

## **Testimony for Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Near Eastern and South and Central Asian Affairs**

**Amanda Dory**  
**Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, African Affairs**

Chairman Kaine, Ranking Member Risch, and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee, I am pleased to appear before you to update you on the security situation in North Africa and the Department of Defense's engagement strategy in the region in coordination with other interagency partners.

### **Introduction**

The Department of Defense is committed to working closely with the Department of State to enhance U.S. Government security assistance to build the capacity of North African security forces. Our strategic approach recognizes that developing strong and responsive defense institutions can support regional stability, allowing partner militaries to operate under civilian authority while respecting the rule of law and international human rights.

The effects of the Arab Awakening in North Africa continue to reverberate within the region and beyond its borders into the Sahelian states of sub-Saharan Africa. Libya remains a key source of instability in North Africa and the Sahel. Thus, the Department of Defense is working closely with its interagency colleagues and partner nations to assist the Libyan government in training its security forces and strengthening Libyan government institutions.

In Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia, the Department of Defense maintains close military-to-military ties with respective senior military and civilian Ministry of Defense counterparts. All three countries are committed to a security dialogue and partnership with the United States, and they share our goals of countering terrorism and enhancing cross-border security. We engage with the three governments on a bilateral basis every 12-18 months to ensure our shared security goals are aligned and U.S. Government security assistance is prioritized accordingly.

The negative effects of terrorism and growing violent extremism have been experienced by all our partners in North Africa, and have underscored to them the

gravity of the threat and the value of partnering with the United States and the international community to address shared security challenges, which extend beyond the Maghreb. For example, each country is cognizant that its nationals are traveling to Syria to support violent extremists fighting against the Syrian government, and is aware of the danger to North African security if and when those fighters return.

To address regional instability in North Africa and the Sahel more broadly, the U. S. Government established in 2005 the Trans-Sahara Counter terrorism Partnership (TSCTP). The TSCTP is a multiyear, regional program to build the capacity and resilience of the governments and communities in the Sahel and Maghreb to address the threat of violent extremist organizations. The TSCTP also provides a means to improve regional and international cooperation and information-sharing.

## **Country-by-Country Security Environment/DoD Programs**

### **Libya:**

Libya remains a country in a difficult democratic transition, and the path to stability continues to be a challenging one for the weak government institutions in Tripoli. The recent kidnapping and release of Prime Minister Zeidan underscore the serious shortcomings in the Libyan security environment. Militia violence and consequent retributive attacks continue within the country. The Libyan government is unable to control its borders, and weaponry smuggled from Libya is fueling instability from Mali westwards within the Sahel. We and our Libyan partners are working on joint programs designed to address the needed skill sets of Libyan security forces to address these challenges adequately.

The Department of Defense is prioritizing its assistance to focus on building Libyan security institutional capacity and on improving the Libyan government's ability to counter terrorism, counter weapons proliferation, and secure and destroy its chemical weapons stockpiles. Thanks to Congressional support, the United States is working with Libya to develop their capacity to conduct counterterrorism operations via a \$8.42M Section 1206 Special Operations Support company and medical training program; and a \$7.75M Global Security Contingency Fund (GSCF) SOF company build program. DoD will also provide training for the

larger interagency GSCF Under the joint State-DoD GSCF authority, we are also pursuing a \$14.9M program to provide technical expertise, training, and limited equipment to build Libya's inter-ministerial (i.e., MOD, MOI, and Customs) border security program (\$14.9M).capacity to address security along its southern land border. This program includes training and equipping to build a border security company, and programming for Libya's neighbors -- Chad, Niger, and Algeria – to improve border security cooperation with Libya. We remain hopeful that these projects will positively impact Libya's security situation

An additional program that the United States is working with Libya is a \$45 million chemical weapons abatement program at Waddan, Libya where we have installed a static detonation chamber, and a U.S. contractor is ramping up operations and is on schedule to eliminate remaining Libyan chemical weapons by the end of 2013 in accordance with Libya's international commitments.

In response to a request from Libyan Prime Minister Zeidan, the United States has offered to provide General Purpose Force military training for 5,000-8,000 personnel. This training effort is intended to help the government build the military it requires to protect government institutions and maintain order. It is one element of the targeted security programs the United States has provided to Libya since 2011, building on the February 2013 Paris Ministerial-level meeting on supporting Libya's security and justice sector needs and British Prime Minister Cameron's announcement at the G-8 Summit in June about expanding international support for Libya's security sector. The United Kingdom and Italy have also committed to train 2,000 Libyan General Purpose Forces personnel, each.

We expect the U.S.-led training to begin via FMS in the spring of 2014 at a U.S.-leased/run training facility in Bulgaria and to continue over a number of years based on cohort size and the pace of training. The Government of Libya has committed to fund this training program and provided initial financial deposits. The United States will work closely with Libya to ensure all candidates for training are properly vetted to ensure that they meet human rights standards in accordance with U.S. law.

All U.S. assistance will continue to be coordinated with the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) and with European partners who have also offered substantial security sector assistance to the Government of Libya.

**Tunisia:**

Tunisia's military deserves tremendous credit for supporting and protecting the population during Tunisia's democratic transition. More recently, following a series of terrorist attacks on the Tunisian military in the Chaambi Forest beginning in April 2013, as well as the assassination of two opposition political figures, the Tunisian government continues to grapple with the threat of violent extremism. U.S. assistance to the security sector focuses on counterterrorism support, border security training, and a continuation of our long-standing Foreign Military Financing (FMF) and International Military Education and Training (IMET) programs.

The United States has provided technical assistance, equipment, and training to Tunisian Ministries and agencies to make them more effective in securing land border crossings, maritime borders, ports, and airport and seaport operations. U.S. assistance has also provided equipment and relevant training for inspection and/or detection equipment.

Maintenance and upgrade of existing equipment and the addition of critically needed procurements through FMF is a U.S. priority to help address the Ministry of Defense's (MOD's) broadened mission and to reinforce efforts to counter the growing threat of violent extremism. The United States is also assisting the Ministry with training through IMET funding, with an emphasis on enhancing strategic planning capabilities.

**Algeria:**

Algeria has been a critical security partner in countering regional violent extremist organizations. Its strategic location in the Maghreb, and its long history combating domestic terrorism and violent extremism, make Algeria a linchpin in

the struggle against al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and its affiliates and bringing stability to the region. The January 2013 terrorist attack against the In-Amenas oil facility highlighted the growing transnational threats in the region. The Algerian military continues to conduct successful interdiction operations on its southern border against AQIM affiliates. Additionally, Algeria provides training and equipment assistance to its Sahel neighbors, contributing to broader regional efforts to curb violent extremist groups' trans-border movement and activities.

As a result, the Department of Defense continues to expand engagement with Algeria in cooperation with other U.S. Government departments and agencies across a range of activities, to include information sharing and exercises. The Algerian government is also interested in acquiring U.S. equipment for counterterrorism purposes. To address this interest, the Department of Defense is working to provide Algeria with equipment and training to enhance Government of Algeria defense capabilities. Algeria has acquired U.S. goods and services, equipment, and training via direct commercial sales since the 1980s, including a border security system from Northrup Grumman and eight Lockheed C-130 transport aircraft. U.S. bilateral military engagement and sustained dialogue is also expanded through the IMET program , which is enhancing professionalization and modernization of Algeria's armed forces.

### **Morocco:**

From the beginning of his reign, King Mohammed VI has recognized that democratic political and economic reforms are needed. During the Arab Awakening, he continued to respond to popular demands for change from within Moroccan society. Nevertheless, the earlier terrorist bombing in Casablanca in 2003 was a strong signal that Morocco was not immune from violent extremism and the regional threats to stability in the Maghreb and Sahel. We anticipate that security cooperation will be one of many themes during the King's meeting at the White House tomorrow.

The United States and the Kingdom of Morocco share a long history of bilateral relations that is enduring and expansive. A major non-NATO ally, Morocco has been a strong partner in the struggle against terrorism, and our

bilateral military and political cooperation is growing. Among the first Islamic countries to condemn publicly the attacks of September 11, 2001, Morocco provided forces in Desert Storm, Bosnia, and Kosovo. Additionally, Morocco is a strong contributor to global UN peacekeeping operations.

Our security cooperation programs with Morocco enhance Morocco's military professionalism through the International Military Education and Training program and help to increase Morocco's effectiveness and capabilities in the context of multilateral operations through provision of Foreign Military Financing and Excess Defense Articles. Additionally, U.S. Africa Command partners with Morocco to execute a robust program of Military-to-Military activities and joint military exercises, including AFRICAN LION – a significant joint and combined exercise on the continent. U.S. security support to Morocco has a cascade-like effect on the region as Morocco in turn provides assistance to more than 20 African countries through training and humanitarian assistance.

### **Conclusion:**

Each of the four countries under discussion today faces a differing array of political, economic, and governance challenges as a result of the political upheavals of the last several years in the region. North African countries will continue to face security challenges as a result, and addressing those challenges will take time, particularly in the case of Libya. Our goals are to focus on long-term institution building and regional cooperation in coordination with other countries, to be supportive of host government requests, and to maintain a small and effective U.S. military footprint in the region.

Thank you for your time and attention today. We appreciate your interest in and support of U.S. military cooperation in the Maghreb as it supports broader U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives in the region, and I will be pleased to answer any questions.