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Country Reports on Terrorism 2022: Libya

BUREAU OF COUNTERTERRORISM

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Libya

Overview: Libyan government officials continued to work with U.S. counterparts to combat terrorism, although fractured security institutions limited cooperation. After elections scheduled for December 2021 were “postponed,” the Libyan House of Representatives, with the backing of the self-styled Libyan National Army (LNA), appointed a new interim “Government of National Stability” to replace the Government of National Unity (GNU) based in Tripoli; however, the United Nations and most countries, including the United States, continued to recognize the Government of National Unity (GNU) as the Government of Libya.

Despite the political impasse, terrorist groups such as ISIS and al-Qa’ida in the Islamic Maghreb were unable to regroup or exploit the political uncertainty. While terrorist groups controlled no territory in Libya and have been significantly degraded in terms of numbers and capacity, they remained a threat. The GNU is a reliable and willing U.S. counterterrorism (CT) partner, although the GNU’s capacity to eliminate terrorist safe havens, deter the flow of foreign fighters, counter terrorist financing, and ensure effective counterproliferation efforts across Libya’s territory were limited. The LNA, which exerts control over most of the areas outside the northwestern part of the country, countered terrorism in the east and the south of the country, but its counterterrorism gains were limited to areas under its direct con

2022 Terrorist Incidents: There were no confirmed significant terrorist incidents in Libya in 2022.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: There were no changes since 2021.

The GNU retained the former Government of National Accord's 2020 CT Strategy and its national CT coordinator. In practice, however, because of the fractured political situation, coordination between relevant authorities occurred largely on an ad hoc basis, and an implementation plan for the 2020 CT Strategy was not promulgated. Throughout 2022 the GNU and the LNA conducted CT operations in areas where they exerted control.

Although Libya lacks a comprehensive counterterrorism law, the Libyan penal code criminalizes offenses that may threaten national security, including terrorism, the promotion of terrorist acts, and the handling of money in support of such acts.

Libya's porous southern border was nominally controlled by the LNA, but the LNA relied on local armed groups, militias, and foreign fighters to exert control over the southern frontier. Smuggling and trafficking, including in persons and arms, were rampant. The LNA conducted CT operations in the South, where and when it could.

Libya's four largest international airports, located throughout the country and falling in areas under the control of the GNU and the LNA, continued to participate in the CT Bureau's Aviation Security Program, which trains airport screeners and managers. The GNU did not make any tangible progress in 2022 on the installation of the Migration Information and Data Analysis System (or MIDAS), which the CT Bureau funded through the International Organization for Migration, despite receiving the equipment and agreeing to do so in November 2021.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Libya is a member of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force. Its FIU is in the Central Bank of Libya. There were no significant changes in 2022.

Countering Violent Extremism: The Libya Antiterrorism Center's Community Protection Department, which was launched in 2021, continued in 2022 its efforts to counter "extremist ideology" through education and media outreach in partnership with civil society organizations, and religious and educational institutions.

International and Regional Cooperation: Libya regularly votes in favor of counterterrorism measures in the UN General Assembly, the Arab League, and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

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