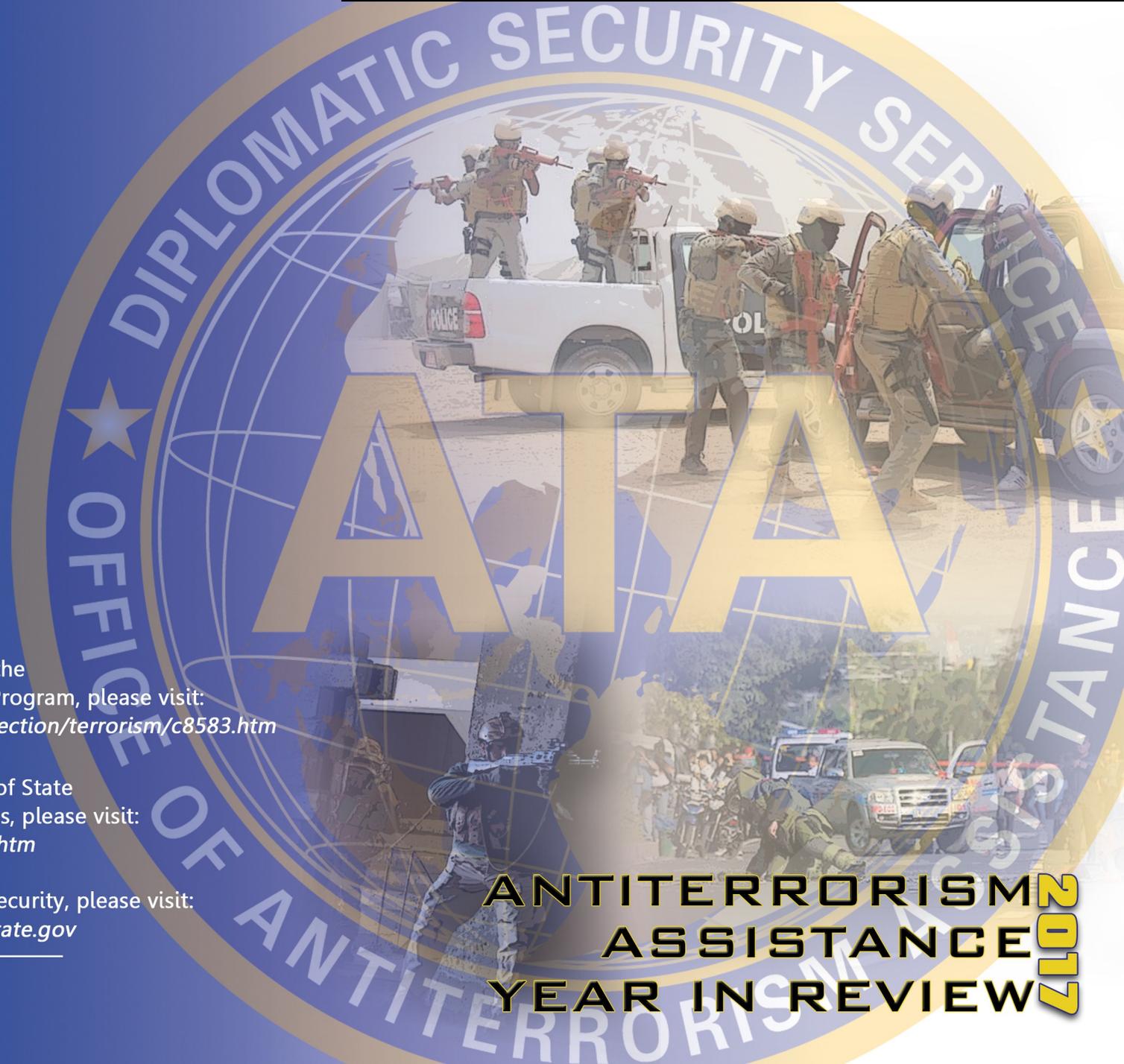




UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
BUREAU OF DIPLOMATIC SECURITY
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE
BUREAU OF COUNTERTERRORISM



For more information on the Antiterrorism Assistance Program, please visit:
www.state.gov/m/ds/protection/terrorism/c8583.htm



For more on Department of State counterterrorism initiatives, please visit:
www.state.gov/j/ct/index.htm



For more on Diplomatic Security, please visit:
www.diplomaticsecurity.state.gov

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**ANTITERRORISM
ASSISTANCE
YEAR IN REVIEW 2017**

ATA

2017 YEAR IN REVIEW

ATA

BY THE NUMBERS

431 Courses, Workshops,
& Technical Consultations

8,233 Participants

47 Countries

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EXECUTIVE INTRODUCTION

The U.S. priority of building sustainable counterterrorism capabilities of our international law enforcement partners not only safeguards the security of critical U.S. allies, it also helps to contain transnational threats before they reach the U.S. homeland or challenge regional or global stability.

Established by Congress in 1983, the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) program is the U.S. Government's premier counterterrorism training and equipment provider for specialized police units in friendly foreign nations. Over its 35-year history, the ATA program has evolved into a key pillar of the U.S. counterterrorism strategy, partnering with 154 nations to build their law enforcement capacity to overcome terrorism challenges in their own countries. Through its training and equipment grants, ATA enhances its partners' ability to protect their own citizens, private sector entities, and official U.S. government personnel and interests abroad, and prevents the spread of terrorism beyond their respective borders.

The ATA program receives its funding and policy guidance from the Department's Bureau of Counterterrorism and is administered by the Bureau of Diplomatic Security. The two bureaus partner to align policy, planning, funding, and program design and execution to make it difficult for terrorists to operate.

Through training, mentoring, and provisioning equipment, ATA helps build the critical capabilities of law enforcement partners abroad with both knowledge-enhancing training courses and tactical skills development to detect, deter, and disrupt terrorist activities. ATA first assesses a participating nation's capability gaps and develops needed curriculum, and then trains and mentors the country's law enforcement officers in a wide variety of counterterrorism disciplines aimed at achieving the country-specific policy goals.

The ATA program offers more than 50 unique courses and hundreds of customized consultations to enhance the capabilities of its partner nation police units, ranging from cyber security to SWAT training to protecting critical infrastructure to bomb disposal. The training programs are intended to alleviate risks that may be of a political, military, or economic nature, such as preventing the destabilization of friendly regimes, protecting U.S.-bound international flights from foreign ports-of-departure, or aiding in the detection of terrorists or their weapons attempting to transit across open, ungoverned borders.

The ATA program builds on its past while focusing on the future, namely through establishing sustainability for the agencies that receive its training. Last year, ATA embedded mentors in partner units to reinforce ATA curriculum concepts and

provide real-time knowledge to their mentees. Through best practices such as embedded mentors and train-the-trainer programs, ATA fosters the development of self-sustaining capability while delivering its assistance within a rule-of-law framework that promotes respect for human rights.

Further, the ATA program is increasingly integrating into whole-of-government approaches to transborder terrorist threats. For example, ATA training is now a key component of the Department of Defense-led annual Flintlock exercise – the largest multinational civilian-military exercise on the African continent.

Finally, in 2017, the Department of State continued the expansion of its Special Program for Embassy Augmentation and Response (SPEAR). Created in the aftermath of the 2012 Benghazi terrorist attack, SPEAR trains and equips host nation units designated as the first tactical responders to U.S. diplomatic facilities in crisis. A SPEAR-trained unit serves as an immediate response force until additional Department of State or Department of Defense assets can arrive – often from locations hours away.

In sum, ATA's return on investment is high. In 2017, numerous partner nations demonstrated how ATA training and equipment enhanced their capacity to counter real world threats. This report demonstrates how the ATA program has saved lives, helped protect U.S. officials and interests abroad, and contributed to closer relationships with partner nations in the shared fight against global terrorism.

Countering terrorism will continue to be a priority for the United States for years to come. The ATA program has been advancing these efforts for 35 years, evolving as threats do so it can provide targeted and relevant training, equipment, and support to partner nations. Mitigating threats where they originate stifles the spread of extremism and violence – while increasing security for the Homeland – which is why the ATA program will remain a key tool in the U.S. counterterrorism strategy.



Michael Evanoff

Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Diplomatic Security



Nathan Sales

Ambassador-at-Large and Coordinator for Counterterrorism

ATA Cyber Programs Take the Fight Online

ATA-Trained Philippine National Police Disrupt Terrorist Bomb Plot on Eve of ASEAN Summit

ATA programs reached a new level of sophistication in 2017 with cyber-focused courses on the dark web and social media. Just 48 hours before U.S. President Donald Trump arrived in the Philippine capital to attend the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Summit, ATA alumni in the Philippine National Police (PNP) used their cyber investigative training to thwart a terrorist plot to disrupt the international gathering by detonating a bomb in metropolitan Manila.

Police arrested three suspected members of the Abu Sayyaf terrorist group as leaders from 20 nations, the European Union, and the United Nations were about to arrive in Manila for the November 10-14, 2017 summit.



U.S. President Donald Trump speaks to reporters at the ASEAN summit in Manila, November 14, 2017. At left is U.S. National Security Advisor H.R. McMaster and at right is U.S. State Secretary Rex Tillerson. (AP/Wide World Photos)

PNP Chief Ronald Dela Rosa made the announcement to news media on November 17, 2017, three days after the ASEAN summit concluded. Local news reports indicated that one of the suspects had posted to social media photos of himself and his alleged accomplices at various places in the Metro Manila region, including at the Cultural Center of the Philippines complex, the ASEAN summit's main venue.

The terrorist plot was discovered through the investigative work of officers assigned to the PNP's Anti-Cybercrime Group, alumni of an ATA training program. The PNP Anti-Cybercrime Group monitored the suspects' social media postings and provided intelligence to the PNP operating units who located the suspects and made the arrest.

This case demonstrates the growing sophistication of ATA's cyber-focused courses on the dark web and social media. In *Investigating the Dark Web*, ATA trainees learned how terrorists access the dark web and use encryption and other applications to conceal their online operations. Participants learned how to navigate the dark web and use it to uncover information on terrorists and their attack plans.

ATA's complementary *Social Media Investigations* course enhanced trainees' understanding of how terrorists utilize social media for operations, including recruitment, propaganda dissemination, and attack coordination. Participants learned techniques and tools on social media platforms to monitor targeted individuals or groups and collect information to thwart would-be attacks like the disrupted bomb plot against the 2017 ASEAN summit.

Since 2003, when ATA delivered its first cyber training to the Philippines, ATA support has helped the PNP to build a successful counter-terrorism cyber investigations program that is considered the best in the region. In 2018, the Philippines is projected to be among the top recipients of ATA cyber training and cyber-related equipment and technology grants.

ATA-Trained and -Mentored Malian Gendarmerie Neutralizes Hotel Terrorist Attack

On June 18, 2017, terrorists attacked the Hotel Kangaba, a popular tourist resort for Westerners and expatriates just outside of Bamako, Mali. The ATA-trained and -equipped Peleton d'Intervention de la Gendarmerie Nationale (PIGN) was the first security force to respond.

ATA mentors assigned to the PIGN provided mission planning and tactical guidance to the PIGN commander whose forces, along with Bamako's Force Speciale Antiterrorist (FORSAT) unit, conducted a successful counter-assault.



PIGN members showcase their ATA-training for the U.S. Ambassador and the President of Mali's Special Chief of Staff, August 26, 2017, Bamako, Mali. (U.S. Department of State photo)

Background Image:

With the Hotel Kangaba ablaze in the background, an ATA-trained PIGN officer provides overwatch from a sniper position and passes target information to the unit commander conducting the counterassault from the base of the hill beneath the hotel, June 18, 2017, Bamako, Mali. (U.S. Department of State photo)



An ATA instructor observes a PIGN crisis response team exercise reinforcing the unit's ATA training received a week prior at the ATA regional training center within the Jordan International Police Training Center in Amman, March 2017, Bamako, Mali. (U.S. Department of State photo)

The PIGN commander and ATA mentors created a plan of action using an armored vehicle along with a mix of PIGN and FORSAT members to advance up the hill towards the hotel. An exchange of gunfire on the hill's slopes stopped the attackers' momentum and ultimately eliminated two of the terrorists.

During the assault, one PIGN and one FORSAT member suffered life threatening gunshot wounds. PIGN personnel trained by ATA in tactical medicine quickly applied their training to save the lives of the injured. PIGN and FORSAT units continued on, using their ATA crisis response training to clear the hotel and surrounding area of the terrorist threat, rescuing several patrons hiding inside.

SPOTLIGHT: Afghanistan's Elite Anti-Terrorism Unit Crisis Response Unit 222

ATA-Trained Afghan Crisis Response Unit Neutralizes Terrorist Attacks on Afghan National Army Hospital, Hamid Karzai International Airport, and the U.S. Embassy Compound



U.S. Embassy Kabul's Diplomatic Security-led joint training exercise with Afghanistan's CRU-222, designed to enhance the responsiveness of the Government of Afghanistan in protecting the international diplomatic community. Here, CRU-222 clears a building next to U.S. Embassy Kabul during a simulated complex attack against the embassy from an adjacent property, February 18, 2017. (U.S. Department of State photo)

Since 2002, ATA has delivered training to multiple Afghan law enforcement agencies, including the elite Kabul-based anti-terrorism police unit known as Crisis Response Unit 222 (CRU-222), an ATA partner since 2015.

Under the ATA program, Afghan civilian security forces receive training and mentorship in specialized counterterrorism-related skillsets such as crisis response, room entry methods, and response to an active shooter. Following targeted ATA training and mentorship, including operational advice from NATO's Resolute Support forces, CRU-222 is now Afghanistan's premier counterterrorism response unit. CRU-222 has effectively mitigated multiple terrorist attacks, including the following in 2017:



CRU-222 deploys its ATA training and special equipment in a counterassault on ISIS terrorists attacking a U.S. Embassy Kabul facility and the Hamid Karzai International Airport, September 27, 2017. (Photo courtesy of the Afghan General Command Police Services Unit)

On March 8, ISIS-claimed militants dressed as doctors stormed the Afghan National Army Hospital near U.S. Embassy Kabul, attacking civilian patients and employees using knives, gunfire, and explosives. The attackers killed at least 30 people and wounded 50 others. ATA-trained CRU-222 responded and engaged the attackers during a four-hour counterassault. Some CRU-222 members were dropped by helicopter to the roof of the building where they entered the hospital while other members of the tactical unit simultaneously cleared the hospital from the ground floor up. The CRU-222 team contained the threat and secured the building, killing six of the attackers.

On September 27, ISIS militants launched more than 45 rockets at the Hamid Karzai International Airport in Kabul and targeted the area where the U.S. Secretary of Defense's aircraft had parked during a visit to Kabul earlier in the day. The aircraft had departed before the attack commenced. The militants also targeted a U.S. embassy facility with heavy weapons fire from an adjacent compound. CRU-222 responded to the compound at the request of U.S. Embassy Kabul's Diplomatic Security Regional Security Officer and methodically eliminated the threat from the terrorists. CRU-222 effectively applied its ATA training to safely detonate explosive devices positioned on the compound and counter suicide-borne improvised explosive devices worn by the attackers.



ATA-trained CRU-222, Kabul's elite anti-terrorism police unit, participates in an emergency drill with the U.S. embassy's Diplomatic Security-led Regional Security Office, February 2017. (U.S. Department of State photo)

ATA & FLINTLOCK 2017

Africa's Largest Multi-National Civilian-Military Exercise with U.S. Forces

Following the success of ATA involvement in Flintlock 2016, ATA developed an integrated law enforcement training component for the U.S. Department of Defense's Flintlock 2017 exercise in N'Djamena, Chad from February 20 to March 16, 2017. Flintlock 2017 represented the largest multi-national civilian-military exercise on the African continent conducted by U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM), Special Operations Command Africa, and the U.S. Department of State, and demonstrated the importance of military and law enforcement integration and interoperability.



Following a successful assault, an ATA-trained Chadian crisis response team detains a suspect during an exercise scenario at Flintlock 2017, N'Djamena, Chad. (U.S. Department of State photo)

For Flintlock 2017, ATA developed a multi-pronged initiative to integrate strategic, operational, and tactical law enforcement and civilian engagement components into the Flintlock training exercise. ATA deployed 23 instructors and mentors who assembled almost 130 African law enforcement officers from the four Lake Chad Basin countries of Chad, Cameroon, Niger, and Nigeria, as well as U.S. law enforcement



During Flintlock 2017, an ATA-trained Chadian crisis response team responds to a simulated suicide bombing attack at a local market in N'Djamena, Chad, to neutralize the terrorist threat and secure the perimeter. (U.S. Department of State photo)



An ATA-trained Chadian crisis response team practices extracting a hostage from a hotel and securely moving him to a safe location for de-briefing during Flintlock 2017, N'Djamena, Chad. (U.S. Department of State photo)

partners from the Department of Justice, for training and integration into the exercise operations controlled by the Joint Military Headquarters (JMHQ). The addition of the law enforcement element into the JMHQ demonstrated to all participants, especially African partners, the importance of military and law enforcement communities working together to conduct successful counterterrorism operations.

During the exercise's closing ceremony, AFRICOM Chief of Staff Maj Gen. Roger L. Cloutier specifically cited ATA's contribution to Flintlock and its role in helping to integrate law enforcement into counterterrorism operations on the African continent.

FEATURED NATION: The Philippines

ATA-Trained Philippine National Police Unit Disables Bomb Near U.S. Embassy

Early one morning in November 2016, a Manila street cleaner spotted what looked like a cellphone connected by red wires to a cylindrical device near the U.S. embassy. The street cleaner alerted authorities to the suspected bomb and the Philippine National Police responded and quickly closed the major road near the embassy.

An ATA-trained and -equipped explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) unit arrived and a technician in an ATA-provided bomb suit examined the suspect device. Using an ATA-granted disruptor, the EOD unit safely detonated the device. After rendering the bomb safe, the unit also used an ATA-trained explosives-detecting canine to sweep the area for a possible secondary device.



An ATA-trained Philippine National Police bomb disposal squad member, wearing a bomb-resistant suit, leans to check the scene shortly after detonating a suspicious package believed to be a bomb in a trash bin near U.S. Embassy Manila, November 28, 2016. (AP/Wide World Photos)



ATA-trained Philippine National Police bomb disposal squad members pause to retrieve a cellphone from the scene after detonating a package believed to be a bomb in a trash bin near U.S. Embassy Manila, November 28, 2016. (AP/Wide World Photos)

FEATURED NATION: The Philippines

ATA-Trained Philippine Police Respond to Twin Blasts in Manila, Disrupt Third Suspected Bomb with ATA Robot

At 5:55 p.m. on May 6, 2017, the first of two explosions rocked the neighborhood of Manila's Golden Mosque in an attack later claimed by ISIS. The ATA-trained and -equipped members of the Philippine National Police Manila District Explosive Ordnance Disposal and Canine Unit responded to the Quiapo Muslim Quarter.



Philippine National Police deploy an ATA-donated explosives robot to render safe a suspected bomb in downtown Manila, May 6, 2017. (Photo courtesy of Philippine National Police)

As the unit conducted its investigation of the first blast, a second bomb detonated at 8:30 p.m. only meters away, injuring two officers.

The police then deployed an ATA-provided explosives robot that they used to successfully render safe a suspected third explosive device.

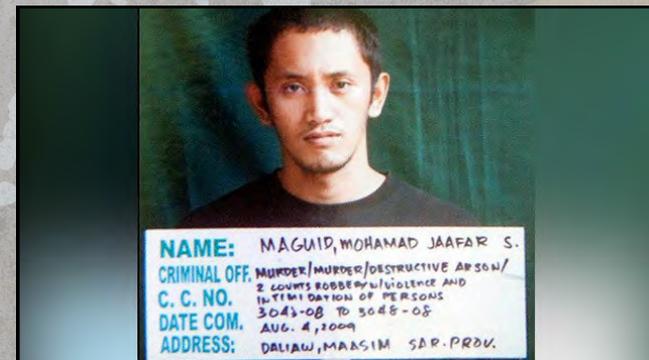
ATA-Trained Philippine Police Kill Terrorist Leader at Tourist Beach Resort

On January 5, 2017, Philippine National Police (PNP) located a militant leader and ISIS sympathizer at the Angel Beach Resort on the southern Philippine island of Mindanao.

ATA-trained leaders from the PNP along with counterparts from the Philippine National Intelligence Coordinating Agency (NICA) led the joint operation against Mohammad Jaafar Maguid, an ISIS supporter and founder of the terrorist group Ansarul Khilafa Philippines (AKP). In the ensuing gun battle, Maguid was killed.

In addition to leading the AKP organization, Maguid had participated with other local extremist leaders in a 2016 video pledging allegiance to ISIS. Known for flying ISIS flags in its camps, the AKP has been responsible for deadly bomb attacks at local festivals, including a grenade blast that murdered a police officer.

In the operation, ATA-alumni from the PNP successfully used skills acquired in their ATA training, including *Police Leader's Role in Combating Terrorism, Interdicting Terrorist Activities, Major Case Management, Vital Security Infrastructure, Protection of National Leadership, First Response to Terrorist Incidents, Interviewing Terrorist Suspects*, and the *ATA Tactical Commanders Course and Senior Leader Executive Seminar*.



Police mug shot of Ansarul Khilafa Philippines terrorist leader Mohammad Jaafar Maguid, August 4, 2009. (Photo courtesy of Philippine National Police)

ATA-Trainee Leads Successful Counterassault on Hostage-Takers at Burkina Faso Restaurant

On August 13, 2017, armed insurgents opened fire on Ouagadougou's popular Aziz Istanbul Restaurant, killing 19 people, wounding 21 civilians, and taking dozens hostage. U.S.-trained security forces responded quickly, without foreign assistance, and successfully launched a counterassault resulting in the two attackers' deaths. In complement to prior U.S. Department of Defense exercises and training engagements on crisis response, ATA's training directly contributed to key developments in the Burkinabe's capacity to withstand and respond to such terrorist attacks.

After a previous hotel and restaurant attack in 2016 that left 30 dead, ATA conducted a senior crisis management seminar for Burkina Faso's first responder agencies. One alumnus, the Commander of the Special Intervention Unit who used his ATA training to create the Burkinabe Unified Crisis Command Center, led the August 2017 counterassault against the terrorists barricaded inside the Ouagadougou restaurant.



Burkinabe officers respond to the Ouagadougou restaurant attack on August 13, 2017. (Photo courtesy of Burkina Faso Gendarmerie)

After the terrorists were neutralized, ATA-trained investigators responded with ATA-donated equipment. This equipment improved the investigators' ability to collect sensitive evidence to support their continued investigations to identify perpetrators of the attack.

Expansion of the ATA Mentor Program

New ATA Mentoring Program in Jordan Pays Immediate Dividends

In early 2017, ATA launched a long-conceptualized plan to embed mentors into several Jordanian police units, including the Jordanian Public Security Directorate's Criminal Investigation Department (CID), Forensics Lab (FSL), and K-9 Unit. ATA mentors served to reinforce ATA curriculum concepts, provide real-time knowledge, and share their professional expertise and experience with their mentees. The mentors further assessed and developed specialized training to enhance and reinforce unit strengths. The capture of multiple criminals demonstrated the professionalism of the Jordanian security services and the effectiveness of the ATA-Jordan mentor program:

In February 2017, an ATA mentor embedded in CID was asked to accompany an investigative team to a crime scene involving a double homicide and arson. The two victims were found in separate bedrooms and both suffered from blunt force trauma. Before leaving the scene, the perpetrators deliberately set fire to the master bedroom which resulted in heavy damage throughout the apartment.

Upon arriving at the scene, the first responders moved the bodies of the victims prior to the arrival of the investigative team. Through crime scene analysis advice, the ATA mentor assisted CID in locating the original spot where the victims had been slain based on blood splatter patterns. The ATA mentor worked alongside the team in their investigation, providing investigative guidance on how to determine behavior, movement, and brutality at the murder scene, which enabled CID to identify and arrest the two suspects. The following day, the two suspects confessed. Such investigative skills are easily transferable to terrorism-related incidents.

Background Image:

Fingerprints of a suspected criminal at Jordan's ATA-mentored Forensics Science Lab, Amman, January 2018. (U.S. Department of State photo)



A lab technician at Jordan's Forensics Science Lab conducts ballistic analysis in support of an investigation mentored by ATA, Amman, January 2018. (U.S. Department of State photo)

Expansion of the ATA Mentor Program (continued)



Jordan's ATA-mentored police K-9 Unit practices checking a vehicle for contraband and extracting a suspected trafficker, Amman, January 2018. (U.S. Department of State photo)

ATA's mentors within the K-9 Unit have seen similar operational successes by imparting their decades of explosives-detection canine handling experience to their Jordanian police colleagues. As a result, Jordanian police canine teams have located explosive compounds in vehicles attempting to cross from Syria into Jordan, including 300 grams of a key component of C4 hidden in a tractor trailer and 50 grams of TNT in a similar vehicle. The canine teams additionally uncovered multiple weapons hidden inside vehicles at a sensitive government location, including a handgun with a full magazine of bullets and a 12mm hunting rifle with accompanying rounds.

Across Amman, the K-9 Unit and its ATA mentors practiced improved and consistent veterinary care, nutrition, and kennel maintenance, making Jordan's police canines a sustainable tool against would-be terrorist for years to come.

Within CID, ATA mentors have also encouraged progressive practices as they assist Jordanian investigators in incorporating new electronic investigative equipment and other technological advances, new investigative methods, and enhanced trace evidence and explosive components in solving their cases.

Looking ahead, ATA's mentors will continue to build closer relationships between the United States and Jordan and contribute to lasting institutional progress for Jordan's police force as it deters and combats the threat of terrorism within Jordan's borders.



An ATA-mentored canine handler prepares to test his canine's ability to detect explosives, narcotics, and other contraband at the headquarters of Jordan's Public Security Directorate K-9 Unit in Amman, January 2018. (U.S. Department of State photo)

ATA-Trained Kenyan Rural Border Protection Unit Repels Al-Shabaab Attack

On November 12, 2017, extremists from the al-Shabaab terrorist organization attacked the Rural Border Patrol Unit (RBPU) Mararani Camp in Lamu County, Boni Forest, Kenya approximately 20 miles from the border with Somalia.

In a firefight that lasted 45 minutes, the ATA-trained RBPU officers engaged attackers hidden in the trees and brush surrounding the camp who fired on the RBPU with machine guns, rocket propelled grenades, and fragmentation grenades. Using their ATA training, the RBPU successfully thwarted the terrorists, who were unable to penetrate the camp.



The Rural Border Protection Unit employs its ATA-training during a high risk vehicle stop exercise, Kitui, Kenya. (U.S. Department of State photo)



Kenya's ATA-trained Rural Border Protection Unit (RBPU) approaches a suspected terrorist cell location during a high risk raid exercise at the RBPU Headquarters and Training Camp, Kitui, Kenya. (U.S. Department of State photo)

The Commandant of the RBPU reported that al-Shabaab used the attack to test the readiness and defenses of the camp and may have been motivated by a desire to capture RBPU vehicles and weapons for future terrorism operations. The Commandant explicitly credited ATA training and equipment for the RBPU's success in countering the attack.



SPOTLIGHT: ATA's Special Program for Embassy Augmentation and Response (SPEAR)

Immediate Response Forces to U.S. Diplomatic Facilities and Personnel in Crisis

In response to the 2012 attack on the U.S. diplomatic facility in Benghazi, Libya, and subsequent recommendations by the Secretary of State's Accountability Review Board, the Department of State bolstered security at a number of high and critical threat embassies and consulates. Central to the effort is the Special Program for Embassy Augmentation and Response (SPEAR).

The Bureau of Diplomatic Security created SPEAR to train and equip host-nation police units designated as the first tactical responders to U.S. diplomatic facilities in crisis.



The Diplomatic Security-trained SPEAR team in Mali conducts firearms training with the unit's dedicated SPEAR mentor in Bamako, January 2018. (U.S. Department of State photo)

An ATA-trained SPEAR unit serves as an immediate response force until additional Department of State or Department of Defense assets can arrive – often from locations hours away. Given this reality, SPEAR provides a U.S. embassy or consulate with a more capable, dedicated host-nation crisis response team that can provide immediate and direct emergency assistance to U.S. diplomatic personnel, facilities, and residences in peril.

A SPEAR-trained unit directly enhances U.S. embassy or consulate security as a critical security program force multiplier. SPEAR establishes a long-term engagement with host-nation security forces and supports the goal of building and ultimately sustaining the partner nation's capabilities to protect the diplomatic community.

A SPEAR unit's training package emphasizes operational tactical response and incident command and control, and includes basic techniques to mitigate fire being used as a weapon. Other courses that may be delivered during the first year of training include observation techniques for immediate response-dedicated defensive marksmen; field-based tactical medicine; response to active shooter incidents; and designing crisis management exercises that sustain and improve learned skills.

In 2017, U.S. embassies and consulates with SPEAR units included Chad, Iraq (Erbil), Kenya, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria (Abuja), South Sudan, and Tunisia.



SPOTLIGHT: SPEAR (continued)

The backbone of every SPEAR program is the embedded mentor. The embedded training mentor is a U.S. subject matter expert who deploys to the partner nation to work with the Diplomatic Security Regional Security Office (RSO) and designated SPEAR unit to reinforce the skills and knowledge gained in the formal training courses. The mentor assists the host government unit by supplementing the technical skills developed in training with the administrative, logistical, internal training, and management capabilities needed for successful unit operations. Additional areas of focus for the mentor include leadership development, standard operating procedures, emergency planning, and interoperability training with RSO security elements, such as the local guards and Marine Security Guards safeguarding the embassy or consulate.

SPEAR is a high value/high impact, cost effective, and replicable program that has already returned significant dividends on its investment.

Beyond keeping diplomatic facilities open during civil unrest, SPEAR teams routinely escort diplomatic convoys to unstable regions, provide security during election monitoring, and enhance security for major diplomatic events. For example, the Nairobi SPEAR team supported the U.S. embassy's election monitors for the Kenyan Presidential election in 2017. Kenyan elections are historically volatile. Accordingly, the RSO requested enhanced security for U.S. Embassy Nairobi. These U.S. security assets were immediately incorporated into embassy security planning and trained side-by-side with the SPEAR unit in contingency scenarios. The SPEAR unit and additional security teams conducted joint training and deployed to strategic locations in the city to support U.S. election monitors in case an emergency evacuation was required. Although the election monitoring successfully finished without incident, the SPEAR team was prepared if things went awry.



The Diplomatic Security-trained SPEAR team practices compound entry at the Mali National Police Training Center, Bamako, January 2018. (U.S. Department of State photo)



ATA ON THE MAP

ATA YEAR IN REVIEW



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