carrying cash in Jammu and Kashmir. In 2018, HM reportedly killed four police officers in Shopian district in the Indian state Jammu and Kashmir. Also in 2018, HM claimed responsibility for abducting and killing three police officials in Jammu and Kashmir.

In 2019, Indian officials accused HM of being behind a grenade attack on a Jammu bus stand that killed a teenager and injured 32 other people. That same year, two Indian soldiers were killed and six others injured when an alleged HM militant attacked their patrol with a vehicle-borne IED (or VBIED). HM was also suspected by police of having killed five Bengali laborers and a truck driver in 2019. In August, three HM militants opened fire on Indian soldiers during a search operation in the Indian Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, killing one soldier.

**Strength:** Precise numbers are unknown.

**Location/Area of Operation:** The Indian Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir

**Funding and External Aid:** Sources of support are unknown, but HM is suspected to receive some funding from sources in Pakistan as well as from local fundraising.

## **Indian Mujahedeen**

**Aka** Indian Mujahedeen; Indian Mujahidin; Islamic Security Force-Indian Mujahideen (ISF-IM)

**Description:** The Indian Mujahedeen (IM) was designated as an FTO on September 19, 2011. The India-based terrorist group has been responsible for dozens of bomb attacks throughout India since 2005 and caused the deaths of hundreds of civilians. IM maintains ties to other terrorist entities, including ISIS, 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.

**Activities:** IM is known for carrying out multiple coordinated bombings in crowded areas to maximize terror and casualties. In 2008, 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 2015 the arrest of three IM militants linked the group to the 2014 low-intensity blast near a restaurant in Bangalore that killed one woman and injured three other people. The arrest also uncovered that the group planned to carry out attacks on India's Republic Day and had provided explosives for attacks in other parts of the country.

In 2016, IM was increasingly linked to ISIS. That year, 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 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 claim responsibility for any attacks in 2020.

**Strength:** Precise numbers are unknown.

**Location/Area of Operation:** India

**Funding and External Aid:** IM is suspected of obtaining funding and support from other terrorist organizations, as well as from sources in Pakistan and the Middle East.

## **Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant-Libya**

**Aka** Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant-Libya; 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 an FTO on May 20, 2016. In 2014, then-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 2014, several hundred operatives set up a base in Darnah, and the following month, Baghdadi formally established the branch after announcing he had accepted oaths of allegiance from fighters in Libya.

**Activities:** Since becoming established, ISIL-Libya has carried out multiple attacks throughout Libya and threatened to expand ISIS's presence into other countries in Africa.

In 2015, ISIL-Libya claimed responsibility for a suicide attack on a luxury hotel in Tripoli that killed eight people, including a U.S. contractor. In 2015, ISIL-Libya released a propaganda video showing the murder of 21 Egyptian Coptic Christians who had been kidnapped from Sirte, Libya, in two separate incidents in 2014 and 2015.

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 2018, ISIL-Libya claimed responsibility for an attack on Libya's electoral commission headquarters in Tripoli that killed 14 people. Also in 2018, ISIL-Libya claimed responsibility for a suicide attack on Libya's National Oil Company headquarters that left 2 persons dead and 10 others wounded. Later that year, ISIL-Libya was implicated in an attack on a town in central Libya that resulted in 5 persons killed and 10 others kidnapped. Still later that year, ISIL-Libya claimed responsibility for an attack on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that killed three people.

In 2019, ISIL-Libya claimed responsibility for numerous attacks on the Libyan National Army (LNA). These included a dawn assault on a military training camp in the southern city of Sabhā that killed at least nine soldiers and an attack on the town of Zillah in which three soldiers were killed and four captured.

In May, ISIL-Libya claimed responsibility for three attacks on LNA forces at an LNA checkpoint in southern Libya. ISIS-Libya reportedly used explosives and Katyusha rockets in these attacks, which targeted Tamanhint Airbase, the headquarters of the LNA's 628 Battalion in Taraghin, and the LNA's Khalid Ibn al-Walid Battalion headquartered in Umm al Aranib. Also in May, ISIL-Libya conducted a separate VBIED attack targeting a LNA checkpoint in Taraghin.

**Strength:** ISIL-Libya is estimated to have fewer than 500 fighters.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Libya

**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 in Syria.

## **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 an 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 2002, but the group was renamed Islamic Jihad Union in 2005. Although IJU remains committed to overthrowing the Government of Uzbekistan, today it is active primarily in Afghanistan and, more recently, in Syria, where many of its members relocated from Afghanistan.

**Activities:** 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 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 2007, German authorities detained three IJU operatives, including two German converts, disrupting the group’s plans to attack targets in Germany — including Ramstein Airbase, where the primary targets would be U.S. diplomats, soldiers, and civilians.

In 2013, two IJU videos showed attacks against a U.S. 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 also were killed. In 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 to fight Afghan troops in late 2016. IJU released a second video in 2018 showing a joint raid with the Taliban in northern Afghanistan. The video, dated 2017, shows a nighttime clash with Afghan forces. In 2019 the United Nations confirmed that IJU was operating inside Syria under control of al-Nusra Front. IJU did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2020.

**Strength:** IJU consists of 100 to 200 members.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Afghanistan, Syria, Turkey, Uzbekistan, and Europe



**Funding and External Aid:** Sources of funding are unknown.

## Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan

**Aka** IMU

**Description:** Designated as an 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 stated objective to set up an Islamic state in Uzbekistan, the group primarily operates 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 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 the IMU's former Taliban allies.

**Activities:** Since the beginning of Operation Enduring Freedom, the IMU has been predominantly focused on attacking international forces in Afghanistan. In 2009, NATO forces reported an increase in IMU-affiliated FTFs in Afghanistan. In 2010 the IMU claimed responsibility for the ambush that killed 25 Tajik troops in Tajikistan.

In 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, primarily in the northern part of the country. In 2015 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 IMU members. In 2016, Uzbek refugee Fazliddin Kurbanov was sentenced by a U.S. federal court to 25 years in prison for planning a bomb attack in Idaho. Kurbanov had been in online contact with members of IMU, seeking advice on how to make explosives and discussing attacking U.S. military bases.

In 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 2020.

**Strength:** Precise numbers are unknown.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Afghanistan, Pakistan, Syria, Turkey, and Central Asia

**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 Revolutionary Guard Corps**

**Aka** IRGC; The Iranian Revolutionary Guards; IRG; The Army of the Guardians of the Islamic Revolution; AGIR; Pasdarn-e Enghelab-e Islami; Sepah-e Pasdaran Enghelab Islami; Sepah-e Pasdaran-e Enghelab-e Eslami; Sepah-e Pasdaran-e Enqelab-e Eslami; Pasdaran-e Inqilab; Revolutionary Guards; Revolutionary Guard; Sepah; Pasdaran; Sepah Pasdaran; Islamic Revolutionary Corps; Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps; Iran’s Revolutionary Guard Corps; Islamic Revolutionary Guards; Iran’s Revolutionary Guards; Army of the Guardians of the Islamic Revolution.

**Description:** Designated as an FTO on April 15, 2019, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), part of Iran’s official military, has played a central role in Iran’s use of terrorism as a key tool of Iranian statecraft since its inception. The IRGC has been directly involved in terrorist plotting; its support for terrorism is foundational and institutional, and it has killed U.S. citizens.

The IRGC was founded in 1979 and since then has gained a substantial role in executing Iran’s foreign policy and wields control over vast segments of the economy. The IRGC’s ties to nonstate armed groups in the region, such as Hizballah in Lebanon, help Iran compensate for its relatively weak conventional military forces. Answering directly to the supreme leader, the corps is also influential in domestic politics, and many senior officials have passed through its ranks.

The IRGC is composed of five primary branches: the IRGC Ground Forces, IRGC Air Force, IRGC Navy, the Basij, and the IRGC-QF.

**Activities:** The IRGC — most prominently through its Qods Force (QF) — directs and carries out a global terrorist campaign. The IRGC-QF in 2011 plotted a brazen terrorist attack against the Saudi Ambassador to the United States on American soil. In 2012, IRGC-QF operatives were arrested in Turkey and Kenya for plotting attacks. An IRGC operative was convicted in 2017 of espionage for a foreign intelligence service; he had been surveilling a German-Israeli group. In 2018, Germany uncovered 10 IRGC operatives involved in a terrorist plot in Germany. In 2018, a U.S. federal court found Iran and the IRGC liable for the 1996 Khobar Towers bombing that killed 19 Americans. The QF is active in Syria in support of the Assad regime.

The IRGC-QF is Iran’s primary mechanism for cultivating and supporting terrorist groups abroad. The IRGC continues to provide financial and other material support, training, technology transfer, advanced conventional weapons, guidance, or direction to a broad range of terrorist organizations, including Hizballah, Kata’ib Hizballah, Asa’ib Ahl al-Haq and Harakat al-Nujaba in Iraq, al-Ashtar Brigades and Saraya al-Mukhtar in Bahrain, and other terrorist groups in Syria and around the Gulf. Iran also provides up to \$100 million annually in combined

support to Palestinian terrorist groups, including Hamas, Palestine Islamic Jihad, and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command.

**Strength:** The IRGC has upward of 125,000 troops under its command.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Iran, Iraq, Syria, Europe, and the Gulf

**Funding and External Aid:** The IRGC-QF continues to engage in large-scale illicit financing schemes and money laundering to fund its malign activities. In 2017 the IRGC-QF engineered a plot to produce counterfeit currency by deceiving European suppliers to procure advanced printing machinery and other necessary materials. It then printed counterfeit Yemeni bank notes, which were used to support its destabilizing activities in Yemen.

### **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'idat al Jihad/Bilad al Raafidaini; Tanzim Qa'idat al-Jihad fi Bilad al-Rafidayn; The Monotheism and Jihad Group; The Organization Base of Jihad/Country of the Two Rivers; The Organization Base of Jihad/Mesopotamia; The Organization of al-Jihad's Base in Iraq; The Organization of al-Jihad's Base in the Land of the Two Rivers; The Organization of al-Jihad's Base of Operations in Iraq; The Organization of al-Jihad's Base of Operations in the Land of the Two Rivers; The Organization of Jihad's Base in the Country of the Two Rivers; al-Zarqawi Network; Islamic State of Iraq; Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham; Islamic State of 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; Amaq News Agency; Al Hayat Media Center; Al-Hayat Media Center; Al Hayat

**Description:** Al-Qa'ida in Iraq (AQI) was designated as an 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 as well as the West's support for, and the existence of, Israel. In late 2004, Zarqawi 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 Defeat-ISIS Coalition forces until his death in 2006.

That year, AQI publicly renamed itself the Islamic State in Iraq. In 2013, it adopted the moniker of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) to express its regional ambitions as it expanded operations to include the Syrian conflict. ISIS was led by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, who declared an Islamic caliphate in 2014, but he was killed in 2019. In 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. Also in 2017, then-Iraqi Prime Minister Haidar al-Abadi announced the territorial defeat of ISIS in Iraq. In 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 lower Middle

Euphrates River Valley in Syria. 2019 marked the full territorial defeat of ISIS's so-called caliphate; however, ISIS in Syria remains a serious threat. The group benefits from instability, demonstrates intent to cause attacks abroad, and continues to inspire terrorist attacks around the world.

**Activities:** ISIS has 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, Iraqi, and Syrian operatives. In 2014, ISIS was responsible for most of the 12,000 Iraqi civilian deaths that year. ISIS was heavily involved in the fighting in Syria, and had 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. In 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.

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 8 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 [2020 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 2015, ISIS carried out a series of coordinated attacks in Paris, 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 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 4 U.S. citizens, and injured more than 250 people. In 2016 a gunman who pledged allegiance to ISIS killed 49 individuals and injured 53 others at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, Florida. Also in 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 3 U.S. citizens. Also in 2016, ISIS claimed responsibility for a truck attack on a crowded Christmas market in Berlin that killed 12 people and injured 48 others.

In 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 2017 a man who claimed to be a member of ISIS drove a truck into a crowded shopping center in Stockholm, killing five and injuring many more. Also in 2017, ISIS claimed a suicide bombing in Manchester, England, that killed 22 people outside of a live concert.

In 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.

In 2019, ISIS claimed responsibility for the suicide bombing of a restaurant in Manbij, Syria, that killed 19 persons, including 4 Americans. That same month, ISIS reportedly launched a missile attack that seriously wounded two British commandos in eastern Syria. On Easter Sunday 2019, more than 250 people were killed in Sri Lanka when ISIS-inspired terrorists carried out coordinated suicide bombings at multiple churches and hotels. Later that year, ISIS claimed responsibility for killing a U.S. servicemember while he was participating in a combat operation in Ninewa province, Iraq. Also that year, ISIS claimed responsibility for a stabbing attack near the London Bridge in which a man killed two people and injured three others. That same month, ISIS claimed responsibility for an attack on a border post in Tajikistan that killed four Tajik servicemembers.

In November, ISIS claimed responsibility for a rocket attack on the Siniya oil refinery in Salahuddin province, Iraq. In December, ISIS attacked a convoy of Syrian regime soldiers and militiamen in Deir ez-Zor province, Syria, killing at least 37 people.

**Strength:** Estimates suggest ISIS fighters in Iraq and Syria number between 11,000 and 18,000, including several thousand FTFs.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Iraq and Syria, with branches and networks around the world

**Funding and External Aid:** ISIS received most of its funding from a variety of criminal activities in Iraq and Syria. Criminal activities included extortion of civilian economies, smuggling oil, and robberies. ISIS also maintains stockpiles of as much as hundreds of millions of dollars scattered across Iraq and Syria it looted during its occupation of those countries in 2013 to 2019. ISIS continues to rely on trusted courier networks and money services businesses to move its financial resources within and outside of Iraq and Syria. The territorial defeat of ISIS that eliminated its control of territory in Syria in 2019 reduced ISIS's ability to generate, hold, and transfer its financial assets. Despite this, ISIS continues to generate revenue from criminal activities through its many clandestine networks in Iraq and Syria and provides significant financial support and guidance 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, ISISB, Abu Jandal al-Bangali, Neo-JMB, New JMB, Neo-Jammat-ul Mujahadeen-Bangladesh

**Description:** ISIS-Bangladesh was designated as an FTO on February 28, 2018. Created in 2014, 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 Bengali Muslims under the leadership of then-ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.

**Activities:** In 2015, gunmen belonging to ISIS-Bangladesh shot and killed an Italian aid worker in Dhaka. In 2015, ISIS-Bangladesh claimed responsibility for injuring 10 people during a Christmas Day suicide attack at a mosque packed with Ahmadi Muslims. In 2016 the group claimed responsibility for an assault on the Holey Artisan Bakery in Dhaka that killed 22 people, including an American. In 2017, ISIS-Bangladesh claimed responsibility for twin explosions that targeted a crowd in Sylhet, Bangladesh, killing six people.

In 2019, ISIS-Bangladesh claimed responsibility for two explosions in Dhaka that injured four police officers and two civilians. Also in 2019, ISIS-Bangladesh claimed responsibility for a small bomb thrown at a Bangladeshi minister in Dhaka, which injured two police officers. Also during that year, the group claimed responsibility for an explosion outside the Awami League office in Khulna.

On February 28 there was an IED blast near a police box in Chattogram, and on July 31 there was an attack at a Hindu temple in the Naogaon district where a crude bomb was planted. ISIS-Bangladesh claimed responsibility for both attacks. In July, ISIS-Bangladesh claimed responsibility for an attack on a police station in Dhaka that injured five people, including four police officers.

**Strength:** ISIS-Bangladesh has several hundred armed supporters.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Bangladesh

**Funding and External Aid:** Although ISIS-Bangladesh's sources of funding are largely unknown, the group 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 in the Greater Sahara; 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 an 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 2015, which was acknowledged by ISIS in 2016.

**Activities:** In 2016, ISIS-GS claimed responsibility for an attack on a military post in Intangom, Burkina Faso, that killed three Burkinabe soldiers.

In 2017, ISIS-GS claimed responsibility for an 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. In 2018, ISIS-GS was reportedly involved in numerous skirmishes and attacks in Mali and Niger, including those that targeted French troops and civilians. In 2019, ISIS-GS attacked a Malian military base, killing 54 soldiers.

In January, ISIS-GS militants attacked a Nigerien military base on the border between Niger and Mali, killing 89 soldiers. In August, ISIS-GS was suspected of killing six French NGO workers, their Nigerien guide, and one other Nigerien citizen near Niamey, Niger. In November, ISIS-GS claimed responsibility for an attack on Burkinabe soldiers in Oudalan province, Burkina Faso, killing 14 soldiers.

**Strength:** Precise numbers are unknown.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger

**Funding and External Aid:** Sources of funding are unknown.

### **Islamic State's Khorasan Province**

**Aka** 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 an 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 then-ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, which was accepted in 2015. The group has carried out suicide bombings, small arms attacks, and kidnappings in Afghanistan against civilians and Afghan National Security and Defense Forces. ISIS-K has also claimed responsibility for attacks on civilians and government officials in Pakistan.

**Activities:** In 2016, ISIS-K attacked a Pakistani consulate in Afghanistan, killing seven Afghan security personnel; bombed a peaceful protest in Kabul, Afghanistan, killing an estimated 80 people and wounding another 230; claimed a shooting and suicide bombing at a hospital in Quetta, Pakistan, killing 94; and bombed a Shrine in Balochistan province, Pakistan, killing more than 50 people.

In 2017, ISIS-K attacked the Iraqi Embassy in Kabul, killing two people; bombed a mosque in western Afghanistan, killing 29 people and injuring 60 others; claimed responsibility for a double suicide bombing in a Shiite majority neighborhood in Kabul, Afghanistan, leaving more than 20 dead and 70 injured; attacked a Sufi shrine in Sindh province, Pakistan, that killed at least 88 people; and attacked an election rally in Balochistan province, Pakistan, that killed 149 people. In 2019, ISIS-K claimed responsibility for an attack at the Ministry of Communications in Kabul, killing seven people. Also in 2019, ISIS-K claimed responsibility for a suicide bombing at a wedding hall in a Shiite minority neighborhood in Kabul, killing 80 people and injuring 154 others. Later that year, an ISIS-K bombing of a mosque in Nangarhar province killed at least 70 people. Also in 2019, ISIS-K suffered a series of major defeats and lost much of its territory in Nangarhar in the face of attacks by both the Defeat-ISIS Coalition and Taliban forces.

In March, ISIS-K claimed responsibility for an attack on a Sikh house of worship in Kabul that killed 25 worshippers and wounded 8 others. After that attack, Afghanistan's National Directorate of Security arrested the leader of ISIS-K, Abdullah Orokzai, and two other high-ranking commanders. In August, ISIS-K claimed responsibility for an attack on a prison in Jalalabad, Afghanistan, that killed at least 29 people and injured more than 50 others. In October, ISIS-K carried out a suicide bombing outside an education center in Kabul that killed at least 18 people and injured at least 57 others.

**Strength:** ISIS-K is estimated to have about 1,000 fighters.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Central Asia

**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.

### ISIS-Philippines

**Aka** ISIS in the Philippines; ISIL Philippines; ISIL in the Philippines; IS Philippines; ISP; Islamic State in the Philippines; Islamic State of Iraq and Syria in South-east Asia; Dawlatul Islamiyah Waliyatul Masrik, DIWM; Dawlatul Islamiyyah Waliyatul Mashriq; IS East Asia Division; ISIS Branch in the Philippines; ISIS' "Philippines province"

**Description:** ISIS-Philippines (ISIS-P) was designated as an FTO on February 28, 2018. In 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. Hatib Hajan Sawadjaan is the current leader of ISIS-P, and the organization has ties to elements of the Abu Sayyaf Group.

**Activities:** In 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 more than 300,000 residents to flee the area. In 2018, ISIS-P claimed responsibility for a suicide bomb attack on a military checkpoint in Basilan that killed 10 people. In 2019, ISIS-P claimed responsibility for the Jolo cathedral bombing in Sulu, a complex suicide attack carried out by an Indonesian couple during mass, killing 23 people and wounding more than 100 others. ISIS-P did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2020.

**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:** The Philippines

**Funding and External Aid:** ISIS-P receives financial assistance from ISIS in Syria and receives funds from local extortion and kidnapping-for-ransom groups.



## Islamic State-Sinai Province

**Aka** Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis; Ansar Jerusalem; Supporters of Jerusalem; Ansar Bayt al-Maqdes; Ansar Beit al-Maqdis; Islamic State-Sinai Province; Islamic State in the Sinai; Jamaat Ansar Beit al-Maqdis fi Sinaa; Sinai Province; Supporters of the Holy Place; The State of Sinai; Wilayat Sinai

**Description:** Originally designated as an 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. In 2014, ABM officially declared allegiance to ISIS. In 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:** Before pledging allegiance to ISIS, ABM 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. From 2015 through 2019, ISIS-SP claimed responsibility for numerous attacks, including the bombing of a Russian passenger plane, the abduction and killing of a Croatian citizen, rockets launched at Israeli cities, attacks on Egyptian Christians, and numerous attacks against Egyptian military and security personnel.

In 2020, ISIS-SP claimed responsibility for multiple attacks on Egyptian police and army checkpoints in the Sinai as well as against Egyptian civilians. In April, ISIS-SP claimed responsibility for an IED attack against a military armored convoy causing at least 10 casualties among Egyptian soldiers. In June, ISIS-SP claimed it killed six Egyptian soldiers during a checkpoint attack at al-Maghara in central Sinai. ISIS-SP also increased its attacks against Sinai tribal members in 2020, including the June killing of a 75-year-old tribal elder who was strapped to a pole with explosives detonated next to him. In July an ISIS-SP suicide bomber targeted a tribal family gathering, killing at least three people.

**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:** Egypt

**Funding and External Aid:** Although the sources of ISIS-SP's funding are largely unknown, there are indications that it may receive funding from ISIS in Syria.

## ISIS-West Africa

**Aka** Islamic State West Africa Province; ISISWAP; Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant-West Africa; ISIL-WA; Islamic State of Iraq and Syria West Africa Province; ISIS West Africa Province; ISIS West Africa; ISIS-WA

**Description:** ISIS-West Africa (ISIS-WA) was designated as an FTO on February 28, 2018. In 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 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 2018, ISIS-WA abducted a Christian student in Nigeria, and in 2018 the group kidnapped three aid workers during an attack that killed dozens of other people. Also that year, ISIS-WA claimed responsibility for five attacks in Chad and Nigeria that resulted in 118 deaths.

In 2019, ISIS-WA attacked the convoy of the then-governor of Borno State as it drove from the capital of Maiduguri to a town near Nigeria's border with Cameroon, killing as many as 10 people. In 2019, ISIS-WA claimed responsibility for two attacks in western Niger, ambushing Niger Army soldiers in Tongo Tongo, resulting in 28 deaths, while also attacking Niger security forces near the Koutoukale prison that killed one soldier.

In 2019, ISIS-WA fighters launched an attack against a military base near Baga in the Lake Chad area, killing 20 Nigerian and five Chadian soldiers. Also in 2019, ISIS-WA attacked a convoy of Action Against Hunger (AAH) and Nigerian health ministry employees in northeastern Nigeria. One AAH driver was killed during the attack, while five people were taken hostage; ISIS-WA claimed to have killed four of the hostages by year's end. Late that year, ISIS-WA released a video showing the execution of 11 reported Christians and claimed the killings were revenge for the killing of ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.

In September, ISIS-WA attacked the convoy of the Borno State governor in northeast Nigeria, killing 15 security personnel. In June, ISIS-WA claimed responsibility for two attacks in the Monguno and Nganzai areas in northeastern Nigeria, killing 20 soldiers and 40 civilians. Also in June, ISIS-WA claimed responsibility for raiding a village in the Gubio area, killing 81 people. In December, ISIS-WA fighters kidnapped a humanitarian aid worker and two local officials at a checkpoint in the village of Wakilti in Borno State.

**Strength:** ISIS-WA has an estimated 3,500 members.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Nigeria and the greater 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 Nasr 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 Nasr al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM) was designated as an 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 its 2017 formation. That

year, 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. JNIM's second in command, Ali Maychou, was killed in 2019.

**Activities:** In 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, in 2018.

In 2018, JNIM claimed responsibility for a suicide attack against an African Defeat-ISIS Coalition base in Mali that killed at least 6 people; a suicide bombing in Gao, Mali, which targeted a French military patrol and killed several civilians; and a truck bomb in a residential complex in Gao, killing 3 and injuring 30. In 2019, JNIM claimed responsibility for an attack against a UN base in northern Mali, killing 10 Chadian peacekeepers and wounding 25 others; an assault on a Malian military base, killing 11 soldiers; and a landmine under a passenger bus in central Mali, killing 14 civilians and injuring another 24.

In 2020, JNIM claimed responsibility for a January attack against a Malian military camp near the border with Mauritania that killed 20 members of Mali's security forces and wounded 5 others; a March raid on a Malian army base in the northern town of Tarkint that killed at least 29 soldiers and wounded 5 others; and a July suicide attack on French troops in northern Mali that killed a French soldier. In April, Switzerland's foreign ministry reported that a Swiss woman held hostage in Mali by JNIM since 2016 had been killed by JNIM.

**Strength:** JNIM is estimated to have between 1,000 and 2,000 fighters.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger

**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 Muslima 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 an FTO on November 14, 2013, Jama'atu Ansarul Muslimina Fi Biladis-Sudan (Ansaru) publicly splintered from Boko Haram in 2012. 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 2012, Ansaru kidnapped a French engineer allegedly in response to French involvement in Mali. In 2013, Ansaru kidnapped and subsequently killed seven international construction workers.

In 2016, the Nigerian Army announced the capture of Ansaru leader Khalid al-Barnawi. Ansaru did not publicly claim responsibility any attacks in 2019, but during that year Ansaru announced the creation of a new media outlet for the group.

In January, Ansaru claimed responsibility for attacking a convoy of the Emir of Potiskum in northern Nigeria, killing at least 30 Nigerian soldiers.

**Strength:** Precise numbers are unknown; however, given its narrower scope of operations, Ansaru's membership is estimated to be much smaller than that of Boko Haram.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Nigeria

**Funding and External Aid:** Sources of funding are unknown.

### **Jaish-e-Mohammed**

**Aka** 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 an FTO on December 26, 2001. JeM was founded in 2000 by former senior Harakat ul-Mujahideen leader Masood Azhar. The group aims to annex the Indian Union Territory 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 Indian Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, including a 2001 suicide attack on the Jammu and Kashmir legislative assembly building in Srinagar that killed more than 30 people. The Indian government publicly implicated JeM, along with Lashkar e-Tayyiba, in the 2001 attack on the Indian Parliament that killed 9 persons 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 2003, Pakistan implicated JeM members in two assassination attempts against then-President Pervez Musharraf.

In 2018, JeM claimed responsibility for killing nine Indian officers at the Sunjuwan military station. Also in 2018, several JeM militants stormed a police outpost in the Indian Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, killing four police officers and injuring another. In 2019, JeM claimed responsibility for a suicide bombing that killed 40 personnel from India's Central Reserve Police Force in the city of Pulwama in the Indian Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

**Strength:** JeM has several hundred armed supporters.

**Location/Area of Operation:** India, Afghanistan, and Pakistan

**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 al-Adl**

**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; Jundullah; Jondullah; Jundollah; Jondollah; Jondallah; Army of God (God's Army); Baloch Peoples Resistance Movement (BPRM); Jeysh al-Adl; Army of Justice; Jaish ul-Adl; Jaish al-Adl; Jaish Aladl; Jeish al-Adl

**Description:** Jaysh al-Adl was designated as an FTO on November 4, 2010, under the name Jundallah. Since its inception in 2003, Jaysh al-Adl, has engaged in numerous attacks, killing and maiming scores of Iranian civilians and government officials. The group'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. The group adopted the name Jaysh al-Adl in 2012 and has since claimed responsibility for attacks under that name.

**Activities:** Jaysh al-Adl claimed responsibility for a 2009 suicide bomb attack in the Sistan and 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, Jaysh al-Adl claimed responsibility for the 2010 suicide bomb attack inside the Iman Hussein Mosque in Chabahar, which killed an estimated 35 to 40 civilians and wounded 60 to 100 others. Also in 2010, Jaysh al-Adl attacked the Grand Mosque in Zahedan, killing about 30 people and injuring an estimated 300. In 2018, Jaysh al-Adl claimed responsibility for abducting 12 Iranian security personnel on the border with Pakistan. In 2019, Jaysh al-Adl claimed responsibility for a suicide car bombing in southeastern Iran that killed 27 Iranian government officials.

In June, Jaysh al-Adl claimed responsibility for planting two roadside bombs on the course of an Iranian military convoy; one of the bombs detonated, injuring one person.

**Strength:** Precise numbers are unknown.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan

**Funding and External Aid:** Sources of support are unknown.

## **Jaysh Rijal al-Tariq al-Naqshabandi**

**Aka** Army of the Men of the Naqshabandi 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 an FTO on September 30, 2015. The group first announced insurgency operations against international forces in Iraq in 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 Baathist regime, and end external influence in Baghdad.

**Activities:** Between its founding in 2006 and the 2011 withdrawal of Defeat-ISIS 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, most of the organization was subsumed by ISIS. JRTN did not claim responsibility for any attacks between 2016 and 2020.

**Strength:** Precise numbers are unknown.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Iraq

**Funding and External Aid:** JRTN has received funding from former regime members, major tribal figures in Iraq, and from Gulf-based financiers of terrorism.

## **Jemaah Ansharut Tauhid**

**Aka** JAT; Jemmah Ansharut Tauhid; Jem'mah Ansharut Tauhid; Jamaah Ansharut Tauhid; Jama'ah Ansharut Tauhid; Laskar 99; JAT

**Description:** Jemaah Anshorut Tauhid (JAT) was designated as an 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 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 claim responsibility for any attacks between 2016 and 2020, 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:** 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 Islamiya; 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 an 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 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 7 U.S. citizens; the 2003 bombing of the J.W. Marriott Hotel in Jakarta; the 2004 bombing outside the Australian Embassy in Jakarta; and the 2005 suicide bombing in Bali, which killed 26 people.

In 2009, a JI faction claimed responsibility for suicide attacks on the J.W. Marriott and Ritz-Carlton hotels in Jakarta that killed 7 people and injured more than 50, including 7 U.S. citizens.

In 2015, 44 policemen and 3 civilians were killed during a raid targeting 2 JI members in Mamasapano on the island of Mindanao in the southern Philippines.

In 2019, Indonesian authorities arrested several JI members, including its emir Para Wijayanto. Indonesian police said that between 2013 and 2018, under Wijayanto's leadership, JI sent at least six groups to Syria for military training or to participate in the fighting.

In 2020, Indonesian authorities arrested a JI leader, Aris Sumarsono, who is suspected of being involved in the making of bombs used in the 2002 Bali bombings and the 2003 bombing of the

J.W. Marriott Hotel in Jakarta. JI did not claim responsibility for any attacks between 2016 and 2020.

**Strength:** Estimates of JI membership vary from 500 to several thousand members.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines

**Funding and External Aid:** JI fundraises through membership donations, criminal actions, and business activities. The group has received financial, ideological, and logistical support from Middle Eastern contacts and illegitimate charities and organizations.

### **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:** Kahane Chai (KC) was designated as an FTO on October 8, 1997. Radical Israeli-American Rabbi Meir Kahane founded Kach — the precursor to 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. In 1994 the group was banned from running in Israeli elections.

**Activities:** KC has harassed and threatened Arabs, especially Palestinians, and Israeli government officials and vowed revenge for the 2000 death of Binyamin Kahane and his wife. The group is suspected of involvement in numerous low-level attacks dating to the start of the Second Palestinian Intifada in 2000. KC was last linked to an attack in 2005, when one of its members killed four people on a bus in Shfaram, Israel.

**Strength:** KC’s core membership has been estimated to be fewer than 100.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Israel and the West Bank

**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 as an anti-western Shia group, Kata'ib Hizballah (KH) was designated as an FTO on July 2, 2009. Before the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq in 2011, the group conducted attacks against U.S., Iraqi, and Defeat-ISIS Coalition targets in Iraq and 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, such as filming and releasing videos of attacks. KH has ideological ties to and receives support from Iran.

**Activities:** KH has claimed responsibility for numerous terrorist attacks since 2007, including IED attacks, rocket-propelled grenade attacks, and sniper operations. In 2007, KH gained notoriety for its attacks against U.S. and Defeat-ISIS Coalition forces in Iraq. In 2011, five U.S. soldiers were killed in Baghdad when KH assailants fired multiple rockets at a 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 2016, KH continued to fight ISIS alongside the Iraqi Army, but operated outside the Iraqi government's command-and-control structure. In 2017 and 2018, KH published warnings threatening to fight against the U.S. presence in Iraq.

In 2019, KH members stormed the Bahraini Embassy in Baghdad in protest of Bahrain's hosting the United States' Israel-Palestine conference. In 2019, KH was reportedly involved in sniper operations against Iraqi protestors. Later that year, KH was blamed for a rocket attack on K-1 Air Base in Kirkuk that killed one U.S. citizen. A few days later, members of KH broke into the U.S. Embassy compound and participated in a violent attack against the facility, setting fires inside, which destroyed security checkpoints and reception rooms.

On March 11, KH reportedly launched rockets at the Camp Taji, an American-controlled military base near Baghdad, killing two Americans and one British soldier, and wounding 14 others.

**Strength:** Precise numbers are unknown.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Iraq and 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 an 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. The PKK foreswore violence from 1999 until 2004, when its hardline militant wing took control and renounced the self-imposed cease-fire. In 2009 the Turkish government and the PKK resumed peace negotiations, but talks broke down after the PKK carried out an attack in 2011 that killed 13 Turkish soldiers. In 2012 the PKK claimed responsibility for multiple car bombings that killed more than 10 people. Between 2012 and midyear 2015, the Turkish government and the PKK resumed peace negotiations, but the negotiations ultimately broke down — owing partly to domestic political pressures and the conflict in Syria.

In 2016, the group claimed a VBIED strike against Sirnak police headquarters, which killed 11 people and wounded more than 70 others. In 2017, Turkish officials blamed the PKK for a car bomb and shooting outside of a courthouse that killed two people and an attack on a military convoy that killed 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 against a Turkish army base, which resulted in dozens of casualties. Also in 2018 a roadside bomb struck a bus carrying workers from the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, killing 7 persons and wounding 13 in Diyarbakir province's Kulp district. The government blamed the PKK for the attack.

In 2019 the PKK engaged in terrorist attacks in eastern and western Turkey when the organization struck over the border from its bases within Iraq. Also that year, the PKK was accused of assassinating a senior Turkish diplomat in Erbil, Iraq. Later that year, the PKK attacked a Turkish military vehicle in Hakkari province, killing two soldiers and wounding another.

In February a PKK-claimed rocket attack on the Gürbulak customs gate with Iran killed two Turkish Customs officials. In March a PKK affiliate claimed responsibility for a suicide bombing on a natural gas pipeline near the Turkish-Iranian border, taking the pipeline offline for months. In September PKK militants fired rockets at a Turkish military base in northern Iraq, killing two soldiers and wounding another. In October the PKK took responsibility for a bombing in Turkey's Mardin province that temporarily disabled an oil pipeline running from Iraq to Turkey.

**Strength:** The PKK is estimated to consist of 4,000 to 5,000 members.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Iraq, Iran, Syria, and Turkey

**Funding and External Aid:** The PKK receives financial support from the large Kurdish diaspora in Europe.

### **Lashkar e-Tayyiba**

**Aka** al Mansooreen; Al Mansoorian; Army of the Pure; Army of the Pure and Righteous; Army of the Righteous; Lashkar e-Toiba; Lashkar-i-Taiba; Paasban-e-Ahle-Hadis; Paasban-e-Kashmir; Paasban-i-Ahle-Hadith; Pasban-e-Ahle-Hadith; Pasban-e-Kashmir; Jamaat-ud-Dawa; JUD; Jama'at al-Dawa; Jamaat ud-Daawa; Jamaat ul-Dawah; Jamaat-ul-Dawa; Jama'at-i-Dawat; Jama'iat-ud-Dawa; Jama'at-ud-Da'awah; Jama'at-ud-Da'awa; Jamaati-ud-Dawa; Idara Khidmate-Khalq; Falah-i-Insaniat Foundation; FiF; Falah-e-Insaniat Foundation; FalaheInsaniyat; Falah-i-Insaniyat; Falah Insania; Welfare of Humanity; Humanitarian Welfare Foundation; Human Welfare Foundation; Al-Anfal Trust; Tehrik-e-Hurmat-e-Rasool; TehrikeTahafuz 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 an FTO on December 26, 2001, Lashkar e-Tayyiba (LeT) is an anti-India-focused terrorist group. LeT was 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's FTO designation, 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-Muhammed (JeM) have combined with other groups such as Hizbul Mujahideen to mount anti-India attacks. The Pakistani government banned LeT in 2002 and temporarily arrested Hafiz Saeed following the 2008 Mumbai attack. In 2017, Pakistan placed Saeed under house arrest; however, he was released 10 months later after a Lahore High Court judicial body rejected a government request to renew his detention. In 2019, Pakistani police again arrested Saeed and charged him with financing terrorism.

**Activities:** LeT has conducted operations, including several high-profile attacks, against Indian troops and civilian targets since 1993. The group also has attacked Defeat-ISIS Coalition forces in Afghanistan. LeT uses assault rifles, machine guns, mortars, explosives, and rocket-propelled grenades.

LeT was responsible for the 2008 attacks in Mumbai against luxury hotels, a Jewish center, a train station, and a popular café that killed 166 people — including 6 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 2010, Pakistani-American businessman David Headley pled guilty in a U.S. court to charges related to his role in the 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 2015 attack in Gurdaspur, Punjab, that killed seven people. Later in 2015, operatives affiliated with LeT attacked Indian security forces in Udhampur, in the Indian Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. Still later in 2015, LeT carried out an attack on an Indian paramilitary convoy after it left Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir, injuring one civilian and seven Indian military personnel.

During a three-month period in 2016, LeT was suspected of engaging in at least three firefights with Indian security forces in Kupwara district, in the Indian Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, injuring two Indian personnel. Also in 2016, LeT was suspected of conducting an ambush on an Indian security force convoy in Pulwama district, in the Indian Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, killing 8 persons and injuring 20. Some media reports alleged the group's involvement in an attack that year on an Indian army camp in Uri, in Jammu and Kashmir, which killed 20 soldiers.

In 2017, LeT conducted an attack in the Indian Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir that left six police officers dead. The following month, LeT militants attacked a bus of pilgrims returning from the Amarnath Yatra shrine, killing seven people. In 2018, LeT claimed responsibility for a suicide attack against an Indian army camp in Jammu and Kashmir's Bandipora district that killed three soldiers.

In 2020, Pakistani authorities arrested and convicted LeT founder and leader Hafiz Saeed, as well as multiple other senior LeT leaders, on terrorism finance charges. LeT did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2020.

**Strength:** Precise numbers are unknown.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Afghanistan, India, and Pakistan

**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 UK, where it is a designated terrorist organization as Lashkar e Tayyaba (LT). In 2019, 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 an 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 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 since 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 a police operation in Pakistan in 2017.

In 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 1999 the group attempted to assassinate then-Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and his brother Shahbaz Sharif, chief minister of Punjab province.

In 2014, more than 24 people were killed and 40 others wounded in a bus bombing by an LJ attack targeting Shia pilgrims. LJ claimed responsibility for the 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 2016, two individuals suspected of belonging to LJ were arrested by police in Pakistan for their alleged involvement in 25 cases of targeted killings, including the murder of Pakistani singer Amjad Sabri, as well as army and police personnel. In 2019, LJ claimed responsibility for bombing a market in Quetta that killed 20 people and injured 48 others. The attack reportedly targeted the local minority Shia Muslim Hazara community.

In July, Pakistani police arrested three LJ members who were allegedly planning to carry out an attack in the Gujranwala, Pakistan. Explosive materials, detonators, and a safety fuse were recovered during the arrest.

**Strength:** LJ's membership is assessed to be in the low hundreds.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Afghanistan and Pakistan

**Funding and External Aid:** LJ's funding comes from wealthy donors in Pakistan and the Middle East, particularly Gulf states. 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 an 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 its capital of Kilinochchi. In 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:** Precise numbers are unknown.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Sri Lanka, India, and Malaysia

**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 alMujahideen; Magles Shoura al-Mujahddin

**Description:** The Mujahidin Shura Council in the Environs of Jerusalem (MSC) was designated as an 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:** In 2013, MSC claimed responsibility for a rocket attack targeting the Israeli city of Eilat. Previously, MSC claimed responsibility for the 2013 attack in which Gaza-based militants fired at least five rockets at Sderot, Israel, and the 2013 attack in which two rockets were fired at Eilat. MSC did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2020.

**Strength:** MSC is estimated to have several hundred fighters.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Gaza

**Funding and External Aid:** Sources of funding are unknown.

## al-Murabitoun

**Aka** al-Mulathamun Battalion; 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; The Sentinels

**Description:** Al-Murabitoun was designated as an FTO on December 19, 2013, originally under the name al-Mulathamun Battalion. Al-Murabitoun was originally part of al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) but became a separate organization in 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 al-Mulathamun Battalion. In 2013 the al-Mulathamun Battalion and the Mali-based Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (known as MUJAO) announced that the two organizations would merge under the name “al-Murabitoun.” In 2015, al-Murabitoun 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 Nasr al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM).

**Activities:** In 2013, what is now known as al-Murabitoun claimed responsibility for the 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 3 U.S. citizens. Seven other U.S. citizens escaped.

In 2013, al-Murabitoun participated in twin suicide bombings on a northern Nigerien military base and a French uranium mine in Arlit, Niger. The coordinated attacks killed more than 20 people, including all the attackers.

In 2015, al-Murabitoun claimed responsibility for an attack at La Terrasse restaurant in Bamako, Mali, that killed a French national, a Belgian national, and three Malians. Al-Murabitoun also claimed responsibility for the 2015 hotel siege in central Mali that killed 17 people. Also in 2015, al-Murabitoun operatives participated in the strike against the Radisson Blu Hotel in Bamako, Mali, taking more than 170 people hostage — including U.S. citizens. Up to 26 people were killed in the attack, among them a U.S. international development worker.

Al-Murabitoun was reportedly involved in the 2016 AQIM attack on a popular tourist hotel in Burkina Faso that killed nearly 30, including a U.S. citizen. In addition, al-Murabitoun claimed responsibility for a 2017 suicide car bombing at a military camp in Mali that killed more than 47 people and injured more than 115. In 2018, al-Murabitoun was involved in fighting against French forces in Mali. Al-Murabitoun did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2020.

**Strength:** Precise numbers are unknown.

**Location/Area of Operation:** 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, al-Murabitoun 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 an 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 and commits crimes and acts of terror throughout Colombia, including violence against civilian populations there and in Venezuela.

**Activities:** The ELN continued to target Colombia’s infrastructure, particularly oil pipelines. The ELN also launched mortar attacks on police stations and the military; placed explosive devices near roads; and engaged in sniper attacks, roadblocks, and ambushes. Additionally, 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 early in the year following a series of ELN bombings that killed several police officers and injured dozens more. The government ended talks following a 2019 VBIED attack by the ELN on the General Santander National Police Academy. The attack was the deadliest Bogotá had experienced in years, killing 22 police cadets and injuring 87 more. Colombian officials also attributed numerous oil pipeline bombings to the ELN in 2019.

ELN continued to commit attacks throughout Colombia in 2020. In February, ELN called for an “armed strike” across the country; authorities reported that ELN executed 23 attacks, killing one soldier and injuring seven police officers.

**Strength:** ELN consists of about 2,300 armed combatants.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Colombia and Venezuela

**Funding and External Aid:** The ELN draws its funding from the illicit narcotics trade, extortion of oil and gas companies and landowners, and illegal mining in Colombia and Venezuela. Additional funds are derived from kidnapping-for-ransom payments.

## **al-Nusra 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-Nusrah Front (ANF) was designated as an FTO on May 15, 2014, and is al-Qa'ida's affiliate in Syria. It is led by Abu Muhammad al-Jawlani. The group was formed in 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 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 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.

**Activities:** ANF has been active in operations against other factions in the Syrian conflict. In 2016 the group carried out attacks in Aleppo and other parts of Syria controlled by the Syrian Army, killing both military officials and civilians.

Since 2017, ANF has continued to operate through HTS in pursuit of its objectives. In October 2017, ANF launched an attack near the Turkish border against the Syrian Army, killing several soldiers. Also that year, the group carried out multiple suicide bombings in Damascus, including suicide attacks using VBIEDs. ANF took control of significant portions of Idlib from 2017 to 2019, exerting severe military pressure over other local groups such as Ahrar al-Sham and Nur ad-Din al-Zinki as it fought against the regime and continued plotting against U.S. and allied interests.

In 2019 the group suffered heavy casualties, estimated in the hundreds, from engagement with Russian-backed Syrian government forces. Also that year, ANF bombed the Syrian town of Kafr Takharim, using heavy weaponry, and killing at least five people.

In May, an ANF member threw a grenade and opened fire into a group of civilians in Idlib city, Syria, killing two persons and injuring others.

**Strength:** ANF has between 5,000 and 10,000 fighters.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Syria

**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. The group also generates revenue by collecting fees from commercial traffic entering and exiting Idlib.

## Palestine Islamic Jihad

**Aka** PIJ; PIJ-Shaqaqi Faction; PIJ-Shallah Faction; Islamic Jihad of Palestine; Islamic Jihad in Palestine; Abu Ghunaym Squad of the Hizballah Bayt al-Maqdis; Al-Quds Squads; Al-Quds Brigades; Saraya al-Quds; Al-Awdah Brigades

**Description:** Palestine Islamic Jihad (PIJ) was designated as an FTO on October 8, 1997. Formed by militant Palestinians in Gaza during the 1970s, PIJ is committed to the destruction of Israel 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. Between 2008 and 2011, PIJ conducted rocket attacks and used other explosive devices to target southern Israel. Throughout 2014, PIJ operatives carried out attacks on Israeli buses in Tel Aviv. That year, PIJ carried out a wave of rocket attacks into Israeli territory; up to 60 rockets may have reached Israel.

In 2015, PIJ revealed that its militants were smuggling weapons, including Gaza-made rockets and mortars, through tunnels in Gaza, in preparation for future attacks against Israel. That year, Israeli forces blamed PIJ for firing a rocket that landed in Gan Yazne, a region close to the Gaza border. Also that year, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) claimed PIJ operatives in Syria fired four rockets at the Golan Heights and Upper Galilee.

Throughout 2016, PIJ continued to strike Israel, primarily through light arms fire directed at IDF patrols. That year, 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. PIJ claimed responsibility for launching rockets into Israel throughout 2018 and 2020. In a 2019 video, PIJ's Al-Quds Brigade introduced a new rocket to its arsenal and thanked Iran for its support.

In February, PIJ claimed responsibility for rocket and mortar attacks fired into southern Israel.

**Strength:** PIJ has close to 1,000 members.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Israel, Gaza, and the West Bank

**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 an 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. Throughout the 1990s the PLF was suspected of supporting terrorism against Israel by other Palestinian groups. In 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 2008 assault against an Israeli military bus in Huwarah, Israel, and the shooting of an Israeli settler. In 2010, the PLF claimed responsibility for an IED attack against an IDF patrol, which caused minor injuries to a soldier; another IED was discovered during a search of the area. The PLF has not claimed responsibility for any attacks since 2016 but continues to maintain a strong presence in many refugee camps in Gaza, Lebanon, and Syria.

**Strength:** Precise numbers are unknown.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Gaza, Lebanon, and the West Bank

**Funding and External Aid:** Sources of funding 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 an FTO on October 8, 1997, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) is a Marxist-Leninist group founded in 1967 by George Habash after splitting from the Arab Nationalist Movement. The group earned a reputation for committing large-scale international attacks in the 1960s and 1970s, including airline hijackings that killed more than 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.

In 2014, two Palestinians reportedly affiliated with the PFLP entered a Jerusalem synagogue and attacked Israelis with guns, knives, and axes, killing 5 persons — including 3 U.S. citizens — and injuring 12. A month later, the PFLP claimed responsibility for several rocket attacks along the Lebanese-Israel border.

In 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.

In 2019, IDF and Israeli Border Patrol forces arrested four PFLP members allegedly responsible for remotely detonating an IED in the West Bank, killing an Israeli teenager and seriously wounding two others.

In December, Israeli security forces in the West Bank arrested approximately 50 members of a PFLP cell believed to be behind a string of deadly attacks in the area and seized a large number of weapons and bomb making materials.

**Strength:** Precise numbers are unknown.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Gaza, Israel, Lebanon, Syria, and the West Bank

**Funding and External Aid:** 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 an FTO on October 8, 1997. The PFLP-GC split from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine 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 conducting cross-border attacks into Israel using unusual means, such as hot-air balloons and motorized hang gliders. Since the early 1990s the group has focused primarily 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 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 that year, the PFLP-GC took responsibility for rocket fire aimed at Israeli territory. In that attack, at least three rockets were fired from Lebanon into northern Israel and landed near Shlomi, a small town near the Lebanese frontier with Israel.

Although the PFLP-GC did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2020, the group remained an active part of the Syrian conflict.

**Strength:** The PFLP-GC has several hundred members.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Syria, Lebanon, and Gaza

**Funding and External Aid:** The PFLP-GC receives safe haven and logistical and military support from Syria as well as financial support from Iran.

### **al-Qa'ida**

**Aka** al-Qa'eda; al Qaida, al Qaeda, 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; Usama Bin Laden Network; Usama Bin Laden Organization; al-Jihad; the Jihad Group; Egyptian al-Jihad; Egyptian Islamic Jihad; New Jihad; International Front for Fighting Jews and Crusades; Islamic Army for the Liberation of Holy Sites

**Description:** Al-Qa'ida (AQ) was designated as an FTO on October 8, 1999. 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 2001. While numerous AQ leaders have been killed in recent years, including Usama bin Laden in 2011, AQ’s current leader, Ayman al-Zawahiri, remains at large.

**Activities:** AQ conducted three bombings targeting U.S. troops in Aden, Yemen, in 1992 and claimed responsibility for shooting down U.S. helicopters and killing U.S. soldiers in Somalia in 1993. AQ also carried out the 1998 bombings of the U.S. Embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, killing up to 300 people and injuring more than 5,000. In 2000, AQ conducted a suicide attack on the U.S.S. *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 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 2015.

In 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 1998 U.S. Embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania.

In 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.

In 2017 a U.S. citizen was convicted in New York of charges related to abetting AQ's 2009 attack on a U.S. military base in Afghanistan using two truck bombs. The following month, 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 jihad against the United States after the U.S. Embassy in Israel moved from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

In 2019, a man from Cleveland, Ohio, was arrested for allegedly making plans for an AQ-inspired bomb attack on the city's downtown Independence Day parade. Also in 2019, Zawahiri called for extremists in the Indian Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir to attack Indian forces and appealed to Muslims to attack U.S., European, Israeli, and Russian military targets in a video recording.

While AQ did not claim responsibility for any attacks, it remained active in 2020.

**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 leaders oversee a network of affiliated groups. Among them are 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. Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan and the Haqqani Network also have ties to AQ. In addition, supporters and associates worldwide who are motivated by the group's ideology may operate without direction from AQ central leadership.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Afghanistan, Lebanon, Pakistan, Somalia, Syria, Yemen, and North Africa

**Funding and External Aid:** AQ primarily depends on donations from likeminded 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; Ansar al-Sharia; Ansar al-Shariah, Ansar al Shariah, Partisans of Islamic Law, 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 an FTO on January 19, 2010. In 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 stated goals include establishing a caliphate and implementing Sharia law in the Arabian Peninsula and the wider Middle East.

**Activities:** AQAP has claimed responsibility for numerous terrorist acts against both local and foreign targets since its inception in 2009. These include a 2009 attempted attack on Northwest Airlines Flight 253 from Amsterdam to Detroit, Michigan. In 2010, AQAP claimed responsibility for a foiled plot to send explosive-laden packages to the United States on cargo planes. In 2015, brothers Cherif and Said Kouachi attacked the satirical newspaper *Charlie Hebdo* in Paris, 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.

In 2017 a U.S. Navy SEAL was killed in a raid against AQAP leaders in Yemen. That same year, AQAP attacked a Yemeni Army camp, killing at least two soldiers. In 2018, AQAP senior leader Khaled Batarfi called on the group's supporters to "rise and attack" Americans "everywhere." In 2019, AQAP gunmen killed 19 soldiers in an attack on an army base in southern Yemen.

In February, AQAP released a video claiming "full responsibility" for Mohammed Saeed Alshamrani's 2019 shooting at Naval Air Station Pensacola that killed three persons and injured eight others.

**Strength:** AQAP fighters are estimated to be in the low thousands.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Yemen

**Funding and External Aid:** AQAP's funding has historically come from theft, robberies, oil and gas revenue, kidnap-for-ransom operations, and donations from likeminded supporters.

### **al-Qa'ida in the Indian Subcontinent**

**Aka** al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent; Qaedat al-Jihad in the Indian Subcontinent

**Description:** Al-Qa'ida in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS) was designated as an FTO on July 1, 2016. Established in 2014, 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. In 2019, the Afghan government reported that Umar was killed in a military raid on a Taliban compound in Helmand province, Afghanistan.

**Activities:** In 2014, AQIS claimed responsibility for an attack on a naval dockyard in Karachi, Pakistan, in which militants attempted a hijacking of a Pakistani Navy frigate to attack nearby

U.S. warships. AQIS 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 2017, AQAP called on AQIS to launch more attacks on Burmese authorities because of Burma's policies toward Rohingya Muslims. AQIS has not claimed responsibility for any attacks since 2017. In 2019, Asim Umar, the head of AQIS, was killed in a joint U.S.-Afghan military operation.

AQIS did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2020. India's National Investigation Agency arrested 10 alleged al-Qa'ida-affiliated operatives from Kerala and West Bengal on September 19 and 26.

**Strength:** AQIS is estimated to have several hundred members.

**Location/Area of Operations:** Afghanistan, 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 an 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 in 2006 and al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) became the primary name of the group. 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. Following the death of AQIM leader Abdelmalek Droukdel, who was killed in June by French forces, the group chose Abu Obaida Yusuf al-Annabi as Droukdel's successor.

**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 expand its operations. Terrorists with ties to AQIM were involved in the 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 2014, AQIM killed 14 Algerian soldiers in an ambush east of Algiers.

In 2015, AQIM claimed responsibility for an attack on a UN vehicle in Kidal, Mali, which wounded seven peacekeepers. That same year, AQIM twice attacked UN convoys near Timbuktu, Mali, with small arms and rocket-propelled grenades; three peacekeepers were killed



in another attack; six others were killed in still another attack; and 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 this last attack, among them a U.S. international development worker.

In 2016, AQIM carried out an attack on a hotel in Burkina Faso that killed 28 people and injured 56 others. Also in 2016, AQIM claimed responsibility for a strike on a popular tourist beach resort in Cote d'Ivoire that killed more than 16 people and wounded another 33.

In 2017, AQIM conducted a suicide attack that left more than 50 people dead in Gao, Mali. In 2018, AQIM claimed responsibility for a vehicle suicide attack on an army patrol in Gao that killed 4 civilians and wounded 31 others, including 4 French soldiers.

In 2019, AQIM claimed responsibility for an attack on a UN camp in northern Mali, killing 10 peacekeepers and wounding 25 others.

In 2020, AQIM engaged in clashes with Algerian security forces during sweeping operations in which AQIM primarily used IEDs and small arms.

**Strength:** AQIM has an estimated 1,000 fighters operating in the Sahel, including Algeria, northern Mali, southwest Libya, and Niger.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Algeria, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Libya, Mali, Niger, and Tunisia

**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 receives 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 an 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 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 continued to conduct attacks. 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.

**Activities:** Targets have included civilians (the most notorious example is the Omagh bombing in 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 most of the attacks that occurred after the Irish Republican Army (IRA) was decommissioned in Northern Ireland.

In 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 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 found in Dublin in 2016. In 2017, RIRA gunmen fired at police officers in North Belfast, injuring one officer. RIRA did not claim responsibility for any attacks between 2018 and 2020.

**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:** United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland

**Funding and External Aid:** RIRA is suspected of receiving funds from sympathizers in the United States and of attempting to buy weapons from U.S. gun dealers. The group reportedly purchased sophisticated weapons from the Balkans and occasionally collaborated with the CIRA.

## **Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia**

**Aka** FARC, FARC-EP; *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo*

**Description:** Founded in 1964 and designated as an 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 2016, after four years of negotiation in Havana, the Colombian government and FARC reached a peace agreement, later approved by Colombia's Congress, setting into motion a disarmament, demobilization, and reincorporation process. In accordance with the peace agreement, the vast 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 8,000 weapons.

As of December, roughly 13,000 FARC ex-combatants (including former rank-and-file guerrillas and militia) continue to participate in the reintegration process based on the 2016 Peace Accord.

Following the 2016 Peace Accord, FARC dissident groups have seen a resurgence in some areas of Colombia by filling the void left by FARC ex-combatants who permanently left the battlefield.

**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 as well as multiple kidnappings and assassinations of Colombian government officials and civilians. In 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 Íngrid Betancourt.

There have been reports of continued extortion and violent criminal activities by FARC dissidents not participating in the peace process. In 2019, former FARC commanders Iván Márquez and Jesús Santrich appeared in a video calling for a return to arms against the Colombian government.

In 2020, FARC continued to commit attacks throughout the country, including bombings, violence against civilians, kidnappings, attacks against utilities infrastructure, and attacks against military and police facilities.

**Strength:** Before the peace accord, the FARC was estimated to have 7,000 armed members, with several thousand additional supporters.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Colombia and Venezuela

**Funding and External Aid:** Before the peace accord, the FARC was primarily funded by extortion and 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 Silahli Devrimci Birlikleri*; *Dev Sol SDB*; *Devrimci Halk Kurtulus Partisi-Cephesi*; *Devrimci Sol*; Revolutionary Left

**Description:** Designated as an FTO on October 8, 1997, the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party/Front (DHKP/C) was formed in 1978 as *Devrimci Sol*, or *Dev Sol*, a splinter faction of *Dev Genc* (Revolutionary Youth). It was renamed in 1994 after factional infighting. "Party" refers to the group's political activities, 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 primarily has targeted current and retired Turkish security and military officials. In 1990 the group began conducting attacks against foreign interests, including U.S. military and diplomatic personnel and facilities. The DHKP/C assassinated two U.S. military contractors, wounded a U.S. Air Force officer, and bombed more than 20 U.S. and NATO military, diplomatic, commercial, and cultural facilities. In 2001 the DHKP/C began conducting its first suicide bombing attacks against Turkish police. Since the end of 2001, DHKP/C has typically used IEDs against official Turkish and U.S. targets.

The DHKP/C was responsible for many high-profile attacks in 2012, including the suicide bombing of a police station in Istanbul. In 2013, a DHKP/C operative exploded a suicide vest inside the employee entrance to Embassy Ankara. The explosion killed a Turkish guard and seriously wounded a Turkish journalist. In 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 one police officer and wounded another. That year, 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. Also that year, two women opened fire on the U.S. Consulate in Istanbul; one woman was identified as a member of the DHKP/C.

In 2017 a DHKP/C militant launched an antitank missile into Istanbul police headquarters. The attack did not result in any deaths or injuries.

In 2019, two individuals linked to the DHKP/C were arrested by Turkish security forces after they had entered the Turkish Parliament and taken a staff member hostage.

In October, Turkish security forces launched a nationwide operation across 12 provinces, arresting 93 individuals linked to the DHKP/C.

**Strength:** The DHKP/C is estimated to have several dozen members inside Turkey, with a support network throughout Europe.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Turkey and Europe

**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** *Epanastatikos Aghonas*

**Description:** Designated as an 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 2004 attack outside a Citibank office in Athens. RS claimed responsibility for the 2007 rocket-propelled grenade attack on Embassy Athens, which damaged the building, and the 2009 bombing of a Citibank branch in Athens.

The Greek government has made significant strides in curtailing the group's terrorist activity. In 2010, Greek police arrested six suspected RS members, including purported leader Nikos Maziotis, who later escaped. In 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 2014; the blast caused extensive damage to surrounding structures but no casualties.

In 2016 a Greek court sentenced Maziotis to life in prison plus 129 years. In 2017, Roupa was arrested by Greek police in Athens and later sentenced to life and 25 years' imprisonment. RS did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2020.

**Strength:** Precise numbers are unknown.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Greece

**Funding and External Aid:** RS's sources of funding are unknown, but the group most likely supports itself by means of criminal activities, including bank robbery.

### **al-Shabaab**

**Aka** Harakat Shabaab al-Mujahidin; al-Shabab; Shabaab; Youth Wing; Mujahidin al-Shabaab Movement; Mujahideen Youth Movement; Mujahidin Youth Movement; al-Hijra, al Hijra, Muslim Youth Center, the Youth, MYC MYM, Pumwani Muslim Youth, Pumwani Islamist Muslim Youth Center; Hizbul Shabaab; Hisb'ul Shabaab; al-Shabaab al-Islamiya; al-Shabaab al-Islaam; al-Shabaab al-Jihaad; The Unity of Islamic Youth; Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujaahidiin; Harakatul-Shabaab al Mujaahidiin; Mujaahidiin Youth Movement

**Description:** Al-Shabaab was designated as an 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 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 2013, al-Shabaab 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 as well as 6 soldiers and police officers; hundreds of others were injured. In 2015, al-Shabaab carried out a raid with small arms and grenades on Kenya's Garissa University College that killed 148 people.

Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for one of the deadliest attacks against AMISOM troops in Somalia in 2016. Using a VBIED and small arms fire, al-Shabaab assembled against a Kenyan AMISOM base and killed more than 100 soldiers. Also that year, al-Shabaab attempted to down Daallo Airlines Flight 159 with 74 passengers on board, but only the suicide bomber was killed in the explosion.

Al-Shabaab continued a steady pace of attacks in 2017 and 2018. The deadliest of these was a 2017 attack in which al-Shabaab is believed to have 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 2019, al-Shabaab was involved in more than 1,000 violent events in Somalia and eastern Kenya. Attacks included a hotel attack in Kenya that killed 21 people; an attack on the government ministries in Mogadishu, killing 15 people including a deputy minister; a suicide bombing at the office of Mogadishu Mayor Abdirahman Omar Osman, killing 8 persons including Osman; an attack on the UN and AMISOM compound in Mogadishu, killing 7 persons; and a bomb blast in Mogadishu that killed more than 90 people.

Al-Shabaab continued to carry out attacks in Somalia and Kenya throughout 2020. In January, al-Shabaab fighters attacked the United States Armed Forces' Camp Simba in Manda Bay, killing the three U.S. citizens. Later in January, suspected al-Shabaab operatives killed three teachers and destroyed a communications mast and police post in Garissa County, Kenya. In July, 20 al-Shabaab gunmen attacked and destroyed a communication mast in Garissa County, Kenya. In September, al-Shabaab operatives attacked a Kenya Defense Forces (KDF) convoy with small arms and grenades in Mandera County, Kenya. One KDF soldier was killed. In August al-Shabaab detonated a car bomb at the gates of the Elite Hotel in Mogadishu, starting a four-hour gun battle with security official that killed at least 16 people. In October, al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for killing 24 Somali troops in the Afgooye District, northwest of Mogadishu.

**Strength:** Al-Shabaab is estimated to have between 7,000 and 9,000 members.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Kenya, Somalia, and Uganda

**Funding and External Aid:** Al-Shabaab 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*; EGP; *Ejército Popular de Liberación*; EPL; Partido Comunista del Perú (Communist Party of Peru); PCP; *Partido Comunista del Perú en el Sendero Luminoso de José Carlos Mariategui* (Communist Party of Peru on the Shining Path of José Carlos Mariategui); *Socorro Popular del Perú*; SPP, Communist Party of Peru on the Shining Path of José Carlos Mariategui, Communist Party of Peru, People's Aid of Peru, People's Guerrilla Army; People's Liberation Army

**Description:** The Shining Path (*Sendero Luminoso* or SL) was designated as an FTO on October 8, 1997. The Peru-based terrorist organization was formed in the late 1960s by former university professor Abimael Guzmán, 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 Guzmán who, along with key accomplices, is serving a life sentence in prison. SL is now led by brothers Victor and Jorge Quispe Palomino and Tarcela Loya Vilchez. Under their direction, the group aims to overthrow the Peruvian government and names the United States as a principal enemy.

**Activities:** In 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 2018, six soldiers were wounded by SL sharpshooters at the Nueva Libertad army base in the region of Junín. That same month, a group of SL members killed five soldiers and wounded another in an attack on the Nueva Libertad army base, and attacked a police vehicle using a roadside bomb, killing four policemen.

In 2019, suspected SL members conducted an attack on the Peruvian Army, killing three soldiers.

In August, Peruvian troops and SL members fought in the Valley of the Apurímac, Ene and Mantaro Rivers. In December, Peruvian authorities captured 71 suspected members of SL.

**Strength:** Estimates of SL's strength vary, but experts assess SL to number between 250 and 300 members.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Peru

**Funding and External Aid:** SL is primarily funded by the illicit narcotics trade.

### **Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan**

**Aka** Pakistani Taliban; Tehreek-e-Taliban; Tehrik-e-Taliban; Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan; TTP

**Description:** Designated as an 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 2018. TTP then named Mufti Noor Wali Mehsud as the group's new leader.

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 2009 suicide attack on a U.S. military base in Khost, Afghanistan, which killed seven U.S. citizens, and a 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 in 2010.

Between 2011 and 2018, TTP continued to carry out attacks against the Government of Pakistan and Pakistani civilian targets, as well as against U.S. targets in Pakistan. In 2012, TTP carried out attacks against a mosque, a police checkpoint, a Pakistani Air Force base, and a bus carrying Shia Muslims. In 2013, TTP attacked churches, the home of a government minister in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, and a Shia neighborhood in Karachi, Pakistan. These attacks killed and wounded hundreds of civilians and Pakistani government and law enforcement officials. In 2014, TTP carried out two consecutive attacks against Karachi's international airport and a siege on a primary school in Peshawar that killed 145 people, 132 of whom were children. In 2016 the group claimed responsibility for killing the deputy superintendent of the police counterterrorism department and injuring his son in an attack on their vehicle in Peshawar.



TTP attacks in 2017 included several suicide bombings, among them an attack that targeted a protest in Lahore, an attack on a mosque in northwestern Pakistan, and an attack in Lahore that killed 26 people. Also in 2017, TTP militants disguised as women stormed an agricultural training school in Peshawar, leaving nine dead including the attackers.

In 2018, TTP claimed responsibility for a suicide bombing that killed more than 11 Pakistani security personnel in Swat, Pakistan. TTP also claimed responsibility for a suicide bombing that year that targeted a checkpoint on the outskirts of Lahore, resulting in the deaths of four police officers and two civilians.

In 2019, TTP claimed responsibility in August for killing four members of a peace committee who were working with the Pakistani government in its efforts against the Afghan Taliban.

In February, TTP confirmed the killing of four of its top leaders, including the former deputy of TTP, Sheikh Khalid Haqqani. TTP conducted numerous attacks in 2020, most of which targeted Pakistani security forces. TTP announced a merger with splinter groups Jamaat-ul-Ahrar and Hizbul Ahrar in August. Following the merger, TTP's rate of attacks increased.

**Strength:** TTP is estimated to have between 3,000 and 5,000 fighters.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Afghanistan and Pakistan

**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 2019 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 FY 2019) to refer to section 1754(c) of the NDAA FY 2019 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 differ 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.

Further, 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 discusses terrorist acts as well as other violent incidents that are not necessarily “international terrorism” and therefore are not subject to the statutory reporting requirement.

## Appendix B. Terrorism Deaths, Injuries, and Kidnappings of U.S. Citizens

*Provided by the Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. Department of State*

The term “private U.S. citizen” refers to any U.S. citizen not acting in an official capacity on behalf of the U.S. government. Thus, the figures given in this section do not include, for example, U.S. military personnel killed or injured in a terrorism-related incident while on active duty, nor employees of the Department of State and other federal agencies killed or injured in such incidents while overseas on U.S. government orders. Members of U.S. government employees’ households and U.S. citizens working for contractors hired by the U.S. government, however, are considered private U.S. citizens for purposes of this report.

Although every effort was made to include all terrorism-related deaths and injuries involving private U.S. citizens overseas, the figures below reflect only those cases reported to, or known by, the Department of State. These figures were acquired through consular systems. Embassies and consulates abroad report overseas deaths in consular systems and specify the cause of death. Terrorism-related deaths are evaluated by first collecting those data and then contacting posts individually to determine whether there is sufficient official documentation to designate the death as terrorism related. These figures may not reflect actual numbers of injured, which may not always be reported, depending on the severity of injuries and other factors. In the cases of Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria, it is particularly difficult to gather comprehensive information about all incidents and to distinguish terrorism from the numerous other forms of violence.

### **2020 (January 1 to June 30):**

U.S. citizens overseas killed as a result of incidents of terrorism: 1

U.S. citizens overseas injured as a result of incidents of terrorism: 0

U.S. citizens overseas kidnapped as a result of incidents of terrorism: 0

### **Terrorism Deaths of Private U.S. Citizens From January 1 to June 30, 2020 (by Country)**

Country	Date of Death	Number	Location
United Kingdom	June 20	1	Reading

### **2020 (July 1 to December 31):**

U.S. citizens overseas killed as a result of incidents of terrorism: 1

U.S. citizens overseas injured as a result of incidents of terrorism: 0

U.S. citizens overseas kidnapped as a result of incidents of terrorism: 1

### **Terrorism Deaths of Private U.S. Citizens From July 1 to December 31, 2020 (by Country)**

Country	Date of Death	Number	Location
Believed to be Yemen	October 14	1	

### **2019 (January 1 to June 30):**

U.S. citizens overseas killed as a result of incidents of terrorism: 9

U.S. citizens overseas injured as a result of incidents of terrorism: 0

U.S. citizens overseas kidnapped as a result of incidents of terrorism: 0

**Terrorism Deaths of Private U.S. Citizens From January 1 to June 30, 2019 (by Country)**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Date of Death</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Location</b>
Afghanistan	January 14	1	Kabul
Afghanistan	June 19	1	Shindad
Israel	May 5	1	Ashdod
Kenya	Jan 14	1	Nairobi
Singapore	May 5	1	Singapore
Sri Lanka	April 21	4	Colombo

**2019 (July 1 to December 31):**

U.S. citizens overseas killed as a result of incidents of terrorism: 3

U.S. citizens overseas injured as a result of incidents of terrorism: 0

U.S. citizens overseas kidnapped as a result of incidents of terrorism: 0

<b>Country</b>	<b>Date of Death</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Location</b>
Afghanistan	November 24	1	Kabul
Somalia	July 12	1	Kismayo
Somalia	September 9	1	Mogadishu