

RELEASE IN PART B7(E),B7(F)

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED**2015-2016 Bureau of Counterterrorism “Partnership Concept”: Horn of Africa****Summary:**

The threat posed by al-Shabaab and other violent extremists in the Horn of Africa¹ continues to evolve. Inside Somalia, al-Shabaab has suffered significant blows to its organizational leadership and territorial control. However, it retains the ability to block humanitarian access, destabilize the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS), and launch asymmetric attacks. Furthermore, al-Shabaab has expanded its regional activities, increasing attack plotting in Kenya and elsewhere. Also of concern, violent extremist messaging and ideology continue to find traction among certain communities within Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda. There are also increasing concerns about the effects of the Yemen crisis and movement of al-Qa’ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) into East Africa, especially Djibouti.

While governments in the region are increasingly committed to addressing terrorism, their approaches, willingness to cooperate with the United States, and capabilities vary. Governments in the region have critical gaps in their ability to detect and respond to attacks, investigate and prosecute terrorism cases, and counter violent extremist recruitment. In conjunction with the ongoing interagency effort to enhance the Partnership for Regional East Africa Counterterrorism (PREACT) and working closely with other U.S. government partners, the Bureau of Counterterrorism (CT) will pursue diplomatic engagements, programs, mentorships, and other activities to advance the following strategic goals (in no particular order):

1. Constrain al-Shabaab’s freedom of movement and prevent AQAP and other extremists from extending their reach into East Africa by strengthening law enforcement capacity to share information and conduct traveler screening [redacted] in the region and strategic land border crossings between [redacted]
2. Mitigate future mass casualty terrorist attacks and hostage-takings by increasing the capacity of and cooperation between key designated law enforcement units and other first responders across East Africa.
3. Develop modern, comprehensive counterterrorism legal frameworks and justice sector capabilities across East Africa to effectively investigate and prosecute complex terrorism cases, with significant emphasis on international standards for human rights.
4. Disrupt financial support for terrorism by increasing the capacity of and cooperation between financial institutions, financial regulatory systems, law enforcement agencies, and prosecutors in East Africa to conduct effective investigations and prosecutions.
5. Counter al-Shabaab’s messaging and recruitment networks through expanded capacity-building initiatives and partnerships with the FGS and community partners in Somalia, and by utilizing sanctions.

B7(E)

¹ For the purposes of this paper, the “Horn of Africa” includes Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Tanzania, and Uganda.

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

- 2 -

6. Counter violent extremist radicalization and promote rehabilitation and reintegration of violent extremists in East Africa through increased partnerships, community outreach, and strategic communications by and between law enforcement and civil society.

Strategic Context and Gaps:

With U.S. support, over the past two years, the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and Somali forces have pushed al-Shabaab out of major population strongholds and port cities in Somalia – creating space for the new FGS to constitute itself. However, despite significant blows to its organizational leadership and territorial control, al-Shabaab retains the ability to block humanitarian access, to destabilize communities, and to launch asymmetric attacks across Somalia, including in Mogadishu. Al-Shabaab could regain traction if there are not improvements in the security and governance of liberated areas.

The United States provides significant training, equipment, logistical support, advisory support and other operational support to counter al-Shabaab's activity in Somalia, focused on AMISOM. In line with the Deputies-approved U.S. Strategy on Somalia, the United States also seeks to help the FGS to build its capacity to counter al-Shabaab as well as to provide security for local populations. U.S. assistance has focused largely on the Somali National Army (SNA) to date, but support is also needed to strengthen Somalia's civilian institutions, particularly in the law enforcement, financial regulation, and criminal justice sectors. More support is also needed to bolster nascent FGS efforts to promote regional and local stabilization, counter al-Shabaab's messaging, and to rehabilitate and reintegrate disengaged al-Shabaab fighters.

Over the past two years, al-Shabaab has increased its focus and attacks beyond Somalia's borders, especially in neighboring Kenya. In 2014, terrorist attacks resulted in the death of over 200 Kenyans. An April 2015 al-Shabaab attack on a university in Garissa, Kenya, resulted in the death of 148 Kenyans – the largest terrorism-related death toll in Kenya since the attack on the U.S. embassy in 1998. Beyond Kenya, authorities have identified and/or disrupted terrorism plots in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Uganda over the past year, including posts involving Western targets. There are also increasing concerns about the regional effects of the Yemeni crisis and the potential for AQAP and other extremist elements to move into Djibouti and Somalia. Increased AQAP activity could significantly affect the threat environment in East Africa.

Also of concern, violent extremist messaging and appeal continue to resonate and gain traction among some communities in East Africa beyond Somalia, especially within Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda – all key U.S. allies. This trend is evidenced, in certain locations, by increasing levels of violent extremist recruitment, public sympathy for al-Shabaab and/or the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), and violent extremist rhetoric in support of al-Shabaab. Additionally, there are also signs of increasing domestic and non-al-Shabaab-related radicalization that could pose a problem for the region in the medium term. Drivers of violent extremism in East Africa include political grievances and inadequate civic engagement opportunities, poor security force-community relations, disaffection and alienation among youths, and conservative religious ideologies.

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

- 3 -

Governments in the region have limited experience and capacity to respond to the increasingly diffuse and dynamic threat environment – although they have pledged to increase their efforts and cooperation in conjunction with the African Union Summit on Terrorism and the White House Summit on Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) process. [REDACTED]

B7(E)

B7(F)

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

- 4 -

CT Strategic Goals:

In accordance with the 2015 East Africa Regional Counterterrorism and CVE Strategy and the FY 2015 PREACT strategic priorities, CT will develop and pursue diplomatic engagements, capacity-building programs, mentorships, and other activities that advance the following strategic goals.

1. **Constrain al-Shabaab's freedom of movement and prevent AQAP and other extremists from extending their reach into East Africa by strengthening law enforcement capacity to share information and conduct traveler screening** [redacted]

B7(F)

[redacted] in the region and strategic land border crossings between [redacted]

B7(E)

[redacted] Al-Shabaab and associated violent extremists continue to exploit the porous land borders between Somalia and Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Kenya to travel and/or smuggle individuals and explosives throughout the region. [redacted]

B7(F)

[redacted] With CT's support, a number of countries in the region have installed Personal Identification Secure Comparison and Evaluation Systems (PISCES) at airports and other ports of entry. Through training courses, mentoring, exercises, workshops, and enhancements to PISCES, CT seeks to increase the capacity and cooperation of customs, immigrations, and law enforcement border officials to better patrol and conduct screening of individuals transiting [redacted]

B7(E)

[redacted] CT also seeks to build the capacity of officials to share information about suspected terrorists and implement watch-listing techniques across the region. In this regard, CT also seeks to promote greater information exchanges between the United States and East Africa law enforcement agencies.

B7(E)

As [redacted] continues to deal with an influx of [redacted] and other travelers, it has requested support to conduct appropriate screening of these individuals. [redacted]

B7(E)

B7(E)
B7(F)

[redacted] Working closely with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), CT hopes to tailor training courses to address specific needs identified by [redacted] customs and immigrations officials. CT also seeks to partner with the [redacted] government to exchange terrorist screening information and increase watch-listing capabilities.

B7(E)

2. **Mitigate future mass casualty terrorist attacks and hostage-takings by increasing the capacity of and cooperation between key designated law enforcement units and other first responders across East Africa.** The al-Shabaab attack on the Westgate Mall in Nairobi, Kenya, in September 2013 and subsequent attacks throughout the region have exposed significant weaknesses and gaps in law enforcement's capacity and preparedness to respond to critical incidents. Agencies within countries often do not work well

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

- 5 -

together and do not share information. Through the Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) program, CT is working to train and mentor dedicated crisis response units in [REDACTED] [REDACTED] to mitigate and respond to terrorist attacks in accordance with the rule of law and respect for human rights. CT continues to develop and institutionalize the annual ATA East Africa Joint Operations capstone exercise to bring these units together for joint training, exercising, and sharing of best practices. CT is also seeking to build the technical capacity of explosive ordnance disposal units in the region for IED awareness training, and to identify, neutralize, and exploit IEDs.

B7(F)

3. **Develop modern, comprehensive counterterrorism legal frameworks and justice sector capabilities across East Africa to effectively investigate and prosecute complex terrorism cases, with significant emphasis on international standards for human rights.** Most governments in East Africa face serious challenges in investigating and prosecuting terrorism-related cases, including the effective use of intelligence information in rule of law-based investigations and prosecutions. Despite numerous arrests, few cases have been successfully prosecuted in Kenya, Tanzania, or Uganda. Most countries in the region have counterterrorism laws, although some are narrowly focused and others are broad and easily politicized. Through training workshops, advisory support, and mentoring, CT seeks to build counterterrorism-related justice sector capacity in East Africa to conduct effective investigations and prosecutions of terrorist suspects. This includes work to strengthen and/or tailor counterterrorism legal frameworks. As of the end of 2015, CT will be funding or co-funding, with other Department partners, Department of Justice Resident Legal Advisors in [REDACTED] [REDACTED] to provide technical assistance to these countries as well as [REDACTED] through regional activities and working directly with prosecutors and investigators in those countries. CT is also funding [REDACTED] nascent CT legal framework.

4. **Disrupt financial support for terrorism by increasing the capacity of and cooperation between financial institutions, financial regulatory systems, law enforcement agencies, and prosecutors in East Africa to conduct effective investigations and prosecutions.** Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda have all criminalized financial support for terrorism, but key private sector partners in the region – foreign exchange bureaus, mobile money providers, and banks – lack the capacity to identify, report, and freeze terrorist-related financial activities and assets. CT seeks to build the capacity of financial intelligence units (FIUs) and other financial regulatory systems in [REDACTED] to help public and private sector partners to address these financial vulnerabilities and comply with the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) recommendations. CT also seeks to strengthen cooperation between the FIUs, law enforcement agencies, and prosecutors to pursue cases against individuals involved with financing terrorism through both the formal and informal banking sectors, as well as other material support for terrorism. The RLA [REDACTED] is working to strengthen the capacity of the judicial sector [REDACTED] to investigate and prosecute terrorism in [REDACTED] is working to strengthen the capacity of

B7(E)
B7(F)SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

- 6 -

the judicial sector [REDACTED] to prosecute complex terrorist financing and money laundering cases.

B7(E)

5. **Counter al-Shabaab's messaging and recruitment networks through expanded capacity-building initiatives and partnerships with the FGS and community partners in Somalia, and by utilizing sanctions.** While AMISOM continues to make progress in pushing al-Shabaab out of major population centers, military action alone cannot degrade al-Shabaab's appeal and cohesion. More support is needed for efforts in Somalia to counter al-Shabaab's messaging and recruitment efforts, to disrupt its financing and facilitation networks, and to register, rehabilitate and reintegrate disengaging al-Shabaab fighters. In coordination with the United Kingdom and other international partners, CT is seeking to build the capacity of civil society actors in Somalia to counter al-Shabaab's messaging and recruitment. CT is also providing technical support for efforts by [REDACTED] and community partners to rehabilitate and reintegrate disengaged fighters. CT also seeks to utilize designations, sanctions, and other efforts such as Diplomatic Security's Rewards for Justice Program, to stigmatize and discourage al-Shabaab membership. Finally, CT is supporting efforts with [REDACTED] and financial institutions to build a regulatory framework for countering terrorist financing and money laundering.

B7(E)
B7(F)

6. **Counter violent extremist radicalization and promote rehabilitation and reintegration of violent extremists in East Africa through increased partnerships, community outreach, and strategic communications by and between law enforcement and civil society.** In several countries in East Africa, poor relationships between law enforcement and minority communities and related abuses are fueling existing and new grievances. However, in tandem with the White House CVE Summit process, governments in the region have committed to develop new strategies, policy frameworks, and/or mechanisms to effectively address violent extremism. In FY 2015, CT is co-leading efforts within the Department to significantly expand CVE efforts in East Africa as a pilot process for the Counterterrorism Partnership Fund (CTPF). In coordination with [REDACTED] [REDACTED] CT seeks to help governments in East Africa to develop and implement national CVE strategies, with a focus on promoting community-oriented and CVE-sensitive policing strategies. CT also seeks to support initiatives that strengthen partnerships between law enforcement and civil society actors to address drivers of violent extremism. CT seeks to build the capacity of civil society organizations and amplify the voices of credible influencers in targeted communities and populations to counter violent extremist messaging and recruitment. CT also seeks to support the development and implementation of initiatives by governments and community actors in the region to rehabilitate and reintegrate former violent extremists and returning foreign terrorist fighters, including Kenyan fighters who have returned from Somalia.

B7(F)

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

- 7 -

Annex: Recent and Ongoing CT and Related State/USAID Programs**Current CT Programs:**

Over recent years, CT has funded major programs in the following areas:

- **Critical Incident Response:** Through the Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) program, CT has supported law enforcement training across the region to build critical incident response and investigations capabilities. In 2014 and 2015, ATA piloted joint trainings and a regional exercise with [REDACTED]
- **Border Security (Land, Maritime, and Airport):** CT has supported bilateral and regional training programs in border security skills for law enforcement officials, implemented by DS/T/ATA, CBP, and TSA, among others. Through the Terrorist Interdiction Program, CT provides select partners in the region with the capability to secure their ports of entry against known or suspected terrorists attempting to enter or depart the country. CT is also supporting efforts [REDACTED]
- **Countering Violent Extremism (CVE):** CT is supporting a number of CVE projects in [REDACTED] to help the respective governments and civil society partners to counter violent extremist recruitment and to rehabilitate and reintegrate former violent extremist. CT also continues to support a program [REDACTED] to build the CVE capacity of women in civil society organizations that work with local law enforcement.
- **Strengthening Rule of Law CT Frameworks and Enforcement Capacity:** To help build justice sector capacity, including enhancing prosecutorial investigative capabilities, CT has funded Resident Legal Advisors [REDACTED] as well as a judicial sector support and associated programming for [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] CT also plans to co-fund an RLA [REDACTED] who will begin in early 2016. These advisors provide tailored CT-focused rule of law trainings and advisory support for justice sector actors and institutions in East Africa. CT has also funded the Financial Services Volunteer Corps (FSVC), FINCEN, FBI, DHS, and Treasury/IRS to conduct ad hoc trainings on financial investigative techniques; bank regulatory compliance; cross-border investigations; and preventing terrorist abuse of nonprofits [REDACTED]. CT has also funded the [REDACTED] to provide training to East African law enforcement officials on counterterrorism best practices. Additionally, CT is supporting [REDACTED] in conducting a series of regional trainings aimed at promoting implementation of the GCTF *Rabat Memorandum on Good Practices for Effective Counterterrorism Practice in the Criminal Justice Sector*.

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B7(F)

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B7(F)

Related Department of State, USAID, and Interagency Programs:

- **AF:** AF manages and oversees military and criminal justice sector capacity-building and CVE programming in the region under the auspices of PREACT. [REDACTED]

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

- 8 -

B7(E)
B7(F)

- CSCC: Through its digital outreach teams, CSCC largely concentrates East Africa-related programming on counter-messaging in [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] CSCC also draws attention to the slow but steady improvement in people's lives after freedom from al-Shabaab occupation.
- CTPF: With the leadership of CT and J as a pilot for the CTPF, a State and USAID working group is developing an integrated plan for spending [REDACTED] B7(E)
[REDACTED] to counter radicalization and recruitment in the Horn of Africa region. This plan is focused heavily on preventing the spread of violent extremism in Kenya, [REDACTED], but will also include funding for ongoing efforts in [REDACTED] to counter al-Shabaab's influence.
- DOD: DOD continues to provide significant training and equipment to build the capacity of East African militaries who are contributing troops to AMISOM, [REDACTED] B7(E)
[REDACTED] B7(F)
- ISN: The Export Control and Border Security Program (EXBS) supports programming in [REDACTED]
- INL: In [REDACTED] INL supports primary policing institutions and civilian oversight mechanisms in order to hold police officers in [REDACTED] more accountable for [REDACTED]. In [REDACTED] INL is commencing a four- to five-year program that will build the technical capacity of the [REDACTED] of [REDACTED] to investigate complex crimes (including terrorism),
[REDACTED]
- USAID: USAID manages CVE and related stabilization and development programs in [REDACTED] B7(F)

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED