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TERRORISM AND INSTABILITY IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

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Testimony of
Assistant Secretary Linda Thomas-Greenfield
Bureau of African Affairs
and
Acting Coordinator for Counterterrorism Justin Siberell
U.S. Department of State
before the
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
Addressing Instability in Sub-Saharan Africa
May 10, 2016

Thank you, Chairman Corker, Ranking Member Cardin, and Members of the Committee, for the opportunity to testify on sources of instability in Africa and our ongoing work with our African partners to address these challenges.

The United States is committed to partnering with the people and governments of Africa to promote democracy, peace and prosperity. Africa is home to the world's youngest and fastest growing population. It presents significant opportunities for transformation and growth as well as significant challenges. The overall trends in sub-Saharan Africa point to accelerated democratization, development, and economic opportunity. Serious and seemingly intractable conflicts in Angola, Liberia, Cote d'Ivoire, and Sierra Leone have ended and those countries are in the process of rebuilding. We have seen several significant electoral successes during the past year. Although Africa remains the world's least developed continent, average real per capita income has been increasing steadily over the last decade and a half and the middle class is slowly growing.

However, in spite of these positive trends, instability and conflict persist in parts of the continent. This instability has a direct bearing on U.S. national interests and those of our closest allies. Poorly governed localities have been and remain a breeding ground for extremists that seek to do us harm. Underlining the scale of the stability challenges facing Africa, eight of the ten largest United Nations (UN) peacekeeping missions in the world are currently deployed in Sub-Saharan Africa. Added to these, the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) is the largest peace support mission in the world.

In response, Africa's leaders have intensified individual and collective efforts to address these challenges and take greater ownership of their own security. The African Union (AU), sub-regional organizations and individual

African governments are taking important roles in addressing security and political challenges in Africa. African governments are deploying forces for regional missions to counter terrorism, promote stability, and support post-conflict peacebuilding. They are also working to better organize themselves to confront persistent challenges that require multi-faceted solutions. A recent manifestation of this drive for stronger regional coordination and integration is the formation of the *G-5 Sahel* in 2014 by Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger.

The United States is pursuing comprehensive and coordinated whole-of-government approaches to help our African partners build and sustain their security capacity and cooperation. The drivers of conflict and instability in Africa are diverse, and our approach to these threats reflects a range of perspectives, priorities and capabilities. Military, intelligence and law enforcement tools are vital to defend against a range of threats, but cannot replace robust diplomacy and engagements promoting broad-based economic and political opportunity. We must work with our partners, including civil society, to address the root causes of conflict, strengthen accountability, and promote good governance. Stability in Africa ultimately requires leaders with the will and the capacity to respond to the needs and aspirations of their people.

Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism

Terrorism and violent extremism are major sources of instability in Africa. Terrorist organizations such as al-Shabaab, Boko Haram (which now calls itself the Islamic State in West Africa), al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), and al-Murabitoun are conducting asymmetric campaigns that cause significant loss of innocent life and create potentially long-term humanitarian crises. They are adept at exploiting state fragility and political and economic vulnerabilities. Terrorists gain an advantage when security forces and border guards lack the necessary leadership, training, equipment, intelligence, and mobility to disrupt their activities. They also gain an advantage when security forces fail to carry out operations in accordance with international human rights standards. When governments break the bond of trust and fail to protect civilians, terrorists can and do exploit these actions and feed their narrative.

Terrorists and criminal organizations also take advantage of weak and corrupt criminal justice systems unable to effectively investigate, prosecute, and incarcerate criminals. Violent extremist ideology and tactics may be alien and illegitimate to the vast majority of Africans, but individuals and communities are increasingly vulnerable to recruitment by violent extremists in a growing number

of locales over the last decade. While the motives for tolerating, or for joining, violent extremist activities are complex, overlapping, and context-specific, we see violent extremists focusing their recruitment efforts where there is a lack of education and economic opportunity, political and social alienation, poor governance, corruption of elites, and lack of accountability for abuses by security forces. These terrorist groups use increasingly sophisticated means to exploit these weaknesses on social media developing and propagating violent extremist messaging and narratives.

In the Lake Chad Basin region, despite significant progress over the past year -- due in large part to bolstered Nigerian and regional efforts -- more work remains to end the savage atrocities and ongoing violence perpetrated by Boko Haram. Boko Haram, which declared its affiliation with ISIL in 2015, conducts recurring attacks in northeastern Nigeria and the neighboring countries of Cameroon, Chad, and Niger, and they have increased the ghastly practice of forcing women and children to act as human bombs. The conflict has affected the lives of communities across the Lake Chad Basin region, with some 2.6 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) and nearly 170,000 Nigerian refugees forced to flee their country. Since 2009, the conflict has caused approximately 18,000 deaths.

In the Sahel, AQIM and al-Murabitoun continue to operate in parts of northern Mali and along the border corridor between Mali, Niger, and Libya. In recent months, they have responded to military pressure by turning to more asymmetric tactics. They have increased high-profile attacks against so-called "soft targets," including a series of attacks against international hotels, cafes, and resorts in Burkina Faso, Mali and Cote d'Ivoire.

In East Africa, al-Shabaab last year became increasingly aggressive in conducting large-scale attacks against African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM) forward operating bases and a range of targets throughout Somalia. In 2015, al-Shabaab also launched a series of attacks across the border in northern Kenya, including one against a university in Garissa that left nearly 150 people dead. Al-Shabaab reportedly maintains a network of operatives and recruiters across the wider region who seek to exploit long-standing divisions between communities and security forces along the Swahili Coast.

We are concerned about the risk that the presence and potential expansion of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) on the continent will grow. As we have seen elsewhere in the world, ISIL seeks to co-opt existing terrorist groups, as

well as local insurgencies and conflicts to expand its network and advance its agenda.

As President Obama has said, effectively addressing evolving terrorism challenges requires strong, capable, and diverse partners who have both the political will and the ability to disrupt and degrade terrorist networks. Over the past several years, we have seen African governments and African communities come together and show leadership in fighting terrorist groups. In Somalia, AMISOM and the Somali National Army have pushed al-Shabaab from some of its major strongholds and supported efforts by the Federal Government of Somalia to promote stability, but significant shortfalls to stability remain in Somalia. In the Lake Chad Basin region, military forces have undertaken to work together through the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) to counter Boko Haram. Similarly, forces from eleven Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) states initially responded to the security crisis in Mali and worked alongside the French military to destroy terrorist safe havens in northern Mali and provide the stability required for the peace process to advance. We recognize that progress has been made, but more needs to be done to maintain momentum against evolving and adaptive terrorist threats that exist across the continent.

The United States seeks to promote comprehensive, whole-of-government capabilities to respond to terrorism. Our primary multi-year mechanisms for promoting coordinated multi-year interagency approaches are the Partnership for Regional East Africa Counterterrorism (PREACT) and, in West Africa, the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP). Led by the State Department, USAID, and the Department of Defense, PREACT and TSCTP advance U.S. law enforcement, military, development, and public diplomacy expertise and resources to support the efforts of willing regional partners to build and sustain their own CT capability. Through PREACT, TSCTP, and related initiatives, the United States uses a wide range of tools and programs to build capacity and assist regional CT efforts. Areas of support include: (1) enabling and enhancing the capacity of African militaries to conduct CT operations; (2) improving the ability of military and civilian security services to operate regionally and collaboratively on CT efforts; (3) enhancing individual nations' border security capacity to monitor, restrain, and interdict terrorist movements; (4) strengthening the rule of law, including access to justice, and law enforcement's ability to detect, disrupt, investigate, and prosecute terrorist activity; and (5) reducing the limited sympathy and support among communities for violent extremism.

While military efforts remain critical, the success of counterterrorism efforts in Africa depends fundamentally upon capable and responsible civilian partners -- police, prosecutors, judges, prison officials, religious and community leaders -- who can help address terrorism through a sustainable framework that advances rule of law and respect for human rights. In that regard, we seek to increase our capacity-building support for law enforcement, judicial, and other criminal justice sector institutions. We greatly appreciate the funding provided by Congress in Fiscal Year 2016 for the Counterterrorism Partnerships Fund (CTPF). We expect to use this funding to significantly expand our civilian counterterrorism assistance for law enforcement and justice sector efforts in several key African countries.

At the same time, the State Department and USAID are increasing our focus on preventing the spread of violent extremism in the first place – to stop the recruitment, radicalization and mobilization of people, especially young people, to engage in terrorist activities.

In February 2015, President Obama convened the White House Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) Summit, which brought together over 60 countries, 12 multilateral bodies, and representatives from civil society, business, and the religious community. This was followed by locally-hosted regional summits that advanced the conversation with more African stakeholders, including in Kenya and Mauritania. The CVE summit process sparked a broad-based effort to better understand and address the factors that drive radicalization and recruitment to violence within specific communities and called for a more integrated and holistic approach with a broader array of actors – government and non-government.

As such, we are expanding engagement with African governmental and non-governmental partners to better understand the drivers of violent extremism and design effective responses. We are working closely with government partners – at both the national and sub-national level – to adopt more effective policies to prevent the spread of violent extremism. This includes promoting greater trust and partnership between communities and law enforcement – a key area that contributes to resilience against violent extremism.

As we announced during President Obama's visit to East Africa last year, the United States is providing over $40 million in FY 2015 assistance for expanded programs to help counter and prevent the spread of violent extremism in East Africa. Since then, State and USAID have analyzed the underlying drivers of violent extremism and are employing a new approach to programming pooled funds to incentivize collaborative problem diagnosis and integrated program

design. To better understand al-Shabaab's efforts to recruit and expand in areas beyond its control, we studied communities at greatest risk to identify key factors that contribute to both their vulnerability and resilience to violent extremism. We are expanding ongoing USAID programs and designing new programs tailored to address those factors and provide funding to actors in government best suited to do the job. Further to this, the President's FY 2017 budget request includes increased resources for CVE, including an additional $59 million as part of the overall request for the CTPF. These resources would enable us to expand programs in Africa to engage high-risk communities and youth susceptible to violent extremist recruitment.

Our approach to supporting regional efforts to counter-Boko Haram provides an excellent example of how we pursue a comprehensive, multi-sector approach to help address terrorism on the continent. Our ongoing programs for victim support, CVE, and humanitarian assistance provide advisors, intelligence, training, logistical support, and equipment. Specifically, the Department of State is providing $71 million worth of equipment, logistics support, and training, including human rights training, to the countries participating in the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) – Benin, Cameroon, Chad, Niger, and Nigeria. In addition, in September 2015, the Administration directed the use of up to $45 million in support under the Presidential Drawdown authority to provide airlift, training, and equipment. We are also providing training and equipment–through a $40 million Global Security Contingency Fund program – to build cooperation and capacity across regional military and law enforcement forces to enhance border security and disrupt terrorist transit.

These counter-Boko Haram efforts reflect our understanding that security measures alone will never be sufficient. The Department of State is also expanding support for law enforcement forces to conduct investigations and respond to attacks, especially attacks that involve suicide bombings and improvised explosive devices. We must help our partners to establish effective criminal justice institutions to handle terrorism cases in a rule of law framework. That is why we have deployed Department of Justice legal advisors to assist legislators, prosecutors, judges, and corrections officials. Furthermore, we must help countries to make progress in stabilizing liberated areas, improve delivery of government services, and reducing support for violent extremism. With USAID's leadership, we are expanding support for programs to strengthen governance and mitigate conflict in areas threatened by Boko Haram. In Nigeria and Niger specifically the Office of Transition Initiatives is working to improve governments' responsiveness to citizens' expectations and increasing civic

engagement with governing authorities. In Nigeria, we are also advising the government on developing a reconstruction and long-term development plan for the northeast, and USAID is delivering urgent education services to IDPs and conflict-affected communities in the northeast.

We are also responding to the humanitarian crisis caused by Boko Haram's assault on the people of the Lake Chad Basin. In Nigeria alone, approximately seven million people are suffering displacement, deprivation, and/or disease from the consequences of armed conflict and the UN estimates that 9.2 million are in need of immediate assistance across the region. In 2015, and thus far in 2016, we have provided a total of nearly $244 million in humanitarian assistance for Boko Haram-affected populations throughout the Lake Chad Basin, including for IDPs and refugees. USAID and the State Department are supporting projects to increase civilian protection, enhance early warning capabilities, deliver humanitarian relief, and strengthen the overall resiliency of communities.

Addressing Other Sources of Instability

We are also focused on addressing other sources of instability in Africa. Several parts of Africa remain plagued by instability, internal conflict and violence, including Mali, South Sudan, Burundi, the Central African Republic (CAR) and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). We are engaged in aggressive diplomatic efforts to help resolve these conflicts and support the implementation of peace agreements. We are actively supporting ongoing peacekeeping missions. We are also providing significant assistance to address humanitarian needs, prevent mass atrocities, and address underlying causes of instability. Finally, we assist African efforts to get ahead of crises through support of conflict early warning systems and diplomatic responses.

In Mali, we are urging all sides to accelerate their efforts to implement the peace accord signed in June 2015. Significant delays in the accord's implementation have prolonged the security vacuum in northern Mali, undercut our long-term counterterrorism objectives, and made it difficult to advance reconciliation, reintegration, and development. Despite these obstacles, we remain committed to advancing an inclusive peace in Mali through dialogue with all actors and our support to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA).

In South Sudan, the U.S. government's overriding focus
is supporting implementation of the August 2015 Agreement on the Resolution of

Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (ARCISS) so that the civil war may end and peace, stability, and prosperity take root. We are currently supporting the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangement Monitoring Mechanism (CTSAMM) to ensure that the parties are adhering to the ceasefire and security arrangements for Juba and other cities, in accordance with the agreement.

In the CAR, the recent peaceful election and democratic transition were positive steps, but sustained engagement is essential to end the cycle of violence there. We are working both bilaterally, and with the UN, AU, and European Union to support inclusive, representative, human-rights based approaches to security sector reform and governance that facilitate post-conflict stabilization and recovery. Since the crisis in CAR began in late 2013, the U.S. provided over $79 million to train and equip troops deploying into CAR to provide peace and stability, as part of the original AU mission and the subsequent UN mission. We are working to develop activities and programs to prepare the security forces of CAR to provide citizen security in their country, with full respect for the law. Ensuring rule of law and accountability are essential pillars for CAR's future, we are helping to build CAR's judicial structure, including the development of their Special Criminal Court. We are also working to help communities throughout CAR by focusing our long-term development programming on grassroots peace and reconciliation and expanding access to justice through sexual and gender-based violence legal training and mobile courts. The United States is committed to assisting the people and the government of the CAR with its transition from recent violence to a democratically elected government that serves CAR's people.

In the DRC, we seek to preserve security gains made over the last 10 years and to continue countering armed groups in the eastern DRC, while preserving civil society space to foster free and fair elections and a peaceful transition of power. We have supported defense sector and law enforcement reform programs for the last decade. Our efforts include increasing military justice capabilities to hold accountable human rights violators and criminals in the military. We are very concerned, however, that a delay in the November elections this year, and an effort by President Kabila to remain in office after December 20 when he is required by the DRC Constitution to step down, will lead to widespread violence and instability; such instability could have an impact on the entire region.

In Burundi, we are using diplomatic engagement at all levels to urge support for a regionally-mediated dialogue that brings all parties to the table to peacefully resolve the current conflict. We have also encouraged accountability for abuses and violations of human rights and attempts to undermine democracy in Burundi

by sanctioning eight individuals responsible for such activities from both sides of the conflict. In March, we announced $31 million in humanitarian assistance to support more than 260,000 refugees who have fled Burundi over the last year and Congolese refugees and others food-insecure individuals still in Burundi. This brings the total U.S. humanitarian assistance for the regional response to the Burundi crisis to more than $86 million. Thomas Perriello, the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region, has made frequent visits to Burundi, DRC, and to other countries in the region, seeking a diplomatic solution to the current crisis in Burundi and to the impending crisis in the DRC.

In collaboration with the AU and the UN, we continue to support regional efforts to end the threat posed by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and bring the remaining LRA leaders to justice. We are pursuing a comprehensive strategy to build partner capacity, empower local communities, promote defections from the LRA's ranks, and mitigate the consequences of the LRA's atrocities. With U.S. support, the regional forces from Uganda, the DRC, CAR, and South Sudan who comprise the African Union Regional Task Force have significantly degraded the LRA's capacity to attack communities and wreak havoc, but the job is not done.

Increasingly, our African partners recognize the importance of maritime security. They have begun to lead initiatives to protect maritime traffic, reduce the loss of national revenue, and increase economic opportunities. These increased benefits can positively contribute to environmental and socio-economic development, as well as increased national, regional and continental stability. By the same token, they make a substantive contribution to global security. A comprehensive U.S. policy on maritime security in sub-Saharan Africa supports not only U.S. security interests but the Administration's broader sub-Saharan Africa policy objectives. The U.S. Government will encourage and support greater African stewardship of maritime safety and security at the continental, regional, and national levels.

The Department of State, our interagency colleagues and our international partners also recognize the serious threats posed by drug-trafficking. Foreign drug traffickers usually prefer fragile countries with weak law enforcement and judicial systems. They thrive in areas where they can operate with impunity – either because legal systems do not work, or because they can be easily corrupted. The creation of resilient institutions takes time and the lack of governance attracts transnational criminal networks. The flow of drugs through a region risks undermining the States by weakening their institutions, their local communities,

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and their social fabric. With our interagency colleagues, we have collaborated to develop the West Africa Cooperative Security Initiative.

Through the Early Warning and Response Partnership (EWARP) and other programs, the U.S. is assisting the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and soon individual member states with programs to improve networks for early warning of conflict or other stability challenges. This will allow our African partners to better prevent instability so they do not require costly and long term security and humanitarian responses.

Building Strong and Accountable Security Sector Institutions

We recognize that strengthening the security and justice institutions of our African partners is vital for long-term stability on the continent. This includes both military and civilian security services, and the entities that oversee them. We are partnering with African countries and organizations to develop capable and professional security services, improve security sector governance, and enhance regional coordination and interoperability. In August 2014, President Obama announced the Security Governance Initiative (SGI), an innovative, multi-year effort between the United States and African partners to improve security sector governance and capacity by collaborating with partner governments to develop sound policies, institutional structures, systems, and processes to more efficiently and effectively deliver security and justice to citizens. SGI complements our other security sector assistance programs by building underlying institutional capacity, and furthers our efforts to combat terrorism and instability in sub-Saharan Africa by focusing on opportunities to address institutional gaps. In SGI's six initial partners are Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, and Tunisia.

The State Department's International Military Education and Training (IMET) program supports the professionalization of African militaries through training in the United States with a heavy focus on human rights, military justice and civilian control of the military. As a complement to IMET, the Department also funds the Africa Military Education Program (AMEP), which supports instructor and/or curriculum development of select African military education institutions to help further professionalize African militaries.

The U.S. Government is also helping to resolve conflicts on the continent by building the institutional capacity of Africans to train and equip peacekeepers and respond rapidly to conflict. We are training and equipping African peacekeepers through programs such as the Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI) and, the

Africa Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) program. We are also building rapid response capabilities through the Africa Peacekeeping and Rapid Response Partnership (APRRP). ACOTA has trained 297,071 peacekeepers since 2004. We are working to develop professional security forces that respect human rights, recruit and retain a representative corps of professionals, and safeguard democratic institutions in countries emerging from or affected by conflict. Through APRRP, the United States is strengthening the capacity of security forces in six partner countries to deploy rapidly to emerging African crises. The inaugural APRRP partners are Ethiopia, Ghana, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania and Uganda.

Promoting Good Governance, Economic Growth, Opportunity and Development

Countering instability requires a broad and multi-faceted strategy. Given the multiple drivers of instability and conflict in Africa, our responses must be innovative and dynamic. We cannot focus solely on the security aspect of the solution. As outlined in President Obama's 2012 Policy Directive for Africa, the United States has four overall strategic objectives in Africa: (1) strengthen democratic institutions; (2) spur economic growth, trade and investment; (3) advance peace and security; and (4) promote opportunity and development. Progress on all of these objectives is required to improve stability throughout the continent.

We continue to stay focused on supporting free, fair, and transparent electoral processes that are inclusive and representative. We have seen some major electoral successes, for example in Nigeria, Burkina Faso, and CAR, but there have been setbacks as well. We will continue to support regular democratic transitions, because they can help vaccinate a country against feelings of injustice and alienation that can lead some to heed the siren call of extremism and violence. We will continue to support democratization efforts through electoral assistance programs, diplomatic engagement, public outreach, and election monitoring. We will continue to promote respect for universal human rights, promote space for civil society to operate freely, and fight corruption. And we are working with our African partners to ensure that governments deliver essential services, independent judiciaries enforce the rule of law, and that professional security forces respect human rights.

President Obama has highlighted that the most urgent task facing Africa today and for the decades ahead is to create opportunity for Africa's next generation. Young people constitute a majority of Africa's population and stand to

gain, or lose, tremendously based on the continent's social, political, and economic trajectory. They also represent the next generation of African leaders. Through programs like the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI), we are investing in the future by building leadership skills, bolstering entrepreneurship, and connecting young African leaders with one another, the United States, and the American people. This program will have a long-lasting positive impact on the continent. Due to YALI's success, we are expanding the number of Mandela Washington Fellows from 500 to 1,000 this year.

To support economic opportunity and growth in Africa, in 2014, President Obama also tripled the goals of his Power Africa initiative, pledging to add 30,000 megawatts of new, cleaner energy generation capacity and to expand access to at least 60 million households and enterprises across Sub-Saharan Africa. We thank Congress for its leadership in passing the Electrify Africa Act of 2015 in February of this year, which codified the strong bipartisan support for the vision, goals and approach behind Power Africa, and sends a strong signal of the United States' long-term commitment to reducing energy poverty in sub-Saharan Africa.

In addition, we thank Congress for its leadership in reauthorizing the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) for an additional ten years. We are encouraging our African partners to make the most of this ten-year reauthorization by developing AGOA utilization strategies, while at the same time laying the ground work to move our trade and investment relationship forward, beyond AGOA.

YALI, Power Africa, AGOA, and other programs like these are crucial to creating opportunities for the youth of Africa and ensuring that they are less susceptible to recruitment by extremists, criminal enterprises, and human traffickers. Global Health is another top priority. Through our work under the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief and the President's Malaria Initiative, we are turning the tide against these insidious diseases and saving lives. Other presidential initiatives such as the, Feed the Future, and the Partnership for Growth are also focused on building the sustainable development needed to support a rapidly growing populations.

Conclusion

We appreciate the Committee's interest in addressing instability in Africa and again ask for your help in supporting our relevant funding requests. We know that the challenges are great, but we believe that the comprehensive approach that

we are pursuing is making progress and promoting stability that will ultimately benefit the United States and all of Africa. This will be a long-term process that requires persistence and sustained partnerships. With your help we have made significant strides over the past few years, but more work remains to be done.

Thank you and we look forward to your questions.

Testimony by United States Agency for International Development
Assistant Administrator for Africa Linda Etim
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
May 10, 2016
"Terrorism and Instability in Sub Saharan Africa"

Good afternoon, Chairman Corker, Ranking Member Cardin. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss USAID's work with this committee.

Throughout Africa, our efforts to end extreme poverty, promote resilient, democratic societies and create economic opportunity while advancing our security and prosperity are increasingly threatened by instability and the emerging forces of violent extremism. This is a global phenomenon and no part of the world is immune.

The United States has a powerful tool to prevent conflict and instability: international development. As the U.S. Government's primary development agency, USAID has long recognized the critical role of development in addressing social, economic, governance, and other legitimate grievances that can fuel violent extremism and promote radicalization of individuals and communities. It is also important to build counter-violent extremism messaging into programming, especially in local languages that can reach vulnerable populations. Our activities and interventions are designed to reduce extremists' opportunities to exploit social injustice, lack of political integration, economic inequality, religious persecution, and ideological extremism to recruit followers to violent agendas or criminal networks.

Violent extremism impedes development. It can slow investment, prevent children from attending schools, place additional burdens on already fragile healthcare systems, and undermine political systems. Today, I'll discuss our programs that help prevent violent extremism in the Sahel and Horn of Africa and focus on the strategic thinking, analysis, and approach that form the core of our results-oriented programs. I'll also touch on the importance of USAID's governance programs, which seek to address the social inequities, corruption and weak institutions that often foster instability.

Addressing Drivers

USAID uses our analytic capabilities and draws upon our knowledge of the local context to examine the drivers of fragility. Our assessments carefully consider the "push factors" that can drive people toward supporting violent extremism, such as social fragmentation, a sense of injustice, perceptions of marginalization, and distrust of government. We also examine the pull factors that can attract those vulnerable to recruitment, including social and peer networks that provide an ideological foundation, and the promise of financial benefit. We have learned that attitudes of potential recruits are heavily influenced by their environment, information channels, peer group norms, and what they hear from trusted sources.

In 2011, USAID issued, "The Development Response to Violent Extremism and Insurgency," which recognizes development's role in identifying and addressing drivers of extremism in

support of U.S. national security objectives. This Agency notes that much of U.S. foreign assistance goes to countries in the midst of, or trying to prevent, conflict or state failure. Our efforts to prevent and respond to violent extremism are guided by ongoing research and analysis of the factors associated with radicalization and recruitment to violence.

USAID helps prevent the spread of violent extremism through targeted efforts to promote good governance and the rule of law, respect for human rights, and sustainable, inclusive development, among other programs. Together with State, USAID is bringing its development expertise and more than a decade of experience in countering violent extremism programming to bear — harnessing the full range of analytic tools to design, support, and measure programs that reduce the vulnerabilities of communities and build local capacity to resist extremist groups. This is an essential element of the Agency's integrated approach, which begins with prevention.

Youth are a key demographic targeted by our programming. According to the United Nations, in 2015, 226 million youth aged 15-24 lived in Africa. By 2030, it is projected that the number of youth in Africa will have increased by 42 percent to more than 320 million.

While there is no one profile of those most at-risk, unemployed youth who have migrated to peri-urban and slum areas, university graduates whose expectations have not been met, or youth who have lived through conflict can be at great risk. Slow economies and an education that is not tied to market demand leave many youth feeling that they have no role in their community. They lack a sense of belonging and feel marginalized. Such perceptions can drive youth to involvement in destructive or illicit activities.

Gender is a critical element in addressing violent extremism. We work to move beyond generalized assumptions about men and women based on common gender stereotypes, recognizing that gender norms for men and women manifest differently in various social, political, and economic contexts. For example, women are not only victims of violent extremism but can be both perpetrators and critical to prevention. As such, a nuanced and context-specific understanding of gender is needed to accurately diagnose the push and pull factors that drive both men and women to participate in violent extremism, a dynamic that has been largely unaddressed in the research.

Intrinsic to the design of all USAID activities is the belief that our development assistance has the greatest impact on the drivers of extremism by increasing resilience. At the local level, we focus on social cohesion and fostering stronger, more resilient communities. We support individuals, particularly youth, through employment and outreach programs, vocational skills training, and community development activities.

The Horn of Africa

Terrorist threats in East Africa continue to evolve and spread. The regional dynamics and conditions that propel extremism in the Horn of Africa are inextricably linked to neighboring countries. Through the Partnership for Regional East Africa Counterterrorism (PREACT) and related programs, the U.S. Department of State, the Department of Defense, and USAID fund projects in Kenya, Somalia, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Uganda and along the Kenya-Somalia border to

promote civic engagement and political participation, strengthen civil society organizations, amplify moderate voices, mitigate conflict, and empower youth and women; this is a coordinated interagency approach.

In Somalia, al-Shabaab threatens not only the country's viability as a state but also the region's stability. USAID supports peace and stability in 17 of 18 regions through targeted community-vetted interventions that foster good governance, economic recovery, and reduces the appeal of extremism. USAID also promotes the women, peace, and security agenda in Somalia. Since 2011, USAID constructed and/or equipped 12 women's centers across Somalia which are neutral venues utilized by women for community planning, conflict mitigation and resolution, counseling services, adult literacy classes, and public health and safety purposes.

One of USAID's flagship programs, the Transition Initiatives for Stabilization Plus, improves community resistance to the influence of al-Shabaab and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), by creating effective local governance, and proactively engaging communities. We know that communities that realize positive social, cultural, and economic benefits in recovered areas are more likely to resist extremism.

This program serves as the bridge between our immediate humanitarian assistance and our medium- to longer-term development programs in Somalia. Development programs need peace and stability to be sustainable and effective. We conduct rapid-impact, high-visibility work that creates short-term employment opportunities for at-risk youth, displaced people, and other vulnerable groups. All projects are carried out in a consultative process between the local authorities and the community, enabling the civilian population to do something good for their communities while interacting and engaging with a legitimate governance structure. This further mitigates conflict, promotes stability and community cohesion, and strengthens and supports relationships between residents and their government officials.

In Kenya, USAID targets at-risk youth populations through Generation Kenya, which closes the gap between young people who are out of work and employers who are short of skilled employees. By partnering with the private sector, we provide training and meaningful employment to vulnerable young people. Generation Kenya has produced impressive results—100 percent of Generation Kenya's 490 graduates were placed with employers and 90 percent are still in these jobs. Generation Kenya plans to place more than 50,000 youth in stable careers by the year 2020. Going forward, USAID will expand its programming in violent extremism "hot spots" working hand and hand with communities, local, and national governments.

In the Horn of Africa, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development has emerged as the leading regional actor in countering violent extremism. In 2015, it announced a decision to establish a regional Countering Violent Extremism Center of Excellence, based in Djibouti. The center will focus on practical and tangible outcomes that will strengthen countering violent extremism capacities and cooperation across the region. USAID will support the implementation of the Center of Excellence's key priorities to ensure that governments, civil society organizations and other actors have the tools and information on "best practices" to effectively carry out their efforts.

West Africa and the Sahel

In West Africa, violent extremism is a potentially destabilizing force which threatens the tenuous progress of the region's development. In the Sahel, vast porous borders fostering centuries-old socioeconomic and ethno-tribal ties exist alongside post-colonial boundaries and enhance the likelihood of spreading tension and instability. Modernization, urban migration, and the breakdown of social cohesion and familial and communal interdependence have disrupted historically strong community and regional ties.

USAID counters this force through our role in the Trans Sahara Counter Terrorism Partnership. Our programs and initiatives are designed to reduce the threats of violent extremism and armed conflicts within the Libya-Niger-Mali corridor and in Nigeria, along Niger's southern border. By improving national and regional capacities to resist terrorist organizations, we help disrupt efforts to recruit and train new members, particularly youth. Our efforts also make it harder for extremists to establish safe havens. Through the USAID Peace through Development and Expanded Regional Stability program, we support Niger, Chad, and Burkina Faso's community leaders to engage with marginalized communities and work with government officials to make local governance more inclusive and transparent. We engage youth through vocational and entrepreneurial skills training, civic education, and leadership training to increase participation in local decision making, encourage greater citizen participation, advocacy, and government outreach.

In Niger, our Community Cohesion Initiative engages communities through small-scale, targeted activities involving local civil society organizations, governments, and community members. The Niger Education and Community Strengthening Program works in 150 schools across 22 municipalities to improve educational opportunities for children in at-risk communities. This support increased school attendance rates from 62 percent to 93 percent in targeted communities. Investments in these learning opportunities are focused on ensuring an increasingly educated population is paired with economic opportunity.

The USAID Peace through Development II project has reached 40 Nigerien communities across the regions of Agadez, Diffa, Maradi, Tahoua, Tillaberri, Zinder and the capital district of Niamey. By producing and delivering original radio content aimed at countering extremist narratives that was broadcast across 33 partner stations, the program has reached over 1.7 million people from groups at risk of violent extremism. It has directly engaged nearly 100,000 people through civic education, moderate voice promotion and youth empowerment themed events. We also facilitate local dialogue and reduce community tensions by tackling small yet important development projects such as rehabilitation of a well or brush-clearing that makes it harder for terrorists and other criminal elements to conduct attacks along popular roads. Our programs increase civic engagement among Nigerien government authorities and citizens and decrease the interest of young people to take part in illegal or extremist activities. These activities also increase the community's knowledge of the Government of Niger's efforts to promote security and stability throughout the region.

Across Mali, USAID supports the Government's roadmap for political transition. Following the successful July 2013 presidential elections, we are focused on supporting the peace accord that

brought an end to the conflict with the Northern Armed Groups, restoring a sense of normalcy in strategic areas in the North, and countering violent extremism through inclusion of marginalized communities. Our assistance increases the effectiveness and legitimacy of government institutions. By strengthening the government's public financial management systems we help ensure that public funds are distributed equitably and justly throughout Mali, and that decentralization efforts are accompanied with sufficient skills, training, and oversight to prevent corruption. Mali is also a partner country Security Governance Initiative, the United States' joint endeavor with six African partners to improve security sector governance and capacity to address threats. We've just embarked on the first-ever Rule of Law program to ensure the Ministry of Justice obtains and maintains qualified staff to carry out its mission. In addition, our newest program, the Mali Peace Initiative, builds upon a three-year, Office of Transition Initiatives program that operated across Northern Mali to strengthen targeted communities' resilience to conflict and radicalization. Still, the tragic loss of USAID friend and partner, Anita Datar, during the November 2015 terrorist attack on the Radisson Blu hotel in Bamako, Mali underscores the challenges that remain as we continue our efforts to bolster the fragile peace process and provide assistance to vulnerable communities.

In nearby Nigeria, a surge of violence perpetuated by the terrorist group Boko Haram, which now calls itself the Islamic State in West Africa continues. The insurgency has forced large populations to migrate to more secure areas, disrupting homes and livelihoods and burdening already stressed basic public services such as education and health. USAID's programming improves the Nigerian government's responsiveness to community needs, reducing perceptions of marginalization and addressing youth vulnerability to violent extremist influence. Women and girls are not only victims of violent extremism, but have the ability to prevent recruitment and serve as mediators and peace-builders. Christian and Muslim women have used the skills received during USAID-supported training to help citizens in Boko Haram affected communities manage the effects of trauma and stress and to conduct inter-religious dialogue to promote conflict prevention and peaceful coexistence. This is integral to a more holistic and practical healing process.

The Nigeria Regional Transition Initiative focuses on diminishing conditions that allow Boko Haram to exist and flourish in the Northeast. It provides small-scale, strategically targeted assistance to local partners. For example, we supported UNICEF and other implementing partners to provide education activities for conflict-affected children, including internally displaced persons and children in host communities, in Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, and Gombe states. We provide child-friendly spaces, psychosocial support, and peer mentoring opportunities for children, while also training teachers in conflict-sensitive instruction. These activities build a stronger sense of community and belonging in these traditionally marginalized areas by facilitating peaceful interactions between the internally displaced and host communities. We are promoting conflict mitigation, expanding a sports-for-peace program, and launching a local language radio program to counter the appeal of terrorist or criminal organizations.

Conclusion

We have seen real progress in our efforts. Through program assessment, implementation and evaluation, we are learning what works and what doesn't. As we gain experience, we improve

our monitoring and evaluation and gather more baseline data so that we can more effectively measure program impact.

A central tenet of our development approach is the transfer of knowledge and skills to stakeholders and partners in African countries. Through our Missions' work and through USAID-funded resource centers, such as those referenced above, we train individuals and communities to own and address violent extremism in their own countries.

At USAID, we're committed to this work. We've increased the number of individuals dedicated to programming focused on countering extremism, trained employees on its principles and incorporated countering violent extremism objectives into our country program strategies.

Instability in some areas is the product of generations of neglect and corruption; solutions to these challenges will be the product of generations of concerted focus, legitimate engagement, and expectations of results. For our development programs to succeed we must invest in strong local partnerships and our methods of engagement must be nimble and creative. Because trends in extremism are fluid, we must constantly reassess our priorities, our progress, and our policies to ensure that our work is based on the realities of today.

Toward this end, we are pleased with our strong and productive partnership with the Departments of Defense and State on the planning and implementation of programming, as well as our work with other donors on coordinating efforts to counter extremism. Sustained engagement—within the U.S. Government, with other donor governments, and with our partners in the region—will be the key to combating extremism today and securing peace and stability for years to come.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee. I look forward to your questions.

STATEMENT OF MR. ABDOULAYE MAR DIEYE,

United Nations Assistant Secretary General and Regional Director,

UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa

TO THE

UNITED STATES SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

ON

INSTABILITY IN AFRICA

Current threats in Nigeria, the Great Lake Region, Mali, Somalia and East Africa; and international development responses.

Washington DC, 10 May, 2016

Mr. Chairman, Mr Ranking Member, Members of the Committee,

I am honored, as Regional Director for Africa at the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), to be invited as a panelist before the US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

UNDP is the lead UN development agency. We are active in 168 countries and territories across the world, including all 53 countries in Africa. Our mission, as set by Member States through our Executive Board, is to assist countries to eradicate poverty and, at the same time, achieve a significant reduction of inequalities and exclusion. We do this by supporting inclusive growth and development, fostering democratic governance and building resilient institutions and communities that are better able to manage risks that can endanger peace and development.

Mr. Chairman,

My purpose today is two-fold.

First, I want to briefly update you on what we, as UNDP, have learnt about instability in Africa. Second, I will share our view on the possible developmental approaches to mitigate the threats to peace and stability in what is often referred to as *"Africa's Arc of Instability"* which encompasses the Sahel, the Lake Chad Region and the Horn of Africa.

But let me first recognize and celebrate that Africa has made significant strides on the social, political and economic front since the turn of the century.

Figures show that Africa's rate of extreme poverty fell from 56% in 1990 to 43% in 2012; steady economic growth and macroeconomic stability have resurged; and protracted armed conflicts are on a downward trend. We have seen that these **successes tend to be driven by countries that invest in the safety, security and productive lives of their citizens**. We have also seen, in many instances, genuine and inclusive democratic transitions leading to more responsive and accountable governments. This progress, however, is at risk of reversal.

Mr. Chair, Ranking Member, Members of the Committee,

The stark reality is that steady economic growth and macroeconomic stability have not transformed into sustainable development. Deep socio-economic inequalities within and between communities in these sub-regions and indeed across much of Africa persist. While extreme

poverty has been reduced, a vast number of citizens continue to live in dire conditions with little prospect of attaining the most basic of human development needs in health, education or livelihoods. It is estimated that 60% of the population in the region are between the ages 18 – 30. It is young Africans who are making the grim choice as illegal migrants - travelling to the North of Africa destined for the West, setting off on journeys that we know frequently end in death. It is these youth, particularly females, who are kidnapped, trafficked into servitude, and exploited. They are young; they are poor; and the majority are desperate. It is young people, in particular, who are easy prey for extremist ideologues. They are radicalized, with promises of relevance and prosperity and encouraged along a path of violence and destruction. In Nigeria, more than 40% of suicide bombers are female. One in five suicide bombers deployed by Boko Haram last year was a child and, usually, a girl.

The exponential growth of violent extremism in Africa, including the growing convergence between different groups, also presents an imminent threat to Africa's steady path to prosperity. We estimate that at least 33,000 persons have been killed in Africa since 2011, and 6 million people are internally displaced as a result of violent extremism.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, Members of the Committee,

Societies and communities bear the brunt of extremist violence. Extremists target public spaces such as markets and bus stations, forcing people to make a difficult choice between risking death by going to work to earn a living, or risking the very survival of their families. Nowhere is this more evident than in the Lake Chad Basin – Nigeria, Chad, Niger and Cameroon – where over 3

million people are displaced, thousands have been killed and many more are held captive across the four countries. The killing of students in Garissa, Kenya, the kidnapping of the Chibok girls in Dikwa, Nigeria, the suicide attack on medical students in Somalia, and the recent tragic events in Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire and Mali have shown that this phenomenon is unique in targeting the innocent and vulnerable, breeding discord among communities, and arresting development.

The impact of extremist violence is not only the loss of lives and destruction of property – national economies are also negatively affected. According to the International Monetary Fund, violent extremism is amongst the major risks to economies in parts of Africa. Tunisia's GDP growth has been cut from 3% to 1% with a 45% decline in tourism. Chad's GDP's contracted by 1% in 2015 from a 5% growth in 2014, and Kenya saw a 25% reduction in tourism following terrorist attacks.

Weak governance and limited opportunities for youth are critical drivers of socio-political instability. They fuel illegal migration and violent extremism, significantly intensifying the risk that Africa may once again be described as a "blight on the conscience of the world".

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, Members of the Committee,

Over the last two years, UNDP has held a number of consultations, conducted a series of studies and commissioned research to better understand the violent extremism scourge in Africa. We have just concluded a seminal *"perception study"* on *"radicalization, violence and insecurity in the Sahel"*, covering border communities in eight countries – Mauritania, Senegal, Niger, Mali,

Chad, Burkina Faso, Cameroon and Nigeria. That study is the first, we believe, to assess perceptions of affected populations on what they see as the main factors explaining radicalization, and what they would expect as solutions. We are also currently conducting research on *"radicalization journey mapping"* with a view to identifying *"the tipping point to violent extremism"*. This research, which interviews extremists , their families and their communities, covers the zones of operation of Boko Haram and Al Shabaab in regions of Nigeria, Kenya, Uganda and Somalia; and it will be extended (in a phase II) to Northern Mali and the Lake Chad region.

Preliminary results of these various studies and research converge in three major findings:

1. While the drivers of radicalization are multi-faceted, and defy easy analysis, their major roots are to be found in: *(i) poverty and low human development (ii) an endemic sense of economic and political exclusion and marginalization; and (iii) weak social contracts with high level of societal divisions along ethnic or religious lines.*

2. *The most fertile grounds for radicalization are border areas, which are, in most of the countries studied, neglected in terms of socio-economic and institutional infrastructure.*

3. *While there are a number of common elements which drive radicalization, there are also some important differences between countries. For example, socio-economic factors tend to be the prominent drivers in the Sahel, the Lake Chad Basin, Somalia and Nigeria; whereas political grievances are a much more prominent factor in Kenya.*

In short, violent extremism finds fertile ground among the disenfranchised and in ungoverned spaces.

It is with this research and analysis in mind that we have embarked on a development-led approach which seeks to address the multiple drivers and enablers of radicalization and violent extremism.

We have launched a four-year regional initiative on *"preventing and responding to violent extremism in Africa"* which focuses on supporting regional institutions, governments, communities and at-risk individuals to address the drivers and related factors.

We are working in epicenter countries, spill-over countries and at-risk countries to help partners develop and implement integrated, regional and national policies and strategies; effective decentralization; cross-border development initiatives; rule of law; peer-to-peer, community and faith-based interventions to prevent youth radicalization and de-escalate local conflicts. We also promote social cohesion at community level, working with local and national governments to provide basic social services to citizens. We support employment creation, and we work with local governments to strengthen public administration and the extension of state authority.

We have learned that well-resourced, comprehensive and integrated programs combining security and development responses offer the best approaches to combating violent extremism. We have further learned that communities – including faith groups – should be at the center of the response, with efforts to increase trust and build confidence between them and law

enforcement agencies. These initiatives, combined with participatory governance and sustained efforts to address inequality, can bring hope, opportunity and purpose to young people and excluded communities. This approach is critical in successfully inoculating communities against radicalization.

Let me conclude my remarks by emphasizing that for Africa to meet its full development potential, preventing and responding to violent extremism is essential. This will require coordinated and collaborative partnerships between governments, development partners and civil society groups.

Mr. Chairman, I thank this Committee for holding these hearings, which can only rightly add to the sense of urgency that this situation warrants, and for inviting UNDP to make a submission.

Statement by Christopher Fomunyoh, Ph.D.
Senior Associate and Regional Director for Central and West Africa
National Democratic Institute

U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
"Terrorism and Instability in sub-Saharan Africa: A Good Governance Imperative"
May 10, 2016

Mr. Chairman, ranking member Cardin, and distinguished members of the Committee, on behalf of the National Democratic Institute (NDI), I appreciate the opportunity to discuss terrorism and instability and make the case for why democracy and good governance should be a central component of any counterterrorism and stabilization strategy in Sub-Saharan Africa. For more than 30 years, NDI has worked around the world to establish and strengthen political and civic organizations, safeguard elections, and promote citizen participation, openness, and accountability in government. The Institute has conducted programs in, or worked with participants from approximately 50 of Africa's 54 countries; and I have been fortunate to be part of our efforts in many of those countries for the past two decades.

Introduction

Terrorist activity in sub-Saharan Africa over the past decade threatens to destabilize the continent and roll back some of the gains in broadening political space and participation since the global wave of democratization that began in the 1990s. Groups such as Boko Haram in northeastern Nigeria and the Lake Chad basin, Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQMI) in northern Mali and the Sahel, and Al-Shabaab in Somalia and the Horn of Africa have caused tens of thousands of deaths and tremendous economic and social dislocations of civilian populations. Some of these extremist organizations operating in Africa are eager to establish alliances with violent extremist organizations in other parts of the world, notably Al Qaeda and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). The international community is right in supporting counterterrorism efforts that seek to defeat these extremist groups militarily and must, at the same time, assist the affected countries to address the root causes and triggers of the rise in extremism and violence on the continent.

The principal motivation of today's terrorists in sub-Saharan Africa is deeply rooted in a pattern of religious beliefs; however, it is noteworthy that governance failures have exacerbated the impact of this phenomenon and created an enabling environment in which extremism thrives. When a state collapses, as was the case with Somalia prior to the emergence of Al-Shabaab, or allows for huge swaths of ungovernable spaces, as was the case in Northern Mali, or fails to fulfill its basic purpose of providing citizens with access to a meaningful life, liberty, and property, as in northeastern Nigeria, the social contract between the state and the citizenry is broken. Discontent with governments that are viewed as illegitimate or ineffective is a fertile ground for recruitment as disaffected individuals may easily embrace extremism hoping to

access a better life, political power or voice and the resources linked to these attributes in transition environments. Moreover, oppressed citizens and marginalized groups that are denied access to basic public goods and services and opportunities are more vulnerable to extremist appeals and indoctrination by non-state actors who in return promise to fulfill their needs. Efforts to counter violent extremism and terrorism in sub-Saharan Africa must, therefore, address poor governance as part of the overall strategy. Based on institutional lessons learned through NDI's work, my own experience and expertise as an African, and what I hear loud and clear from African democrats -- leaders and activists alike -- across the continent, I would strongly offer the following three recommendations for your consideration:

- Any counterterrorism strategy for Africa should be grounded in the consolidation of democracy and good governance such that short term military victories can be sustained in the medium to long term. We cannot defeat violent extremism now only to take up the same fight five, 10 years down the road.

- Autocratic regimes should not get a pass from the international community solely because they are good partners in the fight against terrorism. Shrinking political space, frequent and overt violations of citizen rights and freedoms, and the undermining of constitutional rule and meaningful elections breed discontent and disaffection that form the fertile ground for recruiters and perpetrators of violence and extremism. Good partners in countering violent extremism and terrorism can and should be good performers in democratic governance. These two principles are not mutually exclusive; in fact they are mutually reinforcing.

- Africans of this generation are jittery and extremely fearful of reliving the experience of the Cold War era during which dictatorships thrived amidst grave human deprivation and gross human rights abuses just because some leaders were allies of the West at the time. The fight against terrorism should not become a substitute for the Cold War paradigm of this century with regards to sub-Saharan Africa.

Governance Gaps and Extremism

According to a 2009 report by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), marginalized citizens who feel excluded from the political process may turn to extremist groups to fight for inclusion or to gain a sense of belonging.[1] Also, a 2014 study by academics at the University of Illinois, Chicago, and Pennsylvania State University found that countries where ethnic groups are excluded from political power suffer from more domestic terror attacks.[2] Unfortunately, in many African countries the politics of exclusion remains a reality. Identity politics, buttressed by subjective criteria such as ethnicity, region of origin, and in a few cases religion, breeds discontent and dissatisfaction within communities.

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[1] USAID. Guide to the Drivers of Violent Extremism. February 2009.
[2] Seung-Whan Choi and James A. Piazza. "Ethnic groups, political exclusion and domestic terrorism," Defense and Peace Economics. December 11, 2014.

Poor governance accounts for low and uneven rates of economic and human development, poor service delivery, and lack of opportunities for gainful employment and/or prosperity and societies with these traits tend to be breeding grounds in which extremist groups thrive.[3] Dissatisfaction with a government's failures to ensure a reasonable quality of life can lead to radicalization and a rejection of central authority.

Democratic governance is critical to every counterterrorism strategy -- before, so citizen grievances are not allowed to fester and breed extremism, dissatisfaction, and alienation from the state; during, to deprive extremists of possible recruitment grounds; and after, to sustain the peace that would have been gained militarily for the medium to long term. Excessive deprivation in both economic terms and in access to political voice, freedom, and civil liberties makes young people vulnerable to the recruitment incentives of extremist movements.

Particularities of the Terrorist Trends in Sub-Saharan Africa

According to the Institute for Economics and Peace's Global Terrorism Index (2015), sub-Saharan Africa experienced the second highest number of terrorism-related casualties in 2014, with more than 10,000 deaths.[4] The greatest terrorist impacts were in northern Nigeria and neighboring countries in the Lake Chad basin, the Sahel, and the Horn of Africa.

Boko Haram in Nigeria

According to the Index report, Boko Haram is the deadliest terrorist group in the world (ahead of ISIS, the Taliban, and Al-Shabaab), having killed more than 7,000 people in terrorist attacks in Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad, and Niger in 2014 alone.[5] On a global scale, in 2014 northern Nigeria suffered 23 percent of all terrorism-related deaths worldwide.[6] In recent months, as Boko Haram has been militarily degraded, it has changed tactics by dramatically increasing cross-border attacks by suicide bombers in Chad, Cameroon, and Niger. Boko Haram was formed by a Muslim leader, Mohammed Yusuf, who railed against government corruption and failure to adhere to the ideology of an Islamic state as a battle cry to recruit young followers, many of whom saw themselves as marginalized and victimized by the Nigerian government.[7] Its first public manifestation was in the attack of a police station in Borno State in 2009.

Al-Shabaab in Somalia

In the Horn of Africa, Somalia faces an Al Qaeda-affiliated Islamic terrorist group, Al-Shabaab, which seeks to undermine any semblance of authority by the Somali government.   Al-Shabaab

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[3] USAID. Guide to the Drivers of Violent Extremism. February 2009.
[4] Institute for Economics and Peace. Global Terrorism Index 2015: Measuring and Understanding the Impact of Terrorism.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Brooking's Institute. 'The disease is unbelief': Boko Haram's religious and political worldview. January 2016

emerged in 1991 after the collapse of the Somali state and protracted armed conflict among various ethnically-based factions. The group took advantage of the power vacuum and prevailing anarchy generated by the intra-Somali conflict to build camps and train fighters without fear of state interference. At its peak, Al-Shabaab recruited young marginalized Somalis by providing basic services to citizens in regions under its control.[8] Despite suffering major setbacks and being pushed out of major cities, Al-Shabaab killed more people in terrorist attacks in 2014 than ever before -- more than 800 people were killed in close to 500 attacks, approximately double the number killed the previous year.[9] Al-Shabaab continues to seek openings to commit terrorist acts outside of Somalia, as it has done in the past killing civilians in attacks in Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Kenya.

Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, Ansar Dine, and Al Mourabitoun in Northern Mali

Despite the military defeat of Islamist militants by African and French troops (Operation Serval) in 2013, and the signing of a peace accord in Bamako in June 2015, northern Mali remains vulnerable to terrorist activity. Recent attacks on western hotels in Bamako and neighboring Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, underscore the new strategy of Ansar Dine and Al Mourabitoun, which now focus on attacking "soft targets" such as hotels, cafes, and supermarkets. Terrorists first gained strength in the region between 2010 and 2012 when extremists and criminal networks previously active in Algeria in the 1990s moved into ungoverned spaces in northern Mali and later capitalized on a separatist movement sparked by dissatisfaction with the performance of the central government in Bamako and allegations of extreme corruption and ineffectiveness in public service delivery.

Timeliness of Counterterrorism Partnerships

As African countries have faced these new security threats for which their militaries were ill-prepared, a variety of partnerships have emerged to assist national and sub-regional forces, with the United States playing a lead role. African countries have provided ground troops to fight terrorism in the Horn of Africa, Northern Nigeria and Northern Mali,[10] and have relied on European nations and the United States for more sophisticated equipment and specialized training. The net result has been the degradation of the bulk of jihadist movements that now have only limited capacity to launch small scale, albeit deadly, attacks using in some cases, suicide bombers.

Unfortunately, in some cases, African governments that are counterterrorism partners are not the best performers on democracy and good governance, which is also one of the declared pillars of U.S. policy in Africa. In fact, a number of these countries are ranked as "not free" by

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[8] Center for Strategic & International Studies. "Al Shabaab." AQAM Futures Project Case Study Series. July 2011

[9] Institute for Economics and Peace. Global Terrorism Index 2015: Measuring and Understanding the Impact of Terrorism.

[10] French troops and a smaller contingent of other European forces (German and Dutch) are engaged as part of current UN operations in northern Mali.

Freedom House.[11] There is a growing perception, and many Africans are fearful that democracy and governance could be sidelined in pursuit of security, and that counterterrorism has become a pretext for undermining democratic values and practices. Africans that lived through the Cold War are beginning to see parallels today as governments that partner with the West to combat violent extremism may feel entitled to unconditional support regardless of their poor performance in other areas. A number of country examples illustrate the point.

- **Shrinking political space in some counter-terrorism partner countries -** In a number of countries some of the gains in civil and human rights of the 1990s are being eroded as political parties and civil society groups are denied political space for citizen engagement and participation or for their voices to be heard. In one notable example, while Chad has played an important role in fighting terrorism in the Lake Chad basin and in northern Mali, its poor track record on democratic governance, including recent allegations of extrajudicial killings of soldiers who voted against the president in the last election, should give the international community pause.[12]

- **Newly enacted antiterrorism laws stifle dissent for political purposes -** Ethiopia, for example, is a strong counterterrorism partner in the Horn, but continues to repress political rights, restrict speech, and arrest members of opposition parties.[13] During legislative elections in 2015, the ruling party won all 547 seats in the lower house. The government uses broadly defined anti-terrorism laws to suppress critics, including nine journalists who were arrested in 2014 and several more who have been in detention since 2006. The Committee to Protect Journalists noted that the 10 journalists detained at the end of 2015 risk being tried under anti-terrorism laws.[14] Furthermore, the government has violently suppressed peaceful protests in Oromia, home of Ethiopia's largest ethnic group, against a government development plan that would displace farmers. Security forces have reportedly killed over 200 people and arrested thousands, including prominent Oromo political leaders.[15]

- **Poor performance on constitutionalism and rule of law -** Burundi is now mired in a post-election crisis in which over 400 people have been killed and hundreds of thousands internally displaced or become refugees in neighboring countries. To many Burundians and other international analysts, the crisis emanates from the current government's recalcitrance in seeking another five year mandate despite the presidential term limitation of the 2005 Arusha accords. These Burundian democracy supporters believe that the country's poor track record on constitutionalism and human rights had been overlooked by counterterrorism partners because of the regime's troop contributions to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).

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[11] Freedom House. Freedom in the World 2015.
[12] Convention Tchadienne Pour la Défense des Droits Humains. "Communiqué de Presse N°012/2016."
[13] Freedom House. Freedom in the World 2016.
[14] Committee to Protect Journalists. 2015 Prison Census.
[15] Human Rights Watch. Ethiopia: No Let Up in Crackdown on Protests. February 21, 2016.

- **Backsliding on elections and political rights -** Recently identified as a "key strategic partner" for its support for AMISOM,[16] Uganda has declined in its recent Freedom House ratings from "partly free" to "not free" as a result of the government's increased violations of civil rights.[17] Unfair conditions leading up to this year's national elections further eroded public confidence in the government, led by one of the longest serving African presidents.[18]

African democrats are increasingly fearful of a return to the Cold War paradigm through which a government's involvement in combating terrorism overshadows the rights of citizens to a responsive and democratic state. Recent public opinion surveys by Afrobarometer show that while a very high percentage of Africans aspire to democracy – 70 percent of Africans preferring democracy to other forms of government -- fewer than half of those in countries surveyed are satisfied with how democracy is working in their country, a drop from previous years.[19]

Recommendations

How, therefore, can counterterrorism assistance better incorporate democracy building?

- Counterterrorism partners should design strategies that also integrate objectives to improve governance such as by encouraging more effective decentralization and voice at the local level in impacted communities and populations. Counterterrorism initiatives should take a holistic (all of government approach) that incorporates governance considerations from conceptualization through operationalization and consolidation.

- Host governments should be encouraged to not only defeat the negative forces militarily, but also to invest in rehabilitating communities and creating governance structures to tackle and eliminate the conditions that fostered the rise of support for extremism in order to guard against a relapse.

- Partners should increase assistance to nascent democracies with weak political institutions to develop functional, responsive governments that are able to deliver basic services to their citizens. Consolidation of democracy should be approached as a long-term process that requires consistent and continued support with mechanisms to reward or incentivize good behavior and penalize poor performance.

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[16] U.S. Department of State Bureau of African Affairs. "U.S. Relations with Uganda. Fact Sheet." October 2, 2015.
[17] Freedom House. Freedom in the World 2015.
[18] State Department Press Statement. "On the Results of Uganda's Presidential Elections." February 20, 2016.
[19] Afrobarometer. "African democracy update: Satisfaction remains elusive for many" September 16, 2015.

- Use public diplomacy and other mechanisms to state clearly and unambiguously expectations for democratic behavior across Africa, as development partners did so successfully in Nigeria in 2014/2015. Moreover, such statements, as recently done in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi, should be followed by concrete actions and long-term commitments to sustain support for democracy and good governance.

- Invest in education to guarantee peace and opportunities for this generation of youth. As argued eloquently in a recent New York Times op-ed by renowned journalist Nicholas Kristof, education can be more effective in combating militancy than military intervention.[20] Girls' education in particular can promote a virtuous cycle of development by increasing the formal labor force, boosting the economy and reducing demographic growth.

Conclusion

Poor governance is a driver of discontent and resentment of the state that can push citizens in transition environments to join or sympathize with extremist networks. To be successful in combatting violent extremism and preventing its reappearance or resurgence, counterterrorism efforts must also address root causes.

Given the high demand for democracy and good governance across Africa, the continent's partners have a critical role to play in helping sub-Saharan African countries address issues relating to terrorism in ways that are consistent with democratic principles. The international community has many tools at its disposal to continue to lead in this endeavor.

Despite the enthusiasm of a few years ago, and some remarkable accomplishments in the last two decades, democratic governance in Africa is under attack. On the one hand, it is challenged by external threats from extremist terrorist organizations and; on the other hand, in some cases, by internal threats from autocratic regimes that fail to deliver public services, combat corruption and protect rights and freedoms. The international community should do everything in its power to help rid the continent of both existential threats. Friends of Africa must make sure that they do not, willingly or inadvertently, allow themselves to become accomplices in denying Africans their basic rights and freedoms and a secure, prosperous future.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee.

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[20] Nicholas Kristof. "What's So Scary About Smart Girls?" New York Times, May 10, 2016.