

officials and the MND website reminded citizens to verify their sources and statistics related to security matters with the MND communications office.

Under the 2006 Charter for Peace and National Reconciliation, Algeria offers amnesty to former terrorists who laid down their weapons and disavowed violence. Exceptions are made for perpetrators of particularly egregious acts, such as rape, murder, and bombings. The Charter works through offices located nationwide to extend judicial assistance and social and job reintegration measures to repentant terrorists, victims of terrorism, and families of terrorists. Some 9,000 terrorists have been pardoned under the Charter since its inception.

International and Regional Cooperation: In 2015, Algeria continued strong diplomatic and mediation efforts to promote regional peace and security. On the diplomatic front, it facilitated an inclusive national dialogue for Malian groups and regional partners that resulted in the signing of a Mali peace accord. In coordination with the UN, Algeria hosted talks among Libyan groups and stakeholders to help reach a political solution. Algeria also participated in various Sahel-Saharan fora to discuss development and security policies, the evolution of regional terrorism, and donor coordination; these included the Nouakchott Process on the Enhancement of Security Cooperation, the Operationalization of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), and the EU Strategy for Security and Development in the Sahel. However, Algeria and Morocco's political disagreement over the Western Sahara remained an impediment to bilateral and regional counterterrorism cooperation.

Algeria is an active member and participant in the AU, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and the Arab League. It is a delegate for the Africa region on the INTERPOL Executive Board and is a founding member of the IJJ. Additionally, Algeria participated in the White House Summit on Countering Violent Extremism in February, and – as a follow-on event – hosted a regional de-radicalization conference, which produced 58 recommendations. Algeria participated in critical counterterrorism-related projects implemented by the UN Office on Drug and Crime's Terrorism Prevention Branch; participated in CEMOC (Comite d' État-Major Opérationnel Conjoint) meetings with Mali, Mauritania, and Niger that were designed to promote security cooperation in the region; and hosted CEMOC's Liaison and Fusion Center for information sharing.

In a leadership role, Algeria sits on the UN Counter-Terrorism Center's Advisory Board and hosts the headquarters of AFRIPOL, a pan-African organization that fosters police training and cooperation in response to security threats such as terrorism, drug trafficking, and cybercrime. Algeria actively participates in the 5+5 Defense Initiative, which brings together five European and five North African countries to address security issues in the western Mediterranean. As a founding member of the GCTF and co-chair of its Sahel Region Capacity Building Working Group, Algeria continued to champion the implementation and development of the Algiers Memorandum on Good Practices on Preventing and Denying the Benefits of Kidnapping for Ransom by Terrorists.

Algeria also provided capacity-building assistance to some neighbors. The Tunisian Defense Minister stated to Tunisian media that Algeria is providing training for Tunisian Special Forces on border security pursuant to a bilateral agreement.

BAHRAIN

Overview: During 2015, the Bahraini government continued to make gains in detecting, neutralizing, and containing terrorist threats from violent Shia militant groups and Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) sympathizers. Those groups' use of real and fake IEDs remained a key threat to security services, resulting in the death of three police officers. The government also began to implement new counterterrorism laws the legislature approved in 2014, including revoking the citizenship of suspected and convicted terrorists. By year's end, the Bahraini government had interdicted several smuggling operations and seized sizeable caches of military-grade explosives, shaped charges, and sophisticated detonators. These raids ensnared several militant cells and significantly eroded militant attacks on police.

The Bahraini government supported the international Global Coalition to Counter ISIL and in December joined the Saudi-led 34-country Islamic counterterrorism alliance. The Bahraini government often did not publicize details about the arrests or convictions of Sunni terrorists, complicating efforts to track its progress against the domestic ISIL threat. Nevertheless, Bahraini leaders publicly condemned ISIL's worldwide activities, ideology, and recruitment, while the government worked to detect, counter, and discourage domestic ISIL recruitment and extremist messaging. In October, the government announced it had charged 24 individuals – seven of whom were in detention and the rest of whom remained at large in Iraq and Syria – with forming an ISIL cell that plotted suicide attacks in Bahrain and recruited fighters for the organization. In December, however, the Public Prosecutor released four of the detained suspects for lack of evidence. Security services also arrested another Sunni man and charged him with purchasing arms for the terrorist group. On several occasions in 2015, ISIL-affiliated social media accounts claimed the group would carry out attacks in Bahrain, but these failed to materialize. Bahrain participated in Global Coalition to Counter ISIL Political Directors meetings in Amman, Quebec, and Brussels; and the Minister of Foreign Affairs participated in the June 2 Coalition Group Ministerial Meeting in Paris.

2015 Terrorist Incidents: Bahrain continued to experience periodic bomb attacks from Shia militants throughout the year with targeting focused exclusively on Bahraini security forces. In previous years, the attacks mostly involved homemade devices, but in 2015 the militants began to use military-grade explosive materials, such as C-4 and RDX.

- On March 19, a bomb injured two policemen in the predominantly Shia village of Karranah.
- On July 15, the Ministry of Interior (MOI) reported a man accidentally blew himself up when attempting to plant a bomb that targeted police in the Shia village of Eker.
- On July 28, a bomb killed two policemen and injured six policemen outside a girls' school on the Shia majority island of Sitra.
- On August 28, a blast killed one policeman in Karranah and seven civilians were injured in collateral damage.
- On September 10, a bomb targeted a police station in the town of Bilad Al-Qadim but caused no casualties.

Suspected Shia militants targeted security services with Molotov cocktails and other homemade devices throughout 2015 and other blasts occurred with fewer or no casualties.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Throughout 2015, Bahrain moved to bolster existing counterterrorism laws and criminal penalties. In March, the Shura Council – Bahrain’s appointed, upper legislative chamber – approved a draft law increasing sentences for those who “promote or glorify” terrorists acts to 10 years and/or a fine of US \$13,350, which the Cabinet approved in September and referred to the elected lower house. In December, the Council of Representatives – Bahrain’s elected, lower chamber – approved a royal decree amending provisions of the 2006 terrorism law, allowing security forces to detain suspects for longer periods of time without charging them, and to take other measures, such as shutting off electricity in a given city block where a suspected terrorist incident occurred, when searching for suspects. Terrorism-related acts, a broadly-defined category, are treated as criminal cases, with prescribed penalties spelled out in the Anti-Terrorism Law of 2006 and Articles 155 and 168 of the Penal Code. While many of the terrorism cases in 2015 involved criminals who engaged in violent acts against security services, there were concerns that the government sometimes used counterterrorism laws – specifically citizenship revocations – to prosecute or harass individuals for their criticism of the government.

Throughout 2015, security services were able to detect, deter, and respond to terrorist incidents. The MOI is the lead government agency charged with detecting and preventing acts of terrorism and arresting suspects in terrorist-related acts, with the Bahrain National Security Agency providing intelligence support. The Bahraini Coast Guard also contributes to the counterterrorism mission by monitoring and interdicting the seaborne movement of weapons and terrorists into and out of the country. The major deterrents to more effective law enforcement and border security remain the lack of interagency coordination and limited training opportunities to develop requisite law enforcement skills.

Bahrain has participated in the Department of State’s Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) program since 1987. One Combatting Domestic and Transnational Terrorism ATA course took place in 2015 that graduated approximately 20 officers.

Bahrain’s ability to detect transnational plots remains limited due to capacity, detection, and information-sharing deficiencies. Every year, millions of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) nationals transit the King Fahad Causeway connecting Bahrain to Saudi Arabia with relatively little screening. The Saudi citizen who killed 27 worshippers in a Kuwaiti mosque in June transited Bahrain via the airport, highlighting the country’s vulnerability to threats from violent extremists residing in neighboring countries.

Security forces reported they thwarted several plots through arrests and the discovery of at least two large weapons caches. In March, police and customs officials intercepted a bus containing bomb-making materials attempting to enter Bahrain from Saudi Arabia across the King Fahad Causeway. In June, the government uncovered a warehouse in the Dar Kulaib village containing explosives and bomb-making materials. In September, security forces discovered a facility that contained bomb-making equipment and 1.4 tons of explosives. In November, the Bahraini government announced it had conducted a major counterterrorism operation resulting in the arrest of 47 individuals, the confiscation of bomb-making materials, and the disruption of several terrorist plots.

In 2015, Bahrain initiated dozens of cases for terrorism-related crimes and secured 11 convictions. Sentences varied but included the death penalty and revocation of citizenship for

those accused of more serious crimes. However, the government has not carried out an execution of a foreign national since 2010 and has not executed a Bahraini national since 1996. In January, the government cited the 2006 terrorism law when it revoked the citizenship of 72 citizens, many of whom were out of the country at the time. In March, the High Criminal Court sentenced three Bahrainis to death and seven others to life in prison while revoking the citizenship of eight of them for a 2014 bombing that killed three policemen. In April, the same court sentenced a man to death and gave varying sentences to 11 others, ranging from 10 years to life for another 2014 bombing that killed a policeman. In June, a court sentenced two men who previously had their citizenships revoked to life in prison for terrorism-related charges. In November, a lower court convicted five Bahrainis of plotting terrorist attacks, revoked their citizenship, and sentenced them to life in prison. Also in November, a court sentenced 12 Bahrainis to life in prison and revoked their citizenships for terrorist acts and targeting police. Various other suspects received sentences ranging from a few years to life in prison for other planned or executed attacks against the security services.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Bahrain is a member of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force, a Financial Action Task Force (FATF)-style regional body. Its financial intelligence unit, the Anti-Money Laundering Unit, is a member of the Egmont Group. Bahrain is an important regional financial hub, which makes it vulnerable to large amounts of money flowing through the Gulf region to support various terrorist groups. In 2015, Bahrain organized or participated in several meetings focused on disrupting the financial support systems for terrorist entities. The government sent a delegation with representatives from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Finance, and Interior to the three initial meetings for the Counter-ISIL Finance Group in Rome, Jeddah, and Washington, DC. In April, Bahrain hosted the 8th EU-GCC Workshop on Combatting Terrorist Financing. In November, Bahrain hosted the “Good Giving Conference,” a workshop focused on combating the financing of terrorism through preventing abuse of the charitable sector. The program focused on international good practices used to ensure charitable donations are not used or diverted for nefarious purposes.

Throughout 2015, the Central Bank of Bahrain (CBB) continued its efforts to upgrade the country’s AML/CFT regulatory framework via an entity known as the Policy Committee, which formulates AML/CFT policies and is in charge of implementing FATF recommendations. The CBB periodically reviewed financial institutions’ licenses to ensure compliance with CBB regulations. In April, the CBB took organizational control of the Iran Future Bank, which the U.S. government had previously sanctioned for aiding in Iran’s nuclear proliferation and missile acquisition activities, and the Iran Insurance Company in order to “protect the rights of depositors,” but declined to provide further details. In August, the government detained former opposition parliamentarian Hassan Isa on terrorism finance-related charges, although opposition groups and activists complained the detention was politically motivated.

The Ministry of Labor and Social Development’s (MOLSD) Directorate of Civil Societies monitors and administers civil society and NGOs, including charitable institutions that could be used to finance terrorists or terrorist groups. When a group petitions the MOLSD to form a new civil society group, the Ministry’s Financial and Legal Departments scrutinize the potential new group’s finances in coordination with the CBB and MOI. The CBB also works with the MOLSD to prepare a report regarding the groups’ internal and external fund transactions. The Directorate of Civil Societies submit an annual financial report issued by an accredited auditing firm, which is reviewed by the Ministry’s Financial and Administrative departments, and is subject to

inspection visits throughout the year by the MOLSD's Registration and Public Relations Departments.

For additional information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2016 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INSCR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*: <http://www.state.gov/j/inl/rls/nrcrpt/index.htm>.

Countering Violent Extremism: The Ministry of Justice and Islamic Affairs (MOJIA) heads Bahrain's efforts to counter radicalization to violence and violent extremism, in part by organizing regular workshops for clerics and speakers from both the Sunni and Shia sects. The MOJIA also undertakes an annual review of schools' Islamic Studies curricula to evaluate interpretations of religious texts.

International and Regional Cooperation: Bahrain worked closely and cooperatively with international, multilateral, and regional partners. It is a member of the GCC and participated in the August U.S.-GCC Counterterrorism and Border Security Working Group meeting in Riyadh. Since formally endorsing the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism in March 2008, Bahrain has proactively worked to expand air, sea, and causeway border control points, although its data collection and information-sharing capabilities remain limited.

EGYPT

Overview: In 2015, the Egyptian government continued to confront active terrorist groups, which conducted deadly attacks on government, military, and civilian targets throughout the country. During the latter half of the year, the number of reported IEDs, anti-government demonstrations, and attacks on security forces declined considerably, particularly after the Egyptian Economic Development Conference held in Sharm El-Sheikh in March 2015. However, terrorist groups have succeeded in launching several large-scale attacks in Cairo and other urban areas.

Recent attacks and social media propaganda suggest that terrorist groups are increasingly seeking to expand the geographic scope of attacks outside the restive areas of northeast Sinai. The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)-Sinai Province (ISIL-SP) remained a significant threat; however, a new group calling itself "Islamic State Egypt," distinct from ISIL Sinai, has begun to claim responsibility for terrorist attacks outside of Sinai. While these organizations receive some external financial and logistical support as a result of their affiliation with ISIL, there is no evidence of a significant presence of non-Egyptian "foreign terrorist fighters" in Egypt.

Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al Sisi continued to focus on counterterrorism in Egypt. In the wake of the assassination of Egyptian Prosecutor General Hisham Barakat, the Egyptian government approved a new counterterrorism law, increasing the state's legal authorities to counter terrorism. The law provides a broad definition of terrorism, to include "any act harming national unity or social peace."

The Egyptian Armed Forces (EAF) had limited success in combatting terrorist groups. The EAF launched a stepped-up counterterrorism campaign (known as Operation "Right of the Martyr") against ISIL-SP on September 7. The EAF also continued to seize and destroy numerous tunnels