Testimony of
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Addressing Instability in Sub-Saharan Africa
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Thank you, Chairman Corker, Ranking Member Cardin, and Members of the Committee, for the opportunity to testify on sources of instability in Africa and our ongoing work with our African partners to address these challenges.

The United States is committed to partnering with the people and governments of Africa to promote democracy, peace and prosperity. Africa is home to the world's youngest and fastest growing population. It presents significant opportunities for transformation and growth as well as significant challenges. The overall trends in sub-Saharan Africa point to accelerated democratization, development, and economic opportunity. Serious and seemingly intractable conflicts in Angola, Liberia, Cote d'Ivoire, and Sierra Leone have ended and those countries are in the process of rebuilding. We have seen several significant electoral successes during the past year. Although Africa remains the world's least developed continent, average real per capita income has been increasing steadily over the last decade and a half and the middle class is slowly growing.

However, in spite of these positive trends, instability and conflict persist in parts of the continent. This instability has a direct bearing on U.S. national interests and those of our closest allies. Poorly governed localities have been and remain a breeding ground for extremists that seek to do us harm. Underlining the scale of the stability challenges facing Africa, eight of the ten largest United Nations (UN) peacekeeping missions in the world are currently deployed in Sub-Saharan Africa. Added to these, the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) is the largest peace support mission in the world.

In response, Africa's leaders have intensified individual and collective efforts to address these challenges and take greater ownership of their own security. The African Union (AU), sub-regional organizations and individual

1

African governments are taking important roles in addressing security and political challenges in Africa. African governments are deploying forces for regional missions to counter terrorism, promote stability, and support post-conflict peacebuilding. They are also working to better organize themselves to confront persistent challenges that require multi-faceted solutions. A recent manifestation of this drive for stronger regional coordination and integration is the formation of the *G-5 Sahel* in 2014 by Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger.

The United States is pursuing comprehensive and coordinated whole-of-government approaches to help our African partners build and sustain their security capacity and cooperation. The drivers of conflict and instability in Africa are diverse, and our approach to these threats reflects a range of perspectives, priorities and capabilities. Military, intelligence and law enforcement tools are vital to defend against a range of threats, but cannot replace robust diplomacy and engagements promoting broad-based economic and political opportunity. We must work with our partners, including civil society, to address the root causes of conflict, strengthen accountability, and promote good governance. Stability in Africa ultimately requires leaders with the will and the capacity to respond to the needs and aspirations of their people.

Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism

Terrorism and violent extremism are major sources of instability in Africa. Terrorist organizations such as al-Shabaab, Boko Haram (which now calls itself the Islamic State in West Africa), al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), and al-Murabitoun are conducting asymmetric campaigns that cause significant loss of innocent life and create potentially long-term humanitarian crises. They are adept at exploiting state fragility and political and economic vulnerabilities. Terrorists gain an advantage when security forces and border guards lack the necessary leadership, training, equipment, intelligence, and mobility to disrupt their activities. They also gain an advantage when security forces fail to carry out operations in accordance with international human rights standards. When governments break the bond of trust and fail to protect civilians, terrorists can and do exploit these actions and feed their narrative.

Terrorists and criminal organizations also take advantage of weak and corrupt criminal justice systems unable to effectively investigate, prosecute, and incarcerate criminals. Violent extremist ideology and tactics may be alien and illegitimate to the vast majority of Africans, but individuals and communities are increasingly vulnerable to recruitment by violent extremists in a growing number

2

of locales over the last decade. While the motives for tolerating, or for joining, violent extremist activities are complex, overlapping, and context-specific, we see violent extremists focusing their recruitment efforts where there is a lack of education and economic opportunity, political and social alienation, poor governance, corruption of elites, and lack of accountability for abuses by security forces. These terrorist groups use increasingly sophisticated means to exploit these weaknesses on social media developing and propagating violent extremist messaging and narratives.

In the Lake Chad Basin region, despite significant progress over the past year -- due in large part to bolstered Nigerian and regional efforts -- more work remains to end the savage atrocities and ongoing violence perpetrated by Boko Haram. Boko Haram, which declared its affiliation with ISIL in 2015, conducts recurring attacks in northeastern Nigeria and the neighboring countries of Cameroon, Chad, and Niger, and they have increased the ghastly practice of forcing women and children to act as human bombs. The conflict has affected the lives of communities across the Lake Chad Basin region, with some 2.6 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) and nearly 170,000 Nigerian refugees forced to flee their country. Since 2009, the conflict has caused approximately 18,000 deaths.

In the Sahel, AQIM and al-Murabitoun continue to operate in parts of northern Mali and along the border corridor between Mali, Niger, and Libya. In recent months, they have responded to military pressure by turning to more asymmetric tactics. They have increased high-profile attacks against so-called "soft targets," including a series of attacks against international hotels, cafes, and resorts in Burkina Faso, Mali and Cote d'Ivoire.

In East Africa, al-Shabaab last year became increasingly aggressive in conducting large-scale attacks against African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM) forward operating bases and a range of targets throughout Somalia. In 2015, al-Shabaab also launched a series of attacks across the border in northern Kenya, including one against a university in Garissa that left nearly 150 people dead. Al-Shabaab reportedly maintains a network of operatives and recruiters across the wider region who seek to exploit long-standing divisions between communities and security forces along the Swahili Coast.

We are concerned about the risk that the presence and potential expansion of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) on the continent will grow. As we have seen elsewhere in the world, ISIL seeks to co-opt existing terrorist groups, as

well as local insurgencies and conflicts to expand its network and advance its agenda.

As President Obama has said, effectively addressing evolving terrorism challenges requires strong, capable, and diverse partners who have both the political will and the ability to disrupt and degrade terrorist networks. Over the past several years, we have seen African governments and African communities come together and show leadership in fighting terrorist groups. In Somalia, AMISOM and the Somali National Army have pushed al-Shabaab from some of its major strongholds and supported efforts by the Federal Government of Somalia to promote stability, but significant shortfalls to stability remain in Somalia. In the Lake Chad Basin region, military forces have undertaken to work together through the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) to counter Boko Haram. Similarly, forces from eleven Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) states initially responded to the security crisis in Mali and worked alongside the French military to destroy terrorist safe havens in northern Mali and provide the stability required for the peace process to advance. We recognize that progress has been made, but more needs to be done to maintain momentum against evolving and adaptive terrorist threats that exist across the continent.

The United States seeks to promote comprehensive, whole-of-government capabilities to respond to terrorism. Our primary multi-year mechanisms for promoting coordinated multi-year interagency approaches are the Partnership for Regional East Africa Counterterrorism (PREACT) and, in West Africa, the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP). Led by the State Department, USAID, and the Department of Defense, PREACT and TSCTP advance U.S. law enforcement, military, development, and public diplomacy expertise and resources to support the efforts of willing regional partners to build and sustain their own CT capability. Through PREACT, TSCTP, and related initiatives, the United States uses a wide range of tools and programs to build capacity and assist regional CT efforts. Areas of support include: (1) enabling and enhancing the capacity of African militaries to conduct CT operations; (2) improving the ability of military and civilian security services to operate regionally and collaboratively on CT efforts; (3) enhancing individual nations' border security capacity to monitor, restrain, and interdict terrorist movements; (4) strengthening the rule of law, including access to justice, and law enforcement's ability to detect, disrupt, investigate, and prosecute terrorist activity; and (5) reducing the limited sympathy and support among communities for violent extremism.

While military efforts remain critical, the success of counterterrorism efforts in Africa depends fundamentally upon capable and responsible civilian partners -- police, prosecutors, judges, prison officials, religious and community leaders -- who can help address terrorism through a sustainable framework that advances rule of law and respect for human rights. In that regard, we seek to increase our capacity-building support for law enforcement, judicial, and other criminal justice sector institutions. We greatly appreciate the funding provided by Congress in Fiscal Year 2016 for the Counterterrorism Partnerships Fund (CTPF). We expect to use this funding to significantly expand our civilian counterterrorism assistance for law enforcement and justice sector efforts in several key African countries.

At the same time, the State Department and USAID are increasing our focus on preventing the spread of violent extremism in the first place – to stop the recruitment, radicalization and mobilization of people, especially young people, to engage in terrorist activities.

In February 2015, President Obama convened the White House Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) Summit, which brought together over 60 countries, 12 multilateral bodies, and representatives from civil society, business, and the religious community. This was followed by locally-hosted regional summits that advanced the conversation with more African stakeholders, including in Kenya and Mauritania. The CVE summit process sparked a broad-based effort to better understand and address the factors that drive radicalization and recruitment to violence within specific communities and called for a more integrated and holistic approach with a broader array of actors – government and non-government.

As such, we are expanding engagement with African governmental and non-governmental partners to better understand the drivers of violent extremism and design effective responses. We are working closely with government partners – at both the national and sub-national level – to adopt more effective policies to prevent the spread of violent extremism. This includes promoting greater trust and partnership between communities and law enforcement – a key area that contributes to resilience against violent extremism.

As we announced during President Obama's visit to East Africa last year, the United States is providing over $40 million in FY 2015 assistance for expanded programs to help counter and prevent the spread of violent extremism in East Africa. Since then, State and USAID have analyzed the underlying drivers of violent extremism and are employing a new approach to programming pooled funds to incentivize collaborative problem diagnosis and integrated program

design. To better understand al-Shabaab's efforts to recruit and expand in areas beyond its control, we studied communities at greatest risk to identify key factors that contribute to both their vulnerability and resilience to violent extremism. We are expanding ongoing USAID programs and designing new programs tailored to address those factors and provide funding to actors in government best suited to do the job. Further to this, the President's FY 2017 budget request includes increased resources for CVE, including an additional $59 million as part of the overall request for the CTPF. These resources would enable us to expand programs in Africa to engage high-risk communities and youth susceptible to violent extremist recruitment.

Our approach to supporting regional efforts to counter-Boko Haram provides an excellent example of how we pursue a comprehensive, multi-sector approach to help address terrorism on the continent. Our ongoing programs for victim support, CVE, and humanitarian assistance provide advisors, intelligence, training, logistical support, and equipment. Specifically, the Department of State is providing $71 million worth of equipment, logistics support, and training, including human rights training, to the countries participating in the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) – Benin, Cameroon, Chad, Niger, and Nigeria. In addition, in September 2015, the Administration directed the use of up to $45 million in support under the Presidential Drawdown authority to provide airlift, training, and equipment. We are also providing training and equipment–through a $40 million Global Security Contingency Fund program – to build cooperation and capacity across regional military and law enforcement forces to enhance border security and disrupt terrorist transit.

These counter-Boko Haram efforts reflect our understanding that security measures alone will never be sufficient. The Department of State is also expanding support for law enforcement forces to conduct investigations and respond to attacks, especially attacks that involve suicide bombings and improvised explosive devices. We must help our partners to establish effective criminal justice institutions to handle terrorism cases in a rule of law framework. That is why we have deployed Department of Justice legal advisors to assist legislators, prosecutors, judges, and corrections officials. Furthermore, we must help countries to make progress in stabilizing liberated areas, improve delivery of government services, and reducing support for violent extremism. With USAID's leadership, we are expanding support for programs to strengthen governance and mitigate conflict in areas threatened by Boko Haram. In Nigeria and Niger specifically the Office of Transition Initiatives is working to improve governments' responsiveness to citizens' expectations and increasing civic

engagement with governing authorities. In Nigeria, we are also advising the government on developing a reconstruction and long-term development plan for the northeast, and USAID is delivering urgent education services to IDPs and conflict-affected communities in the northeast.

We are also responding to the humanitarian crisis caused by Boko Haram's assault on the people of the Lake Chad Basin. In Nigeria alone, approximately seven million people are suffering displacement, deprivation, and/or disease from the consequences of armed conflict and the UN estimates that 9.2 million are in need of immediate assistance across the region. In 2015, and thus far in 2016, we have provided a total of nearly $244 million in humanitarian assistance for Boko Haram-affected populations throughout the Lake Chad Basin, including for IDPs and refugees. USAID and the State Department are supporting projects to increase civilian protection, enhance early warning capabilities, deliver humanitarian relief, and strengthen the overall resiliency of communities.

Addressing Other Sources of Instability

We are also focused on addressing other sources of instability in Africa. Several parts of Africa remain plagued by instability, internal conflict and violence, including Mali, South Sudan, Burundi, the Central African Republic (CAR) and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). We are engaged in aggressive diplomatic efforts to help resolve these conflicts and support the implementation of peace agreements. We are actively supporting ongoing peacekeeping missions. We are also providing significant assistance to address humanitarian needs, prevent mass atrocities, and address underlying causes of instability. Finally, we assist African efforts to get ahead of crises through support of conflict early warning systems and diplomatic responses.

In Mali, we are urging all sides to accelerate their efforts to implement the peace accord signed in June 2015. Significant delays in the accord's implementation have prolonged the security vacuum in northern Mali, undercut our long-term counterterrorism objectives, and made it difficult to advance reconciliation, reintegration, and development. Despite these obstacles, we remain committed to advancing an inclusive peace in Mali through dialogue with all actors and our support to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA).

In South Sudan, the U.S. government's overriding focus
is supporting implementation of the August 2015 Agreement on the Resolution of

Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (ARCISS) so that the civil war may end and peace, stability, and prosperity take root. We are currently supporting the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangement Monitoring Mechanism (CTSAMM) to ensure that the parties are adhering to the ceasefire and security arrangements for Juba and other cities, in accordance with the agreement.

In the CAR, the recent peaceful election and democratic transition were positive steps, but sustained engagement is essential to end the cycle of violence there. We are working both bilaterally, and with the UN, AU, and European Union to support inclusive, representative, human-rights based approaches to security sector reform and governance that facilitate post-conflict stabilization and recovery. Since the crisis in CAR began in late 2013, the U.S. provided over $79 million to train and equip troops deploying into CAR to provide peace and stability, as part of the original AU mission and the subsequent UN mission. We are working to develop activities and programs to prepare the security forces of CAR to provide citizen security in their country, with full respect for the law. Ensuring rule of law and accountability are essential pillars for CAR's future, we are helping to build CAR's judicial structure, including the development of their Special Criminal Court. We are also working to help communities throughout CAR by focusing our long-term development programming on grassroots peace and reconciliation and expanding access to justice through sexual and gender-based violence legal training and mobile courts. The United States is committed to assisting the people and the government of the CAR with its transition from recent violence to a democratically elected government that serves CAR's people.

In the DRC, we seek to preserve security gains made over the last 10 years and to continue countering armed groups in the eastern DRC, while preserving civil society space to foster free and fair elections and a peaceful transition of power. We have supported defense sector and law enforcement reform programs for the last decade. Our efforts include increasing military justice capabilities to hold accountable human rights violators and criminals in the military. We are very concerned, however, that a delay in the November elections this year, and an effort by President Kabila to remain in office after December 20 when he is required by the DRC Constitution to step down, will lead to widespread violence and instability; such instability could have an impact on the entire region.

In Burundi, we are using diplomatic engagement at all levels to urge support for a regionally-mediated dialogue that brings all parties to the table to peacefully resolve the current conflict. We have also encouraged accountability for abuses and violations of human rights and attempts to undermine democracy in Burundi

by sanctioning eight individuals responsible for such activities from both sides of the conflict. In March, we announced $31 million in humanitarian assistance to support more than 260,000 refugees who have fled Burundi over the last year and Congolese refugees and others food-insecure individuals still in Burundi. This brings the total U.S. humanitarian assistance for the regional response to the Burundi crisis to more than $86 million. Thomas Perriello, the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region, has made frequent visits to Burundi, DRC, and to other countries in the region, seeking a diplomatic solution to the current crisis in Burundi and to the impending crisis in the DRC.

In collaboration with the AU and the UN, we continue to support regional efforts to end the threat posed by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and bring the remaining LRA leaders to justice. We are pursuing a comprehensive strategy to build partner capacity, empower local communities, promote defections from the LRA's ranks, and mitigate the consequences of the LRA's atrocities. With U.S. support, the regional forces from Uganda, the DRC, CAR, and South Sudan who comprise the African Union Regional Task Force have significantly degraded the LRA's capacity to attack communities and wreak havoc, but the job is not done.

Increasingly, our African partners recognize the importance of maritime security. They have begun to lead initiatives to protect maritime traffic, reduce the loss of national revenue, and increase economic opportunities. These increased benefits can positively contribute to environmental and socio-economic development, as well as increased national, regional and continental stability. By the same token, they make a substantive contribution to global security. A comprehensive U.S. policy on maritime security in sub-Saharan Africa supports not only U.S. security interests but the Administration's broader sub-Saharan Africa policy objectives. The U.S. Government will encourage and support greater African stewardship of maritime safety and security at the continental, regional, and national levels.

The Department of State, our interagency colleagues and our international partners also recognize the serious threats posed by drug-trafficking. Foreign drug traffickers usually prefer fragile countries with weak law enforcement and judicial systems. They thrive in areas where they can operate with impunity – either because legal systems do not work, or because they can be easily corrupted. The creation of resilient institutions takes time and the lack of governance attracts transnational criminal networks. The flow of drugs through a region risks undermining the States by weakening their institutions, their local communities,

and their social fabric. With our interagency colleagues, we have collaborated to develop the West Africa Cooperative Security Initiative.

Through the Early Warning and Response Partnership (EWARP) and other programs, the U.S. is assisting the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and soon individual member states with programs to improve networks for early warning of conflict or other stability challenges. This will allow our African partners to better prevent instability so they do not require costly and long term security and humanitarian responses.

Building Strong and Accountable Security Sector Institutions

We recognize that strengthening the security and justice institutions of our African partners is vital for long-term stability on the continent. This includes both military and civilian security services, and the entities that oversee them. We are partnering with African countries and organizations to develop capable and professional security services, improve security sector governance, and enhance regional coordination and interoperability. In August 2014, President Obama announced the Security Governance Initiative (SGI), an innovative, multi-year effort between the United States and African partners to improve security sector governance and capacity by collaborating with partner governments to develop sound policies, institutional structures, systems, and processes to more efficiently and effectively deliver security and justice to citizens. SGI complements our other security sector assistance programs by building underlying institutional capacity, and furthers our efforts to combat terrorism and instability in sub-Saharan Africa by focusing on opportunities to address institutional gaps. In SGI's six initial partners are Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, and Tunisia.

The State Department's International Military Education and Training (IMET) program supports the professionalization of African militaries through training in the United States with a heavy focus on human rights, military justice and civilian control of the military. As a complement to IMET, the Department also funds the Africa Military Education Program (AMEP), which supports instructor and/or curriculum development of select African military education institutions to help further professionalize African militaries.

The U.S. Government is also helping to resolve conflicts on the continent by building the institutional capacity of Africans to train and equip peacekeepers and respond rapidly to conflict. We are training and equipping African peacekeepers through programs such as the Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI) and, the

Africa Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) program. We are also building rapid response capabilities through the Africa Peacekeeping and Rapid Response Partnership (APRRP). ACOTA has trained 297,071 peacekeepers since 2004. We are working to develop professional security forces that respect human rights, recruit and retain a representative corps of professionals, and safeguard democratic institutions in countries emerging from or affected by conflict. Through APRRP, the United States is strengthening the capacity of security forces in six partner countries to deploy rapidly to emerging African crises. The inaugural APRRP partners are Ethiopia, Ghana, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania and Uganda.

Promoting Good Governance, Economic Growth, Opportunity and Development

Countering instability requires a broad and multi-faceted strategy. Given the multiple drivers of instability and conflict in Africa, our responses must be innovative and dynamic. We cannot focus solely on the security aspect of the solution. As outlined in President Obama's 2012 Policy Directive for Africa, the United States has four overall strategic objectives in Africa: (1) strengthen democratic institutions; (2) spur economic growth, trade and investment; (3) advance peace and security; and (4) promote opportunity and development. Progress on all of these objectives is required to improve stability throughout the continent.

We continue to stay focused on supporting free, fair, and transparent electoral processes that are inclusive and representative. We have seen some major electoral successes, for example in Nigeria, Burkina Faso, and CAR, but there have been setbacks as well. We will continue to support regular democratic transitions, because they can help vaccinate a country against feelings of injustice and alienation that can lead some to heed the siren call of extremism and violence. We will continue to support democratization efforts through electoral assistance programs, diplomatic engagement, public outreach, and election monitoring. We will continue to promote respect for universal human rights, promote space for civil society to operate freely, and fight corruption. And we are working with our African partners to ensure that governments deliver essential services, independent judiciaries enforce the rule of law, and that professional security forces respect human rights.

President Obama has highlighted that the most urgent task facing Africa today and for the decades ahead is to create opportunity for Africa's next generation. Young people constitute a majority of Africa's population and stand to

gain, or lose, tremendously based on the continent's social, political, and economic trajectory. They also represent the next generation of African leaders. Through programs like the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI), we are investing in the future by building leadership skills, bolstering entrepreneurship, and connecting young African leaders with one another, the United States, and the American people. This program will have a long-lasting positive impact on the continent. Due to YALI's success, we are expanding the number of Mandela Washington Fellows from 500 to 1,000 this year.

To support economic opportunity and growth in Africa, in 2014, President Obama also tripled the goals of his Power Africa initiative, pledging to add 30,000 megawatts of new, cleaner energy generation capacity and to expand access to at least 60 million households and enterprises across Sub-Saharan Africa. We thank Congress for its leadership in passing the Electrify Africa Act of 2015 in February of this year, which codified the strong bipartisan support for the vision, goals and approach behind Power Africa, and sends a strong signal of the United States' long-term commitment to reducing energy poverty in sub-Saharan Africa.

In addition, we thank Congress for its leadership in reauthorizing the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) for an additional ten years. We are encouraging our African partners to make the most of this ten-year reauthorization by developing AGOA utilization strategies, while at the same time laying the ground work to move our trade and investment relationship forward, beyond AGOA.

YALI, Power Africa, AGOA, and other programs like these are crucial to creating opportunities for the youth of Africa and ensuring that they are less susceptible to recruitment by extremists, criminal enterprises, and human traffickers. Global Health is another top priority. Through our work under the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief and the President's Malaria Initiative, we are turning the tide against these insidious diseases and saving lives. Other presidential initiatives such as the, Feed the Future, and the Partnership for Growth are also focused on building the sustainable development needed to support a rapidly growing populations.

Conclusion

We appreciate the Committee's interest in addressing instability in Africa and again ask for your help in supporting our relevant funding requests. We know that the challenges are great, but we believe that the comprehensive approach that

we are pursuing is making progress and promoting stability that will ultimately benefit the United States and all of Africa. This will be a long-term process that requires persistence and sustained partnerships. With your help we have made significant strides over the past few years, but more work remains to be done.

Thank you and we look forward to your questions.