

TEN THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S BUREAU OF COUNTERTERRORISM



- 1. We build foreign counterterrorism capacity** in the civilian sector and contribute to efforts in the military and defense sectors. We develop and support programs in law enforcement, rule-of-law, and counterterrorism finance, and on topics ranging from cyber-security to crisis response.
- 2. With our partners, we created a new multilateral counterterrorism body.** In 2011, with 30 founding members (29 countries and the EU), the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) was launched. GCTF is a major initiative within the Obama Administration's broader effort to build an international architecture for dealing with 21st century terrorist threats. The GCTF has mobilized over \$175 million to strengthen counterterrorism-related rule of law institutions, and has developed best practice documents in rule of law, combating kidnapping for ransom, and prison de-radicalization and disengagement. The GCTF is also developing two international training centers in the Middle East and North Africa region that will provide training in the Forum's two areas of strategic priority: countering violent extremism and strengthening rule of law institutions.
- 3. We counter violent extremism.** To defeat terrorists, we must undermine their ability to recruit. We work to delegitimize the violent extremist narrative, develop positive alternatives for populations vulnerable to recruitment, and build partner government and civil society capacity to counter violent extremism themselves.
- 4. We engage with foreign governments.** We hold regular bilateral, regional, and multilateral dialogues on shared counterterrorism issues and consult with foreign governments on urgent and emerging threats. We exchange intelligence, information, and best practices to ensure that we all are in the best position to thwart terrorists. We help draft foreign counterterrorism laws and maintain cooperative research and development agreements with partner nations.
- 5. We respond to crises.** We lead an interagency crisis response team, the Foreign Emergency Support Team (FEST). Established in 1985, the FEST travels at four hours notice to the scene of an overseas emergency to provide round-the-clock advice and assistance to U.S. Ambassadors and foreign governments. The FEST has responded to bombings, kidnappings, and other crises, and supports and participates in training exercises. We have deployed a FEST 30 times since 1989.
- 6. We strategize.** We work closely with the National Security Staff and other agencies to develop, refine, and implement U.S. counterterrorism strategy and operations.
- 7. We designate.** We prepare designations that carry legal sanctions against State Sponsors of Terrorism, foreign terrorist organizations, entities and individuals, and countries not fully cooperating with U.S. counterterrorism efforts.
- 8. We support research and development.** We co-chair with the Department of Defense the interagency Technical Support Working Group (TSWG). TSWG conducts the National Interagency Combating Terrorism Research and Development Program, which enhances the counterterrorism technology and equipment capabilities of U.S. government agencies involved in counterterrorism activities.
- 9. We support the safe recovery of hostages.** The Hostage Policy Subgroup refines and implements official U.S. policy toward Americans taken captive abroad. We work closely with interagency partners to shape and guide implementation of hostage policy to accomplish the safe recovery of hostages, bring hostage-takers to justice, and prevent future incidents.
- 10. We strengthen homeland security.** We partner with the Department of Homeland Security and other U.S. agencies to strengthen international cooperation on a range of homeland security issues, including transportation security, terrorist travel interdiction, and critical infrastructure protection.