OPERATION PACIFIC EAGLE–PHILIPPINES

LEAD INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORT TO THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS

JULY 1, 2020–SEPTEMBER 30, 2020

ABOUT THIS REPORT

A 2013 amendment to the Inspector General Act established the Lead Inspector General (Lead IG) framework for oversight of overseas contingency operations and requires that the Lead IG submit quarterly reports to Congress on each active operation. The Chair of the Council of Inspectors General for Integrity and Efficiency designated the DoD Inspector General (IG) as the Lead IG for Operation Pacific Eagle–Philippines (OPE-P). The DoS IG is the Associate IG for the operation. The USAID IG participates in oversight of the operation.

The Offices of Inspector General (OIG) of the DoD, the DoS, and USAID are referred to in this report as the Lead IG agencies. Other partner agencies also contribute to oversight of OPE-P.

The Lead IG agencies collectively carry out the Lead IG statutory responsibilities to:

- Develop a joint strategic plan to conduct comprehensive oversight of the operation.
- Ensure independent and effective oversight of programs and operations of the U.S. Government in support of the operation through either joint or individual audits, inspections, investigations, and evaluations.
- Report quarterly to Congress and the public on the operation and on activities of the Lead IG agencies.

METHODOLOGY

To produce this quarterly report, the Lead IG agencies submit requests for information to the DoD, the DoS, USAID, and other Federal agencies about OPE-P and related programs. The Lead IG agencies also gather data and information from other sources, including official documents, congressional testimony, policy research organizations, press conferences, think tanks, and media reports.

The sources of information contained in this report are listed in endnotes or notes to tables and figures. Except in the case of audits, inspections, investigations, or evaluations referenced in this report, the Lead IG agencies have not audited the data and information cited in this report. The DoD, the DoS, and USAID vet the reports for accuracy prior to publication. For further details on the methodology for this report, see Appendix B.

CLASSIFIED APPENDIX

This report normally includes an appendix containing classified information about the U.S. counterterrorism mission in the Philippines. Due to the coronavirus disease–2019 pandemic, the Lead IG agencies did not prepare a classified appendix this quarter.

FOREWORD

We are pleased to submit this Lead Inspector General (Lead IG) quarterly report to the U.S. Congress on Operation Pacific Eagle–Philippines (OPE-P). This report discharges our individual and collective agency oversight responsibilities pursuant to the Inspector General Act of 1978.

The United States launched OPE-P in 2017 to increase support to the Philippine government in its effort to counter ISIS affiliates and other violent extremist organizations in the Philippines. In coordination with other U.S. Government agencies, the Department of Defense (DoD) conducts counterterrorism operations under OPE-P by, with, and through its Philippine partners.

This quarterly report describes the activities of the U.S. Government in support of OPE-P, as well as the work of the DoD, the DoS, and USAID to promote the U.S. Government's policy goals in the Philippines during the period July 1, 2020, through September 30, 2020.

This report also discusses the ongoing and completed oversight work conducted by the Lead IG agencies and our partner oversight agencies during the quarter. Due to the coronavirus disease–2019 pandemic and related workforce protection requirements, the Lead IG agencies did not produce a classified appendix.

Under Section 8L of the Inspector General Act, the Lead IG agencies cease quarterly reporting when the appropriations for an overseas contingency operation drop below $100 million in a fiscal year. In 2019, the Secretary of Defense rescinded the overseas contingency operation designation for OPE-P. Furthermore, FY 2020 appropriations for OPE-P were less than $100 million. As a result, our Lead IG reporting responsibilities reached sunset at the end of FY 2020, and this is our final report. During the quarter, the Lead IG agencies issued two oversight reports related to OPE-P.

Sean W. O'Donnell
Acting Inspector General
U.S. Department of Defense

Matthew S. Klimow
Acting Inspector General
U.S. Department of State

Ann Calvaresi Barr
Inspector General
U.S. Agency for International Development

On the Cover

(Top row): U.S. security forces board a vessel during a training exercise in the Philippine Sea (U.S. Navy photo); Aftermath of the twin bombings at Barangay Walled City in Jolo, Sulu, on August 24 (Philippines Presidential Communications photos); U.S. Sailors participate in an antiterrorism training exercise (U.S. Navy photo); Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte leads a candle-lighting and offering of flowers at the Jolo blast site (Philippines Presidential Communications photos).
(Bottom row): U.S. Marines conduct a boat raid exercise in the Philippine Sea (U.S. Marine Corps photo).

MESSAGE FROM THE LEAD INSPECTOR GENERAL

Sean W. O'Donnell

I am pleased to present this Lead Inspector General (Lead IG) quarterly report on the status of Operation Pacific Eagle–Philippines (OPE-P). Due to the sunset of Lead IG authority, this will be the final quarterly report on OPE-P, concluding 3 years of oversight and reporting. The U.S. counterterrorism mission and related diplomatic and humanitarian assistance activities in the Philippines continue.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) was active in leading the fight against ISIS-East Asia this quarter, despite limitations and diversion of resources caused by the Philippine government's response to the coronavirus disease-2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. Counterterrorism operations resulted in the removal of several terrorist leaders from the battlefield, but violent extremist organizations were also aggressive in targetting the AFP, including a double suicide bombing that killed 14 and injured 75 security personnel and civilians.

The DoD reported that it does not anticipate a significant change in the terrorist threat in the Philippines within the next 2 years. While there have been positive developments in both the military mission and governance in the southern Philippines, several systemic obstacles to peace and stability remain. Unemployment and poverty, which have fueled violent extremism and resentment of the Philippine government for years, have only been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Efforts to establish an autonomous government for the Muslim-majority provinces of the southern Philippines will require a significant and sustained effort by the national government to overcome major social and economic challenges.

Violent extremists continue to recruit through family and clan networks. Although a majority of the population does not support extremist groups, many have personal ties to members of these groups and are unwilling to take action against them. Furthermore, international ISIS leadership continues to promote ISIS-East Asia through its media operations, inflating the public image of its Philippine branch.

Multiple DoD components cited in this report concurred that sustained commitment by the Philippine government will be necessary to address the root causes of terrorism in the country's poorest and most unstable region. Only by making lasting improvements in governance and socio economic conditions can the extremist threat be reduced to a level where the Philippine security forces will be able to contain it independently.

Despite the termination of Lead IG oversight and reporting, my Lead IG colleagues and I will continue to provide oversight of U.S. Government activity in the Philippines under our respective statutory authorities.

Sean W. O'Donnell
Acting Inspector General
U.S. Department of Defense

U.S. security forces board a vessel during a training exercise in the Philippine Sea. (U.S. Navy photo)

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SUNSET OF LEAD IG REPORTING AND OVERSIGHT ON OPE-P

On November 16, 2017, pursuant to Section 8L (b)(1) of the Inspector General Act of 1978, the Chairman of the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency designated the DoD Inspector General (IG) as the Lead IG for Operation Pacific Eagle–Philippines (OPE-P). Since designation, the Lead IG has reported quarterly on OPE-P and produced joint strategic oversight plans for the operation in the annual Comprehensive Oversight Plan for Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) for FYs 2018, 2019, and 2020.

Pursuant to the Inspector General Act, Lead IG responsibilities and authorities cease at the end of the first fiscal year in which the total amount appropriated for the contingency operation is less than $100 million. In May 2019, the Secretary of Defense approved a revised execute order that rescinded the previous designation of OPE-P as an OCO. As a result, for Lead IG reporting purposes, FY 2020 appropriations relating to continuing military training, support, or operations in the Philippines were not associated with a designated OCO.

Accordingly, Lead IG responsibilities for OPE-P met the sunset provision of Section 8L at the end of FY 2020 and therefore, this is the final Lead IG quarterly report on OPE-P. Oversight of activities related to ongoing counterterrorism, diplomatic, and humanitarian assistance operations in the Philippines will continue under the individual statutory authorities of the DoD, DoS, and USAID Inspectors General and other oversight agencies of the U.S. Government.

ISIS-EA Carries Out Double Suicide Bombing and Clashes Several Times with Philippine Forces

ISIS-East Asia (ISIS-EA) and other violent extremists were active this quarter in conducting acts of violence in the southern Philippines. The most significant attack was a double suicide bombing on August 24 in the city of Jolo, which killed 14 and injured 75. Philippine officials suspect ISIS-EA's involvement with this attack, although the group did not claim responsibility.[1] Other terrorist activity this quarter followed the typical pattern of low-level terrorist attacks and clashes with security forces, including roadside bombs and ambushes on checkpoints.[2]

Philippine Counterterrorism Operations Target ISIS-EA Leaders

This quarter, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) carried out a series of operations directed against leaders of ISIS-EA and the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG). A senior AFP commander stated that Hatib Hajan Sawadjaan, the de facto leader of ISIS-EA and a senior commander of the ASG, was wounded and likely killed in a firefight with Philippine troops near Patikul, Sulu, on July 6.[3] According to U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM), Sawadjaan's leadership was never acknowledged by rival ISIS-EA faction leaders in the Philippines or by the core leadership of ISIS locatedd in Iraq and Syria (ISIS-Core).[4] USINDOPACOM said it was uncertain who would replace Sawadjaan and whether ISIS-Core would publicly acknowledge or participate in the selection of a new ISIS-EA leader.[5]

U.S. Marines conduct a boat raid exercise in the Philippine Sea. (U.S. Marine Corps photo)

The AFP increased its pursuit operations targetting Sawadjaan's family terrorist network and his deputies this quarter, including a raid on a safe house used by his nephew and ASG bomb-maker, Mundi Sawadjaan, on September 22. On September 28, the AFP stated that another ASG group leader and member of the Sawadjaan family, Arsibar Sawadjaan, was killed in a clash with the AFP.[6] Lastly, after the quarter ended, the AFP confirmed that Furuji Indama, the last remaining senior ASG leader on the island of Basilan, was killed in a clash with government forces on September 9. Four other ASG members and two Philippine soldiers were killed in the incident.[7]

(Left) Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte leads a candle-lighting and offering of flowers at the blast site. (Right) Aftermath of the twin bombings at Barangay Walled City in Jolo, Sulu. (Philippines Presidential Communications photos)

U.S. Forces Support Philippines Partners with Intelligence, Casualty Evacuation, and Other Assistance

This quarter, U.S. advisors supported AFP counterterrorism operations with airborne intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) assets. Through ISR support, U.S. forces aim to facilitate AFP and Philippines National Police (PNP) ground operations in areas with high concentrations of terrorist targets.[8] This included helping the AFP develop six target packages. Of these, the AFP took action against four targets on Mindanao and in the Sulu archipelago.[9] U.S. military personnel conducted two advise and assist missions to help clear violent extremists in western Mindanao this quarter, conducted four subject matter exchanges, and assisted two local medical staffs with patient assessments and transfers, according to U.S. Special Operations Command–Pacific (SOCPAC).[10]

The DoD also provided contractor support to the AFP's counterterrorism mission in the form of casualty evacuations, technical and maintenance support to ISR assets, and logistics support.[11] SOCPAC reported that after the August 24 suicide bombing in Jolo, U.S. special operations forces assisted with mass casualty triage and provided medical airlift evacuation for two wounded AFP soldiers.[12]

ISIS-EA Receives Limited Support from Abroad

Since the destruction of ISIS's physical caliphate in Iraq and Syria in March 2019, ISIS-Core media outlets have inflated the image of ISIS-EA's strength and influence to help portray ISIS as a global terrorist power broker outside of its traditional conflict zone, according to SOCPAC.[13] However, despite this consistent media support, ISIS-EA has not received a significant infusion of funding or foreign fighters from ISIS-Core, according to the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA).[14] USINDOPACOM stated that the coronavirus disease–2019 (COVID-19) pandemic was the most significant barrier to foreign fighters entering the Philippines this quarter.[15]

Rather than relying on assistance from overseas, ISIS-EA factions likely continue to rely on the traditional revenue sources they employed prior to pledging allegiance to ISIS, including remittances as well as criminal activities such as kidnap for ransom and extortion.[16] Although the number of foreign terrorist fighters in the Philippines remains small, these individuals provide outsized value to ISIS-EA by providing key capabilities, such as bomb making, financial and communication facilitation, suicide bombing, and attack planning.[17]

Buildings destroyed by fighting in Marawi. (DoD photo)

ABOUT OPERATION PACIFIC EAGLE–PHILIPPINES

MISSION

On September 1, 2017, the Secretary of Defense designated Operation Pacific Eagle–Philippines (OPE-P) an overseas contingency operation. OPE-P is a counterterrorism campaign conducted by U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, in coordination with other U.S. Government agencies, to support the Philippine government and its military forces in their efforts to counter Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) affiliates and other priority violent extremist organizations in the Philippines.

HISTORY

The Philippines, an island nation with a predominantly Roman Catholic population, has struggled for decades with violent extremist separatist groups in the Muslim-populated regions of the country's south. Many of these extremist groups, operating in the most impoverished parts of the country, have affiliations with international terrorist organizations.

The Mutual Defense Treaty of 1951 forms the foundation of the bilateral security relationship between the United States and the Philippines. The Mutual Defense Board, which was started in 1958, and the Security Engagement Board, which was started in 2006, act as the central forum for the U.S. and Philippine armed forces to coordinate and plan military activities for the year ahead. Additionally, the Visiting Forces Agreement of 1998 provides for the expedited entry of U.S. military personnel and materiel into the Philippines and establishes the jurisdictions under which U.S. service members accused of criminal acts in the country may be tried. A supplemental agreement, the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement of 2014, allows for an increased rotational presence of U.S. troops and for the U.S. Government to build and operate facilities located on Philippine military bases.

The U.S. military conducted counterterrorism operations in the Philippines under Operation Enduring Freedom-Philippines from 2002 until that operation concluded in 2015, continuing counterterrorism support at reduced levels. In 2014, many of the Philippines' local jihadist groups, many of which had existed for decades, declared allegiance to ISIS. The international leadership of ISIS supported its Philippine branch with financing, media, foreign fighters, and by recognizing its leader, Isnilon Hapilon, as the "emir" of ISIS in the Philippines. In May 2017, a force of approximately 1,000 ISIS-affiliated militants led by Hapilon seized the city of Marawi, a provincial capital with 200,000 residents, and held it for 5 months. In September 2017, the DoD designated OPE-P as a contingency operation.

U.S. forces provided advice and assistance to Philippine security forces as they liberated Marawi in October 2017. Philippine forces prevailed but suffered heavy casualties, including more than 160 dead. The fighting devastated the city's infrastructure and displaced 353,000 residents of the city and surrounding area. Most of the ISIS-aligned fighters in the city, including Hapilon and his top lieutenants, were killed in the fighting.

Since then, until this quarter, Hatib Hajan Sawadjaan had been the acting leader of ISIS-aligned jihadist groups in the Philippines, but these groups now operate largely independently of each other. The core leadership of ISIS continues to track and claim attacks in the Philippines, but coordination between it and ISIS in the Philippines has been limited. However, the estimated 300 to 500 remaining extremists who profess allegiance to ISIS continue to commit acts of violence to undermine peace and reconciliation in the southern Philippines.

VFA Discussions Continue Without Resolution

Last quarter, the Philippine government stated that it had suspended its previously announced withdrawal from the U.S.-Philippines Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA), the bilateral agreement that establishes the rules by which U.S. military personnel, vessels, and aircraft may enter the Philippines. The VFA also stipulates how criminal offenses committed by U.S. military personnel in the Philippines should be prosecuted.[18] This quarter, the VFA remained in effect but is set to terminate on February 9, 2021, barring any change in policy by the Philippine government. The U.S. Embassy in Manila reported that it was engaging with the Philippine government and military leadership through multiple channels this quarter to highlight the benefits of the security partnership and encourage the Philippine government to rescind its termination decision.[19]

USAID Identifies Lessons Learned from the Marawi Response

In an ongoing review of its response to the 2017 siege of Marawi and the resulting humanitarian disaster, USAID identified several areas where future assistance efforts might be improved. For example, USAID reported that certain assistance objectives, such as "countering violent extremism," were not clearly and consistently defined among USAID offices and bureaus.[20] USAID also noted that better estimations of time and resources needed to deliver assistance in areas beset by violence might allow the mission to more quickly pivot and build on existing programs in future crises.[21] USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance reported that it had to adapt its transitional shelter strategy to the unique challenges in the aftermath of the Marawi siege, including a complicated system of land ownership that made it difficult to obtain large tracts of land on which to build relocation sites for internally displaced persons (IDP).[22]

Marawi Reconstruction Restarts Following COVID-19-Related Delays

USAID reported this quarter that debris removal in Marawi was largely complete, except for damaged and destroyed buildings where private owners did not permit demolition.[23] Following a pause due to the COVID-19 pandemic quarantine restrictions, reconstruction efforts resumed in June, focusing on public buildings and major roads.[24] USAID said that the Philippine government estimated that Marawi reconstruction will be completed before December 2021.[25] However, the Philippine government has previously failed to meet its own projections of when work in Marawi will be completed.[26]

USAID stated that its implementers provided assistance to the Philippine government in repairing and upgrading water and sanitation infrastructure this quarter, as well as by trucking in water to areas where this infrastructure was still lacking.[27] About 66,000 Marawi residents who have been displaced since the 2017 siege lack reliable access to water, shelter, and food due to the ongoing economic recession and the COVID-19 outbreak.[28] This quarter, USAID reported that there were no noticeable improvements in shelter conditions for the majority of IDPs and no handovers of homes were reported by housing programs supported by the Philippine government, the United Nations, or non governmental organizations.[29]

This quarter, the VFA remained in effect but is set to terminate on February 9, 2021, barring any change in policy by the Philippine government.

U.S. Sailors participate in an antiterrorism training exercise. (U.S. Navy photo)

THE QUARTER IN REVIEW

STATUS OF THE CONFLICT

ISIS-EA Suspected in Double Suicide Bombing in Jolo

Violence in the southern Philippines this quarter followed a pattern similar to previous quarters, with a steady stream of low-level violence punctuated by one larger-scale attack. On August 24, two explosions, likely perpetrated by individuals linked to ISIS-East Asia (ISIS-EA) or the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), occurred in close succession in the city of Jolo, the capital of Sulu province. According to the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) and U.S. Special Operations Command–Pacific (SOCPAC), a female suicide bomber detonated a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device near a Philippine military vehicle parked outside a food market.[30]

Approximately an hour later, a second attacker detonated a suicide vest near the site of the first bombing. The DIA stated that the second blast was likely carried out by another female suicide attacker who possibly intended to target first responders. According to the DIA, the two attacks killed a total of 14, including 8 soldiers and 6 civilians, and wounded 75, including 27 soldiers and security personnel and 48 civilians. As of the end of the quarter, ISIS media had not formally claimed responsibility for this attack.[31]

Aftermath of the twin bombings at Barangay Walled City in Jolo, Sulu, on August 24. (Philippines Presidential Communications photo)

SOCPAC reported that U.S. special operations forces assisted with the mass casualty triage resulting from the attack and provided medical airlift evacuation for two wounded Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) soldiers.[32] Four days later, U.S. forces transferred one of the wounded Philippine National Police (PNP) officers by helicopter to a hospital with a higher level of care than was available locally.[33]

According to the DIA, AFP intelligence officers began investigating a potential suicide attack threat on Jolo as early as June but were unable to neutralize the threat. In the DIA's analysis, this demonstrated that ISIS-EA remains capable of carrying out coordinated attacks that involve prolonged planning cycles. However, the DIA also stated that it has not observed any indications that ISIS-EA is currently capable of carrying out an insurgent campaign on the scale of the 2017 siege of the city of Marawi.[34]

Violent extremist organizations (VEO) in the Philippines have not historically employed suicide bombings as a tactic. However, in the last 2 years, individuals linked to ISIS-EA have conducted or attempted at least six suicide attacks. These include the January 2019 double suicide attack against a Catholic cathedral in Jolo, the second largest terrorist attack in Philippine history, which killed 20 and injured more than 100. This quarter's attack was the third suicide bombing carried out by female terrorists in the Philippines in the last 2 years.[35]

ISIS-EA Leader Possibly Killed in Battle with the AFP

USINDOPACOM said it was uncertain whether ISIS-Core would publicly acknowledge or participate in the selection process of a new ISIS-EA leader.

This quarter, AFP Lieutenant General Cirilito Sobejana told reporters that Hatib Hajan Sawadjaan, the acting leader of ISIS-EA and a senior commander of the ASG, was wounded in a firefight with the AFP near Patikul, Sulu, on July 6. Lieutenant General Sobejana stated that he was "90 percent sure" that Sawadjaan had died of his wounds shortly after the battle, and Philippine forces were actively searching for his body. He added that recently captured ASG militants had provided information about Sawadjaan's death. AFP officials said it was likely that Sawadjaan's nephew, Mundi, may have plotted the August 24 suicide bombings in Jolo in retaliation for his uncle's killing.[36]

According to U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM), Sawadjaan probably died of his injuries. However, his body has not been found to confirm his death. It is unknown who would assume his leadership position, if he is confirmed dead or incapacitated.[37] Although Sawadjaan was regarded by USINDOPACOM as the de facto leader of ISIS-EA, his leadership was never acknowledged by rival faction leaders in the Philippines, and the core leadership of ISIS in Iraq and Syria (ISIS-Core) never officially recognized him as ISIS-EA's leader as it did the group's first leader, Isnilon Hapilon.[38] According to the DIA, Sawadjaan was confirmed as ISIS-EA's overall emir by a group of ISIS-aligned ASG leaders in May 2018, but this meeting excluded other ISIS-EA faction leaders who opposed Sawadjaan.[39]

USINDOPACOM said it was uncertain whether ISIS-Core would publicly acknowledge or participate in the selection process of a new ISIS-EA leader. However, USINDOPACOM stated that if ISIS-Core were to publicly acknowledge a new emir, it could represent increased legitimacy of ISIS-EA.[40]

The DIA stated that, as of the end of the quarter, there were no indications that ISIS-EA had elected or otherwise identified a new leader. In its own assessment, the DIA stated that it was unclear whether Sawadjaan was actually dead.[41]

AFP INCREASES PRESSURE ON SAWADJAAN FAMILY AND NETWORK

Notwithstanding the uncertainty about the possible death of Hatib Hajan Sawadjaan, the AFP increased its operations focused on the terrorist leader's family network and deputies. These efforts included a raid on a safe house used by his nephew and ASG bomb maker, Mundi Sawadjaan, and others on September 22. An AFP spokesperson told reporters that no fighting took place during the raid, as the approximately 40-member ASG cell that had been housed there left shortly before AFP troops arrived. According to the AFP spokesperson, the raid was part of an ongoing effort to apprehend Mundi Sawadjaan, who is suspected in connection with the August 24 suicide bombing in Jolo.[42]

Additionally, on August 13, Abduljihad Susukan, a senior leader of the Sawadjaan ASG faction, surrendered to police in Davao on Mindanao. In addition to his role in the terrorist group's leadership, Susukan was wanted for at least 23 murders and 5 kidnappings. He is also wanted for crimes in Malaysia, where security officials are seeking his extradition.[43] In September, the PNP reported that it had apprehended a suspected aide of Mundi Sawadjaan in Zamboanga city.[44] In another operation, eight members of Mundi Sawadjaan's terrorist cell surrendered to AFP troops in Sulu province.[45] On September 28, the AFP stated that another ASG group leader and member of the Sawadjaan family, Arsibar Sawadjaan, was killed by

the AFP.[46] Lastly, after the quarter ended, the AFP confirmed that Furuji Indama, the last remaining senior ASG leader on the island of Basilan, was killed in a clash with government forces on September 9. Four other ASG members and two Philippine soldiers were killed in the incident.[47]

Local Leaders Condemn Terrorists but May Lack Ability to Stop Them

ISIS-EA's support from the local population "diminished notably" this quarter, according to the DIA.[48] Specifically, after the suicide attacks in Jolo, local leaders and citizens met to discuss how local residents can help stop the presence of ISIS-affiliated terrorist groups in their communities.[49] In response to the August 24 attack in neighboring Jolo, the mayor of Indanan, a city in Sulu province, led local leaders in signing a covenant formally rejecting the ASG's presence in the municipality and terrorist violence in the region on September 29.[50] In addition to officially declaring the ASG "persona non grata," the covenant commits local leaders to supporting the counterterrorism activities of the AFP and PNP. Sulu Governor Abdusakur Tan and Major General Corleto Vinluan, Jr., the commander of AFP forces in the southern Philippines, attended the signing ceremony along with other military leaders.[51]

ISIS-EA's support from the local population "diminished notably" this quarter, according to the DIA.

According to media reports, local elected leaders in the Sulu region often publicly denounce the ASG, but family bonds between ASG members and the population at large remain stronger than any local government antiterrorism initiatives.[52] The ASG was founded in 1991 by former leaders of the Moro National Liberation Front who split from that group when it entered into peace negotiations with the Philippine government, negotiations that resulted in a peace agreement in 1996. According to a Stanford University study of violent militant groups, the ASG has never participated in peace talks or renounced violence, but many members share family ties with members of the Moro National Liberation Front, which is now a legitimate political party in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). While the two groups officially oppose each other, some degree of cooperation and communication remains between them.[53]

Additionally, many local leaders lack the capability to drive out VEOs due to weak governance. According to an Australian security analyst, this dynamic of well-connected terrorists and weak local governments allows ASG commanders the freedom to conduct illicit activity and to draw from a base of young and disenfranchised individuals for new recruits. The governance vacuum also allows the ASG to freely promote its ideology.[54]

SELECTED KEY EVENTS, JULY 1, 2020–SEPTEMBER 30, 2020

JULY 1
ISIS-aligned fighters kill 3 PNP members on patrol in South Cotabato province

JULY 9
An improvised explosive device planted by ISIS-aligned BIFF fighters in Maguindanao province kills 2 policemen and wounds 4 others

JULY 29
Two AFP soldiers killed and 13 wounded in a clash between the AFP and ISIS-aligned BIFF fighters in Maguindanao

JULY 31
A firefight in Patikul, Jolo, between AFP and ASG results in the deaths of 3 AFP soldiers and 6 ASG militants

Philippine security forces also conducted operations against terrorist kidnap-for-ransom cells, which have been a key source of income for Philippine VEOs.

According to a DoS cable, Mayor Kerkhar Tan of Jolo told reporters on August 27 that PNP intelligence officials indicated that there were additional attacks being planned in his city. Local contacts told the U.S. Embassy in Manila that between four and seven suicide bombers, a combination of Philippine and Indonesian nationals, remained in the region. Despite these reports, Tan said that he opposed the recommendation of senior military officers that President Duterte should reinstate martial law, pointing out that the 2019 Jolo cathedral bombing occurred under a previous declaration of martial law.[55]

AFP and ISIS-EA Engage in Clashes Across Southern Philippines

Confrontations between the AFP and ISIS-EA were most intense on the island of Jolo this quarter, as in recent previous quarters, according to the DIA. Additionally, in southern Mindanao, ISIS affiliates targeted checkpoints and used roadside bombs against Philippine security forces. Except for the double suicide bombing in Jolo (see page 7), ISIS-EA's violent activity generally followed its typical pattern of low-level attacks and skirmishes.[56]

Philippine security forces also conducted operations against terrorist kidnap-for-ransom cells, which have been a key source of income for Philippine VEOs. One of five Indonesian fishermen held captive for 8 months by the ASG was killed during a firefight between Philippine troops and the militants in Patikul on September 30. According to media reports, it was not immediately known if the hostage was killed by his captors or during the crossfire between the two sides. The four other fishermen remained in ASG captivity as of the end of the quarter. One ASG fighter was killed in the clash.[57]

ISIS-EA Propaganda Pivots Away from COVID-19

Last quarter, the DIA reported that ISIS-EA was attempting to capitalize on the Philippine government's COVID-19 response for propaganda purposes, including calls for attacks against individuals adhering to the restrictions and threats posted on social media of violence if mosques were not allowed to reopen.[58] In late July, an ISIS-aligned Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) leader released a video message accusing non-Muslims of manipulating the virus to kill Muslims and calling on fellow Muslims to join Philippine VEOs in their campaign of violence. The DIA reported that beside that one video, there was comparatively little ISIS-EA media exploiting the COVID-19 pandemic to promote civil unrest this quarter.[59]

AUGUST 24
Two coordinated explosions, likely perpetrated by individuals linked to ISIS-EA or the ASG, kill at least 14 and injure 75 in Jolo city

AUGUST 29
Combat operations in the Patikul area of Jolo island result in 1 AFP soldier killed and 8 wounded as well as 3 terrorists killed

SEPTEMBER 9
The AFP engages a group of ASG fighters in Zamboanga and kills at least 3

SEPTEMBER 18
One AFP soldier is killed and 3 wounded by an improvised explosive device during operations in Talayan, Maguindanao

SEP

Enduring Challenges for Counterterrorism Operations in the Philippines

Although OPE-P no longer meets the statutory threshold for Lead IG reporting after FY 2020, U.S. counterterrorism operations will continue. SOCPAC stated that OPE-P will remain important to addressing "internal security challenges within the Philippines for the foreseeable future."[60] SOCPAC also stated that efforts under OPE-P aim to disrupt the ability of VEOs to organize, plan, and export violence.[61]

Due to its geography, socio economic conditions, and political history, the southern Philippines has long been an environment for VEO proliferation. According to SOCPAC, this has been compounded in recent years by the coordination of VEOs with ISIS-Core and the additional threat of foreign fighters entering the Philippines through porous sea borders. SOCPAC stated that the desired end-state in OPE-P would be the degradation of the current VEO threat in the Philippines to the point where the AFP and PNP-Special Action Force (PNP-SAF), the special operations component of the PNP, were capable of independently disrupting these remaining threats and eliminating emerging threats as they arise.[62]

According to SOCPAC, its counterterrorism efforts are the practical application of the training, engagements, and Foreign Military Sales that constitute the broader U.S.-Philippine bilateral security relationship. While the challenge of countering VEOs and preventing their spread is complex, OPE-P is only part of the larger U.S. Government effort that addresses local governance, social and economically disenfranchised groups, education, and regional security. SOCPAC stated that while counterterrorism operations target the malign actors in the southern Philippines, the totality of the diplomatic, military, and economic efforts aim to erode their base of support and perception of legitimacy.[63]

USINDOPACOM identified the ongoing uncertainty regarding the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) and COVID-19-related travel restrictions as the major short- and medium-term challenges to sustaining the efforts to degrade ISIS-EA and other priority VEOs to the point of disrupting assistance from trans national terrorist organizations.[64] COVID-19-related restrictions have created new challenges for U.S. personnel entering and leaving the region to support OPE-P, complicating the rotation of supporting units.[65]

Ongoing uncertainty about the future of the VFA has also resulted in a tenuous situation for U.S. advisors, as they must simultaneously plan future operations with and without the access and protections currently afforded under the VFA. According to USINDOPACOM, this lack of certainty in both the near and long term has made planning anything beyond a few weeks or months extremely difficult. Additionally, the lengthy process for procurement under the U.S. laws which govern the Building Partner Capacity program often results in wait times of more than a year to receive equipment and training for Philippine partners.[66]

USINDOPACOM could not provide specific assessments regarding desired end-states for OPE-P in a publicly releasable format but stated that, in general, a successful conclusion of OPE-P would achieve the disruption of assistance from trans national terrorist organizations in the Philippines.[67] USINDOPACOM identified the following 12 indicators, an increase or decrease in which could be used to gauge the state of counterterrorism operations in the Philippines:

- Frequency and effectiveness of terrorist attacks, including tactics, technical capabilities, and processes
- Number of AFP and PNP-SAF counterterrorism operations
- Effectiveness of AFP and PNP-SAF operations by the numbers of terrorists killed, wounded, and captured

- Local perceptions of the legitimacy of the national and local governments, including security forces, versus that of VEOs
- Number of kidnappings perpetrated by VEOs
- Assessed capability and improvements in AFP and PNP-SAF
- VEO recruitment and funding
- Presence and experience of foreign terrorist fighters
- VEO attacks outside of the southern Philippines, such as in the national capital region
- Employment of ISR assets employed by the AFP and PNP-SAF in counterterrorism operations
- Realignment of AFP and PNP-SAF resources from Islamist terrorists to the communist New People's Army insurgency, or vice-versa
- A shift in counterterrorism responsibility from the AFP to the PNP-SAF, with the AFP focusing more on external threats and the PNP taking the lead role in countering domestic terrorists[68]

SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES REMAINS A PERMISSIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR TERRORISTS

The DIA stated that members of ISIS-EA and other VEOs are closely connected to one another and to large swaths of the community through familial and clan bonds. Although the average citizen in the southern Philippines may not expressly support the actions of these terrorists, many likely have some type of connection to VEO members and do not want to work against family or clan members, according to the DIA. Additionally, average citizens are unlikely to work against VEOs overtly, such as by providing information to the police about terrorist members and activities, due to fears of retaliation.[69]

The DIA estimated that, barring any major unforeseen developments, Philippine VEOs, including ISIS-EA, will likely maintain their current level of membership and violence over the next 1 to 2 years. These groups will likely continue to conduct a steady stream of small-scale operations, primarily targeting Philippine counterterrorism forces. The DIA stated that these groups also "will almost certainly maintain the intent and some capability to conduct larger-scale operations against soft targets where civilians may be present," such as this quarter's double suicide bombing in Jolo.[70] (See page 7)

According to the DIA, a change in the top-level leadership of ISIS-EA would likely cause fragmentation within the group as members jockey for influence and leadership. The DIA added that an increase in the number and effectiveness of Philippine counterterrorism operations could result in at least a temporary decrease in VEOs' ability to conduct operations, obtain financing, and recruit.[71]

PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT AIMS TO DEGRADE RATHER THAN TO ERADICATE VEOS

In early 2018, President Duterte revised the AFP's desired end-state from eradicating VEOs to degrading them. According to SOCPAC, this was a more realistic objective, given the resiliency of extremist groups in the Philippines. AFP counterterrorism leaders have emphasized the importance of neutralizing key terrorist leaders, a strategy that SOCPAC stated has previously resulted in the surrender of rank and file terrorist fighters.[72]

The AFP's former commander in western Mindanao, Lieutenant General Cirilito Sobejana, stated that the removal of top terrorist leaders from the battlefield has created a domino effect down the ranks, prompting many terrorists to surrender after the group becomes headless. SOCPAC stated that U.S. military support for this strategy during and after the Marawi siege contributed to the surrender of

(continued on next page)

Enduring Challenges for Counterterrorism Operations in the Philippines *(continued from previous page)*

hundreds of ISIS-EA fighters.[73] As Lead IG reports have discussed over the course of OPE-P, ISIS-EA has not come close to reconstituting its peak force strength of approximately 1,000 fighters since the 2017 death of ASG leader, Isnilon Hapilon, who first united several jihadist factions under the ISIS banner in 2016.

PHILIPPINE WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT APPROACH TARGETING UNDERLYING CAUSES OF EXTREMISM UNLIKELY TO SUCCEED WITHOUT SUSTAINED EFFORT

The DIA stated that the Duterte administration is attempting to implement a whole-of-government approach against radicalization through anticorruption campaigns, literacy and education programs, youth outreach initiatives, and economic development. However, the DIA assessed that the current efforts were unlikely to break the VEO recruitment chain. The BARMM remains one of the Philippines' poorest regions, prone to poor governance, corruption, political injustice, social marginalization, and a lack of basic services, infrastructure, and livelihood opportunities. According to the DIA, nongovernmental organizations face challenges operating and engaging civil societies in that area because of the combination of insurgency, high crime rates, and clan violence. The recent peace deal between the Philippine government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, a large group of Islamic insurgents, provided greater governing autonomy to the BARMM, which could provide the necessary groundwork to stem VEO recruitment efforts, according to the DIA. However, effective implementation of this legislation remains challenging and elusive.[74]

Sustaining initiatives aimed at moderating local divisions and clan rivalries, improving BARMM governance capacities, and ensuring national government support for the BARMM might diminish some of the factors which drive radicalization and recruitment in the long term, according to the DIA. Additionally, the Philippine government's ability to implement its disarmament program for former militants and to follow through on providing cash handouts, housing, scholarships, and sustainable livelihood opportunities for former fighters will likely have some mitigating impact on VEO recruitment. The DIA stated that other Southeast Asian countries have implemented deradicalization programs, prison reforms, and initiatives to regulate Islamic education to combat VEO recruitment, but the DIA added that it was uncertain whether the Philippine government and the BARMM would be receptive to such efforts.[75]

SUSTAINED PHILIPPINE EFFORT AND U.S. ASSISTANCE ARE NEEDED TO COUNTER VEOS

As the Lead IG has observed over the course of reporting on OPE-P, the level of violence and VEO presence in the southern Philippines has remained relatively consistent since the end of the Marawi siege in October 2017. In the intervening 3 years, the Philippine security forces have made some progress in improving their counterterrorism capacity and reconstituting their losses from the heavy fighting in and around Marawi. The peace agreement that led to the creation of a semi-autonomous government in the BARMM has brought the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, a once hostile group of an estimated 40,000 members, into the political process.

U.S. special operations forces will continue to assist the Philippine security forces in their counterterrorism operations as long as their assistance is welcomed by the Philippine government. However, as reported by the DIA and USINDOPACOM, a sustained commitment by the Philippine government will be necessary to improve governance and socio-economic conditions in the country's poorest and most unstable region. Lasting improvements to the systemic conditions that currently provide VEOs with a permissive operating environment and readily available recruiting pool will ultimately be necessary to reduce the terrorist threat to a level where the Philippine security forces will be able to combat it independently.

STATUS OF ISIS-EA

SOCPAC and the DIA reported that while ISIS-EA received significant media support from ISIS-Core, it did not receive an infusion of either funding or foreign fighters this quarter.

ISIS-EA Receives Media Support but Little Else from ISIS-Core

Since the fall of ISIS's physical "caliphate" in Iraq and Syria in March 2019, ISIS-Core media outlets, including the Amaq News Agency and al-Naba newsletter, have continued to show interest in ISIS-EA to portray a global influence outside of its traditional conflict zone of Iraq and Syria, according to media reports.[76] Citing open source reporting, SOCPAC stated that ISIS-Core's media operations inflate the strength and influence of ISIS-EA to support the narrative that ISIS remains a global threat. The al-Naba newsletter mentioned ISIS-EA in two consecutive issues during Ramadan 2020 (April 23 to May 24). However, during this period, ISIS-Core credited ISIS-EA with only 1 out of 158 ISIS-claimed operations—accounting for 5 of 371 casualties worldwide.[77]

Although these statistics indicate that ISIS-EA is one of the least active and effective ISIS affiliates in terms of operations and bloodshed, al-Naba employed unsubstantiated claims to portray ISIS-EA as one of the most active franchises. SOCPAC noted that when ISIS-EA does carry out a major attack, al-Naba will often exaggerate casualty figures to inflate ISIS-EA's perceived ranking among global franchises. For example, a June attack which left 4 AFP soldiers dead and 17 wounded was reported by al-Naba as 15 killed and an undetermined number wounded. Al-Naba uses these opportunities to portray ISIS-EA as more capable than it is, a trend which SOCPAC anticipates will likely continue.[78]

SOCPAC and the DIA reported that while ISIS-EA received significant media support from ISIS-Core, it did not receive an infusion of either funding or foreign fighters this quarter. The DIA stated that it was unclear the extent to which ISIS-EA relies on ISIS-Core for financial backing. Prior to pledging allegiance to ISIS, ASG and other VEOs relied primarily on payments from kidnap-for-ransom, extortion, donations, illegal drug sales, and other criminal activity to sustain their operations. The DIA reported that there is a strong likelihood that these types of funding mechanisms will remain central to jihadist terrorism in the Philippines. For example, in early September, a group of ASG fighters traveled from Basilan to Zamboanga seeking victims to kidnap and hold for ransom, according to the DIA.[79]

Despite this apparent lack of financial support, ISIS-Core continues to lend media support to ISIS-EA. This quarter, ISIS-Core media channels attributed 10 attacks in the Philippines to ISIS-EA. Most of these claimed attacks were small-scale and focused on the deaths of between one and six AFP and PNP members per attack. Notably, ISIS-Core media made no official claim for the August 24 suicide attack in Jolo, according to the DIA. However, ISIS-EA supporters in both the Philippines and Indonesia issued statements praising the attacks and encouraging women to take an active role in terrorist operations.[80]

NO SIGNIFICANT SIGNS OF INTERNATIONAL COORDINATION BETWEEN SOUTHEAST ASIAN JIHADISTS

Just as coordination with ISIS-Core was minimal, ISIS-EA elements in the Philippines were similarly unconnected with other VEOs in neighboring countries. According to the DIA, ISIS-Core has stated that it intends to spread its ideology to other Southeast Asian countries. ISIS began establishing semiautonomous regional branches in 2016, and 30 VEOs

in Southeast Asia pledged allegiance to ISIS that year. ISIS-Core originally envisioned a unified Southeast Asian movement, and thus began referring to these groups collectively as ISIS-EA. However, the DIA stated that this name was largely aspirational, and while the name implies international organization, ISIS affiliates in Southeast Asia generally do not coordinate with each other and maintain only limited connections to ISIS-Core.[81]

ISIS-affiliate organizations now exist in the Philippines, Malaysia, and Indonesia, but the DIA reported that it has not found any indication of significant coordination among trans-Pacific ISIS affiliates across international boundaries. Indonesian and Malaysian counterterrorism operations have been successful in countering ISIS attack plans and disrupting the flow of foreign fighters into the Philippines, according to the DIA.[82]

ISIS-EA Maintains Force Strength Through Family and Local Recruitment Despite Losses

According to SOCPAC, Philippine counterterrorism operations, in partnership with U.S. advisors, have significantly degraded ISIS-EA and other Philippine VEOs, especially compared to the high-water mark of the Marawi siege in 2017. However, these groups continue to pose a threat to peace and stability in the southern Philippines.[83] This quarter, the DIA reported that its assessment of ISIS-EA's posture in the Philippines was unchanged from previous reports. The DIA continues to estimate that ISIS-EA consists of approximately 300 to 500 members, divided among several factions, including the ASG, the Esmael faction of the BIFF, the Maute Group, and Ansar Khalifah Philippines. According to DIA, fighters with historical ASG affiliations primarily operate on the islands of Basilan and Jolo. ISIS-EA's BIFF factions have a presence in Maguindanao and South Cotabato, and elements of the Maute Group retain a marginal presence in Lanao del Sur.[84]

The DIA reported that it had not observed specific recruitment figures for ISIS-EA in the Philippines nor any indication that would signify a shift in recruitment strategy or figures this quarter. The DIA stated that recruitment through family and clan networks typical of Philippine VEOs is difficult to track, but it assessed that ISIS-EA continues to draw on these pools of individuals for recruitment despite COVID-19-related restrictions on movement in the southern Philippines.[85]

The DIA reported that it observed no indicators of any change in ISIS-EA tactics or capabilities this quarter.[86] While it is likely that ISIS-EA and other VEOs aspire to launch more frequent and larger scale offensive operations, counterterrorism operations have likely hindered their ability to do so, according to the DIA. COVID-19-related travel restrictions may also be limiting the ability of VEOs to recruit and resupply.[87] The DIA stated that it had no information this quarter to indicate that ISIS-EA had shifted its overall pace of recruitment or attacks in any significant manner as a direct response to the COVID-19 pandemic.[88]

The DIA stated that recruitment through family and clan networks typical of Philippine VEOs is difficult to track, but it assessed that ISIS-EA continues to draw on these pools of individuals for recruitment despite COVID-19-related restrictions on movement in the southern Philippines.

Figure 1.

Areas of the Southern Philippines Where VEOs Are Active

Economic Fallout from COVID-19 May Benefit VEO Recruitment

The AFP typically cites a lack of employment opportunities and social alienation as the primary drivers for residents of the southern Philippines to join VEOs. According to SOCPAC, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated this problem, not just in the southern Philippines but nationwide.[89] The World Bank stated that the pandemic was taking a heavier toll on the Philippine economy than on its neighboring countries due to the Philippine government's reliance on stringent quarantine measures rather than early scaling up of its testing capacity and contact tracing efficiency. The World Bank assessed that the country's economy will shrink by 1.9 percent in 2020.[90] According to World Bank estimates, this will likely result in the poverty rate increasing by 3.3 percent.[91] SOCPAC described the outlook for employment in the Philippines in 2020 as "grim," with the increased number of unemployed workers, including tens of thousands of Filipinos returning home after losing employment abroad, resulting in a significantly larger recruiting pool for VEOs.[92]

Prisoners Released Due to COVID-19 Are at Risk for Radicalization

As last quarter's Lead IG report stated, surges of COVID-19 infections among the inmate populations of the Philippines' overcrowded prisons and jails have forced the government to consider early release and bail to alleviate the congestion that has made these facilities vulnerable to COVID-19 outbreaks.[93] Citing statistics found in open source reporting, SOCPAC stated that Indonesia had released 37,014 convicts, with plans to ultimately release a total of 50,000, equal to roughly 20 percent of the country's pre-pandemic prison population. The Malaysian government has similarly discussed plans to release up to 30,000 of the estimated 72,000 prisoners currently held in all of its correctional institutions (that were built to house 52,000). By comparison, the Philippine government has been relatively modest in granting such amnesty, releasing fewer than 10,000 of the 215,000 prisoners held nation-wide.[94]

The Philippines has the most overcrowded prison system in the world, with 215,000 prisoners held in facilities designed to house 41,000.[95] In SOCPAC's assessment, President Duterte has taken a more conservative approach to prisoner releases as a means of mitigating the spread of COVID-19 than neighboring countries have.[96] Nonetheless, SOCPAC views the early release of any inmates in the Philippines and neighboring countries as a potential increase to the VEO recruiting pool, adding that a significant number of released prisoners increases the pool of recruits that will return to their homes unemployed, and even non-violent criminals have a high probability of having been radicalized during their time in prison.[97]

AFP Counterterrorism Operations Minimize Foreign Fighter Presence in the Philippines

The DIA estimated that there were probably fewer than 20 active foreign terrorist fighters supporting ISIS-EA in the Philippines this quarter. These foreign fighters are mostly Indonesian and, to a lesser extent, Malaysian.[98] The double suicide attack on August 24 raised some initial concern about a potential Philippine-Indonesian ISIS nexus, as some media outlets erroneously reported that the suicide bombers were both Indonesian. However, Philippine security force investigations later determined that both were Filipina.[99] The DIA also stated that it was possible that COVID-19-related travel restrictions had disrupted regional terrorist movements.[100]

Although it identified no major influx of foreign fighters into the Philippines this quarter, the DIA assessed that Indonesian and Malaysian extremists probably continue to view the southern Philippines as an attractive destination for escaping counterterrorism pressure in their home countries. However, the DIA stated that the Philippines' new Anti-Terrorism Act, which went into effect last quarter, may change this dynamic, depending on how the law's provisions are implemented. As of the end of this quarter, the Philippine Department of Justice and the Anti-Terrorism Council were still working to establish implementing rules and regulations for the new law, which broadens the definition of "terrorism" and "terrorist" to include financial, material, recruitment, and media support. It allows for a maximum of 24 days of warrantless detention for terrorist suspects and removes penalties under a previous

law for arresting officers if a terrorism suspect had their charges dismissed. According to the DIA, once the new law is fully implemented, the southern Philippines may no longer be viewed as an attractive destination for regional foreign terrorists.[101]

The Anti-Terrorism Act also requires the Anti-Money Laundering Council, the Philippine government's financial intelligence agency, to examine the bank accounts of suspected terrorists. In early September, the Council signed a new memorandum of agreement with the Philippine Department of Finance to strengthen the cooperation between the two agencies in the fight against money laundering. According to SOCPAC, this new agreement aims to improve information sharing to detect, investigate, and prosecute money laundering and terrorism financing suspects.[102]

Although the number of foreign fighters in the Philippines remains small, these individuals tend to assume key roles and responsibilities as financial and communication facilitators and as attack planners and perpetrators.

SMALL NUMBER OF FOREIGN FIGHTERS HAVE LARGE IMPACT FOR ISIS-EA

Although the number of foreign fighters in the Philippines remains small, these individuals tend to assume key roles and responsibilities as financial and communication facilitators and as attack planners and perpetrators. They are likely highly valued by ISIS-EA leadership, but do not assume direct leadership roles. For example, during the siege of Marawi, Malaysian nationals Amin Baco and Mahmud Ahmad likely served as financial and communication facilitators for ISIS-EA. Before then, the DIA believes that Zulkifli Bin Hir, also a Malaysian, served as a bomb-making instructor for multiple Philippine VEOs. In recent years, Moroccan, Indonesian, and Egyptian nationals have served as attack planners and perpetrators in the Philippines.[103]

SOCPAC concurred with the DIA assessment that foreign terrorist fighters "are a critical force multiplier" for ISIS-EA and other Philippine VEOs due to the significant increase in capabilities and experience that they provide.[104] For example, SOCPAC stated that foreign fighters have been involved in bomb-making and training locals to construct improvised explosive devices. Many also have Arabic language skills necessary for coordination with ISIS-Core's predominantly Arab-speaking leaders and members. Foreign fighters have carried out suicide attacks, and the Philippine security forces recently detained an Indonesian woman, the widow of a former ASG leader, who was planning to carry out a suicide attack.[105]

Philippine counterterrorism forces are making concerted efforts to identify and detain foreign fighters and to tighten maritime borders with the goal of preventing new foreign fighters from entering the country, according to the DIA. These efforts along with COVID-19 travel restrictions have likely slowed new foreign jihadist elements' ability to enter the country.[106]

OPE-P COUNTERTERRORISM ACTIVITY

U.S. Advisors Support AFP Operations with Counterterrorism Targeting and Planning

This quarter, U.S. advisors supported their AFP partners in the intelligence and operations elements of counterterrorism targeting and planning, according to SOCPAC. This included the integration of airborne intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) assets in support of AFP activity throughout the region. U.S. military personnel conducted two advise and assist missions to help clear VEOs in Western Mindanao this quarter. Additionally,

Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte talks to troops at Edwin Andrews Air Base in Zamboanga City. (Philippines Presidential Communications photo)

U.S. special operations forces conducted four subject matter exchanges and assisted two local medical staffs with patient assessments and transfers, according to SOCPAC.[107]

According to SOCPAC, U.S. forces supported AFP efforts to further degrade ISIS-EA by providing airborne ISR in support of AFP and PNP-SAF ground operations in areas with high concentrations of VEO activity this quarter.[108] This included helping the AFP develop six target packages. Of these, the AFP took action against four targets on Mindanao and in the Sulu archipelago.[109]

The AFP's ISR capabilities consist primarily of human intelligence with some limited signals intelligence, according to SOCPAC. The Philippine Air Force maintains a small number of ScanEagle unmanned aerial systems in western Mindanao to collect aerial video. According to SOCPAC, the Philippine Air Force has limited its use of these assets to overland operations over Mindanao due to a previous ScanEagle crash in the Sulu Sea. Two modified Cessna 208s serve as the Philippine's premiere manned aerial ISR collection platforms. While these aircraft occasionally support counterterrorism operations, they are more often tasked with disaster relief missions and other priorities. SOCPAC stated that the AFP also employs commercial "off-the-shelf" unmanned aerial systems in support of ISR operations.[110] The AFP have not made noticeable improvements in their employment of ISR assets this quarter, but this effort to make improvements has been complicated by reduced access to partners due to COVID-19 restrictions, according to SOCPAC.[111]

U.S. Casualty Evacuation Support Supplements AFP Domestic Capacity

DoD contractors support the AFP's counterterrorism mission in the forms of casualty evacuations, technical and maintenance support to ISR assets, and air logistics support.[112] According to SOCPAC, U.S. forces provided support to two major AFP clearing operations this quarter. U.S. personnel provided aerial ISR, airborne medical evacuation and casualty care, and exploitation and analysis of captured enemy materials and improvised explosive devices.[113]

In addition to providing casualty evacuation assistance related to the August 24 Jolo bombing, U.S. special operations advisors helped facilitate the reception, stabilization, and evacuation of AFP killed and wounded that the AFP evacuated with their own air and ground transportation assets. This assistance included air evacuation of one AFP member killed and eight wounded during fighting in the Patikul region of Jolo island on August 29 and ground evacuation of one killed and three wounded in fighting in Talayan on Mindanao.[114]

PARTNER FORCE DEVELOPMENT

USINDOPACOM has previously stated that changes to OPE-P guidance, which included the removal of the OCO designation, were not intended to alter any of the operations, activities, or investments under the operation. This quarter, USINDOPACOM stated that capacity building is conducted under specific authorities provided under U.S. law for host nation security assistance and managed by DoD security assistance offices. OPE-P is and will remain a military operation conducted by USINDOPACOM to advise and assist the Philippine security forces, including the AFP and PNP-SAF, against trans national terrorist organizations.[115]

Some DoD security assistance activities support the development of Philippine counterterrorism capacity, either directly or indirectly, but these are not funded or executed under OPE-P authorities, according to USINDOPACOM. The Joint U.S. Military Assistance Group–Philippines, the DoD component assigned to the U.S. Embassy in Manila works with SOCPAC to synchronize U.S. security assistance and OPE-P activities, but the broader bilateral security assistance program is significantly larger than the relatively narrow counterterrorism effort.[116]

SOCPAC stated that while the AFP has made significant progress against VEOs since the start of OPE-P in 2017, further degradation of these groups in the short term was limited by the AFP's inability to locate and neutralize terrorists who have well-developed local support networks, lines of communication, and operational security practices. SOCPAC assessed that the AFP and PNP-SAF's collective ability to conduct combat, law enforcement, and intelligence gathering operations was sufficient to limit the threat posed by VEOs to its current state. However, the Philippine security forces have not demonstrated the capacity to sustain gains from successful counterterrorism operations by preventing these organizations from reconstituting their personnel, equipment, and finances after combat operations. SOCPAC stated that this will ultimately require a whole-of-government approach to reconciling the Philippines' Muslim minority with the national government.[117]

USINDOPACOM has previously stated that changes to OPE-P guidance, which included the removal of the OCO designation, were not intended to alter any of the operations, activities, or investments under the operation.

This quarter, SOCPAC reported that many U.S. troops limited their physical engagements with Philippine partners to comply with the Philippine government's COVID-19-related travel restrictions and to protect the health and safety of U.S. personnel. As such, U.S. military advisors did not directly interact with the AFP's Special Operations Command. SOCPAC added that it was unable to provide an assessment of any progress made in developing the capabilities or capacity of this new national-level command. Exceptions to the COVID-19-related restrictions included U.S. forces supporting counterterrorism operations on Mindanao and in the Sulu archipelago, U.S. Government and contractor ISR operations, casualty evacuation support, a Civil Military Support Element, and a minimal in-person presence to maintain equipment and facilities on Luzon.[118]

SOCPAC Recommends Building on AFP Strengths

SOCPAC stated that the AFP's leadership has typically received professional military education and frequently demonstrates the capability to execute large-scale operations in the difficult jungle and mountainous terrain where VEOs operate in the southern Philippines. SOCPAC recommended that the DoD continue to build on this capability through subject matter expert exchanges focused on staff battle planning to integrate artillery, close air support, and ground troops in close proximity to enemy forces.[119]

SOCPAC stated that the bilateral security partnership should not be limited to the tactical level. Analyst exchanges also help share information, improve the capability of Philippine analysts to provide accurate information to the warfighters, and help U.S. forces understand Philippine culture, according to SOCPAC.[120]

Effective Maritime Security Requires a Whole-of-Government Approach

SOCPAC stated that the Philippine government could significantly impede ISIS-EA's support network, lines of communication, and ability to reconstitute fighting power by focusing greater resources on maritime patrols and interdictions in the waters of the Sulu archipelago. However, SOCPAC added that while the military traditionally leads these efforts, they ultimately require a whole-of-government approach, including programs to address the needs of disaffected local populations.[121]

While the PNP Maritime Group, Philippine Coast Guard, and Naval Special Operations Units lead the direct operations, successful maritime interdiction operations require significant intelligence support. According to SOCPAC, the Philippine security forces lack sufficient capacity to prevent terrorist movement between islands or along the coast of Mindanao without significant human intelligence to identify threats, and this requires a civilian population willing to cooperate with the authorities.[122]

SOCPAC stated that addressing a disaffected population's needs will remain a key line of effort for the Philippine government in its effort to counter VEO threats, since populations that do not support or identify with the government's policies will either actively support the insurgency or refuse to help the government combat it. Additionally, the expanse of waters in the southern Philippines and the population's heavy involvement in fishing and water-borne transportation create a situation where the security forces are overwhelmed with possibilities, according to SOCPAC. The AFP needs a supportive population that will inform on ISIS-EA's whereabouts and activities so that military force can be efficiently focused on high-value enemy targets and rather than attempting to screen all traffic throughout the area. SOCPAC added that, in its assessment, a population that supports the Philippine government would be less willing to provide safe houses, transportation, and resources to VEOs.[123]

SOCPAC stated that addressing a disaffected population's needs will remain a key line of effort for the Philippine government in its effort to counter VEO threats, since populations that do not support or identify with the government's policies will either actively support the insurgency or refuse to help the government combat it.

Combat Methodology Employed by U.S. Advisors Combines Intelligence with Planning

In previous quarters, SOCPAC has stated that it advises the AFP in the targeting of terrorists with a doctrine called, "Find, Fix, Finish, Exploit, Analyze, and Disseminate." This methodology combines intelligence and operations into a single planning and execution cycle for counterterrorism operations. This quarter, SOCPAC provided a description of the AFP's progress in each phase of the cycle:

Find: Identify enemy targets for future counterterrorism operations

The AFP has robust networks of human intelligence, supplemented with some technical and aerial ISR capability. The AFP has shown a high degree of competence in this phase and is often the source of the information that allows U.S. assets to conduct the fix phase.

Fix: Locate the target at a specific time and place

The AFP's capability to fix is enhanced by U.S. military assistance. The AFP primarily uses foot patrols to gain contact with enemy forces moving through an area. The AFP's aerial ISR is limited by the canopy of the jungle and the altitude it must fly to mitigate the typical clouds and weather systems.

Finish: Lethal or non-lethal operations against the target

The AFP's finish capability is reduced by the complexity of conducting operations in the low light conditions of a jungle environment. However, the AFP will often begin operations during periods of darkness and continue into daylight hours.

Exploit: Gather intelligence from captured enemy personnel and equipment

The AFP understands the process of sensitive site exploitation and the value of items recovered. The AFP provides the U.S. advisors' exploitation lab with a significant quantity of items recovered from operations. These items have resulted in useful intelligence products. The PNP also operates an exploitation lab capable of conducting fingerprint, DNA, chemical, and tool marks analyses, but it is unable to conduct cellphone and media exploitation.

Analyze: Extract useful intelligence products from the exploit phase to inform future operations

AFP special operations units maintain a competent intelligence function that produces analysis and products that are sufficiently accurate and detailed to inform decision-making for future counterterrorism operations.

Disseminate: Share intelligence products derived from the analyze phase across the force for the next iteration of the cycle

After intelligence is produced, several factors, such as a lack of secure information systems and databases, limit the AFP and PNP's capability to share the information across the force.[124]

DoD Civil Military Support Assists AFP's COVID-19 Response

According to SOCPAC, the Civil Military Support Element Philippines, a special operations force that conducts targeted civil affairs operations in support of diplomatic and development objectives, was active in assisting the Philippine government's COVID-19 response efforts this quarter. As of September 10, this assistance included a total of 18 COVID-19-related projects worth more than $358,000 in total, with $1.7 million in medical and education projects scheduled for FY 2021. SOCPAC reported that projects conducted this quarter included providing $28,000 in personal protective equipment to the local government officials in Sulu province and Zamboanga city and $159,000 in medical supplies and personal protective equipment for local hospitals, contact tracers, and other first responders across the country.[125]

Additionally, on September 11, the Civil Military Support Element Philippines conducted combat casualty care training for 22 members of the Philippine Coast Guard, with the goals of enhancing the Coast Guard's immediate casualty care capability and increasing the interoperability of Philippine Coast Guard and U.S. military personnel.[126]

This quarter, the Philippine government tasked the AFP with setting up and operating COVID-19 screening checkpoints in the more densely populated areas of Mindanao, according to SOCPAC. These checkpoints are typically staffed by one or two uniformed personnel, and SOCPAC assessed that this diversion of resources has had a low to moderate impact on the counterterrorism mission, with the AFP still planning and conducting major operations and minor patrols this quarter. However, the use of forces and resources for checkpoints is a strain on the AFP. The additional requirements for intra-island travel and quarantine measures with reduced staffing have had a compounding effect on personnel challenges. [127] Movement of U.S. advisors to the AFP requires coordination between U.S. military components, the AFP, and local governors, which USINDOPACOM says has made travel more difficult. Additionally, reduced staffing within the Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs has delayed approvals for in-coming U.S. personnel.[128] According to SOCPAC, the AFP remains focused on its counterterrorism mission, but COVID-19 restrictions have required some modifications to ongoing operations.[129]

USINDOPACOM reported that, in general, the AFP's COVID-19 mitigation and support activities consumed a smaller share of its resources this quarter than last quarter, when the pandemic first began. While U.S. and Philippine health and safety restrictions have limited some elements of U.S. military support under OPE-P, especially face-to-face meetings and travel, USINDOPACOM assessed that these limitations were temporary given the heightened pandemic mitigation measures. However, limited use of commercial aircraft, prioritization of military aircraft for other missions, and frequently changing travel restrictions and quarantine requirements due to COVID-19 resulted in delays and the unpredictability of the arrivals and departures of U.S. personnel.[130]

This quarter, the Philippine government tasked the AFP with setting up and operating COVID-19 screening checkpoints in the more densely populated areas of Mindanao, according to SOCPAC.

DIPLOMACY AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

VFA Discussions Continue Without Resolution

Last quarter, the Philippine government announced that it had suspended its previously announced withdrawal from the U.S.-Philippines Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA).[131] The VFA is the bilateral agreement that establishes the rules by which U.S. military personnel, vessels, and aircraft may enter the Philippines and stipulates how criminal offenses committed by U.S. military personnel in the Philippines should be prosecuted.[132] The Philippine government announced that the suspension would last for an initial 6-month period, and it reserved the ability to extend the suspension for an additional 6 months.[133]

The U.S. Embassy in Manila stated in September that the initial 6-month suspension of termination, which continued this quarter, would apply until December 1, 2020. The embassy added that if the Philippine government did not implement the 6-month extension or withdraw the termination decision altogether before December 1, the original termination process would resume, counting down toward an expected termination on February 9, 2021. The embassy reported that the U.S. Government is engaging with the Philippine government and military leadership through multiple channels to highlight the benefits of the security partnership and encourage the Philippine government to rescind its termination decision.[134]

While the embassy has stated the strong support of the U.S. Government for continuing the VFA, the Philippine government has made no formal statements regarding how it plans to act when the suspension of termination expires.

While the embassy has stated the strong support of the U.S. Government for continuing the VFA, the Philippine government has made no formal statements regarding how it plans to act when the suspension of termination expires. The Philippine government has cut the proposed 2021 budget for the Presidential Commission on Visiting Forces, which oversees the implementation of the VFA, by more than half—from $580,000 in 2020 to $250,000 in 2021.[135] Shortly after the quarter ended, Philippine Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr., who previously advocated for preserving the VFA, told reporters that the commission's "budget must reflect the fact that we have abrogated the VFA."[136] As of the end of the quarter, the commission's budget was still under review by the Philippine Senate.[137]

DUTERTE PARDONS U.S. MARINE WHOSE CRIME DREW CRITICISM OF THE VFA

On September 7, Philippine Foreign Secretary Teodoro Locsin, Jr. announced that President Duterte had pardoned U.S. Marine Lance Corporal Joseph Scott Pemberton, who was convicted of killing a transgender woman in the Philippines 6 years ago. Pemberton confessed to choking and drowning Jennifer Laude in 2014 and was convicted in 2015.[138]

Under the terms of the VFA, Pemberton served most of his sentence at a military base near Manila, guarded by both U.S. and Philippine security personnel, rather than in one of the Philippines' overcrowded prisons.[139] (See page 18.) According to media reports, Pemberton's arrest in 2014 and his release this quarter stoked public resentment because of perceptions of preferential treatment afforded to U.S. military personnel in the Philippines. Past accusations that U.S. military personnel committed crimes against Filipinos stirred anti-U.S. sentiment and contributed to the closure of U.S. military bases at Subic Bay and Clark Air Base in the early 1990s. These instances have periodically arisen as a contentious political issue in the Philippines.[140]

In a September cable, the U.S. Embassy in Manila reported that the release of Pemberton would expedite the elimination of a long-standing "irritant" in the relationship between the U.S. and Philippine governments amid efforts to restore the VFA.[141] After Pemberton's deportation on September 13, the embassy asserted in a cable that, despite the emotionally charged case provoking outcry in the Philippines over alleged preferential treatment, Pemberton's case was processed in accordance with the VFA. The embassy noted in the cable that while the future of the VFA was unclear, the cooperation demonstrated by both sides in the process of concluding the Pemberton case may serve as a constructive precedent and help convince the Philippine government to set aside VFA termination.[142]

DoS Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations Sponsors Activities to Counter Violent Extremism

The DoS Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations reported that its Countering Violent Extremism through Responsive Government and Civil Society Engagement Initiative continued during the quarter. The bureau reported that the implementing partner for this initiative, the Asia Foundation, provided non governmental organizations and local governments in Zamboanga, Basilan, and Maguindanao with virtual training to counter misinformation online and highlight the work that local governments are doing to address the COVID-19 pandemic. The bureau reported that local governments shared reports of how violent extremist groups were exploiting the pandemic as part of their broader anti-government narrative. According to the bureau, the Asia Foundation partnered with public health professionals and communications experts to assist local governments and non-governmental organizations in developing risk management and communication strategies in response to the pandemic.[143]

Plans for DoS-funded Regional Counterterrorism Training Center Stalled, May Be Adjusted

The DoS Bureau of Diplomatic Security reported that there was no progress made this quarter with respect to the construction of the long-planned Regional Counterterrorism Training Center in the Philippines. The bureau de-obligated funding for the Center to avoid expiration of funds, but the DoS could re-fund the project on an adjusted plan with newly obligated funds, pending further internal discussions and engagement with the Philippines government on a way forward.[144]

Notwithstanding the lack of progress this quarter with the construction of the Regional Counterterrorism Training Center, the DoS plans to continue to provide training to the PNP through the Anti-Terrorism Assistance program. While these training courses continued to be cancelled throughout the quarter due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Bureau of Diplomatic Security stated that it tentatively plans to resume training courses in March 2021.[145]

Notwithstanding the lack of progress this quarter with the construction of the Regional Counter-terrorism Training Center, the DoS plans to continue to provide training to the PNP through the Anti-Terrorism Assistance program.

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE AND DEVELOPMENT

USAID Identifies Lessons Learned from the Marawi Response

USAID stated that when the siege happened in 2017, it redirected several ongoing programs to respond to the crisis.

The USAID Mission in the Philippines stated that it plans to conduct an evaluation of its response to the Marawi siege next year.[146] In the meantime, USAID identified areas where subsequent assistance efforts might be improved. For future responses to similar crises, USAID reported that there may be a need to define assistance objectives more clearly and that a common understanding among USAID offices and bureaus of countering violent extremism programming might help promote more effective implementation of response efforts.[147] USAID stated that this programming was updated in its new countering violent extremism policy during the implementation of USAID programs on Mindanao following the Marawi siege with a clearer definition and programming framework. [148] Under the new policy, USAID interventions can only be categorized as countering violent extremism programming if they reduce the risk of recruitment and radicalization to violence and build the capacity and commitment of partner governments, civil society, and the private sector to counter violent extremist threats.[149]

USAID stated that when the siege happened in 2017, it redirected several ongoing programs to respond to the crisis.[150] USAID shifted its development strategy towards broader development goals in November 2019. The new Country Development Cooperation Strategy, which had previously included a specific development objective for peace and stability on Mindanao, contained no explicit development objectives related to either violent extremism or instability. Instead, it aimed to address terrorist recruitment and radicalization by strengthening government and community capacity to respond to transnational threats.[151] Follow-on programs, such as the Marawi Response Project, implemented recovery assistance with a greater awareness of the violent extremist environment, according to USAID.[152]

USAID also noted that better estimates of time and resources needed to deliver assistance in areas beset by violence, might allow the mission to pivot more quickly and build on existing programs in future crises.[153] A more realistic estimate of the time required to implement interventions might also improve future activities in comparable post-conflict environments, according to USAID.[154]

USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance reported that it had to adapt its usual transitional shelter strategy to the unique challenges in the aftermath of the Marawi siege.[155] Normally, the bureau would obtain large land areas to use as relocation sites for IDPs. However, the lack of documented land titles and complicated traditional ownership structure in Marawi made it difficult to obtain sufficiently large tracts of land on which to construct such relocation sites.[156] Instead, a USAID implementer provided other shelter options, including long-term rental assistance, and requested IDPs locate small plots of land on which to construct smaller shelter settlements.[157]

Marawi Reconstruction Restarts Following COVID-19-Related Delays

USAID reported this quarter that debris removal in Marawi was largely complete, except for damaged and destroyed buildings where private owners did not permit demolition. However, the Task Force Bangon Marawi, the Philippine government's interagency organization to coordinate reconstruction efforts, has not provided an updated timeline for the return of IDPs to the most heavily damaged areas of Marawi.[158]

USAID reported this quarter that debris removal in Marawi was largely complete, except for damaged and destroyed buildings where private owners did not permit demolition.

Reconstruction efforts restarted in June, following a pause due to COVID-19 quarantine restrictions.[159] This work continued on eight civic buildings, a four-story school building, the central market, the city jail, and the central fire station.[160] A 12-mile road connecting Marawi with outlying areas was more than 80 percent complete and is estimated to be completed by December 2020, according to USAID.[161] In September, work began on a 15-mile road network inside the most damaged area of Marawi, with an estimated completion date of December 2021.[162] Repair of three mosques also began in September.[163]

According to USAID, the Philippine government estimated that Marawi reconstruction will be completed before December 2021.[164] However, the Philippine government has previously failed to meet its own projections of when work in Marawi will be completed. In March 2019, the Task Force Bangon Marawi stated that IDPs would be able to return to their homes by July of that year. This estimate was later revised to September and then to December, with many IDPs still waiting to return as of the end of this quarter.[165]

In FYs 2019 and 2020, the USAID Mission in the Philippines obligated $37 million for its response to the Marawi siege and provided support for restoring livelihoods, improving education, and repairing and enhancing water and sanitation services and infrastructure. USAID's Marawi Response Program offered non-cash microgrants ranging from $5,000 to $50,000 to displaced families and host communities.[166] Microgrant beneficiaries included business owners from the most damaged area of Marawi, who were given grants to increase employment of IDPs or host residents, according to USAID.[167] USAID also reported that more than 9,000 school administrators and local government officials from 91 cities and municipalities were trained through USAID's Education Governance Effectiveness activity on fiscal management and utilization of local education funds.[168]

USAID's Strengthening Urban Resilience for Growth and Equity activity aims to assist the Philippine government with repairing and upgrading water infrastructure and to help water service providers to improve the sustainability of water and sanitation services.[169] This program also provided livelihood support, including skills capacity and technical training, start-up materials and equipment, and market access, to displaced individuals, traders, and business owners to support their recovery and broader economic rehabilitation in Marawi, according to USAID.[170]

Number of Marawi IDPs Remains Stable, and Water and Shelter Needs Continue

Water and shelter continue to be concerns for IDPs, in addition to food security due to the ongoing economic recession and the COVID-19 outbreak.

The number of IDPs from the 2017 Marawi conflict remained steady this quarter at approximately 66,000, according to USAID.[171] The majority of IDPs are former residents of the most damaged part of the city whose homes have been completely destroyed.[172] USAID reported that another 3,000 persons were temporarily displaced for a few weeks in the Datu Salibo municipality starting on July 27, 2020, due to conflict between the AFP and BIFF.[173] A USAID implementer distributed hygiene kits to 671 households in Datu Salibo and nearby Ampatuan in response to this incident, according to USAID.[174]

Water and shelter continue to be concerns for IDPs, in addition to food security due to the ongoing economic recession and the COVID-19 outbreak.[175] This quarter, USAID reported its implementer continued to provide transitional housing to IDPs, bringing the total number of households supported to 720 families.[176] There were no other noticeable improvements in shelter conditions for the majority of IDPs and no handovers provided under housing programs supported by the Philippine government, the United Nations, or non-governmental organizations.[177] The water supply within and around Marawi improved with support from the Philippine government and the Asian Development Bank water infrastructure projects, according to USAID.[178] However, the Philippine government encountered difficulties with borehole drilling for wells in IDP shelter sites and requested continued assistance from USAID for water trucking to meet immediate needs.[179] A USAID implementer provided water trucking to Marawi that reached more than 1,000 IDPs daily with 20,000 liters of water supply.[180]

Since FY 2017, USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance has obligated more than $19.8 million in response to the Marawi siege.[181] This quarter, USAID reported obligating $1.5 million in a new award to provide food assistance in Lanao del Sur, including cash transfers to IDP households and hygiene promotion activities to support COVID-19 prevention.[182] Although COVID-19-related quarantine measures during the last 3 weeks of September caused some delays to humanitarian assistance in the BARMM, USAID implementers continued to provide services to IDP populations, according to USAID.[183] Ongoing USAID activities included assistance for approximately 14,000 IDPs with emergency water supply, hygiene supplies, sanitation, and support for livelihoods through cash for work programs.[184] In addition, USAID supported transitional shelter for 2,000 IDPs and savings and lending activities for 600 IDP households.[185]

USAID Directs Programming to Support BARMM Government

USAID'S FORWARD BANGSAMORO ACTIVITY PROVIDES TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND PLANNING FOR BARMM MINISTRIES

This quarter, USAID reported that its FORWARD Bangsamoro activity, which aims to bolster local governance in the BARMM, supported several program reviews and planning efforts for BARMM government ministries.[186] For example, FORWARD Bangsamoro supported technical reviews of plans and programs for the Ministry of Human Settlements and Development and the Ministry of Public Order and Safety, according to USAID.[187]

During these reviews, USAID agreed to provide assistance to a psychosocial support program for Moro communities, technical support to local governments on the preparation of a comprehensive land use plan, and support for the conduct of a Regional Bangsamoro Peace Forum.[188]

USAID reported that FORWARD Bangsamoro also provided technical assistance for the drafting of the Bangsamoro Development Plan, which outlines plans for the development of airports, tourism, forestry, and land acquisition under the new BARMM regional government.[189] Technical support to the Ministry of Trade, Industry, and Tourism on business sector consultations will be used as input to the regional trade and industry plan, according to USAID.[190] COVID-19-related assistance to the BARMM included building the capacity of farmers to boost agricultural production and mitigate food insecurity during the pandemic.[191]

TWO NEW USAID AWARDS AIM TO SUPPORT PEACE AND STABILITY ACTIVITIES

This quarter, USAID reported that it had awarded two new procurements related to promoting peace and stability in the BARMM. USAID reported that the Enduring Peace in the Bangsamoro activity, a $1.1 million, 3-year award scheduled to have started on October 1, is intended to improve participatory governance structures, develop community-owned peacebuilding mechanisms, and foster trust, empathy, and mutual understanding among communities in Basilan, Maguindanao, and Cotabato City.[192] According to USAID, the second award is the Women's Global Development and Prosperity New Partnerships Initiative Mindanao, a $2.5 million, 5-year activity that began on August 9, and which is designed to strengthen peace and stability in the BARMM by improving economic opportunities for women in the region.[193]

USAID reported that the Women's Global Development and Prosperity New Partnerships Initiative Mindanao intends to provide business development and organizational training for women entrepreneurs as well as support the design of an online hub for women's business opportunities in the BARMM.[194] The program will also work with local partners to advocate for policy support on women economic empowerment and gender-equality by the BARMM government.[195] It also intends to identify support from partner firms to bridge gaps in local value chains, build peer learning networks, and link women employees or job seekers to potential employers or those providing specific job-related training, according to USAID.[196]

USAID Focuses Resources on COVID-19 Response

The WHO reported that the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in the Philippines increased by more than 800 percent this quarter, from 37,514 confirmed cases as of June 30 to 309,303 as of September 29.[197] In addition to stressing Mindanao's health systems, the pandemic also risks undermining progress made under the Bangsamoro Peace Process, including the creation of the BARMM, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).[198]

As of the end of the quarter, USAID reported that it had obligated approximately $21.9 million for the response to the COVID-19 outbreak in the Philippines, including $1.3 million in funding for communities directly affected by the Marawi siege in 2017 and $2.2 million to support COVID-19-related health activities on Mindanao.[199]

The WHO reported that the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in the Philippines increased by more than 800 percent this quarter, from 37,514 confirmed cases as of June 30 to 309,303 as of September 29.

This quarter, USAID reported that it supported COVID-19 testing on Mindanao through its Infectious Disease Detection and Surveillance project with the transportation of more than 12,000 specimens to testing laboratories. According to USAID, the turnaround time from collection to transport improved from 2 to 4 days to an average of 3 hours.[200] USAID's ReachHealth project supported village-level emergency health response teams in strengthening their navigation, monitoring, and contact tracing capacity.[201] This project conducted contact tracing development and aims to support the development of village-level plans to improve the links between testing teams and contact tracing teams in areas with severe outbreaks, according to USAID.[202]

USAID reported that it has obligated approximately $6.8 million in COVID-19 supplemental International Disaster Assistance funding since June 2020 to help earthquake and conflict-affected IDPs and host communities, including those affected by the Marawi siege, across the BARMM and other regions on Mindanao to prepare for and mitigate the spread of COVID-19.[203] According to USAID, it is providing funding to distribute hygiene supplies, install handwashing stations, disseminate critical information about how to prevent the spread of COVID-19, help families build emergency shelters to ease crowding and create safe places to reside, and provide support for COVID-19 prevention efforts in transitory shelters for IDPs.[204]

More broadly, USAID reported that it delivered 100 ventilators to the Philippine government on August 28.[205] This delivery included clinical training sessions and additional medical supplies and consumables that would sustain use for 2- patients per ventilator, depending on use.[206] The recipient hospitals and government entities will assume responsibility for costs associated with maintaining the equipment after the expiration

Executive Secretary of the Philippines Salvador Medialdea (left) receives one of the 100 U.S.-donated ventilators from U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines Sung Kim (right). (Philippines Presidential Communications photo)

of a 1-year warranty, according to USAID.[207] USAID reported that distribution of these ventilators to 47 hospitals by the Philippine government's Office of Civil Defense began in the first week of September and was planned to be completed by the end of October.[208]

Additionally, USAID reported that it provided assistance to local governments to strengthen health service delivery at the village and household levels; to implement training for protection against infection; to support the Philippines Department of Health's communication of the latest COVID-19 guidelines; and to expand community access to water, sanitation, and hygiene information.[209]

PANDEMIC STRESSES WEAK HEALTHCARE SYSTEM CAPACITY ON MINDANAO

The COVID-19 pandemic strained hospital capacity on Mindanao this quarter, according to USAID. A surge in cases in Lanao del Sur province, with 136 active cases as of September 25, led to province-wide quarantine measures in the last 3 weeks of September.[210] Most new cases in the BARMM this quarter were found among overseas workers returning from high-risk areas, many of whom were stranded in cities like Manila due to quarantine policies and related travel restrictions in place within the Philippines.[211]

As of September 27, the utilization rate of COVID-19 hospital beds had exceeded the 30 percent threshold that is considered safe because of the constant possibility of sudden surges in need, according to USAID, with Northern Mindanao at nearly 55 percent and the Davao region at 70 percent capacity.[212] USAID reported that the use of mechanical ventilators in the BARMM had already reached 40 percent of capacity; using more than 30 percent is generally considered unsafe.[213] According to a media interview with a Philippine health official, the 30 percent safety threshold is designed to allow room for surge capacity in the event of a sudden increase in cases. Hospital utilization for COVID-19 patients between 30 and 70 percent is considered a warning status, and above 70 percent, hospitals are in danger of being full in case of a surge.[214]

Additionally, an insufficient supply of personal protective equipment combined with poor infection prevention and control practices resulted in a high incidence of infection in healthcare workers in some areas, according to USAID.[215] Secondary impacts from the outbreak also impeded healthcare services, such as expectant mothers being turned away in some cases at hospitals because they were unable to show a negative COVID-19 test result, a requirement for patients to be admitted to hospitals.[216]

USAID reported that the Philippine government's response to the outbreak on Mindanao was constrained by weak local health systems capacity, including an ongoing need to improve contact tracing.[217] Of the 55 temporary non-hospital health facilities assessed on Mindanao, 47 percent were not certified by the Department of Health, and 80 percent were not certified by the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation due to collaboration challenges between local governments and regional Department of Health and Philippine Health Insurance Corporation offices, as well as an uneven understanding of the value of certifications and accreditations of health facilities.[218]

As of September 27, the utilization rate of COVID-19 hospital beds had exceeded the 30 percent threshold that is considered safe because of the constant possibility of sudden surges in need, according to USAID.

In August, OCHA reported that a widespread emergence of COVID-19 could present serious challenges on Mindanao, which accounts for only 24 percent of the total population of the Philippines but 36 percent of the country's poor.

The UN COVID-19 Humanitarian Response Plan for the Philippines, published in August, noted that Mindanao's fragile health system, limited number of testing facilities, and IDP locations with limited or no access to health services, exacerbated by travel restrictions, increased the concern of the widespread emergence of COVID-19 in the region.[219] The priorities for the BARMM in the national COVID-19 Response Plan focus on prevention, control, mitigation, and the management of cases.[220]

OCHA REPORTS THAT PANDEMIC MAY INCREASE DISPLACEMENT, COMPLICATE HUMANITARIAN AND DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS, AND STALL THE PEACE PROCESS

In August, OCHA reported that a widespread emergence of COVID-19 could present serious challenges on Mindanao, which accounts for only 24 percent of the total population of the Philippines but 36 percent of the country's poor.[221] Security operations and conflict between armed groups, including longstanding feuds over resources and political power that have continued in spite of the COVID-19 outbreak, may produce more displacement of communities that have been previously disturbed by conflict or otherwise marginalized.[222] OCHA also reported that the COVID-19 outbreak has further complicated the response on Mindanao and requires sustained humanitarian and development support to maintain gains that have resulted from peace efforts.[223]

DoS Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration Supports Humanitarian Assistance in the Philippines through International Organizations

The DoS Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (DoS PRM) reported that it provided $2,825,000 in humanitarian assistance through the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) programs in the Philippines this quarter, including $225,000 for COVID-19 response efforts.[224]

Regarding ongoing challenges to humanitarian assistance in the Philippines, DoS PRM reported that conflict and instability on the island group of Mindanao—which along with natural disasters have left thousands of people displaced over decades—continue to drive new displacement. DoS PRM reported that in recent months, there has been a gradual transition from an emergency COVID-19 response to a resumption of protection and assistance activities in these conflict-affected areas. However, DoS PRM noted that historical challenges are now compounded by COVID-19 health concerns.[225]

UNHCR AIMS TO ASSIST IDPS THROUGH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO GOVERNMENT ENTITIES AND DIRECT AID

DoS PRM reported that UNHCR works closely with the Philippine government on assistance to IDPs in Marawi by co-leading the protection forum for Marawi IDPs with Task Force Bangon Marawi. DoS PRM reported that UNHCR focuses on supporting the Philippine government's efforts to address housing, property, and land issues. This includes providing technical assistance to the Land Dispute Resolution Committee and to Philippine legislators on draft Marawi IDP compensation bills. DoS PRM reported that UNHCR

continued its advocacy and engagement in technical discussions on the passage of a regional IDP law in the Bangsamoro parliament.[226]

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, UNHCR also continued to operate the Mindanao Virtual Protection Coordination Platform and Protection Forum to support the BARMM Ministry of Social Services and Development, with the goal of promoting information sharing and joint action between the government and humanitarian actors. DoS PRM reported that UNHCR is expected to complete the handover of quick-impact projects in 12 sites hosting IDPs across Marawi city, Maguindanao, and Cotabato as part of its COVID-19 response. DoS PRM reported that it expects these projects to benefit approximately 25,000 displaced individuals through construction of shallow wells, handwashing facilities, latrines, water pumps, and communal public health toilets, as well as the distribution of hygiene kits and rehabilitation of water systems. DoS PRM reported that UNHCR also distributed approximately 3,000 sets of hygiene kits to approximately 15,000 IDPs in high-risk communities on Mindanao.[227]

ICRC EFFORTS FOCUS ON BASIC NEEDS AND CHALLENGES RELATED TO COVID-19

DoS PRM reported that the ICRC provided food and other assistance, such as hygiene items, water and sanitation services, medical care, mental and psychosocial care, physical rehabilitation, and livelihood support to victims of conflicts. Additional assistance included small cash grants of approximately $100 each to 1,032 households in the Maguindanao municipalities of Ampatuan and Datu Hoffer to help with immediate needs.[228]

DoS PRM reported that the ICRC works with the Philippine government and non-governmental armed groups on compliance with international humanitarian law. It also aims to reunite families separated by conflict. DoS PRM reported that the ICRC has helped respond to the COVID-19 pandemic by providing training to front-line workers in 10 institutions on Mindanao, donating more than 8,000 personal protective equipment kits to medical facilities in conflict-affected regions, and setting up community quarantine facilities. DoS PRM added that the ICRC continues to assist the Philippine government with infection control inside detention centers, benefiting approximately 36,000 persons in 53 detention centers, including support for 8 medical isolation centers in detention centers with a total capacity of 1,100 beds.[229]

BUDGET AND EXECUTION

USINDOPACOM reported that it had committed $85.4 million, obligated $80.6 million, and disbursed $36.7 million in base and OCO spending in support of OPE-P during FY 2020.[230] (See Table 1.) USINDOPACOM reported that its FY 2021 OCO budget request for OPE-P is approximately $72.3 million. While less than the FY 2020 budget, it supports many of the same requirements, including $43.5 million for contractor-owned and -operated ISR through the U.S. Navy's operation and maintenance budget, $24.8 million for U.S. Navy casualty evacuation support, and $4.9 million for U.S. Marine Corps facilities support.[231] According to SOCPAC, ISR support remains the most critical component for sustaining current U.S. military support to Philippine counterterrorism operation.[232]

USINDOPACOM reported that it had committed $85.4 million, obligated $80.6 million, and disbursed $36.7 million in base and OCO spending in support of OPE-P during FY 2020.

Table 1.

FY 2020 Spending on OPE-P, in $ Thousands

					Year to Date		
	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	4th Quarter	Base	OCO	TOTAL
Commitments	26,222.3	28,504.1	13,487.0	17,167.1	8,046.9	77,333.6	**85,380.5**
Obligations	23,723.0	16,503.3	12,480.7	27,891.9	8,866.3	71,732.6	**80,598.9**
Disbursements	8,685.9	4,759.3	2,622.3	20,612.1	1,382.8	35,296.8	**36,679.6**

Source: OUSD (Comptroller).

Foreign Military Financing Focuses on Improving Philippine Maritime Security, Disaster Response, and Professionalization

The DoS Bureau of Political-Military Affairs reported that the U.S. Government provided the Philippine government with a total of $40 million in FY 2020 Foreign Military Financing funds, primarily to support the Philippine government's maritime security, disaster response, and military professionalization capacities. According to the bureau, a provisional spend plan created by the U.S. Embassy in Manila indicated that $10 million of these funds would support the AFP's counterterrorism capacity through the procurement of communications equipment, night vision devices, unmanned aerial systems, vehicles, precision guided munitions, and related integration work. The bureau added that the DoS requested $40 million in Foreign Military Financing funds for the Philippines in its FY 2021 budget request.[233]

PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT'S MISUNDERSTANDING OF CONTRACT OBLIGATIONS LEADS TO MINOR VIOLATIONS OF END-USER AGREEMENTS

This quarter, the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs reported that the AFP was not in compliance with some of the end-user agreements for weapons and other materiel procured through the Foreign Military Sales program. In the past year, the DoS has received notifications of two incidents in which the AFP failed to obtain U.S. Government authorization to transfer U.S.-provided defense articles to third parties. In both cases, the bureau reported that the violations were a result of the AFP's lack of understanding of its obligations under the terms and conditions of the U.S. Government providing the equipment.[234]

The bureau further reported that it had determined the violations were not substantial and, therefore, did not require an official notification and report to the U.S. Congress. The bureau reported that the AFP has cooperated with the U.S. Government in answering questions and providing requested information. The bureau continues to work with the AFP so that the Philippines can maintain its current compliance with its end-user agreements to prevent such unauthorized transfers from happening again.[235]

OVERSIGHT ACTIVITIES

This section of the report provides information on Lead IG and partner agencies' completed and ongoing oversight work related to audits, inspections, and evaluations; Lead IG investigations; and hotline activities from July 1, 2020, through September 30, 2020.

As previously discussed, OPE-P sunset for Lead IG reporting and monitoring purposes, as of the end of FY 2020. Oversight projects for OPE-P that began in FY 2020 and were not completed by the publication of this report will continue. Lead IG and partner agencies' oversight will continue under their individual statutory authorities, and each will publish their reports according to their agency procedures.

AUDIT, INSPECTION, AND EVALUATION ACTIVITY

The Lead IG agencies use dedicated, rotational, and temporary employees, as well as contractors, to conduct oversight projects, investigate fraud and corruption, and provide consolidated planning and reporting on the status of overseas contingency operations.

The COVID-19 global pandemic continued to affect the Lead IG agencies' ability to conduct oversight on projects related to overseas contingency operations. Due to the evacuation of deployed staff from overseas locations and country-imposed travel restrictions, the Lead IG agencies continued to conduct oversight work while teleworking and practicing social distancing. Some oversight projects were either delayed or deferred, or the scope of the work was revised or narrowed.

Based on DoD force health protection guidance, the DoD OIG made decisions on when to return personnel to overseas locations on a case-by-case basis. The DoS OIG and USAID OIG have also monitored local conditions to determine when to resume overseas oversight operations. Prior to the pandemic, some oversight staff from the Lead IG agencies would travel to the Philippines and other locations in the region to conduct fieldwork for their oversight projects.

Despite these constraints, the Lead IG agencies and their partner agencies completed two reports related to OPE-P during the quarter. These reports examined security controls for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance asset supply chains in the USINDOPACOM area of responsibility, and DoS management of awards for humanitarian assistance programs.

As of September 30, six oversight projects related to the Philippines were ongoing. Project titles and objectives for the ongoing projects can be found in Appendix C.

Final Reports by Lead IG Agencies

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Evaluation of DoD Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Supply Chains

DODIG-2020-106; July 22, 2020

The DoD OIG evaluated security controls for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance asset supply chains in the USINDOPACOM area of responsibility. The final report was classified.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Classified Inspection of the U.S. Mission to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva, Switzerland

ISP-S-20-16; Jul 7, 2020

The DoS OIG issued this classified report based on its inspection of the U.S. Mission to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva, Switzerland. An unclassified report was published last quarter and a summary of that report was included in the previous OPE-P quarterly report. This classified report was provided to authorized recipients.

INVESTIGATIONS AND HOTLINE ACTIVITY

The investigative components of the Lead IG agencies and their partner agencies continued to conduct investigative activity related to OPE-P during the quarter. The Lead IG agencies and their partner agencies coordinate their investigative efforts through the Fraud and Corruption Investigative Working Group, which consists of representatives from the Defense Criminal Investigative Service (DCIS, the DoD OIG's criminal investigative component), the DoS OIG, USAID OIG, the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command, the Naval Criminal Investigative Service, and the Air Force Office of Special Investigations.

COVID-19 continued to affect the Lead IG agencies' ability to conduct OPE-P related investigations. DCIS investigators neither traveled to the Philippines this quarter, nor initiated any new investigations there. Ongoing and future OPE-P related cases will be addressed by DCIS investigators stationed in South Korea. USAID OIG investigators have temporarily relocated from the Philippines but have been teleworking from other locations on OPE-P related cases.

During the quarter, the investigative branches of the Lead IG agencies and their partner agencies coordinated on four open investigations. The open investigations involved grant and procurement fraud, theft, and corruption.

Hotline

Each Lead IG agency maintains its own hotline to receive complaints and contacts specific to its agency. The hotlines provide a confidential, reliable means for individuals to report violations of law, rule, or regulation; mismanagement; gross waste of funds; and abuse of authority for independent review. A DoD OIG investigator coordinates the hotline contacts among the Lead IG agencies and others, as appropriate. This quarter, the investigator did not receive any complaints related to OPE-P.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
Classified Appendix to this Report

Previous editions of this quarterly report contained a classified appendix that provided additional information on Operation Pacific Eagle–Philippines. Due to the coronavirus disease–2019 pandemic, the Lead IG agencies did not prepare a classified appendix this quarter.

APPENDIX B
Methodology for Preparing this Lead IG Report

This report complies with section 8L of the Inspector General Act of 1978, which requires that the designated Lead IG provide a quarterly report, available to the public, on each overseas contingency operation, and is consistent with the requirement that a biannual report be published by the Lead IG on the activities of the Inspectors General with respect to that overseas contingency operation. The Chair of the Council of Inspectors General for Integrity and Efficiency designated the DoD IG as the Lead IG for Operation Pacific Eagle-Philippines. The DoS IG is the Associate Lead IG for the operation.

This report's content was contributed by the three Lead IG agencies—DoD OIG, DoS OIG, and USAID OIG—and by partner oversight agencies. This report covers the period from July 1, 2020, through September 30, 2020.

To fulfill the congressional mandate to report on OPE-P, the Lead IG agencies gather data and information from Federal agencies and open sources. The sources of information contained in this

Aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan steams through the San Bernardino Strait, crossing from the Philippine Sea into the South China Sea. (U.S. Navy photo)

report are listed in endnotes or notes to tables and figures. Except in the case of audits, inspections, investigations, and evaluations referenced in this report, the Lead IG agencies have not verified or audited the information collected through open-source research or from Federal agencies, and the information provided represents the view of the source cited in each instance.

INFORMATION COLLECTION FROM AGENCIES AND OPEN SOURCES

Each quarter, the Lead IG agencies gather information from the DoD, DoS, USAID, and other Federal agencies about their programs and operations related to OPE-P. The Lead IG agencies use the information provided by their respective agencies for quarterly reporting and oversight planning.

This report also draws on current, publicly available information from reputable sources. Sources used in this report may include the following:

- U.S. Government statements, press conferences, and reports
- Reports issued by international organizations, nongovernmental organizations, and think tanks
- Media reports

The Lead IG agencies use open-source information to assess information obtained through their agency information collection process and provide additional detail about the operation.

REPORT PRODUCTION

The DoD OIG, as the Lead IG for this operation, is responsible for assembling and producing this report. The DoD OIG, the DoS OIG, and the USAID OIG draft the sections of the report related to the activities of their agencies and then participate in the editing of the entire report. Once the report is assembled, each OIG coordinates a two-phase review process within its own agency. During the first review, the Lead IG agencies ask relevant offices within their agencies to comment, correct inaccuracies, and provide additional documentation. The Lead IG agencies incorporate agency comments, where appropriate, and send the report back to the agencies for a second review prior to publication. The final report reflects the editorial view of the DoD OIG, DoS OIG, and USAID OIG as independent oversight agencies.

APPENDIX C
Ongoing OPE-P Oversight Projects

The Secretary of Defense removed the overseas contingency operation designation for Operation Pacific Eagle–Philippines (OPE-P) in May 2019. As a result, Lead IG responsibilities with respect to OPE-P met the sunset provision of Section 8L of the Inspector General Act at the end of FY 2020. While the Lead IG's reporting requirements for OPE-P will cease, ongoing oversight of activities related to OPE-P that have not been completed by the end of the quarter will continue under the individual statutory authorities of the DoD, DoS, and USAID OIGs.

Table 2 lists the title and objective for Lead IG and partner agencies' ongoing oversight projects.

Table 2.

Ongoing Oversight Projects by Lead IG and Partner Agencies, as of September 30, 2020

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
Evaluation of Counterintelligence Mission Programs (Activities) in the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command Area of Responsibility To determine whether the Defense Intelligence Agency and Military Services counterintelligence programs support U.S. Indo-Pacific Command mission requirements in its area of responsibility.
Evaluation of Combatant Command Counter Threat Finance Activities in Support of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, U.S. Africa Command, U.S. Central Command, and U.S. European Command Priorities To determine whether U.S. Africa Command, U.S. Central Command, U.S. European Command, and U.S. Indo-Pacific Command are planning and executing counter threat finance activities to impact adversaries' ability to use financial networks to negatively affect U.S. interests.
Evaluation of the U.S. Combatant Commands' Responses to the Coronavirus Disease–2019 To determine how U.S. Africa Command, U.S. Central Command, U.S. European Command, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, U.S. Southern Command, and their component commands executed pandemic response plans; and to identify the challenges encountered in implementing the response plans and the impact to operations resulting from the coronavirus disease–2019.
DEPARTMENT OF STATE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
Audit of Department of State's Risk Assessments and Monitoring of Voluntary Contributions to International Organizations To determine whether DoS policies, processes, and guidance for voluntary contributions ensure that risks are identified, assessed, and responded to before providing funds to public international organizations; and that funds are monitored to achieve award objectives.
U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
Audit of USAID's Self-Reliance Initiative To determine to what extent are USAID's self-reliance metrics incorporated into its development programming strategy; and the challenges USAID faces in implementing development activities as envisioned under the Journey to Self-Reliance Initiative.
Audit of USAID's Contract Termination Practices To assess USAID's procedures guiding acquisition award terminations.

ACRONYMS

Acronym	
AFP	Armed Forces of the Philippines
ASG	Abu Sayyaf Group
BARMM	Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
BIFF	Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters
COVID-19	coronavirus disease–2019
DIA	Defense Intelligence Agency
DoD	Department of Defense
DoS	Department of State
DoS PRM	DoS Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration
FY	fiscal year
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	internally displaced person
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
ISIS-EA	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria–East Asia, formerly referred to as ISIS-Philippines (ISIS-P)
ISR	intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance

Acronym	
Lead IG	Lead Inspector General
Lead IG agencies	DoD OIG, DoS OIG, and USAID OIG
OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OCO	overseas contingency operations
OIG	Office of Inspector General
OPE-P	Operation Pacific Eagle–Philippines
PNP	Philippine National Police
PNP-SAF	PNP-Special Action Force
SOCPAC	U.S. Special Operations Command-Pacific
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugees
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
USINDOPACOM	U.S. Indo-Pacific Command
VEO	violent extremist organization
VFA	Philippines–United States Visiting Forces Agreement
WHO	World Health Organization


0 100 200 Miles
0 100 200 Kilometers
Projection: Mercator
Cagayan
LUZON
Baguio City
Philippine Sea
Quezon City
Manila
South China Sea
Batangas
Naga
PHILIPPINES
Bacolod
Cebu
Cagayan de Oro
Iligan
Marawi
Mindanao
Sulu Sea
Davao
Zamboanga
General Santos
Jolo
Sulu Archipelago
MALAYSIA

ENDNOTES

1. DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 1G, 9/29/2020; SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 12, 10/2/2020; DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 1G, 10/14/2020.
2. DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 1C, 9/29/2020.
3. Jim Gomez, "Army Chief: Militant Leader Likely Killed in Philippines," Associated Press, 8/25/2020.
4. USINDOPACOM J2, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 5, 10/2/2020.
5. USINDOPACOM J2, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 5, 10/2/2020.
6. CNN Philippines, "Abu Sayyaf Sub-Leader Killed in Sulu Clash—Military," 9/28/2020.
7. Roel Pareño, "Westmincom Confirms Death of Abu Sayyaf Leader Furuji Indama," Philippine Star, 10/30/2020.
8. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 1M, 10/2/2020.
9. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 11B, 10/2/2020.
10. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 8, 10/2/2020.
11. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 8, 10/2/2020.
12. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 12, 10/2/2020.
13. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 6, 10/2/2020; SOF News, "One Year Later–Physical Defeat of Daesh," 3/23/2020.
14. DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 1E, 9/29/2020.
15. USINDOPACOM, vetting comment, 10/28/2020.
16. DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 1E, 9/29/2020.
17. DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 28, 10/14/2020; SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information 20.4 OPE-P 7, 10/14/2020.
18. Sofia Tomacruz, "VFA Termination Suspended Due to Pandemic, Geopolitics—Locsin," Rappler, 6/3/2020; Philippines–United States Visiting Forces Agreement, 2/10/1998.
19. Embassy Manila, response to DoS OIG request for information, 10/8/2020.
20. USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
21. USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
22. USAID BHA, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
23. USAID BHA, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
24. USAID BHA, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
25. USAID BHA, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
26. Froilan Gallardo, "Reconstruction of Marawi Delayed Till December, Philippine Official Says," BenarNews, 8/15/2019.
27. USAID BHA, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020; USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
28. USAID BHA, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
29. USAID BHA, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
30. DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 1G, 9/29/2020; SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 12, 10/2/2020; DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 1G, 10/14/2020.
31. DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 1G, 9/29/2020; SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 12, 10/2/2020; DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 1G, 10/14/2020.
32. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 12, 10/2/2020.
33. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 12, 10/2/2020.
34. DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 1H, 9/29/2020.
35. DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 1G, 9/29/2020; USINDOPACOM, response to DoD OIG request for information, 12/30/2019; USINDOPACOM, vetting comment, 10/28/2020.
36. Jim Gomez, "Army Chief: Militant Leader Likely Killed in Philippines," Associated Press, 8/25/2020.
37. USINDOPACOM, vetting comment, 10/28/2020.
38. USINDOPACOM J2, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 5, 10/2/2020; DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.2 OPE-P 1D, 4/15/2020.
39. DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.3 OPE-P PR 1D, 6/25/2020.
40. USINDOPACOM J2, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 5, 10/2/2020.
41. DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 1D, 9/29/2020.
42. Dempsey Reyes, "Troops Overrun Abu Sayyaf Bombmaker's Lair in Sulu," Manila Times, 9/22/2020; ABS-CBN News, "Military Seizes Alleged Hideout of Abu Sayyaf's Mundi Sawadjaan in Sulu," 9/23/2020.
43. Jeoffrey Maitem, "Notorious Abu Sayyaf Sub-Leader Arrested in Philippines," BenarNews, 8/14/2020.
44. CNN Philippines, "Abu Sayyaf Sub-Leader Killed in Sulu Clash—Military," 9/28/2020.
45. CNN Philippines, "Eight Bandits Under Abu Sayyaf Leader Sawadjaan Surrender to Military," 9/23/2020.
46. CNN Philippines, "Abu Sayyaf Sub-Leader Killed in Sulu Clash—Military," 9/28/2020.
47. Roel Pareño, "Westmincom Confirms Death of Abu Sayyaf Leader Furuji Indama," Philippine Star, 10/30/2020.
48. DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4, OPE-P 1C, 9/29/2020.
49. DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4, OPE-P 1C, 9/29/2020.
50. DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4, OPE-P 1C, 10/4/2020.
51. DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4, OPE-P 1C, 9/29/2020; PTV News, "Banning of Abu Sayyaf Presence in Sulu, a People's Covenant," 9/30/2020.

52. Georgi Engelbrecht, "Violence in Southern Philippines Highlights Resilience of Militant Networks," Australian Strategic Policy Institute, 9/16/2020.
53. Stanford Center for International Security and Cooperation, "Abu Sayyaf Group," Mapping Militant Organizations, 2018.
54. Georgi Engelbrecht, "Violence in Southern Philippines Highlights Resilience of Militant Networks," Australian Strategic Policy Institute, 9/16/2020.
55. Embassy Manila, cable, 20 MDA 33886, "Embassy Manila End of Day: Friday, August 28, 2020," 8/28/2020.
56. DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 1C, 9/29/2020.
57. Niniek Karmini, "Indonesian Hostage Dies in Philippine Army, Militant Battle," Associated Press, 9/30/2020; BenarNews, "Indonesian Captive of Abu Sayyaf Militants Killed in Southern Philippine Clash," 9/30/2020.
58. DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.3 OPE-P PR 21, 6/25/2020; DIA, vetting comment, 7/15/2020.
59. DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 24, 9/29/2020.
60. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 7, 10/2/2020.
61. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 7, 10/2/2020.
62. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 7, 10/2/2020.
63. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 31, 10/14/2020.
64. USINDOPACOM J3, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 6, 10/2/2020
65. USINDOPACOM, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P SUPP 34, 10/29/2020.
66. USINDOPACOM, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P SUPP 34, 10/29/2020.
67. USINDOPACOM J3, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 7, 10/2/2020.
68. USINDOPACOM, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P SUPP 32, 10/29/2020.
69. DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 29, 10/14/2020.
70. DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 27, 10/14/2020.
71. DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 27, 10/14/2020.
72. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 1M, 10/2/2020.
73. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 1M, 10/2/2020.
74. DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 29, 10/14/2020.
75. DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 29, 10/14/2020.
76. SOF News, "One Year Later–Physical Defeat of Daesh," 3/23/2020.
77. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 6, 10/2/2020.
78. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 6, 10/2/2020.
79. DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 1E, 9/29/2020; USINDOPACOM, vetting comment, 10/28/2020.
80. DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 1F, 9/29/2020.
81. DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 1B, 9/29/2020.
82. DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 1B, 9/29/2020.
83. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 1M, 10/2/2020.
84. DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 1A, 9/29/2020.
85. DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 1J, 9/29/2020.
86. DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 1G, 9/29/2020.
87. DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 21, 9/29/2020.
88. DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 21, 9/29/2020.
89. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 6, 10/2/2020.
90. World Bank, "Global Economic Prospects," 6/2020; Chino S. Leyco, "COVID-19 Takes Heavier Toll on PH Among ASEAN Economies," Manila Bulletin, 6/9/2020.
91. Czeriza Valencia, "Poverty Rate Seen to Rise This Year," Philippines Star, 6/10/2020.
92. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 6, 10/2/2020.
93. Lead IG, "Operation Pacific Eagle—Philippines, Quarterly Report to the United States Congress, April 1-June 30, 2020," 8/2020.
94. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 6, 10/2/2020.
95. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 6, 10/2/2020.
96. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 6, 10/2/2020.
97. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 6, 10/2/2020.
98. DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 1K, 9/29/2020.
99. DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 1B, 9/29/2020.
100. DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 1K, 9/29/2020.
101. DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 1L, 9/29/2020.
102. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 3, 10/2/2020.
103. DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 28, 10/14/2020.
104. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 7, 10/14/2020.
105. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 7, 10/14/2020.
106. DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 28, 10/14/2020.
107. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 8, 10/2/2020.
108. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 1M, 10/2/2020.

109. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 11B, 10/2/2020.
110. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 2, 10/2/2020.
111. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 11A, 10/2/2020.
112. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 8, 10/2/2020.
113. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 10, 10/2/2020.
114. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 12, 10/2/2020.
115. USINDOPACOM J3, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 14, 10/2/2020.
116. USINDOPACOM J3, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 14, 10/2/2020.
117. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 6, 10/2/2020.
118. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 13, 10/02/2020.
119. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 30, 10/14/2020.
120. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 30, 10/14/2020.
121. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 1M, 10/2/2020.
122. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 1M, 10/14/2020.
123. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 1M, 10/14/2020.
124. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 11C, 10/2/2020; SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 11C, 10/14/2020; USINDOPACOM, vetting comment, 10/28/2020.
125. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 17, 10/2/2020.
126. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 17, 10/2/2020.
127. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 22, 10/2/2020.
128. USINDOPACOM, vetting comment, 10/28/2020.
129. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 22, 10/2/2020.
130. USINDOPACOM OIG, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 26, 10/2/2020.
131. Sofia Tomacruz, "VFA Termination Suspended Due to Pandemic, Geopolitics—Locsin," Rappler, 6/3/2020.
132. Philippines–United States Visiting Forces Agreement, 2/10/1998.
133. Sofia Tomacruz, "VFA Termination Suspended Due to Pandemic, Geopolitics—Locsin," Rappler, 6/3/2020.
134. Embassy Manila, response to DoS OIG request for information, 10/8/2020.
135. Katrina Domingo, "2021 Budget of Panel Overseeing VFA Implementation Cut by More than Half: Locsin," ABS-CBN News, 10/8/2020.
136. Katrina Domingo, "2021 Budget of Panel Overseeing VFA Implementation Cut by More than Half: Locsin," ABS-CBN News, 10/8/2020; DoS, cable, 20 MDA 6326, "Embassy Manila End of Day: Thursday, February 6, 2020," 2/6/2020.
137. Katrina Domingo, "2021 Budget of Panel Overseeing VFA Implementation Cut by More than Half: Locsin," ABS-CBN News, 10/8/2020.
138. Associated Press, "Philippines Pardons U.S. Marine for Killing Transgender Woman," 9/7/2020; Corinne Redfern, "He Killed a Transgender Woman in the Philippines. Why Was He Freed?" New York Times, 9/17/2020.
139. Associated Press, "Philippines Pardons U.S. Marine for Killing Transgender Woman," 9/7/2020.
140. Sebastian Strangio, "In the Philippines, a Marine's Pardon Stirs Anger over U.S. Privilege," The Diplomat, 9/8/2020.
141. Embassy Manila, cable, 20 MANILA 1484, "President Duterte Pardons LCpl Pemberton," 9/10/2020.
142. Embassy Manila, cable, 20 MANILA 1522, "Philippines: LCpl Pemberton is Deported from the Philippines," 9/16/2020.
143. DoS CSO, response to DoS OIG request for information, 9/11/2020.
144. DoS DS, response to DoS OIG request for information, 9/17/2020; DoS EAP, CT, DS, and Embassy Manila vetting comments, 10/21/2020, 10/24/2020, 10/25/2020.
145. DoS DS, response to DoS OIG request for information, 9/17/2020; DoS DS, vetting comments, 10/22/2020.
146. USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
147. USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
148. USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
149. USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
150. USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
151. Lead IG, "Operation Pacific Eagle–Philippines, Quarterly Report to the United States Congress, October 1, 2019–December 31, 2019," 2/2020; USAID, "Country Development Cooperation Strategy for the Philippines," 11/25/2019.
152. USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
153. USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
154. USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
155. USAID BHA, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
156. USAID BHA, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
157. USAID BHA, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
158. USAID BHA, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
159. USAID BHA, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
160. USAID BHA, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
161. USAID BHA, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
162. USAID BHA, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
163. USAID BHA, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.

164. USAID BHA, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
165. Froilan Gallardo, "Reconstruction of Marawi Delayed Till December, Philippine Official Says," BenarNews, 8/15/2019.
166. USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
167. USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
168. USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
169. USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
170. USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
171. USAID BHA, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
172. USAID BHA, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
173. USAID BHA, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
174. USAID BHA, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
175. USAID BHA, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
176. USAID BHA, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
177. USAID BHA, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
178. USAID BHA, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
179. USAID BHA, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
180. USAID BHA, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
181. USAID BHA, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
182. USAID BHA, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
183. USAID BHA, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
184. USAID BHA, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
185. USAID BHA, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
186. USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
187. USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
188. USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
189. USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020; BARMM, "BARMM Parliament Approves Resolution on 1st Bangsamoro Development Plan," 7/3/2020.
190. USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
191. USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
192. USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
193. USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
194. USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
195. USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
196. USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
197. WHO, "Philippines COVID-19 Situation Report #42," 6/30/2020; WHO, "Philippines COVID-19 Situation Report #55," 9/29/2020.
198. OCHA, "COVID-19 Humanitarian Response Plan, Philippines," 8/4/2020.
199. USAID, "COVID-19 Program Budget Dashboard, Philippines," 10/1/2020; USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
200. USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
201. USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
202. USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
203. USAID BHA, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
204. USAID BHA, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
205. USAID, "U.S. Provides 100 Ventilators to the Philippines to Support COVID-19 Response," 8/28/2020; USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
206. USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
207. USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
208. USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
209. USAID, "U.S. COVID-19 Assistance to the Philippines," 9/29/2020.
210. USAID BHA, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
211. OCHA, "COVID-19 Humanitarian Response Plan, Philippines," 8/4/2020.
212. USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
213. USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
214. Philippine Daily Inquirer, "38 of 130 Medical Facilities in NCR in 'Danger Zone' if COVID Cases Surge," 9/18/2020.
215. USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
216. USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
217. USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
218. USAID Asia Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 9/29/2020.
219. OCHA, "COVID-19 Humanitarian Response Plan, Philippines," 8/4/2020.
220. OCHA, "COVID-19 Humanitarian Response Plan, Philippines," 8/4/2020.

221. OCHA, "COVID-19 Humanitarian Response Plan, Philippines," 8/4/2020.
222. OCHA, "COVID-19 Humanitarian Response Plan, Philippines," 8/4/2020.
223. OCHA, "COVID-19 Humanitarian Response Plan, Philippines," 8/4/2020.
224. DoS PRM, response to DoS OIG request for information, 10/2/2020.
225. DoS PRM, response to DoS OIG request for information, 10/2/2020.
226. DoS PRM, response to DoS OIG request for information, 10/2/2020.
227. DoS PRM, response to DoS OIG request for information, 10/2/2020.
228. DoS PRM, response to DoS OIG request for information, 10/2/2020.
229. DoS PRM, response to DoS OIG request for information, 10/2/2020.
230. DoD OUSD Comptroller, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 15A, 9/30/2020.
231. DoD OUSD Comptroller, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.3 OPE-P PR 13B, 6/30/2020.
232. SOCPAC, response to DoD OIG request for information, 20.4 OPE-P 16, 10/2/2020.
233. DoS PM/SA, response to DoS OIG request for information, 9/28/2020; DoS PM/RSAT, response to DoS OIG request for information, 10/5/2020; DoS PM/SA, response to DoS OIG request for information, 10/5/2020; DoS PM/SA, vetting comment, 10/22/2020.
234. DoS PM/RSAT, response to DoS OIG request for information, 10/5/2020; DoS PM/RSAT and Embassy Manila, vetting comment, 10/26/2020.
235. DoS PM/RSAT, response to DoS OIG request for information, 10/5/2020; DoS PM/RSAT and Embassy Manila, vetting comment, 10/26/2020.

A U.S. Marine fast ropes from an MV-22B Osprey in a training exercise. (U.S. Marine Corps photo)


INSPECTOR GENERAL
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
U.S. AGENCY for INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

TO REPORT FRAUD, WASTE, OR ABUSE RELATED TO OVERSEAS CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS AND PROGRAMS, CONTACT:

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE HOTLINE

dodig.mil/hotline

1-800-424-9098

DEPARTMENT OF STATE HOTLINE

stateoig.gov/hotline

1-800-409-9926 or 202-647-3320

U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT HOTLINE

ighotline@usaid.gov

1-800-230-6539 or 202-712-1023