

**SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE**

STATEMENT OF GENERAL

CARTER HAM, USA

COMMANDER



UNITED STATES AFRICA COMMAND

BEFORE THE SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

7 MARCH 2013

### **Mission Statement**

United States Africa Command protects and defends the national security interests of the United States by strengthening the defense capabilities of African states and regional organizations and, when directed, conducts military operations, in order to deter and defeat transnational threats and to provide a security environment conducive to good governance and development.

## **INTRODUCTION**

This year marks the fifth anniversary of the formation of the command. Since our standup in 2008, our operational capabilities and capacities have markedly increased. In parallel, our relationships with African partners and our security cooperation engagements have matured in both focus and effectiveness. Our integrated approach seeks to address the greatest near-term threats to our national security while simultaneously building long-term partnerships and fostering regional cooperation.

The past year has witnessed both positive developments and sobering reminders of the threats in the U.S. Africa Command Area of Responsibility. Many African partners are more capable of addressing national and regional security challenges today than they were a year ago, and we have strengthened both new and enduring partnerships. In Somalia, sustained operations by African forces, with enabling assistance from the United States and the international community, significantly weakened al-Shabaab, providing space for Somalia's transition to a constitutionally based government. We are deepening our relationship with the Tanzanian military, a professional force whose capabilities and influence increasingly bear on regional security issues in eastern and southern Africa and the Great Lakes region. Senegal and Ghana, anchors of regional stability in West Africa, held peaceful, democratic elections last year and remain important U.S. partners in efforts to counter transnational threats. Similarly, in Botswana, a highly capable partner and positive influence throughout southern Africa, we are strengthening an enduring partnership grounded in shared commitments to

democracy and the rule of law. Liberia is progressing toward the establishment of a professional, capable military that is a force for good, as demonstrated by its border deployment in response to Cote d' Ivoirian rebel activities last fall. In Libya, a nation that witnessed its first election of the General National Congress since the overthrow of Qadhafi, we are developing a strong partnership with the new military.

Despite these positive trends, the regional security environment continues to challenge U.S. interests and increase the operational demands on U.S. Africa Command. In the past year, the United States lost four Americans in deadly attacks in Benghazi and three more in the terrorist attack on a British Petroleum facility in Algeria; al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) emerged stronger and better armed following the coup d'état in Mali; and Boko Haram continued its campaign of violence in Nigeria.

## **STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT**

### **Emerging Terrorist Networks**

As al-Qa'ida has syndicated its ideology and violence, its affiliates and adherents in Africa and the Arabian Peninsula have become increasingly networked and adaptable in their recruiting, training, financing, and operations. Violent extremist organizations, insurgents, and criminal organizations are exploiting weak governance and under-governed spaces, and remain determined to harm the United States, our partners and Allies, and innocent civilians. The need to put pressure on al-Qa'ida affiliates and adherents in East, North, and West Africa has never been greater. The September 2012 attack on the U.S. Special Mission Compound and Annex in Benghazi and the January 2013 attack on the British Petroleum oil facility in Algeria illustrate the growing threat posed by violent extremist organizations in Africa to U.S. citizens and interests. This network of al-Qa'ida affiliates has already developed into a threat

to U.S. regional interests and if left unchecked, could pose a threat to Europe and the U.S. Homeland. Coordinated approaches that integrate diplomatic, development, and military efforts are needed to achieve both short- and long-term counter-terrorism objectives, including the disruption of terrorist financing and undermining of recruitment efforts by violent extremist organizations.

### **Arab Awakening**

The Arab Awakening redefined the North African political landscape and continues to impact countries across the region. Two years ago, the actions of a single Tunisian citizen catalyzed a wave of change that continues to reverberate throughout North Africa and the Middle East. The post-revolutionary transitions currently underway in Tunisia and Libya are extraordinarily important to the future of these countries and to the region and have had significant consequences for regional security. The flow of fighters and weapons from Libya to violent extremist organizations in northern Mali serves as one example of how political instability in one nation can have a profound effect across a broad region. The United States has a stake in the success of these transitions, not least of all for their potential to serve as a powerful repudiation of al-Qa'ida's false narrative that only violent extremism can drive change. U.S. Africa Command's relationships with the Tunisian and Libyan militaries have important roles in supporting these transitions as new governments in Tunisia and Libya work to develop accountable and effective institutions, strengthen civil society, and improve security.

### **Increased Regional and International Integration**

The rising political and economic influence of emerging powers is transforming the

international system, and this change is evident in Africa. Asian economic expansion is inflating global commodities prices, a major driver of strong economic growth in some African nations. Increased Chinese engagement in pursuit of economic development is deepening China's political and economic influence and increasing its access in the region. Other rapidly growing economies, including Brazil and India, are similarly increasing their engagement and investment in Africa. As Africa becomes more fully integrated into the global economy, African maritime security is growing in importance to the free flow of global commerce. In parallel with Africa's continuing integration into global political and economic systems, African nations are strengthening their regional economic and political integration. African nations and regional organizations are increasingly taking a lead role in multilateral responses to regional security threats, both within and outside the structure of the African Union and the regional standby forces that comprise its continental security architecture.

## **COMMAND APPROACH**

U.S. Africa Command's approach reflects strategic guidance provided in the National Security Strategy, the Defense Strategic Guidance, the National Military Strategy, the Presidential Policy Directive for Political and Economic Reform in the Middle East and North Africa (PPD 13) and the United States Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa. Based on this strategic guidance, U.S. Africa Command protects and advances vital U.S. national security interests in Africa, including protecting the security of the global economic system, preventing catastrophic attacks on the homeland, developing secure and reliable partners, protecting American citizens abroad, and protecting and advancing universal values. These universal values include the respect for and protection of human rights, the prevention of mass atrocities, and the provision of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. In Africa,

military-to-military engagement plays a limited but important role in sustaining progress in countries undergoing democratic transitions, as well as those emerging from conflict.

In support of advancing regional peace and security, U.S. Africa Command focuses on priority countries, regional organizations, and programs and initiatives that build defense institutional and operational capabilities and strengthen strategic partnerships. Cooperative security arrangements are key to addressing transnational threats, and U.S. Africa Command utilizes operations, exercises, and security cooperation engagements to foster multilateral cooperation and build the capacity of regional and sub-regional organizations. U.S. assistance, including focused military support, has contributed to significant progress by African forces in the past year in both peacekeeping and combat operations.

U.S. Africa Command's strategic approach addresses both threats and opportunities. We simultaneously address the greatest near-term threats to our national security while building long-term partnerships that support and enable the objectives outlined in the U.S. Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa: strengthening democratic institutions; spurring economic growth, advancing trade and investment; advancing peace and security; and promoting opportunity and development. Countering terrorism is the Department of Defense's (DoD) highest priority mission in Africa and will remain so for the foreseeable future. While prioritizing addressing emerging security challenges through both direct and indirect responses, U.S. Africa Command views these challenges also as opportunities to deepen enduring relationships, strengthen partner capabilities, and foster regional cooperation.

Our theater strategy and four subordinate regional campaign plans guide our operations, exercises and engagements, which focus on five functional areas: countering violent extremist organizations; strengthening maritime security and countering illicit trafficking; strengthening defense capabilities; maintaining strategic posture; and preparing

for and responding to crises. These activities are primarily executed by U.S. Africa Command's components: Army Forces Africa, Air Forces Africa, Naval Forces Africa, Marine Forces Africa, Special Operations Command Africa, and Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa. Our headquarters interagency representatives from nine Federal agencies and liaison officers from eight countries are integral to the success of U.S. Africa Command's efforts.

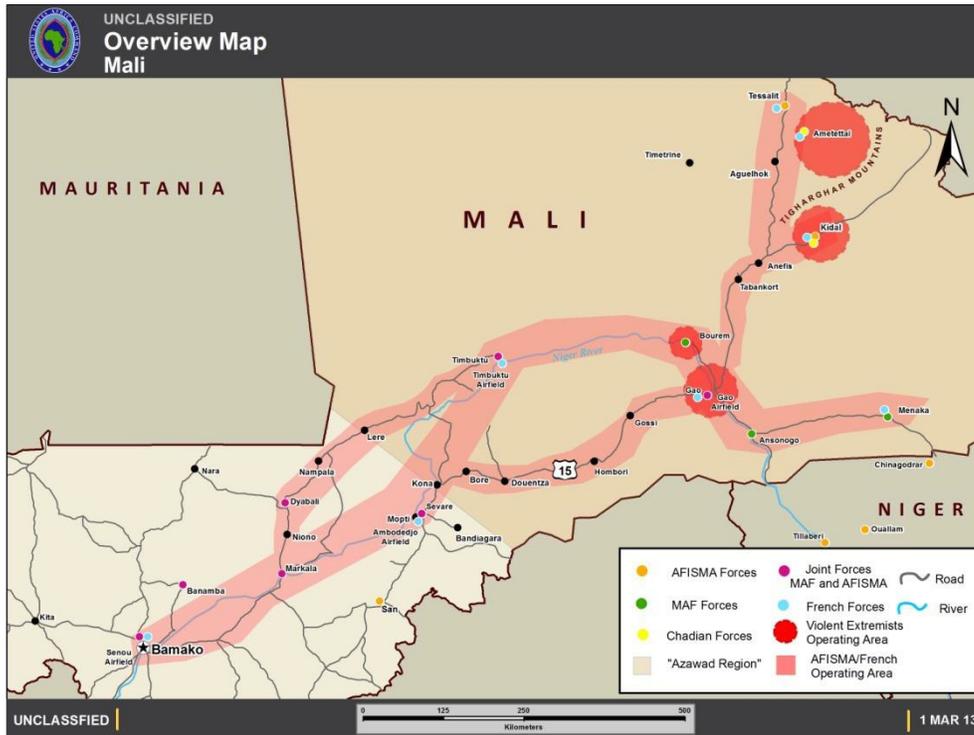
## **U.S. AFRICA COMMAND PRIORITIES**

### *COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMIST ORGANIZATIONS*

The September 2012 attack on the U.S. Special Mission Compound and Annex in Benghazi and the January 2013 attack on the British Petroleum oil facility in Algeria are evidence of the growing threat posed to Americans and U.S. interests by African violent extremist organizations (VEO) and the global VEO network. In the past year, U.S. Africa Command worked closely with regional and interagency partners to strengthen counter-terrorism partnerships grounded in shared security interests, assisted partner military forces and U.S. interagency partners in discrediting and defeating the appeal of violent extremism, and strengthened partner capabilities to provide security as an element of responsive governance.

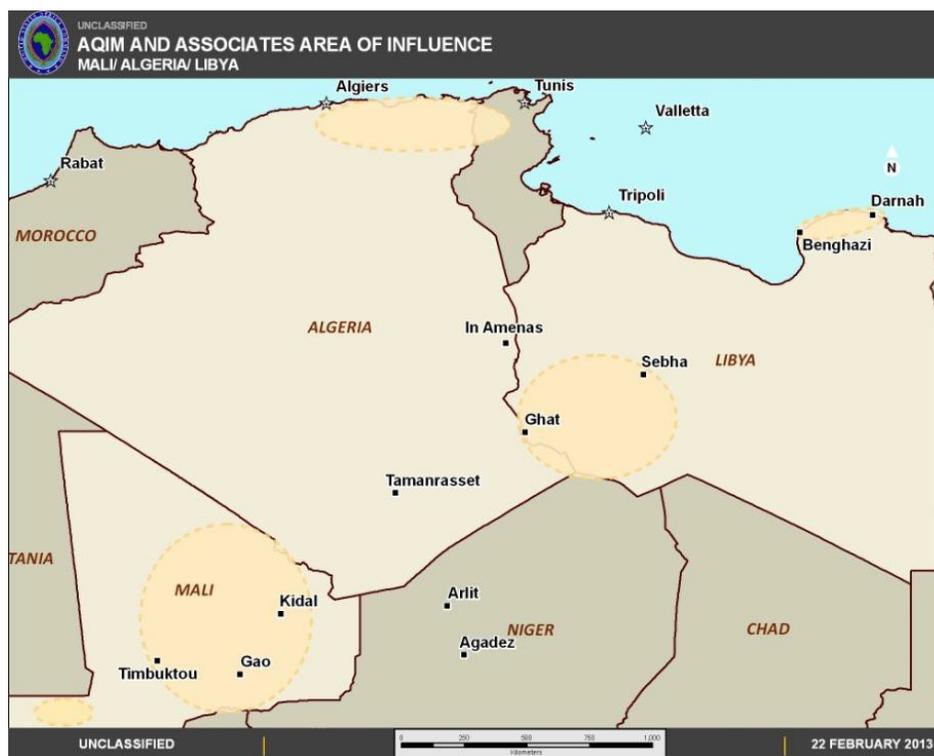
Three violent extremist organizations are of particular concern in Africa: al-Qa'ida in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), active in northern and western Africa; Boko Haram in Nigeria; and al-Shabaab in Somalia. Although each organization individually poses a threat to U.S. interests and regional stability, the growing collaboration of these organizations heightens the danger they collectively represent. Of the three organizations, AQIM, which exploited the instability that followed the coup d'état in Mali and seeks to

establish an Islamic state in northern Mali, is currently the most likely to directly threaten U.S. national security interests in the near- term.



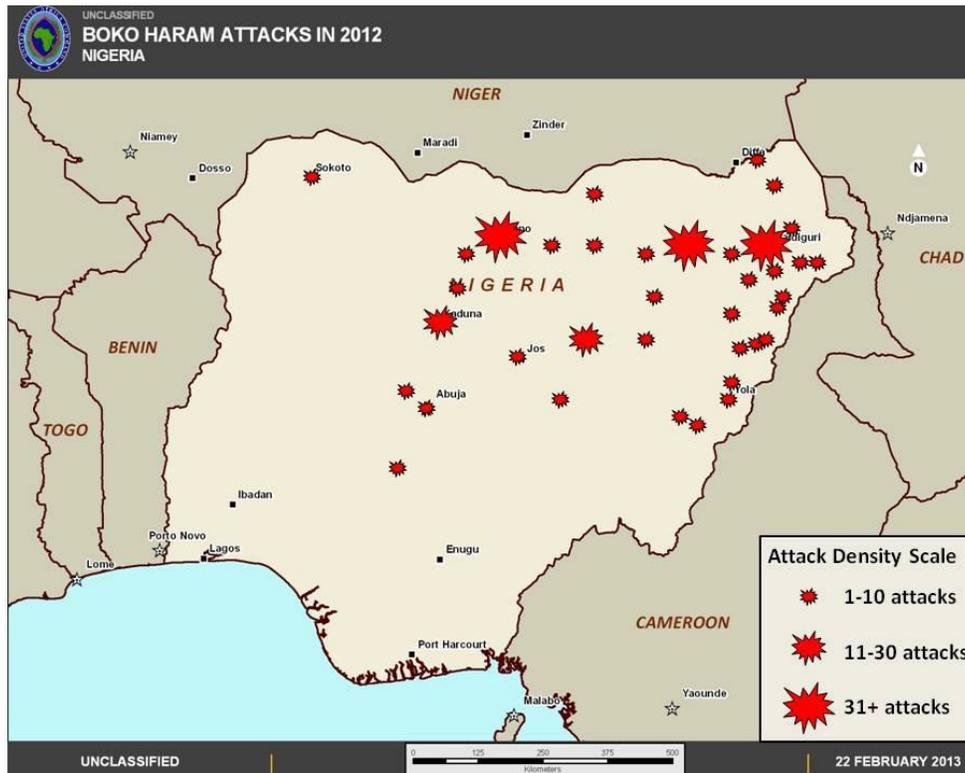
To counter AQIM and support the restoration of governance in Mali, U.S. Africa Command is providing support to French and African military operations in northern Mali, which are achieving gains against AQIM and other terrorist organizations. We are supporting French efforts with information, airlift, and refueling, and are working with the Department of State (DoS) to support the deployment of west African forces to the African-led International Support Mission to Mali (AFISMA). Recently, we began unarmed, remotely piloted aircraft operations from Niger in support of intelligence gathering efforts in the region. Although French, Malian, and AFISMA forces are achieving success in removing AQIM fighters from population centers, eliminating the long-term threat posed by AQIM will require the restoration of Malian governance and territorial integrity, political

reconciliation with northern indigenous groups, the establishment of security, and the sustained engagement of the international community.

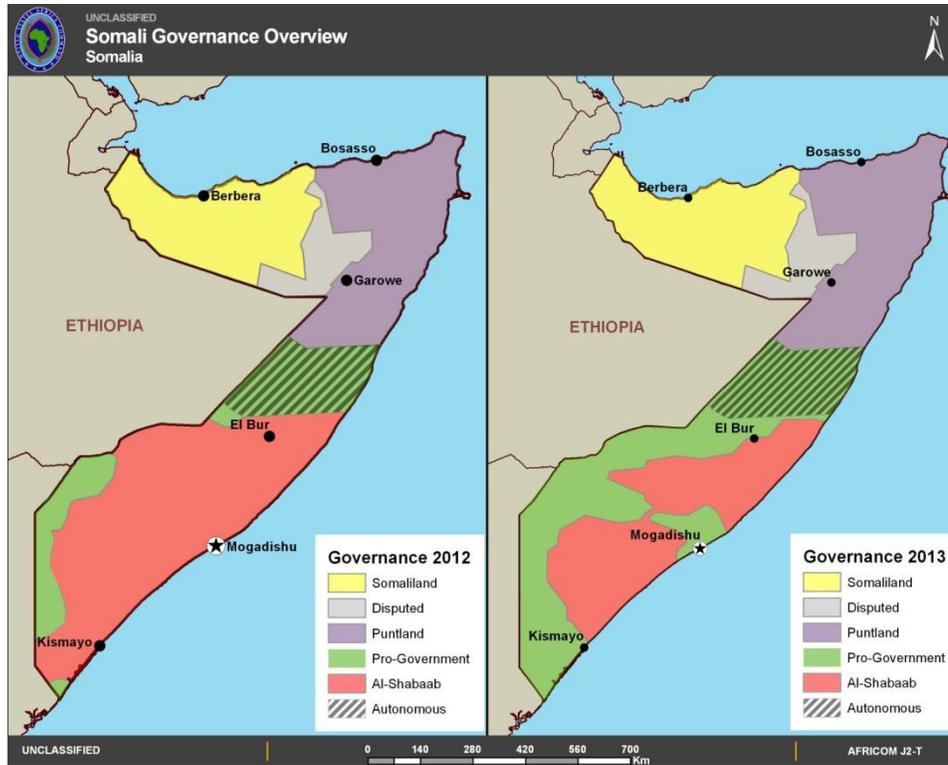


While international focus is currently on Mali, AQIM is not solely a Malian challenge. The organization is spread across the Sahel region and requires a regional approach to effectively address the threat. U.S. Africa Command continues to work closely with the Department of State (DoS) and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to support regional counter-terrorism efforts under the umbrella of the Trans-Sahara Counter-Terrorism Partnership (TSCTP). A partnership between 10 northern and western African nations and the United States, TSCTP is designed to support the development of partner nation military counter-terrorism skills and capabilities and foster regional cooperation among participating nations to address the evolving threat of AQIM and related extremist groups. One aspect of TSCTP's impact can be seen in the troop contributions of five participating countries (Burkina Faso, Chad, Niger, Nigeria, and Senegal) to AFISMA. Although Mali has historically been a TSCTP partner, U.S. Africa Command is not currently engaged in capacity-building with the armed forces of Mali,

consistent with U.S. legal prohibitions on the provision of security assistance to any military force that has been involved in a military overthrow of a democratically elected government.



In Nigeria, where Boko Haram is conducting a destabilizing campaign of violent attacks focused on the northern part of the country, U.S. Africa Command engages with the Nigerian Armed Forces to improve their military capabilities. We seek to support the development of a professional military that will support a coordinated Nigerian Government effort to address Boko Haram and provide the citizens of Nigeria with responsive governance and improved economic opportunity. Boko Haram is in contact with al-Qa'ida and recently kidnapped a French family in retaliation for French actions against AQIM in Mali. If pressure on Boko Haram decreases, they could expand their capabilities and reach to pose a more significant threat to U.S. interests.



In Somalia, al-Shabaab has been greatly weakened by the operations of African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), Ethiopian, and Somali forces. While al-Shabaab is less effective, the group is still dangerous and capable of conducting unconventional attacks to disrupt AMISOM operations and the newly formed Somali government.

The significant gains achieved by AMISOM forces over the past year were critical in providing space for the political process that resulted in Somalia’s transition to a government now formally recognized by the United States. While Somalia faces many challenges ahead, it is on a positive path. As military-to-military relations are normalized with Somalia, U.S. Africa Command will work with the DoS to develop security cooperation activities to assist with the development of a unified Somali security force. For the foreseeable future, focus must be maintained on Somalia to sustain security progress made to date.

Overall, we believe that our efforts to counter violent extremist organizations are having a positive impact. Our African partners are demonstrating strengthened capabilities

and are increasingly cooperating with other nations to address shared security challenges, including supporting African Union and United Nations operations and programs. The leadership of the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States in addressing the security challenges in Mali is indicative of the growing willingness and capability of Africans to address African security challenges.

### *MARITIME SECURITY AND COUNTER ILLICIT TRAFFICKING*

Multilateral cooperation in addressing regional maritime security challenges continued to improve over the past year. Maritime security is not only vital to countering terrorism and illicit trafficking, but is also a critical enabler of trade and economic development. Coastal nations contend with a range of challenges off their coasts including trafficking in narcotics and arms, human trafficking; piracy and armed robbery at sea; oil bunkering; and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU). Piracy and armed robbery at sea in the western Indian Ocean and Gulf of Guinea elevated insurance rates and shipping costs, resulting in increased costs to consumers. IUU fishing devastates African fisheries, which play a vital role in African economic growth and food security. Criminal organizations leverage ungoverned maritime space that could also be exploited by violent extremist organizations.

African partners are making progress in addressing challenges in the maritime domain through cooperative regional approaches supported by the international community. U.S. Africa Command and our Naval and Marine components work closely with the U.S. Coast Guard in the execution of our two primary maritime security programs, the African Partnership Station program (APS) and the African Maritime Law Enforcement Partnership (AMLEP), which are contributing to strengthening regional maritime capabilities and interoperability. African maritime forces used skills gained through participation in AMLEP

and APS to conduct operations that resulted in the seizure of over \$100 million worth of cocaine and the levying of over \$3 million in fines. Benin and Nigeria now conduct joint maritime patrols while South Africa, Tanzania, and Mozambique signed a counter-piracy agreement codifying their efforts and reflective of the trend of increasing regional cooperation in addressing maritime security challenges.

Countering illicit trafficking is linked to the challenge of increasing African maritime security. Illicit trafficking in the maritime, air, and land domains provides income to international criminal networks, has a destabilizing influence on governance, and is increasingly exploited by violent extremist organizations as a source of financing. U.S. Africa Command coordinates closely with U.S. government agencies and embassy law enforcement teams to conduct programs to counter illicit trafficking. Our efforts focus on increasing partner nation capacities to detect and interdict illicit trafficking throughout the African continent. Counter- trafficking skills are applicable to combating a wide range of criminal activity, including poaching.

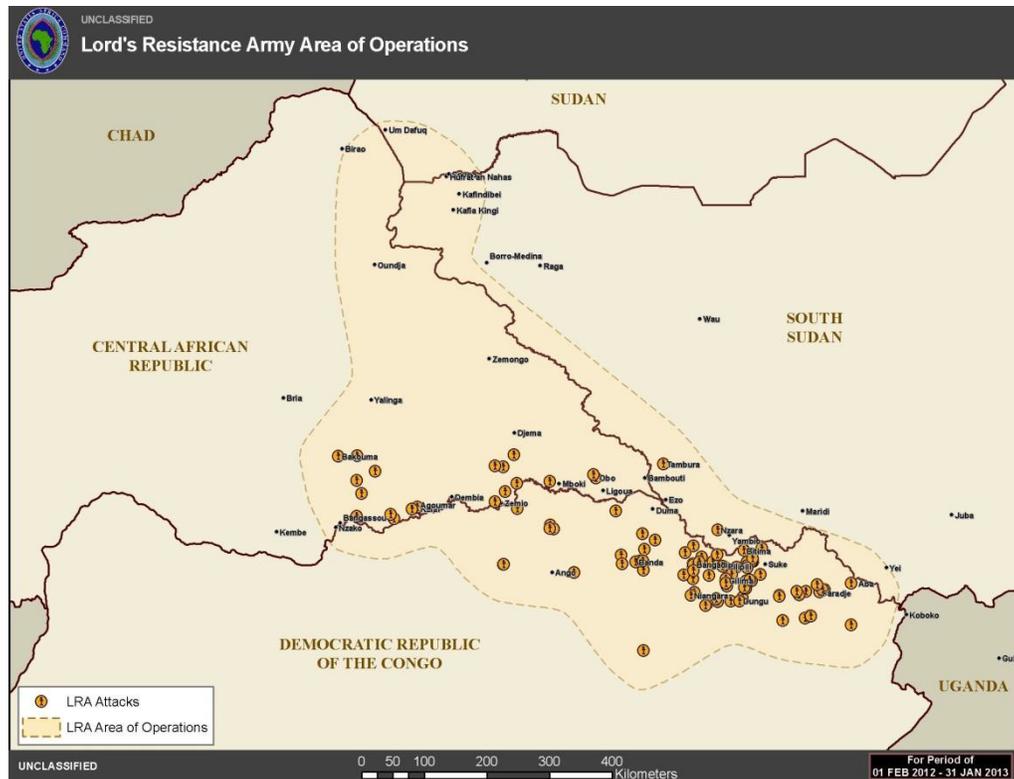
As part of our enduring partnership with Liberia, we are supporting the development of the Liberian Coast Guard and recently renovated the coast guard's pier to enable operations. U.S. Africa Command constructed a new Senegalese maritime operation center with follow on training and assistance to the new center's staff and advanced training to the Cape Verde Counter Narcotics and Maritime Operations Center. The U.S. Africa Command also assisted Cape Verde and Senegal in developing maritime operations centers that have facilitated the interdiction of suspect vessels.

#### *STRENGTHENING DEFENSE CAPABILITIES*

Strengthening partner defense capabilities enables African nations to provide for

their own security and helps U.S. Africa Command to develop enduring relationships that support freedom of movement and assured access for U.S. forces. We assist African nations in developing capable, accountable, self-sustaining military forces and defense institutions. Our capacity-building activities complement DoS programs and are planned in close coordination with embassy country teams and partner nations. Our engagements, which span the range of essential military capabilities, include combined humanitarian and medical assistance programs conducted in coordination with the USAID.

The success of AMISOM forces against al-Shabaab illustrates the positive impact of U.S. defense capacity-building efforts in the region. AMISOM forces receive pre-deployment training through the DoS Global Peace Operations Initiative's Africa Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) program. U.S. forces support and complement ACOTA activities with specialized training in skills that have played a critical role in enhancing the operational success of AMISOM forces, including intelligence analysis and countering improvised explosive devices. To date, the forces of five AMISOM troop contributing countries (Burundi, Djibouti, Kenya, Sierra Leone, and Uganda) were trained through the ACOTA program.



Advice and assistance from U.S. forces enhanced the capabilities and cooperation of military forces of Uganda, South Sudan, Central African Republic, and Democratic Republic of the Congo currently engaged in operations to counter the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). Operational gains made by regional forces over the past year, combined with civilian efforts, resulted in increased LRA defections, the capture of key LRA leaders, and decreased LRA attacks on civilian populations. The formation of an African Union Regional Task Force will facilitate further cooperation among counter-LRA forces.

U.S. Africa Command is broadly supporting U.S. commitments to countries undergoing democratic transitions by assisting in the development of professional militaries that respect civilian authority, are respectful of the rule of law, and are increasingly capable of securing their borders and combating mutual threats, including transnational terrorism. We continue to develop our and strengthen partnerships with the armed forces of Libya and South

Sudan. In South Sudan we have developed a comprehensive program that supports the ongoing DoS security assistance program. Our current focus is on education of key institutional-level personnel and small-scale civil action projects with the South Sudanese military. Our engagement with the Libyan Armed Forces similarly focuses on education and also emphasizes the strengthening of Libyan counter- terrorism capabilities. As these relationships continue to develop, we look forward to deepening our partnership with both militaries.

U.S. Africa Command's engagements with African land forces will be enhanced as the command becomes the first combatant command to be supported by a brigade through the Army's Regionally Aligned Force (RAF) concept. Beginning in March 2013, 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade, 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division will support U.S. Africa Command in developing enduring relationships and cooperation with partner nation land forces. RAF engagements will likely range from small travelling contact teams to support to major exercises. Initial planning for the RAF includes support to State Department-led ACOTA training for African forces deploying in support of United Nations and African Union peacekeeping operations.

An area of emerging focus is strengthening partner defense capabilities in air security and safety. Last year, our dual-hatted Air Force component, USAFE-AFAFRICA, launched the African Partnership Flight (APF) program, which promotes regional cooperation and strengthens the capabilities of partner nation air forces to provide airlift support to United Nations and African Union peacekeeping operations. 150 airmen from five African nations participated in APF's initial event last year, which addressed air mobility and logistics for peacekeeping operations, priority areas in which African air forces have very limited capabilities. APF will expand this year to include 175 students from eight nations.

The State Partnership Program (SPP) provides unique capabilities that augment our

ability to build enduring relationships with strategic partners in the region. SPP engagements build mutual U.S. and partner nation capacity to address shared security challenges. SPP activities currently contribute to our security cooperation with eight partner nations; Botswana, Ghana, Liberia, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, and Tunisia. SPP engagements account for over 40 percent of military-to-military engagements each year. Expansion of the State Partnership Program, particularly in East and North Africa, would assist in developing stable and enduring relationships with additional strategic partners, providing a foundation for capacity-building efforts by rotational forces.

Over the past year, U.S. Africa Command increased activities in support of the National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security, including integrating gender training, which is tailored to partner nation socio-cultural dynamics, into our security sector reform activities. Liberia has established a goal of 20 percent female representation in its armed forces, a development that reflects the increasing regional interest in expanding opportunities for women in the armed forces. We are also working with the Botswana Defence Forces to assist in its efforts to expand the integration of women into their forces.

#### *PREPARING AND RESPONDING TO CRISIS*

U.S. Africa Command stands ready to respond to crises across the continent. Several incidents in the last year caused the Command to act to ensure the safety and security of American citizens including the January 2012 rescue of American citizen Jessica Buchanan and Danish citizen Poul Thisted from captors in Somalia. In November 2012, when rebel activities in the Central African Republic required the suspension of U.S. Embassy operations, we assisted the DoS in evacuating U.S. Embassy personnel and American citizens.

The dynamic security environments that followed the Arab Awakening have increased requirements for crisis response capabilities. U.S. Africa Command capabilities to respond to crisis have matured over the past year, including the establishment of a headquarters Command Center and the allocation of a Commander's In-extremis Force in October 2012. The Commander's in-Extremis Force is currently based in Colorado, with a rotational element forward in Europe. Forward basing in Europe would increase the capability of the command to rapidly respond to incidents on the continent. Our Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force, which previously focused on supporting security cooperation activities, will be expanded to allow support to crisis response, further increasing our capabilities in this regard.

## **HOW CONGRESS CAN HELP**

Sequestration and potentially, a year-long extension of the current continuing resolution, will have a negative impact on the command. The combined effects may force significant reductions in theater security cooperation activities and joint and combined exercises, potentially endangering progress in strengthening partner defense capabilities, gaining access to strategic locations, and supporting U.S. bilateral policy objectives. Meeting Africa's many challenges requires the collaboration and support of all agencies of the U.S. government and the support of Congress. Enactment of full year appropriations for defense, military construction, DoS, and USAID programs is critical to effective program planning and mission execution. Because U.S. government efforts are interconnected and often mutually dependent, fully resourcing one of these pillars without the others compounds the difficulties of planning and execution, and hinders mission completion.

Many of our programs use a mix of DoS and DoD authorities and funding. For example, DoS peacekeeping operation authority provides for training our African partner

nation forces, while DoD section 1206 authority provides for equipping those forces. The use of dual authorities requires close coordination between departments, and full funding of the DoS's security assistance programs is critical to success. We work with our interagency partners to ensure the resources provided by Congress are appropriately tied to our defense and foreign policy priorities.

We are keenly aware of the current fiscal environment and support all ongoing DoD efforts to decrease spending and ensure funds are wisely utilized. Our efforts under the Campaign to Cut Waste resulted in budget plans which reflect a savings of \$1 million in both monetary and process efficiencies. We have also taken a hard look at our staffing levels, contracts, and conferences to determine where savings can be realized. We applied a self-imposed 5 percent personnel reduction for both FY13 and FY14 and are on a path to all but eliminate temporary hires and overhires. But sequestration and a possible year-long extension of the current continuing resolution will have serious negative consequences for our efforts.

I thank this committee and Congress for its support of our team and our mission. You have provided key authorities at appropriate times, as in extending through FY14 the temporary authority to build the counter-terrorism capacities of Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, and countries engaged in AMISOM. Pursuant to this authority, we have worked with the DoS to plan and execute our support to counter-terrorism capacity-building at a critical time. We are currently providing logistical equipment to Djiboutian and Kenyan forces participating in AMISOM. We appreciate this authority and believe it will enable AMISOM forces to continue their progress against al-Shabaab.

We also appreciate the enhanced train and equip authority under section 1206 of the FY 2006 NDAA, as amended in the FY 2013 NDAA, to permit small scale military construction among the authorized elements.

Your annual reauthorization of the temporary, limited authority to use operation and maintenance funding for military construction in support of contingency operations in our area of responsibility has permitted us to meet critical operational support needs in a timely fashion, and we appreciate your recognition of its importance.

The recent volatility in North and West Africa demonstrates the importance of sufficient Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) assets to cover multiple crises simultaneously. ISR capabilities are required to protect American interests and to assist our close allies and partners. We appreciate the authorization in the FY 2013 NDAA of an additional \$50 million for ISR in support of our counter-LRA efforts.

We appreciate your continued support for the Combatant Commander Exercise and Engagement Program. This program is the foundation of our exercises in Africa and funds strategic lift requirements as well as providing Service Incremental Funds to our components, ensuring we can provide the forces to work and exercise alongside our African partners.

Finally, we welcome visits by Congressional Members and their staffs. The Members and staff who have had the opportunity to travel in Africa gain a deeper appreciation for the challenges and the many opportunities that are presented in this large and diverse continent.

## **CONCLUSION**

The African continent will continue to present a complex and fluid set of challenges and opportunities. African nations, the African Union, and regional economic communities are increasingly demonstrating their willingness to address African security challenges. At U.S. Africa Command, we will continue to engage with our African partner militaries to strengthen their skills and capabilities, so they are better able to address shared security concerns and are

able to contribute to regional stability and security. We also look forward to strengthening our existing partnerships and developing new partnerships, such as we have with the Libyan military.

Our contributions to protecting and advancing our national interests would not be possible without our interagency partners across the government, including the Department of State, U.S. Agency for International Development, the incredibly dedicated women and men of the U.S. intelligence community and others. Our team of Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines and Coastguardsmen – and our DoD and interagency civilian teammates – is dedicated to our mission and their achievements would not be possible without the strong support of their families.

Thank you for your enduring support to our men and women in uniform and for your interest in this increasingly important region of the world.