Chairman, ranking member, distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to update you on the activities and efforts of United States Africa Command to protect and promote U.S. national security interests in Africa. Since I last spoke with the Senate, I have had nine months to examine the opportunities and challenges the U.S. and our partners face in Africa. As expected in an area of responsibility covering fifty-three countries, issues are complex and varied. I am confident we have the right strategic approach to meet these challenges, and our efforts, in coordination with the efforts of our allies and partners, will have a lasting impact on the security and stability of the African continent. It is an honor to lead the efforts of the men and women of United States Africa Command in this dynamic and rapidly changing strategic environment.

Africa remains an enduring interest for the U.S., and the fifty-three nations in the Africa Command Area of Responsibility look to the U.S. for assistance but, more importantly, for leadership—leadership that advantages our partners as they turn challenges into opportunities. We can meet our military objectives and advance American interests with a combination of strategic patience, targeted investments, and strong partnership to achieve shared security objectives and maintain our long-term approach which contribute to the conditions for development and good governance to take root. If we focus on working with our African partners on developing local solutions to radicalization, destabilization, and persistent conflict, we will remain the security partner of choice for the next decade, all while upholding our American values. Africa, our allies, the U.S., and, indeed, the world will benefit from our actions to promote stable and effective nation states and defense institutions in Africa.

In order to accomplish this goal, the U.S. must remain engaged on the continent,
investing in the capability, legitimacy, and accountability of African defense institutions. We must continue to enable African solutions by building partner capacity, instilling professionalism within defense forces, and increasing their respect for the rule of law. When necessary, we must be ready to conduct military operations to protect U.S. interests, counter violent extremist organizations, and enable our partners’ efforts to provide security. To protect and promote U.S. national security interests in Africa, diplomacy and development are key efforts, and our partnership with the Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is key to achieve enduring success. Together, we work to address the root causes of violent extremism, lack of accountable government systems, poor education opportunities, and social and economic deficiencies to achieve long-term, sustainable impact in Africa. More specifically, I want to thank Congress for the authority to support other USG agencies under the 2017 National Defense Authorization Act. We now have the flexibility to facilitate a whole of government approach, which is the best opportunity to assist Africa in creating sustainable African solutions. This approach benefits Africans and Americans and mitigates the considerable security risks we currently face.

**STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT**

Africa’s sustained economic growth, improved social development, and growing entrepreneur class are unlocking the continent’s potential for international investment and trade, raising its geostrategic importance to the U.S while also attracting international competition for access, influence, and trade. Africa’s continued commitment to democracy, evidenced by the January 2017 actions of the Economic Community of West Africa (ECOWAS) to uphold the election results in The Gambia, reinforces the strong foundation of shared values and commitment to good governance the U.S. has with its African partners. As the U.S. pursues
opportunities for greater partnership with Africa, we must be cognizant of the negative external
and internal forces seeking to counter our shared goals and not be constrained by them.

Africa links directly to U.S. strategic interests as the continent strives for inclusion in the
rules-based international order. Just as the U.S. pursues strategic interests in Africa,
international competitors, including China and Russia, are doing the same. Whether with trade,
natural resource exploitation, or weapons sales, we continue to see international competitors
engage with African partners in a manner contrary to the international norms of transparency and
good governance. These competitors weaken our African partners’ ability to govern and will
ultimately hinder Africa’s long-term stability and economic growth, and they will also
undermine and diminish U.S. influence—a message we must continue to share with our partners.

Parts of Africa remain a battleground between ideologies, interests, and values: equality,
prosperity, and peace are often pitted against extremism, oppression, and conflict. The strategic
environment includes instability that allows violent extremist organizations to grow and recruit
from disenfranchised populations. Currently, the greatest threat to U.S. interests emanating from
Africa is violent extremist organizations (VEOs). Furthermore, these VEOs are competing for
primacy over other extremist movements in Africa and aspire to incorporate large portions of the
continent into their respective ideologies. They build partnerships with regional VEOs; exploit
the vulnerability of Africa’s youth population; and take advantage of ungoverned and under-
governed spaces to target our partners, our allies, and the U.S. Africa’s population faces large
scale unemployment and disenfranchisement from corrupt governments and abusive security
forces, making them prime targets for exploitation by criminal and terrorist organizations across
the continent.
In addition to the transregional threats of terrorism, Africa is vulnerable to conflict and instability from political, social, economic, and environmental challenges. These forces are driving the current migrant crisis. The migrant flow between Africa and Europe greatly concerns our European allies. Europe views the migrant crisis as its preeminent security and economic issue. The International Monetary Fund estimates the initial cost of direct support to refugee inflow into the EU will average approximately $16-32B annually. When the secondary costs of migrant integration, border policing, and regional support are added, the cost increases to an additional $150B annually for the EU. Unfortunately, this crisis will most likely continue in the near future, as many African countries are not able to stem the flow at home.

Globally, 15 of the top 25 most fragile countries of the world are in Africa, according to the 2016 Fund for Peace "Fragile State Index." At the root of this fragility is weak governance. While governance is not a core mission of the Department of Defense, we recognize that building professional, legitimate defense institutions is critical to enabling a population-centric approach to governance that prioritizes the security of the population over the security of the regime. Because of this, our work continues to support the efforts of the Department of State and USAID to develop legitimate, rights-respecting security forces and address the root causes of instability.

COMMAND APPROACH

THEATER STRATEGY (5 – 20 Years)

In order to address the challenges and secure U.S. interests in the Africa, our strategy articulates a long-term, regionally-focused approach for a safe and stable Africa. Specifically, the strategy outlines an Africa in which regional organizations and states are willing and capable partners addressing security challenges, the security of the African population, and
U.S. interests in Africa. Although our strategy is regionally focused, many programs and activities are executed bilaterally further stressing the importance of willing and capable partners. Transregional VEOs not only constitute the most direct security threat to the U.S. emanating from Africa but are also the most dangerous threat to stability in East, North, and West Africa. The 2015 National Security Strategy calls on us to work with Congress to train and equip partners in the fight against VEOs, and the United States Africa Command Area of Responsibility one theater in that broader fight. However, training and equipping African partners for the tactical fight is insufficient to achieve long-term stability. U.S. and international assistance must build our African partners’ ability to direct, manage, sustain, and operate their own defense sectors over time. Capable and sustainable defense institutions are critical in providing a secure environment for the deepening of democracy and broad-based development, which together can diminish some of the factors that attract vulnerable persons into violent extremism and criminality.

Our approach assumes the continuation of limited available resources, both financial and personnel, to accomplish U.S. objectives. Thus, Africa Command will continue to operate with security force assistance as the decisive effort of our strategy. However, any reduction to our already optimized (but limited) resources would impact Africa Command’s ability to support the National Security Strategy and National Military Strategy objectives.

THEATER POSTURE

Our command approach is driven by a light, adaptable footprint enabling joint operations, protection of U.S. personnel and facilities, crisis response, and security cooperation. We continue to maintain one forward operating site on the continent, Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti, home of Combined Joint Task Force Horn of Africa, Africa Command’s
lead for East Africa efforts. This base is essential to U.S. efforts in East Africa and the Arabian Peninsula. Camp Lemonnier serves as a hub for multiple operations and security cooperation activities, assuring access in the region, freedom of movement through the Gulf of Aden, and protecting U.S. interests. The importance of our forward operating site was evident during the execution, the past summer, of OPERATION OAKEN STEEL, the reinforcement of the U.S. Embassy in Juba, South Sudan, to ensure the protection of embassy personnel during the conflict between rival factions. For this operation, U.S. forces based out of Camp Lemonnier, as well as Moron, Spain, deployed to our cooperative security location in Entebbe, Uganda, which provided an effective staging location for rapid crisis response.

As part of the 2017 Theater Posture Plan, Africa Command closed five contingency locations and designated seven new contingency locations on the continent due to shifting requirements and identified gaps in our ability to counter threats and support ongoing operations. These contingency locations strive to provide the necessary access in crucial areas aligned with the Theater Campaign Plan.

THEATER CAMPAIGN PLAN (2 – 5 Years)

Africa Command’s Theater Campaign Plan seeks to disrupt and neutralize transnational threats by building African partner defense capability and capacity, as directed in the 2015 National Security Strategy, in order to promote regional security, stability, and prosperity, while always protecting U.S. personnel and facilities and the United States’ access on the continent. This approach balances efforts to strengthen defense institutions and conduct counterterrorism operations with African partners and international allies, such as France and the UK, in order to disrupt, degrade, and eventually defeat extremists. Additionally, Africa Command conducts assessments to
measure the effectiveness of our security cooperation activities to ensure our Theater Campaign Plan is achieving the desired results.

Africa Command is currently operating along five Lines of Efforts (LOE) 1) Neutralize al-Shabaab and transition the security responsibilities of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) to the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS); 2) Degrade violent extremist organizations in the Sahel Maghreb and contain instability in Libya; 3) Contain and degrade Boko Haram; 4) Interdict illicit activity in the Gulf of Guinea and Central Africa with willing and capable African partners; and 5) Build peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance, and disaster response capacity of African partners.

LOE 1: NEUTRALIZE AL-SHABAAB AND TRANSITION AMISOM TO THE FGS

In 2015, AMISOM recaptured significant territory from al-Shabaab, al-Qaeda’s pre-eminent affiliate in East Africa. In 2016 after Ethiopian forces, operating independently from AMISOM, withdrew from Somalia, al-Shabaab regained some territory, and, today, the group continues to conduct attacks on AMISOM forces, the FGS, and the Somali National Security Forces (SNSF). We have also seen followers of ISIS begin to make in-roads into Somalia, which will further test AMISOM forces and the FGS. Sustained conflict and prolonged food insecurity have driven approximately one million refugees out of Somalia and into neighboring countries, like Kenya, who struggle with overflowing refugee settlements. Current and anticipated drought conditions have led to poor harvests and increased food insecurity throughout East Africa that has increased the risk of famine in Somalia. Large scale refugee migrations can destabilize regions already stressed to meet the basic needs of its own populations.

Ten years of operations in Somalia have left AMISOM troop contributing countries
fatigued. Somalia is dependent on AMISOM forces to provide security and conduct counter-
terror operations. AMISOM is scheduled to begin withdrawing in 2018, and if this departure
begins prior to Somalia having capable security forces, large portions of Somalia are at risk of
returning to al-Shabaab control or potentially allowing ISIS to gain a stronger foothold in the
country.

Africa Command supports our partners’ efforts to neutralize al-Shabaab and other
violent extremist organizations operating in Somalia and supports the transfer of security
responsibilities from AMISOM to the SNSF once conditions allow. Africa Command and the
Department of State, working with a substantial international security assistance effort well-
coordinated by the UN Special Representative to the Secretary General, operates through the
venue of the Security Six (UN, European Union, U.S., UK, Turkey, and the United Arab
Emirates). This international effort aims to demonstrate sufficient progress in building the
SNSF in 2017 to justify an extension of AMISOM beyond 2019. Central to the U.S. approach
in Somalia is our partnership with the FGS. Working with the Department of State, we are
encouraging the FGS to come to an inclusive agreement on its security architecture in order to
build a sustainable SNSF that accounts for regional dynamics and continue to reach out to the
regional and local governments of Somalia.

Africa Command continues to support the counter-terrorism efforts, assist AMISOM
troop contributing countries, assist in equipping and training the SNSF, enable international
partners in their training efforts, and protect U.S. personnel in Somalia and the region. Our
advise, assist, and accompany efforts, paired with our deliberate targeting of top-level al-
Shabaab leadership, have had a significant impact in degrading al-Shabaab’s effectiveness in
East Africa, but those two efforts are not enduring solutions to Somalia’s problems.
With the inauguration of President Mohamed Abdullahi “Farmajo” Mohamed in February 2017, Somalia has seen its first-ever peaceful transition of power and first non-transitional government since 2006. President Farmajo’s platform promotes good governance and anti-corruption, and he has indicated further opening the door for increased coordination with the United States and the international community. His widespread popularity within Somalia suggests he has a personal interest in helping push the country towards one-person one-vote elections in 2020.

While we continue to work with the Security Six partners to coordinate our efforts in support of the SNSF, our support to AMISOM troop contributing countries is constrained by the use of security cooperation funding and associated processes designed to train and equip forces over the long term rather than to support current operations. The new Chapter 16 authorities in the 2017 National Defense Authorization Act provide the needed funding flexibility—multi-year monies and up to five years sustainment monies—to further the progress of degrading and ultimately defeating al-Shabaab while protecting U.S. interests in East Africa. Africa Command is working with OSD and Congress to accelerate the notification and approval timelines to better tailor our training and equipping efforts with our AMISOM and Somalia partners.

**LOE 2: DEGRADE VIOLENT EXTREMIST ORGANIZATIONS IN THE SAHEL MAGHREB AND CONTAIN INSTABILITY IN LIBYA**

The instability in Libya and North Africa may be the most significant, near-term threat to U.S. and allies’ interests on the continent. The multiple militias and fractured relationship between factions in east and west Libya exacerbate the security situation, spilling into Tunisia and Egypt and the broader Maghreb, allowing the movement of foreign fighters, enabling the
flow of migrants out of Libya to Europe and elsewhere. Africa Command is working to ensure
U.S. interests are protected and to enable our African partners to contain instability originating in
Libya, counter violent extremist organizations in the Sahel-Maghreb, and develop the requisite
defense institutions to maintain security in the region.

Stability in Libya is a long-term proposition requiring strategic patience as the Libyan
Government of National Accord (GNA) forms and develops. We must maintain pressure on the
ISIS-Libya network concurrently with Libya’s efforts to progress with political reconciliation.
This is a significant challenge given Libya’s absorption capacity for international support
remains limited, as is our ability to influence political reconciliation between competing
factions, particularly between the GNA and the House of Representatives. We must carefully
choose where and with whom we work with to counter ISIS-Libya in order not to shift the
balance between factions and risk sparking greater conflict in Libya.

**Degrade ISIS-Libya Network**

Our operations in Libya support the global coalition’s efforts to defeat ISIS-Libya.
OPERATION ODDYSEY LIGHTNING (OOL) enabled GNA-aligned forces to successfully
liberate the city of Sirte from ISIS control. However, even with the success of Sirte, ISIS-Libya
remains a regional threat with intent to target U.S. persons and interests. We will continue to
support Libyan partners and an international coalition to defeat ISIS-Libya and build the capacity
of the region while limiting civilian casualties. OOL can serve as a model for future U.S.
operations in the region by improving the battlefield capabilities and ethics of a partnered force,
working on the partner’s timeline without following planning-mandated timelines, remaining
flexible to keep an international force together and most importantly, limiting civilian casualties.
Support the Government of National Accord (GNA)

Despite its success in Sirte, the GNA continues to struggle with controlling Tripoli, providing basic services, and exercising authority over security forces. The political situation in Libya remains extremely dynamic, and the GNA faces a host of political, economic, and security challenges. We continue to support the diplomatic, stabilization, and development activities of the U.S. Interagency. We must also continue to promote development of responsive and effective governance and ensure the rights of all Libyans are respected. These are foundational to long-term regional security. Additionally, the House of Representatives (HoR)—and their military arm, the Libyan National Army (LNA)—must play a constructive role in the development of a unified, functioning Libyan government. While we recognize Libya’s struggle for a unified government remains uncertain and may not materialize within the foreseeable future, a national security structure solution accommodating the HoR and LNA provides a path forward.

In an effort to counter regional instability, Africa Command supports partners like Tunisia, a Major Non-NATO Ally. Africa Command is assisting the Tunisian military to develop and sustain Special Forces, border security capabilities and Tunisia’s intelligence capability. Working with the intelligence community and our component commands, Africa Command is training Tunisian intelligence organizations through train, advise, and assist mentors. Our efforts include helping Tunisia to establish an intelligence school, an intelligence fusion center, and the development of a professional intelligence career field within the Ministry of Defense. This model demonstrates an effective means of building initial counterterrorism intelligence capacity, and then transitioning to sustainable intelligence capacity building within a partner’s intelligence organizations, all focused on unit vice individual development. We also
work with Tunisia to develop and enhance its rotary wing capabilities. Through foreign military sales and excess defense articles programs, Tunisia has procured eight UH-60M Blackhawks and 24 OH-58D Kiowa Warrior helicopters. Tunisia expects the Blackhawks to function as a multirole aircraft providing casualty evacuation, troop transport, and air assault capabilities, and the Kiowas to provide much needed reconnaissance, precision strike, and close air support capabilities. With the assistance of ongoing US-provided air-to-ground integration training, these helicopters, added to the Tunisian operational inventory, sustained in part by the Department of State's Foreign Military Financing will provide better speed and response time during crises and a major boost to the modernization and capabilities of the Tunisian Armed Forces to conduct counterterrorism and border security operations in Tunisia.

*Al-Qaeda in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)*

Along with the threat posed by ISIS, AQIM remains a significant threat to U.S. interests and the security of our African partners. AQIM in Mali continues to exploit ethnic resentments in central Mali and spread their influence rendering large areas of the country ungovernable. With Operation BARKHANE, France continues to lead the fight to counter violent extremists throughout the Sahel region. However, Mali’s path toward greater stability and security remains unclear. The government, ex-rebel armed groups, and pro-government militias have demonstrated little political will to implement the peace accord signed in June 2015 and continue to commit human rights violations against civilians. The framework of political reforms and security measures, though imperfect, are the only existing solution for Mali to emerge, without further bloodshed, from the crisis that began in 2012.

We continue to support France’s counterterrorism operations in Mali against al-Qaeda affiliate groups and seek to increase our synchronization and coordination with their efforts.
Continued airlift and logistical support is essential to France’s efforts, and we must continue to provide this support if progress is to happen in this volatile region. Additionally, with the Department of State, we continue to support the troop contributing countries to the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali, which currently provides some measure of security in northern Mali. We continue to look for opportunities to take a more active role in defeating AQIM and supporting the accountable, inclusive governance that is key to durability and protecting our interests throughout the regions.

LOE 3: CONTAIN AND DEGRADE BOKO HARAM AND ISIS-WEST AFRICA

A primary focus for Africa Command in West Africa is containing and degrading Boko Haram and its offshoot since last year, ISIS-West Africa. Since 2010, Boko Haram has carried out attacks against civilians and directly targeted partner regional governments and military forces in the Lake Chad Basin (Nigeria, Niger, Cameroon, and Chad). Africa Command works with our Lake Chad Basin partners to expand partner capacity and capabilities to support regional cooperation and expand our African partner capacity and capabilities to ensure Boko Haram and ISIS-West Africa does not threaten partner, allied, or U.S. interests and do not destabilize the region.

The Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF), an African-inspired and African-led initiative that includes Benin, Cameroon, Chad, Niger, and Nigeria, provides a critically important venue for planning and coordinating security operations and for linking intelligence to these operations. As a result, the MNJTF and its member states have considerable successes in enabling multinational cooperation and coordinating multinational operations, and have placed significant pressure on Boko Haram and ISIS-West Africa. Thanks to this pressure, Boko Haram and ISIS-West Africa are less able to inflict mass casualties than in the past, and they control
only a fraction of the territory they occupied in 2014 and early 2015. Nonetheless, through the
continuing threat of asymmetric attacks, Boko Haram and ISIS-West Africa sustain a reign of
terror across much of Northeastern Nigeria and the border areas of the neighboring Lake Chad
Basin countries, thus preventing millions of displaced persons from returning to their homes.

The advent of ISIS-West Africa adds a new dimension to the insecurity of the Lake Chad
Basin. This group, with official ties to ISIS, operates in a more disciplined fashion than Boko
Haram; by avoiding attacks against Sunni Muslims and by forging relations with the local
population, ISIS-West Africa could take deeper root in the Lake Chad Basin region, thus making
it a greater threat to our partners. Although determined to defeat Boko Haram and ISIS-West
Africa and return stability to the region, the MNJTF faces significant challenges in maintaining
pressure on Boko Haram and ISIS-West Africa while simultaneously addressing competing
individual security requirements in the face of individual financial constraints.

Africa Command, while not engaged in direct military operations, supports the efforts
of our Lake Chad Basin partners to counter Boko Haram and ISIS-West Africa by providing
advisors, intelligence, training and equipment to complement other U.S.-provided equipment
and logistical support. The P3 (France, U.K., U.S.) Cellule de Coordination et de Liaison
(Coordination and Liaison Cell – CCL) coordinates international support to the MNJTF and its
member states to ensure that such support is complementary and effective. This past
December, the U.S. assumed 6-month rotational leadership of the CCL for the first time, and
we are taking full advantage of this opportunity to strengthen P3 support for the MNJTF and its
member states.

Africa Command provides security force assistance directly to regional military
partners in order to enable operations and build institutional capacity over the long term. For
example, in 2016, we provided Niger two ISR-equipped Cessnas to enhance Niger’s capacity to collect ISR to support its efforts to fight terrorism. This added capacity has had an important impact in bolstering Niger’s ability to fight the terrorists. In 2017 we intend to provide Chad and Cameroon each with two ISR-capable Cessnas. Additionally, in Chad, we are working to strengthen border reconnaissance forces with training and equipment to bolster its intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities. Cameroon likewise is a major recipient of U.S. security assistance via train and equip programs. In FY16 and FY17, the U.S. invested over $123M to expand Cameroonian ISR, command and control, and counter-terrorism force and logistics capabilities.

While regional partners have assisted in slowing the progress of Boko Haram and ISIS-West Africa, long-term success requires Nigeria to address development, governance, and economic deficiencies exacerbated by the humanitarian emergency, which serve as drivers of violent extremism in northeastern Nigeria and throughout the Lake Chad Basin region. Under the current Government of Nigeria's leadership, Nigeria is making progress but must still overcome systemic corruption and build the trust of civilian populations, including by protecting human rights abuses and holding accountable those who are responsible for abuses. Nigeria’s success in addressing these governance and development issues is key to an enduring solution in the Lake Chad Basin.

Despite gains made against Boko Haram and ISIS-West Africa, nearly 2 million people remain displaced from their homes in Nigeria, and over 400,000 others are displaced in Niger, Chad, and Cameroon. Moreover, the international humanitarian community has identified famine conditions throughout the areas of hostility in northeast Nigeria, and continued violence in these areas prevents responders from delivering life-saving assistance, prolonging a man-made
food crisis. Refugees and internally displaced persons mostly reside informally in makeshift

camps or mixed in with host communities, which are themselves under great stress to meet basic

needs and are vulnerable to exploitation. The large numbers flowing into receiving

communities—some already stressed to meet basic food and security needs—may have a
destabilizing effect on these communities. Africa Command continues to coordinate with the

Department of State and USAID, who work closely with the United Nations and non-
governmental organizations to alleviate suffering, implement reintegration programs, and

promote stability in the region.

**LOE 4: INTERDICT ILLICIT ACTIVITY IN THE GULF OF GUINEA AND CENTRAL AFRICA WITH WILLING AND CAPABLE AFRICAN PARTNERS**

Africa Command also supports our African partners, international partners, and

Interagency partners to interdict and counter illicit actors and their activities in Central Africa

and the Gulf of Guinea. Our priority effort is to build the institutional capacity of our African

partners to address the many forms of illicit activity that threaten their security and regional

stability. This mission requires a whole of government approach, and we work closely with the

Department of State, Department of Treasury/FBI, and components of the Department of

Homeland Security to synchronize our approach and complement each other’s efforts. These

efforts are enhanced by having the Interagency embedded within Africa Command, a benefit to

our mission.

**Countering the Lord’s Resistance Army**

In Central Africa, led by the efforts of Special Operations Command – Africa, we have

focused on working with the African Union Regional Task Force (AU-RTF) to counter the

Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA), one of the many illicit actors operating in the region. Uganda,
the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic, and South Sudan have contributed forces to the AU-RTF, which has led military efforts to reduce the LRA’s safe havens, capture key leaders, and promote defections. With advice and assistance from U.S. forces, the AU-RTF has been largely successful.

Through the combined efforts of military forces, civilian agencies, and non-governmental organizations, the LRA is not a threat to central governments and populations centers, but reduced to areas of ungoverned spaces. Today, although the group's leader, Joseph Kony, remains at large, we estimate fewer than 150 Lord’s Resistance Army fighters remain, and communities are better prepared to protect themselves.

**Maritime Security in the Gulf of Guinea**

Despite decreased U.S. reliance on African oil imports over the past three years, the resource-rich Gulf of Guinea region remains a strategic interest to the U.S. due to its role in the global oil market, its strategic location close to a major maritime trade route, the more than 74,000 American citizens in the area, and its exploitation as a transit point for illicit trafficking from the Americas to Europe. In the Gulf of Guinea, maritime security sector assistance consists of long-term efforts to build the capacity of African partners to achieve combined maritime law enforcement operations between the partners. Africa Command strongly supports the implementation of the 2013 Yaoundé Code of Conduct through regional strategic zone agreements. The agreements promote shared law enforcement responsibility against piracy and armed robbery at sea; trafficking of drugs, arms, and persons; and illegal, underreported, and unregulated fishing. Cross-water boundary tracking and interdiction missions have been widely successful, and we look forward to working with our partners in the region to expand the capability in the coming years.
In 2017, the Gulf of Guinea Commission will meet to finalize the Code of Conduct, converting the document into a binding agreement providing a valuable mechanism to build accountable governance, strengthen port and vessel security, and improve transparency. Furthering the building of maritime capacity, Belgium, France, Germany, and the UK regularly participate in regional maritime exercises and operations. Africa Command’s efforts, led by U.S. Naval Forces Africa, target assistance and capacity building through the African Partnership Station, EXERCISE OBANGAME EXPRESS, and the Africa Maritime Law Enforcement Partnership Program.

**LOE 5: BUILD PEACEKEEPING, HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE, AND DISASTER RESPONSE CAPACITY OF AFRICAN PARTNERS**

Africa Command supports U.S. governmental efforts that enable African partners across the African continent to support disaster response and peace operations within their region or throughout Africa. Through the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA), our implementing partner, we build our partner’s capacity to secure pathogens of security concern and improve partners’ capabilities to respond to the deliberate or accidental release of materials of concern and to support civilian-led responses to infectious diseases. The Africa Partner Outbreak Response promotes effective military-civilian partnerships in the health and security communities and leverages best practices among African partners. Africa Command’s support to this initiative maintains health security and mitigates the risks of another epidemic emanating from the continent.

Another important implementing partner to Africa Command’s crisis and disaster response efforts is the National Guard’s State Partnership Program (SPP). The SPP and their African partners have improved disaster management competency and readiness to support
civilian-led efforts. Currently, SPP has established partnerships with thirteen African nations to advance Africa Command and partner objectives. Africa Command continues to see the value of the National Guard’s continuous engagement and fully support SPP’s efforts.

Additional programs building the capacity of our African partners are the Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI), the African Peacekeeping Rapid Response Partnership (APRRP) and the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) programs. In partnership with the Department of State, GPOI is working to strengthen international capacity and capabilities to execute UN and regional peacekeeping operations. Though it is a global program, the preponderance of GPOI work is on the African continent, with 22 active African partner countries. Through GPOI, we aim to build sustainable, self-sufficient peace operations proficiencies in almost half of the countries in Africa to deploy and operate in UN and regional peace operations. We are also working collaboratively with U.S. and international stakeholders to improve the operational effectiveness of these missions. APRRP supplements the work we do through GPOI, enabling a deeper investment in six of the most capable African peacekeeping contributing countries to build their capacity to rapidly respond to emerging crises on the continent. Through APRRP, we are developing key enabling capabilities such as aviation; medical; engineering; logistics; command, control, communications, and information systems; and formed police units. GPOI and APRRP do not only help us to build the peacekeeping capabilities of partners in Africa (both for long-term sustainment or expansion of current contributions and for rapid response to emerging crises), but they also help to professionalize militaries through our training and equipping support, enhance defense institutions through their capacity building approach, and deepen our mil-mil partnerships.

Africa Command recognizes for capacity building efforts to be effective, they need to
align with Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) objectives. We do this by integrating a gender perspective into our military activities through two main efforts: 1) staff training and awareness, and 2) integration into the Theater Campaign Plan. For training and awareness, Africa Command hosts the Gender in Military Operations program, which solicits perspectives from African partners on gender issues within their military and during operations. For campaign planning, we integrate WPS concepts into peacekeeping capacity building, mil-to-mil engagements; training on human rights, rule of law, gender-based violence; and peacekeeping exercises. WPS works to professionalize our partners’ militaries and build their effectiveness to meet security challenges.

Africa Command’s primary engagement with Southern Africa is also through this line of effort. Along with being the most stable region in Africa, the region fields some of the most professional and capable military forces on the continent. For example, at the August 2016 Southern Africa Regional Leaders Seminar, topics such as climate change, environmental issues, uncontrolled migration, and health and disease capacity building were discussed, which speaks to Southern Africa’s capacity to address advanced, global security issues. In the past year, South Africa, Zambia, and Malawi have contributed to United Nations peacekeeping operations in Sudan, South Sudan, the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Furthermore, Malawi will host the upcoming Africa Land Forces Summit and Exercise AFRICA ENDEAVOR, and South Africa is hosting Exercise SHARED ACCORD to further develop its capacity to support peacekeeping operations. We are complementing Department of State efforts to train and deploy peacekeepers with development of the defense institutions necessary to promote sustained regional stability over time. Africa Command will also continue to develop the capacity of Southern African troop contributors to the UN Missions in the Central African
Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and South Sudan.

Our efforts, and those of the Department of State to build sustainable and self-sufficient peace operations capacity, to include rapid response capabilities, sustainable force generation and training institutions, and modest improvements to strategic mobility, enable our partners across East, North, West, Central, and Southern Africa to lead the response to the threats, man-made or natural, facing their regions.

**IMPLEMENTING OUR APPROACH**

**Synchronization with Partners**

Africa Command relies on our strong international, Interagency, and multinational relationships to achieve our objectives. Africa Command works with international partners to synchronize operations and security force assistance on the continent. Fourteen of our international partners are represented at Africa Command, co-located in our Multi-National Coordination Cell (MNCC). One particularly powerful enabler is the Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF) concept (managed via U.S. Army Africa), which allows for relatively easy access to unassigned forces. The RAF executes a significant share of the Theater Security Cooperation activities in Africa, contributing meaningfully to mission success. Additionally, the U.S. leads and participates in multilateral planning groups for East Africa, North Africa, the Sahel Maghreb, and Naval Forces Africa recently concluded flag-level staff talks with its French service component counterpart to synchronize our combined strategic approach in the Gulf of Guinea. In East Africa, we are synchronizing security force assistance to AMISOM troop contributing countries and the SNSF. In North Africa, international partners are positioned to support international planning in support of stabilization efforts in Libya as conditions allow. In the Sahel Maghreb, we have begun to coordinate activities and do multilateral planning in
support to the MNJTF in the Lake Chad Basin and operations in Mali.

Also important to Africa Command’s efforts are the diplomatic and development efforts of our Interagency partners, Department of State and USAID. Over the past three years, we have established an annual Africa Strategic Dialogue and Africa Strategic Integration Conference to coordinate and integrate our activities with the Department of State and USAID, working hand in hand to build the capacity of our partners and strengthen African defense institutions. In partnership with the Department of State, the Security Governance Initiative (SGI) builds the capacity of civilian and defense institutions who provide oversight to the security sector. With the six SGI partners (Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Tunisia), we support efforts to strengthen governance across the security sector. These long-term SGI efforts will improve the effectiveness and sustainability of U.S. security assistance investments and activities.

Also essential to our mission is our relationship with other combatant commands. We coordinate with European Command for shared response forces. We rely heavily on our European allies such as Spain, Italy, and Greece for force projection out of southern Europe. Without these relationships, we could not execute our missions on the continent. We also coordinate with Central Command for shared response forces as well as Egypt and Arabian Peninsula equities. Lastly, we coordinate with Special Operations Command (through Special Operations Command – Africa) for counter-terrorism strategy and operations. An example of our cooperation with other combatant commands, both OPERATION ODYSSEY LIGHTNING and OPERATION OAKEN STEEL required assets outside of Africa Command’s assigned forces for extended periods of time, and this close cooperation helped achieve mission success in an efficient manner.
Security Force Assistance Resources

Our recent success in building the capacity and defense institutions of our African partners was only possible with funding provided by Congress through the Counter-Terrorism Partnership Fund (CTPF) and other programs. This funding, and the authorities provided to build the capacity of foreign security forces, has been essential to our success in enabling African partners and enhancing their capability to counter extremist organization within their borders and in support of collective regional efforts. Africa Command appreciates the flexibility provided by Congress with the new Section 333 authority. We will continue to prioritize crucial airlift, ISR, command and control systems, sustainment, and force structure development of our African partners. We will ensure our investments in African defense institutions continue to directly support U.S. national interests.

Programs such as the before-mentioned Security Governance Initiative and Counter-Terrorism Partnership Fund provide us the ability to work with our partners to strengthen their institutions. Institutions fashioned in accordance with the rule of law, protecting African citizens, and providing inclusive opportunities. Sustaining our efforts at current if not increased level of priority will ultimately determine if building partner capacity succeeds and if our African partners can improve security environments and progress toward good governance.

Capability Constraints

Africa’s security environment is dynamic and complex requiring innovative solutions. Even with limited resources or capabilities, Africa Command leans forward, working with partners and allies, to execute its mission and mitigate risk. While the command has been able to succeed in multiple efforts, our mission is impacted by inconsistent resourcing of key requirements and capabilities. These constraints risk our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines,
Coast Guardsmen, and Civilians executing activities on the African continent. For example, only approximately 20-30% of Africa Command’s ISR requirements are met. This limits situational understanding, support to operations, and fails to offer threat indications and warnings. For personnel recovery, Africa Command relies heavily on contract Search and Rescue assets due to lack of dedicated assets to support operations. Furthermore, African partners lack the capability and capacity to assist with personnel recovery missions. Integrating personnel recovery and surgical stabilization/medical sustainment capabilities are a moral obligation and essential for the proper care of U.S. service members who risk their lives to protect our nation. Africa lacks a theater distribution network to support our forces. This issue manifests itself most significantly in West Africa where we have approximately 1,000 personnel conducting 12 named operations across a nine nation region. This capability gap forces our personnel to revert to costly and ineffective ad hoc solutions. An effective hub and spoke distribution system would consolidate cargo, replace multiple commercial contracts, and eliminate the use of heavy military cargo planes and deliver an efficient low volume/low frequency sustainment solution. In OPERATION ODYSSEY LIGHTNING (OOL), the U.S. military effort to support the Libyan government against the ISIS, incorporating Afloat Forward Staging Base and amphibious ship capability into operational planning added to the successful execution of the mission. Currently, Africa Command has an unfilled requirement to maintain this capability, which would serve to fill critical personnel recovery and casualty evacuation shortfalls. Additionally, this amphibious capability, during OOL, supported maritime-based ISR operations, and Africa Command could further exploit this capability to support additional operations against regional threats.

Our capability constraints are most profound in our support to the Department of
State-led mission to protect U.S. personnel and facilities. Flexible posture through our cooperative security locations and contingency locations, complemented by the highly-valued Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force-Crisis Response at Moron Air Base, Spain the U.S. Special Operations Force-led Crisis Response Force in Baumholder, Germany and the East Africa Response Force in Djibouti, provide response options during crises. However, the tyranny of distance posed by the continent challenges that responsiveness, and we knowingly accept risk for operations. To mitigate this risk, finalizing the development of key cooperative security locations through Defense Cooperation Agreements with host nations, coupled with accurate indications and warnings from increased ISR and the ability to recover and evacuate our personnel, will ensure swift crisis response to all our embassy locations in Africa.

LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE

Moving forward, United States Africa Command continues execute its mission on the African continent. We continue to focus our decisive effort on building African partner capacity—and supporting African solutions to African problems. We continue to work closely with international and Interagency partners to make small, wise investments which pay huge dividends in building stable and effective governments—the foundation for long-term security in Africa. I am confident that with your support, Africa Command will protect and promote U.S. interests and keep the U.S. safe from threats emanating from Africa. Thank you for your continued support to our mission and to the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, Coast Guardsmen, civilians, contractors, and families of the United States Africa Command.