

FACT SHEET: Leaders' Summit to Counter ISIL and Violent Extremism

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The White House

Office of the Press Secretary

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President Obama today is hosting a Summit highlighting the international community's efforts to counter ISIL, address Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs), and Counter Violent Extremism (CVE). The President has made clear that ISIL poses a threat to the United States and the international community, and that we will use all instruments of power to defeat it. He has also made clear that this fight will not be won quickly, solely through military means, or by the United States alone. This is a long-term struggle that will be won with a comprehensive approach in concert with state and nongovernmental actors across the globe—which is exactly what we are doing. This Summit, also hosted by Vice President Biden, built on progress achieved the last year and provided the participants the opportunity to announce new initiatives. Today the international community demonstrated its resolve to degrade and ultimately destroy ISIL and break the lifecycle of terrorism – from radicalization to conflict zones and everywhere in between.

Countering ISIL

The United States established and is leading a Coalition of more than 60 partners committed to degrading and ultimately destroying ISIL, and today welcomed new Coalition members Malaysia, Nigeria, and Tunisia to join those efforts. While military power rolled back some of the group's territorial gains and improved local partner forces' capabilities, Coalition efforts to begin countering ISIL's messaging, disrupting its finances and countering the FTF threat continue to be equally important. And through humanitarian assistance and stabilization programs, the Coalition is helping those who have survived ISIL's barbarity. Yesterday the Coalition released a statement outlining the breadth and depth of counter-ISIL efforts in the past year.

As part of our counter-ISIL efforts, the Coalition is **supporting the Iraqi government's progress toward effective governance**. Under Prime Minister Abadi, Baghdad has approved a comprehensive program to foster inclusive governance and reconciliation, and taken initial steps to rein in corruption, streamline the bureaucracy and decentralize responsibilities to provincial and local leaders. The U.S. and our Coalition partners will work with the Iraqi Government to help ensure these and many other steps are fully implemented.

The challenge of establishing effective governance is even greater in Syria, where the regime is conducting a brutal campaign that has fractured the country and allowed ISIL to flourish. With our allies, we are **pursuing a negotiated political transition that removes Asad** from power and establishes a transitional government uniting the Syrian people.

More than two dozen Coalition partners, led by the United States, have **contributed to the military campaign in Iraq and Syria**, conducting over 7,200 air strikes to date and training and providing equipment and ammunition to local partners. As a result, ISIL has lost the ability to operate freely in 20-25 percent of the populated territory it held one year ago in Iraq and Syria. In Syria, Kurdish and Arab partners—with Coalition support—have cut off ISIL's access to all but 68 miles of the 600-mile long Syria-Turkey border, which is an important step toward preventing FTF travel and squeezing ISIL supply lines.

- In Iraq, 18 Coalition members have trained more than 13,000 Iraqi and Peshmerga soldiers. The Coalition has also facilitated training for thousands of Sunni tribal fighters, supporting Baghdad's efforts to recapture Ramadi and liberate Anbar Province.
- In Syria, the Department of Defense is training and equipping appropriately vetted elements of the Syrian armed opposition to counter ISIL and create the conditions for a political settlement. Training sites were established in Turkey and Jordan, and sites in Qatar and Saudi Arabia will open shortly. Coalition strikes and nonlethal assistance have also helped a variety of other forces in Syria, many of whom played critical roles clearing ISIL from all but approximately 68 miles of the Turkey-Syria border.

The Coalition is working to **squeeze ISIL financially**. Early this year, the Coalition's Counter ISIL Financial Group (CIFG), co-chaired by the United States, Italy and Saudi Arabia, developed an action plan to disrupt ISIL's financial activity and ability to raise, move and use funds. This week, the United States designated over 30 ISIL officials, facilitators and supporters and announced a State Department Rewards for Justice offer of up to \$5 million for information leading to the significant disruption of the sale of oil or antiquities benefiting ISIL. Additionally, the UN added key ISIL facilitators to the UN al-Qa'ida Sanctions List, effectively freezing their assets and preventing them from using the international financial system as well as prohibiting their travel in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1267.

The Coalition is also working to **erode ISIL's appeal** by strengthening capabilities to counter the group's messages of hate. The State Department's Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications operationalized an Interagency Counterterrorism Communications cell to improve cross-government collaboration on countering ISIL's online messaging. And the UAE-based Sawab ("the right path") Center is increasing online debate to undermine ISIL's claims to legitimacy and strategic success.

The United States and its partners are **responding to the humanitarian impact** of the conflict and ISIL's depravity. In Syria, ISIL has contributed to the crisis that has forced nearly 12 million people from their homes, including more than 4 million refugees, 7.6 million internally displaced persons and 5.5 million children. The United States is the single largest humanitarian aid donor for those impacted by the Syria crisis, contributing \$4.5 billion since the crisis began. Since 2014, 3.2 million Iraqis have also become internally displaced, and the United States has contributed more than \$477 million in humanitarian assistance to address this and the needs of other vulnerable populations. Additionally, on September 15, the Department of Defense approved up to \$75 million for relief supplies to help address immediate lifesaving needs for displaced Iraqis. Our joint efforts with Coalition partners, including financial contributions to the United Nations Development Program's Funding Facility for Immediate Stabilization, have begun yielding positive results near Tikrit, where approximately 100,000 civilians displaced by ISIL's violence have returned.

Countering the Foreign Terrorist Fighter Threat

ISIL is a unique threat in large part due to its ability to attract FTFs, and the United States is leading global efforts to address this challenge. **Last year, President Obama chaired a UN Security Council summit at which UNSCR 2178 was adopted.** The binding resolution, which has improved the international community's ability to counter the FTF threat, requires countries to prevent suspected individuals from entering or transiting their countries; disrupt financial support to FTFs; implement UNSCR 1267 sanctions obligations and propose sanctions against those supporting ISIL and affiliates or derivatives of al-Qaida; and implement legislation to enable prosecution. UNSCR 2178 also underscores the centrality of efforts to counter violent extremism to suppress the FTF threat, a theme amplified at today's summit.

Since the adoption of UNSCR 2178, **22 countries have passed legal frameworks to better address the threat posed by FTFs, 34 countries have arrested FTFs, and 12 have successfully prosecuted at least one foreign terrorist fighter.** The United States has supported several of our partners' development and implementation of laws addressing the FTF threat while respecting fundamental human rights and civil liberties.

The United States continues to help partners improve border security to better identify, restrict and report suspected FTF travel, including encouraging partners to participate in multilateral information sharing mechanisms. Today, **through INTERPOL's Counterterrorism Fusion Center (CTFC), 52 countries now share foreign terrorist fighter profiles.** Bilaterally, the United States has concluded arrangements with over 40 international partners to provide a mechanism for sharing terrorist travel information.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is **encouraging additional countries to join the U.S. and more than 60 other countries that use travel information, like Advanced Passenger Information (API), to more effectively identify known and previously unknown FTFs.** In May, DHS and the State Department

drove an unprecedented meeting of Interior Ministers of UN Security Council nations to advocate for strong implementation of UNSCR 2178 principles. The ministerial focused on border controls particularly. DHS also announced the creation of an open-source tool for strengthening border security. At a July meeting in Spain, DHS, State and partner nations made key financial commitments to strengthening border security.

At home, we are employing a whole-of-government approach, leveraging homeland security, law enforcement, justice sector, intelligence, diplomatic, capacity building, and information sharing tools to counter FTFs. DHS and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) disseminate Joint Intelligence Bulletins to share threat information with state, local and tribal law enforcement. Additionally, in recent months DHS announced changes to security partnerships required under the Visa Waiver Program to align with UNSCR 2178 and enhanced the Electronic system for Travel Authorization (ESTA). These efforts enhance security while continuing to encourage legitimate trade and travel.

Building Global Movements to Counter Violent Extremism

As President Obama has said, “ideologies are not defeated with guns; they’re defeated by better ideas – a more attractive and more compelling vision.” That is why President Obama convened the February 2015 White House Summit to Counter Violent Extremism, where the international community came together to expand efforts against violent extremism. Since then, driven by U.S. leadership, the global CVE movement has grown rapidly.

Global Progress

Today, the United States announced the launch of the **International CT and CVE Clearinghouse Mechanism (ICCM)** to improve capacity-building coordination among key partners in several pilot countries. The ICCM will identify programming gaps, and mobilize and coordinate donor resources to address identified needs.

We also highlighted new initiatives and progress on a number of key initiatives announced at the February 2015 White House Summit to Counter Violent Extremism:

Strong Cities Network: Today, Attorney General Loretta Lynch will keynote the launch the first global network of municipal and other sub-national leaders to support the development of effective rights-based community focused programs and training to build resilience against violent extremism.

The Global Youth Summit to Counter Violent Extremism: Yesterday, Lisa Monaco, the President’s Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Advisor, kicked off a summit that brought together more than 80 global youth leaders and organizations from more than 45 countries to build support for innovative youth-led initiatives. The development of global virtual platforms will allow participating youth leaders and youth-oriented organizations to remain connected and share best practices.

Peer-to-Peer Global University Challenge: Spanning both domestic and international CVE efforts, the United States Government recently launched this initiative to empower university students in the United States, Canada, North Africa, Middle East, Europe, Australia, and Asia. Their objectives were to design and implement a social or digital initiative, product, or tool to motivate and empower their peers to join the movement in countering violent extremism. The spring 2015 winner of the Peer-to-Peer Challenge, One 95.org from Missouri State University, was showcased yesterday at the Global Youth Summit.

RESOLVE (Research and Solutions for Violent Extremism): This international CVE research network, which was launched last week, will provide grants to local researchers and serve as a platform to facilitate information sharing and mentoring. It will be managed by a consortium of organizations that will include the Geneva Centre on Security Policy, Hedayah, the Institute for Security Studies, the Africa Policy Institute, and the U.S. Institute of Peace.

Balkans Regional CVE Initiative: The Government of Albania will lead a Western Balkans regional CVE initiative to build regional capacity and cooperation on CVE issues, in particular through supporting front-line CVE practitioners, civil society, and local communities, developing national CVE strategies, and promoting research, education, and counter-messaging.

East Africa CVE Center of Excellence and Counter-Messaging Hub: The Government of Djibouti will host an Intergovernmental Authority on Development center to provide dedicated support, training, and research related to CVE, and serve as a resource for governments and civil society from across the region.

Guidelines and Good Practices for Developing Inclusive National CVE Strategies: Hedayah, in collaboration with the Global Center on Cooperative Security and the Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe, produced a set of guidelines, good practices and principles for the development of national CVE strategies/action plans that promote a “whole of society” approach to CVE.

Domestic Progress

The federal government has partnered with local governments, public safety officials, educators and social service providers in **greater Boston, Los Angeles and the Twin Cities** to implement strategic prevention frameworks that address the unique issues facing their local communities. Since February, federal officials and local partners have advanced and expanded their prevention frameworks to include the addition of new community stakeholders, developed private sector partnerships, and developed a new series of youth-focused programs.

In September, the Department of Justice (DOJ) Community Oriented Policing Service (COPS), in partnership with the Police Executive Research Forum, convened law enforcement executives and community partners from over a dozen cities to explore how to **adapt best practices and lessons learned from Boston, Los Angeles,**

Montgomery County, Md. and the Twin Cities to regions around the country.

Participants discussed how to identify and build relationships with key stakeholders and methods to develop, implement and assess community engagement, prevention and intervention programs. The COPS Office and Police Executive Research Forum will develop a series of case studies for local law enforcement seeking to replicate these programs.

DHS, in partnership with the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC), continues to lead, improve and expand its community engagement work including **Community Engagement Roundtables, Town Hall Meetings, Community Awareness Briefings and Community Resilience Exercises in cities all across the country**. Enhanced efforts will expand opportunities to reach more diverse communities; help develop the necessary understanding of terrorism and terrorist recruitment tactics; and to collectively and holistically explore ways to address these threats before they become a challenge at the local level.

In order to enhance training for federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial law enforcement, DHS and DOJ work cooperatively with its federal partners to **update CVE-relevant training programs based on current threat assessments** through programs such as the Uniformed Police Training Program, Criminal Investigator Training Program, Land Management Police Training Program, and the Rural Police Officer Training.