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Overview: Algeria continued significant efforts to prevent terrorist activity within its borders. Figures published by the Algerian armed forces show continued pressure on terrorist groups as indicated by the numbers of terrorists killed, captured or surrendered, as well as weapons seized and hideouts destroyed. Some analysts assess that continuing losses have substantially reduced the capacities of terrorist groups to operate within Algeria. Nevertheless, al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), AQIM-allied groups, and ISIS elements, including the Algerian affiliate locally known as Jund al-Khilafah in Algeria (JAK-A or Soldiers of the Caliphate in Algeria), remained in the country. These groups aspired to impose their interpretations of Islamic law in Algeria and to attack Algerian security services, local government targets, and Western interests. Terrorist activity in Libya, Tunisia, and Mali contributed to the overall threat.

Algeria is not a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, although it observed some coalition meetings. Algeria actively supported the effort to counter ISIS in other ways, such as counter-messaging, capacity-building programs with neighboring states, and co-chairing the Global Counterterrorism Forum's (GCTF's) West Africa Capacity Building working group.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: JAK-A claimed responsibility for attacks on security forces. Within the region, AQIM continued attacks using improvised explosive devices (IEDs), bombings, false roadblocks, and ambushes. The Algerian government maintained a strict "no concessions" policy with regard to individuals or groups holding its citizens hostage. Attacks in 2017 included:

- In February 26, a man wearing a suicide belt attempted to enter a police station in Constantine, in eastern Algeria. Police shot his belt, causing it to explode and killing the attacker. Two police officers were injured. ISIS claimed responsibility for the attack in a statement posted on the internet.
- On August 31, a man wearing an explosive belt blew himself up, killing two police officers, at the entrance to the Tiaret police station, about 270 kilometers southwest of Algiers. ISIS claimed responsibility for the attack via its propaganda arm, the AMAQ News Agency. AQIM also claimed responsibility and denounced the ISIS claim as a lie.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: On September 29, a new law entered into effect making significant changes to Algerian criminal procedure. While increasing the number of jurors in many serious criminal cases, the amendments specify that in cases involving terrorism,

trials, and appeals will be heard before judges only. The new law provides for greater prosecutorial control of judicial police, including judicial police within the armed forces.

Military forces and multiple law enforcement, intelligence, and security services addressed counterterrorism, counter-intelligence, investigations, border security, and crisis response. These included under the Ministry of Interior the various branches of the Joint Staff, the National Gendarmerie, Border Guards under the Ministry of National Defense (MND), and approximately 210,000 national police, or General Directorate of National Security. Public information announcements from the MND provided timely reporting on incidents during which MND forces captured or eliminated terrorists and seized equipment, arms, ammunition caches, and drugs.

Border security remained a top priority. Algerian and Tunisian customs officials continued to coordinate along their shared border. Algeria created a ditch and berm along the southern part of its border with Tunisia, deployed 3,000 additional troops to the Libyan border, and placed surveillance equipment and a concrete wall along the Moroccan border. According to media, Algeria sought to increase use of aerial surveillance technologies. The Government of Algeria closely monitored passenger manifests of inbound and outbound flights. Government officials reported that all border posts had access to INTERPOL databases.

In 2017, six disciplines at the Gendarmerie's forensics laboratory were accredited to International Organization for Standardization standards, a first in the region. Algerian law enforcement agencies participated in training and exchanges offered by the U.S. government and by third countries. Algerian participants attended numerous workshops conducted under the aegis of the GCTF. A U.S.-Algeria Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty entered into force April 20, facilitating cooperation in transnational terrorism cases and other criminal matters.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Algeria is a member of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force, a financial action task force-style regional body. Its financial intelligence unit, known as the Financial Intelligence Processing Unit (CTRF), is a member of the Egmont Group. The CTRF regularly publishes administrative orders signed by the Minister of Finance, directing the immediate freezing and seizure of the assets of persons and entities on the United Nations (UN) sanctions list under UN Security Council resolution (UNSCR) 1267 (1999) and its successor resolutions. In implementing UNSCR 2178 (2014), the Algerian Penal Code specifies liability for foreign terrorist fighters and those who support or finance them.

Foreign exchange restrictions and distrust of banks push Algerians to cash transactions and informal currency-exchange markets. Media reports suggest the scale of the informal market grew, partly in response to government import limitations. Multiple fiscal initiatives by the government have failed to motivate illegal traders to formalize their businesses.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): Algeria emphasized a whole-of-government CVE approach, including rehabilitation and reintegration programs for repentant terrorists. Stressing the importance of an inclusive society, the foreign ministry published a booklet on *The Role of Democracy in the Fight Against Violent Extremism and Terrorism*. Regulation of mosques to ensure they are "de-politicized" and "de-ideologized" is a key aspect of the Algerian approach. The foreign minister recently lauded the "crucial role" of women in CVE efforts, highlighting the *mourchidates*, female clerics who work with young girls, mothers, and prisoners.

The Algerian government monitors mosques for possible security-related offenses and prohibits the use of mosques as public meeting places outside of regular prayer hours. Government officials publicly affirmed Algeria's Sunni Maliki tradition of Islam, which the Algerian government

believes provides a moderate religious vision for the country. There have been complaints that the government imposes restrictions on other variants of Islam.

International and Regional Cooperation: Algeria is an active member in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Arab League and is a founding member of the GCTF. In 2017, the African Union (AU) named Algeria coordinator of its counterterrorism efforts. Algeria is a founding member of the Institute for International Justice and the Rule of Law and participated in counterterrorism-related projects implemented by the UN Office on Drug and Crime's Terrorism Prevention Branch. Algeria also participates in Comité d'État-Major Opérationnel Conjoint (CEMOC), a cooperative body between Algeria, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger created to fight AQIM activities in the Sahel; and hosts CEMOC's Liaison and Fusion Center for information sharing.

Algeria sits on the UN Counter-Terrorism Center's Advisory Board and hosts the headquarters AU Mechanism for Police Cooperation (AFRIPOL), a pan-African organization to foster police training and cooperation. Algeria hosts the AU's counterterrorism center of excellence, the African Center for the Study and Research on Terrorism. As co-chair of the GCTF's West Africa Capacity Building working group, Algeria hosted that group's plenary meeting in October 2017.

On a bilateral basis, Algeria continued strong diplomatic engagement to promote regional peace and security. Algeria chaired the implementation committee for the peace accord in Mali and continued to press stakeholders to support the UN political process in Libya. Algeria also participated in various Sahel-Saharan fora to discuss development and security policies, the evolution of regional terrorism, and donor coordination. Political disagreement between Algeria and Morocco over the status of Western Sahara remained an impediment to bilateral and regional counterterrorism cooperation in 2017.

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