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Country Reports on Terrorism 2023

Country Reports on Terrorism 2023 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.

Foreword ✓

In 2023 the United States and the international community confronted a terrorist threat landscape that is fast moving, complex, and ideologically diverse. The October 7 Hamas attacks in Israel, which killed 32 U.S. citizens – with five others still held hostage as this report is being drafted – were a stark and horrific reminder that terrorist groups overseas remain a persistent and pervasive threat to the United States and U.S. citizens and facilities abroad. The ensuing crisis in Gaza has exacerbated widespread instability across the Middle East and globally, with terrorists and violent extremists across the ideological spectrum exploiting the conflict to threaten attacks against U.S. interests worldwide. To confront these evolving and emerging threats, the United States has shifted from a military-centric, U.S.-led approach to a tactic more rooted in diplomacy, partner capacity building, and prevention. This balance recognizes the full range of counterterrorism tools and ensures a more sustainable whole-of-government and whole-of-society counterterrorism approach with allies and partners around the world.

In 2023 the United States and its partners continued to make major strides against terrorist organizations, boosting diplomatic, multilateral, and programmatic efforts worldwide. Through U.S. leadership, the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS raised nearly \$600 million in pledges to support stabilization projects in Iraq and Syria. In June the United States and Europol convened the 11th Meeting of the Law Enforcement Coordination Group to bolster international coordination and information sharing on countering Hizballah’s terrorist and criminal activities. More than 30 governments across the Middle East, the Americas, Europe, Africa, and the Indo-Pacific discussed how law enforcement and financial tools can be used to disrupt Hizballah’s operating environment. The United States – through the Department of State’s Bureau of Counterterrorism – executed roughly \$344.3 million in FY 2022 foreign assistance to enable frontline partners across Africa, Asia, the Americas, Europe, and the Middle East to manage terrorism threats more effectively within and across their borders. Finally, U.S.-led efforts resulted in the repatriation of nearly 5,500 foreign terrorist fighters and their associated family members from detention facilities and displaced persons camps in northeast Syria to 21 different countries of origin – the largest number of repatriations completed in a single year.

Despite key counterterrorism successes, terrorist groups around the world remained resilient and determined. In 2023, Iran remained the leading state sponsor of terrorism, facilitating a wide range of terrorist and other illicit activities in the United States and globally. Regionally, Iran continued supporting acts of terrorism through its proxies and partner groups – such as Hizballah, Ansar Allah (commonly referred to as the Houthis), Hamas, and al-Ashtar Brigades – in Bahrain, Iraq, Lebanon, Palestine, Syria, and Yemen. In the last months of 2023, Houthi militants in Yemen engaged in numerous attacks on shipping lanes in the Red Sea, significantly disrupting maritime commerce and global trade. Separately, Iranian-aligned militia groups (IAMG) in Iraq and Syria conducted repeated attacks with unmanned aircraft systems against U.S. forces in the region in attempts to compel their withdrawal. Globally, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Qods Force (IRGC-QF) and the Ministry of Intelligence and

Security remained Iran's primary actors involved in supporting terrorist recruitment, financing, and plotting across Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas.

Al-Qa'ida (AQ) and its affiliates remained resilient and determined, and senior AQ leaders continued to oversee a global network to target the United States and U.S. interests, particularly in Africa and the Middle East. In East Africa, al-Shabaab sustained de facto control over significant portions of south-central Somalia and moved freely in parts of neighboring countries, expanding its operations in northeast Kenya. Despite the December death of Maalim Ayman, a senior leader of al-Shabaab who was responsible for the 2020 attack on U.S. and Kenyan forces in Manda Bay, the group maintained its capability to conduct high-profile attacks in the region, including against U.S. citizens and infrastructure, and aspired to coordinate attacks against the U.S. homeland and Europe. In West Africa, Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (or JNIM) intensified attacks in the Sahel, killing hundreds, increasingly threatening capital cities in the region, and expanded operations in the northern border regions of Coastal West Africa. Across the Middle East, al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and other AQ elements remained intent on conducting terrorist operations in the West and against U.S. interests in the region. At the end of 2023, AQAP relaunched the group's English-language *Inspire* magazine, which provides operational guidance for would-be attackers in the homeland.

The Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) maintained an enduring global enterprise, promoting a large-scale terrorism campaign across the Middle East, Africa, and Asia. Despite key leadership losses including the deaths of two ISIS caliphs in Syria in 2022 and one in 2023, ISIS maintained a significant underground operational structure and conducted terrorist operations throughout Iraq and Syria. An estimated 9,000 ISIS fighters, including 1,600 Iraqis and 1,800 fighters from countries outside Syria and Iraq remained in detention facilities controlled by the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF). Additionally, 17,000 Syrians, 20,500 Iraqis, and roughly 9,000 third-country nationals from more than 60 countries remain in al-Hol and Roj displaced persons camps in northeast Syria. Furthermore, ISIS expanded its recruitment and operations across key global regions, growing its network to approximately 20 branches and affiliates. ISIS leveraged its global network, operatives, finances, and propaganda to inspire homegrown terrorist attacks in the West, including an October attack by an ISIS supporter in Brussels, Belgium, that killed two Swedish citizens. ISIS affiliates in West Africa remained among the largest and most active branches of the organization, while affiliates and networks in East Africa serve as ISIS's primary revenue generator, disbursing funds and guidance to branches and networks across the continent.

Racially or Ethnically Motivated Violent Extremism (REMVE) constituted a growing and transnational threat to the United States and our allies. Violent white supremacist, anti-government, accelerationist, and like-minded individuals promoted violent extremist narratives, recruited new adherents; raised funds, and shared tactical training – including weapon-making instructions – both online and in-person. Many REMVE attacks are inspired by transnational REMVE movements with adherents around the world who connect online. Attacks often are carried out by individuals who are part of anonymous online communities but lack formal ties to traditionally organized groups. REMVE actors are increasingly adept at exploiting social media platforms, online gaming platforms, gaming-adjacent platforms, smaller websites with targeted audiences, and encrypted chat applications. They use these means to recruit new followers, plan and rally ideological support, and disseminate materials that contribute to radicalization and mobilization to violence.

As terrorist threats morphed and metastasized, the United States continued to adapt its counterterrorism approach and marshalled international efforts to counter global terrorism. In 2023 the United States worked with multilateral institutions to advance priority counterterrorism issues and initiatives, including preventing/countering terrorist travel, capacity building, use of battlefield evidence, addressing REMVE, and rehabilitating and reintegrating FTFs and their associated family members. In June the Counterterrorism (CT) Bureau led the U.S. delegation to the UN Secretary General's third CT High-Level Week and the eighth review of the UN Global Counterterrorism Strategy (GCTS). The GCTS review successfully preserved key commitments to promoting whole-of-society counterterrorism approaches that are gender sensitive, protect

fundamental freedoms, and are grounded in human rights and the rule of law. The Department of State additionally co-hosted several events during CT High-Level Week on priority issues including Counter-Unmanned Aircraft Systems, REMVE, FTFs, and use of the internet for terrorist purposes. These drew wide engagement from member states, UN entities, and civil society. During UNGA 78 High-Level Week in September, Deputy Secretary for Management and Resources Richard Verma co-hosted a side event on the humanitarian and security challenges in northeast Syria and encouraged UN member states to repatriate FTFs and their associated family members. The Department further entrenched its commitment to the Quad, hosting Australia, India, and Japan in December at the first Quad Counterterrorism Working Group.

The United States continued to increase the professionalism and capacity of partner nations to address terrorism threats within and across their borders, working with civilian law enforcement entities in more than 50 countries and regions globally. To maintain international momentum on the efforts to investigate and prosecute terrorism cases, the International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law – supported through U.S. funding in 2023 – trained more than 450 criminal justice practitioners on critical issues such as REMVE, battlefield evidence, prosecutions, mutual legal assistance, and juvenile justice. In 2023 the United States continued to build partner nations’ capacities to identify, interdict, and prosecute Iran-backed terrorist activities – including by Hizballah – as well as other illicit activities and targets, with an emphasis on Arabian Gulf partners such as Bahrain and Tri-Border Area partners in Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay. Further, the United States continued to build Central Asian partners’ civilian law enforcement capacity to counter terrorism threats emanating from Afghanistan. In April, for example, the Tajik Special Purpose Militia Unit (or OMON) and Internal Troops used U.S.-funded training and equipment to neutralize two terrorists after they crossed into Tajikistan from Afghanistan.

Another significant line of effort in 2023 was facilitating the repatriation, rehabilitation, reintegration, and, where appropriate, prosecution of ISIS FTFs and their associated family members. 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 applicable. As of 2023 the United States has repatriated a total of 40 U.S. citizens from Syria and Iraq. The United States’ engagement, advocacy, and support resulted in the repatriation of nearly 5,500 FTFs and their associated family members to 21 different countries of origin in 2023 – crucially to prevent their further radicalization to violence. Notable repatriation efforts in 2023, with U.S. support, included the Kyrgyz Republic’s repatriation of 333 displaced persons (97 women and 236 children) in four separate repatriation operations and Iraq’s conducting nine repatriation operations of nearly 300 fighters and more than 3,800 family members.

Finally, the United States continued to promote a whole-of-government, whole-of-society approach to preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE) by engaging with governments, with local community, civil society, and religious leaders, and with tech companies. The United States continued its support for the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF), a foundation that strengthens community resilience against violent extremism by supporting local, tailored initiatives to address the drivers of violent extremism. As of June, GCERF supported 43 active grants in 14 partner countries: Albania, Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burkina Faso, Kenya, Kosovo, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, North Macedonia, the Philippines, Somalia, Sri Lanka, and Tunisia. Estimated conservatively, GCERF projects have reached 3.2 million direct beneficiaries. In addition, the Strong Cities Network grew to more than 220 cities around the world in 2023, bringing together mayors, local officials, youth, civil society, national governments, multilateral bodies, and the private sector to discuss best practices in preventing and countering violent extremism. The network also launched new Middle East/North Africa, South Asia, and Western Balkans regional hubs in 2023, which aim to engage more municipalities in the region on P/CVE efforts within their respective communities.

This constitutes a brief overview of the United States’ ongoing work to protect our people and our allies from the ongoing threat of terrorism. Country Reports on Terrorism 2023 provides a detailed review of last year’s successes and the ongoing challenges facing our country and our partners,

challenges that will require a continued commitment to and investment in global counterterrorism efforts going forward.

Ambassador Elizabeth Richard
Coordinator for Counterterrorism

For More Information ✓

The Human Rights Report

Significant human rights issues influenced the state of terrorist activity in many countries in this report, which 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, such as 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 [2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#) and the [2023 Report on International Religious Freedom](#) for more information.

The International Narcotics Control Strategy Report

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes regarding many of the countries in this report, see the [International Narcotics Control Strategy Report, Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes](#).

Members of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS ✓

Country or Organization	Continent or Region
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
Republic of Togo	Africa
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
Togo	Africa
Tunisia	Middle East and North Africa
Türkiye	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

Terrorist groups primarily aligned with al-Qa’ida and ISIS conducted attacks against civilian infrastructure and civilians, including humanitarian workers and government personnel, as well as against security forces. These attacks resulted in deaths, injuries, abductions, and the capture and destruction of property across Sub-Saharan Africa during 2023. Terrorist groups routinely manipulated intercommunal disputes and local grievances to gain support for their malign operations. These terrorists continued to attack military outposts; attack civil servants and politicians; attack churches, mosques, and schools; and kidnap or attack foreign nationals, including humanitarian workers. African countries, as well as regional and multinational organizations, sustained counterterrorism efforts against terrorist groups with varying degrees of success. Across the region, there continued to be reports of abuses by security forces related to counterterrorism efforts.

In East Africa, Somalia and its partners continued efforts to pressure al-Qa’ida-affiliated al-Shabaab in central Somalia, although the group retained the ability to mobilize substantial financial resources and launch sophisticated and often coordinated attacks on civilians, government personnel and facilities, and security forces, including Somali and African Union peace support operations. ISIS-linked fighters in East Africa continued to conduct small-scale local attacks. In central Africa, ISIS-linked fighters conducted attacks primarily against civilians and security forces in eastern areas of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In the Lake Chad region, ISIS-West Africa and Boko Haram continued to conduct attacks primarily in Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, and Niger.

In the Sahel region, the withdrawal of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) at the end of 2023 and the July coup in Niger increased instability in the central Sahel, which terrorist groups exploited to their advantage.

Terrorist groups have continued their operations in Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger and expanded into Coastal West Africa, primarily into Benin and Togo. These groups included al-Qa’ida-affiliated Jama’at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM) and ISIS-Sahel. In southern Africa, ISIS-linked fighters continued operations in northern Mozambique, and ISIS-linked facilitation networks continued activity in South Africa.

The United States continued to support partners across affected regions of Sub-Saharan Africa in their efforts to build counterterrorism capacity in areas such as aviation and border security, by improving regional security forces, countering terrorist finance, advancing criminal justice sector reforms, and training and mentoring law enforcement to manage crisis response and conduct investigations. The African partners continued to undertake efforts to develop and expand regional cooperation mechanisms, but these efforts often were stymied by political and security instability.

Burkina Faso	Democratic Republic of the Congo	Mali	Nigeria	Sudan
Cameroon	Djibouti	Mauritania	Senegal	Tanzania
Chad	Ethiopia	Mozambique	Somalia	Uganda
Côte d’Ivoire	Kenya	Niger	South Africa	

East Asia and the Pacific

Overview

The threat to governments in East Asia and the Pacific from terrorist organizations, including groups inspired by ISIS, remained diminished in 2023. Counterterrorism pressure from regional security forces in the Philippines and Indonesia, a product of years of effort, continued to have significant deterrent effects on terrorist organizations' abilities to conduct attacks in those countries.

In the Philippines, most terrorist incidents perpetrated by ISIS-affiliated organizations in 2023 involved attacks against military or police targets. Indonesian law enforcement agencies reported that there were no terrorist attacks in Indonesia in 2023; authorities attributed the decline in attacks to successful counterterrorism efforts and international cooperation.

Australia and Malaysia reported repatriating some foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) and/or associated family members in 2023. Indonesia has considered repatriating family members of FTFs in northeast Syria but has not yet done so.

Racially or ethnically motivated violent extremism (REMVE) continued to be a key concern for Australia and New Zealand.

Authorities in East Asia and the Pacific continued efforts to investigate and prosecute terrorism cases, increased regional cooperation and information sharing, and addressed critical border and aviation security gaps. Authorities in the region additionally increased efforts to counter the financing of terrorism through domestic efforts and participation in multilateral fora such as FATF and began intensifying focus on artificial intelligence and its relation to terrorist recruiting and radicalization to violence online.

The Counterterrorism Information Facility, which was a Singapore-led initiative for Southeast Asian countries, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States, with a sole purpose of increasing information sharing among one another and between military and law enforcement agencies entered its second year of operation but continued to face challenges in operationalizing information obtained.

The Quad – consisting of Australia, India, Japan, and the United States – held its first Counterterrorism Working Group in December, focused on developing good practices to counter the use of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear weapons; evolving technology such as drones; and countering use of the internet for terrorist purposes. In late 2023 the United States deepened its counterterrorism efforts through the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) by joining Bangladesh and the Philippines as co-chairs of the ARF Intersessional Meeting on Counterterrorism and Transnational Crime from 2024 through 2026.

The People's Republic of China continued to use counterterrorism as a pretext to repress members of religious and ethnic minority groups, particularly Muslim Uyghurs, and also continued efforts to legitimize repressive domestic counterterrorism (CT) tactics by hosting numerous foreign counterparts, including many from Muslim-majority countries, including CT officials in Indonesia, to observe and share best practices on “deradicalization” practices. The PRC also persisted in its efforts to institutionalize this approach within the UN system.

Israel's sustained, wide-scale military operation in Gaza in response to the October 7 Hamas terrorist attacks had a pronounced effect on regional affairs, as influential Muslim-majority countries such as Malaysia increased support for Hamas through diplomatic outreach and official statements,

and most countries in the region – including those with hostages held by Hamas – such as Thailand and the Philippines – remained neutral or cautious in countering the organization. Countries with established sanctions and designations against Hamas – such as Australia, Japan, and New Zealand – remained cautious in public messaging, though Australia remained strongly in support of Israel’s response through 2023.

Australia	Malaysia	Philippines	Thailand
Indonesia	People’s Republic of China (Hong Kong and Macau)	Singapore	

Europe

Overview

U.S. and European partner counterterrorism (CT) strategies continued to align in 2023, as the United States focused on partner-led, U.S.-enabled engagement through diplomacy, multilateral cooperation, and building partners’ capacity. The Administration prioritized repatriating foreign ISIS fighters and their associated family members remaining in northeast Syria following the territorial defeat of ISIS, and European partners worked in collaboration with the United States to repatriate their nationals from detention centers and displaced persons camps. ISIS remained an ideological influence and continued seeking to project power by recruiting from European countries and inspiring attacks against European targets and public spaces.

U.S. policy, programs, and relations with European states and the European Union became stronger in the wake of Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine. Central, Eastern, and Southern European countries continued to be targets of state-sponsored Russian disinformation and propaganda, which sought to co-opt racially or ethnically motivated violent extremist (REMVE) movements to undermine current and candidate members of NATO and the EU.

Terrorist groups in Eastern Europe and the Western Balkans sought to take advantage of active illicit smuggling and trafficking networks to attempt to facilitate entry of terrorists into Europe from the Middle East and South Asia. Türkiye, given its geographic location, remained a transit point for foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) departing neighboring countries. Most terrorist incidents in Europe involved the use of knives, guns, or vehicles to injure or kill targets of opportunity in France, Germany, Türkiye, and the United Kingdom. Europe continued to face ongoing terrorist threats and concerns, including from U.S.-designated terrorist groups, REMVE actors, and Islamist groups. Many European governments expressed concern about the growing threat posed by REMVE actors and their work to engage, recruit, and radicalize other individuals to violence through the use of the internet.

The United States supported partners across Europe in their efforts to build CT capacity through technical assistance, trainings, and mentorship. Key areas of assistance and cooperation included repatriation, information sharing, countering violent extremism (CVE), increasing law enforcement capacity, and the collection and use of battlefield evidence.

In 2023, both the United States and European countries grappled with the threat of lone actors attacking public spaces and citizens. European partners undertook additional efforts to further develop and expand regional cooperation mechanisms to detect and interdict terrorist travel and other terrorism-related activities.

Albania	Cyprus	Greece	Russia	Türkiye
Austria	Denmark	Italy	Serbia	United Kingdom
Belgium	France	Kosovo	Spain	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Georgia	North Macedonia	Sweden	
Bulgaria	Germany	Norway	The Netherlands	

The Middle East and North Africa

Overview

On October 7, Hamas, the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and other Palestinian terrorists launched a large-scale attack on Israel from the Gaza Strip, killing an estimated 1,200 individuals, injuring more than 5,400 others, and abducting 253 hostages. The Hamas assault resulted in the highest number of U.S. citizen casualties in a single attack overseas in this century, with dozens of U.S. nationals among the dead and seven still held hostage at the end of 2023. Nationals from at least 35 countries were killed, injured, or taken hostage in the attack.

Iran and its terrorist partners and proxies ramped up attacks across the Middle East in the aftermath of the October 7 attack, significantly worsening the terrorism landscape and destabilizing the region. Through the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps-Qods Force, Iran provided funding, training, weapons, and equipment to several U.S.-designated terrorist groups in the region responsible for conducting these destabilizing attacks. From October 8 through the end of the year, Iran-aligned militia groups (IAMGs) engaged in attacks on Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS forces in Iraq and Syria. The Houthis, based in Yemen and supported by Iran, fired hundreds of missiles and UAVs at civilian shipping transiting the region, disrupting global supply chains. The Iranian regime continued to host senior al-Qa’ida leaders residing in Iran, including Sayf al-’Adl. Globally, Iran continued plotting attacks against dissidents and other perceived enemies of the regime based abroad.

Terrorist groups such as ISIS and al-Qa’ida continued to operate and maintain safe havens in the Middle East and North Africa, posing significant terrorist threats to the region. In Iraq, before the October 7 Hamas attack on Israel, there had been a decrease in terrorist attacks from ISIS in 2023 because of the increasing effectiveness of the Iraqi Security Forces in combating terrorism. However, IAMG attacks against facilities hosting U.S. personnel in Syria and Iraq increasingly burdened U.S., Coalition, and partner forces with force protection responsibilities, increasing the challenge in

executing the counter-ISIS mission while under pressure from these attacks. ISIS remained active and continued to claim responsibility for attacks in Syria, Iraq, and regionally, while also presenting an ongoing threat to U.S. interests abroad and domestically.

Across northeast Syria, about 9,000 ISIS fighters were held in detention facilities. An estimated 46,500 displaced persons – including some 9,500 non-Syrian, non-Iraqi, third-country nationals, most of them children and many of them family members of ISIS fighters – remained in al-Hol and al-Roj displaced persons camps. The United States continued to increase advocacy and support for countries of origin to repatriate their nationals and to rehabilitate, reintegrate, and, as appropriate, prosecute them. In 2023, more than 4,500 foreign nationals, including large numbers of Iraqis, were repatriated from northeast Syria, surpassing previous years. During 2023, Coalition partners and international organizations including the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF), and Hedayah offered legal and practical assistance in ensuring safe and successful reintegration of returnees into society.

Algeria	Israel, The West Bank and Gaza	Libya	Saudi Arabia
Bahrain	Jordan	Morocco	Tunisia
Egypt	Kuwait	Oman	United Arab Emirates
Iraq	Lebanon	Qatar	Yemen

South and Central Asia

Overview

In 2023, South and Central Asia continued to experience terrorist activity, notably emanating from Afghanistan but also relying on regional networks for support. Despite commitments by the Taliban that Afghan soil would be used neither to support terrorist groups nor to launch attacks against the United States or its allies, terrorist groups such as the Islamic State’s Khorasan Province (ISIS-K) and Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) continued to take advantage of poor socioeconomic conditions and uneven security procedures that make for a more-permissive operating environment.

The United States continued to evaluate whether the Taliban has the political will or technical capability to prevent Afghan soil from hosting or supporting terrorist groups, acts of terrorism, terrorist finance, or recruitment toward violent extremism. The Taliban arrested some notable ISIS-K operatives in 2023 and viewed ISIS-K as the primary threat in Afghanistan, while appearing to apply less pressure against al-Qa’ida and TTP. Al-Qa’ida has continued to keep a low profile, both within Afghanistan and across the rest of South and Central Asia.

Pakistan saw a rise in terrorist attacks from both ISIS-K and TTP, both in frequency and in number of casualties, likely enabled by close proximity and the porous border with Afghanistan. ISIS-K was more likely to attack political rallies and religious gatherings, while TTP more frequently targeted

government groups, including police and security forces. The United States has prioritized partnership with Pakistan on counterterrorism civilian capacity building and joined Pakistan to relaunch the annual Counterterrorism Dialogue in March.

ISIS-K demonstrated the ability to expand outside of Afghan soil, recruiting heavily from Central Asian states. ISIS-K propaganda increasingly is being delivered in Central Asian languages, and targets disaffected youth, vulnerable refugee populations, and groups that lack economic opportunity.

In Central Asia, U.S. assistance continued to prioritize border security efforts, supplemented by technical assistance and equipment transfers. The United States continued to engage Central Asian countries as civilian CT partners, which included the promotion of participation by Tajikistan and Uzbekistan in multilateral initiatives focused on repatriations, C5+1 lines of effort such as customs and border security, countering ISIS, countering violent extremism (CVE), and use of the internet for terrorist purposes. The C5+1 Border Security Training Program, and UN Office of Counterterrorism (UNOCT) programs continued to increase capacity of Central Asian countries to detect, mitigate, and deter terrorist movement and activity.

Central Asia remained a leading region in the repatriation, rehabilitation, and reintegration of associated family members of foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) from northeast Syria. In 2023, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan notably conducted repatriation flights to repatriate, rehabilitate, and reintegrate their nationals – with the United States often providing logistical, transportation, psychosocial, and reintegration support for repatriated individuals.

The United States continued to expand civilian strategic partnerships in the region, including through the Quad (Australia, India, Japan and the United States itself) Counterterrorism Joint Working Group, which held a tabletop exercise in December, and through sustained engagement with South Asian countries on border security, aviation security, counter-unmanned aircraft systems, and with ongoing initiatives to counter violent extremism in Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka.

Afghanistan	Kazakhstan	Pakistan	Turkmenistan
Bangladesh	Kyrgyz Republic	Sri Lanka	Uzbekistan
India	Maldives	Tajikistan	

Western Hemisphere

Overview

Terrorism remained a security concern for some countries in various parts of the Western Hemisphere in 2023. Transnational terrorist organizations have a limited presence, with small pockets of supporters in the region. National or locally oriented groups – such as the Ejército de Liberación Nacional (National Liberation Army, ELN), Segunda Marquetalia, and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People’s Army (FARC-EP) in

Colombia and Venezuela, and Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) in Peru – remained the region’s most significant terrorist threats. Corruption, weak governmental institutions, insufficient interagency cooperation, weak or nonexistent legislation, and limited resources remained obstacles to improving security in 2023. Nevertheless, governments in the hemisphere made significant progress in counterterrorism (CT) efforts and strengthened regional cooperation against terrorism.

Lebanon-based and Iran-backed terrorist group Hizballah continued its long history of activity in the Western Hemisphere, raising funds from its supporters and financiers in key locations. Hizballah supporters seek to generate funding through licit and illicit activity and then transfer it to the group’s headquarters to enable Hizballah to advance its malign agenda. In recent years, Hizballah supporters and members have been identified in Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Panama, Peru, and the United States. In 2023, Brazilian authorities disrupted Hizballah’s attempt at targeting the Jewish community and exposed the organization’s recruitment efforts in Brazil.

Colombia, Peru, and Venezuela all continued to experience terrorist activity. Segunda Marquetalia, FARC-EP, and the ELN continued to commit acts of terrorism throughout Colombia and Venezuela, including bombings, kidnappings, attacks against utilities infrastructure, and violence against civilian populations, demobilized FARC-EP members, and military and police facilities.

Authorities in the Western Hemisphere actively participated in multilateral and regional efforts to counter terrorism. The OAS’s Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism (CICTE) held its annual session May 18-19 in Mexico City, focusing on preventing and addressing violent extremism that could lead to terrorism. The Chile- and U.S.-funded OAS-CICTE 24/7 Inter-American Network on Counterterrorism, which seeks to strengthen cooperation and facilitate information sharing among member states to prevent and address terrorist threats in the Western Hemisphere, convened its first in-person meeting on the first day of the gathering.

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

Chapter 2. State Sponsors of Terrorism ✓

This report provides a snapshot of events during 2023 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 requiring the President to certify either a) that a designated country has not provided any support for acts of international terrorism during the previous six months and has provided assurances that it will not support acts of international terrorism in the

future or b) that there has been a fundamental change in the leadership and policies of the designated country, that the country is not supporting acts of international terrorism, and that the country has provided assurances that it will not support acts of international terrorism in the future. A wide range of sanctions is imposed because 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 country's military capability or ability to support terrorism
- Restrictions on U.S. foreign assistance
- Visa processing requirements
- Imposition of miscellaneous financial and other restrictions

Cuba

On January 12, 2021, the Department of State designated Cuba as a State Sponsor of Terrorism. The Secretary of State determined that the Cuban government repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism in granting safe harbor to terrorists.

Cuba was previously 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.

Cuba's designation was rescinded in 2015 after a thorough review found the country met the statutory criteria for rescission. In 2021 the Secretary of State determined Cuba had repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism in the six years since its designation had been rescinded. Citing peace negotiation protocols, Cuba refused Colombia's request to extradite 10 Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN, or the National Liberation Army) leaders living in Havana after that group claimed responsibility for the 2019 bombing of a Bogotá police academy that killed 22 people and injured 87 others.

The Cuban government did not formally respond to the extradition requests for ELN leaders Victor Orlando Cubides (aka "Pablo Tejada") and Ramírez Pineda (aka "Pablo Beltrán") filed by Colombia.

In November 2022, pursuant to an order from Colombian President Petro, the U.S. Attorney General announced that arrest warrants would be suspended against 17 ELN commanders, including those whose extradition Colombia had previously requested. In May 2023 the Colombian government and ELN convened the third round of Colombia-ELN peace talks in Cuba.

Cuba continues to harbor several U.S. fugitives from justice wanted on charges related to political violence, many of whom have resided in Cuba for decades.

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 of State 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 previously was designated as a State Sponsor of Terrorism in 1988, primarily because of its involvement in the 1987 bombing of a Korean Air passenger flight. The DPRK's designation was rescinded in 2008 after a thorough review found the country met the statutory criteria for rescission. In 2017 the Secretary of State determined the DPRK had repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism in the nine years since its designation had been rescinded. The nation 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 since 2002.

Iran

Designated as a State Sponsor of Terrorism in 1984, Iran continued its support for terrorist activity in 2023, including support for Hizballah, U.S.-designated Palestinian terrorist groups in the West Bank and Gaza including Hamas, the Houthis in Yemen, and Iran-aligned militia groups (IAMGs) in Iraq and Syria. After the October 7 Hamas attacks on Israel, Iran-backed groups took advantage of the regional conflict to further their objectives. 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. The IRGC-QF is Iran's primary mechanism for cultivating and supporting terrorist activity abroad. In 2019 the Secretary of State designated the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, including IRGC-QF, as a Foreign Terrorist Organization. Iran uses regional militant and proxy groups to facilitate deniability and to shield it from accountability for its destabilizing policies.

In 2023, Iran continued providing weapons systems and other support to Hamas and other U.S.-designated Palestinian terrorist groups, including Palestine Islamic Jihad and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command. Although there is no evidence that Iran knew about Hamas's October 7 attacks on Israel in advance, its long-standing material, financial, and training support to Hamas enabled Hamas to execute the attack.

In Iraq and Syria, Iran supported various IAMGs in 2023, including the U.S.-designated terrorist groups Kata'ib Hizballah, Harakat al-Nujaba, and Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq, with sophisticated weapons – including increasingly accurate and lethal unmanned aerial systems (UAS) – support, funding, and training. On October 18, IAMGs restarted attacks against US military and diplomatic facilities, which came after an 18-month general pause in attacks in Iraq and a six-month pause in attacks in Syria. By the end of 2023, IAMGs had attacked US facilities in Iraq and Syria more than 100 times.

Iran also bolstered terrorist groups operating in Syria, including Hizballah, which has provided significant support to the Assad regime. Iran views the Assad regime as a crucial ally. The Iranian government used Iraq and Syria for transshipment of weapons to Hizballah. Iranian forces have backed militia operations in Syria and Iraq directly, with artillery, rockets, drones, and armored vehicles. 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 actions in Syria. These Iran-aligned forces conducted multiple attacks on U.S. forces in Syria.

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 produce its own rockets and missiles, thereby threatening Israel from Lebanon and Syria. Iran has provided hundreds of millions of dollars in support of Hizballah and trained thousands of its fighters at camps in Iran. Hizballah fighters have been used extensively in Syria to support the Assad regime.

In Bahrain, Iran has continued to provide weapons, support, and training to local Shia militant groups, including the al-Ashtar Brigades and Saraya al-Mukhtar, both U.S.-designated terrorist groups.

In Yemen, Iran has provided a wide range of weapons, such as unmanned aerial vehicles (UAS) and missiles, training, and other support to Houthi militants, who in late 2023 began attacking Israel and commercial ships in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden with missiles, UAS, and small boats. The Houthis seized the commercial vessel *Galaxy Leader* and continued to hold its crew hostage.

In 2023, Iranian forces continued a pattern of attacks on commercial ships in the Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Oman, including a December 23 drone attack on the *Chem Pluto*, a Liberian-flagged tanker carrying oil. Additionally, in 2023, Iran seized commercial vessels transiting the Strait of Hormuz and surrounding waters.

As in past years, the Iranian government continued supporting terrorist plots or associated activities targeting dissidents and other perceived enemies of the regime. In 2023 the U.S. Department of Justice unsealed an indictment charging three individuals connected with Iran in a plot to assassinate an Iranian dissident in New York City. Also in 2023, a United Kingdom court found a man guilty of attempting to collect information for terrorist purposes on the London-based Iran International, a media company that is critical of the Iranian regime. In recent years, Albania, Belgium, and the Netherlands have all either arrested, convicted, 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 that country.

In an extension from 2022, the Albanian government in 2023 continued to be a victim of cyberattacks emanating from Iran, likely in response to Albania hosting members of the Mujahedeen-e-Khalq – an Iranian dissident group that advocates overthrowing the Iranian government. Additionally, Iran pursued or supported terrorist attacks against Israeli and Jewish targets in 2023, including a thwarted plot to attack Israeli tourists in Cyprus. These plots were being implemented by current and former members of the IRGC-QF.

Senior al-Qa'ida members continued to reside in Iran, where the authorities still refuse to identify publicly members they know to be living in the country. Iran has allowed al-Qa'ida facilitators to operate a core transit pipeline through Iran since at least 2009, enabling al-Qa'ida to move funds and fighters to South Asia and Syria, among other locales.

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 also to allow Iran to rearm and finance the terrorist organization. The Assad regime's relationship with Hizballah and Iran remained strong in 2023, as the regime continued to rely heavily on external actors Russia and Iran to fight

opponents and secure territory. The U.S.-designated Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps remains present and active in the country with Assad's permission. Assad remained a staunch defender of Iran's policies, while Iran exhibited equally energetic support for the Syrian regime. Syrian regime 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 al-Qa'ida and other terrorist groups' FTF facilitation efforts during the Iraq conflict fed the growth of al-Qa'ida, ISIS, and affiliated terrorist networks inside Syria. The Syrian regime's years of awareness and encouragement of terrorists' transit to Iraq to fight 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 opposition. Those very networks were among the terrorist elements that brutalized the Syrian and Iraqi populations in recent years. Throughout the Syrian conflict, terrorist groups in Syria have often cited the regime's human rights abuses and violations to justify their activities and recruit members. The Assad regime has frequently used counterterrorism (CT) laws and special CT courts to detain and imprison protesters, human rights defenders, humanitarian workers, and others on the pretext of fighting terrorism. Additionally, Iran-aligned militia groups from Iraq, some of which are U.S.-designated terrorist organizations, continued to travel to Syria to fight on behalf of Iran and the Assad regime.

Affiliates of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) also operated on Syrian soil and represented Türkiye'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 2019 and 2022, U.S. forces completed operations that resulted in the death of successive ISIS leaders Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi al-Qurayshi. ISIS members in Syria continued to plot or inspire external terrorist operations.

As part of a broader strategy used throughout the past 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 acquisition and/or use of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) materials and expertise remained a credible terrorist threat in 2023, and the United States continues to work proactively to disrupt ISIS and other terrorist 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 prevent terrorist access to CBRN expertise, technologies, and material. Efforts to address CBRN terrorist threats through UNSCR 1540 and through multilateral activities executed since the suspension of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism in April 2022 are detailed in Chapter 4.

The United States is an active member of the G-7-led Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction (GP), launched in 2002 to prevent terrorists and states that support them from acquiring or developing weapons of mass destruction (WMD). To date, GP consists of 31 members (30 countries and the European Union), providing a vital forum for members to assess the threat landscape, share best practices, exchange information on national priorities for CBRN programmatic efforts worldwide, and coordinate assistance for these efforts. In 2023

the United States also helped lead related efforts in the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) by developing, with Mongolia and Vietnam, a workshop and tabletop exercise to be held in 2024 to enhance ARF members' implementation and operationalization of CBRN legal frameworks.

The United States continues to support the International Atomic Energy Agency's 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 internationally accepted guidance and provides training, technical advice and assistance, peer reviews, and other advisory services.

The United States Department of State coordinates its programming through:

- The Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation
- The Office of Weapons of Mass Destruction Terrorism (WMDT)
- The Office of Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR)
- The Office of Export Control Cooperation and the Export Control and Related Border Security (EXBS) program
- The Nonproliferation and Disarmament Fund (NDF)
- Internally with other U.S. government agencies, including the Departments of Defense, Justice, Energy, Homeland Security, Health and Human Services, and Agriculture.

In 2023, WMDT undertook multiple capacity building assistance projects and activities with priority foreign partners across the full spectrum of WMD prevention, detection, and response. WMDT conducted training workshops on WMD threat assessment and prosecution, cyber-enabled investigations, behavioral threat assessment, chemical transportation security, chemical and biological weapons response scenarios, counter-unmanned autonomous systems, and clandestine lab investigations in East Asia and the Pacific (Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines), North Africa (Algeria, Morocco), and Sub-Saharan Africa (Kenya, Senegal, South Africa). In addition, WMDT supported the development and execution of multilateral tabletop exercises focused on identifying gaps in national or regional chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and high-yield explosives (CBRNE) preparedness and response capabilities, the applicability of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, and other international legal frameworks and cooperation mechanisms.

The Global Threat Reduction Program (GTR), managed by CTR, continued its work to prevent states and terrorist groups from acquiring or proliferating WMD to attack the United States. In 2023, GTR's chemical and biological security programs engaged with hundreds of foreign partners through virtual training to strengthen capacities to detect and counter WMD terrorism threats. In Iraq, GTR continued to strengthen physical security at chemical sites previously targeted by ISIS and worked with partners across Iraq to strengthen chemical transportation security, chemical supply chains, and chemical security curricula.

In response to the threat of transnational terrorists using unrestricted, commercially available material to conduct chemical weapons (CW) attacks, GTR collaborated with security forces around the world to train law enforcement in partner countries to detect and prevent CW attacks against vulnerable transportation networks, such as railroads and urban transit systems. Further, GTR continued to train partners in academia, industry, and the transport sector to secure chemicals in their custody against malicious access.

GTR's biosecurity programming continues to support partner capacity to prevent, detect, and respond to outbreaks of high-consequence pathogens – whether intentional, accidental, or natural. GTR worked to strengthen coordination and information sharing between and among ministries as well as security and research sectors to enhance detection and response to outbreaks and bioweapon attacks. It continues to engage with government, industry,

and academic representatives from Indonesia, Morocco, Somalia, Yemen, and other countries by promoting the adoption of security measures to prevent individuals or nonstate actors from acquiring weaponizable biological material and technology.

The Department of State's EXBS program funds capacity building programs aimed at strengthening legal and regulatory systems, developing licensing tools, enhancing port of entry and border security enforcement, enforcing strategic trade control, providing outreach to key public and private sectors, and encouraging information sharing within governments and across national borders. As part of a core national security strategy to counter 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) – and prevent them from using those materials against U.S. citizens and interests. To achieve this objective, EXBS continues to train partner governments globally to detect, interdict, and counter the materials, technologies, and tactics that terrorists could use to carry out low-technology attacks on public or cargo transportation.

In 2023 the EXBS program continued to engage partners in North Africa, the Middle East, Central Asia, and Southeast Asia on countering wide-ranging threats to transiting ports of entry and borders by enhancing partner capabilities to address CBRNE and related WMD threats posed by nonstate actors. The EXBS program conducted robust border security capacity-building in Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia, and Central Asia, particularly to mitigate the risk of CBRNE capabilities flowing to terrorist groups operating in Afghanistan, Gaza, and Libya.

In 2023, NDF launched a new project to bolster the security of supply chains in Central and South Asia that could be exploited by nonstate actors in Afghanistan to acquire chemical and biological precursors, materials, and equipment illicitly that could be used in mass casualty attacks. This initiative also will include mentorship of Customs and Border Security personnel in neighboring countries to prevent cross-border movements of chemical, biological, and explosive materials as well as mentorship and redirection engagement of Afghan scientists with relevant WMD expertise, making those countries vulnerable to exploitation by the Taliban or other terrorist groups.

Further, NDF continued to advance legacy projects that address critical gaps in existing U.S. government nonproliferation threat reduction programs, as determined through a deliberative interagency process. Specifically, during 2023, NDF provided capacity building assistance to a) enhance the interoperability of Iraqi government and Kurdistan Regional Government CBRN units in responding to chemical and biological weapons (CBW) threats in the aviation security sector; b) bolster cross-sector coordination and law enforcement information sharing to combat rudimentary, low-technology CBW threats in Libya and Southeast Asia; and c) mitigate CBW proliferation and terrorism threats in Central Asia stemming from the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan. In addition, NDF completed the second year of a three-year chemical weapons threat reduction initiative in partnership with the Counterterrorism Agency of Indonesia and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime as part of the Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons of Mass Destruction matchmaking process. Lastly, in collaboration with EXBS, NDF is supporting the expansion of the World Customs Organization's (WCO's) Program Global Shield through 2025. With NDF's support, the WCO will:

- Cultivate foreign partners' analytical capabilities to monitor illicit trade in chemical explosives precursors through risk-based targeting profiles.
- Conduct tactical operations to test participating countries' capabilities to detect and interdict such trade.
- Provide training and equipment to sustain national-level targeting, detection, interdiction, and investigation of illicit chemical transfers.

The U.S. Department of State continues to work internally and externally to address the global challenge of chemical terrorism, including through efforts at the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). Such steps include measures aimed at facilitating OPCW Technical

Secretariat (TS) access to additional response tools against chemical weapons use, including by nonstate actors. U.S. efforts also include ensuring appropriate funding for the OPCW's Investigation and Identification Team, which is responsible for identifying those responsible for the use of chemical weapons in Syria, regardless of whether the perpetrators are state or nonstate actors.

The U.S. Department of State is also working on developing OPCW States Parties' capacity to safely analyze and identify chemicals that would be used in an attack, including by nonstate actors, and determine the likely provenance of such chemical weapons agents. For example, the Forensic Science Center of Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California is working with the National Control Laboratory of Morocco to establish an OPCW labs twinning program. In 2021, U.S. government experts helped draft indicative guidelines for OPCW States Parties on how to secure their chemical value chains, including against malicious nonstate actors. The Department of State's Nonproliferation and Disarmament Fund also provided funding and personal protective equipment to support the OPCW TS's special missions and contingency operations related specifically to Syria through the OPCW's Trust Fund for Syria Missions. Finally, the U.S. government is studying the possibility of assisting African and Southeast Asian countries vulnerable to terrorism with developing chemical protection plans.

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 can 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 whose government 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 (NDAA) FY 2019 to refer to section 1754(c) of the NDAA FY 2019 as of August 13, 2018]; section 2371(a) of Title 22; or section 2780(d) of Title 22. (For information regarding Cuba, the DPRK, Iran, and Syria, see Chapter 2, State Sponsors of Terrorism.)

Terrorist Safe Havens

Africa

Sahel: Rough terrain, expansive territory, historically weak government presence, and longstanding grievances create conditions for terrorist groups such as al-Qa'ida affiliate Jama'at al-Islam wal-Muslimin and ISIS-Sahel (formerly known as ISIS in the Greater Sahara) to recruit fighters and conduct asymmetric attacks against civilians, security forces, and other government personnel. These terrorist groups have freedom of movement throughout large areas in the central Sahel in Mali and Burkina Faso, as well as in portions of Niger adjacent to the two countries. The decision of the Government of Mali to terminate the mission of the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (or MINUSMA) and also expel French troops, together with the July 2023 coup in Niger, increased instability in the central Sahel, which terrorist groups exploited to their advantage. The areas where terrorist groups can operate continue to grow and over the last several years have extended to border regions with coastal states, including Nigeria, Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, and Togo. No government in the Sahel was known to support or facilitate the proliferation or trafficking of WMD in or through its territory.

Mozambique: Areas of northern Mozambique remain largely undergoverned and susceptible to asymmetric attacks against civilians and government personnel by ISIS-Mozambique (ISIS-M). While the Mozambican government faces significant capacity challenges in countering terrorism, its willingness to mobilize security forces and engage in security cooperation with international partners means that ISIS-M is not able to operate unchallenged. The Mozambican government was not known to support or facilitate the proliferation or trafficking of WMD in or through its territory.

Somalia: Owing to inadequate government capacity, terrorists are able to organize, plan, raise funds, communicate, recruit, train, and operate in relative security in significant parts of the country. The Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) mobilized governmental and non-governmental forces to try to clear areas controlled by al-Shabaab and attempted to control the flow of terrorist fighters across its borders, with minimal success. The FGS cooperated with U.S. counterterrorism efforts, but its ability to respond to law enforcement requests was extremely limited. The Somali government was not known to support or facilitate the proliferation or trafficking of WMD in or through its territory.

Sudan: Because Sudanese Armed Forces and the Sudanese security services are consumed with the country's continuing armed conflict, much of the country remains contested, ungoverned, or poorly governed. Such conditions are conducive to providing potential safe haven for terrorists over time, though a high level of armed conflict likely disrupts terror group operations in the short term. There was no known support or facilitation for the proliferation or trafficking of WMD in or through Sudan.

The Lake Chad Region: In the portions of Cameroon, Chad, Niger, and Nigeria surrounding Lake Chad, remote terrain, historical grievances, and undergoverned spaces create conditions for Boko Haram and ISIS affiliate ISIS-West Africa to conduct asymmetric attacks against civilians and government personnel. No government in the Lake Chad Region was known to support or facilitate the proliferation or trafficking of WMD in or through its territory.

Southeast Asia

The Southern Philippines: The Philippines continued to dedicate significant resources to closely tracking terrorist groups that operate primarily, but not exclusively, in the southern part of the country. Although the Philippines remained a destination for foreign terrorist fighters from Indonesia, Malaysia, the Middle East, and Europe, the Philippines 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. To the extent possible, U.S. counterterrorism efforts focused on moving training and other direct engagement with Philippine National Police (PNP) units to the South, particularly in Mindanao, where the terrorist insurgency remains active.

The Philippine government, with U.S. and international assistance, continued to make progress in increasing interagency cooperation to identify, investigate, and prosecute terrorist activities in 2023. However, the continued ability of terrorist organizations to operate in the southern Philippines reflects the centuries-long challenge of governing effectively in the country's more remote areas and establishing consistent security in a region characterized by a strong separatist identity, endemic poverty, and religious differences, as well as dense jungle terrain that allows for elusive terrorist movement. ISIS-East Asia (ISIS-EA) remained an active belligerent in the region despite the loss of its leader in a joint operation by the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the PNP on June 14. ISIS-EA later claimed responsibility for a December 3 mass casualty attack on a Catholic Mass in Marawi. The government was not known to support or facilitate the proliferation or trafficking of WMD in or through its territory.

The Sulu/Sulawesi Seas Littoral

Malaysia: The government continued efforts to deny terrorists the use of the Sulu and Celebes Seas region as a safe haven by working with Indonesia and the Philippines to address the movement of foreign terrorists through the region. Officials told the press that possible terrorist transit through sea routes and porous borders remained a concern in Malaysia. The Eastern Sabah Security Command, a multiagency Malaysian government entity that provides additional security along the country's eastern maritime and terrestrial border with the Philippines and Indonesia in the Sulu and Celebes Seas, enforced a dusk-to-dawn curfew at sea in some areas and conducted maritime patrols to safeguard against cross-border threats by criminals or terrorist groups. The government was not known to support or facilitate the proliferation or trafficking of WMD in or through its territory.

Indonesia: The Government of Indonesia conducted monitoring and surveillance of suspected terrorist cells in its territory, including in the Sulu/Sulawesi Seas Littoral region. However, the Indonesian government also acknowledged that a lack of naval resources and law enforcement capacity hindered its ability to monitor potential terrorist activity in maritime and remote parts of Indonesia, including the Sulu and Sulawesi Seas. 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

Iraq: During 2023, portions of Iraq remained potential safe havens for terrorist training, organization, and operations. The Government of Iraq (GOI) was cognizant of this challenge and continued to engage in counterterrorism operations and cooperated with the United States, the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, and international organizations on counterterrorism efforts. Although the GOI issued Executive Order 237 in 2019 to further its control over Iran-aligned militia groups (IAMG) within the Popular Mobilization Forces, several of those groups continued to defy central government authority and instigated violent and destabilizing activities in Iraq and neighboring Syria, including conducting attacks against U.S. interests. The government was not known to support or facilitate the proliferation or trafficking of WMD in or through its territory.

Lebanon: Hizballah-dominated areas of Lebanon remained safe havens for terrorist groups. Hizballah used these areas for terrorist recruitment, training, fundraising, and financing. The Government of Lebanon did not take meaningful actions to disarm Hizballah, even though the organization's continued weapons buildup is in contravention of UNSCR 1701.

Other terrorist groups, including Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, continued to operate inside Lebanon's Palestinian refugee camps, over which there was limited government control.

Lebanon's lack of a strong control regime for the storage and movement of weaponizable materials posed risks for the spread of WMDs, including for potential terrorism. In 2023 the Lebanese Armed Forces, the Internal Security Forces, and other Lebanese authorities partnered with U.S. government agencies to detect and prevent proliferation and trafficking of WMD.

Southern Libya: Neither the Government of National Unity nor the Libyan National Army provides sanctuary to terrorist organizations to carry out terrorist activities from Libyan territory. However, both continued to require assistance in ensuring that Libya's territory was not used for terrorist activities, particularly along its southern border. There was no known support or facilitation for the proliferation or trafficking of WMD in or through Libya.

Yemen: The Republic of Yemen government (ROYG) does not provide safe haven to terrorist organizations, but the security vacuum created by the ongoing conflict in the country has afforded al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and ISIS-Yemen room to operate, primarily in central Yemen. Because of this instability, coupled with the ROYG's limited capacity, the United States continues to work with partners and allies to counter the presence of ISIS and other terrorist groups in Yemen, and continues multilateral partnership with the ROYG to address these threats. The ROYG continues to demonstrate both political will and technical ability to address threats of terrorism in the territory under its control. There was no known support or facilitation for the proliferation or trafficking of WMD in or through Yemen.

South Asia

Afghanistan: Terrorist groups, including ISIS-Khorasan Province (ISIS-K), AQAP, and Tehreek-e-Taliban-e-Pakistan (TTP), continued to operate in Afghanistan. Al-Qa'ida operations have shrunk to their lowest level since 2001, and the Taliban have made efforts to reduce ISIS-K operations in Afghanistan by targeting its leadership. The TTP retains a significant presence in Afghanistan, principally in areas bordering Pakistan, and conducted attacks into Pakistan. It is unclear whether the Taliban have either the will or the capability to eliminate the TTP safe haven and end cross-border attacks. The Taliban are unlikely to effectively control the flow of FTFs in and through Afghanistan. There was no known support or facilitation for the proliferation or trafficking of WMD in or through Afghanistan.

Pakistan: Pakistani security forces have demonstrated the technical expertise to identify, locate, and arrest known and suspected terrorists, with most operations occurring in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and in Balochistan.

Despite Pakistan's notable arrests, incidents of terrorist attacks – both from ISIS-K and TTP – rose sharply in frequency and in lethality over the last year. This shift was most prevalent in KP southern districts, likely owing to the region's proximity to Afghanistan, mountainous border terrain that is difficult to navigate and patrol, and decentralized authorities for counterterrorism operations, among other factors. Pakistani authorities engaged in several rounds of high-level diplomatic talks with the Afghan Taliban to discuss what Pakistani officials describe as the flow of TTP fighters across the Afghanistan-Pakistan border to conduct attacks in Pakistan. There was no known support or facilitation for the proliferation or trafficking of WMD in or through Pakistan.

Western Hemisphere

Colombia and Venezuela: Terrorist organizations continue to operate in these countries and profit from criminal activity. Venezuela continued to provide safe haven for Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN), Segunda Marquetalia, and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army (FARC-EP) – terrorist groups of Colombian origin – which operate in Venezuela and near Venezuela-Colombia border areas. ELN was present in multiple Venezuelan states, with a consolidated presence in many municipalities throughout the states of Amazonas, Anzoátegui, Apure, Barinas, Bolívar, Guárico, Táchira, and Zulia, as of December. FARC dissident groups are present in several Venezuelan states, with a consolidated presence in Amazonas, Apure, Bolívar, and Zulia, as of the end of 2023. There was no known support or facilitation for the proliferation or trafficking of WMD in or through Colombia or Venezuela.

White-Identity Terrorism/Racially or Ethnically Motivated Violent Extremism

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 2023 the Department of State continued implementing the Administration's National Strategy for Countering Domestic Terrorism, which includes an emphasis on transnational racially or ethnically motivated violent extremism (REMVE), through targeted engagements, relevant programming, and (where possible) designations of foreign REMVE individuals and entities.

In April, with support from the Department of State, the International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law held a roundtable on countering REMVE in the security services. Criminal justice representatives and policymakers from nearly 20 countries attended the roundtable and were joined by multilateral organization representatives and think tank experts. Participants discussed the increasing problems of radicalization to REMVE within the security sector, with specific emphases on the military and law enforcement. Participants also offered recommendations on how government and civil society can work to address the threats of REMVE within the institutions charged with keeping ordinary citizens safe from these types of threats.

In June the Departments of State and Justice co-hosted, with the Government of Norway, the second meeting of the Counterterrorism Law Enforcement Forum in Oslo. The meeting brought together more than 100 law enforcement officials, criminal justice practitioners, policymakers, and financial regulators from over 40 countries and multilateral organizations to discuss the REMVE threat. Participants highlighted the increased need to coordinate using the full range of tools to counter REMVE activity. The discussions noted the advantages of improving information sharing and data collection. Participants also noted that these activities should be accomplished among all levels of local, state, and national governments, and across borders and with civil society organizations.

The Counterterrorism (CT) Bureau also awarded \$2 million to fund new projects designed to counter Russia's disinformation regarding Ukraine and Ukrainian citizens who have sought refuge from Russia's war of aggression. These projects are intended to:

- Support the RAND Corporation's effort to identify which Russia-linked actors are most involved in spreading this type of disinformation and determine how and where these messages are being spread.
- Develop an effective countermessaging campaign to expose the Kremlin's REMVE falsehoods.
- Support university students in Moldova, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia to promote a unified and resilient Europe by pushing back against anti-Ukraine narratives.
- Increase policymakers' understanding of the ways in which the Kremlin directly and indirectly influences REMVE movements in Europe.
- Develop a new program through the Strong Cities Network to train and mentor local government officials and community leaders in Germany and several Central and Eastern European countries to build community resilience against hate and polarization, focusing on locales where Ukrainian nationals and ethnic Ukrainians are now living.

Furthermore, CT Bureau supported exchanges between local government officials from Europe and North America on efforts to counter REMVE, including through the Strong Cities Network. In January, CT facilitated the participation of Belgian, German, and Finnish mayors at the U.S. Conference of Mayors' winter meeting in Washington. The German Marshall Fund, in addition to hosting a discussion on countering REMVE at the

winter meeting, held a Strong Cities Network side event on countering hate and polarization. In May the city of Oslo and CT Bureau co-sponsored a workshop on countering REMVE in Oslo. In June, CT partnered with Embassy Bratislava and the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs on an International Visitor Leadership Program on countering REMVE for local and federal policymakers and practitioners from Slovakia. In September the Strong Cities Network held its fourth annual global summit on the margins of the UN General Assembly in New York. This event brought 200 local officials from 40 countries together, with REMVE being one of the main topics.

Finally, the CT Bureau collaborated with the organizers of the Eradicate Hate Global Summit on two panels at the third annual summit in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in September, including “Hate and Polarization in Central and Eastern Europe” and “Hate-Fueled Violence Against the LGBTQ+ Community.” For the latter discussion, CT sponsored the travel of an LGBTQI+ activist from Slovakia whose business in Bratislava was the target of a REMVE attack in 2022 that killed two persons.

Known WIT attacks in 2023 included the following:

- **Brazil:** In February a 17-year-old boy was arrested after he attacked a school with homemade explosives while wearing a Nazi armband. The teenager allegedly threw five Molotov cocktails filled with gasoline and nails at the school. Two additional unexploded homemade bombs were found at the scene. According to the local authorities, no one was injured during the attack. After his arrest, police searched the shooter’s home and discovered Portuguese versions of Adolf Hitler’s *Mein Kampf*, an airsoft rifle, and a notebook containing notes about Nazism.
- **Hungary:** In February, Hungarian neo-Nazis attacked Jewish community members and journalists as part of the “Day of Honor” event. The “Day of Honor” is the largest Hungarian neo-Nazi gathering, attracting neo-Nazis from all over Eastern Europe, and has occurred annually since 1997; the event has been previously banned by the Hungarian government.
- **United States:** In May, in Allen, Texas, an individual perpetrator launched an armed attack with an AR-15 on an outlet mall that killed eight civilians and wounded seven others. The gunman was shot and killed by a police officer during the attack. He was a neo-Nazi sympathizer wearing a patch on his chest that included the acronym “rwds,” according to two senior law enforcement officials. Authorities believe the letters stand for “right-wing death squad,” a phrase used in far-right online spaces. There has been no official claim of responsibility.
- **Mexico:** In May, in Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, an individual perpetrator planted three homemade bombs inside a movie theater; one detonated. The bomber left a handwritten message with a swastika drawn at the bottom. There were no injuries or casualties. There has been no official claim of responsibility.
- **Ireland:** In November, Irish white supremacists and ultranationalists online spread disinformation regarding the nationality of a stabbing suspect arrested after stabbing two adults and three children. This anti-immigrant disinformation led to three days of white supremacist rioting in Dublin, injuring police and bystanders.
- **Japan:** In November, in Tokyo, an individual conducted a car-ramming attack against the barricade of the Israeli Embassy. One person was injured, a police officer guarding the embassy. No group has claimed responsibility for this incident, though it was verified that the perpetrator was part of a right-wing extremist group.

Foreign partners designated, proscribed, banned, or otherwise restricted the activities of the groups and individuals below in 2023. Notably, statutory criteria and domestic legal authorization to take such actions differ greatly among countries. For example, other governments may rely solely on speech as the basis of the designation, proscription, or banning actions, which raises freedom-of-expression concerns and is not permissible in the United States, owing to First Amendment protections.

- **Hammerskins Deutschland** (banned by Germany) is a neo-Nazi organization and the German offshoot of the Hammerskins Nation – a U.S. group founded in 1988. According to German authorities, the core element of the group’s ideology is the propagation of a racial doctrine based on Nazi ideology. The purpose of Hammerskins Deutschland is to consolidate its right-wing violent extremist worldview, particularly through concerts at which it tries to appeal to nonmembers to radicalize them to violence.
- **Artgemeinschaft** (banned by Germany) is a Berlin-based neo-Nazi group founded in 1951 and described by German authorities as an important interface for the all-German neo-Nazi scene. According to German authorities, the group is racist and antisemitic and promotes a white supremacist ideology, including advocating for white-only families.
- **Bordeaux Nationaliste** (banned by France) was dissolved by Council of Ministers decree. According to the French dissolution decree, Bordeaux Nationaliste is a small far-right group that promotes a xenophobic ideology and has organized or participated in several violent and racist attacks in Bordeaux and its surrounding area.
- **Civitas** (banned by France) was dissolved by Council of Ministers decree. According to the French dissolution decree, Civitas had operated as an association since 1999 before becoming a political party in 2016. According to the French government, the group spreads antisemitic, anti-Muslim, homophobic, and conspiracy theories and seeks to “wage war against the republic,” encouraging the use of force to achieve this.
- **Martel Division or Division Martel** (banned by France) was dissolved by Council of Ministers decree. According to the French dissolution decree, the Martel Division formed during the second half of 2022 and had around 30 members. The group advocates violence against antifas, immigrants, or presumed Muslims. Martel Division also promotes the recourse to violence to promote the advent of nationalist and xenophobic supremacy. The dissolution decree also stated that the group organizes combat training and promotes the use of weapons in the confrontations that it encourages.
- **Russian Imperial Movement Individuals** (designated by North Macedonia). North Macedonia adopted restrictive measures against Russian Imperial Movement (RIM) leaders Stanislav Anatolyevich Vorobyev, Denis Valiulloovich Gariyev, and Nikolay Nikolayevich Trushchalov and RIM supporters Stanislav Shevchuk and Alexander Zhuchovsky. 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. Shevchuk is a Europe-based representative of RIM who traveled to the United States in 2017 with the objective of establishing connections between RIM and far-right violent extremist and white nationalist groups. He has spoken on behalf of RIM at rallies in Europe and advocated publicly for the group throughout Europe as recently as 2019. Zhuchovsky is a Russia-based supporter of RIM who has repeatedly used his account on Russia-based social media platform VK, formerly known as VKontakte, to fundraise and recruit for RIM. Since 2014, Zhuchovsky has raised more than 200 million rubles to purchase weapons and military equipment for RIM and other pro-Russian fighters in the Donbas in Ukraine and has facilitated the travel of RIM fighters to the region. Vorobyev, Gariyev, and Trushchalov were concurrently designated by the United States as Specially Designated Global Terrorists (SDGTs) in 2020. Shevchuk and Zhuchovsky were concurrently designated by the United States as SDGTs in 2022.

Anton Thulin (designated by North Macedonia) traveled to St. Petersburg in 2016 and received paramilitary training from RIM, including in bomb making. In 2017 a Swedish court convicted Thulin and sentenced him to 22 months in prison in connection with the detection of a powerful homemade bomb near a refugee residential center in Gothenburg, Sweden. After serving his sentence, Thulin sought to receive additional paramilitary training in Poland, before he was expelled by Polish authorities, who cited the “serious, real, and current threat to security and public order” he posed. Thulin was designated by the United States as an SDGT in 2022.

Countering Terrorism on the Economic Front

In 2023 the Department of State designated one new group as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist under the Department's authorities in Executive Order (E.O.) 13224. In addition, 14 individuals were designated as SDGTs. The Department also reviewed and maintained the Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) designations of seven entities, including the FTO and SDGT amendments of Real IRA to its new primary name of New Irish Republican Army.

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.

2023 E.O. 13224 Designations

On April 11 the Department of State designated Hurras al-Din leader Sami Mahmud Mohammed al-Uraydi. The Department's Rewards for Justice is also offering a reward of up to \$5 million for information on the identification or location of al-Uraydi. Groups like Hurras al-Din that exploit undergoverned spaces and conflict zones in Syria are responsible for killings, kidnappings, and violence targeting of members of religious minority groups.

On May 24 the Department of State designated five al-Shabaab leaders: Maxamed Siidow, Cali Yare, Maxamed Dauud Gabaane, Suleiman Cabdi Daoud, and Mohamed Omar Mohamed. Siidow, Yare, Gabaane, and Daoud are finance emirs who oversee al-Shabaab's illicit taxation operations in southern Somalia's Lower Shabelle. Mohamed is the al-Shabaab wali in the Diinsoor District, Bay region, and has been responsible for a series of attacks targeting civilians.

On June 8 the Department of State designated two ISIS General Directorate of Provinces (GDP) leaders: Abdallah Makki Muslih al-Rufay'i and Abu Bakr ibn Muhammad ibn 'Ali al-Mainuki. Al-Rufay'i is the Iraq-based ISIS GDP Bilad al-Rafidayn Office emir, and al-Mainuki is a Sahel-based ISIS GDP al-Furqan Office senior leader. ISIS-Core has relied on its regional GDP offices to provide operational guidance and funding around the world.

On June 20 the Department of State designated two ISIS leaders, Arkan Ahmad 'Abbas al-Matuti and Nawaf Ahmad Alwan al-Rashidi, as part of efforts to promote accountability for conflict-related sexual violence. Al-Matuti is a senior field military commander in Wilayat al-Jazirah, having held several positions within ISIS, including the wali of the Bulayj, Syria sector. Al-Matuti was also involved in selling Yezidi women and girls, taking several Yezidi captives as sexual slaves for himself. Al-Rashidi manages ISIS financial payments to members and widows and works in the group's smuggling operations. Al-Rashidi also was responsible for the sexual slavery and rape of Yezidi women and girls in Sinjar, Iraq.

On November 14 the Department of State designated Akram al-Ajouri, the Palestine Islamic Jihad deputy secretary general and leader of its militant wing, the al-Quds Brigades. Iran has trained PIJ fighters to produce and develop missiles in Gaza while also funding groups that provide financial support to Palestinian Islamic Jihad-affiliated fighters.

On November 17 the Department of State designated Kata'ib Sayyid al-Shuhada (KSS) and its secretary general, Hashim Finyan Rahim al-Saraji. Iran, through the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and its external operations force (known as the Qods Force), has supported KSS,

Kata'ib Hizballah (KH), and other Iran-aligned militia groups with training, funding, and sophisticated weapons – including increasingly accurate and lethal unmanned aerial systems. KSS, working at times with other U.S.-designated terrorist organizations, including KH and Harakat al-Nujaba, has planned and supported attacks against U.S. personnel.

On December 8 the Department of State designated two ISIS-Democratic Republic of the Congo (ISIS-DRC, aka Allied Democratic Forces) leaders: Mohamed Ali Nkalubo and Ahmed Mahamud Hassan Aliyani. Nkalubo, an ISIS-DRC senior adviser and deputy to ISIS-DRC's overall leader, served as a communication conduit to ISIS-Core senior leaders and is responsible for disseminating ISIS propaganda in central Africa. Aliyani, an ISIS-DRC commander, oversees the facilitation of foreign terrorist fighters traveling into the Democratic Republic of the Congo to join the group. Both individuals have led ISIS-DRC attack planning and participated in numerous attack operations, including the April 2022 attack at a bar in the Katindo military camp in Goma, DRC; the January 15, 2023, attack on a Pentecostal church in Kasindi, DRC; and the June 16, 2023, attack on the Lhubiriha Secondary School in Uganda.

Multilateral Efforts to Counter Terrorism and Violent Extremism

In 2023 the United States continued to work through multilateral organizations to promote whole-of-government and whole-of-society CT efforts that respect human rights and the rule of law. The United States and the European Union revived the annual U.S.-EU CT Strategic Dialogue. The United States continued to strengthen partnerships, build consensus on counterterrorism threats, and advance U.S. measures to counter terrorism and violent extremism. Examples of U.S. multilateral engagements are described below.

The UN: Sustained and strategic engagement at the UN on CT issues is a priority for the United States. Throughout 2023, the UN remained actively engaged in addressing the threat of terrorism to international peace and security, including through the Secretary General's hosting of the third CT High-Level Week and the eighth review of the UN Global Counterterrorism Strategy.

The UN Security Council and its Counterterrorism Committee (CTC) and the Counterterrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED): The United States supported CTC and CTED efforts to assess terrorist trends, to analyze capacity gaps of member states to implement UNSCRs 1373 (2001), 1624 (2004), 2178 (2014), 2396 (2017), and 2617 (2021), along with other relevant CT resolutions, and to facilitate needed training and other technical assistance to UN member states. In 2023 the CTC held open briefings on issues including on border security and countering terrorist narratives and held negotiations on CTED's nonbinding guiding principles on the use of unmanned aircraft systems for terrorist purposes. CTED has conducted 202 assessment visits to 117 member states since its creation in 2005. In 2023 it conducted assessments to nine countries, including Canada, the DRC, Ecuador, and Jordan.

- **UN Security Council Sanctions Regimes:** In 2023 the United States supported the UN listings of Abdul Rehman Makki (the Lashkar-e-Tayyiba head of political affairs), ISIS-K spokesperson Sultan Aziz Azam, ISIS-K senior leader Maulawi Rajab, Abdullahi Osman Mohamed Cadow (an al-Shabaab senior explosive expert), and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant in South-East Asia. The U.S. government continued to work closely with the UN 1267 Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh) and al-Qa'ida, 1988 Taliban, 1533 Democratic Republic of the Congo, and 751 Al-Shabaab Sanctions Committees by proposing listings or amendments. The United States also continued to engage the UN 1267 ombudsperson regarding petitions for de-listings, provided input to the committee to enhance its procedures and implementation of sanctions measures, and assisted respective monitoring teams or panels of experts with information for

its research and reports. Further, the United States led or supported the negotiation of CT-/sanctions-related UNSCRs, including UNSCR 2716, which renewed the mandate of the 1988 Taliban Sanction Regime's Monitoring Team, and UNSCR 2713, which renewed the al-Shabaab Sanctions Regime.

- **The UN General Assembly and the UN Office of Counterterrorism:** The UN General Assembly adopted by consensus resolution 77/298 in June as part of its eighth biennial review of the UN Global CT Strategy (GCTS). The GCTS, originally adopted in 2006, has four pillars: 1) measures to address the conditions conducive to terrorism, 2) measures to prevent and counter terrorism, 3) measures to build states' capacity to prevent and counter terrorism and to strengthen the role of the United Nations system in this regard, and 4) measures to ensure respect for human rights for all and the rule of law as the fundamental basis of the fight against terrorism. The UN Office of Counterterrorism (UNOCT) serves as Secretariat of the UN Global CT Coordination Compact, composed of 42 UN entities and several others such as INTERPOL, which is described as the largest coordination framework across peace and security, development, and human rights pillars of work in the UN.

The United States participated in UNOCT's third Counterterrorism High-Level Week in June and co-hosted multiple side events to advance counterterrorism priorities such as repatriation of foreign terrorist fighters and associated family members from northeast Syria and countering the use of unmanned aerial systems for terrorist purposes.

- **The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime:** The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime's (UNODC's) Terrorism Prevention Branch continued to assist countries seeking to ratify and implement the universal legal instruments against terrorism and provided assistance in 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 the branch as a counterterrorism assistance implementer, particularly for programming to strengthen member states' criminal justice systems' response to terrorism. The United States participated in the annual UN Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, which included the negotiation of the UN General Assembly resolution, "Technical Assistance Provided by the UNODC Related to Counterterrorism," which guides UNODC's CT efforts. The resolution had not been updated since 2019 and now encourages UNODC to provide support to member states to create terrorist screening databases as outlined in UNSCR 2396 (2017); recognize the adoption of the International Civil Aviation Organization's new Standard and Recommended Practice on Passenger Name Record data; recognize UNODC's role in addressing terrorist attacks on the basis of xenophobia, racism, intolerance, and religion or belief; address the issue of gender-based violence; and acknowledge the importance of monitoring and evaluation of programming.
- **The UNSC 1540 Committee:** The 1540 Committee monitors and facilitates efforts to implement UNSCR 1540 (2004), which addresses 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 on request. Using the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs Trust Fund resources to cover expenses, the GoE also has interacted with the OPCW, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, the World Customs Organization, INTERPOL, UNODC, the Financial Action Task Force, and other multilateral and national organizations that provide counterproliferation and counterterrorism capacity building to interested member states. The United States is one of 10 countries that, along with the EU, have contributed to a UN 1540 Trust Fund managed by the 1540 Committee's United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) Secretariat. The funding used to support these activities also helps support UNSCR 1540 Regional Coordinator positions in the Africa and Asia regions. U.S.-UNODA funds also continued to be used to conduct projects that assist African

and Asian countries in strengthening national 1540 implementation by providing training to national 1540 points of contact and developing voluntary national action plans. Given the key role played by current 1540 coordinators in GoE-supported peer reviews, the United States will continue to promote establishing and sustaining additional 1540 regional coordinators, advocate to increase the number and quality of national action plans and peer reviews, and encourage more effective implementation of UNSCR 1540 and subsequent resolutions. Likewise, the United States will continue to work with likeminded partners in the committee to expand 1540's reach to address emerging WMD proliferation threats posed by new technologies and delivery vehicles as well as evolving trends in proliferation finance.

The Global Counterterrorism Forum: Founded in September 2011 by the United States and Türkiye, the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) is an informal, apolitical, multilateral counterterrorism platform to strengthen international civilian-led counterterrorism efforts. The forum helps member countries implement UN binding resolutions and commitments through the development and adoption of practical CT guidance and toolkits. The European Union and Egypt currently co-chair the GCTF, through 2026.

The GCTF has five working groups, three of which are thematic – Countering Violent Extremism (CVE), Criminal Justice and the Rule of Law (CJ-ROL), and Foreign Terrorist Fighters – and two focused on regional efforts: Capacity-Building in the East Africa Region, and Capacity-Building in the West Africa Region. The United States and Jordan co-chair the FTF Working Group.

The UN is a close partner of the GCTF and a regular participant in its activities. The forum 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 Counterterrorism Strategy and, more broadly, to complement and reinforce existing multilateral counterterrorism efforts. The GCTF also partners with a wide range of regional multilateral organizations, including the Council of Europe, the OSCE, NATO, the AU, the OAS, the League of Arab States, and ASEAN.

In September, GCTF members produced and circulated two new documents related to countering violent extremism:

- Recommendations for Funding and Enabling Community-Level Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE)
- National-Local Cooperation Toolkit

The United States supported the work of the GCTF through six virtual and five in-person engagements co-led by the United States in 2023:

- **Racially or Ethnically Motivated Violent Extremism Toolkit and Initiative.** The United States and Norway hosted a launch event and two virtual workshops to raise awareness of the GCTF REMVE Toolkit. The workshops brought together more than 150 participants from foreign governments, law enforcement, academia, civil society, and the private sector to share expertise on REMVE and examine how the Toolkit can be applied to current and emerging threats.
- **Initiative on Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Returning Family Members of Foreign Terrorist Fighters.** The United States and Jordan, as co-leads of the FTF Working Group, held two in-person events in support of this initiative. The FTF Working Group partnered with the GCTF CVE Working Group leads (Australia and Indonesia) to host an event on the margins of the GCTF Coordinating Committee in Cairo focused on rehabilitating and reintegrating FTFs and their associated family members. The event brought nearly 100 participants together to exchange ideas and good practices on effective rehabilitation and reintegration programming based on GCTF member countries' individual experiences. The FTF Working Group held a second in-person workshop in Amman, Jordan, in October focused on the Middle

East. Policymakers, government officials, practitioners, UN entities, and regional civil society organizations gathered over two days to examine the recommendations outlined in the *GCTF Good Practices on Addressing the Challenge of Returning Families of Foreign Terrorist Fighters* and apply them to a tabletop exercise scenario. The workshop enabled participants to identify current gaps in rehabilitation and reintegration programming.

- **Watchlisting Toolkit Initiative.** The Watchlisting Toolkit initiative focused on implementation of the Toolkit's recommendations to help countries construct and manage their watchlisting enterprises and screening of known and suspected terrorists. This Toolkit is a useful resource for policymakers, law enforcement officials, immigration and consular officers, and agencies that manage and operate national-level terrorist watchlists. In November the United States organized a two-day workshop for over 40 participants in Santiago, Chile, to build the watchlisting capabilities of Western Hemisphere countries.
- **Initiative on Maritime Security and Terrorist Travel.** The GCTF Operationalizing the Prevention and Interdiction of Maritime Terrorist Travel initiative promotes the recommendations put forth in the Addendum to the GCTF New York Memorandum on Good Practices for Interdicting Terrorist Travel to address potential vulnerabilities in the maritime sector that could be exploited by terrorists. In December the United States partnered with the G7++ Friends of Gulf of Guinea Co-Chairs, Germany and Côte d'Ivoire, to host a three-day workshop focused on operationalization of the GCTF maritime security good practices in Dakar, Senegal. The workshop brought together more than 50 participants from GCTF member and partner states, international organizations, the private sector, civil society, and non-governmental organizations, including a large and diverse representation from Central and West Africa, to share lessons learned and expertise on how to effectively counter maritime terrorist travel.
- **Initiative to Counter Terrorist Use of Unmanned Aircraft Systems.** The United States and the UK continued their partnership to counter the use of unmanned aircraft systems (also known as unmanned aerial systems) for terrorist purposes by operationalizing the *Berlin Memorandum on Good Practices to Counter Unmanned Aerial System Threats* (2019). The leads held a March launch of this initiative and two practical workshops in October and December, bringing together policymakers and practitioners from the public and private sectors to examine the current threat landscape and identify appropriate solutions.
- **Border Security Management Initiative.** The FTF Working Group Co-Chairs, in partnership with UNOCT, announced the creation of a new initiative focused on updating and enhancing the GCTF *Good Practices in the Area of Border Security and Management to Counter Terrorism and Stem the Flow of Foreign Terrorist Fighters* resource. The FTF Working Group and UNOCT hosted both a launch event in September on the margins of the GCTF Coordinating Committee and Ministerial in New York and the first of two exploratory dialogues in December. Through a series of virtual and in-person exploratory dialogues and workshops taking place from September 2023 through June 2024, the initiative leads will seek recommendations and expertise from border security experts to inform the drafting of an addendum to the aforementioned GCTF border security resource.

More information on the GCTF is available through its [website](#).

Global Counterterrorism Forum-Inspired Institutions: The International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law (IIJ), Hedayah, and the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund 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.** In 2014 the United States and other GCTF partners established the IIJ, headquartered in Malta, to help criminal justice practitioners better investigate and prosecute terrorism in line with international guiding principles, including those established by the GCTF. In coordination with the GCTF and others, the IIJ has established itself as a leading

institute in counterterrorism and rule-of-law capacity building, training more than 9,000 lawmakers, police, prosecutors, judges, corrections officials, and other criminal justice stakeholders from over 120 participating countries. In addition to offering a broad spectrum of foundational courses on topics such as terrorism investigations, juvenile justice in the context of terrorism, international evidence sharing, and sexual violence as a weapon of terrorism, the IIJ has convened a range of programs that align with specific U.S. strategic interests and key counterterrorism priorities, including collection, sharing and use of battlefield evidence, protection of insider witnesses before international tribunals, racially or ethnically motivated violent extremism, and repatriation from detention facilities and camps in northeast Syria. The IIJ works closely with the GCTF, supporting the work of the GCTF's CJ-ROL Working Group, hosting meetings and workshops, and operationalizing and informing the development of GCTF good-practice documents.

- **Hedayah.** Hedayah is the first-ever international center of excellence for countering violent extremism, and is headquartered in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. Hedayah concentrates on capacity building, dialogue and CVE communications, and research and analysis. The center continued to organize capacity building workshops on CVE communications, education-based approaches to CVE, countering REMVE efforts, rehabilitation and reintegration workshops, and CVE national action plans. In 2023, Hedayah concluded its CT-supported program that focused on Tunisia and Tajikistan and improved government awareness of P/CVE strategic communication approaches and tools through a new CVE communication strategy. Hedayah also held its annual research conference in The Hague and co-hosted an UNGA side event called “Women on Drivers of Peace and Innovation.” Hedayah launched its Strengths and Needs Assessment Tool for CVE in March, and also continued to focus on rehabilitation and reintegration of FTFs and associated family members returning from conflict zones, including northeast Syria. In 2023, Hedayah raised about \$10 million for programs and operating expenses from donors including Australia, Canada, the EU, Morocco, Spain, the UAE, the UK, and the United States.
- **The Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund.** The Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF) serves as the first global fund to strengthen community resilience to terrorism. Based in Geneva, GCERF focuses on preventing and countering terrorism by building the capacity of small, local, community-based organizations. Since its inception in 2013, GCERF has raised more than \$180 million in grant commitments and in-kind contributions, with the United States counted as one of the top donors. As of June, GCERF supported 43 active grants in 14 partner countries: Albania, Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burkina Faso, Kenya, Kosovo, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, North Macedonia, the Philippines, Somalia, Sri Lanka, and Tunisia. Estimated conservatively, GCERF projects have reached 3.2 million direct beneficiaries.

The Strong Cities Network: In 2015 the Strong Cities Network (SCN) launched at the UN General Assembly, with support from the United States. With 25 founding members, SCN now includes more than 225 local governments across six continents. The network 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 hosts the SCN secretariat, which 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 and the EU, SCN began to launch regional hubs in southern and East Africa, the Middle East and North Africa, South Asia, and the Western Balkans.

SCN hosted several transatlantic dialogues on city-led approaches to countering hate and polarization in Berlin, Oslo, and Washington. In September, New York City hosted more than 150 mayors and other local leaders for the fourth SCN global summit on the margins of UNGA.

INTERPOL (International Criminal Police Organization): Through its I-24/7 secure global police communications network, INTERPOL connects member states through their respective National Central Bureaus (NCBs) to its criminal police investigative databases, secure messaging

platform for NCB-NCB investigative coordination, and its application portal for countries to issue an INTERPOL alert (Diffusion or Notice). INTERPOL provides technical assistance and training to help member countries affected by the FTF challenge by providing frontline officials with access to INTERPOL databases to enhance international terrorism investigations and traveler screening. By extending these connections beyond a country's NCB to strategic, high-volume airports, seaports, and land ports of entry – as well as to other government agencies with investigative responsibilities – national authorities are better able to identify, deter, and interdict FTFs and other transnational criminals.

The European Union: The EU remains a top counterterrorism partner of the United States; both share a common definition of terrorism and have an established a common list of terrorist groups. In May the EU hosted the annual U.S.-EU CT Strategic Dialogue in Brussels for the first time (owing to the COVID pandemic) since 2019. Together, the United States and the EU reviewed their counterterrorism strategies, which emphasize diplomacy, multilateral cooperation, and building partner capacity. The Administration made repatriation, rehabilitation, reintegration, and, where appropriate, the prosecution and incarceration of FTFs and associated family members in northeast Syria a priority, and the U.S. encouraged European partners to work in partnership to repatriate their nationals from the al-Hol and al-Roj displaced persons camps. Both the United States and its European partners collaborate in Syria and Iraq, where the threat only escalates if FTF repatriations do not increase. Both agreed that Afghanistan continues to pose a growing CT risk, not only to Pakistan and the Central Asian countries but also to European and U.S. interests, as ISIS seeks to increase its external operations capabilities. Before the October 7 Hamas attacks, U.S.-EU coordination focused on threats that were diffuse and geographically diverse. Since then, however, Europe and the United States have seen a marked increase in domestic threats from global terrorist groups, and by lone actors inspired by rhetoric of REMVE actors.

The United States worked closely with the EU and its member states on REMVE, which some EU members refer to as “right-wing extremism,” “nationalist extremism,” or “far-right extremism.” These threats, largely from violent white supremacists, are on the rise in both Europe and the United States, where these actors’ movements appear to be centered and based. Self-radicalized individuals with no formal ties to groups also are a growing threat. The United States and the EU work together to address the threat posed by REMVE actors as they actively engage, recruit, and radicalize target audiences to violence through online engagement. The EU is also concerned by individual “right-wing nationalists” from member states who have been volunteering in Ukraine and later returning to their home countries with battlefield experience – and possibly also with weapons. There are significant transnational links between REMVE actors and networks on both sides of the Atlantic, and the United States and the EU work jointly to tackle these threats.

The EU is an integral partner in tackling challenges associated with battlefield evidence, prison overcrowding, and the volume of repatriations from northeast Syria. Although EU institutions note that decisions related to repatriating FTFs and their associated family members from the battlefield in Syria are reserved for member states, EU authorities have stated that rehabilitating and reintegrating returning citizens is a priority at the EU level. Human rights and humanitarian groups continue to criticize the inaction of EU member states to repatriate their citizens. The U.S. Departments of Defense, Justice, and State continue efforts with the EU and its member states to facilitate the sharing of battlefield evidence, as well as to emphasize that counterterrorism is an important area for NATO-EU cooperation.

During the 2023 U.S.-EU Strategic Dialogue, both identified Afghanistan/Central Asia and the Sahel/Coastal West Africa as priority regions of emphasis. The EU continued its military and law enforcement capacity building missions in the Horn of Africa, the Central African Republic, and Mozambique, working closely with U.S. elements in counterterrorism, border security, and stabilization efforts, while its mission in the Sahel faced new constraints. For example, Niger announced its intention to withdraw from remaining EU partnerships, including the EU Military Partnership Mission in Niger, in December. The EU has 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 Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE): Under North Macedonia's leadership as the 2023 Chair in Office, the OSCE approach to counterterrorism focused on the protection of vulnerable targets from terrorist attacks and improving border security measures to counter terrorist travel while upholding international human rights law.

In November, experts from Central Asia and Mongolia gathered in Tashkent for a workshop organized by the OSCE Action Against Terrorism Unit of the Transnational Threats Department, the OSCE Project Coordinator in Uzbekistan, the UN Office of Counterterrorism, the UN Conference on Trade and Development, and INTERPOL. The group discussed how to better protect vulnerable targets, such as critical infrastructure and soft targets, from terrorist attacks. The event provided an opportunity to enhance the preparedness of OSCE participating states and a platform for dialogue on cross-border infrastructure protection.

The Seventh OSCE Passenger Data Exchange Seminar also took place in November. Experts emphasized the need to establish human rights-focused passenger data legislation and technical and financial support in applying it. They also highlighted the benefits of engaging with airlines from the early stage and how to analyze and profile passenger data.

In December the OSCE launched the Project PROTECT initiative with an event in Uzbekistan. With U.S. support, this project seeks to enhance national approaches in the protection of vulnerable targets from terrorist threats and other hazards through the provision of specialized guidance, technical assistance, and opportunities for regional cooperation across the OSCE area. OSCE staff actively participated in global and regional efforts supported by the United States through the Global Counterterrorism Forum, the International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law, and NATO.

NATO: Heads of States and Government (HOSG) met for a NATO Summit in Vilnius, Lithuania, in July and released a communique that declared terrorism, in all its forms and manifestations, as the most direct asymmetric threat to the security of allied citizens and to international peace and prosperity. HOSG also tasked the NATO permanent council to update the NATO Counterterrorism Action Plan (CTAP) and Counterterrorism Policy Guidelines (2012). Secretary General Stoltenberg appointed Assistant Secretary General for Operations Tom Goffus as his Special Coordinator for Counterterrorism in October. NATO work under the CTAP focuses on improving awareness of the terrorist threat, developing capabilities to prepare and respond, and enhancing engagement with partner countries and other international actors. The CT Bureau supports NATO capacity building efforts for partners in the Middle East, North Africa, and the Sahel focused on civil-military coordination and information sharing, including on battlefield evidence, border security, complex terrorist attacks, resilience, cultural property protection, and counterterrorist financing. Under the auspices of this project, NATO in May brought together experts focused on civilian-military coordination as a complement to ongoing work with the International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law (IIJ) and the Council of Europe (CoE). At the NATO Center of Excellence for Stability Policing in Vicenza, Italy, NATO conducted two iterations of institutional-level battlefield evidence training for participants from Algeria, Israel, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Qatar, Tunisia, and the UAE. In September the NATO Joint Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear Defense Center of Excellence in Vyškov, Czech Republic, hosted a training for first responders to a terrorist attack. The United States also contributed to the work of the NATO Resilience Committee to strengthen national and collective resilience and civil preparedness against military and nonmilitary threats. NATO international staff members regularly collaborate with the AU, the CoE, the EU, the IIJ, the OSCE, the UN, and other international and regional organizations.

The Council of Europe: The United States actively participates and supports Council of Europe (CoE) counterterrorism efforts. The CoE's counterterrorism priorities, as established in its 2023-27 Strategy, concentrate on prevention, prosecution, and protection. The Council of Europe Committee on Counterterrorism (CDCT) convened several working groups throughout the year to which the U.S. contributed policy and judicial expertise, including on Emerging Terrorist Threats; Preparedness and Emergency Response; Countering Terrorist Communications, Recruitment, and

Training; and the Use of Information Collected in Conflict Zones as Evidence in Criminal Proceedings Related to Terrorist Offenses. With U.S. support, the CoE partnered with the IIJ to develop practices that enable the use of battlefield evidence in the investigation and prosecution of terrorism cases and violations of international humanitarian law. Representatives from the U.S. Departments of State and Justice participated in the January CoE “Digital Conference on Countering Terrorist Communications.” CT Bureau officials worked with counterparts from the 46 member states of the Council of Europe at the biennial CDCT plenary to advance efforts to utilize battlefield evidence to bring terrorists to justice, address the threat of terrorism motivated by violent “far right” ideologies, and counter increased abuses of technology for terrorist purposes. The CoE hosts networks of Contact Points on Foreign Terrorist Fighters and the Exchange of Procedural Information Regarding the Legal Standing of Victims of Terrorism to increase information sharing among operational actors. (The United States participates in both.) The CoE Secretariat regularly coordinates with countries and other multilateral organizations and entities such as the EU, NATO, the OAS, the OSCE, and the UN.

Group of Seven Roma-Lyon Group on Counterterrorism and Counter Crime: Japan served as the 2023 Group of Seven (G-7) President and set a well-considered agenda for the year that culminated in the adoption of the G-7 Interior and Security Ministerial Statement focusing on solidarity and support for Ukraine, and on CT-related priorities and deliverables such as addressing terrorism and violent extremism, including online. The United States participated in the Roma-Lyon Group’s Heads of Delegation meetings and the Roma-Lyon Group’s six subgroups, ensuring the facilitation and implementation of ongoing projects that develop good practices for counterterrorism and law enforcement efforts. The United States also chaired the Roma-Lyon Group’s cross-modal Transportation Security Subgroup, including security for the 2024 Olympics, recently published regulations, updated national strategies, and updated security measures related to cyber, aviation, rail, and maritime domains. The United States briefed on the Man-Portable Air-Defense Systems (or MANPADS) task force developments and enhancing cross-border cooperation, and also presented a draft Compendium of Practice for a new flight-instruction security project.

The Organization of American States’ Inter-American Committee on Terrorism: The OAS’s Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism (CICTE) held its 23rd regular session in Mexico City, May 17-18. Led by Mexico and Chile as outgoing and incoming chairs in office, respectively, the meeting focused on preventing and addressing terrorism and violent extremism that can lead to terrorism. With U.S. support, CICTE held expert-level briefings on understanding and preventing violent extremism and on the security of major events and tourist destinations. In June, during UN Counterterrorism Week, CICTE co-hosted a side event, “The Nexus Between Organized Crime and Terrorism in the Americas” with the UN Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute and the Counterterrorism Committee Executive Directorate. In 2023, 18 member states including the United States participated in the Inter-American Network on Counterterrorism, which CT Bureau assistance supports. 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.

ASEAN, the ASEAN Regional Forum, and the East Asia Summit: Counterterrorism activities with the 10-member ASEAN bloc and the 27-member the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in 2023 included annual meetings and capacity building efforts under U.S. leadership. The United States partnered with the Philippines and Bangladesh and will serve as co-chairs for the ASEAN Regional Forum Intersessional Meeting on Counterterrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) for 2024-26. This role also involves updating the CTTC workplan for a 3-year timeframe, which will address CVE, illicit drugs, human trafficking, border security and management, and chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and high-yield explosives. In 2023, under the ARF, the United States participated in a workshop on Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism in Indonesia. The United States also co-sponsored the third ASEAN-U.S. Regional Workshop on P/CVE in Indonesia, this time focusing on community resilience.

Also, 2023 yielded the signing of a memorandum of understanding on the U.S.-ASEAN Institute for Rising Leaders Program, which will allow 30 midcareer public service professionals from ASEAN states to develop their leadership skills separately, through a public-private partnership with

Arizona State University, the U.S. government-established U.S.-ASEAN Center based in the United States. The 13th East Asia Summit (EAS) Foreign Ministers' Meeting was convened on July 14 in Jakarta, and foreign ministers released a statement declaring their commitment to further strengthening the EAS as the premier leaders-led forum for dialogue and cooperation on broad strategic, political, and economic issues of common interest in East Asia. On September 6, Indonesia hosted the 11th ASEAN-United States Summit, which promoted dialogue regarding peace, security, and stability in the region.

The African Union (AU): There are two main bodies within the AU that lead its CT efforts: the Political Affairs, Peace and Security Department's Conflict Management Division, located at the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; 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 national action plans, and 3) enhancing international cooperation to ensure relevant regional approaches are taken fully into account. In April, the African Union, in conjunction with Government of Nigeria, hosted a high-Level African Counter-Terrorism Meeting on the Theme: Strengthening Regional Cooperation and Institution Building to Address the Evolving Threat of Terrorism in Africa. In September, Global Counterterrorism Forum invited the AU to participate as privileged partner.

The League of Arab States: The League of Arab States (LAS) is a regional organization consisting of 22 member states that serves as a forum for member states to coordinate policy on matters including security, CVE, and other regional threats of which counterterrorism work is a priority issue. The LAS is also a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. In July the United States hosted a Strategic Dialogue with the Secretariat of the LAS in Washington, where leaders discussed counterterrorism and regional priorities.

The International Civil Aviation Organization: The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) is a specialized UN agency that promotes the development of international civil air navigation safety and security standards and fosters the planning and development of international air transport to ensure safe and orderly growth. The organization adopts standards and recommended practices across many areas, including air navigation, its infrastructure, flight inspection, prevention of unlawful interference, and facilitation of border crossing procedures for international civil aviation. The United States continues to seek to raise the profile of aviation security within the ICAO Secretariat, with the objective of parity between safety and security in the ICAO.

The Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism: The United States continued to observe the 2022 suspension of official Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT) activities and co-chair cooperation with Russia following its full-scale invasion of Ukraine. The United States planned and implemented six multilateral, capacity building activities outside of the formal GICNT framework in 2023 to address global nuclear terrorism threats and challenges with likeminded countries and without Russia's involvement.

Financial Action Task Force: The Financial Action Task Force (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 promulgate effective implementation of the global standards are extended by FATF-style regional bodies worldwide. In 2023, FATF continued to address terrorist financing through its ongoing work. This included regular, nonpublic updates to the FATF global network on the financing of ISIS, al-Qa'ida, and their affiliates, as well as the completion of a report on the use of crowdfunding techniques by terrorist organizations to raise money. FATF also revised and updated best practices for Recommendation 8, the standard related to the protection of non-profit organizations from misuse by terrorist financiers and other illicit actors.

Christchurch Call to Action to Eliminate Terrorist and Violent Extremist Content Online (Christchurch Call): In 2021 the United States officially joined the New Zealand- and France-led Christchurch Call, established in 2019 after the livestreamed terrorist attacks in Christchurch, New Zealand. When announcing its decision to join, the United States applauded language in the Christchurch Call emphasizing the importance of respecting human rights and the rule of law, including the protection of freedom of expression. The United States also noted that in its Christchurch Call participation, the United States would not take steps that would violate the freedoms of speech and association protected by the First Amendment, nor violate people's reasonable expectations of privacy. The United States engaged in active partnership with governments, tech companies, and civil society in the forum's workstreams on key issues such as transparency reporting, new technologies, youth, and gender-based violence and violent extremism to mitigate the risk of online platforms being exploited for terrorist or violent extremist purposes.

The Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism: In 2023 the United States continued to participate in the industry-led Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism (GIFCT). The GIFCT was established by Facebook, YouTube, X (Twitter), and Microsoft in 2017, in close partnership with UN-affiliated Tech Against Terrorism, and reorganized as an NGO in 2020. Its objectives are to prevent and counter terrorist and violent extremist exploitation of online platforms through the development and sharing of technology, including by providing assistance to smaller companies and by implementing research and prevention programs. In 2023 the United States continued to serve on the GIFCT Independent Advisory Committee and participated in GIFCT Working Groups on Crisis Response, Legal Frameworks, Red Teaming (emerging technologies), and Blue Teaming (positive interventions).

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD): In 2023 the United States continued its efforts with governments, tech companies, civil society, and other expert stakeholders to implement the OECD's Terrorist and Violent Extremist Content (TVEC) Voluntary Transparency Reporting Framework (VTRF). The aim of the VTRF is to increase voluntary reporting by platforms of all sizes to help build the evidence base for sound policymaking and to avoid regulatory fragmentation under the auspices of the OECD Committee on Digital Economy Policy. In 2023 an updated baseline report was completed that outlined top private sector and government efforts on TVEC.

The Aqaba Process: In 2023 the United States participated with other governments, private-sector companies, and selected stakeholders in Jordan's counterterrorism-focused Aqaba Process. King Abdullah II of Jordan launched the Aqaba Process in 2015 as an informal international platform to bring together government decision makers and other stakeholders to coordinate strategic efforts to counter terrorism and violent extremism both offline and online. Jordan started the Aqaba Process to address the need for a holistic approach that addresses terrorist threats collectively and simultaneously, sometimes on a regional or thematic basis.

The Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS: The CT Bureau manages the Secretariat of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, formed in 2014. The Defeat-ISIS Coalition, consisting of 82 member countries and five international organizations, hosts an annual ministerial and other high-level diplomatic meetings in close partnership with Department of Defense and international counterparts. The Coalition has expanded its efforts to address the growing ISIS threat in Africa and Central Asia. In 2023, Defeat-ISIS Coalition members raised nearly \$600 million in stabilization pledges – including a U.S. pledge of \$ 149 million – to support infrastructure and other critical projects in Iraq and northeastern Syria. This funding also improved security measures and humanitarian services at the al-Hol displaced persons camp in northeast Syria. Additionally, other Coalition Working Groups continued to prioritize 1) countermessaging programming in Syria and Iraq, West Africa and the Sahel, and Central Asia through the Coalition's Communications Working Group; 2) disrupting ISIS's financial flows through the Counter-ISIS Finance Group; 3) repatriating ISIS detainees and associated family members from northeast Syria; and 4) expanding scope to address ISIS members transiting Africa and Central Asia through the Foreign Terrorist Fighter Working Group.

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 violent extremist groups and their affiliates and adherents to influence, radicalize, recruit, and mobilize individuals and communities to terrorism and violent extremism. Preventing and countering radicalization, recruitment, and mobilization to violence are essential counterterrorism tools. The U.S. government's strategy to minimize the impact of terrorism and violent extremism includes efforts to build the capacity of local actors to address their drivers at the 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 2023, through bilateral and multilateral engagement, the Department of State's CT Bureau emphasized three key areas in strategy formulation, diplomatic engagement, and foreign assistance programming: 1) countering racially or ethnically motivated violent extremism, 2) countering the use of the internet for terrorist purposes, including through countermessaging, and 3) rehabilitating and reintegrating foreign terrorist fighters and their associated family members. The CT Bureau partnered with local and national government officials, community leaders, NGOs, educators, religious figures, private sector technology companies, mental health professionals and social workers, and others to build a prevention architecture to counter radicalization and recruitment to violence. The U.S. approach to targeted violence and terrorism prevention generally moved to a more public health-focused approach.

For example, in 2023 the CT Bureau, in coordination with ASEAN, USAID's ASEAN office, and UNOCT, held the third of three U.S.-ASEAN Workshops on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE) in Indonesia, focusing on building community resiliency through developing and implementing ASEAN members' National Plans of Action on P/CVE, as well as raising awareness of P/CVE online, including by promoting media literacy and critical thinking skills.

Racially or Ethnically Motivated Violent Extremism

The CT Bureau increased its efforts to counter racially or ethnically motivated violent extremism (REMVE). REMVE – in particular, white-identity 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; Jews, Muslims, and members of other religious communities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and/or intersex individuals; governments; and other perceived enemies. The CT Bureau worked with law enforcement, civil society, social services, and foreign partners to take concrete actions to address this growing threat.

Countering the 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 continued to intensify on preventing and countering terrorists' exploitation of internet-based platforms, including online gaming and gaming adjacent platforms as well as emerging technologies such as generative artificial intelligence (GenAI), and online dissemination of instructions for 3D printed weapons. The CT

Bureau worked to ensure the U.S. response was aligned 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 component of Counterterrorism strategy because increased censorship and other government restrictions on human rights can lead to further radicalization to violence. The CT Bureau promoted U.S. policy consistent with longstanding guiding principles, concentrating on programs and workshops that promote critical thinking skill and digital literacy to build resilience against terrorist and violent extremist propaganda and against recruitment efforts internationally.

The CT Bureau continued to work with the Christchurch Call, and advanced U.S. principles in multilateral fora such as the UN, the G-7, and the G-20. The CT Bureau engaged regularly with U.S.-based technology companies to improve voluntary information sharing, particularly on the presence and activities of designated terrorist organizations and their members online, focusing on terrorist trends and tactics. The CT Bureau also engaged regularly with the industry-led GIFCT, including GIFCT working groups, and the UN-affiliated Tech Against Terrorism, demonstrating the U.S. approach in collaborating with the private sector and other stakeholders such as civil society organizations to counter the use of the internet for terrorist purposes.

Rehabilitation and Reintegration

The rehabilitation and reintegration of former foreign terrorist fighters (FTF) and associated family members is a key priority for the United States. The CT Bureau led U.S. efforts and coordinated global engagement on the rehabilitation and reintegration of FTF families repatriated from Syria and Iraq through different platforms, including with the Global Counterterrorism Forum in Amman, Jordan, at the “GCTF Good Practices on Addressing the Challenge of Returning FTF Families” workshop in October. Through Hedayah, the CT Bureau supported a rapid response mechanism that helps governments and NGOs develop and implement effective rehabilitation and reintegration initiatives. The CT Bureau also supported UNICEF to enhance the resilience and social cohesion for children returning from Syria to countries such as Tajikistan and the Kyrgyz Republic. These engagements, which emphasized the importance of providing returnees with psychosocial services and involving community-level stakeholders in the reintegration process, encouraged multiple countries to agree to repatriate their nationals and update their approaches to rehabilitation and reintegration, which could, in turn, encourage other nations to agree to repatriate their nationals from Syria and Iraq.

Strategic Messaging and Counternarratives

The CT Bureau continued to work with the Global Engagement Center to counter terrorist messaging globally, with a particular emphasis on countering ISIS and al-Qa’ida propaganda. The GEC implements strategic messaging and resiliency programming in coordination with the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and CT Bureau regional strategies. The GEC and CT Bureau collaborated to improve linkages among Defeat-ISIS Coalition members and other partners engaged in counterterrorist propaganda campaigns. GEC programs across Syria, Iraq, Somalia, and several West African and Central Asian nations worked to undermine the credibility of terrorist groups’ propaganda by exposing the manipulative tactics these groups use, while also exploiting opportunities to highlight the failures and hypocrisy of specific groups. These efforts also brought together elements within the U.S. Department of Defense and the broader interagency to coordinate messaging within specified countries.

In 2023, the CT Bureau supported Hedayah to develop communication strategies that complemented the Governments of Tunisia’s and Tajikistan’s CVE National Action Plans. This initiative improved government awareness of strategic communication approaches and tools, enhanced government

capacity to engage and communicate with National Action Plan implementers and beneficiaries, and improved governments' ability to develop, implement and monitor programming that supports National Action Plans identified in the communication strategies.

International Platforms to Advance the Countering Violent Extremism

In 2023 the CT Bureau maintained support for international platforms that advance 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.

- **The Strong Cities Network:** The Strong Cities Network (SCN) launched in 2015 at the UN General Assembly, with support from the United States. Founded by 25 members, SCN now includes more than 225 local governments across six continents. The network 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 and the EU, SCN operates regional hubs in southern and East Africa, the Middle East and North Africa, South Asia, and the Western Balkans.
- **The Global Community Engagement Resilience Fund:** The Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF) supports 43 active grants in 14 partner countries: Albania, Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burkina Faso, Kenya, Kosovo, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, North Macedonia, the Philippines, Somalia, Sri Lanka, and Tunisia. Since GCERF's inception, international donors and private organizations have provided roughly \$180 million in grants assistance and in-kind contributions for the organization, with the United States counted as one of the top donors. Estimated conservatively, GCERF projects have reached 3.2 million direct beneficiaries, with 50 percent of direct beneficiaries being women and girls. GCERF aims to raise additional funding through its 2021-25 Replenishment Campaign to provide better alternatives for two million people directly at risk of radicalization and recruitment to violence, and to build a safety net for the 10 million other people in their communities in more than 20 countries. In 2023, CT Bureau staff members gave remarks at the fifth workshop on the Initiative on Funding and Enabling Community-Level P/CVE, established in tandem with the GCTF CVE Working Group. CT also provided input at a UNOCT High-Level Week event co-sponsored by the United States and Ghana on implementing the Accra Initiative in West Africa, deepening the region's cooperation with GCERF. The CT Bureau assisted with GCERF's launch of a pilot project addressing rehabilitation and reintegration for returnees from Iraq and northeast Syria.

Hedayah: In 2023, Hedayah concluded its CT Bureau-supported Tunisia and Tajikistan program that improved government awareness of P/CVE strategic communication approaches and tools through a new CVE communication strategy. Hedayah also held its annual research conference in The Hague and co-hosted an UNGA side event called "Women as Drivers of Peace and Innovation." In addition, Hedayah launched a Strengths and Needs Assessment Tool for CVE in March and continued to focus much of its work on rehabilitating and reintegrating FTFs and their associated family members returning from conflict zones, including northeast Syria. Hedayah raised about \$10 million for programs and operating expenses from donors including Australia, Canada, the EU, Morocco, Spain, the UAE, the UK, and the United States.

Civilian Counterterrorism Capacity Building Programs

Particularly in the wake of Hamas's October 7 attacks against Israel, counterterrorism has been at the forefront of international security discussions. As terrorism has evolved and significantly expanded geographically in recent years, mitigating this threat depends on sustaining the political will and enhanced military and non-military counterterrorism capabilities of U.S. partners. In 2023 the U.S. government continued a counterterrorism approach articulated in the White House's 2022 National Security Memorandum on U.S. International Counterterrorism Policy which strongly emphasizes the need for building partner capacity (both in the military and non-military realms), diplomacy, and leveraging multilateral relationships. For our approach to succeed over the long term, governments must work with civilian official partners who aim to identify, prevent, investigate, prosecute, incarcerate, and when appropriate, rehabilitate terrorist actors. Outside of the military and intelligence channels, the United States has developed partnerships with foreign law enforcement, the justice sector, and corrections entities that can help prevent and disrupt attacks and investigate, arrest, prosecute, and incarcerate terrorists and their facilitation networks in critical regions.

The United States supports programs to build partners' law enforcement capacity to counter terrorism, including by strengthening the ability of justice and corrections officials to counter terrorism. Across 14 core competencies ranging from CVE to border management, the CT Bureau plans, funds, and oversees capacity building programs, often implemented by interagency partners that provide law enforcement and criminal justice officials with the tools needed to address security vulnerabilities and counter terrorist threats on their own.

In 2023, counterterrorism resources allowed the Department of State to continue, and in some cases expand, civilian law enforcement CT capacity building activities with key partner nations in the Middle East, North Africa, West Africa, the Horn of Africa, South and Central Asia, Southeast Asia, the Western Balkans, and the Western Hemisphere to mitigate the threat posed by FTFs, to prevent and counter terrorist safe havens and recruitment, and to counter Iran-sponsored terrorism.

Counterterrorism programs enabled multiple partner nations to pursue terrorist organizations and share information with U.S. law enforcement agencies charged with global CT operations, protecting both the homeland and U.S. interests abroad. Similarly, the CT Bureau developed the capacity of law enforcement partners to respond to terrorist attacks and counter IEDs. CT support strengthened security at airports, with particular focus on those with direct flights to the United States, while also building law enforcement capacity to secure lengthy, porous borders through technical assistance and equipment. The CT Bureau also supported multilateral efforts to strengthen law enforcement and build CVE capabilities. Recipient law enforcement organizations have used the skills and assistance to counter terrorists globally and save hundreds of lives from planned attacks.

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). It is managed by the Diplomatic Security Service. RFJ's goal is to generate information that helps protect U.S. national security.

Under this program, the Secretary of State may authorize reward payments to individuals who furnish information leading to 1) the arrest or conviction of anyone for committing, conspiring to commit, attempting to commit, or aiding or abetting in the commission of an act of international terrorism against U.S. persons or property; 2) the prevention, frustration, or favorable resolution of an act of international terrorism against U.S. persons or property, including by dismantling an organization in whole or significant part; 3) the identification or location of an individual who holds a key leadership position in a terrorist organization; or 4) the disruption of financial mechanisms of a foreign terrorist organization. Pursuant to legislative

amendments, the Secretary may also authorize reward payments to individuals who furnish certain other national security information related to the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act, the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act, foreign election interference, and hostage taking of U.S. persons.

To generate leads, RFJ issues reward offers for information covered by its statutory authority. Since RFJ's inception in 1984, the program has paid in excess of \$250 million to more than 125 individuals who provided information that helped resolve threats to national security, and the Secretary continued to authorize such payments in 2023.

In 2023 the RFJ program announced the following new terrorism-related reward offers:

- **January 5.** A reward of up to \$10 million for information leading to the arrest or conviction in any country of al-Shabaab leader Maalim Ayman or any other individual who committed, attempted, conspired to commit, or aided or abetted in the commission of the 2020 terrorist attack on U.S. and Kenyan personnel at the Manda Bay Airfield in Kenya.
- **January 12.** A reward of up to \$10 million for information leading to the arrest or conviction in any country of al-Shabaab leader Mohamoud Abdi Aden or any other individual who committed, attempted, conspired to commit, or aided or abetted in the commission of the 2019 attack on the DusitD2 hotel complex in Nairobi, Kenya.
- **February 28.** A reward of up to \$5 million for information leading to the identification or location of al-Shabaab key leader Ali Mohamed Rage.
- **March 2.** A reward of up to \$5 million for information leading to the identification or location of ISIS-DRC leader Seka Musa Baluku.
- **March 30.** A reward of up to \$5 million for certain information leading to the arrest or conviction in any country of any individual who committed, attempted, conspired to commit, or aided or abetted in the commission of the 2019 murder of U.S. permanent resident Shakeel Khan in New York state.
- **April 18.** A reward of up to \$7 million for information leading to the identification, location, arrest, and/or conviction of Hizballah key leader Ibrahim Aqil.
- **April 18.** A reward of up to \$10 million for information leading to the disruption of financial mechanisms of Hizballah financier Nazem Ahmad.
- **June 14.** A reward of up to \$5 million for information leading to the identification or location of al-Shabaab key leader Abdullahi Osman Mohamed.
- **July 12.** A reward of up to \$10 million for information on any individual who committed, attempted, conspired to commit, or aided or abetted in the commission of the 2019 al-Shabaab attack on the Asasey Hotel in Kismayo, Jubaland State, Somalia.
- **September 28.** A reward of up to \$5 million for information leading to the identification or location of al-Shabaab key leader Abukar Ali Adan.
- **December 15.** A reward of up to \$10 million each for information leading to the financial disruption of Hamas and Hamas financial facilitators Abdelbasit Hamza Elhassan Khair, Amer Kamal Sharif Alshawa, Ahmed Sadu Jahleb, Walid Mohammed Mustafa Jadallah, and Muhammad Ahmad 'Abd Al-Dayim Nasrallah.

Throughout 2023, RFJ readvertised reward offers worldwide for the following:

- Information leading to the identification or location of key terrorist leaders.
- Information on those responsible for terrorist attacks.

- Information leading to the disruption of Hizballah and Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps financial networks.
- Information on past, planned, or future attacks against U.S. diplomatic missions or personnel.

Support for Pakistan

While the United States continues to cooperate with Pakistan on regional security and counterterrorism, bilateral relations also focus on shared economic and development efforts. These priorities are anchored by the U.S.-Pakistan Green Alliance Framework, including on trade and investment, on addressing the climate crisis, and on responding to the devastation caused by heavy flooding.

The United States continues to provide civilian assistance on a focused set of priorities. In the last two years, the United States has provided nearly \$212 million in humanitarian assistance, including nearly \$97 million for the flood response. The United States also provided assistance to support Pakistan’s development, stability, and prosperity, partnering with the country to address the climate crisis and facilitate private sector-led trade and investment. In health, the United States partnered with Pakistan to promote global health security, combat infectious diseases such as multidrug-resistant tuberculosis and polio, support maternal and child health, and fund activities in family planning and reproductive health. The United States also supports people-to-people exchanges to strengthen the U.S.-Pakistan bilateral relationship, deepen people-to-people ties, and improve Pakistanis’ perceptions of the United States. The U.S. government continues to provide properly focused law enforcement, counternarcotics, and rule-of-law assistance for Pakistan.

The table below shows bilateral assistance provided to Pakistan for fiscal years 2021, 2022, and 2023. It does not include humanitarian and other centrally managed assistance for Pakistan’s benefit, or vestigial funds allotted in prior years.

Account	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023
Total Bilateral Foreign Assistance ^a	109.4	111.0	101.7
Economic Support Fund	72.5	52.1	45.6
Global Health Programs	7.0	30.5	35.0
International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement	24.9	25.0	18.3
Nonproliferation, Antiterrorism, and Demining	0.7	—	—
International Military Education and Training	4.4	3.3	2.8

^a Figures in millions, US\$.

Counterterrorism Coordination With Saudi Arabia

In 2023, Saudi Arabia worked closely with the United States to implement CT commitments and remained eager to enhance defense and security cooperation with the United States, including on CVE issues. Regular high-level consultations and cooperation with the United States supported the Saudi government ability to address domestic and regional terrorism threats, and U.S. government-implemented programs helped Saudi Arabia increase its capacity to detect, deter, and respond to terrorist threats. Saudi Arabia maintained adequate legal frameworks, security forces, and institutional preparedness to counter violent extremist threats. The main threats were from Iran-backed proxies and Houthi cross-border attacks from Yemen. Saudi Arabia remained a regional leader in countering terrorist financing, in part by hosting and co-chairing the Terrorist Financing Targeting Center (TFTC). The TFTC brings together the United States and Gulf Cooperation Council partners to confront new and evolving threats through joint multilateral designations aimed at disrupting financial flows to terrorist networks and individuals.

On the multilateral front, in 2023 Saudi Arabia worked closely on capacity building efforts to increase regional cooperation, minimize duplication of efforts, enhance information sharing, and address border security gaps. Saudi leadership worked to advance counterterrorism cooperation with Muslim-majority states. Saudi Arabia is a member of the Global Counterterrorism Forum and the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and a co-chair of the Coalition's Africa Focus Group. It hosted a Counter-ISIS Finance Group meeting and a successful Defeat-ISIS ministerial in Riyadh. Saudi CVE activities concentrated on identifying pathways to terrorist radicalization and recruitment, with a heavy emphasis on the close monitoring of social media and other internet activity. 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 voices of tolerance in mainstream media, mosques, Islamic organizations, community centers, and prisons, to curb the appeal of "radical" ideology and counter violent extremist messages. The government-supported Etidal Global Center for Countering Extremist Ideology continued its monitoring of violent extremism content and messaging strategy online. Security authorities continued to employ the Center for Counseling and Care to monitor, rehabilitate, and reintegrate into society former Saudi terrorists and foreign terrorist fighters.

With the goal of reducing the potential for violent extremism and terrorist acts, the Saudi government-affiliated Muslim World League promoted tolerance and encouraged interfaith dialogue through religious conferences and visits that brought Saudi religious scholars together with counterparts from other faiths. The Saudi government made further progress in revising textbooks used in the public K-12 curriculum to reduce intolerant and "extremist" content.

The Saudi government's use of terrorism laws to prosecute activists, political dissidents, and members of religious minorities remained a concern.

U.S. Agency for Global Media Initiatives: Outreach to Foreign Muslim Audiences

This section is provided by the U.S. Agency for Global Media. We refer you to http://www.usagm.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/USAGM_CVE_Factsheet-02-16-24.pdf for information on the U.S. Agency for Global Media'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, while 2) facilitating legitimate travel and international exchange. Focusing on these two missions promotes U.S. security and ensures efficient adjudication of visa applications for individuals seeking to participate in visitor exchange programs.

All visa applicants are subject to thorough interagency vetting, and some individuals will require additional processing. We advise applicants to apply for their U.S. visas well in advance of their anticipated travel dates.

USAID Basic Education in Muslim-Majority Countries

The [U.S. Government Strategy on International Basic Education](#) (strategy) was launched in September 2018 and remained in effect through fiscal year 2023. The strategy demonstrates the U.S. government's commitment to international education and advances global diplomatic and development leadership on pressing international education challenges, as called for in the [Reinforcing Education Accountability in Development \(or READ\) Act, P.L. 115-56](#). The goal of the strategy is to achieve a world where education systems in partner countries enable all individuals to acquire the education and skills needed to be productive members of society. To accomplish this goal, the U.S. government has two principal objectives: 1) improve learning outcomes, and 2) expand access to quality basic education for all – particularly marginalized populations. The U.S. government recognizes that its investments in international education serve as a force multiplier for all its work in international development. Strengthening education systems in partner countries advances U.S. foreign policy goals, promotes U.S. and global security, and helps accelerate economic growth at home and abroad.

Under the U.S. Government Strategy on International Basic Education, agencies and departments work together to improve learning outcomes and expand access to quality basic education for all. The [U.S. Government Support to Basic Education Map](#) and the [Fiscal Year 2022 U.S. Government Strategy Report to Congress](#) highlight where the U.S. government is working and the program education levels for each country, and provide examples of coordination across agencies.

The [USAID Education Policy](#), released in 2018, further articulates the U.S. Agency for International Development's vision and direction for supporting partner countries in strengthening their capacity to deliver quality learning opportunities for children and youth. The policy states that the primary purpose of USAID's programming in education is to achieve sustained, measurable improvements in learning outcomes and skills development. The policy applies to USAID's education programming across all levels (from preprimary through higher education), contexts (stable contexts to crisis and conflict-affected environments), settings (formal and nonformal), and providers (state and nonstate). The principles laid out in the policy drive decision making for new education investments in support of the vision that partner country education systems must enable all children and youth to acquire the education and skills needed to be productive members of society and achieve lifelong success and overall well-being.

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 facilitate or complement the law enforcement actions of other U.S. agencies and governments. Section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) mandates that the Department of State review FTO designations every five years to determine whether an FTO still meets the relevant criteria. The law requires that the Secretary of State revoke a designation if the Secretary finds the circumstances that were the basis of the designation have changed in such a manner as to warrant a revocation. There were no revocations in 2023.

Legal Criteria for Designation Under Section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act as Amended

1. The entity 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 in 2023

Africa	
Ansar al-Dine	AAD
Boko Haram	BH
ISIS-Democratic Republic of the Congo	ISIS-DRC

ISIS in the Greater Sahara	ISIS-GS
ISIS-Mozambique	ISIS-M
ISIS-West Africa	ISIS-WA
Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin	JNIM
Jama'atu Ansarul Muslimina Fi Biladis-Sudan	Ansaru
al-Murabitoun	
al-Shabaab	AS
al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb	AQIM

East Asia and the Pacific

Abu Sayyaf Group	ASG
Communist Party of Philippines/New People's Army	CPP/NPA
ISIS-Philippines	ISIS-P
Jemaah Anshorut Tauhid	JAT
Jemaah Islamiya	JI

Europe

Continuity Irish Republican Army	CIRA
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New Irish Republican Army	New IRA
Revolutionary People’s Liberation Party/Front	DHKP/C
Revolutionary Struggle	RS

The Middle East and North Africa

Abdallah Azzam Brigades	AAB
al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade	AAMB
al-Ashtar Brigades	AAB
al-Nusrah Front	ANF
al-Qa’ida	AQ
al-Qa’ida in the Arabian Peninsula	AQAP
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
Hamas	
Harakat Sawa'd Misr	HASM
Hizballah	
Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps	IRGC
Islamic State of Iraq and Syria	ISIS
ISIS-Libya	ISIS-L
ISIS-Sinai Province	ISIS-SP
Jaysh Rijal al-Tariq al-Naqshabandi	JRTN
Kata'ib Hizballah	KH
Kurdistan Workers' Party	PKK
Palestinian 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

South and Central Asia

al-Qa’ida in the Indian Subcontinent	AQIS
Haqqani Network	HQN
Harakat ul-Jihad-i-Islami	HUJI
Harakat ul-Jihad-i-Islami/Bangladesh	HUJI-B
Harakat ul-Mujahideen	HUM
Hizbul Mujahideen	HM
Indian Mujahedeen	IM
Islamic Jihad Union	IJU
Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan	IMU
ISIS-Bangladesh	
Islamic State’s Khorasan Province	ISIS-K
Jaish-e-Mohammed	JeM
Jaysh al-Adl	
Lashkar e-Tayyiba	LeT
Lashkar i Jhangvi	LJ
Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam	LTTE
Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan	TTP

Western Hemisphere

National Liberation Army	ELN
Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army	FARC-EP
Segunda Marquetalia	SM
Shining Path	SL

Africa

Ansar al-Dine

Aka Ansar Dine; Ansar al-Din; Ancar Dine; Ansar ul-Din; Ansar Eddine; Defenders of the Faith.

Description: Ansar al-Dine (AAD) is now a component of Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM). The group was designated as an FTO on March 22, 2013. AAD was created in 2011 as a Tuareg rebel group after its leader Iyad ag Ghali failed in his attempt to take over another secular Tuareg organization and began an association with AQIM in mid-2012. 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 the 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 on 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 and rebel groups, eventually forcing AAD and its allies out of the population centers they had seized. Ghali, however, remained free and appeared in AAD videos in 2015 and 2016 threatening France and the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA).

In 2017 the Sahara Branch of AQIM, AAD, al-Murabitoun, and the Macina Liberation Front came together to form JNIM. Ghali was named the overall JNIM emir.

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 Aguelhok, 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 Aguelhok. 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 between 2015 and 2017, conducting multiple attacks against UN, French, and Malian forces. AAD did not separately claim responsibility for any attacks in 2023.

Strength: AAA's 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 also is said to receive funds from foreign donors and through smuggling operations.

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 the 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.

BH had been intermittently aligned with al-Qa'ida and, in 2015, BH pledged allegiance to ISIS in an audiotape message. ISIS accepted the pledge, and BH began calling itself ISIS-West Africa (ISIS-WA). 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 maintained a group of followers and affiliates concentrated primarily in the Sambisa Forest; this faction became known as BH, while al-Barnawi's group separated and was designated as ISIS-WA. On May 19, 2021, Shekau reportedly was killed during a clash with ISIS-WA.

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. Since then, BH has continued to abduct women and girls, some of whom are subjected to domestic servitude, other forms of forced labor, and sexual servitude, including through forced marriages to its members. Others have been ordered to carry out suicide attacks on civilians.

In 2020, suspected BH fighters claimed responsibility for the abduction of more than 330 students from an all-boys school in Nigeria's northern Katsina State. In 2021, suspected BH fighters launched rocket-propelled grenades into densely populated areas from the outskirts of Maiduguri, Nigeria, killing at least 10 people, among other attacks. In 2022, BH claimed responsibility for an attack on a village in northeast Nigeria and reportedly abducted 17 girls. The group also reportedly killed at least 50 people in an attack on farms near the town of Rann in Nigeria's Borno State. Also in 2022, BH attacked an army position in western Chad, killing at least 10 Chadian soldiers.

Throughout 2023, Boko Haram conducted numerous attacks on civilian and military targets in northern Cameroon; in one of these, Cameroonian officials reported at least six civilians and two soldiers were killed and thousands of residents were displaced. Boko Haram continued to conduct smaller-scale IED attacks, ambushes, and kidnappings for ransom in Nigeria throughout 2023, and the organization continues to clash with ISIS-WA in the Lake Chad and Sambisa Forest areas.

Strength: BH is estimated to have up to 2,000 fighters.

Location/Area of Operation: Primarily Nigeria, but also Cameroon, Chad, and Niger.

Funding and External Aid: BH largely self-finances through criminal activities such as looting, extortion, kidnapping for ransom, and bank robberies.

ISIS-Democratic Republic of the Congo

Aka ISIS-DRC; Allied Democratic Forces, Madina at Tauheed Wau Mujahedeen; City of Monotheism and Holy Warriors; Islamic State Central Africa Province; Wilayat Central Africa; Wilayah Central Africa Media Office; Wilayat Wasat Ifriqiyah; ISIS-Central Africa.

Description: ISIS-Democratic Republic of the Congo (ISIS-DRC) was designated as an FTO on March 11, 2021. ISIS publicly recognized the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), which began as a militant group in Uganda, as an affiliate in late 2018 and claimed responsibility for ADF-attributed attacks starting in 2019 after an attack on an Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo base near Kamango. ISIS-DRC is responsible for many attacks across North Kivu and Ituri Provinces in eastern DRC, as well as intermittent attacks in Uganda. Under the leadership of Seka Musa Baluku, ISIS-DRC has been notorious in this region for its brutal violence against Congolese citizens, regional military forces, and UN personnel.

Activities: In 2020, ISIS-DRC attacked the villages of Kamwiri, Kitsimba, and Lisasa in Beni, North Kivu Province, killing 21 people and abducting 20 others. In 2021, ISIS-DRC attacked displacement camps near the towns of Boga and Tchabi in Ituri Province, killing 57 people and abducting 25 others. In 2022, ISIS-DRC claimed responsibility for a bomb attack during a service at a Protestant church in Kasindi, North Kivu Province, killing at least 10 people and wounding 39 others.

In 2023, ISIS-DRC claimed responsibility for an attack on a village in eastern DRC that killed more than 30 civilians and wounded dozens of others. Also in 2023, ISIS-DRC members attacked a school in Uganda near the border with DRC, killing at least 41 people including 38 students.

ISIS-DRC/Central Africa also claimed credit for the killing of a British-South African couple and their Ugandan guide in a Ugandan national park in October.

Strength: ISIS-DRC is assessed to have up to 1,500 fighters.

Location/Area of Operation: Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda.

Funding and External Aid: ISIS-DRC reportedly funds itself at least partially through local revenue streams, including control of mines and mineral exports. ISIS-linked international financing networks have provided additional revenue to the group since at least 2017.

The group has also seized weapons and ammunition from the Congolese military.

ISIS in the Greater Sahara

Aka ISIS-GS; 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 ISIS acknowledged in 2016. In 2022, ISIS-GS was elevated to a formal ISIS branch and changed its name to ISIS-Sahel (aka ISIS-Sahel Province).

Activities: Since 2017, ISIS-GS has been involved in numerous skirmishes and attacks in Mali, Niger, and Burkina Faso, including the 2017 attack on a joint U.S.-Nigerien patrol that killed four U.S. soldiers and five Nigerien soldiers, as well as other attacks targeting or killing French, Malian, Nigerien, and Burkinabé soldiers and civilians. In 2020, ISIS-GS militants attacked a Nigerien military base on the border between Niger and Mali, killing 89 soldiers, and were suspected of killing six French NGO workers, their Nigerien guide, and one other Nigerien citizen near Niamey, Niger. In 2021, French forces killed ISIS-GS leader Adnan Abu Walid al-Sahrawi in southern Mali. In 2022, ISIS-GS launched an attack on a northern Malian town that killed dozens of civilians. In addition, they claimed responsibility for two other attacks in northern Benin that killed six soldiers.

In February 2023, ISIS-GS ambushed a military convoy in northern Burkina Faso, killing more than 70 soldiers, wounding dozens, and taking five hostages. In April, ISIS-GS seized the village of Tidermène in northeastern Mali.

Strength: ISIS-GS is estimated to have up to 1,000 fighters.

Location/Area of Operation: Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, and to a lesser extent Benin.

Funding and External Aid: Although specific sources are unknown, ISIS-GS probably funds itself from smuggling activities, extortion and taxation, attacks on gold mines, kidnappings for ransom, theft, and from other groups operating in the region.

ISIS-Mozambique

Aka Ansar al-Sunna; Helpers of Tradition; Ahl al-Sunna wa al-Jamaa; Adherents to the Traditions and the Community; al-Shabaab in Mozambique; Islamic State Central Africa Province; Wilayah Central Africa; Ansaar Kalimat Allah; Supporters of the Word of Allah.

Description: ISIS-Mozambique was designated as an FTO on March 10, 2021. ISIS-Mozambique reportedly pledged allegiance to ISIS as early as 2018 and was acknowledged by ISIS as an affiliate in 2019. Since 2017, ISIS-Mozambique, led by Abu Yasir Hassan, has killed more than 1,300

civilians, and it is estimated that the terrorist group's attacks have led to the death of more than 4,000 civilians, security force members, and suspected ISIS-Mozambique militants since it began its violent extremist insurgency.

Activities: In 2020, ISIS-Mozambique captured the strategic port of Mocímboa da Praia, Cabo Delgado Province, killing at least 55 soldiers, and held the city for a year. In 2021, ISIS-Mozambique attacked the nearby town of Palma for four days, killing dozens of local civilians and foreign expatriate workers and looting about \$1 million from banks. In 2022, the organization killed an Italian nun in Chipene, Nampula Province, and attacked multiple villages in Ancuabe District, Cabo Delgado Province, killing at least four civilians. Throughout 2023, the group claimed credit for attacks on army bases, villages, and other civilian and military targets, including an attack on an army camp in which the group killed five soldiers.

Strength: ISIS-Mozambique is estimated to have from a few hundred fighters up to 1,000.

Location/Area of Operation: Mozambique.

Funding and External Aid: Although sources of funding remain unclear, the group has targeted banks in previous operations. In addition, the group has taken control of food supplies in areas under its control and captured weapons from government security forces.

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.

Activities: Since 2016, ISIS-WA has been responsible for numerous attacks in Nigeria and the Lake Chad region, including ones against Nigerian and Chadian military and security personnel. ISIS-WA has also attacked humanitarian aid workers, local officials, critical infrastructure, and other civilians. It executed 11 reported Christians in 2019, claiming they were revenge for the killing of former ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. In 2022, ISIS-WA killed 30 civilians in northeastern Nigeria in response to military air strikes that killed several ISIS-WA commanders, and attacked a prison in central Nigeria, killing at least one guard and freeing more than 800 inmates, among other attacks on civilian and military targets.

In 2023, the group continued to conduct attacks primarily in northeastern Nigeria. Clashes between the group and Boko Haram left roughly 70 people dead in Borno State, and ISIS-WA injured six government security personnel in an attempted ambush on the convoy of the Yobe governor.

Strength: ISIS-WA is estimated to have up to 7,000 active fighters.

Location/Area of Operation: Nigeria and the greater Lake Chad region.

Funding and External Aid: ISIS-WA receives funding from local sources, taxes, the capture of military supplies, and kidnapping-for-ransom payments, as well as some funds from other ISIS affiliates. ISIS-WA is co-located with ISIS's regional office (al-Furqan).

Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin

Aka Jamaat Nosrat al-Islam wal-Mouslimin; Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims; Group to Support Islam and Muslims; GSIM; GNIM; Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimeen.

Description: Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM) was designated as 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, when the Sahara Branch of AQIM, al-Murabitoun, Ansar al-Din, and the Macina Liberation Front came together to form JNIM. The organization is led by Iyad ag Ghali. Multiple JNIM senior leaders have been killed in recent years, including JNIM's former second in command, Ali Maychou, in 2019, senior JNIM commander Bah Ag Moussa in 2020, and senior leader Abdallaye Ag Albaka in 2021.

Activities: Since forming in 2017, JNIM has claimed responsibility for numerous attacks, including a suicide attack against a G5 Sahel joint base in Mali and a truck bomb in a residential area, killing three civilians and wounding 30 in 2018; a vehicle-borne IED attack against the French embassy and Burkinabé Army Headquarters in Ouagadougou in 2018; an attack against a UN base in northern Mali in 2019; attacks against Malian security and military personnel in 2020; and attacks against UN Peacekeepers and Malian soldiers, as well as the abduction of a French reporter working in Mali in 2021; and attacks on Togolese and Burkinabé soldiers in 2022.

In January 2023, JNIM claimed responsibility for two attacks near Bamako that killed two firefighters and three civilians. JNIM also claimed responsibility for an attack that injured at least four MINUSMA members in northern Mali in August. In September, JNIM conducted dual attacks in northern Mali on a passenger boat and a military camp, killing 49 civilians and 15 soldiers. One day later, JNIM claimed responsibility for a suicide attack on a military base in northeastern Mali. In November, JNIM attacked a town in northern Burkina Faso, killing at least 40 civilians and injuring more than 42.

Strength: JNIM is estimated to have several thousand fighters.

Location/Area of Operation: Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Niger, and Togo.

Funding and External Aid: JNIM receives funding through kidnappings 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 Ansaril Muslimina Fi Biladis Sudan.

Description: Jama'atu Ansarul Muslimina Fi Biladis-Sudan (known as Ansaru) was designated as an FTO on November 14, 2013. Ansaru publicly splintered from Boko Haram (BH) in 2012. Since its inception, Ansaru has targeted civilians for kidnapping, including westerners, and attacked 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 BH's objectives and struggle, but it has criticized the group for killing fellow Muslims.

Activities: Since splintering from BH, Ansaru has kidnapped several civilians, including a French engineer allegedly in response to French involvement in Mali in 2012, and seven international construction workers who subsequently were killed in 2013. In 2020, Ansaru claimed responsibility for attacking the convoy of the Emir of Potiskum in northern Nigeria, killing at least 30 Nigerian soldiers.

In 2022, Ansaru reconfirmed its allegiance to AQIM in a statement released online. Also in 2022, Ansaru was suspected of having participated in an attack on a Nigerian passenger train from which more than 60 passengers were taken hostage. Ansaru may have also participated in a 2022 attack on the Kuje prison in Nigeria, which killed at least one guard and freed more than 800 inmates, including Ansaru leader Khalid al-Barnawi, and six of his close lieutenants. Al-Barnawi was captured originally by the Nigerian Army in 2016. Ansaru did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2023.

Strength: Ansaru's precise numbers are unknown; however, the organization has reportedly absorbed an undetermined number of former Boko Haram fighters.

Location/Area of Operation: Nigeria.

Funding and External Aid: Sources of Ansaru's funding are unknown, although some funding probably is generated from kidnappings for ransom.

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 is now a component of JNIM and was designated as an FTO on December 19, 2013, originally under the name al-Mulathamun Battalion. Al-Murabitoun was originally part of 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, while a faction defected to ISIS and ultimately became ISIS-GS. In 2017 the Sahara Branch of AQIM, al-Murabitoun, AAD, and the Macina Liberation Front came together to form JNIM.

Activities: Since 2013, al-Murabitoun has claimed responsibility for numerous attacks involving civilians, including a 2013 attack against a gas facility in southeastern Algeria where more than 800 people were taken hostage during the four-day siege, resulting in the deaths of 39 civilians, including three U.S. citizens; and an attack at the La Terrasse restaurant in Bamako, Mali, that killed a French national, a Belgian national, and three Malians in 2015. During 2015-16, al-Murabitoun was involved in a series of hotel attacks, claiming responsibility for a hotel siege in central Mali and participating in the attack on the Radisson Blu Hotel in Bamako in 2015. More than 170 people, including U.S. citizens, were taken hostage in the Radisson attack and at least 26 people were killed, among them a U.S. international development worker. Al-Murabitoun

reportedly also was involved in the 2016 AQIM attack on a hotel in Burkina Faso that killed nearly 30 people, including a U.S. citizen, and an attack on a beach resort in Côte d'Ivoire. Al-Murabitoun also has been involved in attacks against military personnel, claiming responsibility for a 2017 suicide car bombing at a military camp in Mali that killed more than 47 people and fighting against French forces in Mali in 2018.

In 2022, Fawaz Ould Ahmed was extradited to the United States to face charges including the murder of a U.S. citizen and conspiracy to provide material support to AQIM and al-Murabitoun. Ahmed admitted to a Malian court in 2020 to carrying out the La Terrasse restaurant attack and planning hotel attacks including the Radisson Blu Hotel attack in 2015. Al-Murabitoun did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2023.

Strength: Al-Murabitoun's 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 kidnappings for ransom and other criminal activities.

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. The group pledged allegiance to al-Qa'ida in 2012 and has ties to other al-Qa'ida affiliates, including al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula and al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb. Al-Shabaab formed originally as the militant wing of the former Somali Islamic Courts Union 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 and now the Federal Government of Somalia.

Composed of Somali and other East African recruits and foreign terrorist fighters, al-Shabaab saw its territorial control reduced in the early 2010s owing to the efforts of the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS; formerly the African Union Mission in Somalia [AMISOM]) and Somali forces and to 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 high profile attacks in Djibouti, Kenya, Somalia, and Uganda.

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. Al-Shabaab has assassinated numerous civil society figures, government officials, journalists, international aid workers, and members of NGOs.

The group has claimed responsibility for numerous high-profile bombings and shootings throughout East Africa against civilians, ATMIS troops, other foreign forces, and Somali officials – including suicide bombings in Kampala, Uganda, in 2010, which were its first attacks outside of Somalia, killing

76 people, including a U.S. citizen. Other attacks included the 2013 multiday siege against the Westgate Mall in Nairobi, Kenya, resulting in the deaths of at least 65 civilians, including foreign nationals from 13 countries as well as six soldiers and police officers; the 2015 raid on Kenya's Garissa University College that killed 148 people; the 2016 attack against a Kenyan AMISOM base that killed more than 100 soldiers, one of the deadliest attacks against AMISOM troops in Somalia; the 2019 hotel complex attack in Nairobi, killing one U.S. citizen; and the 2020 attack against U.S. and Kenyan personnel at the Manda Bay Airfield in Kenya, killing three U.S. citizens. In 2022, al-Shabaab detonated two car bombs at a busy market intersection near the Ministry of Education in Mogadishu, killing at least 121 people and wounding at least 300.

In May, more than 50 Ugandan peacekeepers were killed in an al-Shabaab attack on a base southwest of Mogadishu. Also in May, the group attacked a military base in central Somalia, leading to clashes that left at least 17 dead. In July a suicide bombing by the group killed between 20 and 30 Somali soldiers in Mogadishu.

Strength: Al-Shabaab is estimated to have between 7,000 and 12,000 members.

Location/Area of Operation: Primarily Somalia, Kenya, and Ethiopia, and also historically Djibouti and Uganda.

Funding and External Aid: Al-Shabaab receives and generates enough income to launch attacks throughout East Africa, including against ATMIS bases and various civilian targets. The group obtains funds through illegal charcoal production and exports, through 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).

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 in 2008, after the GSPC officially joined with al-Qa'ida in 2006 and 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, killed in 2020 by French forces, the group chose Abu Obaida Yusuf al-Annabi as Droukdel's successor.

Activities: Since becoming an al-Qa'ida affiliate, AQIM has claimed responsibility for or been involved in numerous high-profile attacks, including the 2007 bombing of the UN headquarters building and an Algerian government building in Algiers that killed 60 people. 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. AQIM also participated in a 2015 attack against the Radisson Blu Hotel in Bamako, Mali. More than 170 people, including U.S. citizens, were taken hostage in the Radisson attack, and at least 26 people were killed, among them a U.S. international development worker.

Between 2016 and 2020, elements of AQIM carried out several attacks against civilians, as well as security and military personnel, including 2016 attacks on a hotel in Burkina Faso that killed 28 people and a popular tourist beach resort in Côte d'Ivoire that killed more than 16 people; a 2018

vehicle suicide attack on an army patrol in Gao, Mali, that killed four civilians and wounded 31 others, including four French soldiers; and a 2019 attack on a UN camp in northern Mali, killing 10 UN Peacekeepers and wounding 25 others. In 2022, French forces killed Yahia Djouadi, a senior AQIM official responsible for finance and logistics, in Mali. AQIM did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2023.

Strength: AQIM is estimated to have up to 1,000 fighters.

Location/Area of Operation: Algeria, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Libya, Mali, 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.

East Asia and the Pacific

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 Islamic Liberation Front in the early 1990s and is one of the most violent terrorist groups in the Philippines. The group claims to promote an independent Islamic state in western Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago. In 2014 an ASG faction pledged allegiance to ISIS and later formed ISIS's Philippines branch in 2016.

Activities: Since 2015, ASG has committed bombings, ambushes of security personnel, public beheadings, assassinations, extortion, and kidnappings for ransom (KFR). Examples of its activities include KFR operations targeting Canadian, Philippine, German, and Norwegian citizens in 2016 and 2017; a 2018 car bombing at a military checkpoint on Basilan Island, killing 10 people, including a Philippine soldier and pro-government militiamen; and the 2019 kidnapping of two British nationals from a beach resort in the Zamboanga Peninsula region.

In 2021, Philippine authorities arrested several ASG members, including an ASG member involved in the abduction of two Canadians who were killed in 2016, an ASG bomb expert linked to the 2019 Jolo cathedral bombings, and an ASG member involved in a 2001 kidnapping on Basilan. In 2022, ASG killed one Philippine soldier and wounded two in an attack on a Philippine Army truck.

In February, Philippine authorities blamed ASG for the shooting death of two children in the Mindanao region.

Strength: ASG is assessed to have fewer than 200 armed fighters.

Location/Area of Operation: The Philippines and Malaysia.

Funding and External Aid: ASG is funded primarily through its KFR operations and extortion. The group may also receive funding from external sources, including remittances from overseas Philippine 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.

Communist Party of the Philippines/New People's Army

Aka CPP/NPA; Communist Party of the Philippines; CPP; New People's Army; NPA; NPP/ CPP.

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. 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. CPP/NPA's founder, Jose Maria Sison, who reportedly directed CPP/NPA activity from the Netherlands, died in a hospital in Utrecht in 2022.

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, including four separate 1987 attacks in Angeles that killed three U.S. soldiers, and claimed responsibility for the 1989 ambush and murder of Col. James Nicholas Rowe, chief of the Army division of the Joint U.S. Military Advisory Group.

Throughout 2016 and 2017, several attempts were made to establish a ceasefire and peace deal between the CPP/NPA and the Armed Forces of the Philippines. Peace efforts initially ended in 2017 after reported violations, including reports of the CPP/NPA's continued recruitment in the Philippines and attacks against government forces and civilians. In subsequent years, the CPP/NPA continued to carry out killings, raids, kidnappings, acts of extortion, and other forms of violence primarily directed against Philippine security forces. In November the Philippine government and the CPP/NPA agreed to restart peace negotiations after a six-year hiatus.

Strength: CPP/NPA is estimated to have as few as 2,000 fighters.

Location/Area of Operation: The Philippines.

Funding and External Aid: The CPP/NPA raises funds through extortion and theft.

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"; ISIS-East Asia.

Description: ISIS-Philippines (ISIS-P) was designated as an FTO on February 28, 2018. In 2014 a faction of ASG militants under the command of now-deceased leader Isnilon Hapilon pledged allegiance to ISIS and later formed the ISIS branch in 2016. Some Abu Sayyaf Group factions have been reported to interact and coordinate with ISIS-P, including by participating in attacks that are claimed by ISIS in the Sulu Archipelago.

Activities: Since 2016, ISIS-P has claimed responsibility for numerous attacks against Philippine security forces, including 2017 fighting in Marawi that claimed more than 1,000 lives and forced more than 300,000 residents to flee the area; a 2018 suicide bomb attack on a military checkpoint in Basilan that killed at least 11 people; and several attacks in 2021.

ISIS-P also has claimed responsibility for attacks targeting civilians, including the 2019 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; and twin suicide bomb attacks in the Sulu province in 2020 that killed more than a dozen people and injured more than 70 others. In 2022, ISIS-P was suspected of bombing a passenger bus in the southern Philippines that killed one and wounded 11. In 2023, ISIS-P claimed responsibility for a bombing of a Catholic mass at Mindanao State University that killed four persons and wounded 45 others.

Strength: While exact numbers are unknown, ISIS-P is estimated to have a small cadre of fighters in the southern Philippines.

Location/Area of Operation: The Philippines.

Funding and External Aid: ISIS-P receives some financial assistance from ISIS-Core but relies mostly on criminal activities such as kidnappings for ransom and extortion. It maintains training camps in remote areas under its control and acquires weapons through smuggling and captures or black-market purchases of arms from the Philippine military.

Jemaah Anshorut Tauhid

Aka JAT; Jemmah Ansharut Tauhid; Jem'mah Ansharut Tauhid; Jamaah Ansharut Tauhid; Jama'ah Ansharut Tauhid; Laskar 99.

Description: Jemaah Anshorut Tauhid (JAT) was designated as 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, Indonesia. Ba'asyir is also the co-founder and former leader of Jemaah Islamiya. JAT fractured when Ba'asyir pledged the group's allegiance to ISIS in 2014. Some members who disagreed with the group's realignment left to form Jemaah Anshorut Syariah, while most members joined various ISIS-inspired groups, including Jemaah Anshorut Daulah and Mujahidin Indonesia Timur.

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. JAT has not claimed responsibility for any attacks since at least 2014. Former JAT members have been involved in ISIS-inspired attacks in Indonesia.

Strength: JAT is estimated to have fewer than 1,000 former members scattered among various other Indonesia-based groups.

Location/Area of Operation: Indonesia.

Funding and External Aid: JAT has raised funds through membership donations and legitimate business activities. The organization 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 Islamiyah; Jemaah Islamiyyah; Jema'ah Islamiyah; Jemaah Islamiyyah; Jema'ah Islamiyyah; JI.

Description: Jemaah Islamiya (JI) was designated as an FTO on October 23, 2002. 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.

Activities: Since 2002, JI has conducted numerous significant JI attacks, including the 2002 Bali, Indonesia, bombings that killed more than 200 people, among them seven U.S. citizens; the 2003 bombing of the J.W. Marriott hotel in Jakarta; the 2004 bombing outside the Australian embassy in Jakarta; the 2005 suicide bombing in Bali that killed 26 people; and the 2009 suicide attacks on the J.W. Marriott and Ritz-Carlton hotels in Jakarta, where a JI faction claimed responsibility, that killed seven persons and injured more than 50 others, including seven U.S. citizens.

More than 400 JI operatives have been captured or killed since 2002, including its emir, Para Wijayanto, who was arrested in 2019. Indonesian police said that between 2013 and 2018, under Wijayanto's leadership, JI sent at least six groups of individuals 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 attacks and the 2003 bombing of the J.W. Marriott hotel in Jakarta. In 2021, Indonesian authorities sentenced JI member Taufiq Bulaga to life in prison after finding him guilty for his role in making bombs for a 2005 Bali bombing. In 2021, Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, JI's leader at the time of his arrest in 2002, was released from prison after serving more than two thirds of a 15-year sentence for helping establish a terrorist training camp. In 2022, one of the 2002 Bali bombers, Umar Patek, was released from an Indonesian prison on parole. JI did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2023.

Strength: JI is estimated to have up to 6,000 members.

Location/Area of Operation: Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines.

Funding and External Aid: JI has raised funds 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.

Europe

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 Féin, following its split from Sinn Féin. “Continuity” refers to the group’s belief that it is carrying on the original goal of the Irish Republican Army, to force the British out of Northern Ireland. CIRA cooperates with the New Irish Republican Army.

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 2019, CIRA members conducted an attack on the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), setting off a bomb near the border of Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Also in 2019, CIRA claimed responsibility for a grenade attack in west Belfast on a PSNI vehicle. In 2020, 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. In 2021, CIRA claimed responsibility for an attack on a police station in Fermanagh County, Northern Ireland. CIRA did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2023.

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 bank robberies, extortion, and smuggling.

New Irish Republican Army

Aka New IRA; NIRA; Real IRA; RIRA; Real Irish Republican Army; IRA Army Council; 32 County Sovereignty Committee; 32 County Sovereignty Movement; Irish Republican Prisoners Welfare Association; Real Óglaigh na hÉireann.

Description: The New Irish Republican Army (New IRA) was originally designated as an FTO on May 16, 2001, under the name Real Irish Republican Army. 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 New IRA 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 ceasefire and disbandment, the New IRA has pledged additional violence and continued to conduct attacks. Many New IRA members are former Provisional Irish Republican Army members who left the organization after the group renewed its ceasefire in 1997. These members brought extensive experience in terrorist tactics and bomb making to the group.

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 the New IRA likely was responsible for most of the attacks that occurred after the Irish Republican Army was decommissioned in Northern Ireland. In 2012 the Real Irish Republican Army (RIRA) rebranded itself as the New IRA when members of RIRA, Republican Action Against Drugs (or RAAD), and several independent republicans came together. In 2019 the New IRA claimed responsibility for four parcel bombs mailed to London and Glasgow and an attempt to murder a police

officer in Northern Ireland using a car bomb. Also in 2019, the New IRA admitted responsibility and offered apologies for the shooting and killing of Lyra McKee, a journalist in Northern Ireland. In 2021 the New IRA claimed responsibility for an attempted bomb attack on a police officer in Northern Ireland. In 2022 the New IRA claimed responsibility for a bomb attack on a police vehicle in Northern Ireland.

In February the New IRA was suspected of shooting a senior police officer in Northern Ireland, and a statement purportedly from the group claimed responsibility for the attack. In April, police in Northern Ireland disrupted a New IRA bomb plot meant to coincide with President Biden's visit to Belfast.

Strength: The New IRA is estimated to have about 100 members.

Location/Area of Operation: United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland.

Funding and External Aid: The New IRA receives funds from money laundering, smuggling, and other criminal activities, is suspected of receiving funds from sympathizers in the United States, and has attempted to buy weapons from gun dealers in the United States and the Balkans.

Revolutionary People's Liberation Party/Front

Aka DHKP/C; Dev Sol; Dev Sol Armed Revolutionary Units; Dev Sol Silahlı Devrimci Birlikleri; Dev Sol SDB; Devrimci Halk Kurtuluş Partisi-Cephesi; Devrimci Sol; Revolutionary Left.

Description: The Revolutionary People's Liberation Party/Front (DHKP/C) was designated as an FTO on October 8, 1997. DHKP/C formed in 1978 as Devrimci Sol, or Dev Sol, a splinter faction of Dev Genç (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. DHKP/C murdered 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, 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.

In 2015, Turkish prosecutor Mehmet Selim Kiraz was taken hostage and died from multiple gunshot wounds inflicted by DHKP/C after police attempted to rescue him. Also that year, two women opened fire on the U.S. Consulate General in Istanbul; one woman later was identified as a DHKP/C member. In 2019, two individuals linked to DHKP/C were arrested by Turkish security forces after they entered the Turkish Parliament and took a staff member hostage. In 2022, German police arrested three senior members of DHKP/C for organizing the group's propaganda, recruitment, and funding activities across Germany, and are believed to have supplied fake passports to DHKP/C members. Also in 2022, Turkish security forces arrested Gülten Matur, the DHKP/C leader responsible for Türkiye.

In November a Turkish DHKP/C member was arrested in Greece on terrorism related charges. DHKP/C did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2023.

Strength: DHKP/C is estimated to have several dozen members inside Türkiye, with a support network throughout Europe.

Location/Area of Operation: Türkiye and Europe.

Funding and External Aid: DHKP/C finances its activities chiefly through donations and extortion. In Europe the group engages in fundraising, arms smuggling, and other criminal ventures to support its operations in Türkiye.

Revolutionary Struggle

Aka Epanastatikos Aghonas.

Description: Revolutionary Struggle (RS) was designated as an FTO on May 18, 2009. RS is a radical Marxist violent 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 the Revolutionary People's Struggle.

Activities: RS first gained notoriety in 2003 when it claimed responsibility for bombings at the Athens Courthouse protesting 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. In November, she was granted a conditional release from prison. RS did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2023.

Strength: RS is estimated to have fewer than two dozen members.

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 robberies.

The Middle East and North Africa

Abdallah Azzam Brigades

Aka Abdullah Azzam Brigades; Ziyad al-Jarrah Battalions of the Abdallah Azzam Brigades; Yusuf al-'Uyayri Battalions of the Abdallah Azzam Brigades; Marwan Hadid Brigades; Marwan Hadid Brigade.

Description: Abdallah Azzam Brigades (AAB) was designated as an FTO on May 30, 2012. 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 2017, AAB called for jihad by Muslims against the United States and Israel after the U.S. announcement recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

Beginning in 2013, AAB began targeting Hizballah for the organization's involvement in the Syrian conflict and support for Syrian regime forces. In subsequent years, AAB claimed responsibility for several suicide bombings, including the 2013 bombing outside the Iranian embassy in Beirut, Lebanon, that killed 23 people; the 2014 twin suicide bomb attacks against the Iranian cultural center in Beirut that killed four persons; and the 2014 AAB-blamed suicide bombing in Beirut that killed a security officer. From 2016 through 2018, AAB continued its involvement in the Syrian conflict and was active in Lebanon's Ain al-Hilweh refugee camp. AAB announced its dissolution in 2019 and did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2023.

Strength: AAB's precise numbers are unknown.

Location/Area of Operation: Lebanon.

Funding and External Aid: Sources of AAB's funding are unknown.

Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade

Aka al-Aqsa Martyrs Battalion.

Description: Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade (AAMB) was designated as an FTO on March 27, 2002. AAMB is composed of small cells of Fatah-affiliated activists who 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 Second Palestinian Intifada in 2000, 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 2015, AAMB declared open war against Israel and asked Iran to help fund its efforts in a televised broadcast. Since 2010, AAMB has claimed responsibility for multiple rocket attacks on Israel from the West Bank, including at least 36 rockets launched in 2021.

In 2023, AAMB claimed responsibility for the shooting of an Israeli man near a settlement in the northern West Bank. AAMB has also reportedly fought against Israeli forces in Gaza following the October 7 attacks.

Strength: AAMB is estimated to have a few hundred members.

Location/Area of Operation: Israel, Gaza, and the West Bank. AAMB may have members in Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon.

Funding and External Aid: AAMB receives funds and guidance from Iran, 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 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, including a 2014 bomb attack that killed two Bahraini police officers and a police officer from the United Arab Emirates and the 2017 killing of another local Bahraini police 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 Uprising-inspired political uprising. AAB did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2023.

Strength: AAB's precise numbers are unknown.

Location/Area of Operation: Bahrain, Iran, and Iraq.

Funding and External Aid: AAB receives funding and support from Iran.

Al-Nusrah Front

Aka Jabhat al-Nusrah; Jabhet al-Nusrah; the Victory Front; al-Nusrah Front for the People of the Levant; al-Nusrah Front in Lebanon; Jabhat al-Nusra li-Ahl al-Sham min Mujahedi al-Sham fi Sahat al-Jihad; Support Front for the People of the Levant; Jabhat Fath al-Sham; Jabhat Fath al Sham; Jabhat Fatah al-Sham; Jabhat Fateh al-Sham; Front for the Conquest of Syria; the Front for Liberation of al Sham; Front for the Conquest of Syria/the Levant; Front for the Liberation of the Levant; Conquest of the Levant Front; Fatah al-Sham Front; Fateh al-Sham Front; 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. It is led by Abu Muhammad al-Jawlani. The group formed in 2011 when then-al-Qa'ida in Iraq (AQI) – now ISIS – then-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 (or HTS) as a vehicle to advance its position in the Syrian insurgency.

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. ANF took control of significant portions of Idlib from 2017 to 2019, exerting severe military pressure over other local groups. In 2022, ANF remained the largest and most-dominant militant faction in northwest Syria's Idlib province. ANF took full control of the strategic city of Afrin and at least 26 towns and villages to the Southwest. After several days of fighting between ANF and Turkish-backed rebel groups, an intervention by Türkiye stopped ANF's expansion and the group withdrew from the Afrin region. The clashes killed least 58 people, including 10 civilians, and forced thousands to flee homes or refugee camps.

Throughout 2023 the group continued to attack Syrian regime positions across the frontline held by al-Nusra-aligned fighters. In August the group killed 11 soldiers in an attack that involved detonating explosives in a tunnel under their position. In September the group infiltrated regime-held positions in Latakia and killed nine soldiers. In October, at least 89 soldiers were killed at a military academy in Homs by a drone that likely launched from territory held by al-Nusra and allied factions.

Strength: ANF is assessed to have as many as 10,000 fighters.

Location/Area of Operation: Syria, headquartered in Syria's Idlib province; operationally active in northwest 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 Persian Gulf-based donors. The group also generates revenue by collecting fees from commercial traffic entering and exiting Idlib.

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 was designated as an FTO on October 8, 1999. Established in 1988, al-Qa'ida helped finance, recruit, transport, and train fighters for the Afghan resistance against the former Soviet Union. Al-Qa'ida 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 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. Al-Qa'ida 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. Al-Qa’ida merged with al-Jihad (Egyptian Islamic Jihad) in 2001. Although numerous al-Qa’ida leaders have been killed in recent years, including Usama bin Laden in 2011 and Ayman al-Zawahiri in 2022, al-Qa’ida senior leader Saif al-Adel remains at large in Iran.

Activities: In the 1990s, al-Qa’ida conducted three bombings targeting U.S. troops in Aden, Yemen; claimed responsibility for shooting down U.S. helicopters and killing U.S. soldiers in Somalia; and 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. Two of the individuals wanted for the embassy bombings, Saif al-Adel and Abu Mohammed al-Masri, were released from Iranian custody in 2015 in exchange for an Iranian diplomat who had been kidnapped in Yemen. In 2000, al-Qa’ida conducted a suicide attack on the *USS Cole* in the Port of Aden with an explosive-laden boat, killing 17 U.S. Navy sailors and injuring 39 others.

On September 11, 2001, 19 al-Qa’ida 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 al-Qa’ida was behind the kidnapping of U.S. aid worker Warren Weinstein in Pakistan. Weinstein was held captive until his death in 2015. In 2017, al-Zawahiri released a video calling for jihadists around the world to conduct attacks against the United States. Al-Zawahiri also 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, 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.

Several individuals supporting or inspired by al-Qa’ida have been convicted or arrested. In 2017 a U.S. citizen was convicted in New York of charges related to abetting al-Qa’ida’s 2009 attack on a U.S. military base in Afghanistan using two truck bombs. In 2019 a man from Cleveland, Ohio, was arrested for allegedly making plans for an al-Qa’ida-inspired bomb attack on the city’s downtown Independence Day parade.

In 2022 the United States conducted a counterterrorism operation in Kabul, Afghanistan, that killed Ayman al-Zawahiri. Al-Qa’ida did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2023.

Strength: Al-Qa’ida is estimated to have several dozen members in Afghanistan or Iran. The deaths or arrests of dozens of mid- and senior-level al-Qa’ida operatives, including Usama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri, have disrupted communication, financial support, facilitation nodes, and several terrorist plots. Al-Qa’ida leaders, including those located in Iran, oversee a network of affiliated groups. In addition, supporters and associates worldwide who are motivated by the group’s ideology may operate without direction from al-Qa’ida central leadership.

Location/Area of Operation: Afghanistan, Iran, North Africa, West Africa, Pakistan, Somalia, Syria, Yemen.

Funding and External Aid: Al-Qa’ida depends primarily on donations from likeminded supporters, and from individuals who believe 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 operatives were working together under the banner of AQAP. The announcement signaled the rebirth of an al-Qa'ida franchise that previously carried out attacks in Saudi Arabia. AQAP's stated goals include establishing a caliphate and implementing Sharia 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, including a 2009 attempted attack on Northwest Airlines Flight 253 from Amsterdam to Detroit, Michigan; a 2010 foiled plot to send explosive-laden packages to the United States on cargo planes; and the 2015 attack by brothers Cherif and Said Kouachi at the Paris headquarters of satirical newspaper *Charlie Hebdo*, 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 2019, Mohammed Saeed Alshamrani killed three persons and injured eight others in a shooting at Naval Air Station Pensacola in Florida. AQAP released a video the following year, claiming "full responsibility" for the shooting. In 2021, AQAP killed eight Yemeni soldiers and four civilians in an attack on a security forces checkpoint in Abyan governorate, Yemen. In 2022, AQAP kidnapped five UN workers in Abyan governorate and held them hostage for 18 months. Later that year, AQAP ambushed a security forces checkpoint in Abyan, killing at least 21 Yemeni soldiers – the group's deadliest attack since 2019.

In 2023, AQAP claimed responsibility for an attack on a security forces checkpoint by AQAP gunmen in March that killed several soldiers; an April sniper attack that killed three pro-government soldiers; an IED attack targeting pro-government forces in Abyan governorate; and several drone attacks in the Shabwa governorate of southern Yemen.

Strength: AQAP is estimated to have up to 3,000 members.

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.

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.

Activities: From 2003 to 2011, AAI conducted attacks against a wide range of targets including Iraqi government and security forces, and U.S.-led Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS 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 persons were wounded in the attack.

In 2014, parts 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 2023.

Strength: AAI is estimated to have between 250 and 350 fighters.

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: Ansar al-Shari'a in Benghazi (AAS-B) was designated as an FTO on January 13, 2014. 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. AAS-B announced its formal dissolution in 2017 owing to suffering heavy losses, including the group's senior leadership and defections to ISIS in Libya. AAS-B did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2023.

Strength: AAS-B's precise numbers are unknown.

Location/Area of Operation: Benghazi, Libya.

Funding and External Aid: AAS-B obtained funds from AQIM and 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: Ansar al-Shari'a in Darnah (AAS-D) was designated as an FTO on January 13, 2014. 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 responsibility for any attacks in 2023.

Strength: AAS-D's precise numbers are unknown.

Location/Area of Operation: Darnah, Libya.

Funding and External Aid: Sources of AAS-D's 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: Ansar al-Shari'a in Tunisia (AAS-T) was designated as an FTO on January 13, 2014. 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 personnel. 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 2023.

Strength: AAS-T's precise numbers are unknown.

Location/Area of Operation: Libya and Tunisia.

Funding and External Aid: Sources of AAS-T's funding are unknown.

Army of Islam

Aka Jaysh al-Islam; Jaish al-Islam.

Description: Army of Islam (AOI) was designated as an FTO on May 19, 2011. Founded in 2005, AOI is a Gaza-based terrorist organization responsible for numerous terrorist acts against the Israeli and Egyptian governments and British, New Zealander, 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: Since 2006, AOI has been responsible for kidnappings and terrorist attacks including kidnappings of civilians, including a U.S. journalist; 2009 attacks on Egyptian civilians in Cairo and Heliopolis, Egypt; the 2011 attack on a Coptic Christian church in Alexandria that killed 25 people and wounded 100 others; and rocket attacks on Israel in a joint operation with the Mujahidin Shura Council in the Environs of Jerusalem in 2012.

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, Iraq. In 2019, AOI shared another video praising ISIS that included training information for individuals to conduct suicide attacks. In 2020, AOI published more than two dozen images of fighters conducting military training. AOI did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2023.

Strength: Its 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: Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq (AAH) was designated as an FTO on January 10, 2020. Led by Qays al-Khazali, AAH is an Iran-backed, militant organization that remains ideologically aligned with Iran and loyal to 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: Since its creation in 2006, AAH has claimed responsibility for more than 6,000 attacks against U.S. and Defeat-ISIS Coalition forces. 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 individuals assessed to be AAH members were arrested in connection to rockets fired at the Camp Taji military training complex, where U.S. personnel provide divisional training. Also in 2019, AAH members opened fire on a group of protestors trying to set fire to the group's office in Nasiriya, killing at least six. AAH continued to be active in 2023, including through indirect fire attacks on U.S. facilities in Iraq, typically using front names or proxy groups.

Strength: AAH is estimated to have between 10,000 and 15,000 members.

Location/Area of Operation: Iraq, Syria.

Funding and External Aid: AAH receives funding, logistical support, training, and weapons from Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Qods Force and Hizballah. AAH also receives funding through illicit activities such as kidnapping for ransom, smuggling, and "taxing"/extortion of economic activities in areas where the group is dominant.

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. AAA did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2023.

Strength: AAA is estimated to have membership 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 violent extremist networks.

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: Hamas was designated as an FTO on October 8, 1997. Established in 1987 at the onset of the first Palestinian uprising, or First Intifada, Hamas is an outgrowth of the Palestinian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood. Its armed element, the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, has conducted anti-Israeli attacks, including the horrific October 7th attacks on Israel that killed more than 1,100 people, including hundreds of Israeli civilians and at least 31 U.S. citizens, and more than 240 people kidnapped, including U.S. citizens. 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, Ismail Haniyeh was selected as Hamas's new leader. Hamas remained in de facto control over Gaza in 2023, though much of its control had been disrupted by year's end owing to Israel's military response to the October 7 Hamas attacks on Israel.

Activities: Hamas has 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 2012, Hamas and Palestine Islamic Jihad operatives coordinated and carried out a bus bombing in Tel Aviv that wounded 29 people. In 2014, Hamas kidnapped and murdered three Israeli teenagers, 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. Since 2018, Hamas has continued rocket attacks from Gaza into Israeli territory, including an 11-day escalation with Israel in 2021 during which Hamas and other militant groups launched more than 4,000 rockets into Israeli cities. In 2022, Israeli security forces thwarted an attack planned by a Hamas cell in Jerusalem. The cell planned to shoot Israeli public figures, launch bombing attacks, and kidnap soldiers.

On October 7, 2023, Hamas, with participation from members of PIJ, the PFLP, and other terrorist groups, launched a surprise attack on Israel that killed more than 1,100 people, including hundreds of Israeli civilians and at least 31 U.S. citizens. Supported by armed drones and thousands of rockets, Hamas fighters kidnapped more than 240 people, including U.S. citizens.

Strength: Hamas is estimated to have between 20,000 and 40,000 fighters.

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 Persian Gulf countries. The group receives donations from some Palestinians and other expatriates as well as from its own charity organizations.

Harakat Sawa'd Misr

Aka HASM; Harakah Sawa'id Misr; Harikat Souaid Misr; HASM Movement; Hassam Movement; Arms of Egypt Movement; Movement of Egypt's Arms; Movement of Egypt's Forearms; Hassm; Hamms; Hassam; Hasam.

Description: Harakat Sawa'd Misr (HASM) was designated as an FTO on January 14, 2021. Formed in Egypt in 2015 with the goal of overthrowing the Egyptian government, HASM attacks Egyptian security officials and other government-affiliated targets.

Activities: Since 2016, HASM has claimed responsibility for numerous attacks, including the 2016 attempted assassination of Egypt's former Grand Mufti Ali Gomaa, the 2017 assassination of Egyptian National Security Agency officer Ibrahim Azzazy; the 2017 attack on Burma's embassy in Cairo; and two 2019 car bomb attacks targeting security forces in Giza and on a government health institute in Cairo. HASM did not claim responsibility for any terrorist attacks in 2023.

Strength: HASM's precise numbers are unknown.

Location/Area of Operation: Egypt.

Funding and External Aid: Its sources of funding are unknown.

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 often serves as a proxy for Iran. The two often work together on shared initiatives, although Hizballah also occasionally acts independently. After Hamas launched its horrific attacks on Israel, Hizballah quickly joined in with near-daily hostilities across the Lebanon-Israel border. Hizballah, along with other Iran-aligned militia groups, continues to share 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 Embassy Beirut annex; and the 1985 hijacking of TWA Flight 847, during which U.S. Navy diver Robert Stethem was murdered. Hizballah also was 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 Iraqi Shia militant and terrorist groups in Iraq who in 2007 attacked the Karbala Provincial Joint Coordination Center, killing five American soldiers. In 2012, Hizballah was responsible for an attack on a passenger bus carrying 42 Israeli tourists at the Burgas Airport in Bulgaria, killing five Israelis and one Bulgarian.

Several Hizballah operatives have been arrested or tried around the world, including two arrested in the United States in 2017. One Hizballah 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, extraditing him to Paraguay for prosecution two years later. In 2020, judges at the Netherlands-based Special Tribunal for Lebanon found Hizballah operational leader Salim Ayyash guilty for his central role in the bomb attack in Beirut in 2005 that killed former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafic Hariri. In 2022, appeals judges sentenced two other Hizballah members, Hassan Habib Merhi and Hussein Hassan Oneissi, to life imprisonment for their roles as accomplices in the assassination.

Hizballah has increased the number and intensity of attacks on Israel since October. In November, Hizballah fired antitank missiles at an Israeli community just over the border according to Israeli officials. Hizballah later announced attacks on Israeli military gatherings, and barracks in border areas as clashes continued to intensify. In December, Hizballah unleashed multiple rounds of rocket attacks and multiple drone strikes, according to Israel, reaching approximately three dozen total attacks on Israel since October 7.

Strength: Hizballah is estimated to have up to 45,000 fighters and thousands of supporters and members worldwide.

Location/Area of Operation: Lebanon and Syria. Hizballah has plotted and conducted operations worldwide.

Funding and External Aid: Hizballah continues to receive most of its funding, training, weapons, and explosives, as well as political, diplomatic, monetary, and organizational aid, from Iran. Iran's annual financial backing to Hizballah – which has been estimated to be hundreds of millions of dollars annually – 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.

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: The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) was designated as an FTO on April 15, 2019. Founded in 1979, the IRGC plays a central role in Iran's use of terrorism as a key tool to support its efforts to deter and counter its perceived foes and project power in the Middle East. The organization is composed of several subdepartments, including: the IRGC Ground Forces, the IRGC Air Force, the IRGC Navy, the Basij, the IRGC Intelligence Organization (IRGC IO), and the IRGC-Qods Force (IRGC-QF). The IRGC – primarily through its Qods Force – has been directly involved in terrorist plotting worldwide; its support for terrorism is foundational and institutional, and it has killed U.S. citizens.

Founded in 1979, the IRGC has since gained a substantial role in executing Iran's foreign policy and wields control over vast segments of the economy. The IRGC-QF provides guidance, training, funding, and weapons to partners and proxies throughout the Middle East, including Hizballah

in Lebanon, the Houthis in Yemen, Hamas in Gaza, and Iran-aligned militia groups in Iraq and Syria. The organization's support to these nonstate armed groups in the region helps Iran compensate for its relatively weak conventional military forces and increases its ability to further destabilize the region. Answering directly to the supreme leader, the IRGC also is influential in domestic politics, and many senior officials have passed through its ranks.

Activities: The IRGC is Iran's primary mechanism for cultivating and supporting terrorist groups abroad. In 2023 the IRGC continued 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, Hamas, the Houthis, 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 Persian Gulf. Iran provides up to \$100 million annually in combined support to Palestinian terrorist groups, including Hamas, PIJ, and the PFLP-GC. The IRGC also is active in Syria in support of the Assad regime.

In addition to its support for armed nonstate groups in the Middle East, the IRGC-QF conducts terrorist operations worldwide targeting dissidents and anti-regime critics, Jewish, and Israeli individuals, and former U.S. officials who Iran believes were involved in the death of former IRGC-QF Commander Qasem Soleimani. In 2011 the IRGC plotted a brazen attack against the Saudi ambassador to the United States on American soil. In 2012, IRGC-QF operatives were arrested in Türkiye 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. Also in 2018, a U.S. federal court found Iran and the IRGC liable for the 1996 Khobar Towers bombing in Saudi Arabia that killed 19 U.S. citizens. In 2022, an IRGC member was charged for attempting to arrange the murder of a former U.S. National Security Advisor.

IRGC operatives pursued or supported terrorist attacks against Israeli targets in 2023, including a thwarted plot to attack Israeli tourists in Cyprus.

Strength: The IRGC has between 125,000 and 190,000 personnel, including the IRGC-QF, which consists of an estimated 5,000 to 15,000 personnel.

Location/Area of Operation: The IRGC-QF has plotted and conducted covert operations worldwide.

Funding and External Aid: The IRGC continues to engage in large-scale illicit financing schemes and money laundering to fund its malign activities. In 2023 the United States designated 39 entities constituting an international sanctions evasion network, granting sanctioned Iranian entities access to the international financial system, and obfuscating their trade with foreign customers. This sanctions evasion network enabled the sale of billions of dollars' worth of petrochemicals from Iran-based companies to buyers overseas.

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 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 2004, Zarqawi joined al-Qa'ida and pledged allegiance to Usama bin Laden, and his group became known as al-Qa'ida in Iraq (AQI). Zarqawi led AQI during Operation Iraqi Freedom to fight against U.S. and Defeat-ISIS Coalition forces in Iraq until he was killed in 2006.

In 2006, AQI publicly renamed itself the Islamic State in Iraq before adopting the moniker of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) in 2013, 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 and separated this group from al-Qa'ida in 2014, before 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 (SDF), with support from the Defeat-ISIS Coalition, 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 remains a serious threat. The group benefits from instability, demonstrating intent to cause and inspire terrorist attacks around the world. To that end, ISIS-Core has relied on its regional General Directorate of the Provinces to provide operational guidance and funding to its branches, networks, and affiliates around the world through its regional offices. These offices include the Bilad al-Rafidayn Office, the al-Furqan Office, the Dhu al-Nurayn Office, the al-Siddiq Office, and the al-Karrar Office. This report refers to central ISIS leadership as ISIS-Core.

In April, ISIS emir Abu al-Hussein al-Husseini al-Qurayshi was killed, and, in August, ISIS named Abu Hafz al-Hashimi al-Quraishi as the group's new leader.

Activities: ISIS has conducted numerous high-profile attacks, including rocket attacks, videotaped beheadings of U.S. citizens, suicide bombings against both military and civilian targets, and IED attacks against U.S. military personnel and Iraqi infrastructure. The terrorist group was responsible for most of the 12,000 Iraqi civilian deaths in 2014. ISIS also has been heavily involved in the fighting in Syria and participated in numerous kidnappings of civilians, including aid workers and journalists. And it directs, enables, and inspires individuals to conduct attacks on behalf of the group around the world.

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, including 23-year-old U.S. citizen Nohemi Gonzalez.

The organization has claimed responsibility for several large-scale attacks in Iraq and Syria, including a 2016 car bombing at a shopping center in Baghdad that killed nearly 300 people – the deadliest bombing in the city since 2003. Also that year, ISIS directed two simultaneous attacks in Brussels, Belgium – one at Zaventem Airport and the other at a metro station, killing 32 people, including four U.S. citizens. That same year, a gunman who pledged allegiance to ISIS killed 49 individuals at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, Florida. ISIS claimed responsibility for two additional attacks in 2016: one in which a terrorist driving a cargo truck assaulted a crowd in Nice, France, during Bastille Day celebrations, resulting in 86 deaths, including three U.S. citizens; the second a truck attack on a crowded Christmas market in Berlin that killed 12 people and injured 48 others.

In 2017, ISIS claimed responsibility for two attacks in the United Kingdom: one a terrorist attack on London's Westminster Bridge, when a man drove his car into pedestrians and stabbed others, killing five persons; the other a suicide bombing in Manchester, England, that killed 22 people outside of a live concert. That same year, a man claiming to be a member of ISIS drove a truck into a crowded shopping center in Stockholm, Sweden, killing five persons.

During 2018, ISIS conducted multiple suicide bombings and simultaneous raids in a brutal offensive in southwestern Syria, killing more than 200 people.

In 2019, ISIS-inspired terrorists carried out coordinated suicide bombings at multiple churches and hotels across Sri Lanka, killing more than 250 people on Easter Sunday. Also in 2019, ISIS claimed responsibility for a stabbing attack near the London Bridge in which a man killed two persons.

Since 2019, ISIS has claimed responsibility for numerous attacks including the 2019 suicide bombing of a restaurant in Manbij, Syria, that killed 19 people, including four U.S. citizens; the 2019 killing of a U.S. servicemember while he was participating in a combat operation in Ninewa province, Iraq; the 2021 twin suicide bombings in a busy market in Tayaran Square in Baghdad that killed at least 32 people; and a 2021 suicide attack in a busy market in a predominantly Shia neighborhood in east Baghdad that killed 30 people.

In 2022, ISIS attacked Hasakah prison in Syria, triggering a 10-day battle that spilled over into the streets, killing at least 121 SDF soldiers, 374 suspected ISIS militants, and four civilians. Also in 2022, ISIS claimed responsibility for an attack at the Shāh Chérāgh shrine in Shiraz, Iran, killing at least 15 people.

In 2023, ISIS continued attacking both civilians and government security forces. ISIS targeted people foraging for desert truffles in the Syrian Desert, resulting in more than 150 people killed, between February and April. Overall, ISIS claimed a total of 102 attacks in Iraq and 99 attacks in Syria in 2023.

Strength: Estimates suggest ISIS fighters in Iraq and Syria number between 3,000 and 7,000, including several thousand foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs). 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. ISIS also has 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 otherwise subjected to physical and sexual abuse.

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. The organization maintains stockpiles of as much as tens of millions of dollars, scattered across Iraq and Syria, which it looted during its occupation of those countries during 2013-19. 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 the group ability to generate, hold, and transfer its financial assets. Despite this, ISIS continues to generate some revenue from criminal activities through its many clandestine networks and provides financial support and guidance to its network of global branches and affiliates.

ISIS-Libya

Aka Islamic State of Iraq and ash-Sham in Libya; Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant-Libya; Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant in Libya; ISIS-L; ISIS-Libya; ISIL-Libya; Wilayat Barqa; Wilayat Fezzan; Wilayat Tripolitania; Wilayat Tarablus; Wilayat al-Tarabulus.

Description: The Islamic State of Iraq and ash-Sham in Libya (ISIL-L) was designated as an FTO on May 20, 2016. In 2014, then-ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi dispatched ISIS operatives from Syria to Libya to establish a branch. In 2014, several hundred operatives set up a base in Darnah. The following month, Baghdadi formally established the branch after announcing he had accepted oaths of allegiance from fighters in Libya.

Activities: Since its establishment, ISIS-L has claimed responsibility for and carried out multiple attacks targeting government officials and civilians throughout Libya, including a 2015 suicide attack on a luxury hotel in Tripoli that killed eight persons, including a U.S. contractor; 2018 attacks including on Libya's electoral commission headquarters in Tripoli that killed 14 people, a suicide attack on Libya's National Oil Corporation headquarters that killed two persons, and on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that killed three persons; and a 2021 suicide attack at a police checkpoint in Sabhā, Libya, that killed at least two Libyan National Army personnel. In 2022, ISIS-L attacked and killed three Libyan security personnel in southwest Libya. This followed an attack on the same brigade a week earlier that had killed two members. ISIS-L did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2023.

Strength: ISIS-L is estimated to have up to a few hundred fighters.

Location/Area of Operation: Libya.

Funding and External Aid: ISIS-L's funding comes from a variety of sources, including criminal activity, such as smuggling and extortion, and external funding. The group also receives support from ISIS.

ISIS-Sinai Province

Aka Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis; Ansar Jerusalem; Supporters of Jerusalem; Ansar Bayt al-Maqdes; Ansar Beit al-Maqdis; ISIS-SP; Islamic State of Iraq and ash-Sham-Sinai Province; Islamic State of Iraq and the Sham-Sinai Province; 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 Sayna; Wilayat Sinai.

Description: Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis (ABM) was designated as an FTO on April 9, 2014. ABM emerged in 2011 following the revolution in Egypt. In 2014, ABM officially declared allegiance to ISIS. The Department of State amended ABM's designation to add, among others, the aliases ISIL Sinai Province and Islamic State-Sinai Province in 2015 and ISIS-Sinai Province (ISIS-SP) in 2021.

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 on the Egyptian military and tourist sectors. From 2015 through 2023, ISIS-SP claimed responsibility for many 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 Sufis, and on Egyptian military and security personnel.

In 2020, ISIS-SP increased its attacks against Sinai tribal members, including the killing of a tribal elder, age 75, who was strapped to a pole with explosives detonated next to him, and a suicide bombing that targeted a tribal family gathering and killed at least three persons. In 2022, ISIS-SP continued attacks on Egyptian security personnel, including at military and border guard checkpoints.

In January, ISIS-SP claimed responsibility for an attack on a police checkpoint in Ismailia, Egypt, that resulted in the death of three police officers.

Strength: ISIS-SP is estimated to have a few hundred members.

Location/Area of Operation: Egypt.

Funding and External Aid: ISIS-SP receives funding from external actors, including ISIS-Core, and from smuggling.

Jaysh Rijal al-Tariq al-Naqshabandi

Aka Army of the Men of the Naqshbandi Order; Armed Men of the Naqshbandi 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. In 2006 the group, which consists of former Baath Party officials, military personnel, and Sunni nationalists, announced insurgency operations against international forces in Iraq in response to the execution of Saddam Hussein. Izzat Ibrahim al-Douri, former vice president of Saddam Hussein's Revolutionary Council, led the group until his death in 2020. 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 vehicle-borne IEDs (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 in 2023.

Strength: Its 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 Persian Gulf-based financiers of terrorism.

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: Kata'ib Hizballah (KH) was designated as an FTO on July 2, 2009. Formed in 2006 as an anti-western Shia group, the group conducts attacks against U.S., Israeli, 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 notorious 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 the Camp Victory U.S. military base.

In 2019, KH members stormed the Bahraini embassy in Baghdad, the organization was reportedly involved in sniper operations against Iraqi protestors, and it was blamed for a December rocket attack on K-1 Air Base in Kirkuk that killed one U.S. citizen. Also in 2019, KH members broke into the Embassy Baghdad compound and set fires inside, which destroyed security checkpoints and reception rooms. In 2020, KH reportedly launched rockets at Camp Taji near Baghdad, killing two Americans and one British soldier, and wounding 14 others. In 2021, KH was suspected of a rocket attack on Ain al-Asad Air Base, which hosts U.S. soldiers. In 2022 the group was suspected of launching two Iranian-manufactured unmanned aerial vehicles toward the U.S. base at al-Tanf, Syria.

In 2023, KH remained active in Iraq and Syria, typically using front names or proxy groups to obfuscate its involvement in attacks. Near year's end, KH was suspected of being behind a spate of attacks against U.S. military and possibly diplomatic personnel in Iraq and Syria in the months following the beginning of the Israel-Hamas conflict in October. On December 25, three U.S. military personnel were injured in a drone attack targeting Erbil Air Base, Iraq, suspected to have carried out by KH. KH is also suspected of kidnapping Israeli-Russian researcher Elizabeth Tsurkov in March 2023.

Strength: KH is estimated to have as many as 30,000 fighters.

Location/Area of Operation: Iraq and Syria.

Funding and External Aid: KH depends heavily on support from Iran.

Kurdistan Workers' Party

Aka Kurdistan Freedom and Democracy Congress; Freedom and Democracy Congress of Kurdistan; KADEK; Partiya Karkeran Kurdistan; Halu Mesru Savunma Kuvveti; HSK; Kurdistan People's Congress; People's Congress of Kurdistan; KONGRA-GEL; PKK; KGK; KHK; KCK.

Description: The Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) was designated as an FTO on October 8, 1997. Founded by Abdullah Ocalan in 1978 as a Marxist-Leninist separatist organization, PKK is composed primarily of Turkish Kurds who launched a campaign of violence in 1984.

Activities: In the early 1990s, PKK moved beyond rural-based insurgent activities to engage in urban terrorism. Türkiye became the scene of significant violence, with some estimates suggesting there have been at least 40,000 casualties during the 38-year-long conflict. After the arrest of the PKK's founder in 1999, the group abandoned the insurgency until 2004, when its hardline militant wing solidified control and renounced the self-imposed ceasefire. The Turkish government and PKK resumed peace negotiations in 2009 and again during 2013-2015, but the negotiations ultimately failed.

From 2016 to 2022, numerous attacks by the PKK were reported against Türkiye security forces and government officials, including a 2016 VBIED strike against police headquarters; and a 2017 attack on a military convoy; a 2018 roadside bomb against a bus carrying workers from the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, killing seven persons and wounding 13 in Diyarbakir Province's Kulp district; the 2019 assassination of a senior Turkish diplomat in Erbil, Iraq; several 2020 PKK-claimed attacks aimed at a Türkiye-Iran customs border gate, a natural gas pipeline near the Turkish-Iranian border, and a Turkish military base in northern Iraq; and a 2022 attack on a police guesthouse in southern Türkiye. Türkiye also accused the PKK of being responsible for a 2022 explosion in Istanbul that killed at least six persons and wounded 81 others. The PKK denied responsibility for the blast.

In October the PKK claimed responsibility for a bombing attack outside Türkiye's Interior Ministry building in Ankara that killed one person and injured two others. In December, Türkiye government officials stated that 12 Turkish soldiers had been killed during fighting with the PKK in northern Iraq.

Strength: PKK is estimated to have 4,000 to 5,000 members.

Location/Area of Operation: Iraq, Iran, Syria, Türkiye, and Europe.

Funding and External Aid: PKK receives financial support from the large Kurdish diaspora in Europe.

Palestinian Islamic Jihad

Aka PIJ; Palestinian Islamic Jihad – Shaqaqi Faction; 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: The Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) was designated as an FTO on October 8, 1997. Formed by militant Palestinians in Gaza during the 1970s, the PIJ is committed to the destruction of Israel and to the creation of an Islamic state in historic Palestine, including present-day Israel.

Activities: The PIJ has conducted numerous attacks against Israeli civilian and military targets, including 2014 attacks on Israeli buses in Tel Aviv and a 2016 plot to abduct and kill an Israel Defense Forces (IDF) soldier and carry out a mass-casualty attack on a reception hall in Beersheba. Over the past decade, the PIJ has carried out waves of rocket attacks into Israeli territory.

On October 7, members of PIJ participated in Hamas's attack on Israel that killed more than 1,100 people, including hundreds of Israeli civilians and at least 31 U.S. citizens. The PIJ claimed to hold more than 30 hostages captive.

Strength: The PIJ is estimated to have about 1,000 members.

Location/Area of Operation: Israel, Gaza, and the West Bank.

Funding and External Aid: The PIJ receives financial assistance and training primarily from Iran. Hizballah provides PIJ leaders and representatives with safe harbor in Lebanon. The PIJ has also partnered with 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, West Bank, and the shooting of an Israeli settler. In 2010 the group 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 did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2023.

Strength: Its precise numbers are unknown.

Location/Area of Operation: Gaza, the West Bank, Lebanon, and Syria.

Funding and External Aid: Sources of the PLF's 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: The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) was designated as an FTO on October 8, 1997. The 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 Palestinian Intifada. During that time the group assassinated Israeli Tourism Minister Rehavam Ze'evi in 2001, carried out at least two suicide operations, and with other Palestinian terrorist groups launched multiple joint

operations.

Since 2014, the PFLP has conducted numerous attacks, including a 2014 attack in which two Palestinians reportedly affiliated with the organization entered a Jerusalem synagogue and attacked Israelis with guns, knives, and axes, killing five persons, including three U.S. citizens; a 2017 attack involving two PFLP members near East Jerusalem's Old City that killed an Israeli border security agent, although ISIS claimed responsibility for the attack; and allegedly a 2019 detonation of an IED in the West Bank, killing an Israeli teenager and seriously wounding two others. In 2020, 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 weapons and bomb making materials.

In March, PFLP claimed responsibility for two separate attacks in the West Bank town of Huwara, injuring an Israeli-American and two Israeli soldiers. On October 7, members of the PFLP participated in Hamas's surprise attack on Israel that killed more than 1,100 people, including hundreds of Israeli civilians and at least 31 U.S. citizens. PFLP reportedly holds hostages captured during the attacks.

Strength: The PFLP's precise numbers are unknown.

Location/Area of Operation: Gaza, Israel, Lebanon, Syria, and the West Bank.

Funding and External Aid: Its 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. 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, led PFLP-GC until his death in 2021 and was succeeded by Talal Naji. 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. The PFLP-GC also 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. The PFLP-GC did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2023.

Strength: The PFLP-GC is estimated to have 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.

South and Central Asia

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. In 2019, Asim Umar, the former head of AQIS, was killed in a joint U.S.-Afghan military operation. Osama Mehmood is the current leader of AQIS.

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, Embassy Dhaka local employee Xulhaz Mannan, and Bangladeshi nationals Oyasiqur Rahman Babu, Ahmed Rajib Haideer, and A.K.M. Shafiul Islam. In 2017, al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula called on AQIS to launch attacks on Burmese authorities because of Burma's policies toward Rohingya Muslims. In 2021, India's National Investigation Agency arrested five alleged AQIS operatives in Lucknow on charges of conspiring to conduct a terrorist attack in Uttar Pradesh. Also in 2021, AQIS released two propaganda videos specifically targeting audiences in Kashmir and throughout India. In 2022, AQIS threatened to conduct suicide bombings in several Indian cities.

In July, AQIS issued a statement condemning the burning of a Quran in Sweden and calling for violence against the perpetrators in Sweden and also for attacks against the United States and Europe. In November, AQIS published a booklet urging attacks against U.S. diplomats and military personnel located overseas.

AQIS did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2023.

Strength: AQIS is estimated to have about 200 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.

Haqqani Network

Aka HQN.

Description: The Haqqani Network (HQN) was designated as an FTO on September 19, 2012. HQN was formed in the late 1980s, around the time of the then-Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan. HQN 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's so-called government in Afghanistan in 2001, Haqqani retreated to Pakistan, where his son Sirajuddin continued to direct and conduct HQN's terrorist activity in Afghanistan. In 2015, Sirajuddin Haqqani was appointed deputy leader of the Taliban. Following the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan in 2021, Sirajuddin Haqqani was appointed as the so-called Minister of the Interior.

Activities: Before the withdrawal of U.S. and Defeat-ISIS Coalition forces in 2021, HQN planned and carried out numerous significant kidnappings and attacks against U.S. forces in Afghanistan, Ghani administration officials, 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 two 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, which killed 64 people and injured more than 300 others. In 2017, Afghan officials blamed HQN for a truck bomb that 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 people, including four U.S. citizens. Sirajuddin Haqqani then held a ceremony at the Intercontinental Hotel in 2021 honoring deceased suicide bombers. In 2019, HQN released two hostages, including a U.S. citizen, who had been kidnapped at gunpoint in 2016. In 2020, the Ghani administration identified HQN as responsible for an attack on a military court in Paktika province killing at least five, as well as for a bombing in Kabul that killed three civilians.

Following the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan in August 2021, several HQN leaders were appointed to positions in the so-called interim government announced by the Taliban. In addition to Sirajuddin Haqqani's role as the so-called interior minister, Khalil ur-Rahman Haqqani was appointed as the so-called Minister of Refugees. In 2022, senior HQN leaders provided now-deceased al-Qa'ida leader Ayman al-Zawahiri safe haven in Kabul before the U.S. counterterrorism operation that killed Zawahiri in August of that year.

HQN did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2023.

Strength: HQN is estimated to have between 3,000 and 5,000 fighters.

Location/Area of Operation: Afghanistan.

Funding and External Aid: In addition to the funding HQN receives as a result of its association with the Afghan Taliban, the group has received some funds from donors in Pakistan and the Persian Gulf region.

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: Harakat-ul Jihad Islami (HUJI) was designated as an FTO on August 6, 2010. 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 has supplied fighters to the Taliban in Afghanistan.

HUJI historically concentrated 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 people dead and an estimated 76 wounded. The group emailed the press, stating that the bomb was intended to force India to repeal the death sentence of a HUJI member.

HUJI did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2023.

Strength: Its precise numbers are unknown.

Location/Area of Operation: Afghanistan, India, and Pakistan.

Funding and External Aid: HUJI's funding sources 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: Harakat ul-Jihad-i-Islami/Bangladesh (HUJI-B) was designated as an FTO on March 5, 2008. Formed in 1992 by a group of former Bangladeshi Afghan veterans, HUJI-B seeks to establish hardline Islamist rule in Bangladesh with the use of violence. 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 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. From 2020 to 2022, Bangladeshi courts continued to sentence members of HUJI-B to death for their involvement in HUJI-B attacks. In January, Dhaka police arrested five HUJI-B members for allegedly recruiting Rohingyas from refugee camps and providing them weapons training. In February, two top HUJI-B leaders were arrested in Dhaka.

HUJI-B did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2023.

Strength: 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, including donations from sympathetic individuals and organizations and criminal activities such as piracy, smuggling, and arms running. 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: Harakat ul-Mujahideen (HUM) was designated as an FTO on October 8, 1997. HUM seeks the annexation of the Indian Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir into Pakistan. The organization operated terrorist training camps in eastern Afghanistan until air strikes destroyed them in 2001. In 2003, HUM began using the name Jamiat ul-Ansar; Pakistan banned the group that year. In 2005, HUM's long-time leader Fazlur Rehman Khalil stepped down and was replaced by Dr. Badr Munir.

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. 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 2023.

Strength: HUM is estimated to have only a small number of cadres active.

Location/Area of Operation: HUM conducts operations 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.

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 and officially supports the liberation of Jammu and Kashmir from Indian control and their 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 is suspected of, or has claimed responsibility for, several attacks in Jammu and Kashmir, including the 2018 abduction and killing of three police officials; a 2019 grenade attack on a bus stand that killed a teenager and injured 32 other people; and a 2020 attack by three HM militants who opened fire on Indian soldiers during a search operation, killing one soldier. In 2021, Indian police killed a top HM commander in a gunfight after the HM commander opened fire on accompanying Indian security personnel during a search operation at the HM commander's hideout.

In 2022, Indian police arrested three HM members in connection with the killing of a village leader. In 2023, Indian authorities dismantled a hideout of HM leader Jahangir Saroori.

HM did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2023.

Strength: HM is estimated to have up to 1,500 members.

Location/Area of Operation: The Indian Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

Funding and External Aid: Sources of HM's support are unknown, but the organization is suspected of receiving some funding from sources in Pakistan as well as from local fundraising.

Indian Mujahadeen

Aka Indian Mujahadeen; Indian Mujahidin; Islamic Security Force-Indian Mujahideen (ISF-IM).

Description: The Indian Mujahadeen (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 Hindus Indians for their alleged oppression of Muslims.

Activities: IM has carried out multiple coordinated bombings in crowded areas to maximize terror and casualties, including 16 synchronized bomb blasts in 2008 aimed at crowded urban centers, killing 30 people in Delhi and 38 people at a local hospital in Ahmedabad; a 2010 bombing of a popular German bakery frequented by tourists in Pune, India, killing 17 people and injuring more than 60 others; and a 2014 low-intensity blast near a

restaurant in Bangalore that killed one woman and injured three other persons. Three IM militants were arrested in 2015, and authorities 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. 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. Indian security actions have significantly degraded IM capabilities and networks.

IM did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2023.

Strength: Its 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. IM leadership has been linked to general criminal activity, kidnapping, and extortion to raise funds.

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: Islamic Jihad Union (IJU) was designated as an FTO on June 17, 2005. The group splintered from the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) in the first decade of the 2000s over differences in leadership of global jihadism. Najmiddin Jalolov founded the organization as the Islamic Jihad Group in 2002, but the group was renamed Islamic Jihad Union in 2005. Although IJU was formed to overthrow 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 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 Uzbekistani prosecutor general's office, Embassy Tashkent, and the Israeli embassy.

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 have been 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. In 2015, IJU participated in the five-month-long Taliban siege of Kunduz city. At least 13 police officers and hundreds of civilians were killed in the attacks.

In 2017, IJU released a video showing its militants using assault rifles and rocket-propelled grenades to fight Afghan troops during late the previous year. IJU released a second video in 2018 showing a joint raid with the Taliban in northern Afghanistan. In 2019 the UN confirmed that IJU was

operating inside Syria under control of al-Nusra Front.

IJU did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2023.

Strength: IJU is estimated to have 100 to 200 members.

Location/Area of Operation: Afghanistan, Syria, Türkiye, Uzbekistan, and Europe.

Funding and External Aid: Sources of IJU's funding are unknown.

Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan

Aka IMU.

Description: The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) was designated as an FTO on September 25, 2000. IMU was established to overthrow the Uzbekistani government and establish an Islamic state. Since 2014, however, the group has mostly recruited members from other Central Asian states and Europe. Despite IMU's stated objective to set up an Islamic state in Uzbekistan, the group operates in northern Afghanistan, where it previously fought against international forces. Several IMU members are also suspected of having traveled to Syria to fight with terrorist groups.

IMU has had over-a-decade-long relationship with al-Qa'ida, the Taliban, and Tehrik e Taliban Pakistan. Top IMU leaders integrated themselves into the Taliban's shadow government in Afghanistan's northern provinces when the Taliban battled the Afghan government. In 2015, IMU leader Usman Ghazi publicly announced the group's shift of allegiance to ISIS and has since cooperated with the Islamic State's Khorasan Province. In 2016 a faction of IMU announced its continued commitment to the Taliban and al-Qa'ida, marking a split with Ghazi and the rest of the group. Numerous IMU members, including possibly Ghazi himself, were subsequently reported to have been killed as a result of hostilities between ISIS and IMU's former Taliban allies.

Activities: 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, 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. It then threatened to behead Hazaras (a historically persecuted ethnic group in Afghanistan) whom they were holding hostage, 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.

IMU did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2023.

Strength: IMU is estimated to have up to 500 fighters.

Location/Area of Operation: Afghanistan, Pakistan, Syria, Türkiye, and Central Asia.

Funding and External Aid: IMU receives support from a large Uzbek diaspora, terrorist organizations, and donors from Europe, the Middle East, and Central and South Asia.

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: ISIS-Bangladesh has claimed responsibility for numerous attacks, including the 2015 Christmas Day suicide attack at an Ahmadi mosque; the 2016 assault on the Holey Artisan Bakery in Dhaka that killed 22 people, including one U.S. citizen; twin 2017 explosions that targeted a crowd in Sylhet, Bangladesh, and killed six persons; and several 2019 explosions against police officers, civilians, a Bangladeshi minister, and the Awami League.

In 2020, ISIS-Bangladesh claimed responsibility for an IED blast near a police box in Chattogram and a bomb attack at a Hindu temple in the Naogaon district. That same year, ISIS-Bangladesh claimed responsibility for an attack on a police station in Dhaka that injured five persons, four of them police officers.

ISIS Bangladesh did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2023.

Strength: ISIS-Bangladesh has at least several dozen members.

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.

Islamic State's Khorasan Province

Aka The Islamic State of Iraq and ash-Sham-Khorasan Province; the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria-Khorasan; Islamic State of Iraq and Levant in Khorasan Province; Islamic State Khurasan; ISISK; ISIS-K; IS-Khorasan; ISKP; IS-KP; ISIS Wilayat Khorasan; ISIL's South Asia Branch; South Asian Chapter of ISIL; ISIL Khorasan.

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 pledged allegiance to then-ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, which was accepted in 2015.

Activities: In 2020, ISIS-K claimed responsibility for an attack on a Sikh house of worship in Kabul that killed 25 worshipers and wounded eight others. Also in 2020, 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 and a suicide bombing outside an education center in Kabul that killed at least 18 people and injured at least 57 others.

In 2021, ISIS-K attacks increased following the U.S. military withdrawal from Afghanistan, including a suicide bombing against the Kabul airport as the United States and other governments conducted a large-scale evacuation of their citizens and vulnerable Afghans from the country. At least 185 people were killed in the attack, including 13 U.S. servicemembers supporting evacuation operations; at least another 150 people, including 18 U.S. servicemembers, were wounded. Also in 2021, ISIS-K claimed responsibility for multiple IED attacks in Jalalabad that killed at least 35 Taliban members and three civilians; a suicide bombing of a mosque in Kunduz that killed at least 50 civilians and injured 143 others; a suicide bombing of a mosque in Kandahar that killed at least 47 civilians and injured at least 70 others; and an attack against a military hospital in Kabul that killed at least 20 people and injured dozens more.

In 2022, ISIS-K claimed responsibility for attacks conducted across Afghanistan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, including a March suicide bombing of a mosque in Peshawar, Pakistan, that killed at least 60 civilians and injured 200 others; an April bombing at a mosque in Mazar-e Sharif, Afghanistan, that killed at least 12 people and wounded more than 90 others; a September suicide bombing targeting the Russian embassy in Kabul that killed at least six persons and wounded at least 10 others; and a December attack on the Pakistani embassy in Kabul that injured one person.

In 2023, ISIS-K claimed responsibility for a January bombing of a military airport in Kabul; a January suicide bombing outside the Afghan foreign ministry in Kabul that killed at least five civilians; a July suicide bombing of an election rally in Bajaur, Pakistan, that killed at least 60 people and injured more than 100 others; an October bombing of a sports club in Kabul that killed four persons and injured seven others; and an October suicide attack at a mosque in Baghlan, Afghanistan, that killed at least 17 people and injured dozens of others.

Strength: ISIS-K is estimated to have between 1,500 and 3,000 members.

Location/Area of Operation: Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Central Asia.

Funding and External Aid: ISIS-K receives periodic funding from ISIS-Core. Additional funds come from illicit criminal commerce, taxes, and extortion on the local population and businesses.

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 Harkat ul-Mujahideen senior leader Masood Azhar. The group aims to annex the Indian Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir to Pakistan. 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. The group has claimed responsibility for several suicide car bombings in 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 nine 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 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 Jammu and Kashmir. In 2022, suspected JeM members attacked a bus transporting Indian security forces, killing one security officer and injuring nine others. In that same year, two suspected JeM members conducted a suicide attack against an Indian Army camp that killed four soldiers.

JeM did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2023.

Strength: JeM is estimated to have several hundred fighters.

Location/Area of Operation: India 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 seeks to secure recognition of Baloch cultural, economic, and political rights from the Government of Iran and 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: The organization claimed responsibility for numerous attacks, including a 2009 suicide bomb attack in Sistan and Balochistan Province, Iran, that killed more than 40 people and reportedly was the deadliest terrorist attack in Iran since the 1980s; a 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; and the 2010 attack against the Grand Mosque in Zahedan, killing about 30 people and injuring an estimated 300 others.

Jaysh al-Adl also has claimed responsibility for attacks against Iranian security personnel and officials, including the 2018 abduction of 12 Iranian security personnel on the border with Pakistan; a 2019 suicide car bombing in southeastern Iran that killed 27 Iranian government officials; two 2020 roadside bombs on the course of an Iranian military convoy (one of the bombs detonated, injuring one person); and a 2022 attack on a police station that killed 19 people.

In July, Jaysh al-Adl claimed responsibility for an attack in Sistan and Balochistan Province that killed two Iranian police officers. In December, Jaysh al-Adl also claimed responsibility for an attack on a police station in Sistan and Balochistan Province that killed 11 Iranian security personnel.

Strength: Jaysh al-Adl's precise numbers are unknown.

Location/Area of Operation: Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan.

Funding and External Aid: Its sources of support are unknown.

Lashkar e-Tayyiba

Aka al Mansoorien; Al Mansoorian; Army of the Pure; Army of the Pure and Righteous; Army of the Righteous; Lashkar e-Toiba; Lashkar-i-Taiba; Paasban-e-Ahle-Hadis; Paasban-e-Kashmir; Paasban-i-Ahle-Hadith; Pasban-e-Ahle-Hadith; Pasban-e-Kashmir; Jamaat-ud-Dawa; JUD; Jama'at al-Dawa; Jamaat ud-Daawa; Jamaat ul-Dawah; Jamaat-ul-Dawa; Jama'at-i-Dawat; Jamaat-ud-Dawa; Jama'at-ud-Da'awah; Jama'at-ud-Da'awa; Jamaati-ud-Dawa; Idara Khidmate-Khalq; Falah-i-Insaniyat Foundation; FiF; Falah-e-Insaniyat 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: Lashkar e-Tayyiba (LeT) was designated as an FTO on December 26, 2001. LeT is an anti-India-focused terrorist group, originally 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. The organization 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.

Elements of LeT and Jaish-e-Muhammed have combined with other groups such as Hizbul Mujahideen to mount anti-India attacks. The Pakistani government banned LeT in 2002 and arrested Hafiz Saeed temporarily 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. In 2020, Saeed was found guilty on charges of terrorism

financing and sentenced to prison. As of 2023, Saeed is serving a cumulative 78-year prison sentence in Pakistan as a result of his conviction in seven terrorism financing cases. In December, India formally requested that Pakistan extradite Saeed for trial in India.

Activities: LeT has conducted operations, including several high-profile attacks, against Indian troops and civilian targets since 1993, including the 2008 attacks in Mumbai against luxury hotels, a Jewish center, a train station, and a popular café. The 2008 attacks resulted in 166 deaths, including six U.S. citizens, and injured more than 300 others. In 2010, Pakistani-American businessman David Headley pleaded 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.

In 2017, LeT conducted an attack in Jammu and Kashmir that left six police officers dead. The same year, LeT militants attacked a bus of pilgrims returning from the Amarnath Yatra shrine in Jammu and Kashmir, killing seven persons. 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 2022, suspected LeT members conducted attacks including the shooting and killing of a government employee in his office in Kashmir's Budgam district; an attack on a store in Kashmir's Baramulla district, which injured four persons; and a grenade attack on civilians in Shopian district, Kashmir, that killed two persons.

LeT did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2023.

Strength: LeT is estimated to have up to 5,000 members.

Location/Area of Operation: India and Pakistan.

Funding and External Aid: LeT collects donations in Pakistan and the Persian Gulf states as well as from other donors in the Middle East and Europe – particularly the United Kingdom, where it is a designated terrorist organization. LeT also raises funds in Pakistan through charities, legitimate businesses, and farming.

Lashkar i Jhangvi

Aka Army of Jhangvi; Lashkar e Jhangvi al-Alami; Lashkar e Jhangvi; Lashkar e Jhangvi al-Almi; Lashkar-i-Jhangvi; LeJ al-Alami.

Description: Lashkar i Jhangvi (LJ) was designated as an FTO on January 30, 2003. 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 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.

Activities: LJ has admitted to killing Shia religious and community leaders in Pakistan and specializes in armed attacks and bombings, including the 1999 attempt to assassinate then-Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and his brother Shahbaz Sharif, chief minister of Pakistan's Punjab province.

Since at least 2014, LJ has claimed responsibility for numerous attacks against the Shia community, including a 2014 bus bombing targeting Shia pilgrims that killed 24 people; the 2015 suicide bombing that targeted a market in the predominantly Shia town of Parachinar, Pakistan, and killed at least 23 people; and the 2019 bombing of a market in Quetta that killed 20 people and injured 48 others. The Quetta attack reportedly targeted the local minority Shia Muslim Hazara community. In 2021, three LJ members were allegedly involved in a bomb attack on the Shia minority community in Punjab that killed at least three persons and wounded 50 others.

LJ did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2023.

Strength: LJ is assessed to have a few hundred members.

Location/Area of Operation: Pakistan.

Funding and External Aid: LJ's funding comes from wealthy donors in Pakistan and the Middle East, particularly Persian Gulf states. The group engages in criminal activity, including extortion, to fund its activities.

Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam

Aka LTTE; Ellalan Force; Tamil Tigers.

Description: The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) was designated as an FTO on October 8, 1997. Founded in 1976, 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 LTTE supporters and members have been arrested in India, Malaysia, and Sri Lanka for allegedly planning attacks and fundraising for the LTTE.

Strength: LTTE's 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.

Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan

Aka Pakistani Taliban; Tehreek-e-Taliban; Tehrik-e-Taliban; Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan; TTP.

Description: Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) was designated as an FTO on September 1, 2010. Formed in 2007, TTP is a Pakistan- and Afghanistan-based terrorist organization that opposes Pakistani military efforts in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, the former tribal areas, and other areas of Pakistan. TTP aims to push the Government of Pakistan out of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province and establish Sharia by waging a terrorist campaign against the Pakistani military and state.

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. The group directed and facilitated Faisal Shahzad's failed attempt to detonate an explosive device in New York City's Times Square in 2010.

From 2011 through 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. 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 – the latter of which killed 145 people, 132 of whom were children.

TTP's rate of attacks increased after it announced a merger with splinter groups Jamaat-ul-Ahrar and Hizbul Ahrar in 2020. In 2021, TTP claimed responsibility for an increased number of attacks in the months following the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan, claiming 69 attacks in a two-month span. In 2022, TTP and its affiliate groups conducted more than 290 attacks in Pakistan, most of which targeted Pakistani security forces and occurred in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan provinces. In June of that year, TTP agreed to an indefinite ceasefire with the Government of Pakistan as part of peace talks brokered by the Taliban, though their attacks continued. By November 2022, TTP ended the ceasefire and dramatically increased attacks against Pakistani security forces.

TTP-led attacks killed nearly 1,000 Pakistanis in 2023, with security forces comprising about half of the fatalities. TTP claimed to have conducted 881 attacks throughout 2023, although this number is likely inflated. TTP's attacks included the January suicide bombing of a mosque in Peshawar that killed more than 100 people and injured 57 others.

Strength: TTP is assessed to have as many as 6,000 fighters.

Location/Area of Operation: Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Funding and External Aid: TTP likely raises most of its funds through donations, kidnapping-for-ransom payments, extortion, natural resource extraction, and other criminal activity.

Western Hemisphere

National Liberation Army (ELN)

Aka ELN; Ejército de Liberación Nacional.

Description: The National Liberation Army (ELN) was designated as an FTO on October 8, 1997. ELN is a Colombian Marxist-Leninist group formed in 1964. It 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. ELN commits crimes and acts of terror throughout Colombia, including violence against civilian populations there and in Venezuela.

Activities: ELN continued to target Colombia's infrastructure. It has also launched mortar attacks on police stations and the military; placed explosive devices near roads; engaged in sniper attacks, roadblocks, and ambushes; and kidnapped civilians and members of Colombia's security services.

In 2017 the Government of Colombia and ELN conducted peace talks but ultimately did not 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 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 others.

In 2022, ELN militants blew up a bridge in Caesar Department, Colombia, set fire to vehicles along the road connecting the Colombian cities of Popayán and Cali, and set off bombs between the Colombian municipalities of Socorro and San Gil, which injured eight persons.

In March, nine Colombian soldiers were killed in an attack by ELN near the country's border with Venezuela. In May, members of the ELN attacked a police convoy with explosives, killing two police officers and one civilian in the Colombia town of Tibú.

Strength: ELN is estimated to have up to 5,000 members.

Location/Area of Operation: Colombia and Venezuela.

Funding and External Aid: ELN draws its funding from its involvement in drug trafficking activities, extortion of oil and gas companies and landowners, and illegal mining in Colombia and Venezuela. Additional funds are derived from kidnapping-for-ransom payments.

Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army (FARC-EP)

Aka FARC-EP; Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo; FARC dissidents FARC-EP; Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia dissidents FARC-EP; FARC-D FARC-EP; Grupo Armado Organizado Residual FARC-EP; GAO-R FARC-EP; Residual Organized Armed Group FARC-EP.

Description: FARC-EP was designated as an FTO on November 30, 2021. Using the moniker of the former FARC, FARC-EP has been responsible for the vast majority of armed attacks attributed to FARC dissident elements since 2019. The FARC-EP is led by Nestor Gregorio Vera Fernandez,

alias Ivan Mordisco. In May 2022, former second-in-command Miguel Santanilla Botache, alias Gentil Duarte, was killed in Venezuela, allegedly during a confrontation with drug trafficking groups.

Activities: FARC-EP has been responsible for the killing of political candidates and former FARC members, and the kidnapping of a political operative. In 2021, FARC-EP claimed responsibility for a car bomb attack at the mayor's office in Corinto, Colombia, which injured 43 people, among them several public officials; and for an attack against a Colombian Army base, which wounded 44 people, including two U.S. military advisers. Also in 2021, FARC-EP shot at a helicopter carrying then Colombian President Ivan Duque. In 2022, FARC-EP conducted an ambush of a Colombian Army patrol in Cauca, killing six soldiers. FARC-EP did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2023.

Strength: FARC-EP is estimated to have 2,700 to 3,000 members.

Location/Area of Operation: Colombia and Venezuela.

Funding and External Aid: FARC-EP is funded primarily by involvement in illicit activity, including extortion, international drug trade, and illegal mining.

Segunda Marquetalia (SM)

Aka New Marquetalia; Second Marquetalia; La Nueva Marquetalia; FARC dissidents Segunda Marquetalia; Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia Dissidents Segunda Marquetalia; FARC-D Segunda Marquetalia; Grupo Armado Organizado Residual Segunda Marquetalia; GAO-R Segunda Marquetalia; Residual Organized Armed Group Segunda Marquetalia; Armed Organized Residual Group Segunda Marquetalia.

Description: Segunda Marquetalia (SM) was designated as an FTO on November 30, 2021. In 2019, former FARC commanders, led by Luciano Marin Arango, alias Ivan Marquez, established Segunda Marquetalia after abandoning the 2016 Colombian Peace Accord.

Activities: SM has been responsible for the killings of former FARC members and community leaders. The organization conducts armed assaults, assassinations, extortion operations, and hostage-takings, including the kidnapping and holding for ransom of government employees and the attempted killings of political leaders. In 2020 the Colombian police foiled an attempt by Segunda Marquetalia to assassinate former FARC commander and current president of the Comunes – also called Common People's party – Rodrigo Londono Echeverri, alias Timochenko. Segunda Marquetalia did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2023.

Strength: Segunda Marquetalia is estimated to have more than 1,600 members.

Location/Area of Operation: Colombia and Venezuela.

Funding and External Aid: SM is funded primarily by involvement in illicit activity, including extortion, international drug trade, and illegal mining.

Shining Path (SL)

Aka Sendero Luminoso (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: Shining Path (Sendero Luminoso or SL) was designated as an FTO on October 8, 1997. The Peru-based terrorist organization was founded in 1969 by former university professor Abimael Guzmán, whose teachings created the foundation of SL's militant Maoist doctrine. During the 1980s and early 1990s, SL was one of the most ruthless terrorist groups in the Western Hemisphere. In 1992 the Peruvian government captured Guzmán and key accomplices and sentenced them to life in prison; Guzmán died there in 2021. SL is led by Victor Quispe Palomino, alias Comrade Jose, and Tarcela Loya Vilchez, alias Olga. Historically, the group aimed to overthrow the Peruvian government.

Activities: SL typically targets Peruvian security services and has been known to conduct attacks against civilians. In mid-2021, members of an armed group affiliated with SL murdered 16 civilians, stating that the victims' activities were inconsistent with the group's beliefs. SL conducts a range of illicit activities, inducing extortion, murder, and drug trafficking. In 2022, SL conducted at least five attacks.

On February 11, SL terrorists killed seven Peruvian National Police officers in a vehicle ambush in the southern highland's region of Cusco, in what is considered the largest attack on Peruvian police forces in over a decade. In September, four members of the Peruvian Army were killed in a confrontation with SL.

Strength: SL is estimated to have fewer than 350 active members.

Location/Area of Operation: Peru.

Funding and External Aid: SL is funded by drug trafficking and collecting taxes from drug trafficking organizations operating in the remote eastern part of Peru known as the Valley of the Apurímac, Ene, and Mantaro Rivers, a vast jungle area near the Andes Mountains where most of Peru's coca cultivation and production occurs.

Chapter 6. Legislative Requirements and Key Terms ✓

Country Reports on Terrorism 2023 is submitted in compliance with Section 140 of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1988 and 1989 (22 U.S.C. 2656f or 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 140 of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1988 and 1989 (22 U.S.C. 2656f(a)) states as follows:

(a) ... The Secretary of State shall transmit to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate, by April 30 of each year, a full and complete report providing –

(1) (A) detailed assessments with respect to each foreign country;

(i) in which acts of international terrorism occurred which were, in the opinion of the Secretary, of major significance;

(ii) about which the Congress was notified during the preceding five years pursuant to section 4605(j) of Title 50 [deemed under Section 1768(c)(2) of the National Defense Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 2019 (NDAA FY19) to refer to section 1754(c) of the NDAA FY19 as of August 13, 2018]; and

(iii) which the Secretary determines should be the subject of such report; and

(B) detailed assessments with respect to each foreign country whose territory is being used as a sanctuary for terrorist organizations;

(2) all relevant information about the activities during the preceding year of any terrorist group, and any umbrella group under which such terrorist group falls, known to be responsible for the kidnapping or death of an American citizen during the preceding five years, any terrorist group known to have obtained or developed, or to have attempted to obtain or develop, weapons of mass destruction, any terrorist group known to be financed by countries about which Congress was notified during the preceding year pursuant to section 4605(j) of Title 50, any group designated by the Secretary as a foreign terrorist organization under section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1189), and any other known international terrorist group which the Secretary determines should be the subject of such report;

(3) with respect to each foreign country from which the United States Government has sought cooperation during the previous five years in the investigation or prosecution of an act of international terrorism against United States citizens or interests, information on –

(A) the extent to which the government of the foreign country is cooperating with the United States government in apprehending, convicting, and punishing the individual or individuals responsible for the act; and

(B) the extent to which the government of the foreign country is cooperating in preventing further acts of terrorism against United States citizens in the foreign country; and

(4) with respect to each foreign country from which the United States government has sought cooperation during the previous five years in the prevention of an act of international terrorism against such citizens or interests, the information described in paragraph (3)(B).

Section 2656f(d) of Title 22 of the United States Code defines certain key terms used in Section 2656f(a) as follows:

(1) The term “international terrorism” means terrorism involving citizens or the territory of more than one country;

(2) The term “terrorism” means premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents; and

(3) The term “terrorist group” means any group practicing, or which has significant subgroups which practice, international terrorism.

Interpretation and Application of Key Terms

For purposes of this report, the terms “international terrorism,” “terrorism,” and “terrorist group” have the definitions assigned to them in 22 U.S.C. 2656f(d) (see above). The term “non-combatant,” which is referred to but not defined in 22 U.S.C. 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 U.S.C. 2656f(d) is one of many U.S. statutes and international legal instruments that concern terrorism and acts of violence, many of which use definitions for terrorism and related terms that are different from those used in this report. The interpretation and application of defined and related terms concerning terrorism in this report are therefore specific to the statutory and other requirements of the report, and not intended to express the views of the U.S. government on how these terms should be interpreted or applied for any other purpose. Accordingly, there is not necessarily any correlation between the interpretation of terms such as “non-combatant” for purposes of this report and the meanings ascribed to similar terms pursuant to the law of war (which encapsulates the obligations of states and individuals with respect to their activities in situations of armed conflict).

Statistical Information. Pursuant to 22 U.S.C. § 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 non-combatant targets.

Contextual Reporting. Adverse mention in this report of individual members of any political, social, ethnic, religious, or national population is not meant to imply that all members of that population are terrorists. Indeed, terrorists rarely represent anything other than a tiny fraction of such larger populations. It is terrorist groups – and their actions – that are the focus of this report.

Furthermore, terrorist acts are part of a larger phenomenon of violence inspired by a cause, and at times the line between the two can become difficult to draw. This report includes some discretionary information in an effort to relate terrorist events to the larger context in which they occur, and to give a feel for the conflicts that spawn violence.

Thus, this report will discuss terrorist acts as well as other violent incidents that are not necessarily “international terrorism” and therefore are not subject to the statutory reporting requirement.