



Highlights of a
FORUM

Convened by the
**Comptroller General of
the United States**

**ENHANCING U.S.
PARTNERSHIPS
IN COUNTERING
TRANSNATIONAL
TERRORISM**

July 2008

GAO-08-887SP



Highlights of [GAO-08-887SP](#), a GAO forum

Why GAO Convened This Forum

The United States and the international community have stressed that a coordinated response is required to address the global threat from transnational terrorism. Multilateral engagements provide opportunities to foster relationships with traditional and nontraditional partner countries. Partnerships also can raise common awareness of the threat and build the trust necessary to share information that could prevent and detect terrorist acts.

GAO convened a forum on April 22, 2008, to advance the dialogue on how partnerships can mitigate the conditions that foster transnational terrorism and to identify potential strategies for overcoming challenges faced in engaging in such partnerships. Participants included representatives from U.S. government agencies, foreign embassies, nongovernmental and multilateral organizations, policy institutes, the private sector, and academia.

The forum focused on (1) the partnership efforts and key practices of the U.S. government and its partners, (2) challenges to these efforts and practices, and (3) strategies to overcome the challenges. Comments expressed during the proceedings do not necessarily represent the views of all participants, the organizations they represent, or GAO. Participants reviewed a draft of this summary, and their comments were incorporated, as appropriate.

To view the full product, click on [GAO-08-887SP](#). For more information, contact Charles M. Johnson Jr. at (202) 512-7331 or johnsoncm@gao.gov.

HIGHLIGHTS OF A FORUM

Enhancing U.S. Partnerships in Countering Transnational Terrorism

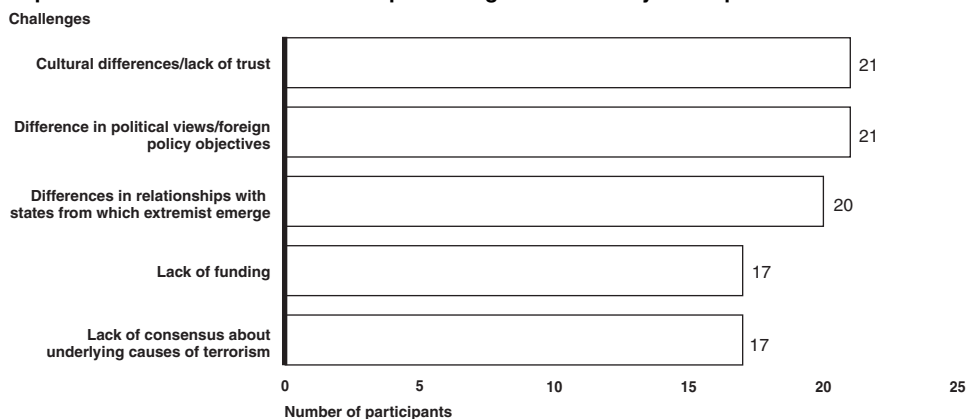
What Participants Said

Forum participants discussed the types of partnerships or initiatives they have engaged in to counter the enabling environment that fosters transnational terrorism. Some of the partnership activities that participants cited include information sharing, training and capacity building, dialogue and education on counterterrorism, and conducting on-the-ground assessments. A few participants voiced concerns that certain labels for partnership programs could limit program effectiveness. Some participants also described characteristics of effective partnerships, such as shared objectives and common understanding of terminology.

Participants identified and ranked the challenges they currently face or have perceived in their partnerships to combat transnational terrorism. The top five challenges were (1) cultural differences and lack of trust, (2) differences in political views/foreign policy objectives, (3) differences in relationships with states from which extremists emerge, (4) lack of funding, and (5) lack of consensus about the underlying causes of terrorism (see figure).

Participants discussed strategies for overcoming some of the challenges. A few participants suggested that funding for counterterrorism programs and activities be made more flexible, so that it could be allocated where needed and have the most impact. Some participants indicated it would be helpful to gain a better understanding of extremist ideologies and the underlying causes of terrorism before making decisions about funding. A few participants also mentioned that knowledge and “practical capacity” in countering terrorism need to be integrated, so that the United States and its partners can gain a better understanding of extremism and current adversaries.

Top Five Counterterrorism Partnership Challenges Identified by Participants



Source: GAO analysis of participants' forum responses.

Note: We asked 22 participants to identify the extent to which they faced or perceived each of the key challenges above. The figure indicates the number of participants who reported facing these challenges to a very great, great, or moderate extent. The number of responses to each challenge ranged from 20 to 22.

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United States Government Accountability Office
Washington, DC 20548

Introduction

The United States continues to face threats and challenges to its national and economic security, including those from international terrorist organizations. These threats have required the U.S. government to rethink its international activities, strengthen antiterrorism capacity-building programs overseas, and enhance interagency and international community coordination. Mitigating terrorist threats has become a central focus of U.S. national security policy. Specifically, a number of U.S. policy initiatives and U.S. government expert reports that focus on combating terrorism—such as the *Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004*, the *2006 National Strategy for Combating Terrorism*, and the *9/11 Commission Report*—point out that the United States needs to strengthen and work with its coalitions and partnerships to facilitate appropriate solutions to the challenges posed by transnational terrorism.¹

GAO convened this forum on April 22, 2008, to assist federal agencies in advancing the dialogue on how partnerships could mitigate the conditions that foster transnational terrorism and to identify potential strategies and solutions for the challenges faced in engaging in such partnerships. The forum focused on (1) U.S. and international partnership efforts and key practices to counter enabling environments that foster transnational terrorism, (2) challenges to these partnerships efforts and practices, and (3) short- and long-term strategies that the U.S. government and its partners can pursue to overcome the challenges. (See app. I for the forum agenda.) Prior to the forum, we solicited the views and experiences of participants on a number of issues pertaining to countering transnational terrorism. During the first session of the forum, we presented the information that participants provided.

The forum brought together a diverse group of experts, including participants from (1) the U.S. government; (2) foreign entities, including officials of foreign embassies, a foreign government official, and an official from a multilateral institution; and (3) nongovernment entities, including representatives from nongovernmental organizations, policy institutes, academia, and the private sector. (See app. II for a list of participants.) We also extended to members of the intelligence community an invitation to

¹*Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004*, P.L. 108-458 (December 17, 2004); the *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism* (September 2006); and *The 9/11 Commission Report* (July 22, 2004).

participate in the forum, but they chose not to attend. The forum was structured so that participants could comment on issues openly, without direct attribution, and to facilitate a frank and substantive discussion. Not all participants commented on all topics, and individual comments are not necessarily representative of the views of other participants.

This summary attempts to capture the ideas and themes that emerged at the forum, the collective discussion of participants at the sessions, and participants' comments of a draft of this summary. This summary does not necessarily represent the views of the organizations that participated in the forum, including GAO. Participants reviewed a draft of this summary, and their comments were incorporated, as appropriate.

I would like to thank the forum participants for taking time to share their knowledge, insights, and perspectives on this important topic. Others will benefit from these contributions. We look forward to working with the participants on these and other issues of mutual interest and concern in the future.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gene L. Dodaro". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "D" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Gene L. Dodaro
Acting Comptroller General of the United States
July 31, 2008

Background

The U.S. administration and the international community have stressed that a coordinated, comprehensive response is required to address the global threat from transnational terrorism. With its Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the United Nations has set up a framework that aims to enhance national, regional, and international efforts to counter terrorism.² The strategy, adopted in 2006, marks the first time that member states have agreed to a common strategic and operational approach to fighting terrorism; it also emphasizes the importance of cooperation and engaging in partnerships. Multilateral engagements provide opportunities to foster relationships with traditional and nontraditional partner countries to combat terrorism. Partnerships can also raise common awareness of the threat and build the trust necessary to share information that could prevent and detect terrorist acts. The international community, including multilateral organizations and partner nations, is collaborating in various ways to address and combat transnational terrorism.

GAO Has Emphasized Transnational Counterterrorism Strategies and Partnerships

In a 2005 report, GAO highlighted the need to identify international strategies to confront the terrorist threat as a 21st century challenge for the federal government.³ Specifically, GAO reported that understanding the underlying causes of terrorism and focusing on mitigating those causes may be one way to diminish levels of terrorism globally. GAO also noted that tactics to address and mitigate the root causes of terrorism may hinge on intelligence, diplomacy, and multinational partnerships and that advancing and protecting U.S. international interests requires the use of all available instruments of power. Several U.S. government entities are key stakeholders in the U.S. effort to combat and mitigate the underlying conditions of transnational terrorism. Their tools for combating terrorism abroad include diplomatic, military, intelligence, development assistance, economic, and law enforcement support.

A number of GAO reports have pointed out issues in coordination among U.S. government entities that engage in combating transnational terrorism. These reports have also highlighted challenges that the U.S. government faces in coordinating an international approach to combating terrorism. For example, in October 2005, GAO reported that the U.S. government lacks an integrated strategy to coordinate the delivery of counterterrorism

²See <http://www.un.org/terrorism/strategy-counter-terrorism.shtml>.

³GAO, *21st Century Challenges: Reexamining the Base of the Federal Government*, GAO-05-325SP (Washington, D.C.: February 2005).

financing training and technical assistance to countries vulnerable to terrorist financing.⁴ In addition, in May 2007, GAO reported that U.S. law enforcement agencies generally lacked not only guidance on using resources to assist foreign nations in addressing terrorist vulnerabilities but also performance monitoring systems and formal structures for information sharing and collaboration.⁵ A list of related GAO reports since 2005 can be found at the end of this report.

GAO Solicited Participants' Views on Counterterrorism Issues before the Forum

Prior to the forum, we solicited participants' views on a number of issues pertaining to countering transnational terrorism and used the participants' responses to help shape the forum's agenda and discussion sessions. Questions posed to the participants focused on the definition of terrorism, the key enabling factors that could foster transnational terrorism, key areas of partnership, and the challenges participants face or perceive in collaborating on counterterrorism.⁶ Nearly half of the participants who attended provided their views.⁷ Participants who responded included officials from U.S. government agencies, foreign partners, a multilateral institution, policy institutes, a nongovernmental organization, and the private and academic sectors.

Definition of Terrorism

The first question we posed to the participants prior to the forum focused on the definition of terrorism. As a baseline, in the absence of a global definition of terrorism, we provided participants with the UN's working definition of terrorism, which is itself based on an academic consensus definition:

Terrorism is an anxiety-inspiring method of repeated violent action, employed by (semi-) clandestine individual, group or state actors, for idiosyncratic, criminal or political reasons, whereby—in contrast to assassination—the direct targets of violence are not the main targets.

⁴GAO, *Terrorist Financing: Better Strategic Planning Needed to Coordinate U.S. Efforts to Deliver Counter-Terrorism Financing Training and Technical Assistance Abroad*, [GAO-06-19](#) (Washington, D.C.: Oct. 24, 2005).

⁵GAO, *Combating Terrorism: Law Enforcement Agencies Lack Directives to Assist Foreign Nations to Identify, Disrupt, and Prosecute Terrorists*, [GAO-07-697](#) (Washington, D.C.: May 25, 2007).

⁶These challenges will be covered in a separate section of this report.

⁷The views provided do not necessarily represent the views of all participants. The views reflected are based on those received by April 15, 2008.

The immediate human victims of violence are generally chosen randomly or selectively from a target population, and serve as message generators. Threat- and violence-based communication processes between terrorists, victims, and main targets are used to manipulate the main target, turning it into a target of terror, a target of demands, or a target of attention, depending on whether intimidation, coercion, or propaganda is primarily sought.

We then asked participants how their agency, organization, or country defined terrorism. Their responses showed that the definition of terrorism varied across forum participants. However, several common elements of what constitutes terrorism emerged from participants' responses, including (1) the unlawful use of force or coercion (2) through violence against a government, person, or group (3) for the attainment of political, economic, religious, ideological, or social goals, (4) as well as the violent manifestation of extremism.

Key Enabling Factors of Terrorism

The second question we posed to participants prior to the forum focused on the key enabling factors that foster transnational terrorism. Based on discussions with the Department of State's Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism and terrorism experts in the academic community, we developed a list of factors that could foster terrorism (see app. III) and asked participants to rank the key factors. The factors most frequently cited were

- propagation and funding of extremism,
- feeling of alienation among host country youth,
- anti-Western sentiments, and
- repressive and corrupt governments.

In addition, responding participants indicated other enabling factors (see table 1).

Table 1: Additional Enabling Factors Fostering Terrorism Identified by Participants before the Forum

Infectious ideology of transnational jihadism
Cultural and ideological factors
History of political violence in a society
Lack of history of successful nonviolent protests
Family and friendship bonds to members of extremist groups, which in turn serve as a key to recruitment
The extent to which a society is undergoing political transition
Regional instability
Weak partner states' capacity to combat terrorism
Grievances stemming from real and perceived human rights abuses against marginalized communities to which terrorists relate, associate, or admire

Source: GAO.

Key Areas of Partnerships in Countering Terrorism

The third question we posed to participants prior to the forum focused on the key areas of partnerships that participants' organizations, agencies, and countries engage in to prevent and combat terrorism. We used the UN Global Counterterrorism Strategy to identify a number of the areas, including those associated with various participants. We chose six of the areas we considered most relevant to the forum. We then asked participants to comment on the areas and to identify the key partnership strategies they are engaged in. A number of participants indicated they are engaged in all of the strategies that we listed. The strategies participants selected most often included

- cooperating in exchanging timely and accurate information concerning the prevention and combating of terrorism;
- stepping up national efforts and bilateral, subregional, regional, and international cooperation to improve border and customs controls in order to prevent and detect the movement of terrorists;
- coordinating and cooperating in combating crimes that might be connected to terrorism, including drug trafficking, trading in illicit arms, and smuggling of potentially deadly materials; and
- stepping up efforts and cooperating to improve the security of manufacturing and issuing of identity and travel documents and preventing and detecting their alteration and fraudulent use.

In addition, participants identified several key areas of partnership that were not presented as options (see table 2).

Table 2: Additional Key Areas of Partnership Identified by Participants before the Forum

Training in consensus building
Programs to empower civil society
Exchange of data related to travel
Critical infrastructure protection
Public-private partnerships
Protection of vulnerable targets
Crisis management exercises
Cyber security and cyber crime
Tactical cooperation with policy, intelligence, and enforcement agencies
Collaborative research and education between nongovernmental actors involving open-source data
Training and equipping partner military forces
Stabilization activities
Security assistance and cooperation programs

Source: GAO.

Prior to the forum, when asked about the most effective partnerships in combating transnational terrorism, participants cited

- regional partnerships involving states, nongovernmental organizations, and regional and international organizations;
- unprecedented unanimity of focus among intelligence services and law enforcement agencies;
- joint investigations or initiatives with international law enforcement and intelligence counterparts;
- partnerships leading to changes in government policy that result in more security, less alienation, and more opportunity for citizens;
- intelligence and information sharing and exchange;
- industry share forums with other providers of financial services;
- partnerships among local law enforcement agencies within and across countries; and
- building partner capacities for security and strengthening governance institutions before terrorism becomes a problem.

International Partnerships to Counter Transnational Terrorism

Forum participants discussed the types of partnerships or initiatives they have engaged in to counter the enabling environment that fosters transnational terrorism. Partnerships can be formal, informal, bilateral, or regional, or involve multiple agencies. In addition, participants voiced concerns that certain labels for partnerships could limit their effectiveness and provided their views on the characteristics of effective partnerships.

Types of Partnerships Depend on a Number of Factors

The U.S. and foreign governments and nongovernment entities use both formal and informal partnerships on a bilateral and regional basis when addressing transnational terrorism. Depending on its focus, the partnership activity could dictate the type of partnership approach used, according to participants. U.S. government, foreign, and nongovernment representatives at the forum stated, for example, that formal structures might be best suited for cooperation among international governmental actors on issues such as information sharing and legal matters such as extraditions and prosecutions. They also mentioned that informal mechanisms might be more applicable to dealing with home-grown operatives and conducting training and advisory programs between the United States and other countries. It was noted that in academic and research circles, scholars share information about terrorism-and counterterrorism-related issues informally.

Forum participants stated they are engaged in bilateral and regional partnerships or cooperate in other ways with the U.S. government, foreign partners, and other institutions to address transnational terrorism. A foreign official indicated that partnership activities build on each other and help increase cultural understanding. The partnership activities that U.S. government, foreign, and nongovernment representatives said they are engaged in include information and intelligence sharing, training and capacity building, dialogue and education on counterterrorism, and conducting on-the-ground assessments (see table 3 for examples of partnership programs). For example, some participants noted that they share information about specific operations, terrorist-financing-related issues, and how to conduct certain counterterrorism operations. However, two foreign officials pointed out that the United States and other organizations need to take into account the unique characteristics and the circumstances on the ground in each region in order to understand the potential consequences of their various approaches to counterterrorism.

Table 3: Examples of Counterterrorism Partnerships

Customs and security training at ports of entry
Training to build a foreign government's capacity to investigate and combat terrorist financing
International assessments of why communities participate in terrorism
Financial sector partnerships to examine financial data
Training and equipping of military forces
Security and stabilization assistance
Support by U.S. special operations forces

Source: GAO.

U.S. government officials at the forum mentioned interagency partnerships that address countering transnational terrorism. A U.S. government official noted that a variety of interagency assessments have identified the underlying causes of terrorism and that agencies have partnered together to examine from the defense, political, and development perspectives how best to coordinate funding to address violence and extremism. In fact, coordination among U.S. government agencies has led to the creation of the Center for Complex Operations, where agencies can share knowledge and understanding, focus on training and education available in the academic and “think tank” communities, and use research to develop a common platform that can help address issues related to violence and extremism.

Counterterrorism Label Can Limit Partnership Effectiveness

Forum participants discussed some of the limitations they have faced in engaging in partnerships aimed at countering transnational terrorism. A U.S. government official and a foreign official indicated that labeling a program as a counterterrorism effort can limit its effectiveness because foreign countries may hold negative perceptions of U.S. policies on the “global war on terror.” Similarly, accepting funding from the U.S. government for programs could also have a negative effect. A U.S. government official said that countries are more willing to openly collaborate with U.S. government agencies on some issues that focus on terrorism than others. Furthermore, programs that offer technical support, such as border security, are more accepted. Moreover, a U.S. government official and a nongovernment representative said that to circumvent potentially negative connotations attached to counterterrorism operations, they have chosen to refer to such operations as “conflict management” or “dealing with vulnerable populations,” especially populations that are “vulnerable to the call of those who espouse violence.” Therefore, while some entities, such as nongovernmental organizations, engage in activities

that counter the enabling environment and receive funding from U.S. agencies, they do not refer to those activities as counterterrorism because they believe that doing so could jeopardize their activities in high-risk countries and increase risks to personnel on the ground.

Participants Describe Characteristics of Effective Partnerships

Characteristics of effective partnerships to counter the enabling environment that fosters transnational terrorism were also discussed at the forum. A U.S. government official noted that for a partnership to be effective, the partners need to have shared objectives and a common understanding of what they are trying to accomplish. In addition, they need to have a common understanding of terrorism-related terminology and definition. A foreign official also stated that partnerships that involve trust and confidence can be successful and result in the sharing of information that is necessary to counter terrorism.

A foreign and a nongovernment participant noted that rhetoric and unilateral actions can limit partnerships and strain relationships. A few participants noted that it is important for the United States to articulate the purpose of its counterterrorism programs when working with foreign countries. A nongovernment representative suggested that the United States put more effort into public education campaigns, so that the programs are not viewed suspiciously and as part of a unilateral effort.

To overcome suspicion about the U.S. government's actions in countering terrorism overseas, a few participants suggested that the United States emphasize its partners' efforts as a contribution to a common threat and even frame the U.S. programs in a local or regional context. An official from a nongovernment entity also noted that international counterterrorism mandates can be more successful if they are put into a context that local populations can better understand.

Participants also identified and commented on a number of key practices they have encountered in their efforts to address counterterrorism issues. In discussing the importance of partnerships, some participants agreed that relationships with foreign and other global partners are necessary to deal with the global threat of terrorism. Moreover, an official from the U.S. government and a foreign entity stated that cooperation is best facilitated by long-term relationships that involve long-term solutions. A U.S. government official pointed out that some of the U.S. goals to counter terrorism are short term while those of the adversary are long term. To deal with this issue, the official said it is therefore important to engage in capacity-building programs that offer long-term development and

solutions. A representative of a nongovernment entity said that the United States has engaged in reactive measures in some counterterrorism areas and should pursue a more proactive approach. A number of participants agreed that the United States has not devoted enough resources to understanding the current adversaries and that the U.S. government could draw more fully upon academic knowledge in dealing with and operating in other societies to combat transnational terrorism.

Challenges to Countering Transnational Terrorism

Prior to the forum, we solicited participants' views on key challenges in partnering to combat the enabling environment that fosters transnational terrorism. Based on the responses we received, we then asked forum participants to identify the extent to which each of the key challenges represented a current challenge they face or have perceived in their partnerships. Participants then discussed strategies for addressing the challenges.

Participants Rated Key Challenges to Partnerships

Prior to the forum, we asked participants to rank, from a list we provided, what they viewed as their top three challenges in partnering to combat the enabling environment that fosters transnational terrorism. The list included the following challenges:

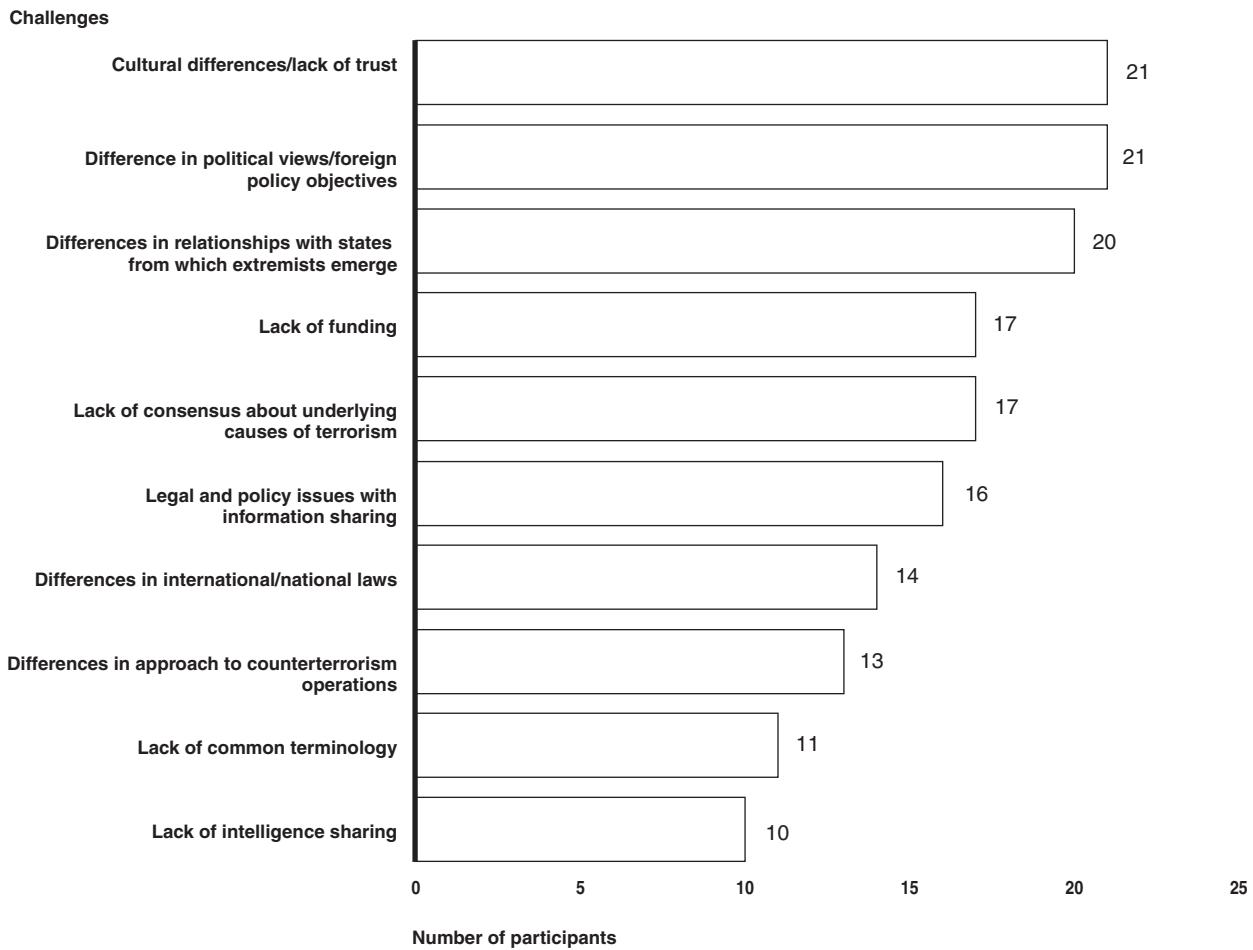
- international/national laws,
- lack of funding,
- lack of human resources,
- differences in political views/ foreign policy objectives,
- differences in relationships with states from which extremists emerge,
- lack of common terminology (i.e., differences in defining the threat),
- legal and policy issues with information sharing,
- differences in approach to counterterrorism operations,
- monitoring and assessing progress,
- technological and operational differences (i.e., incompatibility in systems to share information),

-
- cultural differences/lack of trust,
 - accountability,
 - intelligence sharing, and
 - other.

Based on the responses, “differences in political views/policy objectives” emerged as the most frequently cited challenge, while “lack of funding,” “legal and policy issues with information sharing,” and “intelligence sharing” emerged as the second, third, and fourth most frequently cited challenges, respectively.

At the forum, we presented the 10 challenges most frequently cited by the participants prior to the forum. We then asked participants to identify the extent to which each of the key challenges represented a challenge that they currently face or have perceived in their partnerships to combat transnational terrorism. The range of responses that participants could choose from included “very great,” “great,” “moderate,” “some,” and “little or no extent.” The challenges that most participants identified as being very great, great, or moderate included differences in culture and trust and differences in political views/foreign policy objectives, as shown in figure 1. The challenges that received the fewest very great, great, or moderate responses included the lack of intelligence sharing and lack of a common terminology.

Figure 1: Participants' Rating of Challenges to Partnerships



Source: GAO analysis of participants' forum responses.

Note: We asked 22 participants to identify the extent to which they faced or perceived each of the key challenges above. The figure indicates the number of participants who reported facing these challenges to a very great, great, or moderate extent. The number of responses to each challenge ranged from 20 to 22.

Participants Identified Top Challenges to Partnerships

Participants were asked to identify what they viewed as their top challenge among the five most frequently cited challenges during the forum (see fig. 1). A number of participants cited lack of funding or other funding issues as a challenge. For example, several foreign officials, U.S. government officials, and officials from nongovernment entities stated that funding for counterterrorism needs to be more targeted, flexible, and

sustainable. Some participants also noted that if funding is flexible, resources can be allocated when needed to programs that address a specific counterterrorism issue. Furthermore, an official from a nongovernment entity said that given the fiscal and financial pressures the United States has been facing recently, it is important to have sustainability rather than quantity of funding for counterterrorism operations. He went on to say that resources would have to be reallocated within the U.S. government to give priority to those areas that make the most sense. Rather than funding each agency, funding would be determined by overall objectives, such as counterterrorism. A U.S. government official agreed that it would make sense to have a funding mechanism in place that establishes a counterterrorism budget for U.S. agencies. Finally, an official from a nongovernment entity noted that there might be perception problems or stigmas associated with U.S. government funding for counterterrorism, particularly for programs that may be more on the development side.

Additional Challenges Identified

Some forum participants also identified additional challenges, including the following: (1) the need for the United States to refine the way in which it projects political views in order to build trust among other countries and (2) the need to build greater awareness about the ways in which terrorist organizations use funds to support and carry out their acts as well as the legal impediments to information sharing, including within the international banking community.

Participants Identified Strategies for Addressing Key Challenges

At the end of the forum participants identified strategies to address key challenges that the U.S. government and its partners can pursue. The following are three of the top challenges participants identified during the forum as well as suggestions for addressing those challenges:

- *Lack of flexible funding.* It was suggested that funds for counterterrorism programs and activities be made flexible so that funding could be best allocated where needed and, therefore, have the most impact. An official from a nongovernment entity mentioned that it would be helpful to develop a counterterrorism budget with its components or line items identified and to examine past investments in activities and programs, as well as the results of the investments.
- *Lack of consensus about the underlying causes of terrorism.* Some participants from nongovernment entities indicated that it would be helpful to gain an understanding of extremist ideologies and the underlying causes of terrorism before making decisions about funding. A

few participants also mentioned that knowledge and “practical capacity” in countering terrorism need to be integrated so that the United States and its partners have a better understanding of extremism and current adversaries. Specifically, a participant from the U.S. government and a nongovernment entity agreed that this approach should combine the knowledge of those in academia and policy institutes, and those working in conflict areas.

- *Differences in culture and lack of trust.* A foreign official noted that the United States needs to be more mindful of how it projects its political views and should not project the appearance of distrust in its partners. Such a positive approach could help further build partnerships and cooperative endeavors. A nongovernment representative agreed that the issue of trust is a challenge when it comes to partnerships in countering terrorism.

Appendix I: Forum Agenda

8:30 a.m.	Check-in
8:45 a.m.	Opening session <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome• Introductions• Setting the stage
9:30 a.m.	Session I: Presentation by GAO on results of preforum questionnaire: definition of terrorism, key enabling factors, and key areas of partnerships
10:00 a.m.	Break
10:15 a.m.	Session II: Round-table discussion on partnership efforts to counter the enabling environment that fosters transnational terrorism
11:45 a.m.	Break/buffet lunch
12:00 p.m.	Session III (working lunch): Moderated group discussion on key practices and challenges in partnerships <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Electronic voting on key challenges
2:00 p.m.	Break
2:15 p.m.	Session IV (closed session): Moderated group discussion on short- and long-term strategies for moving forward in partnerships
3:15 p.m.	Wrap-up
3:30 p.m.	Adjournment

Appendix II: List of Participants

Presenters

Gene L. Dodaro	Acting Comptroller General of the United States U.S. Government Accountability Office
Jacquelyn L. Williams-Bridgers	Managing Director, International Affairs and Trade U.S. Government Accountability Office
Charles Michael Johnson Jr.	Director, International Affairs and Trade U.S. Government Accountability Office
Zina Merritt	Assistant Director, International Affairs and Trade U.S. Government Accountability Office
Andrea Miller	Senior Analyst, International Affairs and Trade U.S. Government Accountability Office

Moderator

Frank J. Cilluffo	Associate Vice President for Homeland Security and Director, Homeland Security Policy Institute The George Washington University
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U.S. Government

Gerald M. Feierstein	Principal Deputy Coordinator for Counter Terrorism U.S. Department of State
Elisabeth Kvitashvili	Deputy Assistant Administrator Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance U.S. Agency for International Development
Scott Moore	Senior Advisor for Strategic Initiatives to the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Partnership Strategy U.S. Department of Defense

Mark A. Randol ¹	Director, Counterterrorism Policy Division U.S. Department of Homeland Security
James H. Robertson	Section Chief, International Terrorism Operations Section Federal Bureau of Investigation
Michael Rosen	Policy Advisor, Office of Terrorist Financing and Financial Crimes U.S. Department of Treasury

Foreign

Ahmed Aleisa	First Secretary Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia
Benjamin Burdon	Political Counselor Embassy of Australia
Ashraf Haidari	Political Counselor Embassy of Afghanistan
Mauricio Ibarra	Head of the Office for Special Affairs Embassy of Mexico
Karim El Mansouri	Political Counselor Embassy of Morocco
Pablo Martínez	Deputy Secretary, Inter-American Committee against Terrorism Organization of American States
Matthias Sonn	Deputy Coordinator for Counterterrorism German Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Nongovernment

Jarret Brachman	Director of Research, Combating Terrorism Center United States Military Academy
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¹Since the forum, Mr. Randol is no longer with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. His current position is at the Congressional Research Service as a Specialist in Domestic Intelligence and Counterterrorism.

Appendix II: List of Participants

John J. Byrne	Regulatory Relations Executive Bank of America
Robert Herman	Director of Programs Freedom House
Brian Michael Jenkins	Senior Advisor to the President RAND Corporation
Dennis M. Lormel	Senior Vice President Corporate Risk International
Alistair Millar	Director Center on Global Counterterrorism Cooperation
Sharon Morris	Director, Conflict Management Programs Mercy Corps
Kathleen Smarick	Executive Director, National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism The University of Maryland
Karin von Hippel	Codirector, Post-Conflict Reconstruction Project and Senior Fellow, International Security Program Center for Strategic and International Studies
Mona Yacoubian	Special Advisor, Muslim World Initiative, Center for Conflict Analysis and Prevention United States Institute of Peace

Appendix III: Key Enabling Factors That Could Foster Transnational Terrorism

Propagation of extremism
Funding of fundamentalism and extremism
Emergence of the new mass media—i.e., the internet
Globalization
Demographic bulge—i.e., youth bulge
Availability of safe havens
Weak border controls
Weak counterradicalization policies
Lack of implementation of international counterterrorism agreements
Lack of political will to address terrorism
Insufficiency in law enforcement measures/capabilities
U.S. foreign policies
U.S. public diplomacy
U.S. military presence
Anti-Western sentiment
Repressive and corrupt governments
Foreign domination and control of host country resources
Feeling of alienation among host country youth
Lack of forum for moderate host country voices
Lack of education, lack of opportunity, or poverty in host country
Inequality/discrimination on the basis of ethnic or religious origin in host country
Weak legislative environment/practices in host country
Lack of implementation of laws in host country

Source: GAO analysis of information from the Department of State and terrorism experts.

Notes: The list of factors were identified by GAO and provided to participants for their ranking prior to the forum.

Key factors are listed in no particular order.

Appendix IV: GAO Contact and Staff Acknowledgments

GAO Contact

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Staff Acknowledgments

In addition to the contact named above, Zina Merritt, Assistant Director; Andrea Miller; and Eve Weisberg made significant contributions to the report. Other important contributors included Martin DeAlteriis, Alice Feldesman, Debbie Chung, and Mona Sehgal.

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