

BUREAU OF COUNTERTERRORISM
Country Reports on Terrorism 2014

SENEGAL

Overview: The Government of Senegal continued to take a firm stance against terrorism by strengthening its internal policies and continuing its support to multilateral peacekeeping missions such as the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). Although Senegal did not have any terrorist incidents in 2014, regional trends – such as the rise of Boko Haram in Nigeria and instability in Mali – caused President Macky Sall to label terrorism as the biggest challenge to development in Africa.

The government worked closely with U.S. military and law enforcement officials to strengthen its counterterrorism capabilities. The risk of violent extremism and terrorist activity in Senegal remained elevated from transnational threats due to Senegal's support of MINUSMA. While there was less terrorist activity within Senegal than in some other parts of the Sahel, the Senegalese government remained concerned that terrorists were crossing its porous borders to escape fighting in neighboring countries.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Since 2007, the criminal code has included criminal offenses for terrorist acts as defined in the Organization of African Unity Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism. Article 279 of the criminal code, allows the state to prosecute an individual or group that “intentionally undertakes an act to disturb public order, or the normal functioning of national and international institutions, through intimidation or terror.” The maximum penalty is life in prison.

In October, the chief of the Directorate of Territorial Surveillance, Senegal's domestic intelligence agency, announced that Senegal will develop a department dedicated to fighting terrorism and will create new counterterrorism laws in the criminal code.

Senegal's gendarmerie, national police, and judicial police have insufficient capacity and resources to detect, deter, and prevent acts of terrorism. Senegal worked to improve its law enforcement capacity by participating in multilateral efforts, such as the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), and AU and Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS) programs. Senegal also continued participating in U.S. government counterterrorism capacity building programs, such as the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance program, which focused on strengthening regional border security and enhancing counterterrorism investigative capacity. Senegal also received significant funding and training from the French government.

Senegalese officials identified a lack of border resources and regional cooperation as major security vulnerabilities. On October 21, the United States notified the Senegalese government that the port of Dakar no longer met U.S. Coast Guard security standards.

The United States continued to provide border security training to Senegalese personnel, including an official visit in July by a Senegalese delegation to the United States to learn about best practices recommended by the U.S. Coast

Guard. DHS hosted international interdiction training in McAllen, Texas, in addition to providing tours of land, sea, and air borders for the Senegalese Director General of Customs and Deputy Commander of Gendarmes.

Senegal participated in France's Action Plan Against Terrorism (PACT), a US \$900,000 French capacity building project for local police and gendarmes involved in countering terrorist threats and for magistrates who hear terrorism-related cases.

Significant law enforcement actions against terrorists or terrorist groups in 2014 included the arrest of El Hadji Malick Mbengue in Dakar by security forces. Mbengue was arrested for his alleged links to terrorists in Algeria planning to carry out attacks on American and French interests in Senegal.

Corruption and lack of infrastructure remained obstacles to more effective Senegalese law enforcement and border security, as well as a chronic lack of equipment, insufficient training, and the inability of authorities to maintain their current stock. Additionally, there was a lack of interagency cooperation and coordination across several of the government entities that deal with terrorism.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Senegal is a member of the Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA), a Financial Action Task Force-style (FATF) regional body. At the regional level, Senegal implements the anti-money laundering/counterterrorist financing framework used by member states of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU). Among WAEMU countries, Senegal was the first to have the new framework in place. The Regional Council for Public Savings and Financial Markets is the body responsible for the control of WAEMU financial markets. Article 279-3 of the Senegalese criminal code also allows for the prosecution of sponsors of terrorism. The text stipulates that individuals who "directly or indirectly finance a terrorist enterprise by giving, gathering or managing funds, valuables or goods or by providing advice" are subject to prosecution. The maximum penalty is life in prison. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2014 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume 2, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*: <http://www.state.gov/j/inl/rls/nrcrpt/index.htm>.

Regional and International Cooperation: Senegal is a member of the UN, AU, ECOWAS, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership. The government also participated in the Global Counterterrorism Forum's Sahel Regional Capacity Building Working Group, and hosted the Second Cross-Border Workshop in Dakar from March 26-27. Additionally, Senegal's military remained committed to MINUSMA and increased its troop contribution from 200 to 800 during 2014.

Countering Radicalization to Violence and Violent Extremism: Strong cultural and religious traditions make Senegalese society resistant to extremist ideologies. Islam in Senegal is organized around several influential brotherhoods, which are generally tolerant and do not preach violent extremist ideology. These brotherhoods are also fairly resistant to external influences. In addition, the government continued its outreach to the brotherhoods to build partnerships and offer support in resisting violent extremist messaging and recruitment.
