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Country Report on Terrorism 2019 - Chapter 2 - Sudan

The Secretary of State designated Sudan as a State Sponsor of Terrorism in 1993 for supporting international terrorist groups, including the Abu Nidal Organization, Palestine Islamic Jihad, Hamas, and Hizballah. In September 2019, Sudan officially formed the civilian-led transitional government (CLTG) after 30 years under the regime of former President Omar al-Bashir. The CLTG has asserted that it no longer supports the aforementioned or any other terrorist organization. Sudan has taken steps to work with the United States on counterterrorism. Throughout 2019, despite political turmoil that led to the ouster of the former president and the formation in September of the CLTG, the Sudanese government continued to pursue counterterrorism operations alongside regional partners, including operations to counter threats to U.S. interests and personnel in Sudan.

Despite the absence of high-profile terrorist attacks, ISIS facilitation networks appear to be active within Sudan. The newly appointed Minister of Religious Affairs and Endowments under the CLTG denied the existence of an official ISIS entity in Sudan but acknowledged that there were “extremists” linked to ISIS in the country. The Minister of Religious Affairs and Endowments also emphasized that his ministry would work on combating extremism, fighting terrorism and renewing school curricula to promote tolerance. The media reported in November 2019 that the CLTG was prepared to return between 16 and 20 terrorists from ISIS and other groups to their countries of origin. The arrested persons belonged to different nationalities, including six Egyptians, one Tunisian, and six individuals from Chad and Nigeria.

As part of the government’s counterterrorism strategy, Sudanese forces patrol the Sudanese-Libyan border as well as the Sudanese-Chadian border to interdict the flow of suspected terrorists transiting through the region, and to prevent arms smuggling and other illicit activities. Sudan’s expansive size, and the government’s outdated technology and limited visa restrictions, presented challenges for border security. The CLTG has asked for assistance from the U.S. government as well as the international community to upgrade its technical and physical capabilities to secure its borders.

Regarding AML/CFT, Sudan remains a member of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF), a Financial Action Task Force-style regional body. The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and MENAFATF have both determined that Sudan’s AML/CFT regime adequately addresses AML/CFT. Additionally, Sudan’s Financial Information Unit is a member of the Egmont Group and works regularly with other members of the group on AML/CFT issues.

While new, the CLTG continues to develop a national strategy for countering terrorist radicalization and recruitment. Sudan’s existing strategy combines government and civil society resources and uses a social, economic, and religious approach toward strengthening Sudan’s population against internal or external “extremist” influences. Sudan’s de-radicalization programs run concurrently with the national strategy. De-radicalization programs in Sudan focused on reintegrating and rehabilitating returned FTFs and those espousing terrorist ideologies. Sudan repatriated a small number of women and children who are or had been affiliated with FTFs, mostly the spouses and children of ISIS members killed in Libya, and enrolled them in Sudanese rehabilitation programs.

Tags

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