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STATE DEPARTMENT'S COUNTERTERRORISM BUREAU

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON TERRORISM, NONPROLIFERATION, AND TRADE

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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STATE DEPARTMENT'S COUNTERTERRORISM BUREAU

TUESDAY, JUNE 2, 2015

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON TERRORISM, NONPROLIFERATION, AND TRADE,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 2 o'clock p.m., in room 2172 Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Ted Poe (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. POE. This subcommittee will come to order. Without objection, all members will have 5 days to submit statements, questions and extraneous materials for the record, subject to the length limitation in the rules.

Two weeks ago ISIS had one of its most successful weeks, in Syria took over an ancient city, Palmyra, located in the center of the country. The city is known for its archeological gems that date back to the Romans. In Iraq, ISIS took over Ramadi, the capital of the Anbar Province.

Losing a city in the Sunni heartland caused many to question the administration's strategy in this part of the world. Defense Secretary Ash Carter remarked that the Iraqi troops "had lost the will to fight." The battle for ideas isn't looking much better. Thousands of foreign fighters continue to leave their home countries to fight for ISIS in Iraq and Syria. Those who don't go to Iraq and Syria have been happy to pledge allegiance from afar.

ISIS now has 10 networks outside of Iraq and Syria. Three in Libya, two in Saudi Arabia, one each in the Sinai, Nigeria, Yemen, Algeria, in the Khorasan, in Pakistan and Afghanistan. From pulling off two successful suicide bomber attacks in Saudi Arabia in as many weeks to taking advantage of the fall of the government in Yemen and the lawlessness in Libya, each of ISIS's 10 networks are getting stronger, they are not getting weaker.

Terrorists now control more land than at any time since the end of World War II. In the midst of this struggle lies the State Department's Counterterrorism Bureau. Originally set up as an office back in 1972 in response to the terrorist attack at the Olympic Games in Munich, Germany, it became its own bureau in 2012. The primary mission of the Bureau for Counterterrorism is to forge partnerships with non-state actors, multilateral organizations and foreign governments to advance the counterterrorism objectives and national security of the United States.

Under that broad mission it has five principal responsibilities. One, countering violent extremism; two, capacity building; three, counterterrorism diplomacy; four, U.S. counterterrorism strategy and operations; and lastly, homeland security coordination. Even though the Bureau accepts the idea that it should be spending 3 to 5 percent of the program's resources on monitoring and evaluation, it has no way of tracking how much it actually is spending so it can know if it is meeting that goal.

Over the last 5 years, the Bureau has only completed four evaluations. It seems to me it needs to be doing a whole lot more. Most of the money that the CT Bureau spends is on capacity building. From 2012 to 2014 it spent $191 million on building the capacity of 53 partners through antiterrorism assistance. But of these three partners it has only evaluated two countries. The CT Bureau is having trouble learning from the four evaluations it has done in the past. The Bureau has only implemented half the recommendations made by the evaluation and has no timetable for when it will implement the other half. The Bureau has never done or does it have any plans to do impact evaluation. The only kind of evaluation it can really tell us, if American money made a difference or not.

While it struggles to properly evaluate its programs, the CT Bureau is asking for four times more money than it received in the budget last year. The Bureau wants money for a counterterrorism partnership fund, but it can't give Congress any specifics on how it plans to spend the money let alone how the money will be evaluated that is spent.

There are also problems with how the CT Bureau is spending the money it already obtains from the taxpayers through Congress. According to the GAO, every year since 2012, the CT Bureau has failed to fill staff positions Congress has authorized it to have. The vacancy rate on unfilled positions has hovered around 20 percent every year, but every year since 2012, the CT Bureau keeps asking Congress for more money to authorize more staff positions. Why should Congress grant this request when the Bureau cannot fill the positions Congress has already given it?

Recently the administration has started emphasizing the term "preventing violent extremism," or PVE, more than "countering violent extremism," or in the vernacular, CVE. PVE says that everything to women's right to education to health care is important to prevent violent extremism. The question arises, is this the duty of the Bureau to try to eliminate poverty, health care issues, create jobs under this authorization?

The problem with PVE is that could include almost anything that PVE wants to spend the money on as opposed to strictly counterterrorism operations. It is difficult to know what the definition means when it covers so many issues. It is also unclear what the shift from CVE to PVE means for the Bureau which used to take the lead on counter or CVE efforts.

So at a time of limited resources and a terroristic threat that is increasing we cannot afford to have a squabble over who is in charge or a questionable commitment of evaluating how we are spending American money, and that is the purpose of this hearing today so we can get to the bottom of all of this.

And I will yield to the ranking member Mr. Keating.

Mr. KEATING. Thank you, Chairman Poe, for conducting this hearing. I would also like to thank our witnesses Mr. Johnson and Mr. Siberell for being here today to discuss the State Department's Counterterrorism Bureau. As we know, to degrade and ultimately defeat a foreign terrorist organization like ISIL or al-Qaeda we need to cut off its supply of money, manpower and support. Specifically, we need to improve our efforts to prevent the flow of foreign fighters to the Middle East, especially to Iraq and Syria.

We also need to do a better job countering violent messaging to potential recruits, engaging with at-risk communities, and working to prevent radicalization. Further, we need to do more to restrict terrorist financing, whether it is financing it has obtained through taxes imposes on the population of occupied territories or through the sale of contraband such as trafficking in antiquities looted in Iraq and Syria.

The United States can't do this alone. We have to work with our allies to reduce terrorist access to resources and support. The capacity building programs funded and coordinated by the State Department's Counterterrorism Bureau are the types of activities our Government needs to engage in. These programs are aimed at, for example, assisting our partners in counterterrorism law enforcement, counterterrorism financing, counter radicalization efforts, border security, and restricting terrorist travel.

Already the Bureau has been hard at work to seek and address these critical objectives, and I know we will hear a lot in greater detail from Mr. Siberell later on. It is vital, however, that we ensure that funds appropriated to the Counterterrorism Bureau for these capacity building programs are being used wisely and the United States is getting a good return on our investment. To this end I welcome the participation of Mr. Johnson from GAO, look forward to hearing both of our witnesses to discuss this program, and I yield back.

Mr. POE. Thank you, gentleman. The Chair will yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California, Mr. Sherman.

Mr. SHERMAN. I want to focus these 2 minutes on a big gap in the State Department—its failure to hire people who really understand Islam and the culture involved of the countries. There, last time we had these hearings and in subsequent hearings, the State Department has confirmed they haven't hired a single person who is hired because of their expertise in Islamic jurisprudence or scripture.

And so when we go to try to do our counter propaganda, we are able to show that ISIS kills Yazidi women and children, but the target audience doesn't regard that as an anathema. We need pictures of al-Baghdadi eating a bacon sandwich. That, his target audience would find an anathema. But that is my limited understanding of his target audience. We need people on staff who can quote Hadith for Hadith, Sunnah for Sunnah, and we also need people who have grown up in the relevant countries, whether they be Muslims by faith or whether they even be members of the religious minorities who are easier to screen to be sure that they don't subscribe to the viewpoints of ISIS since there are very few Iranian Jews and Yazidis, et cetera, who are Islamic extremists.

So we can still give the State Department 99.9 percent of the jobs can go to people who study well for the Foreign Service exam and have all the academic Brownie points and their Ivy League degrees or their A+s from Cal State, Northridge. But if 1/10 of 1 percent were hired because they could have memorized the Qur'an and could apply it to the situations we face today, then we would be speaking the language of the target audiences. I yield back.

Mr. POE. I thank the gentleman. Without objection, all the witnesses' prepared statements will be made part of the record, and I would ask that each of our two witnesses keep their presentation to no more than 5 minutes inasmuch as we have your written statement.

Charles Johnson, Jr. is a senior executive with the U.S. Government Accountability Office. As a director with GAO's International Affairs and Trade team, his portfolio focuses on U.S. efforts to counter overseas threats and international security issues. Thank you, Mr. Johnson, for being here. We will hear what you have to say.

STATEMENT OF MR. CHARLES JOHNSON, JR., DIRECTOR, INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ISSUES, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS AND TRADE, GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE

Mr. JOHNSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, Chairman Poe, Ranking Member Keating, and members of the subcommittee. I am pleased to be here to discuss preliminary observations from GAO's ongoing review of the evolution and management of the State Department's Counterterrorism Bureau.

My statement submitted for the record provides preliminary information on three issues. First, how the Counterterrorism Bureau's resources have changed since 2011; second, the extent to which the Counterterrorism Bureau has assessed its performance; and third, the Counterterrorism Bureau's coordination within State and with other government entities on efforts to counter violent extremism and terrorist financing.

Before I delve into the three issues, I would like to note that terrorism and violent extremism as demonstrated by the actions of ISIL, Boko Haram, al-Qaeda and AQ affiliates remain a top national security priority and continue to pose a threat to the United States and other nations. In 2010, the results of the first Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review, known as the QDDR, directed by the Secretary of State at the time, highlighted the global terrorist threat and among other things recommended that the Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism be elevated to a bureau. According to the QDDR, elevation of this office to bureau would, among other things, enhance State's ability to counter violent extremism, enhance efforts to build foreign partner counterterrorism capacity, and enable more effective coordination with other agencies.

As for the first issue, how the Bureau's resources have changed—and if I can ask if the figure, I have a figure to be projected. Our preliminary analysis shows that the Counterterrorism Bureau has received annual increases in authorized full time equivalent staff levels since Fiscal Year 2011, as the figure shows, but they have continued to face a staffing gap every year.

As you can see, the number of authorized FTE positions increased from 66 in Fiscal Year 2011 to a high of 96 in Fiscal Year 2015, but over that same time period the percentage of unfilled FTE positions fluctuated slightly. As the chairman noted, it has averaged about 20 percent a year, and we can say that the range was 17 to 23 percent with 2015 being the 23 percent. These vacancy gaps have included both staff level as well as management level positions. I would like to note that the Bureau recently took some action to close the gap, and they have told us recently in our preliminary review that they are down to 10 FTE vacancies as of the end of May 2015.

Next concern, the extent to which the Counterterrorism Bureau has assessed its performance. Our preliminary analysis has found that while the Bureau has utilized various means to assess some progress, it has not established time frames for addressing open recommendations resulting from completed program evaluations. Specifically, the Bureau as required has established indicators and targets for each of its foreign assistance goals and has reported results achieved toward each indicator.

Since its elevation to a Bureau in Fiscal Year 2012, as the chairman noted in his opening remarks, the Bureau has also completed four evaluations of the counterterrorism related programs that it oversees. These evaluations resulted in 60 recommendations. Our preliminary analysis shows that the Bureau has only addressed about half of those recommendations and lacks time frames for when it will address the remaining recommendations, which are at about 32. Without specific time frames for addressing recommendations, we have previously noted that it may be more difficult, and in particular for this Bureau, to ensure programmatic improvements are made in a timely manner, but more importantly that some of the implementing partners who have been tasked with closing some of these recommendations are held accountable for doing so.

Finally, with respect to the Bureau's coordination efforts, our preliminary analysis indicates that the Bureau's coordination within State and with other Federal agencies on countering violent extremism and countering terrorist financing, or those two programs in particular, generally reflect the key practices for effective collaboration. For example, coordination on policy and programming has allowed for the development of joint projects and helped to avoid some overlap with existing and planned initiatives between the Counterterrorism Bureau and others.

In closing, Mr. Chairman and members of the panel, I would like to thank the subcommittee for the opportunity to testify, as well as the GAO staff who are sitting behind me. Jason Bair, Andrea Miller, Esther Toledo, David Dayton, Mason Calhoun, and Lina Khan who worked on this engagement; and second, note that we anticipate issuing our final report on the evolution and management of the Counterterrorism Bureau in July of this year.

This concludes my statement. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have at this time.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Johnson follows:]

United States Government Accountability Office

Testimony before the Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade, Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives

For Release on Delivery
Expected at 2:00 p.m. ET
Tuesday, June 2, 2015

STATE DEPARTMENT

Preliminary Observations on the Bureau of Counterterrorism's Resources, Performance, and Coordination

Statement of Charles Michael Johnson, Jr., Director
International Affairs and Trade

GAO-15-655T

GAO Highlights

Highlights of GAO-15-655T, a testimony before the Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade, Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives

June 2, 2015

STATE DEPARTMENT

Preliminary Observations on the Bureau of Counterterrorism's Resources, Performance, and Coordination

Why GAO Did This Study

Terrorism and violent extremism continue to pose a global threat, and combating these at home and abroad remains a top priority for the U.S. government. In 2010, the first Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR), conducted at the direction of the Secretary of State, highlighted these global threats and, among other actions, recommended that State's Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism be elevated to bureau status. According to the 2010 QDDR report, the elevation of this office to a bureau would enhance State's ability to, among other things, counter violent extremism, build foreign partner capacity, and engage in counterterrorism diplomacy. In addition, the report stated that the bureau's new status would enable more effective coordination with other U.S. government agencies.

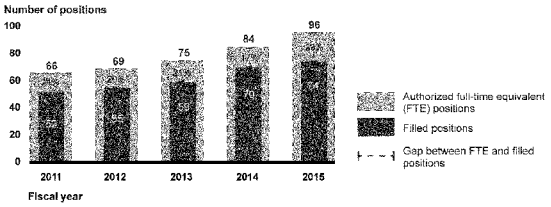
On the basis of preliminary results of ongoing work that GAO is conducting for this subcommittee and other congressional requesters, this testimony provides observations on (1) how the bureau's staffing resources have changed since 2011, (2) the extent to which the bureau has assessed its performance since 2011, and (3) the extent to which the bureau's coordination with U.S. government entities on select programs is in line with key collaboration practices. To conduct this work, GAO reviewed and analyzed State and other U.S. government agency information and interviewed U.S. government officials in Washington, D.C. GAO expects to issue a final report on this work in July 2015, along with any related recommendations.

View GAO-15-655T. For more information, contact Charles Michael Johnson, Jr., at (202) 512-7331 or johnsonchm@gao.gov.

What GAO Found

GAO's preliminary analysis shows that the Department of State's (State) Bureau of Counterterrorism has had an annual increase in authorized full-time equivalent (FTE) positions since fiscal year 2011 and has recently undertaken efforts to reduce a persistent staffing gap. The number of FTEs for the bureau increased from 66 in fiscal year 2011 to 96 in fiscal year 2015, and over the same period the percentage of FTE vacancies ranged from 17 to 23 percent. The vacancies have included both staff-level and management positions. During GAO's ongoing work, the bureau indicated that the gaps between authorized and filled positions were due to several factors. These included an increase in FTEs that the bureau was authorized when it was established and postponement of some staffing decisions until the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, who assumed her position in 2014, had sufficient time to assess the bureau's needs and priorities. The bureau has recently made progress in filling vacant positions and reported having 10 FTE vacancies as of the end of May 2015.

Department of State Bureau of Counterterrorism Authorized Full-Time Equivalent and Filled Positions, Fiscal Years 2011 to 2015



Source: GAO analysis of Department of State data. | GAO-15-655T

Note: Data are as of October 31 in the fiscal year represented.

GAO's preliminary analysis has found that the bureau assessed its progress toward achieving its foreign assistance-related goals but has not established time frames for addressing recommendations from program evaluations. Specifically, the bureau established indicators and targets for its foreign assistance-related goals identified in the bureau's first multiyear strategic plan, and it reported results achieved toward each indicator. Since its elevation to a bureau in fiscal year 2012, the bureau has also completed four evaluations of counterterrorism-related programs it oversees, resulting in 60 recommendations. GAO's preliminary results show that the bureau had addressed about half of the recommendations (28 of 60) as of April 2015 but had not established time frames for addressing the remaining recommendations.

GAO's preliminary analysis has also found that the bureau's coordination within State and with other federal agencies on the Countering Violent Extremism and Counterterrorism Finance programs generally reflects key practices for collaboration. For example, with regard to identifying resources, in cases where the bureau funded other U.S. agencies partnering on these programs, the funding mechanism was clear and laid out in interagency agreements.

Chairman Poe, Ranking Member Keating, and Members of the Subcommittee:

Thank you for the opportunity today to discuss our preliminary observations from our ongoing work looking at the Department of State's (State) Bureau of Counterterrorism (CT Bureau).

Terrorism and violent extremism continue to pose a global threat, and countering terrorism both at home and abroad remains a top priority for the U.S. government. In 2010, the first Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR) conducted by State and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) focused on these global threats by recommending that State's Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism (CT Office) be elevated to a bureau. According to the 2010 QDDR report, the elevation of the CT Office to a bureau would enhance State's ability to, among other things, counter violent extremism, build foreign partner capacity, and engage in counterterrorism diplomacy. In addition, the QDDR report stated that elevating the office's status would enable more effective coordination with other U.S. government agencies.

This testimony discusses our preliminary observations on (1) how the CT Bureau's staffing resources have changed since 2011, (2) the extent to which the bureau has assessed its performance since 2011, and (3) the extent to which the bureau's coordination with U.S. government entities on select programs is in line with key collaboration practices.

To examine how the CT Bureau's staffing resources changed since 2011, we reviewed and analyzed State data from fiscal years 2011 to 2015. We also interviewed State officials from the CT Bureau, Office of Inspector General, Office of U.S. Foreign Assistance Resources, and the Bureaus of Human Resources, Comptroller and Global Financial Services, Budgeting and Planning, and Administration. To assess the reliability of the staffing data, we compared information provided by State with staffing information in State's Congressional Budget Justifications and spoke to State officials regarding the processes they use to collect and verify the staffing data. Based on the checks we performed, we determined that these data are sufficiently reliable for the purposes of this engagement. To examine the extent to which the CT Bureau has assessed its performance since 2011, we reviewed bureau strategic plans, performance reports, program evaluation reports, and action plans for evaluation recommendations, as well as State policy and guidance documents outlining performance reporting and evaluation requirements

for bureaus. We also interviewed CT Bureau officials responsible for strategic planning and program monitoring and evaluation and interviewed or obtained written responses from State officials responsible for overseeing implementation of State's performance reporting and evaluation policies. To examine the extent to which the CT Bureau's coordination with U.S. government entities on select programs is in line with key collaboration practices, we reviewed agency documents and interviewed officials from various State regional and functional bureaus; from the Departments of Defense, Homeland Security, Justice, and the Treasury; and from USAID, the National Counterterrorism Center, and the United States Institute of Peace in Washington, D.C. We focused on the CT Bureau's Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) and Counterterrorism Finance (CTF) programs because these programs involve coordination with large numbers of agencies and also represent strategic priorities for the CT Bureau. We used GAO's key features of collaboration mechanisms that agencies should consider when collaborating within and across the U.S. government to evaluate the extent and nature of collaboration between the CT Bureau and other bureaus within State and other U.S. government agencies.[1]

Our preliminary analysis is based on our ongoing work, which is being conducted in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

Background

[1]GAO, *Managing for Results: Key Considerations for Implementing Interagency Collaborative Mechanisms*, GAO-12-1022 (Washington, D.C.: Sept. 27, 2012).

Evolution of State's CT Office to CT Bureau

In December 2010, the QDDR recommended the creation of the CT Bureau, to supersede the CT Office.[2] State elevated the CT Office to the CT Bureau in January 2012. According to State, one reason for elevating the CT Office to a bureau was that the office's responsibilities for counterterrorism strategy, policy, operations, and programs had grown far beyond the original coordinating mission. In the transition from CT Office to CT Bureau in 2012, some initial organizational changes occurred, such as a reduction from five to four Deputy Coordinators who oversee counterterrorism issue areas within the bureau as well as the creation of an executive office to provide management support to the bureau. The initial organizational changes also elevated the role of strategic planning and metrics and established a new policy and guidance unit.[3]

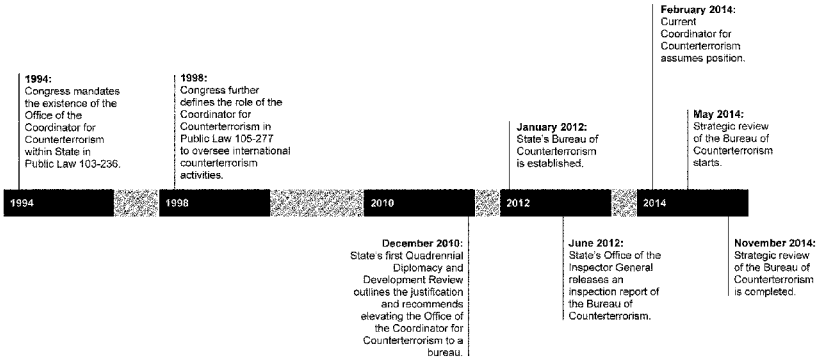
Our preliminary information shows that additional changes to the CT Bureau's organizational structure occurred starting in 2014, after the current Ambassador was confirmed as the Coordinator for Counterterrorism in February 2014. According to bureau officials, the Ambassador initiated a strategic review of the bureau's programs and what they were accomplishing to help form a clear picture of priorities, threats, and where the bureau's efforts and funding should be directed. The strategic review, which was completed in November 2014, led to a reorganization of the bureau and a shift in overall focus to a regional or geographic approach. As a result of the strategic review, the portfolio of the CT Bureau's Office of Programs has changed to reflect a more regional approach rather than an approach based on funding streams. According to CT Bureau officials, the shift is intended to encourage and facilitate cross-bureau discussions across the entire CT Bureau. Specifically, the portfolios of program officials have been broadened by

[2]In 1994 Congress mandated the existence of the CT Office within State to be headed by a Coordinator for Counterterrorism. In 1998 Congress further defined the role of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism to include overall supervision of resources for U.S. international counterterrorism activities, including policy oversight. Congress also established the Coordinator for Counterterrorism as the principal adviser to the Secretary of State on international counterterrorism matters, reporting directly to the Secretary of State.

[3]As the new CT Bureau began organizing itself, State's Office of Inspector General conducted a routine inspection of the CT Bureau in early 2012. U.S. Department of State and the Broadcasting Board of Governors Office of Inspector General, *Office of Inspections: Inspection of the Bureau of Counterterrorism,* Report Number ISP-I-12-32A (Arlington, VA: June 2012).

requiring a cross-cutting look at programs across their assigned region. Figure 1 shows how the CT Office has evolved over the last two decades.

Figure 1: Timeline of Key Events Related to the Evolution of the Department of State's (State) Bureau of Counterterrorism



Source: GAO analysis of Department of State information. | GAO-15-655T

Our preliminary information shows other changes to the bureau's organizational structure stemming from the strategic review, such as the changes in names of directorates and offices, their portfolios, or both to better reflect the new strategic approach and priorities of the bureau. For example, the portfolio for the multilateral affairs office was shifted and combined with the portfolio for the regional affairs office. In addition, a new office and two new units were created: (1) the Office of Strategy, Plans, and Initiatives; (2) the Foreign Terrorist Fighters Unit; and (3) the

Countering Violent Extremism Unit. Appendix I depicts the organizational structure of the CT Bureau, as of May 2015.[4]

CT Bureau Programs, Activities, and Funding Allocations

The CT Bureau manages a range of programs and activities to assist partner nations around the world to combat terrorism, primarily through the following six programs:

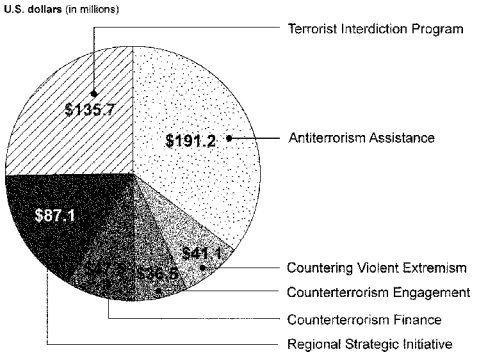
- **Antiterrorism Assistance:** in partnership with the Bureau of Diplomatic Security as the primary implementer, provides U.S. government antiterrorism training and equipment to law enforcement agencies of partner nations.
- **Countering Violent Extremism (CVE):** entails programs and activities that work with partner nation civil society sectors and governments to undermine terrorist ideology and to address the underlying local grievances that drive at-risk individuals into violent extremism.
- **Counterterrorism Engagement:** entails programs and activities to build political will for counterterrorism at senior levels in partner nations.
- **Counterterrorism Finance (CTF):** entails programs and activities to build foreign partner capacity and to implement significant parts of the U.S. government's strategy to cut off financial support to terrorists.
- **Terrorist Interdiction Program:** provides the immigration and border control authorities of partner nations with a computer database system that enables identification of suspected terrorists attempting to transit air, land, or sea ports of entry.
- **Regional Strategic Initiative:** meets transnational terrorist threats with regional responses coordinated by each region's U.S. ambassadors in the field.

Our preliminary analysis shows that from fiscal years 2011 through 2014, the CT Bureau was allocated a cumulative total of $539.1 million for these

[4]According to the CT Bureau, the bureau's final structure is pending until it has been approved by State's management and incorporated into the department's Foreign Affairs Manual.

six counterterrorism-related programs, as shown in figure 2.[5] The majority of these allocations are from the Nonproliferation, Antiterrorism, Demining, and Related Programs account, which funds all six programs. Allocations from the Economic Support Fund support those Countering Violent Extremism and Counterterrorism Engagement program activities that do not involve law enforcement entities.

Figure 2: Total Allocations of Funds to the Department of State Bureau of Counterterrorism for Six Counterterrorism-Related Programs, Fiscal Years 2011 through 2014



Source: GAO analysis of Department of State data. | GAO-15-655T

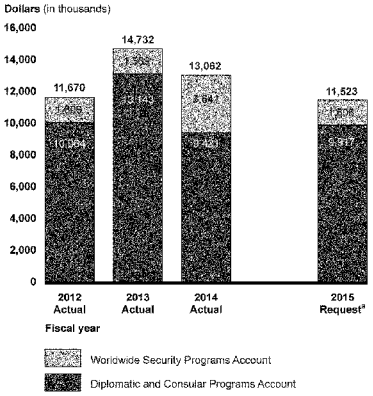
Note: The Bureau of Counterterrorism transitioned from an office to a bureau during fiscal years 2011 and 2012; therefore, allocations for these fiscal years cover the office and the bureau.

Our preliminary analysis shows that, in addition to the foreign assistance programming that the CT Bureau oversees and manages, the bureau's allocated resources include funding for the operations of the bureau. The CT Bureau receives funds from two sources to fund its core operations: the Diplomatic and Consular Programs and the Worldwide Security

[5]The CT Bureau requested $104.4 million in allocations for fiscal year 2015 for these programs. State officials were unable to provide actual allocations for fiscal year 2015 because they were still working to finalize them at the time of our review.

Programs accounts. Figure 3 shows our preliminary analysis of the bureau's total allocations for its overall operations since fiscal year 2012. These allocations increased from $11.7 million in fiscal year 2012 to $14.7 million in fiscal year 2013, as the bureau was being established. The allocations then decreased to $13.1 million in fiscal year 2014.

Figure 3: Funds Allocated for Department of State Bureau of Counterterrorism Operations Budget, Fiscal Years 2012 to 2014, and Allocations Requested for Fiscal Year 2015



Source: GAO analysis of Department of State data. | GAO-15-655T

Notes: The Bureau of Counterterrorism was established in the second quarter of fiscal year 2012; some of the funding shown for fiscal year 2012 covered the predecessor of the bureau, the Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism.

[a]According to the Bureau of Counterterrorism, the bureau has been using allocated funds from fiscal year 2014 until it receives approval within the Department of State for its fiscal year 2015 request.

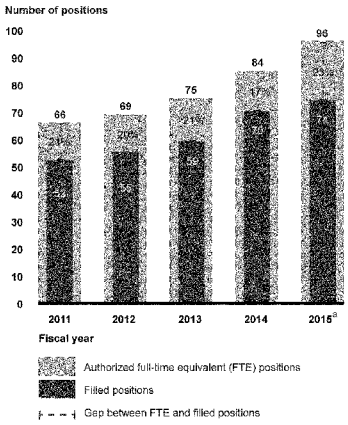
CT Bureau's Authorized Staffing Has Increased since Fiscal Year 2011; Recent Efforts Have Been Made to Reduce Staffing Gap

Our preliminary analysis indicates that the CT Bureau's number of authorized full-time equivalent (FTE) positions has grown annually, and the bureau has recently undertaken efforts to reduce a persistent staffing gap. The bureau's number of FTEs grew from 66 in fiscal year 2011 to 96 in fiscal year 2015, which is an increase of more than 45 percent.[6] Figure 4 shows the number of FTEs within the bureau for fiscal years 2011 to 2015, along with the number of positions that were filled. While the bureau's current authorized level of FTEs for fiscal year 2015 is 96 positions, it had 22 vacancies as of October 31, 2014.[7] Our preliminary analysis also shows that the percentage of vacancies in FTE positions in the bureau has ranged from 17 percent to 23 percent in fiscal years 2011 to 2015. According to the CT Bureau, these vacancies have included both staff-level and management positions. As of the end of May 2015, the number of FTE vacancies in the bureau had been reduced to 10 positions, most of which are in the Office of Programs, according to the CT Bureau.

[6]A position is the specified set of all duties and responsibilities currently assigned or delegated by competent authority and requiring full-time, part-time, or intermittent employment of one person. FTE positions include both civil service employees and Foreign Service Officers. Since 2013, the first full fiscal year that the CT Bureau was in operation, the total staff of the bureau has decreased from around 174 to 165, according to our preliminary analysis. The CT bureau's overall staff numbers include FTE positions and other positions such as detailees and contractors, both of which have decreased since fiscal year 2013. The non-FTE positions in the bureau include contractors, interns, fellows, detailees, and "When Actually Employed," the designation applied to retired State employees rehired under temporary part-time appointments.

[7]A vacancy is a position that an agency has allocated funds to pay for but that is currently not filled by an employee.

Figure 4: Department of State Bureau of Counterterrorism Authorized Full-Time Equivalent Positions and Filled Positions, Fiscal Years 2011 to 2015



Source: GAO analysis of Department of State data. | GAO-15-655T

Notes: Data are as of October 31 in the fiscal year represented. The Bureau of Counterterrorism was established in the second quarter of fiscal year 2012; the positions shown for fiscal years 2011 and 2012 were for the predecessor of the bureau, the Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism.

[a]As of the end of May 2015, the number of vacancies in the Bureau of Counterterrorism had been reduced to 10 positions, according to the bureau.

According to State, to meet the personnel requirements associated with standing up the CT Bureau, the bureau received an authorized increase of up to 31 positions covering fiscal year 2012 to fiscal year 2014. According to the CT Bureau, some of these positions were initially filled within the first 6 months after the bureau was established. Filling the remaining positions was postponed until the current Coordinator for Counterterrorism had time to assess the bureau's needs and priorities, according to the CT Bureau. When the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, following the strategic review, deemed that more staff might be needed in newly created units, some of the authorized positions were used for that purpose. For example, one position was used to fill a management-level

position in the Office of Strategy, Plans, and Initiatives, according to CT Bureau officials.

According to CT Bureau officials, the bureau continues to look at its resource needs. As part of its resource request planning process for fiscal year 2017, the bureau's Executive Director reached out to all CT Bureau office directors to ask if their current staffing was sufficient, according to the CT Bureau. These staffing requests were entered into the bureau's annual planning and budgeting documents. We are continuing to analyze data on staffing gaps in the CT Bureau and expect to provide additional information in our final report. We will also continue to monitor the CT Bureau's workforce planning efforts.

CT Bureau Has Assessed Its Performance but Has Not Defined Time Frames for Addressing Evaluation Recommendations

The CT Bureau utilized various means to assess its performance in fiscal years 2011 through 2014, including performance assessments and program evaluations. Our preliminary analysis indicates that the CT Bureau assessed its progress toward its foreign assistance-related goals but has not established time frames for addressing recommendations from program evaluations.

Our preliminary analysis shows that the CT Bureau assessed its progress toward achieving its foreign assistance-related goals in fiscal years 2012 and 2013, as required by State policy.[8] That policy requires bureaus to respond to an annual department-wide data call for foreign assistance-related performance information. Specifically, bureaus must identify indicators and targets for their foreign assistance-related goals, as defined in their multiyear strategic plans, and report results achieved toward each indicator for the prior fiscal year.[9] As shown in table 1, the CT Bureau identified four foreign assistance-related goals in its first multiyear strategic plan and established quantitative indicators and

[8]To establish a baseline, we analyzed the fiscal year 2011 performance report for the CT Office. We analyzed information in the CT Bureau's performance reports for fiscal years 2012 and 2013. Department of State, Office of U.S. Foreign Assistance Resources, *Guidance for Performance Plan and Report* (2012, 2013). The bureau's fiscal year 2014 performance report was not available at the time of our review.

[9]The multiyear strategic plan is a 3-year strategy that defines priority goals for the bureau. Those goals serve as the framework and basis for the annual performance reports from bureaus.

corresponding targets for each of those goals.[10] It also reported results achieved for each indicator.[11]

Table 1: Department of State Bureau of Counterterrorism Performance Information for Foreign Assistance-Related Goals, Fiscal Years 2011 through 2013

Performance indicator[a]	FY 2011 Target	FY 2011 Result	FY 2012 Target	FY 2012 Result	FY 2013 Target	FY 2013 Result
Goal #1: Counter violent extremism						
Number of students trained in activities, tools, and techniques related to Countering Violent Extremism	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA[b]	●
Number of Countering Violent Extremism programs directly related to U.S. government objectives implemented in-country by civil society and partner governments	NA	NA	●	●	●	●
Goal #2: Disrupt terrorist networks, including sponsorship, financial support, travel, and sanctuary[c]						
Number of students trained in counterterrorism finance by U.S. government programs	NA[b]	●	●	●	●	●
Goal #3: Enhance host country civilian capacity and performance to deter, disrupt, and apprehend terrorists Goal #4: Strengthen multilateral and regional mechanisms[d]						
Number of students trained in antiterrorism topics and skills through the Antiterrorism Assistance program	NA	NA	NA[b]	●	●	●
Number of Counterterrorism Engagement-funded multilateral training and capacity-building activities conducted by multilateral organizations that promote effective counterterrorism policies and programs	NA[b]	●	●	●	●	●
Number of U.S. government-assisted assessments on terrorism	●	●	●	●	●	NA[e]

FY = fiscal year

NA = indicator not applicable to fiscal year, so no target or result reported

● = target or result reported

Source: GAO analysis of Department of State documents. | GAO-15-655T.

Notes: We analyzed information in the Bureau of Counterterrorism's performance reports for fiscal years 2012 and 2013. The fiscal year 2014 performance report was not available at the time of our review. We also analyzed the fiscal year 2011 performance report for the Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism to establish a baseline to show what changes, if any, the Bureau of Counterterrorism had made with regard to its performance reporting efforts since being elevated from an office to a bureau in fiscal year 2012.

[a]In addition to the indicators identified in the table, the bureau was also tracking the number of publicly reported terrorism incidents in a given year worldwide as a "proxy" indicator to inform strategic planning.

[10]The CT Bureau's first multiyear strategic plan became effective with its submission to the Office of U.S. Foreign Assistance Resources in April 2012. In January 2015, the CT Bureau submitted its second multiyear strategic plan, which superseded the first.

[11]We plan to provide the numerical data for these targets and results in our final report.

[b]Although no target was set for the fiscal year, a result was reported. This is consistent with Department of State policy stating that bureaus are not required to set a target for the first fiscal year when an indicator is introduced but that a result can still be reported.

[c]For this goal, the bureau was also tracking three indicators related to the Terrorist Interdiction Program. These indicators are not presented in the table because the bureau determined them to be sensitive but unclassified information.

[d]These goals are presented together because the bureau established the same indicators for both.

[e]No result was reported because the indicator was discontinued in fiscal year 2013. It was discontinued because the bureau concluded that the number of assessments conducted is not a contributing factor to, and does not establish a measure of, the success of a program.

In addition to having assessed its progress toward achieving its foreign assistance-related goals, our preliminary analysis shows that since being elevated to a bureau in fiscal year 2012, the CT Bureau has completed four evaluations of counterterrorism-related programs it oversees. The number of completed evaluations meets the number of evaluations required by State's February 2012 evaluation policy.[12] As shown in table 2, the CT Bureau completed these evaluations during fiscal years 2013 and 2014 and focused primarily on evaluating programs providing training courses to law enforcement officials of partner nations, such as the Antiterrorism Assistance program in Morocco and Bangladesh. CT Bureau officials noted that, when deciding what programs to evaluate, the bureau took into consideration whether the evaluation would inform the priority programming and objectives of the bureau and produce results the bureau could use in future programming decisions and evaluation designs. To date, the CT Bureau has not evaluated the CVE program, which has been identified as a priority goal for the bureau.[13]

[12]Department of State, *Program Evaluation Policy* (Feb. 23, 2012). State's February 2012 evaluation policy required bureaus to complete two to four program evaluations over the 24-month period that began in fiscal year 2012. State modified its evaluation policy in January 2015 to require bureaus to complete at least one evaluation per fiscal year.

[13]As of May 2015, the CT Bureau was still working to finalize its program evaluation plans for 2015. We plan to provide this information in the final report.

Table 2: Department of State Bureau of Counterterrorism Program Evaluations Completed, Fiscal Years 2013 and 2014

Program evaluated	Program description	Evaluation date
Antiterrorism Assistance program in Morocco	Provided training courses to Moroccan law enforcement officials on, for example, cyber forensic and cyber security.	August 2013
Antiterrorism Assistance program in Bangladesh	Provided training courses to Bangladeshi law enforcement officials on, for example, critical incident response, border security, and investigative competence.	October 2013
Resident Legal Advisor and Intermittent Legal Advisor program	Placed advisors in 13 geographic areas to build partner nation investigative, prosecutorial, and judicial capacity in anti-money laundering and counterterrorism finance.	December 2013
Regional Strategic Initiative program in Algeria	Provided training courses and technical assistance to the Algerian Gendarmerie Nationale on, for example, forensics, criminal investigations, and border security.	September 2014

Source: GAO analysis of Department of State documents. | GAO-15-655T.

Our preliminary analysis indicates that the CT Bureau has not established time frames for addressing recommendations from program evaluations. The four program evaluations the CT Bureau completed during fiscal years 2013 and 2014 resulted in 60 recommendations; however, according to bureau officials, the bureau does not have a system for assigning time frames for the implementation of recommendations. The officials said program officers are assigned responsibility for following up on recommendations that impact their portfolio; however, the bureau does not have any policy or other guidance outlining the timing for addressing recommendations from evaluations. In response to questions during the course of our review, CT Bureau officials developed action plans to describe the status of efforts to address the 60 recommendations.[14] On the basis of our review of these action plans, the CT Bureau reported having implemented about half of the recommendations (28 of 60) made

[14]At the onset of our review, the CT Bureau did not have a way to track the status of recommendations from evaluations. CT Bureau officials said our review prompted internal discussions within the bureau about creating a spreadsheet to track the status of recommendations. CT Bureau officials subsequently developed these action plans.

in the evaluations, as of April 2015. The bureau had put on hold or decided not to implement 4 recommendations; the remaining 28 were still being considered or were in the process of being implemented, or the bureau had made a commitment to implement them.

While the action plans are a positive first step to help the bureau monitor and track its progress in implementing recommendations, they do not address the need for the bureau to establish time frames for addressing recommendations from evaluations. Without specific time frames for completing actions in response to recommendations from evaluations, it may be difficult for the bureau to ensure that needed programmatic improvements are made in a timely manner or to hold its implementing partners accountable for doing so.

CT Bureau Collaboration on CVE and CTF Programs Is Generally Consistent with Key Practices

Our preliminary analysis shows that activities between the CT Bureau and other bureaus within State as well as with other U.S. government agencies on counterterrorism programs, specifically the Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) and Counterterrorism Finance (CTF) programs, were generally consistent with key practices that GAO has identified for interagency collaboration in the areas of (1) outcomes and accountability, (2) bridging organizational cultures, (3) leadership, (4) clarity of roles and responsibilities, (5) resources, and (6) written guidance and agreements.[15]

- **Outcomes and accountability**.[15] According to CT Bureau officials, in coordinating on CVE and CTF, the bureau and its partners have defined intended outcomes generally as collaborating on policy and programming decisions, sharing information, and ensuring that there is no duplication of existing or planned initiatives. When working with other U.S. government agencies, the CT Bureau generally has laid out the intended outcomes of coordination efforts in interagency agreements. Our preliminary analysis showed that within State, the goals of coordination may be articulated by the CT Bureau through

[15]GAO, *Managing for Results: Key Considerations for Implementing Interagency Collaborative Mechanisms*, GAO-12-1022 (Washington, D.C.: Sept. 27, 2012). We did not review one additional key collaboration practice, which covers participants, because we did not conduct a comprehensive review across all the bureaus at State that may coordinate on CVE and CTF programs.

[16]GAO-12-1022. Having defined outcomes and mechanisms to track progress can help shape a collaborative vision and goals.

specific requests across regional or functional bureaus or messages defining and assigning specific tasks. We also identified accountability mechanisms to monitor, evaluate, and report on results or outcomes of counterterrorism programming.

- **Bridging organizational cultures.**[17] Our preliminary analysis shows that while terminology may differ when discussing CVE, within State, some regional and functional bureau officials we spoke with said that they use a common definition for CVE and apply the CVE strategy and policy that the CT Bureau has developed for CVE programming. Similarly, some officials in other U.S. government agencies told us they agree on common terms and outcomes of counterterrorism programming as ideas are discussed between the CT Bureau and the implementing agency, if the bureau funds a program or grant. Our preliminary analysis also shows that there was frequent communication among collaborating agencies, including as it relates to CVE programs. Specifically, we found that frequency of communication between the CT Bureau and other State bureaus as well as other U.S. government agencies varied depending on the project or activity and ranged from daily to monthly interactions.

- **Leadership.**[18] Our preliminary analysis shows that for CVE and to some extent CTF, officials at State and other U.S. government agencies were generally aware of the agency or individual with leadership responsibility for the particular counterterrorism program. Officials in State's regional bureaus stated that they are generally aware of when the CT Bureau would have the lead on counterterrorism issues versus the regional bureaus. In addition, officials noted that they receive relevant and timely information on CVE-related programming from the bureau. For the CTF program, our preliminary analysis indicates that there was some uncertainty among officials as to whom they should be working with on CTF programming, due to the recent reorganization of the CT Bureau.

[17]GAO-12-1022. Developing common terminology and open lines of communication among collaborating entities can help ensure that misunderstandings are prevented.

[18]GAO-12-1022. Having clear and consistent leadership can speed decision making and strengthen collaboration among agencies.

- **Clarity of roles and responsibilities.**[19] Our preliminary analysis shows that there was general clarity on the roles and responsibilities of the participants collaborating on CVE and CTF programs with the CT Bureau. For example, several State officials mentioned that for questions related to programs, such as CVE, they knew their point of contact in the CT Bureau and also what that person's portfolio encompassed.

- **Resources.**[20] Our preliminary analysis indicates that, in cases where the CT Bureau funded U.S. government agencies on CVE or CTF programming, the funding mechanism was clear and laid out in the interagency agreements. Some agency officials told us that these agreements provide a standard process for providing funding from the CT Bureau to other agencies.

- **Written guidance and agreements.**[21] Our preliminary analysis shows that many of the agencies we spoke with had formal interagency agreements with the CT Bureau on CVE- or CTF-related programming or activities. The agreements described, among other things, the service to be provided, roles and responsibilities of each party, method and frequency of performance reporting, and accounting information for funding of the service provided. We found that most of the State bureaus we spoke with that coordinate with the CT Bureau on CVE and CTF programs did not have written agreements laying out the terms of the collaboration, but several State officials said that formalized agreements were not necessary because collaboration between bureaus within State is routine and the CT Bureau has been effective in sharing information pertaining to the CVE program.

Thank you again for the opportunity to assist with the oversight of State's Bureau of Counterterrorism. Chairman Poe, Ranking Member Keating, and Members of the Subcommittee, this concludes my prepared

[19]GAO-12-1022. Discussing and documenting roles and responsibilities of collaborating participants can help with interagency decision making.

[20]GAO-12-1022. Identifying and leveraging resources can help ensure that the objectives of collaborative efforts can be accomplished.

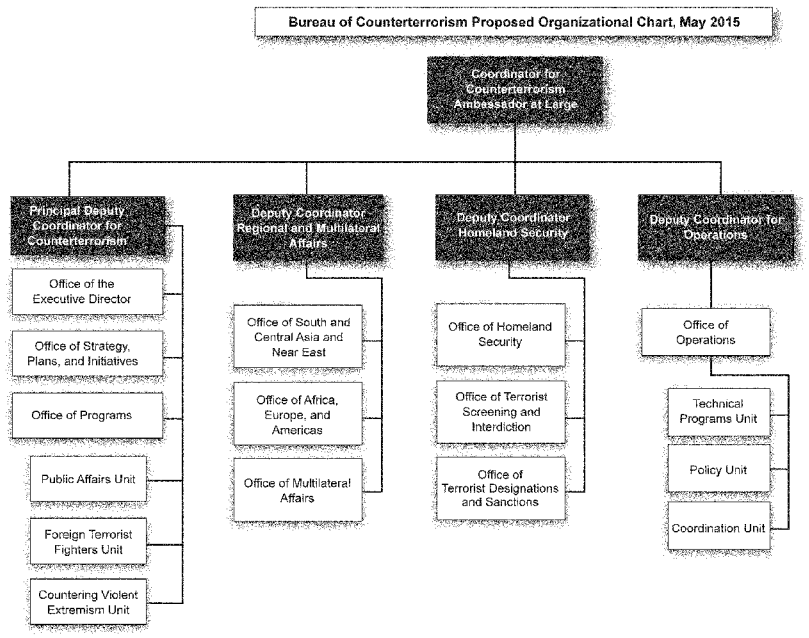
[21]GAO-12-1022. Establishing agreements can define and strengthen commitments by agencies to work collaboratively.

statement. I would be pleased to respond to any questions that you may have at this time.

GAO Contact and Staff Acknowledgments

For further information regarding this statement, please contact Charles Michael Johnson, Jr., Director, International Affairs and Trade at (202) 512-7331 or johnsoncm@gao.gov. Contact points for our Offices of Congressional Relations and Public Affairs may be found on the last page of this statement. Individuals making key contributions to this testimony included Jason Bair, Assistant Director; Andrea Riba Miller, Analyst-in Charge; and Esther Toledo. Technical support was provided by Ashley Alley, Mason Calhoun, Tina Cheng, David Dayton, Martin De Alteriis, and Sarah Veale.

Appendix I: Organizational Chart of the Department of State Bureau of Counterterrorism, as of May 2015



Source: Department of State. | GAO-15-655T

Note: According to Bureau of Counterterrorism officials, the bureau's final structure is pending until it has been approved by Department of State's management and incorporated into the department's Foreign Affairs Manual.

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Mr. POE. Thank you, Mr. Johnson, appreciate your testimony. The Chair recognizes itself for its questions. The Counterterrorism Bureau, what is it supposed to do? Explain it to the average American, which I would suspect many Americans don't even know the Bureau exists. What is it supposed to do? What is the goal of the Counterterrorism Bureau?

Mr. JOHNSON. Well, I would ground it in the overall goal being that the Bureau itself along with the State Department helps coordinate our overseas efforts to combat terrorist threats, those who may harm our foreign partners as well as the U.S., so the primary role is to provide assistance. One of the things that they emphasize is try to build our foreign partners' capacity so they can address that threat.

Mr. POE. So we give money to foreign countries to help them fight terrorism. Is that what you mean by assistance?

Mr. JOHNSON. Yes. We give assistance in terms of our technical assistance or we may provide some training to help them sort of counter violent extremism. Or, for example, a good example would be the ATA programs, the Anti-Terrorist Assistance program where we do fund training programs in some small types of equipment to allow them to sort of do investigative law enforcement activities so they can sort of determine the results of a terrorist attack or things of that nature. We are trying to build up their skill sets and capacity to address the issue or to even prevent the issue before it happens.

Mr. POE. And then the Bureau is supposed to evaluate that assistance?

Mr. JOHNSON. Absolutely. It is critical, and we have said this before in many of our reports, that State Department and particularly this Bureau undertake evaluations. The benefit of doing evaluations is that you can learn from those experiences in whether, where you put your assistance is that a best practice? Is that something that you can model in another region or another country? So definitely evaluations are critical. They should be done routinely, and you should learn lessons from those. And you should also take steps to, based on recommendations that come out of that, timely implement those recommendations.

Mr. POE. To see if we are actually helping prevent terrorism, whether the—just to give an example, hypothetical—the money, let us use money, we give to a country making sure it doesn't go into the pockets of corrupt officials but it actually is working to train somebody to make sure that they can fight terrorism. And so we want them to evaluate all of these programs that they start up.

Mr. JOHNSON. We definitely think it is critical that the State Department does evaluate these programs, and they established a policy initially in 2012 in response to some of our previous recommendations and concerns from the Congress to do so. They have updated that in 2015. They are expected to do somewhere from two to four in a 2-year window. This bureau, actually, I would compare them to other parts of the State Department, have actually done more than some of the other bureaus and offices within the State Department.

Mr. POE. So we partner with 53 countries, correct?

Mr. JOHNSON. Correct.

Mr. POE. And how many of those countries has the Bureau evaluated the program or the assistance to those countries?

Mr. JOHNSON. Well, I would highlight there were two ATA evaluations that were done.

Mr. POE. Now ATA, what does that mean?

Mr. JOHNSON. The Anti-Terrorism Assistance program where as I mentioned earlier we are providing assistance for particularly law enforcement individuals to combat terrorist threats.

Mr. POE. Now are those two assistance programs in two countries or are those two programs that are spread across the 53 countries?

Mr. JOHNSON. Well, it was not the 53. They have only done two of the 53. Algeria, I believe, is one, and I believe the other is Morocco, and Bangladesh. They haven't really done many in terms of countries.

Mr. POE. We have done two out of 53?

Mr. JOHNSON. Correct. Well, they have done four but two of them were ATA evaluations.

Mr. POE. Okay, they have done four out of the 53.

Mr. JOHNSON. Correct.

Mr. POE. So the other countries, the other 49 that we are giving some form of assistance to combat terrorism, the Bureau hasn't evaluated whether we are doing a good job with that assistance or it is not a good job.

Mr. JOHNSON. We are not aware of any evaluations since they have been a bureau.

Mr. POE. Now why haven't they done that according to your investigation?

Mr. JOHNSON. That is something we hope to address in our final product. We have looked at plans. They have had some plans underway to do evaluations, they have reset some of those plans.

One of the other things I would like to point out, given that countering violent extremism is one of the priorities, one of the things we have looked at, they have done no evaluation of the efforts to counter extremism. They have had some previous plans which they discontinued. We are hopeful that going forward once they finalize their 2015 plans that we will get a better indication and be able to provide you with that information.

Mr. POE. So the vast majority of the countries that we want to help fight terrorism overseas, we don't know what they are doing with the assistance because they haven't been evaluated.

Mr. JOHNSON. Well, they have not been evaluated——

Mr. POE. I didn't say that very tactfully, but we don't know what the assistance is doing because they haven't been evaluated. But in your study yet from the GAO, you haven't determined why they haven't done those evaluations which I agree with you are vital?

Mr. JOHNSON. Yes, and let me just distinguish a different point here, because one they have done as I said earlier, with respect to some of the particular foreign assistance efforts they have developed indicators and targets for those so they do have data. Unfortunately I can't disclose that because it is considered sensitive, but I can classify it in terms like a number of individuals trained. But independent evaluations they have only done four.

Mr. POE. Well, they did three of them in 2012 and they did one in 2013. They haven't done any in 2014 and haven't done in any 2015. Is that a fair statement?

Mr. JOHNSON. That is a fair statement.

Mr. POE. So the question still lies why haven't the evaluations been done? And the GAO is going to eventually address that and get that back to us?

Mr. JOHNSON. We will hopefully, yes, drill down deeper on that and provide that in our final report in July, to the extent that the State Department is in a position to finalize its plans.

Mr. POE. Thank you, Mr. Johnson.

Mr. JOHNSON. Sure.

Mr. POE. The Chair will yield to the ranking member, Mr. Keating from Massachusetts.

Mr. KEATING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You mentioned the GAO found preliminarily that the Counterterrorism Bureau's, quote, on coordination with the State and other Federal agencies on countering violent extremism and counterterrorism finance programs generally reflects key practices for collaboration. Could you go a little more into detail on that? Did you conclude then that the CT Bureau's coordination, for example, NCTC or Homeland Security or the Treasury Department, was generally effective?

Mr. JOHNSON. Well, we did, and there are seven key practices that you look at in terms of collaboration. It is outcomes and accountability is one of them. I will just highlight a few. Having leadership things defined, resources devoted toward the effort, clear roles and responsibilities, that is just four of the ones I am highlighting. We looked at six of the seven and we asked general questions in terms of all the partners and stakeholders that would be involved including the ODNI and others, Department of Justice, DHS. No one had any critical concerns with respect to the coordination with the Counterterrorism Bureau. Things seem to be working pretty smoothly or much better in that area.

There was a slight concern with respect to some of the efforts in terms of the working group that they had established to deal with terrorist financing. Some concerns were raised there because that group was disbanded and they are in the process of reassessing the way forward with that. So they have been doing that on an ad hoc basis which has given some folks some concerns, particularly in the——

Mr. KEATING. What was the coordination? Where was it lacking on the financing?

Mr. JOHNSON. Well, it wasn't that it was lacking. They used to have a formal mechanism that they would go about in terms of trying to sort of coordinate with the Treasury and others in terrorist financing, and that working group was put on hold or disbanded until they reassess that and decide the way forward on that. So they are doing it informally right now. We are looking forward to getting an update on the direction that they will take and provide that in our final report.

Mr. KEATING. Yes, I would be curious to see that because that is one of the critical areas that we have to key in.

Mr. JOHNSON. And I would note some of the other work we are doing particularly for this subcommittee as well, we are looking at

the efforts to coordinate on foreign terrorist organizations, the designation of them, and our results on that show that the coordination is going pretty well including with the intel community, ODNI in particular.

Mr. KEATING. I understand that the CT Bureau's own evaluation of its programs since 2012 resulted in recommendations, 60 of them I recall.

Mr. JOHNSON. Correct.

Mr. KEATING. And the Counterterrorism Bureau has implemented about half of those recommendations, 28 out of 60. What is the status of the other 32 recommendations and is the CT Bureau in the process of implementing them?

Mr. JOHNSON. Well, in terms of specific status, unfortunately, I can't discuss that. I think the next panel may be able to. We were told the information on the status is sensitive but unclassified. I would tell you in terms of numbers there are 32. Four have been put on hold and 28 are currently still open and have not been closed. But the State Department panel can probably give you more details if they are willing to share it.

Mr. KEATING. Well, okay. If you can't comment directly on what those programs are, you could perhaps help us in the fact that why you think there has been that delay in implementing them, just generically.

Mr. JOHNSON. Well, in terms of a delay, I mean, I would say in terms of, again we are talking about 60 recommendations from the evaluations that were done, the four independent evaluations. There was also, I throw out some other things. GAO has some open recommendations that we have with the State Department dealing with counterterrorism related issues that remain open.

There are also recommendations from the IG report that was done in 2012. There were 13 recommendations made. They actually have closed 10 of those 13. There are three of those still open. One in particular, as I talked about earlier, the need to coordinate on the ATA program. That is an outstanding recommendation where they were looking for the two entities that have a memorandum of understanding or agreement that has yet to be addressed.

So, I mean there are a lot recommendations that the Counterterrorism Bureau and State Department need to address. I am not sure of the rationale or the reason why there has been a delay or why they haven't done it. But best practices as we model and as we do in GAO, we update the status of all of our recommendations throughout the year, and more so we have a time frame that we expect to have them all closed and fully implemented within 4 years, if possible, and we will take action routinely to update that. That is sort of a best practice that we follow that hopefully the State Department, as it is moving forward in terms of completing evaluations and followup on recommendations, will model some of those practices.

Mr. KEATING. Great, thank you. You have already addressed the issue, the third main issue I had for you regarding full time employees and how that was done. So I thank you for doing that and I yield back.

Mr. JOHNSON. Thank you, sir.

Mr. POE. Thank the gentleman from Massachusetts. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California, Mr. Sherman.

Mr. SHERMAN. You seem to be switching from a combating violent extremism to preventing violent extremism, so instead of just hitting somebody who has already got a gun, prevent somebody from taking up a gun. A natural part of that is our broadcasting efforts. To what extent does this agency coordinate with our broadcasting, and does your report focus on the fact that our broadcasting to the Muslim world is characterized by weak content, weak language coverage, that is to say they only broadcast in some languages not others, and sometimes a weak signal?

Mr. JOHNSON. Yes, we did not specifically look at in detail that issue. We would be happy to undertake——

Mr. SHERMAN. But does the agency coordinate on that or is it off doing its thing to try to persuade people not to take up violent extremism while the broadcasting unit is off doing its thing? What is the level of coordination?

Mr. JOHNSON. Yes. It is an independent operation within the State Department. It is not coordinated with the counterterrorism unit from what I understand. I am aware that there are efforts by other agencies like the Department of Defense and others to also counter violent extremism to coordinate on the propaganda issue.

Mr. SHERMAN. So the office we created to coordinate our anti-terrorism efforts is not coordinating, or is not itself coordinating with other agencies that have similar goals?

Mr. JOHNSON. Well, again I think the panel that is going to follow can address that. I do know that they have stood up sort of a countering violent extremism unit. It is a relatively new unit and it is part of their new structure based on their strategic review.

Mr. SHERMAN. Okay. Well——

Mr. JOHNSON. And so going forward perhaps maybe that is something that that unit will focus on.

Mr. SHERMAN. To your knowledge, and I know we will talk to the next panel, how many of the employees of the agency are native speakers of Arabic or Farsi? People who grew up—do you have any idea?

Mr. JOHNSON. Congressman Sherman, I don't have that information either. Maybe——

Mr. SHERMAN. Ever meet one? To your knowledge do they have one or——

Mr. JOHNSON. On the last hearing you guys had where I understand that there were none at the time.

Mr. SHERMAN. Okay.

Mr. JOHNSON. And I don't think that has changed since then.

Mr. SHERMAN. And so let us say ISIS was trying to recruit people and they had poisoned wells. Naturally, we would be appalled by that. We would show a picture of dead Yazidi civilians. But we are judging things from our standpoint that it is wrong to poison wells and kill Yazidi civilians. Is there anybody in this agency that can look at the Qur'an and to see whether, as it outlines the proper waging of war, poisoning wells is thought to be a good thing or bad, or there is just no bother to find out whether what ISIS is doing is a violation of Islamic law?

Mr. JOHNSON. Yes, unfortunately we did not in this particular review take a deep dive on the cultural background or the language skill sets of the folks. We have done work years ago in the past on that and perhaps that is something to look at in the future.

Mr. SHERMAN. Well, I think to some at the State Department the war against Islamic extremism is just an excuse to get more money to hire more of the same kinds of people that they are comfortable hiring, doing the same thing they have always done, and then to argue that doing anything different than what they have always done would be such a clash with their own culture that we shouldn't consider it.

Mr. JOHNSON. And to that point, Congressman, I would say hopefully they will do it better going forward with the new structure that has been put in place post the strategic review. There were lessons that they can learn, the key is to follow up on those evaluations, those recommendations.

Mr. SHERMAN. But as far as we know they are not coordinating with broadcasting. As far as we know they have no native speakers of the relevant languages. And as far as we know, their meetings to discuss how to explain to potential terrorists that what ISIS and others are doing is wrong can make use of only the definitions of right or wrong one gets from a Western education and cannot explain or even notice which things ISIS is doing are violative of Sunna and Hadith and which are not. So we will fund a bureaucracy that has found an excuse for its own enlargement and will enlarge itself without changing itself. I yield back.

Mr. POE. I thank the gentleman. I appreciate your testimony, Mr. Johnson. You are excused, or you can stay if you want to.

Mr. JOHNSON. Will do.

Mr. POE. Thank you very much.

Mr. JOHNSON. Thank you.

Mr. POE. The committee is ready to proceed with its second panel. I will introduce the witness for this panel, Mr. Justin Siberell, who is the Deputy Coordinator for Regional Affairs and Programs in the Bureau of Counterterrorism at the U.S. Department of State. He joined the State Department Foreign Service in March of '93 and assumed the position in July 2012.

Mr. Siberell, you have 5 minutes for your testimony, and remember we have your testimony already filed so you may summarize your testimony in 5 minutes or less. Thank you.

STATEMENT OF MR. JUSTIN SIBERELL, DEPUTY COORDINATOR FOR REGIONAL AFFAIRS AND PROGRAMS, BUREAU OF COUNTERTERRORISM, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Mr. SIBERELL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will make brief remarks and try to keep them brief. Chairman Poe, Ranking Member Keating, distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. This hearing comes at a critical time in our counterterrorism efforts. Despite the significant blows to al-Qaeda's leadership, terrorist threats continue to emerge propelled in particular by weak and in some cases failed governance in key regions and escalating sectarian conflict globally.

We are deeply concerned about the continued evolution of the Islamic State of Iraq in the Levant, otherwise known as Daesh, not

only in Iraq and Syria, but through the emergence of self-proclaimed ISIL affiliates in Libya, Egypt, Nigeria and elsewhere. Although it remains to be seen what these affiliations really mean—whether representative of command relationships, commonality of strategic goals or merely opportunistic branding—we and our many partners in the international community remain focused on degrading and defeating ISIL.

We remain troubled by the now more than 20,000 estimated foreign terrorist fighters who have traveled to the Middle East, not only for the zeal and unique skills they provide to groups like ISIL and the Nusra Front, but for the experience they are gaining and the threat they could pose for many years to their countries of origin. Over the past year we have seen an increase in lone offender attacks to include attacks in Ottawa, Sydney, Paris, and Copenhagen.

ISIL and al-Qaeda are not the only serious threats that confront the United States and its allies. Iran remains an active state sponsor of terrorism and continues to use its Revolutionary Guard Quds Force to train and support terrorist groups engaged in terrorist acts and working to propel conflict and instability such as Lebanese Hezbollah, Hamas, and Palestinian Islamic jihad. I have submitted a longer statement as you noted, Mr. Chairman, that includes more detail on these evolving threats, and I would ask that it be included in the record at this hearing.

As we look to address these threats and to implement an effective response to the rapidly changing global terrorism environment, we must broaden our tools and build upon and expand our partnerships with key allies. President Obama has emphasized repeatedly that we need to foster strong and capable partners who can address and disrupt terrorist threats where they emerge. The United States needs partners who cannot only contribute to military operations, but also detect threats, conduct arrests, and prosecute and incarcerate terrorists and their facilitation networks. Addressing terrorism in a comprehensive fashion, utilizing civilian security as well as military intelligence capabilities within a strong rule of law framework that respects civil liberties and human rights is crucial both for ensuring the sustainability of our efforts and for preventing the rise of new forms of violent extremism.

With the Department of State's Fiscal Year 2016 budget request, Counterterrorism Bureau seeks funding to sustain our principal counterterrorism programs that form the basis of that partnership building. This funding is critical to advance our multiyear capacity building goals in key partner countries. Focus areas for these programs include building strong counterterrorism legal frameworks, improved crisis response, aviation and border security, anti-money laundering and financial investigations capabilities, and countering violent extremist messaging and recruitment.

At the same time, the Department has requested an additional $390 million in the NADR OCO account for the Counterterrorism Partnership Fund, CTPF. This would provide the Department of State with additional flexible resources to broaden our counterterrorism partnership activities. This funding would also enable us to develop coordinated capacity building efforts with the Department of Defense which received $1.3 billion in CTPF funding in Fiscal

Year 2015, thus ensuring a balanced approach. The additional resources provided by CTPF would enable us to increase our law enforcement and other civilian efforts to address foreign terrorist fighters, counter existing and prevent the emergence of new terrorist safe havens, and countering Hezbollah's worldwide activities.

Mr. Chairman, as you will recall, the Counterterrorism Bureau was established 3 years ago upon the recommendations of the 2010 Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Report. We are playing a leading role in the U.S. Government's efforts to galvanize international commitment and efforts against existing and developing terrorist threats.

The Counterterrorism Bureau has itself evolved even since its inception just a few short years ago. We have implemented a number of organizational changes over the past year to enable a more effective integration of our policy planning, diplomacy and program development. We have elevated the Bureau's policy efforts on countering terrorist financing and countering violent extremism and have invested significantly in improved monitoring and evaluation capabilities.

We believe these changes will enable us to be more strategic and effective. The terrorism challenges that we face continues to evolve at a rapid pace and we cannot predict what the landscape will look like one decade or even 1 year from now. However, we believe we can best protect the American people and America's interests over the long term by engaging in robust diplomacy, expanding partnerships, building bilateral and regional capabilities, and promoting a holistic and rule of law based approach to counterterrorism and violent extremism.

The CT Bureau has a critical central role to play in these efforts. We appreciate Congress' support as we carry out this mission, and look forward to working with you in the year ahead. Thank you again for the opportunity to be with you today and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Siberell follows:]

STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD

JUSTIN SIBERELL
PRINICIPAL DEPUTY COORDINATOR FOR COUNTERTERRORISM

THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S BUREAU OF COUNTERTERRORISM: BUDGET, PROGRAMS, AND POLICIES

HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON TERRORISM, NONPROLIFERATION, AND TRADE

June 2, 2015
2:00 p.m.

Chairman Poe, Ranking Member Keating, and Distinguished Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

This hearing comes at a critical time in our counterterrorism efforts. Despite the significant blows to al-Qa'ida's (AQ) leadership, terrorist threats are continuing to develop, enabled by weak or failed governance and sectarian conflicts around the world. We are deeply concerned about the continued evolution of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), the emergence of self-proclaimed ISIL affiliates in Libya, Egypt, Nigeria and elsewhere, and tens of thousands of foreign terrorist fighters propelling conflict in the Middle East and posing a continued threat to their home countries. And as we remain focused on these and other transnational threats, we cannot lose sight of a range of other terrorist threats, including those such as Hizballah that are driven by State actors.

The Bureau of Counterterrorism (CT) is working to promote cooperation, strengthen partnerships, and build civilian capacity around the world to address the full spectrum of terrorist threats – both those threats that exist today and those that may emerge tomorrow. We are requesting additional resources in Fiscal Year 2016 to expand and broaden our partnership efforts. As the U.S. military expands its efforts with foreign militaries, it is equally critical that we strengthen the capacity of civilian security agencies to ensure effective, whole-of-government approaches to terrorism challenges. It is also critical that we expand our

partnerships with non-governmental actors who can help counter violent extremist recruitment and messaging in key regions around the world. Lastly, with governments and non-governmental actors alike, we must do more to address the drivers that fuel the spread of violent extremism.

Let me first provide a brief overview of the evolving terrorist threats we face, which help to shape the formulation of the CT Bureau's activities and budget request.

The ongoing civil war in Syria has been a significant factor in driving worldwide terrorism events. The rate of foreign terrorist fighter travel to Syria – totaling more than 20,000 foreign terrorist fighters from more than 100 countries as of March 2015 – exceeds the number of foreign terrorist fighters who traveled to Afghanistan and Pakistan, Iraq, Yemen, or Somalia at any point in the last 20 years. Many of the foreign terrorist fighters joined ISIL, which has seized contiguous territory in western Iraq and eastern Syria. Iraqi forces and the Counter-ISIL Coalition have dealt significant blows to ISIL, but it continues to control substantial territory.

ISIL has begun to foster relationships with potential affiliates beyond Iraq and Syria. Ansar al-Shari'a in Darnah pledged allegiance to ISIL in October 2014, and Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis, operating primarily out of Egypt's Sinai Peninsula, officially declared allegiance to ISIL in November. In January, ISIL's branch in Afghanistan and Pakistan was announced. And in March, Nigeria's Boko Haram, in a video from the group, pledged allegiance to, and was promptly accepted by, ISIL. It still remains to be seen, however, the full scope of what these affiliations mean – whether they are representative of a command relationship, commonality of strategic goals, or merely opportunistic partnering.

As with many other terrorist groups worldwide, ISIL continues to brutally repress the communities under its control and use ruthless methods of violence such as beheadings and crucifixions. Uniquely, however, it demonstrates a particular skill in employing new media tools to display its brutality, both as a means to shock and terrorize, but equally to propagandize and attract new recruits. Boko Haram shares with ISIL a penchant for the use of brutal tactics, which include public beheadings, stonings, indiscriminate mass casualty attacks, and systematic oppression of women and girls, including enslavement, torture and rape.

Though AQ central leadership has been weakened, the organization continues to serve as a focal point of "inspiration" for a worldwide network of affiliated groups, including al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula – a long-standing threat to Yemen, the region, and the United States; al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb; al-Nusrah Front; and al-Shabaab.

In the last year, we have also seen a rise in "lone offender attacks" including attacks in Ottawa (October 22, 2014), Sydney (December 15-16, 2014), Paris (January 7, 2015), and Copenhagen (February 14-15, 2015). In some cases, such as the terrorist assassinations at the Paris publication Charlie Hebdo, it was difficult to assess whether attacks were directed by terrorist organizations or inspired by propaganda produced by ISIL or AQ. These attacks may presage a new era in which centralized leadership of a terrorist organization matters less; group identity is more fluid; and violent extremist narratives focus on a wider range of alleged grievances and enemies. Enhanced border security measures among Western states since 9/11 have increased the difficulty for known or suspected terrorists to travel internationally; therefore groups like AQ and ISIL encourage lone actors residing in the West to carry out attacks on their behalf.

ISIL and other terrorist groups, including al-Nusrah Front, continued to use kidnapping for ransom operations and other criminal activities to raise funds. Much of ISIL's funding, unlike that of AQ core and similar organizations, does not come from external donations but is generated internally in the areas it controls. We must remain vigilant, however, as ISIL solidifies and expands its sources of revenue. ISIL is estimated to have earned up to several million dollars per month through various extortion and criminal schemes, including through oil smuggling.

ISIL and AQ core are not the only serious threats that confront the United States and its allies. Iran continues to sponsor terrorist groups around the world, principally through its Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Qods Force (IRGC-QF). These groups include Lebanese Hizballah, several Iraqi militant groups, Hamas, and Palestine Islamic Jihad.

We are concerned about a growth of violent extremists who continue to successfully spread their corrupt ideology, recruiting, radicalizing, and mobilizing people, especially young people, to engage in terrorism.

Over recent years, the CT Bureau has played a lead role in the U.S. government's efforts to address the evolving threats and securing the counterterrorism

cooperation of international partners. The Bureau has led on a number of initiatives, including the following examples:

- **Addressing Foreign Terrorist Fighters**: The Bureau has coordinated efforts across the Department and interagency to curb the flow of foreign fighters to Iraq and Syria, and mitigate threats as some foreign terrorist fighters eventually return home. CT was engaged in the development of UN Security Council Resolution 2178, which drew unprecedented attention to the foreign fighter threat and actions that states can take to address that threat. CT was also instrumental in the development of the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) good practices on foreign fighters, which formed the basis for the resolution. Over the past year, the Bureau has led interagency delegations across Europe, North Africa, the Gulf, and Southeast Asia to raise awareness of the foreign fighter threat and press for more effective information-sharing, law enforcement, and border security measures.

- **Building Multilateral CT Coalitions**: The Bureau has played a central role in the development of the GCTF and related institutions, including the International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law (IIJ), the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF), and *Hedayah*, the international countering violent extremism center of excellence based in Abu Dhabi. Over the past year, the Bureau has also helped to stand up an international law enforcement task force against Hizballah.

- **Promoting Regional CT Law Enforcement Cooperation**: Through our Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) program, CT and the Bureau of Diplmatic Security helped to launch a new joint regional exercise for East African law enforcement officials on responding to real-life terrorism scenarios. CT also signed a Trilateral ATA Agreement with the Government of Morocco, which will build the capacity of Moroccan trainers to promote good practices and cooperation with third countries in the Sahel region.

- **Pressuring Terrorist Support Networks**: Since 2013, CT has prepared and processed over 95 new Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) designations and Executive Order 13224 listings to pressure and prosecute those who provide support to terrorist organizations. CT has also expanded the use of the Personal Identification Secure Comparison and Evaluation System (PISCES) at ports of entry around the world to identify and deter terrorist travel.

As we look to the future and seek to address the rapidly changing threat environment, we must broaden our tools and expand our partners. President Obama has emphasized that we need to foster strong, capable, and diverse partners who can help to disrupt and degrade terrorist threats where they emerge.

The vital role that our partners play has become even clearer in the last year as we have worked to counter ISIL. The United States has worked to build a strong coalition of 62 countries to counter ISIL. This coalition is reflective of the global commitment to degrade and defeat ISIL, and is not only working to assist the Iraqi government halt ISIL's advances on the ground, but also to combat the flow of foreign terrorist fighters, disrupt ISIL's financial resources, and counteract ISIL's messaging and undermine its appeal.

The United States needs partners who can not only contribute to military operations, but also conduct arrests, prosecutions, and incarceration of terrorists and their facilitation networks. Addressing terrorism in a rule of law framework, with respect for human rights, is critical both for ensuring the sustainability of our efforts and for preventing the rise of new forms of violent extremism. Multilateral organizations and other for a such as the GCTF play a critical role in promoting good practices and mobilizing technical assistance in this regard.

Similarly, just as we develop partnerships to disrupt terrorist plots and degrade terrorist capabilities, we also need partners – governmental and non-governmental – who can help counter the spread of violent extremist recruitment and address the conditions that make communities susceptible to violent extremism. We must do more to address the cycle of violent extremism and transform the very environment from which these terrorist movements emerge. And that's why we are committed to enlarging our strategy in ways that respond effectively to the underlying conditions conducive to the spread, as well as the visible symptoms of, violent extremism. This was a major theme of the White House Summit on Countering Violent Extremism (CVE), which brought together 300 participants from national and local governments, civil society, the private sector, and multilateral organizations, including leaders from more than 65 countries in February 2015. The Summit highlighted the important role that partnering with civil society plays in our counterterrorism efforts. Summit participants committed to advance a comprehensive CVE action agenda, which outlines several cross-cutting work-streams.

With our FY 2016 request, the CT Bureau seeks to expand and broaden all of these partnerships and to bolster the rule of law capabilities of our partners to respond to terrorism in an effective and sustainable fashion. Specifically, CT has requested additional foreign assistance resources to advance the U.S. government's top policy and diplomatic imperatives, such as addressing the threat of foreign fighters and countering and preventing terrorist safe havens and recruitment.

CT has implemented a number of organizational changes over the past year to enable better integration of our policy planning, diplomacy, and program development. The Office of Strategy, Plans, and Initiative enhances CT's strategic planning capacity, and we have reorganized our Office of Programs to align with our regional priorities. We have established working groups for each of the Bureau's focus regions to set clear strategic objectives and maximize our resources. We have also sought to elevate the Bureau's policy efforts on countering terrorist financing and countering violent extremism. We believe these changes will enable us to be more strategic and effective.

In our FY 2016 request, CT has requested funding to sustain our enduring programs: ATA, CT Engagement with Allies (CTE), Counterterrorism Financing (CTF), CVE, and Terrorist Interdiction Program (TIP). This funding is critical to advance our multi-year capacity-building goals with specific countries and regions. Focus areas for these programs include crisis response, aviation and border security, counterterrorism legal frameworks and prosecutions/investigations, and countering violent extremist messaging and recruitment. This funding will also enable us to continue to support innovative multilateral efforts by GCTF, GCERF, *Hedayah*, and the IIJ to promote good practices in civilian counterterrorism.

At the same time, the Department has requested an additional $390 million in the Non-proliferation Anti-terrorism, Demining, and Related Programs – Overseas Contingency Operations (NADR-OCO) account for the Counterterrorism Partnership Fund (CTPF). This would provide the Department of State with additional, flexible resources to broaden our counterterrorism partnership activities in an integrated fashion. The additional resources provided by CTPF would also enable us to expand and pursue new types of programming, such as building vetted law enforcement units, promoting fusion centers, researching local drivers of violent extremist threats, and empowering civil society and religious leaders to counter violent extremism. This funding would also enable us to develop coordinated capacity building efforts with the Department of Defense, which

received $1.3 billion in CTPF funding in FY 2015, and ensure a balanced approach with our CT partners.

The additional resources provided by CTPF would enable us to increase our law enforcement and other civilian efforts to address foreign terrorist fighters, counter and prevent terrorist safe havens, and counter Hizballah's worldwide activities. Additionally resources will enable us to deepen partnerships with governmental and non-governmental actors to counter the spread of violent extremism such as strengthening partnerships between communities and local security services, building community resilience, and providing positive alternatives to violent extremism. In particular, we see significant opportunities to ramp up our efforts in North Africa, the Sahel, the Horn of Africa, and Southeast Asia to strengthen partnerships and get ahead of evolving threats. We believe there are also significant opportunities to counter Hizballah, building on the work of the new international law enforcement task force.

CT takes very seriously the importance of managing U.S. taxpayer funding and ensuring maximal impact. Over the past year, CT has adopted a results-focused approach to program design and management aimed at improving performance, outcomes, and accountability with an overarching goal of ensuring the sustainability of our collective efforts. We have developed a set of tools and best practices to determine progress and results, and to facilitate performance-informed decision making. We continue to create monitoring plans for all of our activities and involve third party contractors for targeted evaluations to inform future programming. Evaluation recommendations have allowed us to refine and focus the programs as well as identify areas for improvement in programming. We have also developed an internal tracking Project Activity Management System that allows program managers to track detailed reports on activities, enabling constant monitoring.

The terrorism challenges that we face continue to evolve at a rapid pace, and we cannot predict what the landscape will look like one decade or even one year from now. However, we believe we can best protect America's interests and people over the long run by engaging in robust diplomacy, expanding our partnerships, building bilateral and regional capabilities, and promoting holistic and rule of law-based approaches to counter terrorism and violent extremism. The CT Bureau has a critical, central role to play in these efforts. With the support of Congress, we will continue to take steps to be more strategic, effective, and sustainable. We

appreciate Congress' support in this regard and look forward to working with you in the year ahead.

Mr. POE. Thank you for your testimony. The Chair recognizes itself for its questions. Let me try to be succinct here. I agree with you, terrorism is a bad situation that is taking place in the world and it is increasing. There are more terrorists than there used to be, they are doing worse things, they are hurting more people and the Counterterrorism Bureau is supposed to fight that. And you have asked for a budget increase of several million dollars. One concern I have is the staffing levels of previous budgets, the Bureau is not staffed completely. Why aren't you staffing with the money you have already got and you are asking for more money—I am going to give you all of the questions and then you can answer them. But you are asking for money for more purposes.

The terrorists are doing an excellent job of doing what they do. One way is by their use of social media. They raise money on social media, they raise recruits on social media, and they use it for propaganda purposes, all social media. What are we doing to combat that issue specifically? Because social media, I mean, they know how to use it, and some of it is unlawful but they are still doing it.

And the other question is, be more specific. What are we doing to counter terrorism? Not, we have more resources or we are helping agencies. What are we doing? Give me some examples of specific things we have done with those 53 countries that have helped stop terrorism. So you can take those questions and go wherever you want to.

Mr. SIBERELL. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I will do my best to get through each of those. On the first part of your question with regard to our budget request, and you have just heard from your GAO colleagues on their report about Bureau staffing, I would say that we have had a conversation with them about their estimate of our vacancies and we have continued to staff up. The Bureau was established just a few years ago. We were provided additional positions to build out administrative capabilities to function as a bureau different from where we were as an office prior to that time.

So there has been a scaling up of personnel in the Bureau, and I think we have kept pace with the addition of those resources on an annual basis. The current number of vacancies is 11 in the Bureau, 10 of those are under either hiring and/or interviewing. And most of those are related to some of the reorganizations we have been making that I referred to specifically with regard to aligning our programmatic efforts along a regional basis in line with our policy objectives.

So I separate that out from the request you have made with regard to our programs and getting into your question about what are we doing, some specific things that we are engaged in, I will give you one example. The CT Bureau has led the U.S. Government's efforts not only on behalf of the Department of State but even within the interagency on pulling together a strong coalition of countries to address this issue of the foreign terrorist fighter phenomenon.

And this is a global phenomenon. We have 90 countries that have contributed foreign fighters to the conflict in Syria and Iraq. And we have led interagency delegations to countries across West-

ern Europe, to the Balkans, to North Africa, to the Gulf States, and engaged in comprehensive diplomacy to push those governments to undertake stronger legislative steps to initiate prosecutions and investigations. We have funded the work of our colleagues at DHS and DOJ to provide assistance in the building of prosecutions. We have expanded our watch listing and information sharing, again along with our partners in the interagency. And those steps have made a real——

Mr. POE. Excuse me, let me just interrupt you right there. How many prosecutions have there been based upon your agency's involvement and with assistance?

Mr. SIBERELL. Sir, I would be happy to get you that number.

Mr. POE. You don't know?

Mr. SIBERELL. I don't have the—we have absolutely had prosecutions in Albania as a result of our direct cooperation between the Department of Justice and the Albanian authorities. And there are other examples of facilitation networks having been prosecuted and disrupted as a result of our specific assistance in——

Mr. POE. So you will furnish the subcommittee the list of prosecutions?

Mr. SIBERELL. Yes, happy to do that.

Mr. POE. Follow-up question while you are finishing up. But you haven't evaluated this assistance that you are doing?

Mr. SIBERELL. No, I think we evaluate and we certainly monitor all of our programs on an ongoing basis. I mean it is very important to us that any program that we implement is effective. It is very difficult work to build the capacity of partners particularly in the counterterrorism field, so we take very seriously our responsibility to ensure that our programs are effective. And we have ongoing monitoring in addition to more extraordinary evaluations that we do through outside third parties to ensure that our programs are effective.

Mr. POE. The Chair is out of time. I am still concerned about the evaluations. According to the GAO you all are not evaluating. You say you are. I guess we will just wait for the final report. I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts, the ranking member.

Mr. KEATING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Not long ago the full committee had a hearing on women in counterterrorism, how they can better be utilized, mothers, and others there. Any of the programs you are involved with involve women in those capacities? And how effective are they, if you are?

Mr. SIBERELL. Women have a vital role to play in our counterterrorism effort principally through our countering violent extremism programs. We have sought to build a networks of women who are helpful in a couple of different ways, and one in particular is in the identification of radicalization at the community and local level.

And so we have engaged in work in Nigeria and in Kenya to help build networks of women who have the tools. They are often involved in the community already, have roles in leadership in their local communities, and are given the tools and the training to identify the signs of radicalization.

Mr. KEATING. I would be curious if you could follow up with any written material and how they are proceeding as well.

Mr. SIBERELL. Certainly.

Mr. KEATING. On the financing side I am having difficulty trying to get a handle on the scope of terrorist financing through so-called conflict antiquities, stolen antiquities and artifacts and religious artifacts from other countries, particularly Iraq and Syria. I know in one site there is an estimated, one site alone of $37 million that was raised that way. Do you have any estimates what that is in scope and anything you are doing about that?

Mr. SIBERELL. Well, it is significant and I can try to get you an answer on our estimates of the scope of the total amount of funds, for instance, that ISIL has raised through its illegal and criminal sale of antiquities, looted antiquities. They have simultaneously, as you well know, on the one hand engaged in destruction of priceless antiquities, and also engaged in the criminal networks that sell those priceless antiquities on black markets in order to raise funding. So they are playing both sides of that game.

Mr. KEATING. That would be helpful.

Mr. SIBERELL. Yes.

Mr. KEATING. And the chairman of Homeland Security and myself have a bill to deal with tightening up homeland security on that, so that information would be helpful as well.

Mr. SIBERELL. If I could just add that today in Paris, Under Secretary Stengel, who is with the delegation as part of the Counter-ISIL Coalition meeting, is doing an event drawing attention to this issue, the threat to areas of cultural significance. Of course ISIL having overrun Palmyra recently brings us into very clear focus, so it is something we are paying close attention to.

Mr. KEATING. Yes, just a couple of weeks ago I came back from Istanbul and toured the airport there and saw 40 million people, 40 million trips in that airport alone. And we know that that is a major pathway for foreign fighters into Syria and an important transit point for looted antiquities and smuggling as well. What can we do more, from your perspective, I asked them, what can we do more to help with Turkey becoming more engaged and involved in helping to stop this?

Mr. SIBERELL. Well, the Turks are absolutely vital to our efforts to detain, degrade and defeat ISIL. They are the through-point, as you noted, for people traveling to that region. They are, of course, the through-point and have been for some time of the smuggled oil, et cetera. We work very closely with our Turkish partners to try to cut off those routes. Of course many of them are related to decades old or even ancient smuggling networks that are themselves already well established criminal networks.

So it is working with the Turks to provide them information that we have to enable them to take——

Mr. KEATING. Are they utilizing that information? I frankly didn't see a great deal of implementation.

Mr. SIBERELL. Well, I can talk a little bit about the efforts the Turks have made in disrupting the foreign fighter flow. This has been a very high priority for us and we have worked to improve the coordination between Turkey and other partners, some of the source and transit countries, and particularly European countries, and that has resulted in a number of people being arrested, stopped and turned around. Of course we still know that people do slip through there and pass through, and there have been some

very high profile cases through Turkey. But Turkey remains a key partner and one we have to work with closely on all of these issues.

If I could just address one thing, sir. One other issue I didn't get to was on the women in counterterrorism. Women are often the victims of terrorist crimes. And we work with a number of groups globally to give capacity to victims' organizations to give them the tools and the capability to speak out about the crimes they have suffered. Women provide very effective voices against terrorism in that regard.

Mr. KEATING. Thank you. I yield back.

Mr. ISSA [presiding]. Thank you. We now go to my friend and gentleman from California, Mr. Sherman, for his questions.

Mr. SHERMAN. The chair earlier was talking about the terrorist use of social media. Does your bureau identify postings on social media that are from the terrorists or helpful to the terrorists, and do you ask Twitter, Facebook, et cetera, to take down those postings?

Mr. SIBERELL. We work very closely with the Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications, which has an entire staff devoted to identifying postings by terrorists in specific forums, and then more broadly on open forums and pushing back against——

Mr. SHERMAN. Which social media have been better or worse at acting to take down terrorist postings?

Mr. SIBERELL. Yes. I think we have found an increased level of cooperation generally speaking among the companies.

Mr. SHERMAN. It is time to name names.

Mr. SIBERELL. Well, we have——

Mr. SHERMAN. Okay, is Facebook better or is Twitter better?

Mr. SIBERELL. I think all of the companies have been attuned to the——

Mr. SHERMAN. Are you going to answer the question or are you going to dodge it?

Mr. SIBERELL. It is hard for me to compare one over the other. There has been certainly an increase in cooperation.

Mr. SHERMAN. Let us—Facebook has had a much stronger policy than Twitter that I don't know whether you didn't say that because you don't want to name names or because you are just not as closely related to this effort. Let me shift to something else. Your bureau has how many employees?

Mr. SIBERELL. We have currently all employees all told we have a little over 120.

Mr. SHERMAN. Okay. How many of them are native speakers of Arabic and Farsi and grew up in an Arabic or Farsi culture?

Mr. SIBERELL. I don't have that offhand. We do have Arabic speakers in our bureau.

Mr. SHERMAN. Yes, you have people that have got a bunch of Ivy League degrees and learned Arabic out of a book. That is not what I asked. To your knowledge you don't have any native speakers of those languages who have the culture in their bones?

Mr. SIBERELL. I think we do.

Mr. SHERMAN. You think you do?

Mr. SIBERELL. Yes.

Mr. SHERMAN. Is it Farsi? Arabic? You want to, you think? You don't know? Did you actually try to hire anybody who has that as a background or it is just pure serendipity?

Mr. SIBERELL. We have a number of employees who do have cultural backgrounds that have the spoken——

Mr. SHERMAN. Okay, by serendipity you happened to hire somebody who may or may not be a native speaker. Is there any—oh, let us say—and I hope you were listening to the prior panel. You are faced with the circumstance where ISIS is poisoning wells and you want to be able to know, I hope you would care to know, whether that is forbidden or allowed in warfare by Islamic law. Is there anybody on your staff or any employee of the U.S. Government that you could call for that answer?

Mr. SIBERELL. We do have employees in the Department of State who are familiar with religious texts. We have an office of outreach to religious communities.

Mr. SHERMAN. But I mean, are these people that have really memorized the Qur'an, people who can tell you the difference between the Shiite and Sunni Hadith, or are these people hired for their media skills who have maybe a passing knowledge?

Mr. SIBERELL. Well, there are many people in the Department of State who have strong knowledge of the Qur'an, of the religious text of the Hadith. There may even be——

Mr. SHERMAN. They just happen to know. I mean, look, obviously there could be somebody in our Embassy in Liechtenstein who just happens to be a practicing Muslim and knowledgeable about his own faith. But who would you call for that information?

Mr. SIBERELL. I think what we have found is that the most effective voices in——

Mr. SHERMAN. I didn't ask who was the voice. Before you ask a voice to speak out, before you know to go to the Islamic voices and saying please issue a fatwa against what is going on, you have to know which of the activities of ISIS are at least arguably violative of Islamic jurisprudence. So who do you go to for that?

Mr. SIBERELL. Well, I think, we work with partners to address——

Mr. SHERMAN. In other words you don't have anybody that you can name or any office you can name. Is there a single person paid by the U.S. Government who is hired because of their expertise in the battle we are fighting which is a battle over the nature of Islam?

Mr. SIBERELL. I think there are many people who have expertise in Syria that are employed by the U.S. Government, and many at——

Mr. SHERMAN. Who would you call?

Mr. SIBERELL. Sorry?

Mr. SHERMAN. You are on the front line. Who would you call? You think there are many people, but is there anybody you would call?

Mr. SIBERELL. We have——

Mr. SHERMAN. You think you would find somebody but you don't know who it would be.

Mr. SIBERELL. I think, sir, we have resources available to us that include——

Mr. SHERMAN. Okay. Others have sat there and testified that there is not a single person. You are trying to say that there is but you don't know who it is, which seems to be confirming——

Mr. SIBERELL. Well, there is not a job description or a board of Islamic scholars.

Mr. SHERMAN. Okay. If you wanted to call somebody who had expertise in international jurisprudence you have a whole office. If you wanted to call somebody who had expertise in trade law you have a whole office and you know who to call. It would take you a minute to figure out exactly whether to call Jack or to call Martha.

But when it comes to whether or not, for example, poisoning wells is violative of Islam you have no idea who to call. There is nobody who has been hired because they know the answer to that question. And I know there are practicing Muslims who work at the State Department who may on, again it may be somebody in the Liechtenstein Embassy but nobody whose job it is to answer that question. And I yield back.

Mr. ISSA. I would like to follow up on the gentleman's question briefly. There are, what, more like 1,000 people that work both here and abroad in the Near East section of the State Department?

Mr. SIBERELL. Perhaps.

Mr. ISSA. There are people with tremendous language skills. But let us talk about if you have a cultural question, if you want to understand how you combat terrorism by winning over the hearts and the minds what is your structure for reaching out both within the broad State Department and what your structure would be for reaching within civil society here and abroad?

Mr. SIBERELL. Well, we have very strong relationships with civil society organizations in the United States.

Mr. ISSA. And go ahead and name a couple just anecdotally as you go by.

Mr. SIBERELL. Well, we have, and I will give you an example of where we have worked with Islamic scholars including and through our public affairs sections at our Embassies abroad. We have engaged with partners including the United Arab Emirates Government recently to help to establish a new messaging center that will counter message against the perversions that ISIL has committed and is——

Mr. ISSA. Using both scholars and imams and the like?

Mr. SIBERELL. Yes. Yes.

Mr. ISSA. But back to the gentleman's question, because I think Mr. Sherman deserves a full answer. You do have to, at times, reach well outside this 120 or so employees to find people who have the technical expertise to know whether there is a problem and whether you can relate a solution that is going to resonate in a particular area of the Islamic world; is that correct?

Mr. SIBERELL. Yes.

Mr. ISSA. And that process you mentioned overseas. But would you touch base a little bit with the Muslim community and the community of scholars that exists in the United States? Where are some of the resources that—I don't want you to embarrass anyone. I don't want you to unfairly recognize anyone, but where are some of the places you generally go within the structure to find people

that have native speakers, as Mr. Sherman said, and people who have real understanding of what people on the ground think?

Mr. SIBERELL. Well, first, if I could describe, we have an effort under the Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications which is a staff of people committed to identifying terrorist use of Internet and then counter messaging to include messages that challenge ISIS and al-Qaeda's religious interpretations. And that staff is also an interagency staff that is linked into our intelligence community and other scholars and has expertise available to it.

We have, of course, outreach through our office of religious affairs, and outreach communications ongoing with a number of Islamic as well as other religious community organizations throughout the United States. That has been a priority of Secretary Kerry in particular to expand this effort. And I could speak to them about who some of their lead relationships are with and provide that to you.

Mr. ISSA. I would appreciate that. I guess, let me ask a broader question for a moment. Having traveled in the region for many, many years, one of the worst things you can do is be seen as a puppet of the CIA, a puppet of the United States Government. How do you engage communities particularly outside the U.S. to give their views without their views being directly, and in this case I hope unfairly, written as our views rather than their independent views particularly as to the meaning of the Qur'an?

Mr. SIBERELL. That is a very important question and how we build relationships with credible voices abroad is absolutely vital work. It is sometimes very difficult. The truth of the matter is that some of those that we consider to be credible voices, those who we are seeking to win the hearts and minds of, in other words those who have the potential to be radicalized, the vulnerable, often not particularly well educated or exposed broadly and culturally, might not consider those voices as credible as we have evaluated them to be. So this is a difficult one.

We often also see that some of those who have influence with these vulnerable populations, particularly youth, are people who espouse ideas and values, frankly, that we could not associate ourselves with. But they do stop short of advocating terrorism or violence against civilians.

Mr. ISSA. And let me just put words in your mouth for a moment, because it might not be something you would say but as a member maybe I am freer to say it. You often find yourself with people who talk ill of the Zionists, who talk ill of Israel or maybe even of Christians, while at the same time they are willing to disavow the extremism and the tactics. Is that paraphrasing what you might say?

Mr. SIBERELL. Well, those would be examples and I would say there would be others. I mean there would be views that are antidemocratic. There are views that sideline the role of women in society. There are any number of views that——

Mr. ISSA. There is a long list, isn't there?

Mr. SIBERELL. Yes, it is.

Mr. ISSA. And I am going to close with this quick question. You don't get to pick people because they meet all of America's standards, just the opposite. You have to pick and choose people on perhaps as few as one issue, the issue of violence and terrorism, leav-

ing aside that we may disagree on a host of other values between our two countries.

Mr. SIBERELL. That is unfortunately often the case, yes.

Mr. ISSA. Thank you. And it is now my pleasure to recognize the gentle lady from Illinois, Ms. Kelly.

Ms. KELLY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. All of us here know that we live in a very dynamic and challenging times with respect to global security. From Benghazi to Boston we have been tragically reminded of that truth. As such, our diplomatic efforts, defense systems and intelligence capabilities must be as vibrant as the security threats that we face.

As a representative of a major American city, Chicago, that bad actors and terrorists often seek to target, I know the importance of counterterrorism and maintaining a secure homeland. Our best counterterrorism cooperation results in the gathering and sharing of intelligence and our ability to swiftly and effectively arrest, thwart and prosecute terrorists.

My question is what role, if any, does counterterrorism have with respect to engaging foreign countries and groups suspected of attempting to illegally access U.S. Government and private sector computer systems for purposes of intelligence or economic espionage?

Mr. SIBERELL. Thank you very much for the question. This is an emerging threat we face, related to cyber terrorism groups that systematically seek to undermine and penetrate the U.S. Government's computer systems in an effort to develop a greater understanding and intelligence on our own vulnerabilities, and this is an area that we are working very closely with our partners in the interagency to defend ourselves against and ensure we have robust systems in place.

I would also say, however, that the terrorist groups are also using publicly available information as we know. Researching, for instance, the protection and security around infrastructure in the United States, and what I am getting at is not only are the government systems vulnerable, but other systems and available information can be exploited by terrorist groups.

And this is why it is so important that we protect ourselves in particular against this lone wolf phenomenon, which we are seeing more and more of, where some of these groups have more difficulty sending operatives to the United States or to Western Europe because of enhanced border security measures that have been put in place since 9/11, but what they do therefore is they seek out those who are already here to conduct attacks.

And so there is an active effort underway by a number of these groups we know to radicalize and to encourage attacks among individuals in this country, and so we need to be very careful to protect ourselves against that vulnerability. And our colleagues in the domestic law enforcement and homeland security community are seized with particular vulnerability.

Ms. KELLY. Do you feel you have enough resources to do your job?

Mr. SIBERELL. Well, as part of our budget request we have requested an increase for some of our partnering activities. This gets at building the capacity of partners to address the threats that

they face in their own region, neighborhood, and country. And this is very difficult work. It does require a lot of resources. We think we could use more resources, we could scale up some of that partnering activity.

This, for instance, as an example, we have a very dire situation in Libya which is emerging more and more as a safe haven for terrorist activity. We have a very close partner right next door, Tunisia, which is a country struggling to move forward in a positive and progressive and democratic way. They need our help to build up their capacities. Not only their military and intelligence capacities but their civilian law enforcement capacities, their ability to strengthen their own legislation. They need guidance on how to do that. They need help with investigations and in forensics and applying the whole of government approach to counterterrorism that we have taken. So that is one small example where we would seek to increase our assistance to a particular partner who needs our help at this moment.

Ms. KELLY. Okay. Thank you very much.

Mr. SIBERELL. Thank you.

Ms. KELLY. I yield back my time.

Mr. ISSA. Thank you. And I am going to close, but I want to very quickly just run through a couple of things that were on the committee's ask, and I think it is an open-ended question so hopefully you are ready for it. The majority of the $300 million going to Counterterrorism Partnership Fund as of right now are unspent, or at least not fully committed. Can you give us some specifics of the process for your decision making and some of the areas you expect those funds to be disbursed into?

Mr. SIBERELL. Sure. Thank you very much for the opportunity to lay that out and to be clear that we are requesting this $390 million in Fiscal Year 2016 funds. The State Department has not received funds under the CTPF previously, Fiscal Year 2015 included. The DoD did receive a $1.3 billion appropriation for CT partnership, the State Department did not.

So we are seeking for '16, the $390 million, and we have broken that down——

Mr. ISSA. Okay, and they may be talking about the earlier money but they parenthesized the 390. So why don't you answer both sides, the DoD and how some of that is going, briefly, and then tell us a little bit more about what you would do with the 390, prospectively, because the earlier question, which I skipped, asked about the $493 million for Fiscal Year 2016. They had a number of those and I skipped over it and went to the second question. But please touch on both because I think it is insightful of what you have spent, where it has been committed in concert with DoD.

Mr. SIBERELL. Happy to. The concept here is to build up partners as I noted in the previous response to have the capability across a range of civilian capacities so it would match up against building parallel capacities on the military and intelligence side, and that is the work, generally speaking, of our Department of Defense colleagues.

So whereas we would build, let us say, a capability within a ministry of defense to provide a focused counterterrorism response capability, we also want to ensure that the civilian side of the ledger

is also addressed in terms of being able to incarcerate anyone that those forces might detain. The ability to prosecute those defendants or detainees. The ability to address shortcomings in border security or counter radicalization. There is a whole suite of capabilities we would seek to build on the civilian side.

Now with respect to the $390 million, we break that down into three principal categories. Sixty million dollars of that would go toward our efforts building on our current efforts to strengthen, as I noted earlier, capacities of governments to deal with the specific phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters, those who are traveling to Iraq and Syria and some of whom are actually on their way back to their home countries. Another $20 million would go specifically toward activities against and aimed at dismantling and disrupting Hezbollah's global network and activity particularly in the criminal sphere to raise funds that it uses in its activities in Lebanon and elsewhere, in Syria, et cetera.

Mr. ISSA. But again it would be money to government agencies you are working with?

Mr. SIBERELL. Some of that money would go to our partners in the interagency. So with Hezbollah, for instance, we have an initiative underway to strengthen our work with European law enforcement agencies to build joint investigations. And so a lot of that money would go to the FBI, would go to the Department of Justice, and Homeland Security, as an example. And then the bulk of the funds, $310 million, would go toward the addressing current and then working to prevent the emergence of new terrorist safe havens.

So looking at East Africa as an example, bolstering our partnerships with countries on the periphery of al-Shabaab in Somalia, giving them the capability to better address the threat that is emanating from there; working with the Lake Chad Basin countries to address the threat coming from Boko Haram emerging out of northeast Nigeria and with the Nigerian Government itself; and noting earlier, the work we would like to do with Tunisia, but also with Libya's other neighbors, Niger, Egypt, et cetera, to help bolster their capabilities against those threats. So those would be examples.

Mr. ISSA. Okay. And I want to briefly go to one other thing. Earlier when you were discussing Turkey and their support late in the Saddam era, 60 Minutes, I believe it was, just went ahead and showed us an aerial view of thousands of trucks, tanker trucks, small tanker trucks lined up in a row for miles and miles taking fuel from Iraq, clandestinely, into Turkey. The same was happening in Jordan. The same was happening through a pipeline into Syria. And the government pretended like we were doing something about it, but in fact if 60 Minutes can get you a video of it obviously it was not a secret.

Today isn't there a large amount or at least an amount of oil that are going right through Turkey? Driving right down those same roads in plain sight of both us and the Turks delivering oil from the east to the west and could have come from nowhere legitimately. Isn't that true?

Mr. SIBERELL. There is oil smuggling that continues. We have worked to try to disrupt it even at the source. Some of our coalition

air strikes have been against those small oil refineries and the distribution points, but it is the case that oil smuggling does continue.

Mr. ISSA. And when the trucks are on the road they are off limits to fire on. We have to get them in other places, and clearly the Turks are not going to pull over Turkish trucks and take away their oil even when it clearly comes from a clandestine source.

Mr. SIBERELL. Well, as I noted we are trying to work very closely with the Turks, the Kurds and others to stem that flow of smuggled oil.

Mr. ISSA. Thank you. We now recognize the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Mr. Perry.

Mr. SIBERELL. Thank you.

Mr. PERRY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Sir, I am sorry I missed most of the meeting but I do have a couple questions which I think are germane and go to monitoring in particular. The Bureau has been criticized by some in Congress for the under funding of the monitoring and evaluation of its programs and the general guideline is 3 to 5 percent of program resources. So my question in that vein is how much did the Bureau spend on monitoring and evaluation in 2013 and '14?

Mr. SIBERELL. I can get you the specific figure, the amount of money we spent in those 2 fiscal years. We are monitoring and evaluation activities, in line with the Department's guidelines on monitoring and evaluation. I just want to say that all of our programs are monitored on a constant basis and we want to get this right. We have no interest in perpetuating programs that are not seeing results, and this is very difficult work in capacity building.

What you may be referring in the 3 to 5 percent range are some of the evaluations we have done which are bigger, in some cases bringing in outside parties to evaluate larger programs. And then we can give the list of those evaluations we have completed and the total cost we have put into this.

Mr. PERRY. So if you know the cost then you should know the amount of each program that has been evaluated, right, or if you know the cost, I mean, it is a certain percentage. The program costs X amount, we are spending this much to monitor, right. So we should know that, right? I mean that should be readily available if——

Mr. SIBERELL. We can get you that.

Mr. PERRY. You do monitor that, correct?

Mr. SIBERELL. Yes.

Mr. PERRY. Now according to my notes, so correct me if I am wrong, only two of 53 countries where the Bureau is doing anti-terrorism assistance have been evaluated since 2010. Is that—two of 53 seems low. Is there some reason it is low? Is it not low? Why is that correct or why isn't that correct?

Mr. SIBERELL. Okay. Well, thank you for the opportunity to clarify. I think it is both correct and incorrect, if I might. We have ongoing monitoring of every one of our country ATA programs, and every 2 to 3 years there is an assessment done of the results of previous training and what the requirements are for the coming period.

When you are referring to the two programs, specifically what we did is we subjected two specific country programs to a separate out-

side evaluation. That was in Morocco and in Bangladesh. And in those two countries we brought in a third-party evaluator to look at the program, the life span of it, and I can tell you that we have had very, very important conclusions from those evaluations.

In Morocco, as an example, we determined that the Moroccan Government has achieved at such a level of capacity and capability through that training that we are now working with the Moroccans to actually train third-party countries. And we are putting the Moroccans together, for instance, with countries like Mauritania and other Sahel countries so that the Moroccans can actually do that training. And that was the result of the conclusions of that evaluation.

So it is true that two specific country programs——

Mr. PERRY. So you are saying that those are two that were with a third-party evaluation?

Mr. SIBERELL. But every ATA program has an ongoing process of monitoring and assessment that is done in combination between the Counterterrorism and the Diplomatic Security Bureaus. Every 2 to 3 years every program is evaluated in that way.

Mr. PERRY. So this stuff is expensive, $233 million in foreign aid to the Counterterrorism Bureau, will all those dollars be evaluated? I think about the question that the gentleman, the chairman just asked, and it seems obvious to Americans, right. Counterterrorism, it has got to be funded. Terrorism is funded by something.

So if you have got trucks driving across the desert—I have been to the desert, it is kind of a wide open territory for a lot of it—and that is the source of income for the terrorists, it seems obvious. If we are spending $233 million, like you don't need a whole lot, you don't need to know a lot to know that right there is a target. I don't know if it has to be bombed or if it can be serviced with small arms or medium arms. I don't understand why we let that target continue to exist, quite honestly.

And it is expensive, $233 million. It seems to me that we have wasted 233 or a portion of $233 million when the target is sitting out in the open and you say it is being smuggled. People hear the term "smuggling" they think about something being stolen away in the night under the cover of darkness and deception. This is out in the open in the middle of no-man's land and we let it drive from this point to that point unfettered. What am I missing?

Mr. SIBERELL. Well, the amount of money you are referring to is a global pot and it addresses a number of different areas. Let me focus in on some of the money we do dedicate toward counterterrorism finance work, and that is where we engage our partners in building up their financial intelligence units, their central bank, their ability to monitor funds that flow through the banking system. These groups, each of them, raises money in different ways. ISIL raises the majority of its money, we believe, through extortion and through criminal networks ongoing in the places that they control. So in cities like Mosul or in Raqqah they have the extortion networks and the ability to raise, effectively, taxes from the local population.

Mr. PERRY. With your indulgence, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that and I think you are right. It is not genuine to say that the $233 million were spent counterterrorism operations with ISIS. But

how do you quantify success? So it is my understanding that ISIS raises about $2 million a day. A certain amount of that comes from oil revenue, smuggled oil, illicit oil sales.

How do you connect the—we spent a portion of this $233 million on figuring out their financial network. Once we have the information, isn't success when we have actualized on that information and destroyed the funding source, i.e., the truck driving across the desert full of oil into and through Turkey? Isn't that, or don't we care? Once we have the information we don't put the two together?

Mr. SIBERELL. No, I think cutting off the sources of funding one by one, whether it comes from oil or antiquity smuggling or extortion or taxes from ISIL controlled territory, these are things we have to address each of its own. So it is very important to get at the source of the funding for the——

Mr. PERRY. Do you ever see where the information that you got, the intelligence you received through the counterterrorism operations led to the servicing of the target, the destruction of the target, the destruction of the source of funds; do you ever see that?

Mr. SIBERELL. Well, absolutely. We have taken——

Mr. PERRY. Where is that listed? Can I see where American taxpayers spent this much money to find out this information which led to this action which led to this outcome? How can I see that as a taxpayer and as a Member of Congress and a citizen?

Mr. SIBERELL. Thank you. Specifically that issue probably is a question for DoD, but we have taken strikes against the oil installations in Iraq and in Syria controlled by ISIL. We have taken strikes against distribution points. So there have been very specific responses to available intelligence in that sector in particular.

Mr. PERRY. Okay. Mr. Chairman, I will yield back. But in response just to that we will ask DoD, but I will tell you having served for a fair amount of time of my life, if DoD wants to hit the target and is allowed to hit the target and is resourced adequately and missioned appropriately there will be no target left. If we want to end this target it will be gone, and my concern is that this actionable intelligence hasn't been used to the fullest. With that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Mr. ISSA. Thank you. This concludes all of our questions. You have agreed to a number of things you would respond to for the record.

Mr. SIBERELL. Yes.

Mr. ISSA. Would you mind additional questions if they are received within the next 3 days to be added to that response list for members who are not here?

Mr. SIBERELL. We would welcome them, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ISSA. So thank you. With that we stand adjourned.

Mr. SIBERELL. Thank you very much.

[Whereupon, at 3:28 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

Material Submitted for the Record

SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING NOTICE
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6128

Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade
Ted Poe (R-TX), Chairman

TO: MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

You are respectfully requested to attend an OPEN hearing of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, to be held by the Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade in Room 2172 of the Rayburn House Office Building (and available live on the Committee website at http://www.ForeignAffairs.house.gov):

DATE: Tuesday, June 2, 2015

TIME: 2:00 p.m.

SUBJECT: State Department's Counterterrorism Bureau

WITNESSES: Panel I
Mr. Charles Johnson, Jr.
Director, International Security Issues
International Affairs and Trade
Government Accountability Office

Panel II
Mr. Justin Siberell
Deputy Coordinator for Regional Affairs and Programs
Bureau of Counterterrorism
U.S. Department of State

By Direction of the Chairman

The Committee on Foreign Affairs seeks to make its facilities accessible to persons with disabilities. If you are in need of special accommodations, please call 202/225-5021 at least four business days in advance of the event, whenever practicable. Questions with regard to special accommodations in general (including availability of Committee materials in alternative formats and assistive listening devices) may be directed to the Committee.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

MINUTES OF SUBCOMMITTEE ON *Terrorism Nonproliferation and Trade* HEARING

Day *Tuesday* Date *June 2, 2015* Room *2172*

Starting Time *2:00 p.m.* Ending Time *3:28 p.m.*

Recesses [ ] (____to ____) (____to ____) (____to ____) (____to ____) (____to ____) (____to ____)

Presiding Member(s)

Chairman Ted Poe

Check all of the following that apply:

Open Session [✓]
Executive (closed) Session [ ]
Televised [✓]

Electronically Recorded (taped) [✓]
Stenographic Record [✓]

TITLE OF HEARING:

"State Department's Counterterrorism Bureau"

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Reps. Poe, Issa, Perry, Keating, Sherman, Higgins, Kelly

NON-SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: *(Mark with an * if they are not members of full committee.)*

HEARING WITNESSES: Same as meeting notice attached? Yes [✓] No [ ]
(If "no", please list below and include title, agency, department, or organization.)

STATEMENTS FOR THE RECORD: *(List any statements submitted for the record.)*

QFR - Poe

TIME SCHEDULED TO RECONVENE _____
or
TIME ADJOURNED *3:28 p.m.*

Subcommittee Staff Director

QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED BY
REPRESENTATIVE TED POE (1-11)
DEPUTY COORDINATOR JUSTIN SIBERELL
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
JUNE 02, 2015

Question 1:

CT Bureau completed three evaluations in 2012, one evaluation in 2013, zero in 2014, and has none scheduled for completion in 2015. This is not in line with State Department's own evaluation policy, which states, "At a minimum, all bureaus and independent offices should undertake at least one evaluation per fiscal year." How will the Bureau rectify this problem?

Answer:

The Bureau of Counterterrorism (CT) is committed to effective program management and stewardship of the assistance funds administered under its direction. CT has embraced a results-focused approach to program design and management aimed at improving performance, outcomes and accountability, with an overarching goal of ensuring the sustainability of our collective efforts. The Bureau is furthermore committed to monitoring all of its programs and conducting evaluations of large-scale programs in line with the Department's requirements.

We are in the process of finalizing several requests for proposals for third party evaluations of CT programs, and we anticipate submitting at least one evaluation request for proposal to the State's Evaluation Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contract in FY 2015. CT will also conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the Foreign Emergency Support Team (FEST) in 2015.

In addition to directly funding third party evaluations, CT requires a monitoring component for all assistance programs carried out under the Bureau's direction. Through this monitoring, we gain critical information that enables CT to assess the effectiveness of our programming.

The Bureau also provides $5-7 million per year to the Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS), which implements the ATA program, for curriculum design and evaluation. With these funds, DS hires third party evaluators to evaluate pilot courses and to assess ATA training courses each year. This effort yields recommendations for revising courses and updating curriculum and materials. Annually, CT also provides between an additional $500,000 and $1.4 million to DS for internal assessment, review and evaluation by subject matter experts of the impact of ATA training courses on a country's technical proficiency.

Question 2:

How much did the Bureau spend on evaluation in 2012? 2013? 2014? Will spend in 2015?

Answer:

The Bureau of Counterterrorism (CT) is committed to ensuring that our assistance funds are being utilized effectively and that our efforts are sustainable and have the maximum long-term impact. Developing and employing meaningful evaluations is one of the key mechanisms enabling us to determine whether we are meeting these ambitious goals. Demonstrating the CT Bureau's long-standing commitment to this effort, in FY 2012, CT signed a two year, $2.4 million contract for monitoring and evaluation (M&E) support and training. As part of that contract, CT had four third-party evaluations conducted. In addition to these evaluations, this contract provided monitoring support contractors, M&E trainings, and the development and hosting of a program database. In FY 2014, CT submitted two requests for evaluation proposals to the State Evaluation Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contract, but did not receive any bids in response. CT is working to procure a contract to evaluate the Foreign Emergency Response Team (FEST), which is estimated to cost $200,000 and will start before the end of FY 2015. CT is submitting additional requests for evaluations in FY 2015, which will likely fall within a range of $150,000 - $350,000 per evaluation.

These individual, third-party evaluations are only one part of CT's broader M&E approach. All of CT's Program Managers, for example, have received training in monitoring foreign assistance and have program monitoring as a job requirement. Furthermore, CT maintains an ongoing program monitoring requirement built in to all program proposals, which has included project-specific evaluations that have provided critical information on program outcomes and outputs. The Bureau also provides $5-7 million per year to the Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS), which implements the Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) program, for curriculum design and evaluation. With these funds, DS hires third party evaluators to evaluate pilot courses and to assess ATA training courses each year. Annually, CT provides between an additional $500,000 and $1.4 million to DS for assessment, review and evaluation by subject matter experts of the impact of ATA training courses on a country's technical proficiency. While third-party evaluations are important, we believe they are one part of a larger cycle of strategic program management.

Question 3:

The CT Bureau has never completed an impact evaluation. An impact evaluation, which uses control groups to measure the net impact of a program or project, is one of the most rigorous kind of evaluations. Why has the CT Bureau not done an impact evaluation yet and does it have any plans to do one?

Answer:

For the Bureau of Counterterrorism (CT), assessing the impact of our efforts is a top priority, and evaluations are one of the key mechanisms we employ to gauge both the effectiveness of our existing programs and other activities, and to shape future programmatic

decisions. In addition to our independent, third party evaluations, CT gathers a range of information to assess the impact of the Bureau's assistance. CT requires that all of its implementing partners include robust reporting and M&E within their project budgets. CT program officers work with embassies and implementers to design, execute, implement, and track the progress of projects against strategic objectives and programmatic goals related to core U.S. foreign policy interests. Program managers also work closely with State's Bureau of Intelligence and Research and the broader U.S. intelligence community to gather information related to our assistance. Program managers also travel abroad on a regular basis to conduct site visits and coordinate program work with embassies, host nation officials, and implementers on the ground.

Question 4:

State Department's evaluation policy states that 3-5% of program resources should be spent on monitoring and evaluation. Do you have a system in place to track how much is spent on monitoring and evaluation? If not, are there plans to put it in place and when will it be set up? If so, how much was spent on M&E over the last 4 years on record and are you in compliance with the Department's policy?

Answer:

Monitoring and evaluation are a top priority for the Bureau of Counterterrorism (CT) to ensure that we are effectively overseeing and directing the assistance funds under our control. While the exact resources we expend on M&E can differ from project to project, we use the Department's guidance and established best practices to help us determine a percentage of program funds for formal M&E activities.

On a daily basis, as part of their core work requirements, CT program officers continually monitor our foreign assistance funded programs. The Bureau's Office of Programs, Office of Multilateral Affairs, and Office of Terrorist Screening and Interdiction have more than 25 Washington D.C.-based staff and six field-based staff that manage and overseeing all CT Bureau funded programs. In addition, CT's Office of the Executive Director has four staff that oversee and monitor budget execution for foreign assistance. In addition to the resources CT dedicates to M&E, we also rely on staff at our embassies; CT program officers work with embassies and implementers to design, execute, implement, and track the progress of projects against strategic objectives and programmatic goals related to core U.S. foreign policy interests. Program managers also work closely with State's Bureau of Intelligence and Research and the broader U.S. intelligence community to gather information related to our assistance. Program managers also travel abroad on a regular basis to conduct site visits and coordinate program work with embassies, host nation officials, and implementers on the ground. In addition, CT requires that all of its implementing partners include robust reporting and M&E within their project budgets.

Question 5:

GAO found that the CT Bureau has only addressed 28 out of the 60 recommendations that came out of the 4 evaluations completed so far. How and when will you address the remaining recommendations? Please give the timeframe for the implementation of each remaining recommendation.

Answer:

The Bureau of Counterterrorism (CT) is committed to effectively managing and overseeing its assistance funds, and we regard the independent, third party evaluations we have commissioned to be an essential element of this process.

Many recent evaluation findings, recommendations, and conclusions were useful to CT and its implementers, while other recommendations were off-base or involved factors beyond our control. CT is committed to setting a timetable for reviewing each of the remaining recommendations and determining what action, if any, should be taken. As noted, CT has successfully implemented 28 of those recommendations in a relatively short timeframe. For example, the evaluation report recommended tracking students trained through its Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) funding, in order to enable improved monitoring and encourage sustainable relationship-building. As of 2014, DS has developed and implemented the STARS system to track student data. The ATA Morocco evaluation also revealed that the capabilities of Moroccan security services trained through the ATA programs had reached so high a level as to merit joint U.S. – Moroccan training of other regional partners from North and West Africa. In 2014, CT and the Government of Morocco signed a trilateral training agreement to support Moroccan experts to train third-country Maghreb and Sahel law enforcement officials in counterterrorism capabilities.

The ATA Bangladesh evaluation noted strong program success with the institutionalization and sustainment of protection of national leadership capabilities. ATA is now exploring ways to reach the same level of success in the areas of border security and critical incident management. For example, the ATA program is currently supporting a series of subject matter experts to provide mentorship in explosive ordnance disposal to the Dhaka Metropolitan Police bomb disposal units. This assistance provides specialized, ongoing assistance in bomb disposal techniques and standard operating procedures and facilitates the units' ability to sustain the skills within their training institutions.

Question 6:

In your testimony you indicate that countering violent extremism is a key priority for the U.S. government and the CT Bureau. The data you presented also shows that the CT Bureau has allocated more than $40 million on countering violent extremism programs since fiscal year

2011. How many evaluations assessing the Bureau's CVE programs have been completed? Do you have any evaluations planned for CVE? Why or why not?

Answer:

Countering Violent Extremism is one of the Bureau of Counterterrorism's top priorities, and we are committed to ensuring that our efforts in this critical area are appropriately monitored and evaluated. Our M&E efforts in this area is designed to ensure that that our CVE programming goes to communities that are most vulnerable to radicalization and that the programming is appropriately tailored to the local context and problem set. The USG's CVE efforts are still in the early stages, particularly on the programmatic front. We are considering, as part of our current evaluation discussions, how to undertake an effective evaluation effort to gauge impact of our CVE efforts, including though an independent, third party evaluation. The fast pace and complex nature of the violent extremist threat, coupled with the inability to measure a counterfactual result, has posed additional limitations for program implementers to evaluate the efficacy of CVE programs.

Despite these constraints, CT continues to move forward on its efforts in this area we have already conducted some evaluations of our CVE programs. For example, CT has put in place an independent evaluation for its ongoing Hausa Language Multimedia Platform, Arewa24. A baseline survey, conducted by a Nigerian firm with guidance from the University of Illinois's Political Science Department, was conducted in January of this year. A second survey is tentatively scheduled for January of 2016. As the project continues, CT expects to build longitudinal data-sets to track the evolution of attitudes and behaviors. Interactive voice response polling of focus groups should begin by mid-June and will enable more granular understanding of what works and what does not. The Bureau is committed to continuing to conduct evaluation of its CVE programming and plans to increase evaluations of CVE projects in FY15.

Question 7:

In FY14, Congress appropriated $233 million in foreign aid to the CT Bureau. How much of those dollars will be evaluated?

Answer:

Every dollar obligated by the Bureau of Counterterrorism (CT) is monitored to ensure that funds are spent as intended. The CT Bureau also uses the Department's evaluation guidance to help us determine a percentage of program funds for formal monitoring and evaluation (M&E) activities. CT has embraced a results-focused approach to program design and management aimed at improving performance, outcomes, and accountability with an overarching goal of ensuring the sustainability of our collective efforts.

CT utilizes a set of tools (e.g. SOWs with qualitative and quantitative indicators, site visits, assessments and evaluations) to determine progress and results, and to facilitate performance-

informed decision making. This approach is rooted in a strategic planning cycle with clearly defined, regionally-specific goals informing program selection, and analysis of monitoring data, starting at program implementation, informing adjustments to strategy and programming.

Under the Nonproliferation, Antiterrorism, Demining, and Related Programs (NADR) and Economic Support Fund (ESF) authorities, once awarded, FY 2014 funds are available for expenditure through the end of FY 2019. We will evaluate a number of FY 2014 CT-funded projects consistent with the Bureau's commitment to M&E and in accordance with the Department's evaluation guidelines.

Question 8:

What research or evidence are you gathering to evaluate whether the taxpayer money you've spent resulted in a decrease in terrorism or recruitment, especially of youth, in targeted countries? And if not, why aren't you gathering this research or evidence?

Answer:

The Bureau of Counterterrorism (CT) relies on a broad spectrum of information to design, implement, monitor, and assess the progress of CVE programming, including political reporting from various Department offices and U.S. embassies around the world, U.S. Intelligence Community reporting, open source information, and reporting from host nation and non-governmental interlocutors. Many CVE projects include an initial research phase that helps our implementers target and tailor programming to the right people, in the right places, at the right time.

In addition, the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) is also dedicated to the collection of information on political and security trends relating to terrorism. CT relies on INR's efforts, combined with those of the entire intelligence community, to seek to determine recruitment and radicalization hot spots that will help us direct our diplomatic and programmatic activities. We are continuously reviewing and analyzing this information to determine what changes we need to make, to ensure that we can rapidly adapt to the ever-changing conditions on the ground.

Question 9:

It is my understanding that the CT Bureau recently signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the Bureau of Diplomatic Security to expedite the congressional notification process for antiterrorism training funding, but the Inspector General's office still has not received a copy. When will you send the IG's office a copy of this Memorandum of Agreement?

Answer:

A copy of the CT-DS MOA was signed on May 17, 2015 and a copy was provided to the Office of the Inspector General on May 21, 2015.

Question 10:

Please identify all programs whose dollar value equals or exceeds the median program, project, or activity size for the bureau, or whose number of full time staff equivalents associated with it exceeds the median number of staff associated with similar individual programs, projects, and activities in the Bureau.

Answer:

The Bureau of Counterterrorism (CT) manages a large number of multi-year programs to build the capacity of law enforcement and civilian officials to counter terrorist threats and violent extremism. The Bureau's largest program is the Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) program, implemented principally by the Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS). ATA bilateral activities are largest in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Jordan, and Kenya. Another of CT's larger programs is the Regional Strategic Initiative, which funds a range of field-driven projects around the world to address civilian counterterrorism gaps and promote regional counterterrorism cooperation. CT would welcome the opportunity to brief Congress in more detail on these programs.

Question 11:

What pilot programs has the CT Bureau replicated?

Answer:

CT's Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) program pilots training courses before rolling them out more broadly across the program. These pilots are used to to ensure that the curriculum works well in terms of delivery sequence, module timing, instructional methods, and overall student learning. Subsequent to the pilot delivery, the curriculum development team incorporates any required modifications to enhance the course and certifies it for addition to the approved curriculum and general delivery schedule.

One of the program's more recent pilots is the Rural Border Patrol Operations (RBPO) Course. In 2012, the CT Bureau determined the ATA Course Catalog lacked an effective tool to address the transit of terrorists and terrorist-related materials across green borders. To address this growing challenge, DS designed the RBPO course and piloted the delivery of the course and a train-the-trainer version of the course with our Nigerian partners. The course was

evaluated and determined to be effective. Since the pilot, this course has been formally included in the ATA Course Catalog and delivered across a range of partners, including Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon, Tunisia, Oman, and Kenya,.

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