

From:	(b)(6)
To:	
Subject:	FW: backgrounder in advance of Leaders Summit
Date:	2015/09/24 18:27:00
Priority:	Normal
Type:	Note

Jeff Rezmovic
Office of the Deputy Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Office: (b)(6)
Mobile: (b)(6)

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2015 3:25 PM
(b)(6)
Subject: RE: backgrounder in advance of Leaders Summit

Attached are the materials that were submitted and are currently in counselor clearance with Pat.

Thank you,
(b)(6)

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2015 3:22 PM
(b)(6)
Subject: FW: backgrounder in advance of Leaders Summit

Do we have materials for this?

Jeff Rezmovic
Office of the Deputy Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Office: (b)(6)
Mobile: (b)(6)

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2015 2:56 PM
To: (b)(6)
Subject: RE: backgrounder in advance of Leaders Summit

Will there be TPs for S2? Thanks

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2015 1:25:17 PM
To: (b)(6)
Cc:
Subject: FW: backgrounder in advance of Leaders Summit

FYSA...

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2015 1:22 PM
(b)(6)
Subject: RE: backgrounder in advance of Leaders Summit

The best laid plans....

So we have gotten great interest from the folks below, but because of UNGA and the pope's visit to NYC and Philly, most of them won't be in DC. Therefore we would like to move this to an on the record call, instead of an in person briefing. Same format and participants, but will be a call in.

I'll send around a number tomorrow, but wanted to update everyone on the plan moving forward.

Thanks everyone for the flexibility and sorry for the changes.

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, September 22, 2015 5:10 PM
(b)(6)
Subject: RE: backgrounder in advance of Leaders Summit

Ok, we have locked everyone in for noon on Friday. We are sending out the invites to reporters tonight. Full list of invites below.

Thanks again everyone.

(b)(6)
(b)(6) (Washington Post)
(b)(6) (New Yorker)
(b)(6) (Atlantic)
(b)(6) (Slate)
(b)(6) (LA Times)
(b)(6) (New York Times)
(b)(6) (Daily Beast)
(b)(6) (Huffington Post)
(b)(6) (VOX)

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Tuesday, September 22, 2015 11:36 AM

(b)(6)

Subject: RE: backgrounder in advance of Leaders Summit

Is 12 noon a possibility for folks on Friday? Sorry for the moving target.

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Monday, September 21, 2015 6:26 PM

(b)(6)

Subject: RE: backgrounder in advance of Leaders Summit

Additionally, with this smaller group here, would folks be able to build out any comms you have planned this week in the below? Would be a helpful tracker for our folks. DHS, I have a place holder for the CVE consolidation rollout. State, please add anything on your front.

Thanks all

Week of September 21 –

- White House blog post on U.S. effort to degrade and destroy ISIL.
- Social Media push on individual impacted by CVE.
 - In coordination with Digital, plan to push out a letter written to the President on the impact of CVE in their life to highlight the importance of our efforts.

Thursday September 24th – DHS announcement of CVE consolidation.

Friday September 25th

- Background roundtable discussion with 3-4 columnists previewing the summit. Would focus on our whole-of-government efforts to combat the lifecycle of terrorism and include interagency representatives Department of Justice (DOJ), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Departments of Homeland Security (DHS), State, and Defense as well as National Security Council leadership.

Sunday, September 27th

- DOJ tapes CNN segment on whole of government approach to combat terrorism focusing on the criminal justice system and the more than 70 FTF/HVE cases, 75% of which are ISIL related. Segment will air Monday morning and be repeated as space allows.

Monday, Sept 28th,

- DOJ tapes segment for ABC News on whole of government approach to combat terrorism focusing on the criminal justice system and the more than 70 FTF/HVE cases, 75% of which are ISIL related. Segment is slated to air Monday evening and ABC World News (space permitting) and Tuesday morning on GMA.
- DOJ conducts NYC Based Foreign Press Center briefing on whole of government approach to combat terrorism focusing on the criminal justice system and the more than 70 FTF/HVE cases, 75% of which are ISIL related. Event is being coordinated between DOJ and DOS NYC-based FPC Staff.
- DOJ speaks at an open press event, organized by the International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law and several other organizations, addressing the topic of, "Building More Effective Responses to the Foreign Terrorist Fighter Threat: Addressing the Challenges of Prevention, Prosecution and Reintegration"

Tuesday, September 29th

- Fact Sheet released on September 29.
- Social media push around President's Speech (messaging and strategy coordinated with WH Comms and Digital Team).

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Monday, September 21, 2015 5:57 PM

(b)(6)

Subject: RE: backgrounder in advance of Leaders Summit

Looks like the best time will be **Friday at 1 PM at the White House**. Right now participants would be:

DHS – Mayorkas

DOJ – Carlin

State – Blinken

NSC – (b)(6)

Additionally, given the high level participation, would folks be opposed to opening this up to on the record? Think it would be a worthwhile discussion, and would certainly help to drive attention in a busy week. The folks we are planning to invite are below. We wanted to keep this high level, with more long form thoughtful reporters. Let us know if folks have a problem with the list below.

(b)(6)

Washington Post)
New Yorker)
(Atlantic)



Overarching messaging is below. We are circulating for internal review a final topline and Q&A, which we will have to you tomorrow. Thank you.

LEADERS' SUMMIT MESSAGING
9/21/2015

Summary

The Leaders' Summit on Countering ISIL and Violent Extremism provides the Administration the unique opportunity to enhance international efforts to break the lifecycle of terrorism – from its earliest stages of radicalization, to conflict zones and everywhere in between. This whole-of-government approach includes decisive action to counter terrorist organizations threatening peace and security, preventing extremists from traveling to join such groups or returning home to conduct attacks, as well as countering radicalization at home and abroad.

The President has made clear that the threat posed to the United States by ISIL, al-Qaeda, and their affiliates is grave, and that we are determined to use all instruments in our power to defeat it. Yet he has also made clear that this is not a fight that can be won quickly, solely through military means, or by the United States alone. The United States believes that this is a long-term struggle that will ultimately be won on the basis of a truly multidisciplinary approach and the sustained commitment of hundreds of state and non-state actors across the globe, especially by those on the front-lines of the threat. This meeting brings many of those diverse partners together, building on the efforts we've made over the last year. Throughout the course of the event, our partners will be demonstrating their resolve and commitment to play their part and stay the course over the long-run to break the lifecycle of terrorism.

This summit will highlight progress and lessons learned on all these fronts with a focus on combatting ISIL and more broadly countering Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs) and violent extremism. Most importantly, partners from across the globe will announce new initiatives to break the lifecycle of terrorism.

Topline Messaging

As the President articulated previously, including at last year's U.N. General Assembly address and during his speech, the United States is employing a comprehensive, partnership-based, three-pronged counter-terrorism approach that combines hard and soft means to counter the terrorist threat better:

We are focusing on the most immediate and urgent threat posed by ISIL primarily through the counter-ISIL Coalition, which is employing a multi-faceted approach that includes

military, humanitarian assistance and post-conflict stabilization, counter threat financing, counter-FTF travel, and counter-ISIL messaging components;

- We are making important progress against ISIL, whose aggression is inflicting an enormous humanitarian toll on the region and poses a threat beyond the Middle East. In just the last year, the United States and coalition partners, have conducted more than 6,000 airstrikes, taking out thousands of fighting positions, tanks, vehicles, bomb factories, and training camps. We have eliminated thousands of fighters, including senior commanders.
- Equally important, we have trained and equipped multiple Iraqi brigades and thousands of Sunni and Kurdish fighters, working by, with, and through the Iraqi government. We are making similar progress in Syria, where we are supporting Kurdish and Arab forces who have retaken significant amounts of terrain from ISIL. However, degrading and ultimately defeating ISIL requires more than military efforts. It requires supporting local populations to eradicate the conditions that allowed the group to gain traction. We are making progress on this front, donating hundreds of millions of dollars for humanitarian aid, stabilization, and development programs to help those who bear the brunt of ISIL's barbaric actions.
- We have work left to do and this will be a long fight, but we are making progress on all fronts. ISIL has lost more than a quarter of the populated areas it had seized in Iraq, 10,000 miles of terrain in Syria and everyday Iraqis and Syrians are increasingly receiving the support needed to ensure ISIL does not return to areas it lost.

We are stopping the flow of FTFs through U.N. Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2178 to major conflict zones around the world to prevent the exacerbation of these conflicts and to choke the supply of new people and expertise to terrorist groups of concern, in particular ISIL.

- While we have taken the fight to ISIL abroad, we are also making concrete progress toward countering foreign terrorist fighters who represent a threat to our homelands and supply ISIL and other terrorist organizations with fighters. Last year, the United Nations Security Council adopted UNSCR 2178 to strengthen international cooperation, share information, and take steps to counter violent extremism across the globe.
- The Administration and international partners have made great strides toward implementing the resolution and enhancing global security. Twenty countries have updated their laws; 34 countries, including the United States, have arrested foreign terrorist fighters or aspirants; and 22 countries, including the United States, have brought cases against foreign terrorist fighters while 12 other countries have successfully prosecuted at least one foreign terrorist fighter case resulting in a conviction or sentencing.
- Equally important, 45 countries, including the United States, have provided INTERPOL approximately 4,000 profiles on foreign terrorist fighters. This is more than six times as more than what was shared with INTERPOL prior to UNSCR 2178 and has enhanced INTERPOL members' ability to identify and interdict foreign terrorist fighters. On the home front, we have taken specific actions to address the threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters, to include strengthening our bilateral and multilateral sharing of information on terrorists and enhancing aviation security and screening for travelers to and from the United States.
- Through these and other actions that have been enshrined by UNSCR 2178 we are now better positioned to detect and disrupt foreign terrorist fighters.

We are, at the same time, working to address and counter the range of factors that enables radicalization and recruitment by violent extremists by applying locally-driven, community-based prevention measures both at home and abroad.

- We see Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) as the final core element of our comprehensive approach to combat the lifecycle of terrorism. And we are taking important steps to address the underlying social, political, and economic trends that terrorists exploit, using whole-of-society approaches that uphold human rights and the rule of law. Both at home and abroad, our CVE efforts encompass preventative aspects of counterterrorism as well as interventions to undermine the attraction of extremist movements and ideologies promoting violence.
- The underlying drivers of the approach are: (1) communities provide the solution to violent extremism; and (2) CVE efforts are best pursued at the local level, where officials can build relationships in their communities.
- Here at home, we launched three CVE pilot cities at the White House Summit on CVE in February, and are preparing to announce a new round of cities this fall. Across the globe, international partners have held more than a dozen regional and summits to broaden the global CVE movement and expand the “whole-of-society” approach.
- The White House CVE Summit’s Action Agenda has been presented to the United Nations as a contribution to the U.N. Secretary General’s Plan of Action on Preventing Violent Extremism, which will be presented to the U.N. General Assembly in November.

These coordinated efforts demonstrate the whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to combating the lifecycle of terrorism. The Administration is committed to using every resource at its disposal to eradicate the scourge of terrorism, and this three pronged approach targets all stages of terrorist activity, both at home and abroad. We will continue to take every step possible to ensure the safety and security of the American people.

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Friday, September 18, 2015 8:44 AM

(b)(6)

Subject: backgrounder in advance of Leaders Summit

Thanks to folks for hopping on the call last night on the leaders summit on counter ISIL and violent extremism. In advance of the summit, would like to get a high level representative from State, DOJ and DHS to talk about efforts within your agencies on these issues. Potentially (b)(6) (b)(6) will join from the WH as well.

DOJ, know you thought Carlin would be the right voice here, and DHS had suggested Mayorkas. State, who would be in the best position for your issues?

Right now we are targeting late morning on Friday. Know next week is crazy, so wanted to try to lock in schedules today if possible.

Sender:	(b)(6)	
Recipient:		
Sent Date:	2015/09/24 18:28:29	
Delivered Date:	2015/09/24 18:27:00	

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LEADERS' SUMMIT ON COUNTERING ISIL AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

September 25, 2015

Topline Messaging/If Asked

Counterterrorism

- Counterterrorism must remain the cornerstone of the Department of Homeland Security's mission. Fourteen years after 9/11, it's still a dangerous world.
- We must recognize that we have evolved to a new phase in the global terrorist threat. Today, the terrorist threat is more decentralized, more diffuse, and more complex.
- As the President articulated previously, including at last year's U.N. General Assembly address and during his speech, the United States is employing a comprehensive, partnership-based, three-pronged counter-terrorism approach that combines hard and soft means to counter the terrorist threat better:
 - We are focusing on the most immediate and urgent threat posed by ISIL primarily through the counter-ISIL Coalition, which is employing a multi-faceted approach that includes military, humanitarian assistance and post-conflict stabilization, counter threat financing, counter-FTF travel, and counter-ISIL messaging components.
 - We are stopping the flow of FTFs through U.N. Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2178 to major conflict zones around the world to prevent the exacerbation of these conflicts and to choke the supply of new people and expertise to terrorist groups of concern, in particular ISIL.
 - We are working to address and counter the range of factors that enables radicalization and recruitment by violent extremists by applying locally-driven, community-based prevention measures both at home and abroad.

Domestic Progress since the WH CVE Summit

- Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson is directing a number of changes to take DHS CVE efforts to the next level. The department will consolidate key personnel within an Office for CVE to be the central hub of the Department's support and empowerment of communities in countering the evolving domestic and global terrorist threat. The Office will foster greater involvement of the technology sector in CVE efforts, encourage greater philanthropic support for community CVE efforts, and enhance DHS's own grant-making in the area of CVE.
- DHS, in partnership with the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC), continues to lead, improve and expand its community engagement work including Community Engagement Roundtables, Town Hall Meetings, Community Awareness Briefings, and Community Resilience Exercises in cities all across the country. DHS Senior leadership has regularly participated in these efforts; the Secretary of Homeland Security himself has participated community engagement and CVE events in ten cities across the country and plans to continue his engagement in FY 2016. Enhanced efforts will expand opportunities to reach more diverse communities; help develop the

necessary understanding of terrorism and terrorist recruitment tactics; and to collectively and holistically explore ways to address these threats before they become a challenge at the local level.

- DHS will continue CVE grant opportunities and expand community-based grant funding mechanisms. In order to enhance training for federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial law enforcement, DHS works cooperatively with its federal partners to update CVE-relevant training programs, such as the Uniformed Police Training Program, Criminal Investigator Training Program, Land Management Police Training Program, and the Rural Police Officer Training) based on current threat assessments.

ISIL

- We assess the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) can muster between 20,000 and 30,000 (updated from 22,000 and 32,000) fighters across Iraq and Syria.
- ISIL numbers include hundreds of westerners.
- ISIL numbers include a few dozen Americans.
- We are making important progress against ISIL, whose aggression is inflicting an enormous humanitarian toll on the region and poses a threat beyond the Middle East.
- In just the last year, the United States and coalition partners have conducted more than 6,000 airstrikes, taking out thousands of fighting positions, tanks, vehicles, bomb factories, and training camps. We have eliminated thousands of fighters, including senior commanders.
- Equally important, we have trained and equipped multiple Iraqi brigades and thousands of Sunni and Kurdish fighters, working by, with, and through the Iraqi government. We are making similar progress in Syria, where we are supporting Kurdish and Arab forces who have retaken significant amounts of terrain from ISIL.
- However, degrading and ultimately defeating ISIL requires more than military efforts. It requires supporting local populations to eradicate the conditions that allowed the group to gain traction. We are making progress on this front, donating hundreds of millions of dollars for humanitarian aid, stabilization, and development programs to help those who bear the brunt of ISIL's barbaric actions.
- We have work left to do and this will be a long fight, but we are making progress on all fronts. ISIL has lost more than a quarter of the populated areas it had seized in Iraq, 10,000 miles of terrain in Syria and everyday Iraqis and Syrians are increasingly receiving the support needed to ensure ISIL does not return to areas it lost.

Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs)

- While we have taken the fight to ISIL abroad, we are also making concrete progress toward countering foreign terrorist fighters who represent a threat to our homelands and supply ISIL and other terrorist organizations with fighters.
- More than 25,000 foreign fighters (up from 22,500)—at least 4,500 (up from 4,000) are from the West—have traveled to Syria from more than 100 countries.

- There are more than 250 U.S. Persons (up from 180) who have traveled or attempted to travel to Syria and Iraq potentially to fight or otherwise support the conflict.
- More than 20 U.S. persons (up from a handful) have died after traveling to Syria to partake in the conflict.
- Last year, the United Nations Security Council adopted UNSCR 2178 to strengthen international cooperation, share information, and take steps to counter violent extremism across the globe.
- The Administration and international partners have made great strides toward implementing the resolution and enhancing global security.
 - Twenty countries have updated their laws;
 - 34 countries, including the United States, have arrested foreign terrorist fighters or aspirants;
 - And 22 countries, including the United States, have brought cases against foreign terrorist fighters while 12 other countries have successfully prosecuted at least one foreign terrorist fighter case resulting in a conviction or sentencing.
- Equally important, 45 countries, including the United States, have provided INTERPOL approximately 4,000 profiles on foreign terrorist fighters. This is more than six times what was shared with INTERPOL prior to UNSCR 2178 and has enhanced INTERPOL members' ability to identify and interdict foreign terrorist fighters.
- On the home front, we have taken specific actions to address the threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters, to include strengthening our bilateral and multilateral sharing of information on terrorists and enhancing aviation security and screening for travelers to and from the United States.
- At DHS, we have expanded the security of our Visa Waiver Program to bolster screening of citizens from even our closest partners, and supported the expansion of "preclearance" processes that screen travelers en route to the U.S. to protect travelers of all nations on flights to the United States.

IF ASKED:

Q: Who will make up the Office of Countering Violent Extremism (OCVE)? Will new personnel need to be hired?

A: There are already many personnel across DHS that support the efforts of the existing Office of the CVE Coordinator, including personnel in the National Protection and Programs Directorate (NPPD) and Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL). The key personnel supporting our CVE Coordinator will now be detailed to the Office for Countering Violent Extremism (OCVE), which will be led by a Director for Countering Violent Extremism.

Q: Who will be the Director of OCVE?

We are in the process of filling the position of OCVE Director. In the meantime, DHS CVE Coordinator David Gersten will serve as Acting Director.

Q: Where will OCVE's budget come from?

A: In addition, the Under Secretary for Management shall:

- Secure a budget line for OCVE beginning in the FY17 budget as well as engage the Congress to transfer necessary resources in FY16;
- Establish resource and staffing plans for OCVE, to include detail of full-time employees from NPPD and CRCL to support OCVE; and
- Require OCVE to provide an annual report to the Secretary on DHS CVE activities. The report should include an assessment of progress in meeting milestones and targets set for the year and recommendations for the following year's CVE activities, milestones, and targets.

Q: Does this mean that additional legislation is not required?

A: DHS has worked collaboratively with Congress for almost a decade to expand partnerships with community leaders, the private sector, state and local officials to counter violent extremism and safeguard local communities, and we will continue to do so.

Secretary Johnson considers CVE to be one of the Department's highest priorities. He has personally engaged in a number of CVE engagements with communities across the country, and is committed to ensuring that every component of the Department supports these efforts. Additionally, the Department recently submitted a reprogramming request to appropriators to provide funding in support of existing CVE efforts.

Q: Will this change how DHS engages communities across the country?

A: Community engagement is the foundation of our CVE efforts, and Secretary Johnson has directed CRCL and OCVE to continue to improve and expand these engagement efforts. In addition, Secretary Johnson has directed OCVE to lay the groundwork to eventually hire, train, and field full-time employees to cities around the country to provide additional, dedicated support to community-based CVE efforts. The CVE Director will submit a plan by December 1, 2015 to expand our full-time presence in cities around the country; these recommendations will include a recruiting plan, training pipeline, authorities, responsibilities, and reporting chains for those field offices.

Q: How does CRCL fit into the Department's CVE efforts?

A: The mission of CRCL is an indispensable companion effort to CVE. By receiving, investigating, and addressing grievances, promoting an understanding of DHS policies and practices, and assisting the Department in considering civil rights- and civil liberties-related concerns, CRCL lays the foundation for the Department's efforts to support and empower local communities in their CVE work.

With the establishment of OCVE, CRCL will continue to lead, improve and expand Community Engagement Roundtables, Town Hall Meetings, Community Awareness Briefings, and Community Resilience Exercises in cities across the country.

Q: How will you measure progress for the new OCVE?

A: The responsible senior leaders will provide quarterly updates detailing progress in meeting the goals set forth by the Secretary and an evaluation of the impact and effectiveness of these efforts.

Q: Secretary Johnson has repeatedly referred to ISIL's "slick" social media strategy. What is the Department's plan to counter this?

A: The frequency by which vulnerable Americans are being inundated by social media-propagated narratives that inspire, fund, and recruit violence is increasing. The use of social media to become informed and feel connected is a group identity and emotional phenomenon the Department has to understand and address as part of our approach to countering violent extremism.

We must teach communities that they themselves have the ability to reach those individuals who may succumb to the radicalization of ISIL and turn to violence.

We need the technology sector's help to promote community-based CVE efforts. Under the Secretary's directive, the Director for Countering Violent Extremism will develop a digital strategy to promote and support technology sector partners in using their unique capabilities to assist CVE efforts. This should include a digital strategy to identify and support innovative technology sector efforts to counter violent extremism, engage directly with technology companies to raise awareness of the violent extremist threat, ask them to identify ways to help counter violent extremism, and to make critical information for individuals targeted by violent extremist organizations and their family and friends easily accessible online.

Q: How can other organizations or individuals help?

A: Secretary Johnson has directed the OCVE Director to develop a philanthropic engagement plan. Philanthropies and foundations are also in a position to support domestic CVE efforts. The OCVE Director will coordinate engagements with foundations and other philanthropies to discuss ways they can support CVE.

Additionally, our own grant-making can support CVE. Under this memo, the Federal Emergency Management Agency Administrator will provide a plan to enhance DHS mechanisms for providing financial assistance to CVE programs, and to strengthen our ability to support effective actions to counter violent extremism by expanding funding opportunities for community-based CVE programs.

Q: How will this affect the way DHS works with other agencies, such as the FBI, engaged in CVE efforts as well?

A: The Department of Homeland Security meets regularly with our counterparts at DOJ, the FBI, and other Departments and Agencies to coordinate CVE efforts. The CVE Office will continue this work, leading DHS CVE efforts including partnership with other Departments and Agencies.

Q: Is DHS focused on any particular ideology?

A: The evolving global terrorist threat includes the ongoing threat of foreign terrorist-inspired attacks by those who live in the homeland, as well as the ever-present threat of acts of violence rooted in a wide range of U.S.-based radical ideologies. Our CVE efforts must continue to be addressed to the wide range of violent extremist ideologies. DHS works in coordination with our Federal, state and local law enforcement partners to better mitigate and respond to violent extremism, regardless of the ideological beliefs that may motivate it. Countering violent extremism training is critical to prepare our local, state and Federal partners to better prevent and respond to acts of violent extremism, and DHS continues to work with law enforcement partners to integrate CVE awareness into daily law enforcement activities nationwide, by building upon existing community-oriented policing practices.

Q: Are we doing enough to protect against lone wolf attacks?

A: We are working hard to address this and have made progress.

The FBI continues to aggressively identify and address threats to protect America and safeguard the public from terrorist attacks on the Homeland. As part of this, the Bureau has disrupted a number of threats in recent years.

This said, we are increasingly concerned with the widespread reach of terrorist influence, use of technology and social media to propagate the terrorist message of hate and vitriol and terrorist exploitation of susceptible consumers which exhort those misguided individuals to wanton to acts of violence.

This is why, in addition to efforts in the homeland, we are taking action against ISIL in Iraq and Syria and working to counter the group's narrative and messaging, which are key factors behind individuals conducting lone wolf attacks.

We are also making security enhancements to the Visa Waiver Program, by which we do not require travelers from 38 countries to obtain a visa. In 2014, DHS strengthened the security of the Program by adding additional data elements to the Electronic System for Travel Authorization application. We are preparing additional measures that will achieve our goals of even better security for the United States and increased security partnerships with Visa Waiver Program countries as we maintain the economic benefits of the Program.

DHS is negotiating to expand air preclearance operations to ten new foreign airports, located in nine separate countries. Preclearance is the process by which DHS Officers stationed abroad screen and make admissibility decisions about passengers and their accompanying goods or baggage heading to the United States before they leave a foreign port, and the passenger and accessible property screening conforms to U.S. aviation security screening standards.

We work in close collaboration with state and local law enforcement. As often as several times a week, DHS and the FBI share terrorist threat information and intelligence with Joint Terrorism Task Forces, state fusion centers, local police chiefs and sheriffs.

Q: What are we doing to ensure that foreign terrorist fighters are not taking advantage of the refugee situation?

A: Since the beginning of the conflict in Syria, the United States and its partners in Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey have created stronger screening measures to ensure that foreign terrorist fighters and terrorist groups have difficulty taking advantage of the refugee situation. Additionally with the passage of UNSCR 2178, the United States and its European partners have been working on robust border security measures to make it difficult for criminals and terrorists to take advantage of the migrant situation unfolding in Europe.

All refugees of all nationalities considered for admission to the United States undergo intensive security screening involving multiple federal intelligence, security and law enforcement agencies, including the National Counterterrorism Center, the FBI's Terrorist Screening Center, the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Defense, in order to ensure that those admitted are not known to pose a threat to our country.

Mindful of the particular conditions of the Syria crisis, Syrian refugees go through additional forms of security screening and we continue to examine options for further enhancements for screening Syrian refugees, the details of which are classified.

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