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PROTECTING AMERICA FROM THE THREAT OF ISIS

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

MAY 26, 2016

Available via the World Wide Web: http://www.fdsys.gov/

Printed for the use of the
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

U.S. GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE

23–710 PDF WASHINGTON : 2017

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Publishing Office
Internet: bookstore.gpo.gov Phone: toll free (866) 512–1800; DC area (202) 512–1800
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CONTENTS

	Page
Opening statements:	
Senator Johnson	1
Senator Carper	2
Senator Portman	14
Senator Peters	17
Senator Ayotte	19
Senator Booker	24
Senator Ernst	27
Prepared statements:	
Senator Johnson	37
Senator Carper	38

WITNESS

THURSDAY, MAY 26, 2016

Hon. Alejandro N. Mayorkas, Deputy Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security	5
Justin Siberell, Acting Coordinator of Counterterrorism, Bureau of Counterrorism, U.S. Department of State	6

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF WITNESSES

Mayorkas, Hon. Alejandro N.:	
Testimony	5
Prepared statement	40
Siberell, Justin:	
Testimony	6
Prepared statement	47

APPENDIX

Department of State and USAID Joint Strategy Report on Countering Violent Extremism	53
Responses to post-hearing questions for the Record	
Mr. Mayorkas	65
Mr. Siberell	87

PROTECTING AMERICA FROM THE THREAT OF ISIS

THURSDAY, MAY 26, 2016

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY
AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:02 a.m., in room SD–342, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Ron Johnson, Chairman of the Committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Johnson, Portman, Ayotte, Ernst, Sasse, Carper, McCaskill, Tester, Baldwin, Booker, and Peters.

OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN JOHNSON

Chairman JOHNSON. This hearing will come to order.

I want to welcome our witnesses. Thank you for taking the time to appear here today and for submitting your thoughtful testimonies. We are looking forward to the answers to our questions.

When I took over as Chairman of this Committee, working with Senator Carper, who, by the way——

Senator CARPER. A bloodless coup. It was a bloodless coup.

Chairman JOHNSON. But, he is looking pretty good, having just spent 4 days traveling with the President to Vietnam and just getting back yesterday. So, he got a good night's sleep. I appreciate that.

But, one of the first things we did is we developed a mission statement for the Committee—pretty simple: to enhance the economic and national security of America. Then, on the Homeland Security side of the Committee, we established four basic priorities:

Border security: we have held, I think, 18 hearings on some aspect of our unsecured border.

Cybersecurity: we passed the Federal Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2016—a good measure.

Protecting our critical infrastructure, particularly, our electrical grid, from a kinetic terrorist attack, a cyber attack, electromagnetic pulses (EMP), and geomagnetic disturbances (GMD).

And then, finally, what can we do, as a Nation, to protect our homeland against Islamic terrorists and other violent extremists?

So, this hearing is really about that last priority—addressing Islamic terror and trying to secure our homeland and keep it safe. Not an easy task.

For every last one of these hearings, the goal is, primarily, to lay out a reality, as best we can, so that we can identify—define the problem—admit we have it, so we can actually work toward some

common-sense solutions, recognizing, in this realm, the solutions are very difficult and it is going to take quite some time to, finally, in the end, defeat Islamic terror.

I just want to lay out a couple of facts that have been developed by staff—recognizing again these are estimates. There is nothing hard and fast, but it just gives us some indication of what we are dealing with here, when we are talking about the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS).

Apparently, the monthly revenues of ISIS have dropped from $80 million per month, which would be a little less than $1 billion per year, to about $56 million per month, about $672 million a year. Still, some pretty significant revenue in the hands of barbarians.

There have been 12 confirmed cases of the use of a mustard agent. Three other cases are suspected, both in Syria and Iraq. That ought to concern everybody.

More than 42,900 foreign fighters have entered the conflict zone—about 7,400 Westerners. ISIS has trained at least 400 fighters to target Europe with its external operation.

At least eight of the Paris plotters were foreign fighters returning from Syria. The same network behind the Paris attacks and the Brussels attacks—it is the same network that was behind the Paris attacks and the Brussels suicide bombings. In total, there were 162 victims.

There were 1.8 million illegal border crossings into the European Union (EU) in 2015. The previous year, in 2014, there were 280,000. So, you can just see that, as things degrade in Syria and Iraq, it is putting enormous pressure on European Union States.

ISIS has 43 affiliates—according to some reports—supporting groups, globally. So, the fact that ISIS has a territory—has established this caliphate—other Islamic terror groups are beginning to pledge their loyalty. So, ISIS continues to metastasize. Until we finally do defeat them, they are going to continue to inspire. They are going to continue to metastasize and continue to be a real and growing threat.

So, again, I think we have to take this seriously. We will continue to explore this. I am really looking forward to the testimonies from representatives from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Department of State (DOS).

With that, I will turn it over to Senator Carper, after I ask consent to enter my written statement in the record.[1]

Senator CARPER. I think that is a great idea.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR CARPER

Senator CARPER. Mr. Chairman, thank you for pulling this together. I want to say to the Secretary and to Justin, thank you very much for joining us today. It is an important hearing and a timely one as well.

Our thoughts and prayers continue to be with the people of Belgium and the people of France, who have not only endured losses from terror attacks in their capital cities, but also have endured the recent tragedy involving the crash of the EgyptAir flight that departed from Paris' Charles De Gaulle Airport earlier this month.

[1] The prepared statement of Senator Johnson appears in the Appendix on page 37.

While we are still learning the facts surrounding the loss of the EgyptAir flight, this tragedy reminds us that securing our homeland is likely to remain an ongoing challenge for some time to come—and our efforts must adapt as groups, like ISIS, evolve their tactics.

The Chairman has alluded to some of the progress that is being made, on the battlefield and in other ways, with respect to ISIS—and it is a big coalition: 60 nations. It is beginning to work and we are providing, I think, good leadership. It is going slower than we would like, but real progress is being made—not only in terms of regaining land, but in reducing their capacity to be successful in that part of the world, in taking away their money, and in limiting their ability to finance their operations.

But, securing our borders and our immigration system is, obviously, a key element of keeping us safe—and we have focused quite a bit on those topics as of late, as you know. Hearings on the Syrian refugee program, the security of the Visa Waiver Program (VWP), and the thoroughness of all visa screening efforts bear witness to our focus. We found that the Syrian refugee screening process takes upwards of 2 years and that DHS has enhanced the security of the Visa Waiver Program—not once, not twice, but three times in the last 18 months—and this Committee has focused a lot of time and energy on that as well. And, our government also deploys special visa teams abroad to help consular officers detect fraud.

Securing our borders, however, is only half of the battle. We could shut down all travel and immigration to this country and still not be safe from terrorist threats. That is because, as Peter Bergen testified, in November—I believe right here in this room—and this is a quote from him, "Every person who has been killed by a jihadi terrorist in this country since the attacks on September 11, 2001 (9/11) has been killed by an American citizen or resident."

Let me say that again: "Every person who has been killed by a jihadi terrorist in this country since 9/11 has been killed by an American citizen or resident."

The people who carried out those attacks were not foreign students, they were not tourists, and they were not even refugees. They were Americans. And, in many cases, they had spent much of their lives in this country—in the United States.

For instance, the Tsarnaev brothers spent nearly a decade in the United States before carrying out the Boston Marathon bombing. Major Nidal Hassan was born and raised in America and was serving in the U.S. Army when he committed the Fort Hood attack. Syed Farooq spent most of his life in California before he and his wife committed the San Bernardino massacre. Unfortunately, ISIS knows all too well that the best way to attack America is to have Americans do it for you. That is why ISIS has put an emphasis on using social media and the Internet to radicalize Americans at home.

In order to counter homegrown terrorist attacks, we have to do our best to make sure that, when ISIS makes its recruitment pitch to Americans, their twisted message falls on deaf ears. But, if ISIS is successful at radicalizing Americans, we must also be vigilant in

ensuring, to the best of our ability, that we can stop almost every terrorist attack well before an attack can be carried out.

Let me be clear. The Department of Homeland Security—and other agencies—are not alone in tackling the threat of homegrown terrorism. Congress must help. Indeed, all Americans must help. We can start by taking action to keep weapons—whether they are explosives, dirty bomb materials, or guns—out of the hands of terrorists here. We also need to improve the ability of our law enforcement and intelligence agencies to detect homegrown terrorism plots by helping them work through their challenges on encryption. And, finally, we need to give our Federal agencies the tools they need to help prevent our young people from falling prey to ISIS' online propaganda.

Late last year, I authored, with some of our colleagues here, legislation to empower the Department of Homeland Security to tackle this challenge. This legislation would create an office at the Department of Homeland Security tasked with working with community groups, families—especially young people—and religious leaders to develop community-based solutions for stopping the recruitment of young Americans into ISIS. Our legislation was reported out of Committee earlier this year. It was also included in the Department of Homeland Security Accountability Act of 2016, which we approved just yesterday. We need to get this bill enacted into law as soon as possible, so that we can further help our communities resist ISIS' recruitment efforts.

Secretary Mayorkas and Mr. Siberell, I want to commend you and your Departments for the work that you do to protect our people, in this country, from terrorist attacks, both at home and abroad. We stand ready to work with you both—and your colleagues both—to make sure that your Departments have the resources that you need to combat these threats.

We welcome your testimonies. We appreciate your hard work, the leadership that you are providing, and your selfless devotion to our country. God bless you. Thank you.

Chairman JOHNSON. Thank you, Senator Carper.

It is the tradition of this Committee to swear in witnesses, so if you will both rise and raise your right hand. Do you swear the testimony you will give before this Committee will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you, God?

Mr. MAYORKAS. I do.

Mr. SIBERELL. I do.

Chairman JOHNSON. Please be seated.

Our first witness is Ali Mayorkas. Mr. Mayorkas is the Deputy Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security. Previously, he served as the Director of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), at DHS. A lot of acronyms in this business. He was a partner in a law firm and the youngest United States Attorney to serve the Nation when he was confirmed by the Senate, in 1998, as the U.S. Attorney for the Central District of California. In that capacity, he also served as the Vice Chair of the Attorney General's (AG) Advisory Subcommittee (AGAC) on Civil Rights and was a member of the Subcommittee on Ethics in Government. Mr. Mayorkas.

TESTIMONY OF THE HONORABLE ALEJANDRO N. MAYORKAS,[1] DEPUTY SECRETARY, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Mr. MAYORKAS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member Carper, and distinguished Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you to discuss the priorities and the key actions of our Department of Homeland Security to address the terrorist threats to our Nation, particularly, following the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant's (ISIL) November 2015 and March 2016 terrorist attacks in Brussels and Paris. I will be brief in my remarks and defer to my written testimony, submitted this past Tuesday, so that I can focus on the questions you may pose.

As I articulated in my earlier submission, the threats we face today are more complex and decentralized than they were a decade ago. We are in a new phase in the global terrorist threat. We have moved from a world of terrorist-directed attacks to a world that increasingly includes the threat of terrorist-inspired attacks—one in which the attacker may never have come face-to-face with a member of a terrorist organization but is, instead, inspired by the messages and propaganda of ISIL. By their nature, such inspired attacks are harder for intelligence and law enforcement to detect and could occur with little or no notice—presenting a more complex security challenge.

Confronting the world of both terrorist-directed and terrorist-inspired attacks, our Department of Homeland Security has focused our resources and efforts in four areas, in order to counter the diverse and evolving threats we face: aviation security, border security, countering violent extremism (CVE), and information sharing and support. In each of these areas, we have strengthened—and continue to strengthen—our programs and processes. And, we are executing critical initiatives to better respond to the dynamic threat landscape across the world.

We have strengthened our screening protocols at domestic airports and established security enhancements at foreign airports that are the last points of departure to the United States. We are continually refining our risk-based strategy and our layered approach to border security, extending our zone of security to interdict threats as far outward from our homeland as possible. We are leveraging all available advance passenger and manifest data, intelligence, law enforcement information, and open source information.

We have strengthened the Visa Waiver Program in coordination with the Department of State and Congress. All individuals traveling as part of the Visa Waiver Program are subject to rigorous screening before departure to the United States—and throughout the travel continuum. The Visa Waiver Program significantly enhances our Nation's security and law enforcement partnerships with participating countries and we continue to work with our international partners to strengthen our information sharing and to increase our joint presence at Europol.

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[1] The prepared statement of Mr. Mayorkas appears in the Appendix on page 40.

We have strengthened our information-sharing efforts and close partnerships with State, local, and tribal law enforcement—our key first responders throughout our Nation.

Finally, we have strengthened our relationships with communities across the country and with agencies across the government through our Office for Community Partnerships (OCP) and the Countering Violent Extremism Task Force. We are working in close collaboration to develop guidance, resources, best practices, and training to protect communities from violent extremism.

I would like to thank this Committee for endorsing the Secretary's key "Unity-of-Effort" priority. Strengthening and maturing the Department is an ongoing process. We rely on this Committee to work with us—legislating the joint task forces—and having the Under Secretary for Strategy, Policy, and Plans—the office that leads our countering violent extremism efforts—is critical to ensuring the Department of Homeland Security is able to pursue key mission priorities.

On behalf of our Department, I want to thank you, Mr. Chairman—and the Committee—for your support of our Department. I am very proud to work alongside 240,000 men and women who work each day to protect our homeland.

Thank you very much.

Chairman JOHNSON. Thank you, Mr. Mayorkas.

Our next witness is Justin Siberell. Mr. Siberell is Acting Coordinator of Counterterrorism (CT) in the Bureau of Counterterrorism at the U.S. Department of State. He joined the State Department Foreign Service in March 1993 and joined the CT Bureau in July 2012. He is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service (SFS) with the rank of Minister Counselor. Before joining the Counterterrorism Bureau, Mr. Siberell was Principal Officer in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. In Washington, he completed tours in the State Department Operations Center and the Executive Secretariat. Mr. Siberell.

TESTIMONY OF JUSTIN SIBERELL,[1] ACTING COORDINATOR OF COUNTERTERRORISM, BUREAU OF COUNTERTERRORISM, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Mr. SIBERELL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member Carper, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. The Department of State is working closely with the Department of Homeland Security and other U.S. Government Agencies to counter ISIL and to keep America safe.

Mr. Chairman, we face an evolving terrorist threat environment that is increasingly dispersed and adaptive. This new reality requires that we strengthen partnerships globally, including with our European partners. I would like to describe some of the steps we are taking to do just that. I have submitted a longer statement for the record.

In partnership with a broad coalition of countries across the globe, we have made progress in degrading the capabilities of transnational terrorist groups. In particular, the U.S.-led Global

[1] The prepared statement of Mr. Siberell appears in the Appendix on page 47.

Coalition to Counter ISIL has made important progress in reducing ISIL's control of territory in Iraq and Syria as well as constricting the funds and foreign terrorist fighters (FTF) available to it. At the same time, terrorist groups continue to exploit instability along with weak or non-existent governance, sectarian conflict, and porous borders, in key regions of the world, to extend their reach, terrorize civilians, and attract and mobilize new recruits.

In the face of increased military pressure, ISIL, al-Qaeda, and both groups' branches and adherents have pursued mass casualty attacks against symbolic targets and public spaces. Terrorist attacks in Bamako, Beirut, Brussels, Jakarta, Paris, San Bernardino, and elsewhere demonstrate that these groups remain resilient and determined to continue targeting innocent civilians.

Mr. Chairman, the Department of State is working to address and to mitigate the threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters and other radicalized individuals around the world, particularly in Europe. We are working with partners to increase information sharing, augment border security, and strengthen legal regimes in order to enable more effective counterterrorism efforts.

This engagement has yielded positive results: 45 countries with whom we have engaged have either passed new laws or updated existing laws to address the threat caused by foreign terrorist fighters. The United States now has in place agreements with 55 international partners to strengthen efforts to identify, track, and deter the travel of suspected terrorists. We have provided support to the International Police Organization (INTERPOL) to enhance its role in serving as a focal point for sharing critical FTF identity data with countries around the world. Fifty-eight countries and the United Nations (U.N.) now contribute foreign terrorist fighters' profiles to INTERPOL.

Many of these actions were guided by the requirements upon member States that were identified in U.N. Security Council Resolution 2178, a landmark document developed by the United States and agreed to, unanimously, by Security Council members in September 2014.

We continue to work with DHS and our 38 Visa Waiver Program partners to strengthen our vital security and counterterrorism partnership, including by implementing changes contained in the Visa Waiver Program Improvement and Terrorist Travel Prevention Act of 2015. The Visa Waiver Program gives us unprecedented leverage to hold our partners to the highest standards of security in issuing passports and screening travelers—and it is vital to the security of the homeland as well as to the security of our closest allies.

We have increased our engagement with our European partners in the aftermath of the horrific terrorist attacks in Paris and Brussels. Earlier this year, we deployed Foreign Fighter Surge Teams, composed of experts from across the U.S. interagency counterterrorism community, to several European countries, including Belgium and Greece. These interagency teams are working with partners to identify concrete areas for tightening cooperation in order to identify, disrupt, arrest, and prosecute suspected foreign terrorist fighters.

The Department of State is strengthening our international partners' border security through the development and the deployment of the Terrorist Interdiction Program (TIP) as well as by working with the Department of Homeland Security to deploy key technologies to assist governments with more effectively identifying and targeting suspect travelers. These programs provide a highly valuable capability to countries for strengthening border controls through enhanced technology and training.

Effective border security is one of the most essential tools governments possess to deny terrorists the space and the freedom to plot and carry out attacks. And, our efforts, in this regard, are aimed at ensuring our international partners will adopt and implement the effective procedures and technology to enhance our collective security.

We are also increasing our focus on identifying and preventing the spread of violent extremism—to stop the radicalization, recruitment, and mobilization of individuals to engage in terrorist attacks. Yesterday, the Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) released the first ever joint strategy on countering violent extremism, which articulates an expanded effort to better understand and address the drivers of radicalization and to disrupt the recruitment into terrorist groups.

Mr. Chairman, there is no greater priority than keeping America safe from the threat of terrorism. The Department of State works in close partnership every day with our colleagues at DHS and in other government Agencies to counter the threat posed to the United States by terrorist groups, like ISIL. We greatly appreciate Congress' interest and support of our efforts.

I look forward to your questions and our discussion today. Thank you.

Chairman JOHNSON. Thank you, Mr. Siberell.

Mr. Mayorkas, obviously, the headlines nowadays are about the long lines at the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), so I do want to talk a little bit about that. We did have a briefing by Admiral Peter Neffenger in the Senate Commerce Committee. I just want your assessment of what is causing that. What is the root cause of lines as long as 3 hours when getting through, for example, Chicago O'Hare International Airport?

Mr. MAYORKAS. If I can, Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for the opportunity. Let me separate Chicago O'Hare and the 3-hour lines that were experienced about a week ago, because, quite frankly, that was error on our part. That was a failure to address, with appropriate staffing, a very predictable surge at a peak time of travel. So, that was an aberration, if you will, with respect to the Agency's failure to address what it was ready for.

Chairman JOHNSON. So, we can separate Chicago O'Hare, but there are problems at other airports. So, let us talk about the problem in its totality.

Mr. MAYORKAS. So, we would identify, I think, three general factors, if I may—and they have arisen over the course of quite some time.

First, and very importantly, we have enhanced security measures at our airports in response to an Inspector General's (IGs) report that was published last year. That Inspector General's report iden-

tified certain deficiencies in the Agency's protocols. And, we have since executed a 10-point plan, directed by the Secretary, to address those deficiencies.

Chairman JOHNSON. OK. Let me stop you right there. Do you have a metric, in terms of what those enhanced security measures mean—in terms of throughput? Do we have the average number of passenger throughput, versus what it was, and versus what it is today?

Mr. MAYORKAS. So, I would have to report back to you on that, Mr. Chairman. I do not have that at my——

Chairman JOHNSON. OK. I would ask for that be submitted afterwards.

Mr. MAYORKAS. Most certainly.

Second, over a number of years, the staffing at TSA dropped considerably. And, it dropped at a time—and this is the third factor—when there was an increase in travel volume. And so, I would say that those three factors, together: enhanced security,—which we will, of course, not compromise—an increase in travel volume, and a reduction in the staffing of our personnel. And, we are addressing all three of those very vigorously.

Chairman JOHNSON. So, talk about the staffing, because we have also had representatives from U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) that are having a hard time with staffing. I will tell you that, in Wisconsin, there is not one manufacturer that can hire enough people, so just talk about the staffing. Is it a budget-related issue? Is it the fact that we are simply not able to attract and recruit enough people? Is it an attrition problem? Are people leaving for certain reasons?

Mr. MAYORKAS. There are multiple factors. And I appreciate the opportunity to explain—and I should, first, thank you and your colleagues for a $34 million reprogramming that allowed us to hire additional personnel on a very short term basis, to convert part-time personnel to full-time, and also to pay overtime, so that we can be ready for the summer surge in volume.

There was a purposeful effort to reduce staffing over a number of years and to move to a risk-based methodology that relied on TSA PreCheck and other throughput accelerators, to include "Managed Inclusion"—a program that we have since eliminated, both following the Inspector General's report and also under Administrator Neffenger's leadership and assessment of the security imperative. We have suffered attrition because of the pay that TSA employees receive and because many of them are part-time looking for full-time opportunities. And, there are better opportunities, in what can be a transitional workforce, by virtue of that part-time status.

So, there are multiple reasons—and we are talking each and every one of those. We are converting quite a number of part-time positions to full-time positions. We are taking a look at the pay structure, which, of course, we would need to partner with Congress to alter. The TSA employees are not on a general schedule (GS) pay schedule.

We are also taking a look at the staffing models that we employ. For example, we have skilled screeners—airport screeners—performing functions that do not necessarily require those talents. And, we want to move those talents to where they are needed and

to employ people—divestiture officers—those that communicate to passengers in line that they need not take off their shoes if they are in a TSA PreCheck line—but, if they are not, they need to take off their shoes, their coats, etc.

Chairman JOHNSON. San Francisco is contracting with a private firm to do the TSA security, correct?

Mr. MAYORKAS. Yes, it is.

Chairman JOHNSON. How many other airports are using that same model?

Mr. MAYORKAS. I know there are others. I do not have the exact number. Our ability to staff the security at airports is a voluntary—it is a partnership with the local airport. It is a voluntary relationship. But, what I think is critical, from a security perspective, is that, even if it is a private company, they must, of course, maintain security protocols according to our standards.

Chairman JOHNSON. So, the question I had is this: with those private sector contracted companies, are there the same long lines at those airports?

Mr. MAYORKAS. San Francisco International Airport is a major hub that does have some wait time issues. They are not as acute as some of our top airports. And, I should say, it is the top airports, at peak times, that create the wait time phenomenon. And, we are focused, therefore, on the top 20 airports, at the peak times, and surging staffing accordingly.

Chairman JOHNSON. We are going to have Admiral Neffenger here, I think on June 6th or 7th, so I will get into greater detail with him. I know he has been doing a top-to-bottom assessment of this. You talked about a layered approach toward border security. I want to talk a little bit about a layered approach to airport security as well. We had a very interesting hearing, "Dogs of DHS." I am a big proponent of K–9 units. There is no technology that even comes close to the ability of the nose of a dog. Can you just talk a little bit about it? It has been a year under Admiral Neffenger. He has been doing this basic assessment. How close are we to a reengineering of airport security?

Mr. MAYORKAS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Admiral Neffenger is a phenomenal leader—and I use that adjective advisedly. The assessment is underway, but the changes are underway as well. Admiral Neffenger has not waited to complete the assessment before implementing the reforms that are already identified as needed.

You mentioned canines. We have deployed additional canines and are looking to deploy more. They are, in fact, an extraordinarily effective tool, both from a security perspective and, critically, from a throughput perspective, because individuals who pass the canine review, if you will, can go through expedited screening just as though they had enrolled in and had succeeded in being approved for TSA PreCheck. So, the canine deployments—from a risk-based approach—reengineering the TSA PreCheck process—maximizing the marketing of the TSA PreCheck. It is a security imperative. It is also a throughput advantage.

We went, last year, from a daily average of 3,000 enrollees into TSA PreCheck to now, where we are close to an average daily enrollment of 15,000. I think 2 days ago we reached the 16,000 mark.

So, those are two examples of the reforms that he has instituted while the assessment is underway—not waiting until it is completed.

Chairman JOHNSON. OK. Well, thank you. Just so you know, I will be highly supportive of beefing up and increasing the use of K–9 units. I think that is one of the best things we can do, in terms of a layered approach. Senator Carper.

Senator CARPER. Thank you. Mr. Chairman, I had not planned to address TSA, but it is something that I think we are all interested in. I flew back in from Hanoi, Vietnam, came back in through San Francisco, California, connected yesterday morning, and landed at Dulles, in Virginia. What I witnessed in travel there—and earlier in the month of May and in April—most folks on this Committee have TSA PreCheck and that is how we get through airports. And, time and again, I went quickly through TSA PreChecks and saw long lines of people waiting who were not TSA PreCheck folks. I know, in talking with Admiral Neffenger several times in the last 2 weeks, one of the things that we have to do—it is a collective responsibility, but we have to get more people in these trusted traveler programs. And, the numbers that you just cited—we are up to 16,000 per week, where, previously, TSA was at 5,000 a week in sign-ups—we have tripled that. That is very good. We want to continue to do that.

TSA used to have a marketing program. They used a paid media program. They have not used that for a while and I think they are ramping that up to get the message out again. A pretty good television (TV) commercial—or put it online—people waiting for it could be like 10, 20, 30, or 40 minutes to get through regular checks, while people are zipping by going through TSA PreCheck. That is just a great commercial—very easy to understand.

But, the problem we have at TSA—they have a tough job. They have all kinds of people wanting to get through the security, get on their planes, and go someplace. And, by the same token, we have to make sure that nobody gets through that is going to create mischief or mayhem on an airplane. There is a tension that we have to deal with.

You have a terrific leader. I do not know who figured out we should ask Admiral Neffenger to be the head of TSA, but you have a great leader—and some of the problems they had in Chicago, that you have mentioned, were management problems. They knew the folks were coming. They should have known. They should have staffed for it. And, it was a failure of leadership in that instance—and the leadership, I understand, has been changed—and that is good.

At London's Heathrow Airport, they are doing some very interesting things, as you know, in terms of modernizing the procedures you go through for the security checks. And, I understand that Delta Air Lines is funding a couple of lanes—21st Century lanes down at Hartsfield Jackson Atlanta International Airport—and that is good. We want to encourage other airlines to do the same kind of thing. But, I am told the processing time for people going through TSA—rather, through regular checks, is about 25 percent.

Jeh Johnson, our Homeland Security Secretary, sent a letter, I think, to Fortune 100 companies asking them to consider paying

for TSA participation for their employees—particularly, the ones that are more senior. And, that is something I would urge us to do on our own. We all have Fortune 100—we have Fortune 500 companies in our States. Why do we not, as Members of our Committee, send them a copy of Jeh Johnson's letter with a cover letter of our own saying, "This is what Secretary Johnson has asked 100 companies to do. Why do you not consider doing the same thing as well?" And, the private sector pilots—the Chairman has mentioned this. There were a number of pilots that we had the private sector in—I do not know, a half dozen or more airports around the country—where the private sector is actually doing this. I think there is an authorization for, maybe, three more of those.

The last thing I would say is just regarding leadership. Leadership is the most implement element in any organization I have ever been a part of—whether it is this organization or the ones that you all are a part of. And, at the State Department and at DHS, we need strong leadership. And, you have a great leader in Admiral Neffenger—and we look forward to having him here before the Committee.

That is not what I wanted to talk about, but it is timely—and it is important.

I just want to say that the people at TSA—when I go through TSA, I thank the people who work there. If they are doing a good job, I thank them. I cannot tell you how many times people have said to me, "Nobody has ever thanked me. Nobody has ever thanked me before." I tell them who I am and what I do—and people appreciate that. Two of the most important words you can say, when people are doing a good job, are just, "Thank you."

As you know, Secretary Mayorkas, we have had a number of hearings here on VWP. People are concerned that VWP is the soft underbelly. They do not understand how it has morphed from a travel facilitation program, years ago, to one that enables us to get more information out of the 38 countries that we partner with. Would you just take a minute to briefly mention some of the ways we have tightened up VWP to make sure that we have all of the information—more and more information that has value to protect us—and, at the same time, we protect our security. Thank you.

Mr. MAYORKAS. Thank you very much, Ranking Member Carper. With respect to the Visa Waiver Program, I would answer the question in two parts.

One is with respect to the individual traveler. An individual traveler who seeks to avail himself or herself of the Visa Waiver Program must, of course, submit an application beforehand—and we have strengthened that application to capture more data, so we know more about the individual traveler before they arrive in the United States. We added, in fact, 22 additional fields to the application. And, those additional fields have, in fact, elicited data that has been very material to our security determinations—whether to allow a Visa Waiver Program applicant to arrive here in the United States under that program. So, from the analysis and the assessment of the individual traveler, we have strengthened the application form in very significant ways.

And, then, for a country to qualify as a Visa Waiver Program country, there are, of course, statutory requirements that are very

critical to our homeland security mission—and there are additional requirements that we, ourselves, have imposed—and Secretary Johnson has strengthened those requirements. The participating country must have a visa refusal rate that is under a particular percentage in order to ensure that they are not a source of visa fraud. We have critical homeland security and law enforcement partnership agreements that a country must sign and must implement in order to qualify as a Visa Waiver Program country. And, we use the Visa Waiver Program as a mechanism to drive better cooperation and better information sharing with key international partners.

And so, from both a micro and a macro perspective, the Visa Waiver Program actually enhances our homeland security.

Senator CARPER. Great. Thank you. I have one last quick question. In the 2016 omnibus appropriations bill, we provided the Department of Homeland Security with, I think, about $10 million for grants to counter violent extremism—and $10 million is not a lot of money. It sounds like it is, but it is not. How is DHS going to ensure that it has ample resources to effectively deal with this threat? How can we help further?

Mr. MAYORKAS. Thank you very much, Senator. The challenge of violent extremism is one of our top priorities. The Secretary has made it one of his top five priorities. We created the Office for Community Partnerships to strengthen our efforts in this critical mission area. And, the name is actually very significant because, what we used to do, frankly, is we used to have discrete lines of effort throughout the Department—separate Agencies and separate offices had very important and very effective work underway, but we were not united in our effort. And, we were not necessarily aligned in our allocation of resources. And, under the Secretary's umbrella initiative of "Unity of Effort," we brought all of those resources and all of those efforts together in the Office for Community Partnerships.

And, the name is important because, ultimately, the community, itself, is the most effective means of countering violent extremism. And, what we do is we equip, we assist, we train, and we empower local communities in the struggle. And, under George Selim's leadership, we are going to allocate the $10 million—for which we are very thankful—in a grant program that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will administer. We are tapping into FEMA's grantmaking expertise to administer—to ensure that we employ those funds as effectively and as usefully as possible. In fact, we are engaging with stakeholders now to ensure that the plans that we develop are, in fact, the plans that the communities, themselves, believe are most prudent and most effective.

It is a very difficult challenge. ISIL is extraordinarily sophisticated and extraordinarily focused on its propaganda internationally, including its very able use of social media in its effort to radicalize individuals here in our homeland. And so, we have to counter that message—as you have alluded to earlier—and we cannot do it, of course, as a government, alone. We need to partner, not only with communities, but also with the private sector—and we are working with technology companies, students, universities, and colleges to really engage in countering violent extremism mes-

sages in a peer-to-peer (P2P) format, which we think is the most effective way to proceed.

Senator CARPER. Thank you for all of that.

Chairman JOHNSON. Senator Portman.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR PORTMAN

Senator PORTMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for holding another hearing on a critical topic.

I will say, we have not made much progress. And, with all due respect to what we just heard about some of the new approaches that are being taken, I think it is hard for us to sit here this morning and say that ISIS is, in fact, being contained, which is what the Administration has said on occasion. Of course, ISIS is also called the "Junior Varsity (JV) team" and ISIS was called "a bunch of guys in a truck." I think that was all misleading rhetoric. And, sadly, if you look at what has happened, you have to say that ISIS continues to grow. It continues to grow in a lot of respects. One, is a destabilizing effect on the Middle East—well beyond Syria now. Obviously, we are once again trying to retake Fallujah, Iraq. We have more and more military assets going into Iraq after precipitously pulling out of Iraq.

I think you have to also say they have further destabilized Europe. The Chairman talked about the number of refugees that have moved to Europe—many illegally—and we see what has happened, obviously, with the attacks in Paris and Belgium. But, it goes well beyond that.

ISIS also poses a greater threat to the United States, based on everything that we are hearing in public testimony. I assume you two would not disagree with that—that it is a greater threat, today, than it was the last time we held a hearing. Their ability to reach out to people continues to grow. When you look at what is happening on the Internet and the real social media communication that is going on—we are losing the battle.

And so, my only concern about the back and forth this morning—and I have a lot of respect for Mr. Mayorkas, as he knows, and, Mr. Siberell, I do not know you, but it looks like you have a good background and that you are doing your best. But, I think there is not a sense of urgency here. And, I think, it is right that we have passed some legislation here, out of this Committee, that can be helpful. It is correct that we did provide some more funds for some of these important uses, but I would say on all three levels—as I see them, one is the military level—really going after ISIS, particularly, in Syria and Iraq. I do not believe we are doing what we should be doing to be more aggressive and to be able to eliminate their ability to attack us, attack Europe, and attack other places.

Second, on the border security front, we continue to have gaps. As the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Director told us, in this Committee, we have serious gaps in intelligence, in terms of being able to know who the Syrian refugees are who are coming to this country—and yet, they are coming.

And then, finally, I think, perhaps, the most important area—the one we have not yet been able to figure out—is this—what I would call, "counterterrorism communication," to put it broadly—and,

specifically, online. I looked at some recent data. We are facing a very effective online opponent. They have a very slick narrative.

When we are asked to look at some of the ISIS propaganda online, we tend to see the stuff that has to do with violence and extremism. Here is a report that we received recently. A single month this summer, 52 percent of the nearly 900 propaganda messages that ISIS sent out were focused on quality-of-life issues; 37 percent hit military themes; and only 2 percent touched on brutality or violence.

So, they are sophisticated. They are reaching out to alienated youth in the West and elsewhere. We see this. I mean, I do not think we can say that there are fewer jihadists going to the Middle East, can we? I think it is increasing. The number of foreign fighters is increasing.

So, I guess what I would ask this morning is, what are we doing to respond to this increased capability they have—to the urgency of this problem? What would you say is the most important thing we should be doing?

I noticed, Mr. Siberell, you talked about the Global Engagement Center (GEC) at the State Department. We have talked about the CVE effort at the Department of Homeland Security. We have talked about the Office for Community Partnerships. You talked about Director George Selim this morning. I know these are nascent groups. They are all about a year old—or less, I think, at the State Department. I assume the State Department started this new group because the Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications (CSCC) was not working well and had not provided the kind of counter-messaging that you had hoped.

Are you all working together? I think it is great that there is a "Unity of Effort" initiative now at the Department of Homeland Security. Is there unity of effort, in terms of our government? And, would you say—maybe, I will ask you, Mr. Siberell, first. Would you say that we are effectively countering the messaging we have talked about this morning?

Mr. SIBERELL. Thank you, Senator. The coordination within our government, on this issue, is definitely strengthening. It is a major challenge. I would agree with you that ISIL's use of propaganda—the use of social media and the Internet—to propagate their message and to use the Internet as a very effective tool to recruit new members really has been unprecedented. And, it is not something that we have seen used as effectively by any other group, previously.

I think their message has been blunted. That narrative of victory that they relied upon so successfully in their early period of recruitment—if you think of the 2014 and early 2015 era—there have been significant losses that ISIL has suffered. That narrative of victory has been blunted somewhat. They are not delivering effectively on governance. And, you noted the statistics on—they are focused—52 percent of their messaging is on quality of life. Well, they have suffered in their ability to provide that quality of life. And, the Global Engagement Center is a new effort. It is intended to build broad networks, globally, to coordinate messaging against——

Senator PORTMAN. How long has it been up and running?

Mr. SIBERELL. Just since earlier this year. There was a new Executive Order (EO) that authorized the establishment of the Global Engagement Center.

Senator PORTMAN. Do we still have the Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications?

Mr. SIBERELL. No.

Senator PORTMAN. And, why not?

Mr. SIBERELL. It has been folded into the Global Engagement Center.

Senator PORTMAN. So, you are suggesting that their narrative is less compelling now because they have had fewer victories and because they cannot focus as much on quality-of-life issues? Does this mean there are fewer foreign fighters that are being drawn to the Middle East?

Mr. SIBERELL. Well, the cumulative number of foreign fighters is something we have—is unprecedented. That is something we have never seen in any previous——

Senator PORTMAN. Let me restate the question. Are you saying that it is effective, in terms of what we are actually all looking for, which is fewer foreign fighters—fewer of these, let us say, alienated youth from Western countries, particularly, being drawn to the Middle East? Is that happening?

Mr. SIBERELL. We believe there has been a decrease in the number of foreign fighters traveling to the conflict, yes.

Senator PORTMAN. So, you think there is a decrease in the number of foreign fighters?

Mr. SIBERELL. Yes.

Senator PORTMAN. Can you give me any information on that, in a follow-up communication, as to why you think that and what your numbers are based on?

Mr. SIBERELL. I would be happy to do that. These are numbers and conclusions that also come out of our intelligence community (IC)—their observations of less force strength of ISIL——

Senator PORTMAN. But, you would disagree with me this morning? You think that we are turning the tide? You think that there are fewer foreign fighters coming into the Middle East and, therefore, posing less of a risk to the United States?

Mr. SIBERELL. I think that there has been a decrease in foreign-fighter entry into the Syria-Iraq conflict, but there has been an increase in other places—Libya, as an example. There are other places where ISIL does continue to attract new adherents—new followers. They continue, as you pointed out, to associate themselves with existing insurgencies—and that is a problem. It is not something that is localized in Iraq and Syria. As you have noted, it is a global phenomenon that we have to confront around the world—not simply in one single place—as difficult as that is.

Senator PORTMAN. I think it would be misleading, based on other Administration officials, who have testified in public—I am not talking about our classified briefings—to say that we are making progress—to say that it is decreasing, but I would love to see your statistics on that and where you got them.[1]

Mr. SIBERELL. OK.

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[1] The information provided by Mr. Siberell appears in the Appendix on page 87.

Senator PORTMAN. So, Secretary Mayorkas, would you say that DHS is communicating directly and coordinating with this new Global Engagement Center?

Mr. MAYORKAS. Senator, I am not particularly familiar with that aspect of our communication—on the international front. My focus has been domestically, countering the violent extremist messaging of ISIL as it is targeted to the homeland. I would have to defer to my experts in the international arena to——

Senator PORTMAN. Well, my time has expired. I have to—thank you, Mr. Chairman, for indulging me. I guess, what I would say is that this Committee would be very interested in knowing what the level of coordination is between the State Department and DHS. Let us face it, social media is not subject to boundaries. And so, the people you are trying to address in those communities are the same people who are hearing this message overseas. And, I would hope that we could have better communication, within our government, with the "Unity of Effort" initiative.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman JOHNSON. Senator Peters.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR PETERS

Senator PETERS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate our witnesses testifying today on this very important topic.

Certainly, I think it is always important to remember that ISIS is responsible for the deaths of tens of thousands of Muslims. And, we have to actively engage the Muslim community, both abroad as well as the Muslim community in our own States—and in this country.

As a Senator from Michigan, I am blessed to represent a very vibrant Arab-American, Muslim community in Michigan. Some of the most patriotic individuals that I have ever met are part of that community. And, certainly, they need to be a part of any solution to counter the radical extremism that we see coming from ISIS and the recruitment efforts that are occurring in our communities.

Mr. Siberell, I understand—or, in fact, I have a copy of a new report[1] that just came out, I believe just yesterday, on the Department of State and USAID's joint strategy on countering violent extremism. For the panel, could you summarize what you think are the key parts of this new strategy? And, how does it differ from the past? And, why do we believe that this will be more successful than anything we have done in the past?

Mr. SIBERELL. Thank you, Senator, for the question. Yesterday, we did release the joint Department of State-USAID CVE strategy. It is the first time the State Department and USAID have released such a strategy. What it gets at, is the essential determination and conclusion that our effort in confronting violent extremism—terrorism, globally—needs to be more comprehensive. We need to scale up our efforts to better understand the drivers and the roots of the radicalization that is leading to recruitment into these terrorist groups—that is enabling these groups to continue to recruit, identify, and attract new members, despite the fact that they offer

[1] The Department of State and USAID Joint Strategy Report on Countering Violent Extremism appears in the Appendix on page 53.

only misery, death, and destruction in the communities that they control.

We understand that we have had significant success in blunting the capabilities of groups over time and, certainly, great success through intelligence, military, and law enforcement efforts in removing terrorist leadership. Yet, these groups continue to attract new followers.

So, this strategy is an acknowledgment of the fact that our approach—and when I say "our," it is the United States working in partnership with countries around the globe—needs to be expanded to better understand what is driving people to be attracted to the ideology that these groups propagate as well as what can be done to address those factors in a more effective fashion. So, it lays out a series of strategic objectives, the first of which is to invest more seriously in research itself—better understanding these drivers and the factors leading to radicalization.

It then discusses the importance of building international understanding of the effective measures that can be adopted by governments at the national and subnational levels. It addresses the importance of orienting some of our capacity building and development efforts toward those drivers, beginning to blunt the radicalization process, and also helping countries to deal with those who may have been radicalized—to deradicalize and to be provided off-ramps, effectively, for joining up with these organizations.

It also addresses the importance of effective counter-narratives. That is an area where we are investing—and the Global Engagement Center will be leading in that effort. And, the Global Engagement Center—just to address the Senator's earlier question—it is an interagency organization housed at the State Department, but with representation from across the Federal Government.

And then, finally, the strategy addresses the importance of rehabilitation and reintegration efforts—and these are for efforts related to those who have, for instance, entered into the detention system—the prison system—and what governments can do to better reintegrate those—or rehabilitate those—who have renounced violence.

So, the strategy, we believe, provides us a strong framework to more coherently implement policies and programs around the world to develop this more comprehensive approach, which we believe is merited.

Senator PETERS. Thank you. And, that is an overview of what is happening overseas. Mr. Mayorkas, if you could, please talk a little bit about what is happening in our local communities, as I mentioned at the outset of my time, in the vibrant Arab-American, Muslim communities that we have here in the United States and, in particular, in Michigan. I know your Department has engaged with the community on a regular basis. Secretary Johnson has been in the community as well. Could you give us an assessment of where we are, how important those efforts are, and what we should expect in the future?

Mr. MAYORKAS. Thank you very much, Senator. Secretary Johnson has actually visited and engaged with quite a number of communities across the country. I visited Detroit a number of years ago, in my prior capacity at USCIS, for the very same purpose,

from a different perspective, at that time. And, I have also, of course, visited Minneapolis, Boston, and New York.

Our efforts in the community are absolutely vital and one of the things that we are very focused on, as a Department—and, quite frankly, across the government—is actually being in the community, finding, identifying, empowering, and equipping local, trusted voices to be the critical messengers in the battle to counter violent extremism—whether they be faith leaders, educators, parents, civic leaders, or the like.

Our Office for Community Partnerships equips local communities with tools—with toolkits and messages—and also helps them identify the symptoms of an individual on the path to radicalization. Across the Administration, we created the interagency CVE Task Force to make sure that the "Unity of Effort" initiative is not only accomplished within the Department of Homeland Security, but across the government. And so, we have harnessed the resources of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC), and other Agencies that are focused on the security and safety of the American people. We work in the communities—with the communities—partnering with them to really amplify the voices and really employ the tools to reach the people who are on the path to radicalization.

Senator PETERS. In the number of communities that you mentioned—and others that I know you have been involved in—what have you found the reaction from those communities to be? Have they been active and willing partners? And, do you consider them strong allies in your efforts?

Mr. MAYORKAS. We very much consider them very strong allies. They, themselves, share the concern, not only for the safety of the Nation, but for the safety of their respective communities. No one—no parent wants to lose a child to violent extremism. No parent wants to see a child travel to a conflict zone and join a terrorist organization. No responsible parent, of course. And so, they are close allies. We have brought leaders from communities across the country into the Department of Homeland Security—into our offices to understand their perspectives, to better understand the sensitivities, and to, frankly, learn from them how we can best partner together.

We do not, of course, have a monopoly on the best ideas and how to both work with and impact the communities that we are trying to reach. And so, it is very much a collaborative effort. It is very much a partnership with those communities.

Senator PETERS. Thank you. My time has expired. I appreciate the efforts of both of you. Thank you.

Mr. MAYORKAS. Thank you.

Chairman JOHNSON. Senator Ayotte.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR AYOTTE

Senator AYOTTE. Thank you, Chairman.

Secretary Mayorkas, when we have a VWP application, is that application cross-checked with both our "terrorist watchlist" and our "no-fly list?"

Mr. MAYORKAS. Senator, yes, that application—the data in that application is run through multiple databases. And, I should say,

the Visa Waiver Program traveler is vetted at a number of different points——

Senator AYOTTE. OK. So, you have the "terrorist watchlist," and the "no-fly list." I assume there is our FBI criminal database—the recordskeeping process for our criminal records. What other databases?

Mr. MAYORKAS. It is the "terrorist watchlist," and the "no-fly list," our law enforcement databases, which you have identified, and also other intelligence databases. And, I can certainly provide—subsequent to this hearing—greater specificity on which of those databases are checked.

Senator AYOTTE. OK.

Mr. MAYORKAS. But, it is a full complement of databases.

Senator AYOTTE. So, here is my question. When we look at the attacks that happened in Paris, first, and then, subsequently, in Brussels, my question is this: We know that many of the European countries, and, in particular, four countries—the United Kingdom (U.K.), Germany, France, and Belgium—have actually received some of the greatest numbers of foreign fighters that have gone back and forth between either Iraq or Syria. And, my question is pretty straightforward: Those that we know were involved in the Paris attacks—or the Brussels attacks—were any of those individuals not on our "terrorist watchlist" or our "no-fly list"—which is a smaller subset of the "terrorist watchlist"—or our other databases? Do you know the answer to that?

Mr. MAYORKAS. I do not. I would defer to our experts and I will, certainly, follow up with you, Senator.

Senator AYOTTE. So, this is a really important question. And, the reason I think it is a really important question is that we are only as good as the information that we have. And, we can add additional questions on the VWP checklist, but we do not do an in-person interview with those that apply for the Visa Waiver Program, correct?

Mr. MAYORKAS. We do not do a consular interview. That is correct.

Senator AYOTTE. Right. I mean, it is a pretty large program, with 38 countries involved. So, we are not doing an in-person interview. We have added some additional questions, but it is really what comes in and what goes out that is the most important, in terms of how well we are doing. So, I think it is really important for this Committee to understand whether any of the individuals that we know were involved in Paris—that have been identified in Brussels—were they on the "terrorist watchlist?" Were they in any of our other databases? If not, then we better understand why not. And, we better understand, as we look at the countries of origin—that we see if there are gaps in our information sharing. And, the reason I ask this is because it has been pretty widely publicized, for example, that Belgium had very serious issues with their law enforcement capability, as we know that information was shared from countries, like Turkey, about at least one of the individuals involved in the attacks—and that information was not acted upon. And so, would you agree with me that this is pretty important for us to understand? Because, the program is only as good as the information we have, in terms of how this vetting happens.

Mr. MAYORKAS. If I may, Senator, this is absolutely an important issue. Whether or not an individual is on a "no-fly list" is not necessarily dispositive of whether or not our security vetting would prevent an individual that would pose a threat or danger to the United States from traveling here.

Senator AYOTTE. Well, I would agree, but if they are not on the "terrorist watchlist," which is a broader list than the "no-fly list—the "no-fly list" is a subset of the "terrorist watchlist"—and if they are not at least on the "terrorist watchlist," if they are not in our FBI database, or if they are not in some of these other databases that we, obviously, cannot discuss here—if they are nowhere, it is a lot less likely that we are going to discover them. Would you agree with me on that?

Mr. MAYORKAS. Senator, not necessarily. I would——

Senator AYOTTE. OK. Tell me why you think we are going to discover them.

Mr. MAYORKAS. If I may—and I will keep it specific to the Visa Waiver Program. The application that a traveler must complete is a very comprehensive application. In fact, in our effort to strengthen the Visa Waiver Program, that application has become even more comprehensive. And so, we have picked up data for an individual traveler, who is not, necessarily, in our databases, but we have picked up data about that traveler and that has revealed information that has enabled us to deny that individual the ability to travel based on——

Senator AYOTTE. So, let me ask you this: How many VWP applications are there? How many are in the program? How many people?

Mr. MAYORKAS. I would have to get you that data.

Senator AYOTTE. So, I think it is important to understand how much individual investigating is done on each of those applications. So, in other words, when I get an application, if I am an investigator, how much follow-up work is done on each application?

Mr. MAYORKAS. Senator, what I would appreciate is the opportunity to have our experts brief you in a classified setting as to how we address the extraordinary amount of information we receive on those applications.

Senator AYOTTE. OK. So, this is just what I am trying to get at here. We know that there were deficiencies in Belgium. I know that the Secretary is looking at countries of concern, but information sharing is the critical piece here in order for us to protect our citizens—whether they are in the Visa Waiver Program or not. But, in particular, with this category of individuals, because they do not have to take the extra step to get a visa. And, I think it is important, whether it is in a classified setting or not, that we understand whether, of the individuals that were involved in Brussels and in Paris, were any of them in any of our intelligence databases, first?

Second, how many folks do we actually have in this Visa Waiver Program?

Third, for on a hard-copy application, on how many of those do we have the opportunity to, actually, individually investigate aspects of that application?

So, that is why the lists become important and that is why the intelligence databases become important, because, presumably,

with the numbers, we cannot individually investigate each application. So, what worries me is that you have a significant, obviously, number of foreign fighters that have returned to these European countries—and the sharing of information with our allies is critical. It is also the critical piece that determines how effective our Visa Waiver Program is.

So, I know my time is up, but I hope that we will have an opportunity to really break this down, so we can fully understand how thorough the vetting is for this program. Thank you.

Mr. MAYORKAS. Mr. Chairman, may I seek your indulgence to——

Chairman JOHNSON. Sure, because I am going to seek your indulgence next.

Mr. MAYORKAS. This is a very important point. Allow me to make a number of points.

First, we vet every single Visa Waiver Program traveler's application. Every single one. One——

Senator AYOTTE. And, what does that vetting involve?

Mr. MAYORKAS. That involves checking against our databases—not only the name of the individual, but also pinging against our databases and our extensive holdings—all of the information that we collect through that application. And so, sometimes the information that is of secondary importance, if you will—not necessarily pertinent to the individual, but pertinent to other individuals' identities, whom we identify on the application, has proven to be quite material in our security vetting. And, I could explore this further with you in a different, classified setting. That is the first point.

Two, the ease with which an individual might travel from one European country to another, by way of example, is very different than the ease with which—or the difficulty with which someone might travel from a European country to the United States. Our security protocols at last-point-of-departure airports are extraordinarily robust—and we have multiple layers of security. And so, the travel from one foreign country to another is not to be viewed as synonymous with the ability of an individual to travel from one foreign country to the United States, specifically.

Third, there is a difference between a refugee, to give a particular example, being processed across a border, from one European country to another, and what we consider and what we employ in our security vetting. The difference between the processing of an individual—the capturing of the biographic information—and allowing that individual to travel through within the European zone, ultimately, to resettle there, is a very different process than our multi-tiered, rigorous screening process for refugees here in the United States.

Senator AYOTTE. Right. Well, Mr. Secretary, I appreciate your description, but that is why I want to know how many folks are in the database—or not. And, second, the refugee issue is, obviously, a separate issue than the situation of "I am a citizen of Belgium, I am in the Visa Waiver Program." I am not necessarily—unless we know someone has been back and forth and how good our information is—it is really important. So, I would also like to know how much we are able to get—given the volume—I would

like to know what the volume is and how much follow-up work we are actually able to do, if we do not have someone on a database.

Thank you.

Senator CARPER. Mr. Chairman, I do not normally interject myself into the conversation like this, but I would like to ask for just 30 seconds to say something that I think is pertinent. We have not talked a lot about the preclearance program. I hope, at some point, we will have an opportunity to do that. We are trying to grow that. The idea behind preclearance is that it pushes out our borders further and further into other places, so that folks that are coming through preclearance in other countries have interviews and have their biometrics taken there.

And, the other thing is that everybody that comes through via the VWP, when you get to this country, we collect—if I am not mistaken—their biometrics. They are all fingerprinted. The program has gotten better and better and better as time has gone by. Is it perfect? No. Can we do better? Yes. We have to continue to improve it. But, a lot of work is being done and I think we need to acknowledge that.

Thank you.

Chairman JOHNSON. OK. I want to quickly chime in. From what I know—and without giving you my rationale—I believe the greatest threat we have, in terms of risk factors, stems from foreign fighters—or ISIS operatives—coming to America and threatening the homeland. And, the least risky is the United States Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) because, with proper vetting, we can really reduce risks there, with the number we are bringing in. So, that is the lowest risk.

Then, I would say the Visa Waiver Program is the next highest risk.

But, I think our greatest risk is from foreign fighters or ISIS operatives going through Africa, into Central America, and coming up through our completely porous border.

So, that is my ranking in terms of risk assessment: the lowest risk: USRAP; the next highest risk: the Visa Waiver Program; the highest risk: coming through our porous border. I just want your rankings, Mr. Mayorkas and Mr. Siberell. Just the ranking. No rationale. We will talk about it later in my questioning. What do you think is the ranking, from the lowest risk to the highest risk?

Mr. MAYORKAS. I have not ranked them. I would want to think about that. I think all of the avenues——

Chairman JOHNSON. OK. That is fine. Think about it, because I will come back to it in my questioning.

Mr. Siberell, do you have a quick answer to that?

Mr. SIBERELL. I do not have a relative ranking of that either. I would say that, with the Visa Waiver Program, as I think we have discussed previously, this is a program that enables us to have—and provides us leverage—huge leverage over the Visa Waiver Program partners to require improvements and the strengthening of their own processes. And so, therefore, it is effectively a border security program. It is very strong.

Chairman JOHNSON. OK. Again, I am a supporter of that. I think, honestly, the ranking is kind of obvious, but think about it

and I will come back to you in my questioning. I do not want to take any more of Senator Booker's questioning time.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR BOOKER

Senator BOOKER. Gentlemen, thank you very much for the incredibly difficult work you have done—and do—every day—the service you render to our country. I am grateful to you both.

There were really colossal and consequential intelligence failures on the part of our European allies that allowed some of these horrific attacks to take place. For instance, we understand now that there were a lot of gaps in the ability of EU member countries to collect information about people who traveled to fight with ISIS in Syria, Iraq, and, now, even Libya—even some of the countries, themselves—and we now know that Belgium has a lot of problems, internally, as a Federal system divided by language, geography, and culture. There are eight different security agencies, three languages, and seven parliaments. In Brussels, a city of 1.2 million people, there are 19 communes, each with its own mayor and administration. Their Muslim communities are very different than ours, in Europe, in that our Muslim Americans define themselves as Americans and feel very integrated into society. European Muslims do not have that. There are a lot of challenges for our European allies.

Within the EU, General Michael Hayden has said that EU member States share more with the United States, which is a good thing, than with each other. But, this allows challenges and problems in Europe, I imagine, to fester and to explode—as we have seen. Information sharing among EU member States, today, is often compared with where we were pre-9/11, which involves a lot of overlapping, stovepiped security entities.

And so, I would just like to, for a second, look at what has happened, since the Belgium attack, with our European allies—and to see if they are starting to really change their procedures and their policies. And, do you believe that there is really political buy-in for sharing across borders in European countries around counterterrorism? Is there adequate coordination going on—information sharing and the like? Either of you may respond.

Mr. MAYORKAS. I am happy to jump in first, Senator. Thank you very much. So, the issue of information sharing is critical—as I identified in my opening remarks—of course, critical to homeland security, in terms of the sharing of information with us. And, it very well may be true that they share more information with us than they do with each other, because we demand that information in order for travelers to arrive here in the United States, either through the Visa Waiver Program or otherwise. They have, in fact, advanced considerably in the sharing of information, understanding the imperative post-Paris and post-Brussels—and I can cite some specific examples.

We are very encouraged that the European Union passed a passenger name record (PNR) agreement for the collection and sharing of passenger name record data—information that is a critical snapshot of who the individual is—well in advance of the travel within the European territory. That is one example.

Two, they have really empowered and equipped Europol as a central repository of information and cooperation—really a coordination hub—of which we participate, considerably, in the collection, the dissemination, and the sharing of information. They now have the European Counterterrorism Centre (ECTC) in Europol. They have the European Migrant Smuggling Centre in Europol—and that is serving as a great hub. I think they are making tremendous advances in the collection and the sharing of information. They have a ways to go. They do not necessarily collect and share passenger name record information with each other. They are marshaling through privacy and other interests that have served as a challenge in the past. I think the EU PNR agreement is, frankly, a milestone in that effort and I would defer to my colleague for any other comments.

Mr. SIBERELL. Well, I would agree with all of that. I think that there is political will now, within Europe, for improving their own systems, integrating watchlists, beginning to collect PNR data, and to use that effectively, as Secretary Mayorkas noted. I think that this political will is there today. It is somewhat late in coming, but it is a result of the fact that they have large numbers, as we all know, of foreign terrorist fighters that have gone off to Syria. This has been a crisis for some time. The Paris and Brussels attacks really brought this home. We have seen, certainly, a change in the way that they are approaching these issues—a greater willingness and understanding that they need to improve their systems and a greater openness to work more closely with us—even more closely than they had been, which was already close.

Senator BOOKER. So, after the 9/11 attacks, we created the fusion centers, which I think have been really effective, having seen them as a local official and, now, as a U.S. Senator. You are mentioning things like Europol, but are they really replicating what has been successful here, in terms of the fusion centers that we are using? Are we seeing them move rapidly, as we did, in that direction?

Mr. SIBERELL. What we have seen them do—and I will also defer to Secretary Mayorkas—is to lay out the series of steps that they need to take to better integrate their systems. I think the aspiration is for, ultimately, a unified list, like we have developed since 9/11. But, in the meantime, what they need to do is to build better integration between their lists and to ensure that you can have a single point of search against all of their holdings. And, that is an area where we can help them—and we are prepared to provide them technical assistance as they work through that project.

Senator BOOKER. And so, on that point, the House just recently passed H.R. 4314, the Counterterrorism Screening and Assistance Act of 2016, to accelerate our role in supporting them. And, I guess my question is: there is a lot that we have learned, a lot of resources that we have, and a lot of technology that we have developed. How can our systems better help them improve their capabilities? Are there things that we should be doing to help share those best practices and to provide that kind of technology—that this body here should be acting on with great, deliberate urgency?

Mr. MAYORKAS. Senator, I would say, absolutely, yes—and we are. And, let me, if I can, give you a bottom line to your question, which is that I think they are improving in the sharing of informa-

tion. They are on the right path. They are not where we need them to be. But, we are working to make sure that they are.

I am actually joining the Attorney General and others, such as General Francis Taylor, the leader of our Intelligence and Analysis Office, who is here today. We are going to Europe, on Tuesday, to address the very issue that you raise.

We have offered our technological advances in this area, the Secure Real Time Platform, the Automated Targeting System (ATS), and the Global Enrollment System (GES). We have offered those critical instruments that we, ourselves, have developed and, of course, avail ourselves of in order to assist them in this imperative—this security imperative.

Senator BOOKER. Great. And, I do not have time to go into this line of questioning, but I just want to reiterate, in terms of CVE efforts, there is a problem with government-run CVE efforts, because they are delegitimized—really the "kiss of death", when it comes to our involvement in countering a lot of the messaging that was brought up in earlier questioning. And, I just want to encourage the efforts that I am seeing, which are going on and that are allowing a thousand flowers to bloom—that are more authentic voices. And, one of the most authentic voices—and I will just say this in conclusion—is former foreign fighters, who, themselves, have been disillusioned with the toxicity, the hatred, and what they have seen and experienced. Often, they are very persuasive as a buffer—or an antidote—to the toxins that are being spewed by ISIS. I just would like to say that and to encourage you. I was very happy about the State Department and USAID unveiling the joint strategy, but I am just hoping that we are investing substantively in CVE—and I said this to Secretary Johnson. CVE should not mean law enforcement. It should really mean these other efforts that are going on, which are empowering local communities, helping to elevate authentic voices, and really doing the things that actually work to counter violent extremism.

Mr. MAYORKAS. Senator, we could not agree more. And, that is the ethic that we are, frankly, executing. It is not our voice that is going to move the mountain of this challenge but, rather, the voices in the community.

I attended an extraordinary, quite frankly, peer-to-peer challenge, where students from all over the world competed in developing countermessaging programs. It came from students and it was focused on reaching students. Facebook was a critical partner in that endeavor. We are working with technology companies, so that they serve as platforms for these flowers to bloom. We are working with philanthropic organizations (CBOs), the community-based organizations, faith leaders, teachers, schools, parents, and peers—most critically. And, you have identified an extraordinarily powerful voice: those who once were on the wrong path and have realized the grave problems of their prior ways.

Senator BOOKER. Thank you, sir, that is music to my ears. And, as a Jersey boy, it is almost like Bruce Springsteen music to my ears. Thank you very much.

Chairman JOHNSON. Senator Ernst.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR ERNST

Senator ERNST. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Gentlemen, thank you for joining us today.

First, I want to start with a comment, because we have had a lot of great discussion this morning, I think, in regards to ISIS propaganda and, actually, combating that. I know Senator Portman mentioned earlier in his comments that we really need that governmentwide coordination in our efforts to combat propaganda as well as, I think, to work in the communities. And, I share those concerns. I think all of us do. And, I have joined with Chairman Johnson and Senator Booker to introduce a bill that would require the President to combat terrorists' use of social media. That is where we see so much of this coming out of, so I do hope that we are able to move that bill forward in the Senate—and I just want to thank both of you for partnering on that. And, we do have a lot of folks that are concerned. We hope to work very well with you as we move through a number of these processes.

Then, Deputy Secretary, if I could start with you, please. I understand the benefits of the Visa Waiver Program. I know that we have it, but, still, there are some security concerns—as Senator Ayotte was echoing some of those—but we have 38 countries that participate in that, from what I understand. Is that correct?

Mr. MAYORKAS. Yes.

Senator ERNST. And, are all of them meeting the necessary requirements as they go through the vetting?

Mr. MAYORKAS. Senator, thank you very much. The requirements are a prerequisite to joining the Visa Waiver Program and to remaining in the Visa Waiver Program. We have strengthened that under Secretary Johnson's leadership.

If, in fact, a country—if we determine or assess that a country is falling short of its obligations under the Visa Waiver Program, then we develop a remediation plan with a timeline and strict requirements in order to ensure that no traveler that is arriving in the United States poses a threat to the United States. We have, in fact, employed that mechanism when a country has fallen short. And so, we are quite rigorous in the requirements of the Visa Waiver Program.

Senator ERNST. Are there any countries not meeting the requirements right now?

Mr. MAYORKAS. Senator, there are. We have them on programs and any further details I would be happy to share with you in a different setting.

Senator ERNST. Certainly. I appreciate that, because that is something that I think the public is concerned about, as we have a number of countries involved in this. And, the public really does not know what is being followed up on, so, I think, as long as we stay on top of that—if it is regular that they are meeting their security requirements—how do we check that? How do we know that?

Mr. MAYORKAS. Yes. I should say this underscores one of the critical benefits of the Visa Waiver Program, which is that we do have this leverage with another country—a country that wishes to remain in the program. We use it as a tool to ensure compliance with extraordinarily stringent obligations that serve the security of our

homeland. It is a perfect example how the Visa Waiver Program serves as a tool of security, rather than otherwise.

I do wish the name was changed because the term "waiver" suggests some sort of relaxation of a security requirement when, in fact, the opposite is true. Not only do we capture an enormous amount of information about the individual traveler wishing to avail himself or herself of the program, but we also use the program—and other nations' desires to participate in it—as a driver of information sharing, information collection, and greater security partnership with the United States. It really dovetails with the question that Senator Booker posed, with respect to how a European country does with its security mechanisms. Perhaps, they do better with us than they do with each other by virtue of their participation in the Visa Waiver Program and their desire to avail themselves of that program.

Senator ERNST. OK. Thank you. I appreciate that explanation.

Mr. Siberell, media reports indicate that we sent a Foreign Fighter Surge Team to Brussels a month before the attacks there. And, what challenges prevented us and the Belgian authorities from preventing the attacks? And, additionally, is our Foreign Fighter Surge Team still on the ground there? If you could answer that first, please.

Mr. SIBERELL. Thank you, Senator. The Foreign Fighter Surge Team that was deployed to Brussels—I should first say that that followed on cooperation that we have had undergoing, with the European countries, since 2013, when the problem of individuals traveling to Syria first manifested itself. This is before ISIL was a factor—when it was Al-Nusra and the other al-Qaeda-affiliated groups. So, we have had a long-standing dialogue with our European partners on these issues.

After the Paris attacks, we had discussions within the government to determine what other things we can do now to push our European partners to a heightened level of cooperation. Are there gaps that we can identify? So, we put together interagency teams that went out to Brussels and had a dialogue that was quite mature and open. The Belgian Government is open to these consultations—and across issues like document integrity, passport issuance integrity, and targeted screening—techniques that we have developed—that DHS, in particular, has developed—helping to instruct the Belgians on those new techniques—better integration of watchlists and improved information sharing—all of these areas were identified in the work plan of that Foreign Fighter Surge Team.

So, the Foreign Fighter Surge Team made an initial visit, as a group, to identify where we would have expanded cooperation—and they are ongoing, actually. So, there is a work plan that has been developed and we are continuing to send individuals back and forth. In fact, we have Belgians also coming to the United States. It is an elevated partnership, effectively.

Senator ERNST. OK. Was there anything that could have been done by our Foreign Fighter Surge Team to assist before that attack happened? Is there any way we could have helped to close up that gap?

Mr. SIBERELL. I am not aware of any specific piece of information that would have been provided or revealed by our Foreign Fighter Surge Team members prior to the attack.

Senator ERNST. OK. And, I am going to jump to the Iraqi Kurds, for just a moment, as well. As you know, the Iraqi Kurdish forces are one of our critical partners—if not the most critical partner we have in the fight against ISIS. And, I understand that the Administration just allocated—or designated $415 million in financial assistance to the Iraqi Kurdish forces. Can you provide the Committee with additional details on where the assistance will come from, who it will be going to, and what purpose it will be for?

Mr. SIBERELL. Senator, I think I will have to take that question back and get you an answer. From the counterterrorism perspective, I would agree with you that the Iraqi Kurdish forces have been among our closest partners and, in coordination with the Government of Iraq, have provided a critical counter to ISIL, pushing ISIL out of considerable areas that they encroached upon, including in northern Iraq. And, the Kurds continue to play a critical role with us in the coalition to confront ISIL. But, I will have to get you an answer on that.

Senator ERNST. I would certainly appreciate that.

Gentlemen, thank you for being here, today. I, certainly, appreciate your time and efforts.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman JOHNSON. Thank you, Senator Ernst.

Mr. Siberell, in Mr. Mayorkas' opening statement, he talked about how ISIS has gone from directing activity to inspiring it. I would agree that al-Qaeda directed and that brand of Islamic terror was a centralized operation that directed activity. But, my take on ISIS is that their method of using social media has been to inspire. Outside of their caliphate—their territory—they are inspiring. But, what concerns me is their progression. They are now beginning to direct. Is it not true that there are reports that they had a hand in directing the Brussels attack—that they have heard different names for this—but we will call it an "external operations unit" beginning to direct. So, they have gone beyond just inspiring, to having this "external operations unit" and starting to direct attacks.

Mr. SIBERELL. Senator, I think you have pointed out the essential difference and why ISIL poses a new kind of challenge than al-Qaeda had previously. Al-Qaeda was made up, effectively, of clandestine cells—individuals who had to become a member, had to be vetted, effectively, by the organization, and then were operating in a clandestine manner—secretly, in a number of locations around the world, in which they devised plots and challenged the security of our partners, globally.

ISIL works using a completely different model. They do have, obviously, this core of individuals concentrated in Iraq and Syria. They have a very disciplined military structure to pursue their efforts there. But, at the same time, they make use of the Internet—social media—to inspire others—individuals who may not actually have become members of the group, but who can act on their behalf. And, that also reflects the difference in time we have, from when al-Qaeda was at its height, to where ISIL is, today, with the

Internet and social media—having access to those platforms in a way that al-Qaeda was never successful in using.

But, if I could just answer your question. It is true, yes, that ISIL has identified—we know they have identified, among the foreign fighter cadre, those with skills that could be useful in infiltrating back into their home countries to carry out plots. So, the "external operations network" that ISIL has developed is a very real danger. And, we have been working against it and have had some success in doing so. But, it is absolutely the case that they have also not only trained operatives, but that they have trained individuals to inspire attacks using social media—deliberately—including using individuals in the United States.

Chairman JOHNSON. So, we may be nibbling around the edges. We may have started to take back some of that territory in Iraq. But, they are growing, they are evolving, they are metastasizing, and they are starting to send out their operatives—let us face it, through the refugee flow, the enormous—the 1.8 million refugees flowing into Europe. And, I am going to go back to, again, my question, because I think the answer is quite obvious. The refugee program, literally, we can assure that whatever the number is—10,000—those refugees that might be let into this country should pose no risk. You set up criteria—women and children or relatives of Syrian-American citizens that have the financial capability to support them. Again, taking 10,000 out of 4 million displaced refugees—we can make sure that we take no risks with those refugees.

The same is true with the Visa Waiver Program. I agree, I think it is—combined with preclearance, we can really reduce the risks. So, in the order of what concerns me regarding, potentially, ISIS operatives coming to this country—the least concern I have is the refugee program and then, next, is VWP. By far, my greatest concern is our porous Southern border. Correct? I mean, when we were down in Central America, I heard a new term—a new acronym: special-interest aliens (SIA). So, is that not true? And, does that not also point to the fact that we have to secure our border?

Mr. Siberell, you first.

Mr. SIBERELL. Well, I would defer to Secretary Mayorkas on the Southern border issues. I think those are three categories of concern and we have to ensure that our border security measures are effective in preventing any of those categories of individuals from threatening the American people.

Chairman JOHNSON. I will also point out that, certainly, from what I have witnessed, ISIS is very strategic. You do not take your foreign force and take over vast territory in Iraq without really having been very strategic. And, as we watch them dangerously evolve, I am highly concerned. Mr. Mayorkas.

Mr. MAYORKAS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. First of all, we are very focused on special-interest aliens—individuals from designated countries that seek to enter the United States illegally. We are extraordinarily focused on that. We may not agree, today, Mr. Chairman, on the level of security on the Southwest border. That border, in our estimation, is more secure than it has been in a long time.

One of the primary areas of concern——

Chairman JOHNSON. Let me just stop you right there, in terms of the actual numbers. OK? Unaccompanied alien children (UACs) from Central America—let me get it here—in 2014—the enormous surge—year-to-date (YTD), through April, which is the last number we have, we had 25,500 unaccompanied children. As of April 2016, we are at 25,359. We are at the exact same level, year-to-date, of unaccompanied children.

In terms of family units, we are ahead. And, in terms of the total number of apprehensions on the border, in 2014, year-to-date, we were at 261,000. Last year, at the same point in time, we were down to 182. Right now, we are at 223. So, again, I do not see improvement, in terms of the security of our border. It just has not improved. And, it represents an enormous risk.

I will let you finish.

Mr. MAYORKAS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. First of all, the unaccompanied children and the family units pose a unique challenge because, by and large, those individuals, fleeing the three Central American countries of Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador, do not seek to evade law enforcement.

Chairman JOHNSON. OK. Again, I really do not want you discussing that because it really has nothing to do with ISIS.

Mr. MAYORKAS. OK.

Chairman JOHNSON. I was just pointing out that fact, in terms of lax security on our border. If you want to talk about the numbers I did—the total apprehensions, which are pretty much on par with where we were in 2014.

Mr. MAYORKAS. And, 2014 was far different—and far lower—than in prior years. But, if I may, getting to the point of how we ensure the security of the border—and, specifically, with respect to the terrorist threat—one of the challenges in the smuggling of individuals, is the transnational criminal organizations (TOCs) and their participation in the smuggling of individuals. We have no evidence that suggests that they are willing participants in the smuggling of individuals who are members of terrorist organizations. In fact, we have quite the opposite—that they wish no part in the overt smuggling—participation in the smuggling of terrorists. And, perhaps, it is—and it would make sense that it is—for fear that they would bring the even greater force of the United States to bear on their organizations.

The question is: Are there low-level individuals in these organizations who, unwittingly, may be smuggling an individual in, from one of these countries, who is, in fact, a terrorist? And, we are very focused on that. Our law enforcement officers—our Border Patrol agents—are extraordinarily focused on that and we have not observed any increasing concern. But, that does not suggest that we have not increased our vigilance.

Chairman JOHNSON. OK. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. Senator Carper.

Senator CARPER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I just want to return to the last part of the conversation. I want to go back to what—I quoted Peter Bergen just a moment ago. I will ask my staff to find that quote for me.

We have been down to the border—down in Central America—and, as we know, the reason why those people—kids and families—

are coming up here is because they live hellacious lives. It is dangerous. There is a lack of hope and a lack of opportunity. And, the Chairman has put his finger on the root cause in earlier conversations we have had here. And, that is our insatiable demand for drugs. And, we send money and guns down to Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador and they send drugs. And, the gangs and the folks that get our money and guns use them to make life miserable for folks. If we lived down there and we had kids, we would probably want to come up here as well.

So, anyway, it is a "needle in a haystack" problem. I think of the border as a "needle in a haystack" problem. We can find ways to make the needles bigger—and we do that with force multipliers—not just for Border Patrol, but force multipliers in the air, on the ground, and so forth. But, we also need to make the haystack a lot smaller. And, part of that is the work that we are doing in partnership with these three Central American countries. It is their version of Plan Colombia, the partnership that they have established and that we are helping to support.

I told the Chairman a few minutes ago that I thought he asked a number of important questions, but one of them was to kind of rank the order of the threat. And, he said, I think, wisely, that these people—these guys would be stupid to bed down for 2 years in a refugee program—and a most toughly vetted program, I think, for people coming to this country—and for the outside chance they would ever get here after 2 years. They are not going to do that. VWP will make that more and more difficult. We need to continue to tighten that. Preclearance—we need to grow that—and some of the other things that we have talked about.

But, I want to go back to what Peter Bergen said right here, in this room, when he was testifying—I think it was last November. In his words: "Every person who has been killed by a jihadi terrorist in this country, since 9/11, has been killed by an American citizen or resident." Has been killed by an American citizen or resident. And, our focus, wisely, needs to be on how we reach out to folks in this country and make sure that they do not become radicalized. And, we cannot do it by ourselves. We need great partnerships. We need to grow those partnerships and to work with families and organizations—faith leaders and so forth—and continue to work there. We need to fund it and to make that program as effective as we can.

I have talked to folks in other countries to see why they are so challenged in Europe by some of the folks in their Muslim community—and they have had incredible migration. We have had, relatively, little, but they have had incredibly large numbers—millions of people—going from Syria and other places into Europe. And, a lot of times, when they get to those countries, they are not very warmly welcomed and they end up leading isolated lives in communities by themselves—blocked off. And, they perceive that they are not welcome there and that there is not much hope or opportunity. And, they are very susceptible to radicalization.

One of the keys to our tamping down on those threats, here—they are not gone, because people still get radicalized here—but we want people, when they come from Syria or when they come from these other countries, where they are fleeing horror—once we make

sure they are not a threat—we want them to feel a part of this country and a part of the "American Dream." And, to the extent that we can continue to keep that alive, we will provide, probably, a lot more safety and security for our people than by doing a lot of the other things that we are talking about here today.

Senator Portman asked some questions about ISIS' campaign success and so forth. I just asked my staff to pull out really quickly, some metrics—we like metrics here. And, I just wanted to hit a couple of bullet points.

ISIS' recent losses have been severe. They have lost about 40 percent of the territory that they once held in Iraq. Coalition forces have killed more than 10,000 ISIS fighters and 20 key ISIS leaders, in recent months, including ISIS' chief propagandist and executioner. Just over a week ago, American forces carried out a strike, you may recall, that led to the deaths of ISIS' finance chief and second in command, simultaneously, which enhanced the capabilities of the Iraqi counterterrorism forces. As we know, Iraqi forces recaptured Ramadi from ISIS in January of this year. Campaigns to seize the ISIS strongholds of Mosul and Fallujah are well underway.

In May 2016—this month—the FBI Director James Comey said that the rate at which Americans are joining ISIS has dropped precipitously in the last 9 months. In 2014, 6 to 10 Americans were leaving to join ISIS. I believe that was every month. Today, it is down to about one per month.

In May 2016, ISIS announced that ISIL control 14 percent of Iraqi territory. That is down from about 40 percent. The U.S. Treasury Department also estimates that, due to the combination of falling oil prices, smuggling interdiction, and coalition air strikes, ISIS' oil revenues, which feed their efforts, are down to as low as $250 million per year. That is about half of what they used to be.

Are we done? Is it time to spike the football? No. Is what we are doing working? Yes. And, we need to continue to do more of that—find out what works and do more of that.

I have a couple of questions and I would just ask for short answers. Mr. Siberell, can you describe for us the kinds of improvements that the Foreign Fighter Surge Team is helping the Belgians to implement? Additionally, is there the possibility for these teams to be deployed to other countries in Europe? Just very briefly.

Mr. SIBERELL. Yes, the increased and enhanced information sharing, integration of watchlists, and risk-based traveler screening—techniques that we have developed, in the United States, that would be helpful to the Belgians and other governments—and we are looking to deploy those in other European countries.

Senator CARPER. Good. Thank you. Ali, in your testimony, you referenced a method by which homegrown extremists support ISIS missions through online hacking. I think you called it "doxing." Can you just explain, in a little more detail, how this works and how the Department can help to counter this threat? Thank you.

Mr. MAYORKAS. Thank you very much, Senator Carper. "Doxing" is the practice of taking the name and whatever information is available about an individual and publishing the name and that information and identifying that individual as a potential target of

terrorism. And so, ISIL and other terrorist organizations will, essentially, "dox"—will take, for example, information about military personnel that they pick off of a website—and they will publish it. And, they will identify those individuals as potential targets.

Senator CARPER. Good. And, one last question for you, Ali. How would we, with respect to soft targets—protecting soft targets—how would we increase the security of traditionally unsecured areas, let us say, of an airport? And, how would we do so in a way that does not further encumber the wait times for air travelers? And, could you just share with us, maybe, a step or two that DHS has taken towards that goal, please?

Mr. MAYORKAS. Thank you, Senator. So, soft targets have been an area of our focus for quite some time—the airports, specifically—even before Brussels. As a matter of fact, I visited Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) a little over a month ago. I met with the leaders of airport security there to talk about how they secure the perimeter. This was post-Brussels, but they had started long before. They had visited Israel, which has a great deal of experience in airport security as a place of mass assembly—and they have instituted quite a number of safeguards. The equipment at the airport and the manner in which the airport was both designed and built very much had security in mind.

We worked through our National Protection and Programs Directorate (NPPD).

Senator CARPER. I like "DHS."

Mr. MAYORKAS. As do I. [Laughter.]

That organization, under the leadership of Caitlin Durkovich, in our critical infrastructure arena, has worked with mall operators, theater owners, restaurant owners, and throughout the private sector, to ensure that they are properly trained and properly equipped to respond as soft targets to a potential mass casualty event.

Senator CARPER. Thank you very much. Thank you both for being here today. Thank you for your work and for your commitment and devotion to our country as well as your leadership in your respective Departments. This has been a good hearing. This is a threat that is going to be around facing us, in this country and around the world, for, maybe, as long as we are going to be around—and, certainly, for as far as the eye can see. Have we figured out, entirely, how to deal with it? No. These guys change their tactics and, over time, we have to change what we are doing in response. I think we are doing a lot of smart stuff—some of the smart things that we need to do. And, when I went back, Mr. Chairman, over to Vietnam earlier this week—and I was talking to a number of folks in that country, where we have a much better partnership than I would have ever imagined when I was a naval flight officer (NFO) over there during the Vietnam War. But, the spirit of working together, almost as a team, in many respects, is pretty amazing, given our history there. But, I used this phrase and I think it, probably, is germane here as well. What I said to the Vietnamese was, "If you want to go fast, travel alone. If you want to go far, travel together." "If you want to go far, travel together." And, that is really what we are trying to do here—not just in our country—and the Congress, the Executive Branch, the military, and so forth—Homeland Security—but all across the world. Folks

know this is a cancer on our planet. And, we have to deal with it. But, if we go together, work together, and pull together, we will go a long way—and we need to.

Thank you so much.

Mr. MAYORKAS. Thank you.

Chairman JOHNSON. Thank you, Senator Carper. Unfortunately, what you are saying is true—that we are going to be living with this for quite some time. And, it is unfortunate. We are, certainly, old enough to remember what the world felt like before global Islamic terror raised its ugly head and started slaughtering people.

It is a reality that I wish did not exist, but it is one that does exist. I think this hearing—as I mentioned to the witnesses beforehand, the purpose of every hearing—the goal of every hearing is to deepen our understanding and to lay out the realities—whether, we like them or not, we have to face them. And, that is kind of what I have been trying to point out. Here is the reality of the situation—not whether we like it, but we have to face it, so we can actually deal with it, effectively.

Again, I certainly appreciate the witnesses' time, your thoughtful answers to our questions, and we will keep working forward. This is going to be a long struggle. But, we will shorten it if we actually admit we have the problem and face it the way we have to: as a committed coalition of the willing—of the civilized portions of the world, because this is an attack on civilization and it has to be defeated.

So, with that, the hearing record will remain open for 15 days until June 10 at 5 p.m. for the submission of statements and questions for the record. This hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:52 a.m., the Committee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

Chairman Johnson Opening Statement
"Protecting America from the Threat of ISIS"

Thursday, May 26, 2016

As submitted for the record:

The purpose of this hearing is to examine the threat posed by ISIS to U.S. interests at home and abroad, and the actions taken by the United States government to address this threat.

As the administration struggles to formulate a comprehensive strategy and to provide the leadership necessary to accomplish the president's goal of destroying ISIS, the effects of the instability in the region continue to spill over into other parts of the world. Nearly two years ago, the leader of ISIS declared that the organization was an independent state. Since then, successful attacks in Paris and Brussels led to a warning from James Clapper, the Director of National Intelligence, that ISIS could direct terrorists in the United States to commit a similar attack. After all, ISIS provided the inspiration for the San Bernardino terrorists who killed and injured dozens of Americans last December. More recently, on Tuesday, an ISIS supporter was arrested in the Bronx.

According to some reports, there are 43 groups either affiliated with or proclaiming to support ISIS, and more than 42,900 foreign fighters have joined the group. ISIS claimed to bring down at least one commercial airliner and is the first extremist group to successfully conduct a chemical attack since Aum Shinrikyo in 1995. This is a barbaric terrorist organization whose atrocities include rape, enslavement, mass murder, crucifixions, beheadings and torture.

Today, we will ask three questions: First, what is the administration's strategy for defeating and destroying ISIS? Second, what are the consequences to our homeland security of failing to defeat ISIS? Third, what steps is the administration taking to address ISIS' threat to our homeland security?

Yesterday, our committee passed important legislation that Senator Carper and I have worked on for over a year. Our bill would help address management challenges at the DHS and bring increased transparency, accountability and effectiveness to the agency's operations, enabling the agency to better protect the American people. Today, I want to hear from the deputy secretary where we need to further improve our homeland security defenses to protect Americans from the threat posed by ISIS.

In a few months, we will mark the 15th anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. I am gravely concerned that the American people are at a greater risk of suffering a terrorist attack by Islamic extremists today than at any time since 2001.

The American people deserve a strategy to defeat ISIS. Today we will examine what more the DHS and other federal agencies must do to protect the American people from the threat posed by ISIS. I look forward to hearing our witnesses answer these key questions today.

Statement of Ranking Member Tom Carper
"Protecting America from the Threat of ISIS"

Thursday, May 26, 2016

As prepared for delivery:

Mr. Chairman, thank you for holding this hearing to examine how our government is working to keep Americans safe in light of the recent terror attacks we've seen around the world. Our thoughts and prayers continue to be with the people of Belgium and France, who have not only endured losses from terror attacks in their capital cities, but also the recent tragedy involving the disappearance of the EgyptAir flight that departed from Charles De Gaulle Airport in Paris. While we are still learning the facts surrounding the loss of the EgyptAir flight, this tragedy reminds us that securing our homeland is likely to remain an ongoing challenge for some time to come. Our efforts must adapt as groups like ISIS evolve their tactics.

Securing our borders and our immigration system is obviously a key element of keeping us safe, and we've focused quite a bit on those topics of late. Hearings on the Syrian refugee program, the security of the visa waiver program, and the thoroughness of all visa screening efforts bear witness to our focus. We found that the Syrian refugee screening process takes upwards of two years, that DHS has enhanced the security of the Visa Waiver program three times in the past 18 months, and that our government deploys special visa teams abroad to help consular officers detect fraud.

Securing our borders, however, is only half the battle. We could shut down all travel and immigration to this country and still not be safe from terrorist threats. That's because--as Peter Bergen testified in November—'every person who's been killed by a jihadi terrorists in this country since 9/11 has been killed by an American citizen or resident.' The people who carried out these attacks weren't foreign students, tourists or refugees. They were American citizens or legal residents. And in many cases, they had spent much of their lives in the United States.

For instance, the Tsarnaev brothers spent nearly a decade in the United States before carrying out the Boston Marathon bombing. Major Nidal Hassan was born and raised in America and was serving in the U.S. Army when he committed the Fort Hood attack. Syed Farooq spent most of his life in California before he and his wife committed the San Bernardino massacre. Unfortunately, ISIS knows all too well that the best way to attack America is to have Americans do it for you. That's why ISIS has put an emphasis on using social media and the internet to radicalize Americans here at home.

In order to counter homegrown terrorist attacks, we have to do our best to make sure that, when ISIS makes its recruitment pitch to Americans, their twisted message falls on deaf ears. But if ISIS is successful at radicalizing Americans, we must also be vigilant in ensuring—to the best of our ability—that we can stop almost any terrorist plot well before an attack can be carried out.

Let me be clear. DHS and other agencies are not alone in tackling the threat of homegrown terrorism. Congress must help. Indeed, all Americans must help. We can start by taking action to

keep weapons—whether they are explosives, dirty bomb materials, or guns—out of the hands of terrorists. We also need to improve the ability of our law enforcement and intelligence agencies to detect homegrown terrorism plots by helping them work through their challenges on encryption. Finally, we need to give our federal agencies the tools they need to help prevent our young people from falling prey to ISIS's online propaganda.

Late last year, I authored legislation to empower the Department of Homeland Security to tackle this challenge. This bill would create an office at DHS tasked with working with community groups, families—especially young people—and religious leaders to develop community-based solutions for stopping the recruitment of young Americans into ISIS. My bill was reported out of committee earlier this year. It was also included in the DHS Accountability Act we approved yesterday. We need to get this bill enacted into law as soon as possible so that we can further help our communities resist ISIS's recruitment efforts.

Secretary Mayorkas and Mr. Siberell, I want to commend you and your departments for the work you do to protect Americans from terrorist attacks at home and abroad. We stand ready to work with you both to make sure that your Departments have the resources you need to combat these threats. Thank you both for your testimony. Thank you even more for your leadership and for your selfless devotion to serving this country of ours. We look forward to a very productive hearing.

Statement for the Record

The Honorable Alejandro N. Mayorkas
Deputy Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Before the

United States Senate
Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee

Regarding

"Steps Taken by the Department of Homeland Security to Mitigate the Threat to the Homeland from ISIS and Affiliated Terrorist Groups and our Response in the Wake of the Brussels Terror Attacks"

May 26, 2016

Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member Carper, and distinguished Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you to discuss priorities and key actions of the Department of Homeland Security to address terrorist threats to our Nation, particularly following the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant's (ISIL's) November 2015 and March 2016 terrorist attacks in Paris and Brussels.

The threats we face today are more complex and decentralized than they were a decade ago. As Secretary Johnson has said, we are in a new phase in the global terrorist threat. We have moved from a world of terrorist-directed attacks to a world that increasingly includes the threat of terrorist-inspired attacks, one in which the attacker may never have come face-to-face with a member of a terrorist organization who lives among us and radicalizes, inspired perhaps by the messages and propaganda ISIL disseminates through its use of social media. By their nature, such inspired attacks are harder for intelligence and law enforcement to detect and could occur with little or no notice, presenting a more complex security challenge.

Lone offenders who tend to have few contacts or outward indicators that allow for early identification pose the most likely threat of violence in the Homeland today. ISIL is actively trying to inspire such individuals. The group consistently releases high-quality English-language videos and magazines promoting its alleged caliphate and calling for supporters in the West to pursue attacks in their homelands. The group's supporters are also "doxing" individuals—gathering personal information through open source research and sometimes through hacking—and then publically disseminating the information and calling for attacks against these individuals. ISIL uses social media to publicly post this data, which has included names and addresses of U.S. military, law enforcement, and government personnel. Similarly, Al-Qa'ida is working to inspire potential followers in the West. Earlier this month the group's Yemen-based affiliate, al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), released its latest issue of *Inspire* magazine, which promotes "professional assassinations" in the United States and provides a range of bomb-making tips.

Working effectively with state, local, tribal, territorial, and private sector partners is the key to countering the threat from individuals who are inspired by foreign terrorist organizations. We define these individuals as "homegrown violent extremists." During the past two years, homegrown violent extremists have been inspired primarily by ISIL due to the group's robust English-language propaganda campaign, perceived military successes in Syria and Iraq and attacks in other countries, and the unique lure of the group's alleged caliphate. In 2014, the Federal Bureau of Investigation arrested approximately one dozen U.S.-based ISIL supporters. In 2015, that number increased to approximately five dozen. The majority of arrests were for attempting to travel overseas to join ISIL or for pursuing Homeland plotting on ISIL's behalf.

While homegrown violent extremists present the most likely terrorist threat today, we remain concerned about potential plots emanating from overseas. As the horrific attacks in Paris and Brussels made clear, Syria and Iraq-based ISIL members are involved in operations targeting Western nations. We continue to assess that complex, coordinated operations similar to ISIL's attacks in Paris and Brussels are more likely to occur in Western Europe than in the United States, due to the geographic proximity of Europe to Syria and Iraq and Europe's larger number

of returning foreign fighters. Nonetheless, the group's leadership wants to launch attacks in the home countries of its perceived Western adversaries.

Secretary Johnson focused our resources in four areas in order to counter the diverse and evolving terrorist threats we face:

1. Aviation security;
2. Border security;
3. Countering violent extremism; and,
4. Information sharing and support.

I will identify several of our initial initiatives in each of these priority areas.

Aviation Security

Securing commercial aviation and protecting the traveling public is a key priority of ours. The threats are diverse, including the attempt to smuggle explosives or weapons on board aircraft, ground-based attacks, and hijacking. We have strengthened our screening protocols at domestic airports to ensure that operatives or threatening objects do not enter the secure area of the airports. Transportation Security Administration's Peter Neffenger has implemented a robust security enhancement plan, including the more focused training of TSA personnel, the elimination of the managed inclusion program, and the deployment of additional canine teams.

After a December 2014 airport insider threat incident at Hartfield-Jackson-Atlanta airport, our Department asked the Aviation Security Advisory Committee to recommend adjustments to defend against aviation employees who might seek to bypass security to smuggle weapons or explosives into an airport's secure area. In response to the Committee's subsequent report, TSA is reducing the number of access points to airports' secure areas, coordinating with the FBI to conduct real-time recurrent criminal background checks of employees with secure area access, and encouraging airport employees to report suspicious activity.

Security enhancements also have been undertaken in foreign airports, particularly in airports that are last points of departure to the United States. Since July 2014 our Department has required enhanced screening at select overseas airports. The United Kingdom and other countries have followed suit with similar security enhancements, and the European Union recently passed legislation to enhance passenger screening. We continue to expand our aviation security training to foreign partners, sharing best practices and also loaning equipment to better ensure the effectiveness of passenger screening.

The sharing of information with international partners is a critical security measure to address the challenges that international travel presents. We have strengthened our sharing agreements and protocols with foreign partners and are continuing to work closely with law enforcement and intelligence community partners to screen for watchlisted terrorist subjects.

Our work continues. Earlier this year TSA directed a nationwide vulnerability assessment of airports, in collaboration with airport operators and stakeholders. These assessments were

completed last month and we are now further enhancing security with localized mitigation plans designed to address specific local vulnerabilities. This collaborative approach has been embraced by our stakeholders and is delivering enhanced airport security nationwide.

Border Security

In response to the threat posed by ISIL and other terrorist groups potentially trying to gain access to the Homeland, U.S. Customs and Border Protection is continually refining its risk-based strategy and layered approach to border security, extending our zone of security to interdict threats as far outward from the Homeland as possible to interdict threats before they ever reach the United States.

Operating at 328 official ports of entry across the Nation, CBP processes nearly one million travelers each day. Approximately, 30 percent of these travelers—more than 100 million per year—arrive via commercial aviation.

To mitigate the potential threat of foreign fighters who attempt to travel to and from Syria, CBP leverages all available advance passenger and manifest data, including Passenger Name Records, Advanced Passenger Information System data, previous entry information, intelligence, law enforcement information, and open source information, to detect foreign fighters and others who pose a potential threat to the United States. Equally important, CBP works in close partnership with carriers and its international counterparts to prevent passengers who may pose a security threat, or who are otherwise inadmissible, from boarding flights to the United States.

Another key part of CBP's efforts involves the screening of individuals traveling to the United States under the Visa Waiver Program. Over the last 18 months, DHS, in coordination with the Department of State and Congress, has initiated a series of changes to the Visa Waiver Program to strengthen its security and ensure that the program's requirements are commensurate with the growing threat from foreign fighters, especially those who are nationals of Visa Waiver Program countries.

In November 2014, CBP introduced additional data fields to the Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) application that Visa Waiver Program travelers must complete before boarding a plane or ship to the United States. These enhancements have strengthened the security of the Visa Waiver Program.

On August 6, 2015, DHS introduced further security enhancements to the Visa Waiver Program, requiring member countries to enhance traveler vetting, data collection, and information sharing; use INTERPOL's Stolen and Lost Travel Document database; and, cooperate in the screening of refugees and asylum seekers. The August 2015 enhancements also introduced a requirement for all Visa Waiver Program travelers to use electronic passports (e-passports) for travel to the United States, improving our ability to verify the identity of the individual using the passport.

In December 2015, the Visa Waiver Program Improvement and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2015 codified many of these enhancements into law and established new travel and dual nationality restrictions for Visa Waiver Program applicants. As a result, DHS implemented new

ESTA questions regarding an individual's presence in Iran, Iraq, Sudan, Syria, and dual nationality with Iran, Iraq, Sudan, or Syria, to improve the security of the Visa Waiver Program and the protection of our borders.

Between the ports of entry, along our Southwest, Northern, and coastal borders, CBP extends our zone of security past our physical borders by using actionable information developed through integrated domestic and international partnerships. CBP works in collaboration with other DHS components and our interagency and international partners to monitor networks and patterns of illicit activity and to detect and effectively counter threats along and approaching our borders.

Countering Violent Extremism

Countering violent extremism is a critical component of the effort to counter the threat of homegrown violent extremists motivated by a variety of ideologies. In September 2015 our Department established the Office for Community Partnerships. Since its inception, the Office for Community Partnerships has worked to enhance existing relationships with communities across the country; build new relationships with the technology, marketing, and philanthropic sectors; and, find innovative ways to support those who are discouraging violent extremism.

Advancing countering violent extremism efforts also requires working in a unified and coordinated way across the U.S. Government. In January 2016, we established the countering violent extremism Task Force in partnership with other departments and agencies. Currently, our Department chairs and hosts this Task Force which includes a Deputy Director from the Department of Justice. The Task Force will synchronize and integrate whole-of-government countering violent extremism programs and activities, leverage new efforts, conduct ongoing strategic planning, and assess and evaluate other countering violent extremism programs and activities.

The Office for Community Partnerships and the Task Force are focused on working with stakeholders to prevent terrorist groups from radicalizing individuals to violence. Countering violent extremism stakeholders include federal, state, and local governments and law enforcement, civic and faith leaders, educators, social service organizations, mental health providers and the private sector. To achieve this, we are partnering with and empowering communities by providing them a wide range of resources to challenge violent extremism. Our efforts are a federally driven and locally implemented network of programs and resources aimed at applying tailored approaches to today's threats throughout the country.

Secretary Johnson has personally met with community members in 12 major cities across the country and intends to meet with many more. I have also personally met with community members in Boston and Minneapolis where, along with Los Angeles, the Department has worked with members of those communities to facilitate the development of countering violent extremism prevention frameworks.

To ensure that countering violent extremism efforts are adequately funded, the Office for Community Partnerships will soon send a formal notification to the public of an opportunity to

request part of the new appropriation of $10 million in funding for developing local countering violent extremism efforts. Specifically, this funding will facilitate the development of programs and curricula for law enforcement, community organizations, educators, and others to help them prevent violent extremism of all kinds. Providing federal funding at this level on a competitive basis for the specific purpose of supporting local work to counter violent extremism represents the emphasis we place on these important efforts.

Information Sharing and Support

The rapid exchange of information and intelligence is critical to protecting the Homeland, and our efforts in this arena have come a long way since the September 11th attacks. Today, state and local law enforcement organizations instantly run suspect names against counterterrorism databases, and we have drastically shortened the time it takes to share information about incidents as they occur.

The Department is committed to sharing classified and unclassified information about recent events and threats as quickly as possible so that our state and local partners have the information needed to protect their communities. We are also incorporating the information we and our state and local partners collect every day, including law enforcement information, into our analysis and providing that information to the intelligence community. We do so while protecting privacy and civil liberties, by ensuring our information sharing agreements are subject to a comprehensive departmental-level governance framework that examines the recipient's authorities, approved usages, controlled access, audit features, dissemination limitations, and ultimately, retention or disposition requirements.

To advance these efforts, we are developing the DHS Data Framework, which provides a common information technology platform to improve our ability to use data to support multiple DHS missions. This program will alleviate the stove-piped information technology systems we currently deploy across our Department, enabling more controlled, effective, and efficient use and sharing of homeland security-related information across our Department and, as appropriate, the U.S. Government, all while protecting privacy.

Enhancing our information sharing and security partnerships extends beyond our borders. We view expanding partnerships abroad as key to our mission of securing the Homeland. Our Department is increasing counterterrorism information sharing with our international partners and is supporting the establishment of the European Counterterrorism Center by sharing best practices. We continue to work with our allies to vet fingerprints against our data holdings and those of other U.S. agencies to identify fraud or criminal or terrorist ties, and to rapidly share information with international partners after incidents occur.

The Department is working with the European Union and European Union-member states on information integration and sharing, investigations, border controls, and enhancing the European Union's ability to collect, analyze, and share Passenger Name Record data. On this note, we are pleased with the recently passed European Union directive regarding Passenger Name Record data.

Since the tragic attacks in Paris and Brussels, we have engaged closely with our French and Belgian partners to improve information sharing and to share many of the lessons that the United States has learned over the past decade. The threat to Europe extends beyond these two countries; European citizens from a number of countries have traveled to Iraq and Syria to join terrorist groups and learn terrorist tactics and techniques. As a result, we are working with a range of other European nations to sign additional information sharing agreements and improve border protection.

Conclusion

Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member Carper, and Members of the Committee, thank you again for allowing me the opportunity to appear before you today on the critical issue of Homeland security. I look forward to answering your questions.

UNCLASSIFIED

Joint Statement of
Acting Coordinator for Counterterrorism Justin Siberell
U.S. Department of State
&
Senate Committee on Homeland Security& Governmental Affairs
Hearing: "Protecting America from the Threat of ISIS"
May 26, 2016

Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member Carper, and Members of the Committee: thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. The Department of State is working closely with Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and other U.S. government agencies to counter the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL or Da'esh) and keep America safe. This morning, I'd like to briefly describe the evolving threat environment, particularly those threats confronting our European partners, and the steps that we are taking to counter these evolving threats.

Evolving Terrorist Threat Landscape

As this Committee knows, the United States faces a fluid and fast-changing terrorist threat environment. The international community has made progress in degrading terrorist safe havens. In particular, the U.S.-led coalition to counter ISIL has made significant strides in reducing ISIL's control of territory in Iraq and Syria, as well as the finances and foreign terrorist fighters available to it. At the same time, continued instability in key regions of the world, along with weak or non-existent governance, sectarian conflict, porous borders, and widespread online presence provide terrorist groups like ISIL the opportunity to expand their influence, terrorize civilians, attract and mobilize new recruits, and threaten partner countries.

In the face of increased military pressure, ISIL, al-Qa'ida, and both groups' branches and adherents have pursued mass-casualty attacks against symbolic targets and public spaces. Terrorist attacks in Bamako, Beirut, Brussels, Jakarta, Paris, and elsewhere demonstrate that these groups remain resilient and continue to target innocent civilians. We contend that ISIL attacked Brussels on March 22, in an effort to assert a narrative of victory in the face of steady losses of territory in Iraq and Syria and generate persistent violence and fear in the West.

The United States and our partners around the world face significant new challenges as we and they seek to contend with the return of foreign terrorist

fighters from Iraq and Syria to their home countries. Evolutions in technology that enable terrorist groups to recruit adherents and inspire attacks using publicly-accessible platforms and applications are another challenge. We will release the annual *Country Reports on Terrorism* soon, which will describe these and other trends in greater detail.

Promoting U.S. Homeland Security

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and other domestic law enforcement agencies are in the lead on countering terrorist threats against the United States. The Department of State and our embassies work closely with these agencies to strengthen cooperation and information sharing with foreign countries and to prevent foreign terrorists from traveling to the United States. As this Committee knows, we have taken steps over the past year to enhance the screening of all potential travelers to the United States, including through the Visa Waiver Program (VWP).

The VWP itself helps reinforce some of our strongest counterterrorism partnerships and serves as an incentive to other governments to adhere to the strongest possible security standards. Watchlisting, screening, and intelligence gathering are some of our best tools for countering the threat of foreign terrorist travel and we use these tools every day in collaboration with our VWP partners.

The VWP is not a free pass to travel to the United States. **All travelers** coming to the United States undergo checks for ties to terrorism and are subject to **multiple layers** of security – regardless of whether they have a visa or come in through the VWP. Our VWP partners must uphold strict security standards such as sharing information on known and suspected terrorists and reporting lost and stolen passports to INTERPOL. We use VWP benefits to encourage greater information sharing and more systemic screening by our allies, and these requirements give our partners the impetus to tighten security in ways that can be politically challenging.

The 38 countries that are part of the VWP include many of our closest allies and they are proud of their status. VWP membership is so prized that many countries that are not currently members nonetheless complete program requirements, including strengthening security and information-sharing, in the hope of joining.

Countering Foreign Terrorist Fighter Transit

The Department of State is working to address and mitigate the threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) around the world, particularly in Europe. We are working with partners to put in place the fundamental reforms necessary to address this threat, which include increased information sharing, augmented border security, and strengthened legal regimes.

We are now seeing a reduction in flows of FTFs to Iraq and Syria. We attribute the reduction in FTF flows to a range of factors, including military gains by the Counter-ISIL Coalition and proactive steps by governments to strengthen and enforce border security, counter-facilitation, and counter-recruitment efforts.

In line with the landmark UN Security Council Resolution 2178 in 2014 which we helped to orchestrate, approximately 45 partner countries have passed new laws or updated existing laws to address FTFs. Through our diplomatic efforts, the United States continues to establish information-sharing arrangements, and we now have in place agreements with 55 international partners to assist efforts to identify, track, and deter the travel of suspected terrorists. We also supported INTERPOL to enhance its ability to share critical FTF identity data with countries around the world. Fifty-eight countries, and the United Nations, now contribute FTF profiles to INTERPOL. At least 35 countries have reported arresting FTFs, and 12 have successfully prosecuted at least one foreign terrorist fighter. Turkey, a critical geographic chokepoint in the flow of FTFs to and from Syria and Iraq has also increased detentions, arrests, and prosecution of suspected FTFs, and has taken important steps to improve the security of its border. Information sharing remains critical to preventing terrorist travel and we applaud the April 11 passage and signing of the EU Passenger Name Record Directive.

In particular, we have ramped up our engagement with European partners significantly in the aftermath of the Paris and Brussels attacks. This year, to supplement the close cooperation that we already enjoyed with a number of partners, including France, we deployed U.S. interagency Foreign Fighter Surge Teams to several European countries, including Belgium and Greece. These interagency teams work with partners to identify concrete areas to tighten cooperation to identify, disrupt, arrest, and prosecute suspected FTFs. We are partnering with these governments in areas including: strengthening information sharing on known and suspected terrorists, increasing effective traveler screening, and building comprehensive financial investigations.

We also continue to maintain consistent dialogue with our EU partners about necessary EU reforms that will strengthen our partners' abilities to identify and disrupt FTF travel. We have been pleased with actions taken in recent months by the EU and member states to better address vulnerabilities, including the passage of the EU Passenger Name Record Directive, something we have advocated in favor of for many years. We also know the EU is undertaking significant efforts to better coordinate EU and national-level law enforcement databases and watchlists. We continue to stress to member states the need to populate existing systems with high quality data, and we support the EU's efforts to increase the interoperability of systems. All of these steps are aimed at ensuring that appropriate border security and law enforcement officials have access to the right information at the right time to identify and disrupt FTF travel.

Expanding CT Partnerships and Capacity

President Obama has called for the United States to develop more effective partnerships around the world to confront, disrupt, and defeat the global threat from terrorism, especially threats from ISIL. Through our diplomacy and our capacity-building assistance, the Department of State is leading efforts to build these partnerships.

The success of counterterrorism efforts in countries around the world depends upon capable civilian partners. As in our domestic experience, police, investigators, and prosecutors are on the frontlines of preventing and responding to asymmetric attacks by terrorist groups abroad, especially attacks on so-called soft targets. Border and aviation security officials are working to stop foreign terrorist fighters, transfer of materiel, and terrorist threats. Moreover, local law enforcement, prison officials, and community leaders are on the frontlines to prevent and counter radicalization and recruitment to violence in their communities. The Department of State is leading efforts in these areas to build capacity and cooperation among these civilian actors.

We appreciate Congress' appropriation of $175 million for the Counterterrorism Partnerships Fund (CTPF) in Fiscal Year 2016, and we ask for Congress' continued support for CTPF in FY 2017. With these and other Department of State resources, we are building deeper counterterrorism partnerships with the governments most critical to confronting ISIL, its branches, and other forms of terrorism from the Sahel to Southeast Asia. We are strengthening the ability of key law enforcement and criminal justice sector actors

to more effectively disrupt terrorist threats in their countries and address factors that make communities susceptible to violent extremism. We are working with governments and communities in vulnerable locations across the globe to reverse support of violent extremism. Adequate resources are critical to implement the whole-of-government approaches necessary to defeat ISIL, al-Qa'ida, and other groups that threaten American lives and interests.

The Department is actively engaged in supporting partner nations to counter the spread of ISIL's affiliates and networks. For example, we have increased engagement with our North African partners to address the ISIL branch and other terrorist groups in Libya. We plan to significantly expand support for Tunisia as it copes with threats emanating from Libya. We are also providing significant support to countries in the Lake Chad Basin region as they contend with the threat posed by Boko Haram, which declared its allegiance to ISIL in 2015. For example, we are training law enforcement from Cameroon, Chad, Niger, and Nigeria on skills for conducting border security operations and preventing and responding to terrorist attacks, especially attacks involving improvised explosive devices. We also continue to build the capacity of partner countries to counter threats posed by al-Qa'ida and its affiliates, especially al-Shabaab, al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), and al-Qa'ida in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS). We are also working with multilateral institutions such as the United Nations, the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum, INTERPOL, and many others to help build partner capacities and improve international cooperation.

For FY 2017, we have also requested additional funding for our Terrorist Interdiction Program (TIP), which provides a highly valuable capability for countries to strengthen border controls through enhanced technology and training. When terrorists attempt to cross an international border, they open themselves up to the risk of apprehension. There is no excuse for governments to not enforce effective border controls; many of our partners are attuned to this challenge and are eager for U.S. advice and engagement to improve their own systems. The TIP program provides critical funding and technical expertise to help countries to screen passengers at airports, seaports, and major land border ports of entry. Through this program, we provide and train countries with Personal Identification Secure Comparison and Evaluation Systems (PISCES), a proven technology. We have implemented PISCES in more than 20 countries around the world, and hope to grow that number over the coming year.

Countering Violent Extremism

Finally, we have significantly increased our focus on identifying and preventing the spread of violent extremism– to stop the radicalization, recruitment, and mobilization of people, especially young people, to engage in terrorist activities and empower communities to help themselves confront ISIL and other threats. The attacks in Paris and elsewhere have demonstrated the ability of ISIL to inspire radicalization to violence through its messaging, including on the Internet. The Department of State has enhanced our Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) efforts, including through expanded engagement with key countries in the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia; with our domestic colleagues on the CVE Task Force; and with sub-national leaders, including local mayors and civil society, for instance through the Strong Cities Network.

We are working very closely with USAID and the newly-established interagency Global Engagement Center (GEC) to advance our CVE efforts. In collaboration with the GEC, the Department of State and USAID have requested additional resources for CVE programming in Fiscal Year 2017 – including as part of CTPF – to expand partnerships with government, non-governmental, local communities, and civil society actors who can help address key factors that drive radicalization and support within communities for extremist organizations, including violent extremist messaging and narratives and the recruitment and mobilization to violence.

Conclusion

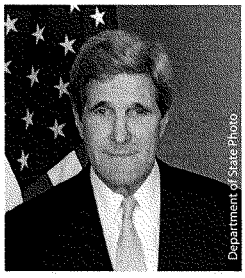
Mr. Chairman, there is no greater priority than keeping America safe from the threat of terrorism. The terrorism threat landscape remains dynamic, and we must continue to enhance and adapt our efforts to stay ahead of emerging threats. The Department of State is committed to working closely with DHS and other U.S. government agencies to counter the threat posed to the United States by ISIL, its adherents, and other terrorist actors. We greatly appreciate Congress' interest and support for our efforts. I look forward to your questions and our discussion. Thank you.

Department of State & USAID Joint Strategy on Countering Violent Extremism

May 2016

MESSAGE FROM SECRETARY KERRY

Threats from violent extremism increasingly undermine security and development around the globe. From Afghanistan to Nigeria, terrorists seek to expand their reach and resonance by exploiting ongoing conflicts and insurgency, joining forces with criminal networks, establishing safe havens in weak and repressive states, and propagating hatred via social media. Even as we work to defeat and degrade the most virulent terrorist group—Da'esh—and restrain the wanton murder, slavery, and violence it spreads, we know that its defeat on the battlefield is not enough.



John Kerry
United States Secretary of State

At the United Nations General Assembly in 2014, President Obama called upon all nations to do more to counter violent extremism. At the World Economic Forum last year, I called on the international community, including the public and private sectors, to pursue more local solutions to this global challenge. We hosted a White House Summit to Counter Violent Extremism (CVE) which brought together government, private sector, and civil society leaders, sparking a range of new initiatives and regional meetings from Astana to Olso, from Nairobi to Nouakchott. We brought this movement back to the United Nations in September at the 70th General Assembly and presented a broad-based action agenda. Building on this momentum, the UN Secretary General presented his Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, embracing the "whole of society" approach that must underpin our common effort.

Today we take another step forward. The Department of State and USAID have produced a proactive international strategy recognizing immediate needs, utilizing our strengths, and demonstrating our will to comprehensively address the challenge of violent extremism, including the root causes. Together, we are building organizational structures needed to pursue a more aggressive and integrated approach to this challenge. This is a generational struggle, but we must begin now.

Carrying forth the work of the White House CVE Summit agenda, this strategy recognizes the need to foster and empower a broad-based coalition of government and non-governmental actors to address this scourge and project a positive vision. Our strategic CVE approach positions the United States to work with partners around the globe to address an evolving threat and prevent new violent extremists from emerging. We will prevail by working together; indeed, there are roles for everyone, from religious leaders to government staff to academics, civil society, NGOs, and the private sector.

With our CVE strategy, we will deepen our understanding of the underlying dynamics feeding violent extremism and integrate a variety of efforts to blunt the spread and erode the appeal of violent extremism. We will mobilize the full range of America's diplomatic and development tools and power to meet this challenge. We will seek additional resources from Congress to expand these efforts. And we will approach our task in a measurable and accountable way—through effective stewardship of American tax dollars to strengthen our national security, while promoting our values.

Our challenge is dynamic, but we know the power of the international community to make progress when we come together. We also know that while violent extremist ideology may be appealing to a small subset of the global population, it is an unsustainable and irreconcilable worldview that the overwhelming majority of the world rejects. By marshalling our values, our partnerships, and our resources, we will expose the lies of violent extremist ideology and provide a positive vision forward. Together, we can, and we must, send a clear signal that our future will not be defined by the agenda of terrorists.

"Building on the February 2015 White House Summit on Countering Violent Extremism (CVE), we will enhance U.S. counterterrorism and CVE efforts by focusing more on prevention and tackling the drivers of violent extremism, addressing what President Obama called the 'ideologies, the infrastructure of extremists — the propagandists, the recruiters, the funders who radicalize and recruit or incite people to violence."

— 2015 Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR)

INTRODUCTION

The spread of violent extremism and terrorism pose significant challenges for U.S. national security. Violent extremists speaking a variety of languages, born of many races and ethnic groups, and belonging to diverse religions continue to recruit, radicalize, and mobilize people — especially young people — to engage in terrorist acts. Their actions not only increase threats against the United States and our allies, but also undermine our efforts to prevent and resolve conflicts, foster sustainable development, protect human rights, promote the rule of law and expand prosperity.

While the drivers of violent extremism vary across individuals, communities, and regions, there is commonality in the ideology and narratives employed by terrorist groups. Of particular concern, over the past two years, Da'esh has attracted tens of thousands of individuals from around the world to travel to Syria and Iraq to join their fight; while some have died or become disillusioned, others have become hardened in their commitment to violence. Terrorist groups such as al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula, al-Shabaab, and Boko Haram have also propagated violent extremism amidst regional conflicts and state collapse. Meanwhile, individuals have been inspired by violent extremist messages and ideology to establish affiliated cells and plot violent acts within their home countries.

The United States National Security Strategy (2015) calls for a sustainable approach to combat the persistent threat of terrorism. The United States will continue to take measures and engage in collective action with responsible partners to disrupt threats against the United States and our allies. At the same time, effectively addressing these threats requires simultaneous and complementary efforts to counter and prevent the spread of violent extremism. This includes efforts to address the specific societal dynamics and drivers of radicalization to violence and counter the ideology, messaging, and recruitment methods that extremist groups and propagandists employ to attract new recruits and foment violence. It also requires proactive efforts to prevent support for violent extremism in areas where the threat is more nascent.

In February 2015, President Obama hosted a summit of government and non-governmental leaders from over 60 countries to mobilize a global effort to coun-

Leaders from around the world participate in the White House CVE Summit in February 2015.

ter and prevent the spread of violent extremism; it is an approach involving governments (national and local), multilateral bodies (international and regional), and non-government partners (civil society and the private sector). The White House Summit on Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) and the subsequent process, which included a series of regional CVE summits, generated a broad-based, multi-stakeholder CVE action agenda and new initiatives that were presented at the September 2015 Leaders' Summit to Counter Da'esh and Violent Extremism. Subsequently, the Secretary General of the United Nations presented his Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism to the UN General Assembly in January 2016, which reaffirmed and expanded upon the CVE Summit's agenda.

Undermining our common humanity, violent extremism is inherently global. It is driven by a mixture of personal, societal, and ideational factors whose manifestations vary from one individual to the next. Violent extremism has affected different societies during different eras and in different regions of the world. The present plan of action does not provide a single solution to this challenge — there is no one tool or approach that will put it to rest forever. Instead, we need to broaden the way we think about this threat and take measures to prevent it from proliferating."
- UN Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism

A comprehensive approach to address the drivers of violent extremism is critical to advancing the United States' national security and overall foreign policy goals. Reflecting this realization, the 2015 QDDR states that the Department of State (State) and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) will work to enhance, refine, and elevate ongoing CVE efforts, particularly those focused on prevention. State and USAID have different tools, approaches, and expertise to contribute to these efforts. USAID's policy, *The Development Response to Violent Extremism and Insurgency*, will continue to provide a broad framework for using development tools to prevent violent extremism. This strategy, which is consistent with USAID's policy, provides a more explicit guide for how State and USAID will work jointly and will leverage the range of available diplomatic and development resources to have a demonstrable impact to prevent and counter the spread of violent extremism.

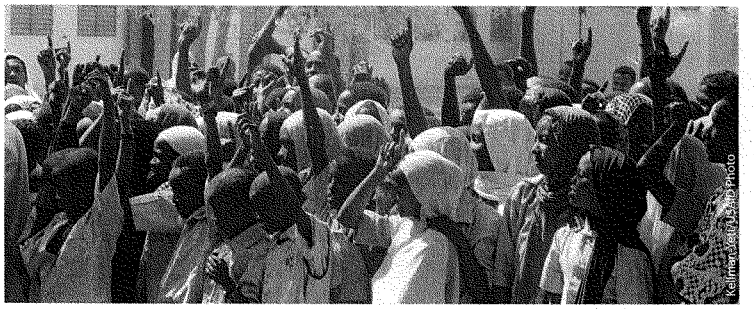
DEFINING AND UNDERSTANDING CVE

For the purposes of this strategy, CVE refers to proactive actions to counter efforts by violent extremists to radicalize, recruit, and mobilize followers to violence and to address specific factors that facilitate violent extremist recruitment and radicalization to violence. This includes both disrupting the tactics used by violent extremists to attract new recruits to violence and building specific alternatives, narratives, capabilities, and resiliencies in targeted communities and populations to reduce the risk of radicalization and recruitment to violence. CVE can be a targeted component of larger efforts to promote good governance and the rule of law, respect for human rights, and sustainable, inclusive development.

Violent extremism is not necessarily tied to a particular religion, ideology, or set of political beliefs, although there is consistency in the extreme ideology propagated and exploited by various terrorist organizations including Da'esh over recent years to justify their violence. In line with the U.S. National Strategy on Counterterrorism (2011), this strategy is principally concerned with countering strands of violent extremism that fuel overseas threats against U.S. persons, allies, and interests.

To be effective, CVE efforts must be guided by ongoing research and analysis of the context, drivers, and most effective interventions against violent extremism. The nature and range of possible drivers of violent extremism can vary significantly from individual psychological factors to community and sectarian divisions and conflicts. Actions by states can serve as drivers of violent extremism, including state-sanctioned violence and heavy-handed tactics by security actors, corruption, systematic denial of fair trial guarantees, discriminatory governance practices, state propagation of religious and/or ethnic intolerance. State repression of cultural and religious expression, especially when seen as targeting a specific religion or sect, or when perceived as so entrenched that only extreme responses could make change a real possibility, can also serve as a driver of violent extremism. As evidenced in Libya, Iraq, and elsewhere, violent conflicts and the breakdown of the rule of law can fuel and enable the spread of violent extremism.

In many environments where the risk of violent extremism is high, development has failed to take root, governance is weak, access to education and training is limited, economic opportunities are few, and unemployment is high. USAID will partner with State to bring to bear its development knowledge, the analytic tools to diagnose state fragility and economic vulnerability, and insights borne of over 55 years of work in the developing world.



Children in Chad react to a participatory theater performance as part of a USAID program to counter violent extremism.

USAID's 2011 policy on *The Development Response to Violent Extremism*, which is informed by years of programming and analysis, and continually refined based on additional research, categorized drivers of violent extremism generally as "push" factors and "pull" factors to better tailor interventions. Push factors create the opportunities for violent extremists to gain traction. For example, they can emanate from institutional and societal failures, such as systematic and gross human rights violations, ungoverned or poorly governed spaces, political, economic or social marginalization, or endemic corruption and impunity. Such deficits —whether real or perceived, and whether experienced directly or witnessed from afar — can make individuals or entire communities vulnerable to adopting violent extremist ideology or aligning with violent extremist groups. Pull factors, in contrast, help explain how adherents to violent extremism are able to attract recruits, for example by perverting religious ideology. Pull factors appeal to people's individual aspirations, such as those for material resources, economic and/or social status, spiritual guidance and purpose, adventure, friendship, or ideology, including through the use of the Internet and social media.

DESIRED END STATES OF JOINT STRATEGY

1. Violent extremist groups and individuals who would threaten U.S. citizens, our allies, and our interests are unable to attract new recruits or garner support for their operations in specific communities; and
2. Governments, multilateral organizations, and communities have the collective capacity to prevent and counter individuals and groups from becoming radicalized to violence.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. **Expand international political will, partnerships, and expertise to better understand the drivers of violent extremism and mobilize effective interventions.** The White House CVE Summit process highlighted the need to deepen international understanding of violent extremism and mobilize global, regional, national, and local action involving governments and non-governmental actors to counter it. Building on that momentum, State will continue to promote international efforts to elevate the importance of CVE, alongside security-based counterterrorism measures, refine our understanding of the drivers of violent extremism, and expand the tools for effective CVE interventions, particularly at the local level. State and USAID will support efforts by multilateral bodies and networks — including the United Nations, Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF), Hedayah, the Strong Cities Network (SCN), and the RESOLVE Network — to strengthen international CVE cooperation, understanding, and practice. USAID will also work to deepen CVE cooperation with multilateral and bilateral development part-

ners, including the UN Development Program (UNDP), the World Bank, European Commission Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development (DEVCO), and the UK's Department for International Development (DFID).

2. **Encourage and assist partner governments to adopt more effective policies and approaches to prevent and counter the spread of violent extremism, including changing unhelpful practices where necessary.** Through enhanced diplomatic engagement and targeted technical support — using research to shape these efforts where possible — State and USAID will work with partner governments (both national and local) to develop strategies, policies, and programs to reduce the appeal and spread of violent extremism. The UN Secretary General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism calls for member states to develop national plans of action to address local drivers of violent extremism, involving a wide range of government and non-governmental actors. State will work with multilateral bodies and other relevant partners to leverage existing and develop new guidance for the implementation of effective national plans. As governments increase their understanding and commitment to CVE, they may determine that changes need to be made to some of their specific policies and approaches to security, human rights, gender, education, and development to reduce potential drivers of violent extremism. Multilateral organizations, such as UN Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UNDP, the International Organization on Migration and others, are also important avenues through which we can assist governments in developing effective plans of action. In addition to encouraging and assisting governments in this area, State will also encourage countries to address the influence of individuals and institutions in their countries that are involved in propagating violent extremist ideology abroad.
3. **Employ foreign assistance tools and approaches, including development, to reduce specific political or social and economic factors that contribute to community support for violent extremism in identifiable areas or put particular segments of populations at high risk of violent extremist radicalization and recruitment to violence.** Violent extremists mobilize people by capitalizing on the grievances of those who feel underrepresented, marginalized, and left behind or who are seeking a larger purpose as well as on structural dynamics that deny them equal participation in society, fair economic opportunity, and/or equal justice. Indeed, in today's terrorist landscape, terrorist groups often thrive in areas with limited or abusive governance, weak rule of law, high degrees of violence and corruption, and limited economic opportunity, and where civil society has limited agency or space to operate. While these structural problems often require broad and long-term solutions, intermediary and targeted steps can be taken to counter the appeal and spread of violent extremism. Working closely together, State and USAID will use foreign assistance tools, to include development programs, that target identified drivers of violent extremism in specific geographic areas or for particular segments of a population and build local capacity and strengthen community resilience to counter violent extremist radicalization and recruitment. USAID will design and implement programs aimed at increasing access to opportunity, improving local and national governance, promoting cooperation and dialogue, expanding the positive opportunities for youth in society, and mitigating conflict so as to improve the conditions and reduce the vulnerability of local communities to violent extremists. At the same time, State and USAID will work together to ensure that U.S. security assistance programming does not inadvertently exacerbate drivers of violent extremism by enabling or giving the appearance of endorsing weak or abusive governance practices.
4. **Empower and amplify locally credible voices that can change the perception of violent extremist groups and their ideology among key demographic segments.** Violent extremists, especially Da'esh, have adopted effective on- and off-line propaganda strategies to radicalize and recruit individuals to violence. Employing public diplomacy and development tools, State and USAID will work to identify, create the space for, and build the capacity of locally influential voices across a range of engagement platforms to promote alternate visions, challenge violent extremist propaganda and dissuade individuals from traveling to conflict zones. A mix of short- and long-term strategies will be required, depending on target audience and desired outcomes. The interagency Global Engagement

Center (GEC), based at State, will lead efforts to coordinate, synchronize, empower, and enable partners' efforts, both government and non-governmental, to conduct effective communications campaigns to counter violent extremist groups, including Da'esh and al-Qa'ida. The GEC will also coordinate, with other agencies, as appropriate, the U.S. government's work with the private sector to counter the communications-related radicalization to violence and recruitment activities of international terrorist organizations and other violent extremists abroad.

5. **Strengthen the capabilities of government and non-governmental actors to isolate, intervene with, and promote the rehabilitation and reintegration of individuals caught in the cycle of radicalization to violence.** Violent extremist radicalization can be cyclical in that individuals become radicalized, undertake violent acts, and then proceed to radicalize and entice new recruits within their communities and/or networks to violence. The cycle of violent extremist radicalization can be self-perpetuating if societies do not put in place "off-ramp" mechanisms to address it. In collaboration with relevant multilateral and bilateral partners, State will expand programs to help governments and civil society develop effective strategies and build community-based structures to (1) identify and prevent susceptible individuals from being drawn further into the cycle, and (2) assess and monitor the risk posed by violent extremist offenders, including in prisons, and support their rehabilitation and reintegration back into society, as appropriate. This includes specialized programs to build the capacity of police, gendarmerie, prosecutors, judges, prison officials, and other criminal justice sector officials to address the life cycle of radicalization to violence in their work.

WAYS AND MEANS TO ACHIEVE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

State and USAID will seek to advance all five of the above strategic objectives by utilizing and integrating the U.S. government's various diplomacy, strategic communications, rule of law, and development resources and tools. Specifically, State and USAID will pursue the following:

1. **Enhancing CVE Diplomacy:** State and USAID will focus and expand diplomatic efforts with governmental, multilateral, and non-governmental actors to promote CVE cooperation and advance this strategy.
   - **Bilateral Diplomacy:** State will expand and elevate CVE within our counterterrorism and broader diplomatic engagement with relevant partners, including key ones in the Middle East, South and Central Asia, and Africa. State will also utilize regular diplomatic engagement with traditional allies, such as G7 countries, Australia, and European partners, to promote joint efforts to advance this strategy. USAID will use its strategic dialogues with key donors, and multi-donor platforms to elevate CVE in development.

Students from Lahore University of Management Sciences are awarded the winners of the Peer-2-Peer (P2P) Challenging Violent Extremism competition, sponsored by the Department of State and Facebook, in January 2016.

Mayors and local government leaders from around the world participate in the launch of the Strong Cities Network in New York in September 2015.

- **Regional and Multilateral Diplomacy:** State and USAID will continue to shape efforts by the UN, GCTF, GCERF, Hedayah, and other multilateral as well as regional fora to promote good practices, tools, and cooperation on CVE. State and USAID will promote and support implementation of the UN Secretary General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, including through engagement with UNDP, UNESCO, and other UN agencies. State and USAID will also engage with the various multilateral development banks, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and other multilateral development partners to enhance cooperation on CVE assistance.
- **People-to-People and Public Diplomacy:** Using people-to-people programs (e.g., the International Visitor Leadership Program and the Peer2Peer: Challenging Extremism Program) and other public diplomacy tools, State and USAID will expand engagement with sub-national authorities, especially cities, nongovernment organizations, faith leaders, the private sector, and civil society to promote CVE partnerships and initiatives. State will also support the SCN to bring together municipal and other sub-national officials to share CVE good practices and launch joint efforts. State and USAID will support regional civil society CVE platforms and other initiatives aimed at building the capacity of women, youth, religious, and other community leaders to advance CVE objectives.

2. **Focusing CVE Strategic Communications:** Under the leadership of the interagency GEC, State will undertake a range of strategic communications efforts to counter violent extremism. Working with other international partners, State will support efforts by the Sawab Center in the United Arab Emirates and other national and regional hubs to counter online messaging by Da'esh and other violent extremist actors. State will also work through its public affairs networks and engagement overseas to promote CVE communications and partnerships.

   Specifically, the GEC will coordinate, integrate and synchronize U.S. government public communications, directed toward foreign audiences abroad, for the purposes of countering violent extremism. The GEC will identify and engage the best available talent and capabilities from the U.S. and global private sectors and elsewhere, including through public-private partnerships, to counter violent extremist narratives. The GEC will develop and guide U.S. strategic counterterrorism narratives directed at foreign audiences abroad by using rigorous research and data analysis.
3. **Expanding Rule of Law and Development Programs to Advance CVE:** In coordination with our diplomatic efforts and working closely with international partners, State and USAID will expand and target rule of law and

development programs to address specific drivers of violent extremism and enhance CVE partnerships. Starting in FY 2017, State and USAID will request additional resources from Congress for these programs. Resources will be focused on areas where they will have the greatest sustained impact, and programming will be guided by rigorous analysis of violent extremism drivers, but also seek to innovate and learn in order to ensure our toolkit is strong.

Specifically, State and USAID will focus programs on building capacity in the following areas:

Criminal Justice

- **Law Enforcement:** State and USAID will enhance programs to help law enforcement officials develop positive relationships, trust, improved administration of and access to justice, and effective communications with the communities most susceptible to violent extremism. State will assist law enforcement to implement new initiatives to advance CVE, especially to disrupt the life cycle of radicalization to violence and to bridge the governance gap between police and communities. This includes developing effective tools and strategies for police-community engagement, including the identification and engagement with at risk groups.
- **Justice Sector:** State and USAID will develop and enhance programs that utilize the full range of criminal justice tools to counter violent extremism and promote rehabilitation and reintegration where appropriate. State will increase awareness and use of alternatives to detention and incarceration that would be appropriate for low-level, first-time, non-violent offenders, including juvenile justice programs. These types of programs provide opportunities for rehabilitation, reintegration, and disengagement from radicalization. State and USAID will also continue to pursue justice sector programs that help countries establish effective legislative frameworks that can protect civil and political rights and counter violent extremism.
- **Prisons:** State will enhance programs to help countries identify and address prison settings where active recruitment is taking place and to establish opportunities for rehabilitation and reintegration. Specifically, State will design programs to help corrections officials recognize and counter recruitment of other prisoners to violent extremism in their facilities, and to implement evidence-based prison management practices that mitigate the risk posed by imprisoned violent extremists. State will assist prison officials to develop programs and partnerships with religious, legal, and community actors aimed at providing opportunities for rehabilitation and reintegration as part of the strategy to counter violent extremism.

Development and Civil Society Strengthening

- **Local Governance and Community Resilience:** USAID will elevate efforts to build positive alternative paths and community resilience to counter violent extremism through improved local governance. USAID will promote peaceful solutions to grievances and frustrations that fuel violent extremism, such as supporting better dialogue between governments and citizens, non-violent approaches to problem-solving and expanding avenues for engagement in community decision-making. USAID will work with communities to be proactive, and create bridges between groups and amplify community characteristics that guard against infiltration by violent extremists.
- **Educational Institutions and Service Providers:** State and USAID will work with partner organizations and multilateral institutions to enhance programs that provide educational and social service providers in key countries with tools to address drivers of violent extremism. Specifically, USAID will seek to expand education and other social service interventions to address critical gaps and advance reforms that can counter violent extremism.
- **Civil Society and Private Sector:** State and USAID will enhance programs to empower civil society, promote broad community engagement, and expand private sector involvement for CVE. As vital partners in countering violent extremism, State and USAID will elevate their role with government partners and support their leadership and capacity development. State and USAID will emphasize work on youth, women, community and faith leaders, and the vic-

Youth leaders from around the world present a "Youth Action Agenda to Prevent Violence and Promote Peace" at the Global Youth Summit Against Violent Extremism in September 2015.

tims of violent extremism. In addition, State and USAID will support efforts to network, train, and build the capacity of civil society actors to engage in CVE efforts, including partnering with national and local governments and promoting rehabilitation and reintegration. State and USAID will also facilitate innovative initiatives with the private sector and communities to break down drivers and build viable alternatives to violence.

- **Youth Engagement:** State and USAID will expand and enhance programs targeting youth who are identified to be at high risk of radicalization and recruitment to violent extremism. State and USAID will support programs that build a sense of belonging, community and purpose. USAID will design programs to support youth empowerment, nurture networks, skills development, and civic and economic opportunities. State and USAID also will support programs that train and mobilize youth to serve as leaders in their communities and globally in the work of CVE.
- **Women and Gender:** State and USAID will expand programs that engage women as key stakeholders in preventing and countering violent extremism in their communities. Women's groups and individual women can play a critical role in identifying and addressing drivers of violent extremism in their families, communities, and broader society. State and USAID will ensure that these programs are informed by rigorous analysis of existing gender dynamics in communities and take into account the fact that women's perceptions of violence and security may be different than those of men in the community.

4. **Promoting Research and Learning:** State and USAID will increase support for efforts to understand overall trends of violent extremism and to identify and analyze the local geography, demography, and drivers of recruitment and radicalization to violent extremism: where the hotspots are; where and with whom terrorists are focusing their efforts; who is most susceptible; and why they may be motivated to join. State and USAID have developed assessment frameworks and programming guides related to conflict management and mitigation and political transition that are designed to identify and analyze issues related to violent extremism and radicalization to violence. Building on field presence, State and USAID will promote research and learning as part of programs. State and USAID will focus inquiries on what types of CVE interventions are most effective and on linkages with other development programming. State and USAID will support the new RESOLVE Network in its efforts to promote and enhance local research on both drivers and effective interventions. State and USAID will also coordinate with efforts by the domestic CVE Task Force, currently chaired by the Department of Homeland Security, to increase research

and learning on CVE in the domestic context.

5. **Elevating CVE within Broader U.S. Foreign Policy:** The United States will elevate CVE within U.S. counterterrorism and broader U.S. foreign policy decision-making and priority-setting. State and USAID will ensure that CVE considerations are taken into account as the United States determines measures to address immediate terrorism threats and pursues broader foreign policy challenges, including preventing conflict, promoting stability and peace in the Middle East, North Africa, and South and Central Asia, fostering sustainable development, and strengthening alliances and security cooperation with key states.

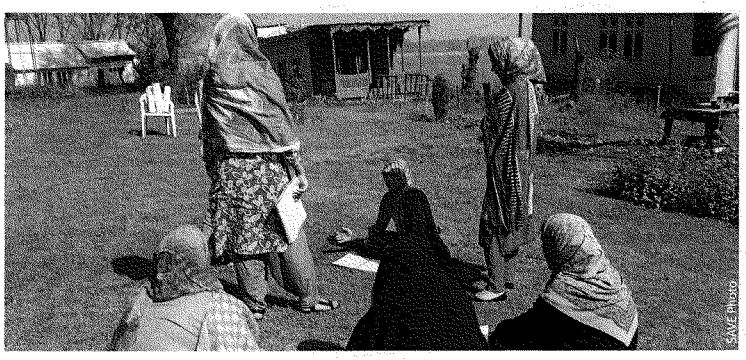
CRITERIA FOR PRIORITIZATION

To maximize these diplomatic, policy, and programmatic efforts and finite resources, State and USAID will set clear priorities for CVE engagement and assistance. Specifically, State and USAID will seek to focus engagement and assistance based on the following factors:

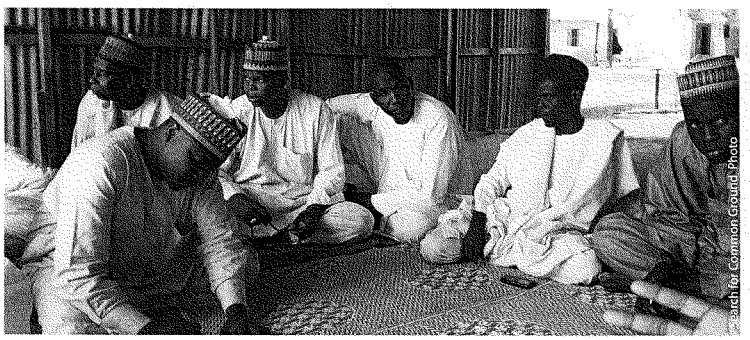
- **Extent of Threat and Risk to U.S. Interests:** We will prioritize CVE efforts to address radicalization and recruitment to violence by terrorist organizations that pose the highest level of threat and risk to the United States, U.S. persons, our allies, and other U.S. interests;
- **Potential for Emergence and Expansion of Violent Extremism:** In an effort to prevent the emergence of violent extremism, CVE programs will prioritize areas with evidence of a high risk of deepening or expanding support for violent extremism. This will especially include areas on the periphery of current terrorist safe havens, and outside those areas in the midst of conflict;
- **Ability to Reinforce Political Will:** CVE efforts will be prioritized where governments and/or sub-national and non-governmental leaders have demonstrated strong political will to address drivers of violent extremism in a responsible manner, or where political will is lacking, but can be cultivated, and is determined to be essential to effectively counter violent extremism; and
- **Prospects for CVE Results, Impact and Innovation:** CVE efforts will be directed to countries and regions that can yield results, as well as be expanded, scaled up and/or made sustainable. We will also coordinate with and, when possible, leverage ongoing assistance by other donors.

MEASURING RESULTS AND EFFECTS

State and USAID will measure progress toward achieving this strategy's objectives, developing a results framework for measuring progress. CVE programs will be measured against clearly stated objectives that are linked to the strategic objectives described above and



The "Mothers School" program brings together women in South and Central Asia to develop strategies for detecting warning signs of radicalization to violence in their communities and taking preventative measures.



As part of a U.S.-supported early warning and early response program, community leaders from northeastern Nigeria meet to address threats from Boko Haram in northeastern Nigeria.

accompanied by clear, well-developed and resourced monitoring and evaluation plans. To the extent possible, State and USAID will develop a set of common indicators to measure outputs and outcomes across CVE assistance programs, and will evaluate the longer-term effects of CVE programming. State and USAID will continue to learn from these efforts and ensure that future efforts are guided by both qualitative and quantitative monitoring information, evidence of results and effects, and where appropriate, innovation.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Secretary of State has directed the Bureau of Counterterrorism and Countering Violent Extremism to guide and coordinate CVE policy, programs, and assistance for the Department. To reflect this expanded role, the Department is renaming the bureau and allocating additional staffing resources. Designating one bureau to lead these efforts will promote a more strategic, and ultimately accountable, approach to the U.S. government's efforts to counter violent extremism abroad, as well as to facilitate coordination with the GEC and the new domestic CVE Task Force. USAID, as outlined in the 2015 QDDR, is also establishing a CVE Secretariat staffed to coordinate and synchronize its efforts.

A working group of core State, USAID, and interagency stakeholders will oversee and coordinate implementation of this strategy. Based on the above criteria on prioritization, the working group will agree upon a set of focus regions and countries for expanded, integrated CVE diplomatic engagement and programming by State and USAID. The working group will encourage and work with interested embassies and USAID missions to develop integrated CVE plans for focus regions and countries, especially to promote coordinated efforts. This will include ensuring programing is tied into the Integrated Country Strategies and the Country Development and Cooperation Strategies, as appropriate.

For example, with approximately $19 million in anticipated Fiscal Year 2015 resources, State and USAID are pursuing a new initiative to design and implement CVE programming in East Africa through an integrated analysis and program design process. A joint State and USAID team will design programs focused on the most vulnerable communities and key drivers of radicalization through field-based assessments and carefully tailored, evidence-based approaches. State and USAID will utilize lessons learned from this approach for other regions.

Finally, in line with the above section on measuring results and effects, the working group will routinely assess progress toward implementation of this strategy, including assessing resource allocations. State and USAID will adapt implementation and make adjustments as required as the threat landscape and nature of violent extremism evolves. The working group will review this strategy every two years, and update as necessary.

Designed by A/GIS/GPS
May 2016

Post-Hearing Questions for the Record
Submitted to Hon. Alejandro N. Mayorkas
From Senator Rob Portman

"Protecting America from the Threat of ISIS"

May 26, 2016

Question#:	1
Topic:	Social Media Recruiting
Hearing:	Protecting America from the Threat of ISIS
Primary:	The Honorable Rob Portman
Committee:	HOMELAND SECURITY (SENATE)

Question: In your testimony, you mentioned the Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) Effort, headed by Director George Selim. I know they are nascent, about half a year old, but what capabilities will this CVE effort bring to the table to counter-message ISIS propaganda?

What can the Office of Community Partnerships do to prevent social media recruiting where ISIS casts a broad net then draws them into the Dark web?

Response: Using reprogrammed Fiscal Year 2016 funding and work closely with the Countering Violent Extremism Task Force, DHS Office for Community Partnerships (OCP) is developing digital strategy and a dedicated team for communications and technology work related to CVE. OCP and the Task Force will build partnerships with the private sector to identify and amplify credible voices to counter violent narratives promoted by ISIL, domestic terrorists, and other violent extremists. OCP will host regional expos for tech and marketing sector leaders to meet directly with community members who can improve their online presence. These expos and the tools created by OCP will leverage the use of digital technologies to engage, empower, and connect CVE stakeholders, and support a communication narrative to counter violent extremism. Also, as terrorists continue to use the Internet to deliberately reach into our Homeland to recruit, radicalize, and mobilize the most vulnerable among us, engagement with private sector technology partners on this issue is paramount.

Various departments and agencies have long engaged with a range of key technology companies to encourage efforts to counter ISIL and other groups online. For example, Secretary and Attorney General Lynch met with social media executives in San Francisco in January 2016 and with high-tech leaders in New York in November 2015. Additionally, the DHS Office for Community Partnerships and DOJ staff engaged with social media industry representatives during the "Madison Valley" meeting at the White

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House on February 24, 2016. The goal of this meeting was to build a dialogue with technology companies to discuss ways to address terrorist use of the Internet.

The DHS Office for Community Partnerships believes that the private sector, which created so many innovative technologies our society enjoys today, can help create tools to limit the ability of terrorists to abuse these technologies. The DHS Office for Community Partnerships applauds companies' efforts to thwart the tiny fraction of their users who seek to exploit technology for nefarious ends, and is encouraged by companies' acceleration and enhancement of such efforts. The DHS Office for Community Partnerships recognizes the critical role that the private sector and NGO groups can play in developing creative and effective solutions to counter terrorists' abuse of media platforms. Going forward, the DHS Office for Community Partnerships will continue to convene a wide range of stakeholders, including communities and civil society groups, technology companies, and content producers. We are encouraged by a number of initiatives currently underway, and commend those who see the common challenge posed by terrorism and are taking proactive steps toward combatting terrorist use of technology.

As part of supporting efforts to challenge ISIL's use of the Internet, the Department is supporting the Peer-to-Peer Challenging Extremism (P2P) Contest, including the Facebook Global Challenge that occurred in February 2016. The objective of the P2P Global Challenge is to engage university students around the globe, while earning academic credit, to create and activate their own social media campaigns to challenge ideology and recruitment messaging propagated by ISIL and other violent extremists.

Since its inception in Spring 2015, over 3,000 students representing 125 university teams from over 30 countries have participated in this unique program. DHS was pleased to support the P2P competition for the third consecutive semester in Spring 2016. There were nearly 50 teams competing in the Spring 2016 program, about half of which are in the United States. This initiative is a collaborative effort between DHS, the Department of State, the National Counterterrorism Center, other U.S. agencies, and the implementing partner, EdVenture Partners. The Spring 2016 final competition was held on June 27, 2016 in Washington, DC. In January 2016, Facebook joined P2P as a sponsor to help expand the program and maximize impact. For Fall 2016, Facebook has offered to financially support an additional 100 international teams, and the Department of State will work with Facebook to manage this expansion. DHS recently partnered with the U.S. Attorney's Office in Colorado to hold its first statewide P2P competition. The Department is currently working with interagency partners, in coordination with the National Security Council staff, to scale up domestic P2P student designed campaigns

Question#:	1
Topic:	Social Media Recruiting
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Primary:	The Honorable Rob Portman
Committee:	HOMELAND SECURITY (SENATE)

and projects. This will require additional funding, as well as support from government and private sector partners to transition viable projects to market.

Question#:	2
Topic:	Passenger Rail Security
Hearing:	Protecting America from the Threat of ISIS
Primary:	The Honorable Rob Portman
Committee:	HOMELAND SECURITY (SENATE)

Question: Recent events in Brussels and Amsterdam indicate that terrorists will continue to target transportation infrastructure due to their status as "soft targets." Former TSA Administrator John Pistole remarked, "Subway stations, rail stations, trains, buses, public transportation have always been soft targets." Since the start of the 21st century, we have witnessed 5 attacks on transportation infrastructure-9/11, Madrid, London, Arras, and Brussels. All of the above attacks have targeted the transportation sector, which is crucial to national and economic security. Unfortunately, a report from the Office of Inspector General for the Department of Homeland Security gives me great pause about the security of our passenger rail services. The OIG released a report on the 13th of this month, which highlighted TSA's lax enforcement of authorities designated to it by the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 (Pub. L. 110-53). The report claims that "TSA has statutory authority to issue security directives to Amtrak based on emerging threats but does not fully enforce these directives." "As of Fiscal Year 2015, three key 9/11 Act passenger rail requirements -a regulation for rail carriers to complete security assessments, a regulation for rail security training, and a program for conducting background checks on rail employees-remain incomplete."

What are you doing to correct TSA's deficiencies regarding its regulation of Amtrak and other passenger rail services?

On the OIG Report's Highlights page, TSA cites the lengthy rulemaking process for not implementing the security regulations. However, it has been 8 or more years since the passage of the Act. Disregarding the rulemaking process, how do you justify the Department continued reliance on voluntary initiatives?

Response: First and foremost, it is important to note that the Inspector General did not identify any specific vulnerabilities or weakness in the security of passenger railroads or public transportation systems as a result of its investigations. That said, completing the remaining September 11 Act requirements is, without question, a priority for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The Administrator of TSA has made his commitment to seeing these mandates through to completion clear in communications with both Congress and his staff. It is important to recognize that seeking action through regulation is rarely an expeditious path and there are many steps in the rulemaking process beyond the control of TSA that prevent establishment of firm timelines. Rulemaking is complex and deliberative, requiring rigorous quality standards. The process often results in significant revisions at various points in a rule's development. Before publishing a proposed or final rule, TSA must address comments provided during

Question#:	2
Topic:	Passenger Rail Security
Hearing:	Protecting America from the Threat of ISIS
Primary:	The Honorable Rob Portman
Committee:	HOMELAND SECURITY (SENATE)

interagency review as coordinated by the Office of Management and Budget. TSA must also take careful account of public comments received on proposed rules, as well as the impact of TSA's rules on regulated parties and the public.

Meeting the impact analysis standards for the surface transportation rules required by the September 11 Act is particularly challenging. The potential cumulative impact of these regulations could be significant, as they require vulnerability assessments, security planning, and training program development *as well as* initial and recurrent training of all frontline employees and vetting of those employees. These requirements will affect large, national systems, medium sized communities and operators, and even small operations. They will affect a system of transportation that is, unlike aviation, intended to be open and easily accessible. The regulations must find the right balance between a complex and evolving terrorist threat and an inherently open and diverse transportation system.

I want to make clear that there is not a lack of security in the absence of these regulations. TSA has pursued rulemaking while simultaneously working with stakeholders to harden the target. As discussed below, numerous programs and measures have been initiated and implemented to protect surface transportation hubs and systems – many of which have been designed to complement and build on other Federal safety and security regulations and programs.[1] Owner/operators of high-risk systems, such as Amtrak, have consistently adopted recommendations made by TSA to enhance security. As noted above, the Inspector General did not identify any specific vulnerabilities or weaknesses in the security of passenger railroads or public transportation systems.

Based on the likelihood of continued voluntary compliance by stakeholders, TSA believes the security landscape for higher-risk surface transportation providers has been enhanced and will not be profoundly changed by future regulatory requirements. The following summarizes the current status of these rulemakings.

- Security Training: The proposed rule to meet the security training requirements has been submitted to the Office of Management and Budget for review under Executive Order 12,866.

[1] Since its creation, TSA has developed its programs and partnerships upon the baseline of safety and security-related programs of the Department of Transportation (DOT). These include 49 CFR part 659 (the Federal Transit Administration's requirements for State Safety Oversight for Rail Fixed Guideway Systems) and 49 CFR part 239 (the Federal Railroad Administration's regulations for Passenger Train Emergency Preparedness). All railroads (freight and passenger) and rail transit systems must also comply with TSA's regulations at 49 CFR part 1580 – which require security coordinators, reporting of significant security incidents to TSA, and chain of custody requirements for Rail Security-Sensitive Materials (RSSM).

Question#:	2
Topic:	Passenger Rail Security
Hearing:	Protecting America from the Threat of ISIS
Primary:	The Honorable Rob Portman
Committee:	HOMELAND SECURITY (SENATE)

- Vulnerability Assessments and Security Planning (VASP): TSA intends to issue an Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRM) to solicit sufficient data regarding the security measures industry currently employs as well as the potential impact of regulations on operations. This data is necessary conduct a robust analysis of the existing baseline of persons potentially affected by a proposed rule. This analysis will help us minimize the costs and maximize the benefits of the policy we will ultimately propose.
- Employee Vetting: TSA intends to address the vetting requirements (threat assessment and immigration check) through a rulemaking to be published in sequence with the other surface security-related rulemakings (the rulemaking for security training will set the applicability and structure for all the other related rulemakings). TSA has already satisfied the requirements of Sections 1414 and 1522 of the September 11 Act, having published an Interim Final Rule on False Statements Regarding Security Background Checks (*see* 73 FR 44665) and issued various guidance documents (*see, e.g.*, TSA's February 2007 updates to its recommended security action items for the highest-risk freight railroads, and background check practices published by the American Public Transportation Association in conjunction with TSA in 2011). TSA intends for all future rulemakings, including the surface employee vetting rule described above, to be consistent with the standards articulated in Sections 1414 and 1522.

Although TSA must still publish regulations that fully accomplish the requirements of the September 11 Act, there is substantial progress on a range of operational improvements to security and prevention/response capabilities to enhance the security of the rail sector consistent with the intent of the September 11 Act. TSA's confidence reflects both its regular interaction with the industry and the assessments it conducts, most notably through the Baseline Assessment for Security Enhancement (BASE) program.

While assessments through the BASE program are voluntary, the program has proven to be an effective method for maintaining awareness of the current security baseline and enhancing that baseline through voluntary cooperation. This voluntary assessment program focuses on efforts to implement the 17 Security and Emergency Management Action Items for Transit Systems (SAIs).[2] The structure of the BASE for transit systems has been similarly implemented for other surface modes. TSA has conducted over 430 BASE assessments on mass transit and passenger rail systems since the program began in 2006. As discussed below, TSA has used results of the BASE program to prioritize

[2] The 17 SAIs were jointly developed by TSA and the Federal Transit Administration in consultation with the industry. More information on this program can be found at: https://transit-safety.fta.dot.gov/security/securityinitiatives/ActionItems/default.asp.

Question#:	2
Topic:	Passenger Rail Security
Hearing:	Protecting America from the Threat of ISIS
Primary:	The Honorable Rob Portman
Committee:	HOMELAND SECURITY (SENATE)

resources to address deficiencies in low-scoring areas across the Nation and adjust resources provided to passenger rail systems. This has raised the level of security in the public transportation and passenger rail environment, minimizing the need for regulatory requirements to mitigate vulnerabilities and risk. In a recent report to Congress, TSA provided additional validation for its assessment results. *See Security Incident Response for Surface Transportation Systems: Fiscal Year 2016 Report to Congress* (Mach 25, 2016) (fulfilling requirements of Section 7 of the Gerardo Hernandez Airport security Act of 2015 (Pub. Law. 114-50) to verify passenger transportation agencies and providers of high-risk facilities have plans to respond to active shooters, acts of terrorism, or other security-related incidents that target passengers).

The following highlights other initiatives, programs, and partnerships that have significantly enhanced the baseline of security for passenger railroads and public transportation.

- Funding for Security Enhancements: Between Fiscal Year 2006 and Fiscal Year 2015, almost $200 million was awarded through the Transit Security Grant Program (TSGP), Amtrak grant program, and the Intercity Bus Security Grant Program (IBSGP/OTRB) specifically for security training and planning efforts between Fiscal Year 2008 and Fiscal Year 2011, and over $11 million was awarded through the Freight Rail Security Grant Program (FRSGP) for security training and planning. TSA's assessments indicate that this funding has resulted in a significant improvement. In addition, TSA's First Observer™ security domain awareness program delivers web-based training to highway professionals, including over-the-road bus operators, encouraging frontline workers to "Observe, Assess and Report" suspicious activities. Approximately 100,000 highway professionals have been trained on the First Observer™ Program.

- Visible Intermodal Prevention and Response (VIPR) teams and RAILSAFE: TSA deploys VIPR teams across the United States, in close coordination with local security and law enforcement officials, to augment the security of transportation systems. In the rail environment, TSA VIPR teams participate in the Regional Alliance Including Local, State & Federal Efforts (RAILSAFE) Program, sponsored by Amtrak. These joint U.S. and Canadian events include participation of law enforcement officers from federal, state, and local authorities, as well as from rail and transit agencies who are deployed at passenger rail and transit stations and along the rights-of-way to visibly exercise counterterrorism and incident response capabilities on specified dates (usually tied to a National Special Security Event). On average, each RAILSAFE event includes simultaneous participations by 255 agencies in 42 states, involving 1,600 police and other personnel.

Question#:	2
Topic:	Passenger Rail Security
Hearing:	Protecting America from the Threat of ISIS
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Committee:	HOMELAND SECURITY (SENATE)

- National Explosives Detection Canine Team Program (NEDCTP): TSA's NEDCTP supports Explosives Detection K9 Teams for airports, mass transit systems, and cargo facilities. This includes teams for passenger rail systems. These teams are currently deployed to 13 of the top 25 passenger rail systems (based on ridership) as well as five AMTRAK locations. The use of highly trained explosives detection canine teams is also a proven deterrent to terrorism directed towards passenger rail systems.

- Passenger Rail Anti-Terrorism Teams: Through TSGP grant funding, dedicated teams are available to support counter-terrorism activities, to include high visibility activities, Explosives Detection K9 patrols, covert surveillance, station inspections, behavioral detection, directed patrols, and other unpredictable activities.

- Random Baggage Screening/Mobile Screening Team: Passenger rail agencies have built a mobile screening capability by conducting random screening of passengers' bags across their network. Examples of high-risk passenger rail systems that conduct random baggage screening include: the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, Amtrak, New York Police Department (Transit Bureau), New York City Metropolitan Transportation Authority, and Chicago Police Department (for the Chicago Transit Authority). In addition, TSA has provided personnel and equipment to support random baggage screening operations for passenger rail agencies.

- Intelligence and Information Sharing: TSA regularly communicates and exchanges intelligence and information with transit and rail operators domestically and internationally through a variety of regularized forums. Some examples include:
  - Transit Policing and Security Peer Advisory Group which is representative of 26 entities, including the largest U.S. public transportation systems, Canada, and the United Kingdom;
  - Monthly industry-wide information sharing calls;
  - Information dissemination through the Public Transportation Information Sharing and Analysis Center; and
  - Participation in the annual Security and Emergency Management Roundtable, a significant event coordinated by TSA and industry engaging major transit systems nationwide to pursue security enhancement practices. The most recent roundtable occurred in June 2016, in Phoenix, Arizona.

- Drills and Exercises: Mass Transit and Passenger rail systems routinely conduct security-related exercises and drills to test emergency response plans and capabilities. In addition, TSA provides exercises, training, and security planning tools to the

Question#:	2
Topic:	Passenger Rail Security
Hearing:	Protecting America from the Threat of ISIS
Primary:	The Honorable Rob Portman
Committee:	HOMELAND SECURITY (SENATE)

passenger rail community through the Intermodal Security Training and Exercise Program and Exercise Information System programs. In Fiscal Year 2015, eight exercises were conducted that directly supported the passenger rail community. In Fiscal Year 2016, fourteen exercises are planned focusing on the passenger rail community.

- American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Standards Program: TSA supports and participates in the APTA-led development of security standards for public transportation, including passenger rail systems. TSA's collaboration with APTA includes publication of seven standards in 2013 and 2014 that further enhanced the security baseline. For example, APTA published standards in 2011 for public transportation agencies and passenger railroads to conduct named-based background checks that reflect the requirements for the scope of background checks in section 1414 of the September 11 Act, including redress. Aggregate BASE data for passenger railroads and public transportation agencies that have been assessed indicates the average score for conducting background investigations of employees and contractors has risen from 87 percent in Fiscal Year 2010 to 94 percent in Fiscal Year 2015.

Post-Hearing Questions for the Record
Submitted to Hon. Alejandro N. Mayorkas
From Senator Claire McCaskill

"Protecting America from the Threat of ISIS"

May 26, 2016

Question#:	3
Topic:	Engagement with Muslim Community
Hearing:	Protecting America from the Threat of ISIS
Primary:	The Honorable Claire McCaskill
Committee:	HOMELAND SECURITY (SENATE)

Question: On May 25, this committee passed the DHS Accountability Act which authorized the Office for Partnerships Against Violent Extremism.

How important is engagement by federal, state and local law enforcement with the Muslim community in the United States to our fight against homegrown extremism?

Response: All communities are potentially at risk for terrorist attacks emanating from both domestic and international terrorist groups. Communities have partnered with DHS to seek federal resources for countering violent extremism, and the DHS Office for Community Partnerships has developed and will continue to develop products and services such as training, exercises, frameworks, and technical assistance to support all communities. The DHS Office for Community Partnerships does this through providing these resources to stakeholders in local government (including law enforcement), non-profit community organizations, and influential community members, and continues to model best practices for replication elsewhere.

Engagement is an important aspect of the Department's CVE efforts across communities. DHS Office for Community Partnerships works closely with other DHS Components to help build and support communities that are resilient to ISIL's message and recruitment efforts. Further, the DHS Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties's (CRCL) community engagement program addresses grievances and explores community based solutions for communities whose civil rights and civil liberties may be affected by DHS activities, helping to build community resilience against homegrown violent extremism by developing trust between law enforcement agencies and communities, while protecting civil rights and civil liberties.

Question#:	3
Topic:	Engagement with Muslim Community
Hearing:	Protecting America from the Threat of ISIS
Primary:	The Honorable Claire McCaskill
Committee:	HOMELAND SECURITY (SENATE)

Active community engagement from all government agencies undermines some of the key recruitment narratives used by violent extremist groups, including ISIL, al-Qa'ida, and their affiliates.

Question: How often does DHS and state and local law enforcement work with Muslim communities in the U.S. to identify individuals that might be in danger of being radicalized?

Response: All communities are potentially at risk for terrorist attacks emanating from both domestic and international terrorist groups. Communities have partnered with DHS to seek federal resources for countering violent extremism, and the DHS Office for Community Partnerships has developed and will continue to develop products and services such as training, exercises, frameworks, and technical assistance to support all communities. The DHS Office for Community Partnerships does this through providing these resources to stakeholders in local government (including law enforcement), non-profit community organizations, and influential community members, and continues to model best practices for replication elsewhere. The DHS Office for Community Partnerships also seeks to foster broad online CVE efforts, and has partnered with FEMA to announce a competitive grant program for communities seeking to address violent extremism. This grant program will provide vital funding to those communities taking action.

Question#:	4
Topic:	Disrupted Plots
Hearing:	Protecting America from the Threat of ISIS
Primary:	The Honorable Claire McCaskill
Committee:	HOMELAND SECURITY (SENATE)

Question: Without getting into classified information, have any plots been disrupted as a result of DHS's and state and local law enforcement's engagement with Muslim communities in the U.S.?

Response: There are two key unclassified examples: 1) In 2012, in Tampa, Florida, the Muslim community provided authorities information that helped disrupt a potential plot; and 2) In 2014, there was a community-led multi-sector intervention, which included clinical psychologists, faith based leaders, and community based advocacy organizations in Chicago, Illinois, that led to the reintegration of a young man who wanted to leave the United States and join ISIL. Additionally, multiple studies have been done by various academic institutions and NGO's about the identification of plots that have been disrupted due to partnership with community members since September 11.

Question#:	5
Topic:	Rhetoric
Hearing:	Protecting America from the Threat of ISIS
Primary:	The Honorable Claire McCaskill
Committee:	HOMELAND SECURITY (SENATE)

Question: How have those relationships been affected by some of the rhetoric we have been hearing recently regarding the Muslims, and, in particular, refugees?

Response: The challenges we face span local, state, federal, and international borders. Engagement with diverse communities is centered on the key principle of not securitizing the relationship with American communities, rather on building bridges and trust through a commitment to protecting civil rights, civil liberties, and addressing grievances. The current rhetoric creates challenges to engage effectively and create trust with communities. At the local level, this rhetoric has a detrimental effect on public safety because it affects the ability of local officials and local law enforcement to reach out to communities, communicate effectively, and engender trust. Through our regular roundtables, communities have regularly expressed a heightened sense of vulnerability among individuals who are perceived to be of Muslim background. The Department of Homeland Security will stand with communities to push back against this violent rhetoric.

Question#:	6
Topic:	USCIS Transformation Program
Hearing:	Protecting America from the Threat of ISIS
Primary:	The Honorable Claire McCaskill
Committee:	HOMELAND SECURITY (SENATE)

Question: Right now our immigration system is mostly still paper-based. The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service's Transformation Program is supposed to create an interoperable system that tracks immigration applications and immigration benefits, and enables sharing of this information across agencies more quickly and easily.

However, this project has now taken over a decade, is $1 billion over budget so far and 4 years behind its initial approved baseline. I understand that USCIS has changed acquisition strategies entirely.

Has anyone has been held accountable for this fiasco?

Response: As is common with IT initiatives, course correction, by no fault of a specific individual, is often necessary. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has dedicated resources to re-baseline and move forward.

Reasons for delays in USCIS' Transformation Program were discussed in depth with the Federal and DHS Chief Information Officers, as well as congressional oversight committee staff. We realized that, as with many government IT programs, relying on a single, large contract with one contractor was not working. We split the work between several contractors, who then had to compete for continued participation in the project. Continuous competition created the spark for innovation, and the vendors responded. We also streamlined our oversight processes. We simplified the technical design of the system, and have taken steps to deliver capability faster while reducing costs. We adopted industry best practices including agile development, open source technologies, and continuous delivery. This is the same approach used in leading technology companies such as Netflix, Amazon, and Etsy, and large companies like Target, Nordstrom, Disney, and Capital One. It is also the same approach that the President has tasked the U.S. Digital Service to provide when upgrading other sites across the entire Federal Government in order to best serve the public.

During 2015, the Transformation Program deployed the capability to process the Application to Replace Permanent Resident Card (Form I-90) as the first release in the new architecture. Also during 2015, the program deployed the capability for processing green cards for new immigrants entering the United States as well as other high volume processing. In 2016, we have deployed capability to support processing Applications for Naturalization and those for Temporary Protected Status. Currently, the system that was rebuilt and redeployed in 2015 is capable of processing 31 percent of USCIS's workload.

Question#:	6
Topic:	USCIS Transformation Program
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Primary:	The Honorable Claire McCaskill
Committee:	HOMELAND SECURITY (SENATE)

In addition, the program was re-baselined in April 2015. The re-baselining revamped the development schedule, adding four more years and $266 million. However, the full re-baselined costs required a 28-year life cycle cost estimate versus 17 years, adding an additional $725 million to the increased cost estimate.

Question: How much is our paper-based system contributing to our vulnerability?

Response: Before approving any applications, petitions or requests, whether filed on paper or electronically, USCIS runs many different background and security checks on individuals, dependents, and beneficiaries. Receiving the applications via paper does not alter this critical step in the process. Data from the applications is currently shared against robust data analytic capabilities to identify trends, imposters, or fraud. USCIS also provides information to our law enforcement partners who assist with immigration enforcement. Improving national security and public safety through more robust electronic data capture and processing will allow USCIS to have even more capability to run analytics against combinations of data that it previously could not in the paper process without a very labor and logistically intensive process. Further, having full records in a digital environment to include images of documents will enhance data sharing.

Question: When is the expected completion date now?

Response: The current plan is to complete development of capability to support processing all USCIS workload electronically by the 2nd Quarter of Fiscal Year 2019.

Post-Hearing Questions for the Record
Submitted to Hon. Alejandro N. Mayorkas
From Senator Jon Tester

"Protecting America from the Threat of ISIS"

May 26, 2016

Question#:	7
Topic:	Airport Security
Hearing:	Protecting America from the Threat of ISIS
Primary:	The Honorable Jon Tester
Committee:	HOMELAND SECURITY (SENATE)

Question: What actions should Congress take to tighten up airport security across the U.S.? How about transportation and cargo security in general?

Response: Congressional support for the Transportation Security Administration's (TSA) efforts to improve security practices while meeting the challenge of recent and unprecedented growth in passenger volume has been vital. The rapid approval of two requests to realign funds from other TSA accounts to support checkpoint operations will allow the ongoing summer surge in passenger traffic to be managed within reasonable wait times, while maintaining security standards.

Congress has also supported TSA's security efforts through the recent passage of Pub. L. 114-190, the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016, which includes several provisions to enhance security in both public and sterile areas of airports and at airport security checkpoints. The Act also addresses cargo security through a provision authorizing TSA to evaluate foreign countries' air cargo security programs to determine whether such programs provide a level of security commensurate with the United States.

Ongoing support from Congress is necessary as TSA works to ensure that future resources are aligned appropriately to meet increased passenger and baggage screening requirements for the next several years. At the same time, TSA is examining ways to make checkpoint screening more effective and efficient with technological and configuration improvements, while increasing the number of eligible passengers enrolled in TSA Pre✓®, and looks forward to working with Congress and other stakeholders to meet this challenge.

Continued support for the Fiscal Year 2017 President's Budget Request provides sufficient support for other activities, including efforts to ensure compliance with

Question#:	7
Topic:	Airport Security
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domestic and international air cargo screening requirements, as TSA works with foreign partners to improve overseas security practices to meet international standards.

Question#:	8
Topic:	Actionable Intelligence Follow-up
Hearing:	Protecting America from the Threat of ISIS
Primary:	The Honorable Jon Tester
Committee:	HOMELAND SECURITY (SENATE)

Question: According to some reports, U.S. and Turkish officials tried to get actionable intelligence to Belgian officials before the March 22 Brussels attacks, but Belgian officials were too slow to respond.

What efforts can the U.S. undertake with European nations to ensure that actionable intelligence within the EU is being followed up on?

Response: DHS is supporting the establishment of the European Counterterrorism Centre (ECTC) and the European Migrant Smuggling Centre (EMSC), which EUROPOL recently stood up in part to improve information sharing among European partners. More specifically, DHS has deployed officers to work at ECTC and EMSC and responds to these organizations' requests for information. In addition, DHS is promoting the importance of ECTC and EMSC within the EU, encouraging European countries to share information with the Centers, which, in turn, will allow the Centers to share more information within the EU. At the same time, DHS continues to work through our officers embedded at Europol and our attachés in Europe to help European law enforcement.

Moreover, following the Paris and Brussels attacks, DHS increased its engagement with European partners, building on the growing amount of support we provided in recent years. Specifically, we engaged France, Belgium, Germany, Greece, Italy, and others to offer assistance on topics such as passport security; fraudulent document detection; refugee and migrant screening; developing Advance Passenger Information and Passenger Name Record systems to screen air travelers; and aviation and border security. All of the above efforts are, in part, intended to help European governments share and take action on intelligence to prevent attacks.

Question#:	9
Topic:	Post-Attack Security Posture
Hearing:	Protecting America from the Threat of ISIS
Primary:	The Honorable Jon Tester
Committee:	HOMELAND SECURITY (SENATE)

Question: How have the French and the Belgians changed their security posture since the attacks? How is the U.S. helping them?

Response: France and Belgium took affirmative steps to improve their security postures following the Paris and Brussels attacks.

France has taken an assertive stance on counterterrorism and border security in the European Union, pushing to strengthen immigration and security controls on the Schengen Zone's external borders and collecting and analyzing Passenger Name Record information for flights to and within the EU. The French government also declared a state of emergency after the Paris attacks, which has now been extended four times, through the end of January 2017. Additionally, the French Parliament approved a series of legislative changes, providing French police greater authority to combat terrorism. For example, French police can now place someone returning from certain "terrorist theaters of operation" under house arrest for up to one month.

Since the Brussels attacks, the Belgian government has focused on improving information sharing among its law enforcement, judicial, and intelligence entities, particularly relating to aviation security and countering violent extremism. Belgium is also making progress on developing its collection and analysis of Advance Passenger Information and Passenger Name Record data.

France and Belgium also prioritized and increased information sharing through Europol and its newly-established European Counterterrorism Centre. Prior to the attacks, Brussels and Paris did not routinely share sensitive counterterrorism and intelligence information with all of their European partners.

The U.S. Government, including DHS, is helping Belgium and France strengthen their counterterrorism and border security capabilities, technical assistance and training. For example, in February 2016, DHS sent CBP, ICE, and TSA representatives to Brussels, as part of an U.S. interagency team, to discuss increasing cooperation on passport security, PNR collection and analysis, screening and watchlisting practices, and vetting of migrants and refugees. The Belgians accepted these offers of assistance and we are now providing training and other forms of support on these issues. DHS is also helping France in a variety of areas, including aviation security, passport and visa fraud, passenger screening and targeting, and border management.

Post-Hearing Questions for the Record
Submitted to Hon. Alejandro N. Mayorkas
From Senator Heidi Heitkamp

"Protecting America from the Threat of ISIS"

May 26, 2016

Question#:	10
Topic:	Degrade ISIS Financial Structure
Hearing:	Protecting America from the Threat of ISIS
Primary:	The Honorable Heidi Heitkamp
Committee:	HOMELAND SECURITY (SENATE)

Question: Over the last few months there have been news reports pointing to financial challenges that ISIS is having, which in turn is causing them to struggle in paying their fighters. Are we investigating the source of income for ISIS?

If so, how is DHS working to degrade ISIS's financial structure?

Response: Under the President's Counter-ISIL strategy, the Treasury Department leads efforts to disrupt ISIL's financial network. That said, DHS supports the identification and disruption of ISIL financial networks through criminal investigations, to include investigations on illegal imports of cultural antiquities from Syria and Iraq, which is a source of income for ISIL. Additionally, DHS provides capacity building and training on bulk cash smuggling, trade-based money laundering, and online financial schemes for key foreign partners

Question#:	11
Topic:	Observe ISIS Sympathizers
Hearing:	Protecting America from the Threat of ISIS
Primary:	The Honorable Heidi Heitkamp
Committee:	HOMELAND SECURITY (SENATE)

Question: One of the defining characteristics of the ISIS-related mobilization is the "extremely heterogeneous background of those involved." This characteristic makes it very challenging for federal agencies and law enforcement to observe ISIS sympathizers. What can be done to help your agency and other federal entities with this issue?

Response: DHS recently created the Office for Community Partnerships (OCP), which was created to develop partnerships with communities across the U.S. and help them prevent acts of violent extremism. As OCP matures, it will be the prime source of leadership, innovation, and support within the Department for local partners, peers, and various sectors working to counter violent extremism. Currently, DHS and other federal partners also conduct research to identify indicators of radicalization to violence. And since December 2015, I&A has provided 47 briefings in 28 states to discuss the evolution of the Homegrown Violent Extremist phenomenon and how public safety personnel are positioned to identify pre-attack signposts and indicators. Overall, these efforts enhance our ability to identify potential homegrown violent extremists and intervene before an act of violence occurs.

Question#:	12
Topic:	No Prior Criminal History
Hearing:	Protecting America from the Threat of ISIS
Primary:	The Honorable Heidi Heitkamp
Committee:	HOMELAND SECURITY (SENATE)

Question: How do we detect terrorists that are so-called "clean skin", meaning terrorists who have no criminal history and could possess a valid passport?

Response: Customs and Border Protection (CBP) employs a layered enforcement strategy to identify high risk travelers, both known and previously unknown, at every stage of the travel system. To achieve this, CBP uses cutting edge technology and analytical methodologies to review advance passenger and cargo data, previous border crossing information, ESTA and visa application data, and intelligence, law enforcement and open source information to identify and mitigate travelers who may pose a risk. In addition, this information is matched against sophisticated targeting rules developed by CBP subject matter experts. Targeting rules, which are based on information from the Intelligence Community (IC) and law enforcement, identify potential high risk travelers based on, for example, travel patterns. All of these tools combined allow CBP to put the pieces of the "puzzle" together and apply additional scrutiny to travelers not previously identified by the IC, law enforcement, and international partners as individuals of concern. I would be more than happy to send my staff to provide further details on CBP's capabilities and methodologies in a closed setting.

Post-Hearing Questions for the Record Submitted to
Mr. Justin Siberell by
Senator Rob Portman (#1)
"Protecting America from the Threat of ISIS"
May 26, 2016

Question:

Following up on our exchange at the hearing, please provide statistics along with their source which support your assessment that the number of foreign fighters traveling to fight in the Middle East, particularly in Iraq and Syria, is decreasing.

Answer:

According to information from the U.S. Intelligence Community, since 2011, nearly 40,000 Sunni fighters from more than 120 countries have traveled to Syria—including 6,900 with Western passports. Global efforts to counter foreign fighter flows are making progress, and we are seeing a drop in the number of fighters travelling to the conflict zones this year. In May during remarks at the International Special Operations Forces Convention, Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Lisa Monaco reported the flow of foreign fighters into Iraq and Syria is down significantly over the last year—at least 50 percent from its peak of 2,000 a month. In early June during a statement delivered before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, Central Intelligence Agency Director John Brennan noted fewer foreign fighters are travelling to Syria.

This decline in the numbers of foreign fighters is putting pressure on the Da'esh. The group is estimated to currently field 18,000-22,000 fighters, a decrease from the estimate of up to 33,000 that it was able to deploy in 2014. In addition, Da'esh has lost 47 percent of the territory it previously controlled in Iraq, a sharp reduction in the size of its self-declared caliphate.

The observed decline in the numbers and rate of foreign fighters arriving in Syria and Iraq may be attributed to a range of factors, including military gains by the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL and proactive steps by governments to strengthen and enforce border security, counter-facilitation and counter-recruitment efforts, such as:

- The United States now has formal information-sharing arrangements with 55 international partners to assist efforts to identify, track, and deter the travel of suspected terrorists.
- 58 countries, plus the United Nations, now contribute foreign terrorist fighter (FTF) profiles to INTERPOL, and there has been a 500 percent increase in suspected FTF identities since September 2014.
- 41 countries have passed new laws or updated existing legislation to more effectively identify and prosecute FTFs.

- 38 countries have reported arresting FTFs, and 30 have successfully brought charges in FTF cases.
- Turkey – a critical geographic chokepoint in the flow of FTFs – has increased its information sharing with international partners and has taken steps to improve border security. Turkey has increased detentions, arrests, and prosecution of suspected foreign terrorist fighters, deporting over 3,000 known or suspected foreign terrorist fighters and banning nearly 50,000 individuals from entry. Physical improvements along Turkey's border with Syria are also underway, with for example the installment of modular concrete walls, wire fencing, and border lighting.
- Approximately 23 countries have developed national action plans to counter violent extremism and/or counterterrorism, and at least 11 have launched programs to counter FTF radicalization and recruitment in their countries (including deradicalization centers and hotlines).

We rely on Intelligence Community (IC) assessments about the flow of FTFs and defer to IC analysis for additional details on the reasons for the decline of FTFs traveling to the Middle East.

The National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) oversees a broad Center-wide effort to track foreign fighters traveling to Syria, working closely with Intelligence Community partners. As part of this effort, NCTC aggregates

information on known or suspected terrorists traveling to Syria in the Terrorist Identities Datamart Environment (TIDE). This effort has created a valuable forum for identifying, tracking, and sharing information with law enforcement, counterterrorism, screening, and watchlisting communities on known or suspected terrorists.

Post-Hearing Questions for the Record Submitted to
Mr. Justin Siberell by
Senator Rob Portman (#2)
"Protecting America from the Threat of ISIS"
May 26, 2016

Question:

You indicated in your testimony that while the number of foreign fighters going to fight in Syria and Iraq is decreasing, hot spots in Africa, like Libya, have seen an increase in ISIS activity. Are there any statistics which indicate that foreign fighters are now traveling to these locations?

Answer:

We rely on Intelligence Community assessments and defer to them for more details – many of which are classified – on the flow of foreign fighters and geographic focus of Da'esh activity.

There are a number of indications Da'esh finds Libya an attractive operating environment. We remain concerned that as Da'esh feels pressure on its hold of territory in Iraq and Syria, Da'esh will try to expand its operations to other areas. Da'esh's Libya branch is among the best developed of the eight official branches outside of Syria and Iraq and the group has attempted to establish a state-like presence in Libya.

- Da'esh has controlled the central coastal town of Sirte since summer 2015, and is believed to have a presence in Tripoli, Benghazi, Ajdabiya, Derna, Sabratha, and other major towns and cities.

- Da'esh has an estimated 3,000 to 6,500 fighters in Libya; those fighters are drawn from the local population in Libya and other countries. Da'esh has urged fighters in Africa to travel to Libya rather than heading to the Middle East given the current international pressure on foreign fighters trying to reach Syria and Iraq.

We are working with the international community to support the Government of National Accord (GNA) in its efforts to respond to the terrorist threat posed by IS Da'esh IL, de-escalate the conflict in the country, and secure Libyan territory and borders. However, it will take time for the GNA to establish the security institutions and capacity to combat Da'esh, guard its borders, and fully protect its citizens. Action against Da'esh in Libya is required for the safety of Libyans, but also for the safety of their neighbors. Libya's porous borders and political and security vacuum have allowed Da'esh to plan and carry out terrorist attacks in Tunisia and Libya.

Questions for the Record
Submitted to Acting Coordinator Justin Siberell by
Senator Rob Portman #3
Senate Committee on Homeland Security & Government Reform
May 26, 2016

Question:

You also mention the State Department's CVE efforts, including the Global Engagement Center. What capabilities does it have to counter-message ISIS propaganda and terrorist incubation?

Answer:

The Global Engagement Center's (GEC's) fact-based online engagement across social media platforms abroad in Arabic, Urdu, and Somali is aimed at contesting the space, refuting the violent extremist narratives, and influencing at risk audience while reducing Da'esh's recruitment efforts. GEC operates on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and other platforms to disseminate counter violent extremist messages. GEC's staff includes native speakers who leverage their language and cultural expertise to create tailored messages that resonate with vulnerable individuals and communicates to expose terrorist acts and undermine the propaganda from international terrorist organizations.

Questions for the Record
Submitted to Acting Coordinator Justin Siberell by
Senator Rob Portman #4
Senate Committee on Homeland Security & Government Reform
May 26, 2016

Question:

What does the Federal Government need to do to get this right? I am happy to see that Michael Lumpkin was put in charge of the GEC. How can Congress ensure he succeeds? Is he getting enough funding?

Answer:

We have been under resourcing the counter-messaging effort for the past couple of years. To provide you some context, before Michael Lumpkin came onboard to lead the GEC in January of this year, the total budget for countering extremist propaganda abroad was less than $10 million annually. Meanwhile, in countries other than Iraq and Afghanistan, we are spending hundreds of millions annually to kill Da'esh leaders, who are replaced months--sometimes only weeks--after a strike occurs.

However, the GEC is finally getting more funding to hire the right people and use digital analytics tools to gain traction in the information battlespace. This year the budget is approximately $15 million, and we are seeking roughly $21 million in FY2017, and nearly $60 million in FY2018. We hope Congress will

support this badly-needed funding for the GEC, as they work to implement the new approach, one that is data-driven and leverages credible voices.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Acting Coordinator Justin Siberell by
Senator Jon Tester (#1)
Senate Committee on Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs
May 26, 2016

Are State Department travel warnings sufficient to keep Americans secure when they travel overseas?

Answer:

While U.S. citizens ultimately make their own travel and safety decisions, the Department of State provides a wealth of information to help guide those decisions on our travel information website, www.travel.state.gov. Travel Warnings and Alerts provide information about credible, specific, and non-counterable security threats overseas to help U.S. citizens make educated decisions about whether to travel. The Department updates and shares Travel Warnings and Alerts as well as country information sheets and security messages with U.S. citizens. The information in our products is based on our best objective assessment of conditions in a given country from reports by our U.S. embassies and consulates, other Department of State bureaus, media outlets, and other foreign and U.S. government sources. We cannot prevent U.S. citizens from traveling, but our warnings provide clear notice of the dangerous situations and difficulties that travelers may encounter in certain countries, including security threats and crime. In addition to security, travel warnings and alerts also cover hurricane and typhoon

season, and time-limited events such as national elections in foreign countries that may spark crowds or demonstrations.

We strongly encourage all U.S. citizen travelers to enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program, or STEP, so that they can receive up-to-date warnings and security messages as they travel.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Acting Coordinator Justin Siberell by
Senator Jon Tester (#2)
Senate Committee on Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs
May 26, 2016

Question:

How do you envision modeling risk in order to best alert Americans when they travel overseas?

Answer:

The Bureau of Consular Affairs works closely with the security and counter-terrorism experts in the Bureau of Diplomatic Security to evaluate threat information and weigh the risk to both private and official U.S. citizens. Based on their assessments and our obligations under the "No Double Standard" policy, Security Messages, Travel Warnings, and Travel Alerts are released to the American public as early as possible. We share a commitment to providing U.S. citizens focused and relevant information to make decisions regarding their personal safety with as much notice as feasible.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Acting Coordinator Justin Siberell by
Senator Jon Tester (#3)
Senate Committee on Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs
May 26, 2016

Question:

According to some reports, U.S. and Turkish officials tried to get actionable intelligence to Belgian officials before the March 22 Brussels attacks, but Belgian officials were too slow to respond. What efforts can the U.S. undertake with European nations to ensure that actionable intelligence within the EU is being followed up on?

Answer:

We are undertaking a number of efforts to ensure information is being shared and acted on within the EU, including working with member states to increase their capacity on border security, identity management, counter messaging, and information sharing. Through bilateral information sharing agreements, we are deepening transatlantic cooperation to counter the threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters. The United States continues to work with European partners to increase security at their borders and eliminate existing security vulnerabilities, enabling them to better identify, restrict, and report travel of suspected foreign terrorist fighters.

The United States continues to urge EU countries to increase the sharing of terrorist identity and watchlisting information between their national and local law enforcement, between member states and the EU, and to use INTERPOL's

resources and screen passengers against its Foreign Terrorist Fighters database and its Stolen and Lost Travel Documents system. European Union member states cooperate to protect against terrorist threats and infiltration, and Turkey remains a partner in countering ISIL and minimizing foreign fighter flows. In turn, the EU is undertaking significant efforts to better coordinate EU and national-level law enforcement databases and watchlists and individual members are trying to increase their own internal information sharing between national and local law enforcement.

The investigations that followed the attacks of November 13, 2015, in Paris and March 22, 2016, in Brussels revealed that one of the main challenges for effective and sustainable action to fight terrorism and organized crime is to ensure the more efficient and expedient exchange of information among member states' law enforcement authorities and with and between EU agencies. The EU Justice and Home Affairs Committee recently approved an ambitious roadmap to increase EU-wide information sharing and interoperability. The adoption of the roadmap is very significant; it lays out a plan for the EU to address critical gaps in information sharing to prevent the next Paris or Brussels-style attacks in Europe. We encouraged member states to endorse the roadmap and have offered technical assistance to the EU as it implements the provisions of the plan.

We have ramped up our counterterrorism engagement with European partners significantly in the aftermath of the Paris and Brussels attacks, and work closely with partners around the globe to counter the foreign fighter threat. We are partnering with these governments in areas including: strengthening information-sharing on known and suspected terrorists, increasing effective traveler screening, and building comprehensive financial investigations.

- The work of the interagency Foreign Fighter Surge Teams (FFSTs) in several European countries (Belgium, France, Italy, Germany, and Greece) is helping to strengthen partner capacity over the long-term to identify, disrupt, arrest and prosecute suspected foreign terrorist fighters and improve our collective global capacity to counter this threat. Through our FFST initiative, we have identified concrete areas to increase Belgium's capacity to identify, disrupt, arrest, and prosecute suspected Foreign Terrorist Fighters. Work with this broader group of partners includes:
    - **France:** technical exchanges on aviation security and use of financial data to identify and monitor terrorists, and border officer exchanges.
    - **Belgium:** technical exchanges on passport security behavioral detection training, and migrant screening.
    - **Greece:** training on investigative tools to counter terrorism finance, migrant screening, and aviation security training.

- **Italy:** migrant screening, and plans to conduct technical exchanges on API/PNR and terrorist use of the internet.

For more information on the intelligence relationship with our European partners, we defer to our Intelligence Community colleagues.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Acting Coordinator Justin Siberell by
Senator Jon Tester (#4)
Senate Committee on Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs
May 26, 2016

Question:

How have the French and the Belgians changed their security posture since the attacks? How is the U.S. helping them?

Answer:

Approximately seven months after ISIL's November 13 terrorist attacks in Paris, French investigators continue to dismantle the terror network that killed 130 people and injured 350 others. Furthermore, the French government, deeply concerned over security at this summer's Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) Euro 2016 soccer tournament and the Tour de France, has secured Parliamentary support to extend the current national state of emergency through July 26. French Prime Minister Manuel Valls announced on May 9 a comprehensive national plan to combat violent extremism that includes "deradicalization centers" and numerous other new measures. In addition, the French National Assembly and Senate met on May 16 to reconcile versions of the draft bill "against crime, terrorism and its financing," allowing judges to approve prosecutorial demands for video surveillance and computer data collection. Until

now, such measures were reserved strictly for investigating judges in the framework of judicial investigations.

The U.S. bilateral relationship with France is stronger and more productive than it has been in decades; we share common objectives and work closely on countering terrorism and violent extremism. We have ramped up our already close counterterrorism partnership in the aftermath of the Paris attacks, and have increased interagency coordination in a number of specific areas. For example, throughout 2016, the U.S. Transportation Security Administration will continue engaging with France to improve "Last Point of Departure" (LPD) airport security. Such actions include: sharing threat-stream information and best practices as well as specific mitigation measures; inspecting French LPD airport air, cargo, and repair operations; liaising on civil aviation issues such as screening technology, behavior detection, canine programs, and "active shooter" preparation and response; assisting French efforts to develop risk assessment criteria and methodology; and partnering with France to improve aviation security in third countries.

Separately, two French cities joined the Strong Cities Network (SCN), participating in the May 2016 SCN Global Summit held in Turkey. The purpose of the network is to connect cities, city-level practitioners, and the communities they represent through a series of workshops, trainings, and sustained city partnerships,

with the aim of responding to municipal-level countering violent extremism (CVE) needs.

Turning to Belgium, through our FFST initiative, we have identified concrete areas to increase Belgium's capacity to identify, disrupt, arrest, and prosecute suspected Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs). We are partnering with several European governments, including Belgium, in areas such as strengthening information-sharing on known and suspected terrorists, increasing effective traveler screening, and building comprehensive financial investigations.

Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson met with Belgian Minister of Interior Jan Jambon in April. Discussion centered on the importance of effective information sharing in the aftermath of the March 22 attacks and opportunities for enhanced counterterrorism collaboration, including traveler and asylum seeker screening. Secretary Johnson reaffirmed DHS' commitment to share information routinely with Belgian partners. The two also discussed European efforts to strengthen immigration and security controls on the Schengen Zone's external borders and to collect and analyze Passenger Name Record data for flights to, and within, the European Union.

We are also partnering with Belgium on a broader, preventive CVE agenda. The Belgian cities of Antwerp and Vilvoorde are SCN members, and both cities have sent delegations to the United States on CVE-focused exchanges. Notably, as

a direct result of the joint State Department/DHS led city-to-city exchange in 2014 between Vilvoorde and Columbus, Ohio, the Vilvoorde police commissioner has mandated diversity training for the entire police force. Furthermore, this Vilvoorde delegation requested additional training on community policing for Vilvoorde city officials, police officers, and civil society members. The Vilvoorde mayor has reported that none of his city's residents have departed Vilvoorde to join ISIL in Syria or Iraq since May 2014, which Belgian officials attribute, in part, to this exchange program.

Post-Hearing Questions for the Record Submitted to
Acting Coordinator Justin Siberell by
Senator Heidi Heitkamp (#1)
Senate Committee on Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs
May 26, 2016

Question:

Over the last few months there have been news reports pointing to financial challenges that ISIS is having, which in turn is causing them to struggle in paying their fighters. Are we investigating the source of income for ISIS?

a. If so, how is the State Department working to degrade ISIS' financial structure?

Answer:

The Department of State works closely with our interagency partners to track ISIL's key sources of revenue. In 2015 ISIL earned at least $1 billion, mostly through the production and sale of energy resources and through extortion of the population in ISIL-controlled areas of Iraq and Syria. ISIL likely made around $500 million in 2015 from oil and gas sales and about $350 million from extortion. In addition to those two large revenue streams, ISIL made at least several million from foreign donations in 2014 and in 2015, between $20 and $45 million from kidnapping for ransom in 2014 but less in 2015, and less than $10 million from trafficking in antiquities.

The Department of State works closely with the Departments of Treasury, Defense, Justice, Homeland Security, and the Intelligence Community to coordinate efforts to disrupt ISIL's finances. Our most effective method of

supporting ISIL, and strengthen the UN implementation process. The United States continues to nominate and encourage other countries to nominate ISIL leaders and facilitators to the UN Security Council's 1267/1989/2253 ISIL and Al Qaida Sanctions List to disrupt ISIL's ability to raise and transfer funds.

In a further effort to restrict ISIL's ability to utilize the international financial system, the Departments of State and Treasury have sanctioned a number of ISIL leaders, financiers, facilitators, and affiliates under the Immigration and Nationality Act and Executive Order 13224. The United States has designated ISIL and eight affiliates as Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTOs) or Specially Designated Global Terrorists (SDGTs) and designated several dozen ISIL leaders and key financiers and facilitators as SDGTs. These sanctions cut ISIL, its affiliates, and its financiers and facilitators off from the U.S. financial system and any transactions going through U.S. banks.

The Department of State is also building partner capacity to counter terrorist financing in a variety of ways. The Bureau of Counterterrorism (CT) is working through a number of US. Departments and agencies, including the Departments of Justice and Treasury and the FBI, to help partner nations investigate and prosecute illicit financial transactions, both internally and beyond their respective boarders. The Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement

disrupting ISIL's revenues to date has been military airstrikes against ISIL-controlled oil and gas facilities and cash storage sites. Operation TIDAL WAVE II, launched in October 2015, targeted ISIL's entire oil and natural gas supply chain – oil fields, refineries, and tanker trucks. Coalition airstrikes against ISIL's cash storage sites have also reduced liquidity in ISIL-controlled territory in northern Iraq by at least tens of millions and possibly up to hundreds of millions of dollars.

Kinetic efforts have complemented diplomatic efforts to build a coalition of countries to disrupt ISIL's finances. In March 2015, the United States established the Counter-ISIL Finance Group (CIFG) to serve as the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL's working group on ISIL finance. The Department of State also conducts bilateral diplomatic engagement with key countries through our Diplomatic Missions in the Middle East and around the world. Our embassies consistently engage foreign government officials to promote counter-terrorist finance tools and provide capacity building.

The U.S. Mission to the United Nations negotiated several UN Security Council Resolutions (UNSCRs) focused on ISIL and other terrorist finance threats. In 2015, we helped negotiate UNSCRs 2199 and 2253, which focus on terrorist financial support networks, strengthen the UN Security Council's ISIL and Al Qaeda Sanctions regime, expand listing criteria to make it easier to designate those

(INL) also funds capacity building programs to strengthen national financial systems against money laundering and terrorist financing.

These initiatives to reduce ISIL's revenues have been quite effective. ISIL has had to cut salaries for its fighters and struggled to sustain its operations, leading many fighters to defect and leave the battlefield. ISIL's credibility in the eyes of its followers has been diminished, and the United States will continue to pressure ISIL financially to further weaken the terrorist organization.

Post-Hearing Questions for the Record Submitted to
Acting Coordinator Justin Siberell by
Senator Heidi Heitkamp (#2)
Senate Committee on Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs
May 26, 2016

Question:

One of the defining characteristics of the ISIS-related mobilization is the "extremely heterogeneous background of those involved." This characteristic makes it very challenging for federal agencies and law enforcement to observe ISIS sympathizers. What can be done to help your agency and other federal entities with this issue?

Answer:

ISIL, its affiliates, and other violent extremist organizations exploit a myriad of sociological motivators, political grievances, poor governance issues, and psychological and economic factors in order to radicalize, recruit, and mobilize to violence followers from countries around the world. To address this, we comprehensively address the challenge of violent extremism, including the root causes, by improving our understanding the dynamics feeding violent extremism, mobilizing and applying the full range of diplomatic and development tools and power to address the specific factors identified, and approaching the task in a measureable and accountable way. We must continue to capitalize on the momentum built by the White House Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) Summit process and Secretary Kerry's efforts to institutionalize and enhance the Department's CVE efforts.

The State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) released the Joint CVE Strategy in May 2016. The Strategy draws on the Department's and USAID's diplomacy and developmental expertise to outline a roadmap to reduce the ability of violent extremists to radicalize, recruit, and mobilize followers to violence and to address specific factors that feed violent extremist recruitment and radicalization. The Strategy incorporates lessons learned from more than a decade of USAID experience in applying development assistance tools in response to violent extremism. Our strategy recognizes the need to embrace a whole of society approach - there are roles for everyone, and we will catalyze partnerships with governments, religious leaders, academics, civil society, NGOs, and the private sector. The Strategy identifies the following strategic objectives for implementation:

1. Expand international political will, partnerships, and expertise to better understand the drivers of violent extremism and mobilize effective interventions.
2. Encourage and assist partner governments to adopt more effective policies and approaches to prevent and counter the spread of violent extremism, including changing unhelpful practices where necessary.
3. Employ foreign assistance tools and approaches, including development assistance, to reduce specific political or social and economic factors that

contribute to community support for violent extremism in identifiable areas or put particular segments of a population at high risk of violent extremist radicalization and recruitment to violence.

4. Empower and amplify locally credible voices that can change the perception of violent extremist groups and their ideology among key demographic segments.
5. Strengthen the capabilities of government and non-governmental actors to isolate, intervene with, and promote the rehabilitation and reintegration of individuals caught in the cycle of radicalization to violence.

The Strategy can be found at http://www.state.gov/j/ct/c71650.htm.

Post-Hearing Questions for the Record Submitted to
Acting Coordinator Justin Siberell by
Senator Heidi Heitkamp (#3)
Senate Committee on Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs
May 26, 2016

Question:

How do we detect terrorists that are so-called "clean skin," meaning terrorists who have no criminal history and could possess a valid passport?

Answer:

If there is no derogatory information about a terrorist in our screening systems, then the primary way to identify such malefactors is to look at suspicious behavior and linkages. Through analysis of travel patterns, passenger reservations and travel information as well as background obtained during the Electronic Secure Travel Authorization (ESTA), passport and visa application processes, U.S. authorities may identify an individual with a possible nexus to terrorism, when the individuals had no directly attributed derogatory information.

In any instance, identifying a potential terrorist threat through these means would effectively allow the U.S. to develop a terrorist identity file on an individual, and if enough derogatory information was then developed, the individual would be placed on the U.S. watchlist for screening and investigation purposes. For further details on U.S. screening and travel analysis programs, we respectfully refer you to the Department of Homeland Security.

Post-Hearing Questions for the Record Submitted to
Acting Coordinator Justin Siberell by
Senator Heidi Heitkamp (#4)
Senate Committee on Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs
May 26, 2016

Question:

What conversations is the State Department having on what we need to do to get at the root causes of terrorism?

a. Is there another conversation that we need to have on poverty or access education that would help prevent the spread of terrorism?

Answer:

In May 2016, The State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) released the Joint Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) Strategy. The Strategy is both a reflection of recent internal State and State-USAID conversations on CVE, as well as a framework to organize our CVE initiatives going forward. In accordance with the Strategy, a core group of stakeholders from both agencies meet regularly to coordinate implementation of the Strategy's following strategic objectives:

6. Expand international political will, partnerships, and expertise to better understand the drivers of violent extremism and mobilize effective interventions.

7. Encourage and assist partner governments to adopt more effective policies and approaches to prevent and counter the spread of violent extremism, including changing unhelpful practices where necessary.
8. Employ foreign assistance tools and approaches, including development assistance, to reduce specific political or social and economic factors that contribute to community support for violent extremism in identifiable areas or put particular segments of a population at high risk of violent extremist radicalization and recruitment to violence.
9. Empower and amplify locally credible voices that can change the perception of violent extremist groups and their ideology among key demographic segments.
10. Strengthen the capabilities of government and non-governmental actors to isolate, intervene with, and promote the rehabilitation and reintegration of individuals caught in the cycle of radicalization to violence.

The Strategy can be found at http://www.state.gov/j/ct/c71650.htm.

As noted in the strategy, research is critical to understanding the root causes of terrorism or the drivers of radicalization and recruitment into violence. Current research indicates that there is not one specific reason that results in an individual being radicalized or recruited into violence, but rather it results from a myriad of sociological motivators, political grievances and poor governance issues, and

psychological and economic factors. Department analysis has found that poverty and access to education and vocational training alone do not make individuals susceptible to violent extremism, but that lack of employment opportunities, human rights abuses by state security forces, systemic discrimination and marginalization of ethnic and religious groups, lure of radical ideology, and peer and kin networks together could factor in a person's pathway towards violent extremism.

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