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The African Centre of the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT/CAERT)

B.P 141 Bureau Poste El-Mohammadia Alger, Algérie

Tel/Fax: +213 23 82 09 46/09 38

[www.caert-ua.org](http://www.caert-ua.org)

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**The 10<sup>th</sup> UN Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact  
Committee Meeting:  
Strategic Coordination of CT Initiatives in Africa: Challenges and  
Opportunities**

24 -25 June 2023 | 10.00-12.00 (EST) | Hybrid  
UN Secretariat Conference Room 12 | WebEx

Remarks

Mr. Idriss Mounir Lallali

Ag. Director

African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT)

- **Your Excellency Mr. António Guterres**, Secretary-General of the United Nations;
  - **Your Excellency Mr. Vladimir Voronkov**, Under-Secretary-General, United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism;
  - **Excellencies Permanent Representatives to the United Nations;**
  - **Distinguished fellow Panelists;**
  - **Distinguished participants, Ladies and Gentlemen;**
1. Allow to me to start by commending the great work that the UN Global CT Coordination Compact is doing in supporting the AU and its Member States CT Efforts and Capacities. I would like to, therefore, seize this opportunity to recognize the leadership demonstrated by H.E Mr. Voronkov and the UNOCT team for the continued support to the African Union and its Member States in the implementation of the UN Global Strategy.
  2. The Importance of International cooperation does not need to be demonstrated anymore. Definitely, Cooperation is important, in particular with regional bodies, not only to deal with shared threats but most importantly to build on each other's strengths, experiences, lessons learned, existing partnership and networks, and more significantly local knowledge and specialized expertise. This is even truer when confronted to such a transnational threat as terrorism that has yet to show any form of regression. A threat that has developed into a complex mix of ideology-driven acts of violence, transnational organized crime (TOC) and insurgency. This is manifested in the multiplicity of armed groups with varying motives and trajectories that are spreading and unleashing violence across the African continent.
  3. In Africa, Member States and regional bodies have continued to review and adopt series of counter-terrorism measures including the development and reviewing of national counterterrorism strategies and plans of action as well as the enhancement of Prevention and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE) capacities in addition to field deployments which have contributed to degrading the capacities of terrorist group to a greater extent.
  4. Despite our individual and collective efforts, the threat has remained resolute both in intent and capability, with growing confidence and cohesion in the launching of devastating attacks on civilians, security forces, military establishments, and critical infrastructures across the continent.
  5. According to the Database of the African Centre on the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT), from January to December 2023, the African Continent registered over 3,000 terrorist incidents that resulted in over 16,000 deaths. On average, the African Continent registers 8 terror attacks and 44 terrorism related deaths per day compared to average 4 terror attacks and 18 victims per day between 2017 and 2021.

6. Civilians remain its highest victims, over 7,000 with over 4,000 security and military personnel have perished in 2023 as a result of terrorist acts, that's an increase of 127% and 190.8% in the Number of Civilian victims Security and Military Personnel respectively when compared to the previous period of 2022.<sup>1</sup>
7. This upward trend and continued expansion, in particular in the Sahel, has been aggravated by the continued political instability and the impact of the drawdown of Peacekeeping Missions and the freezing of Western support to the affected countries as a result of unconstitutional changes of government and the increased use of Mercenary forces and Private Military Contractors in the fight against terrorism.
8. In the affected areas, the prevailing situation undermines the confidence of local populations in the ability of their governments and security forces to protect them against terrorist attacks. As a result, local populations in these affected areas live in an environment of absolute insecurity, fear, psychological trauma and are often at the mercy of the Terrorist and Violent Extremist groups.
9. Terrorist groups continue to occupy and control some portions of national territories in a number of affected Member States. In control of such territory, they tend to run their own criminal economies in conjunction with transnational organized criminal networks and the local population is often made to benefit from it. The intricacies of the situation are worrying.
10. The above, Excellencies, clearly show that a lot more needs to be done in order to effectively respond to the security challenges we are facing. As we continue to meet, there is need for ever deeper thinking and strategizing on how best to outwit these criminal and terrorist networks and deal with emerging security threats.
11. While the alarming expansion of terrorism in Africa poses multitudes of challenges to the peace and security landscape, it also provides us with opportunities to harness our collective efforts towards working decisively to end violent conflicts on the continent and address their root causes.
12. The transnational nature of the threat commands priority attention and synergy in response generation efforts at all levels, by the UN, AU, regional organizations, and regional mechanisms. Consequently, it becomes imperative to foster and strengthen

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<sup>1</sup> 5,682 civilians, 2,233 defense and security personnel died in 2022. West Africa and the Sahel continue to be the most terror active regions in Africa, where 1,027 terrorist acts were registered, followed by East Africa and Central regions with 680 and 350 respectively. Southern Africa region registered 90 terrorist attacks 71 or incidents during 2023, a significant decrease from the previous years. North Africa registered the least number of attacks in Africa, with a total of 14 terror attacks, showing also a decrease from last year where it registered 71 attacks.

multilateral cooperation in our collective efforts to combat terrorism and ensure the safety and security of our societies.

13. In this regard, Cooperation in particular with regional bodies, is a *sine qua non* condition for success. Better positioned, regional organizations have the capacity to better articulate the international obligations into concrete local actions and programs, while ensuring complementarity with existing mechanisms and initiatives.
14. Efforts must therefore be made at the UN level in respect of the principles of subsidiarity, complementarity and comparative advantage, by trusting more in the capacities of regional organizations, who have gained considerable experience over the last two decades, and who are better in tune with local realities, challenges and priorities, and who can ensure concrete implementation of International obligations by their member states. In addition, it will ensure greater impact, tailored assistance, local ownership and sustainable responses not only against the threat but most importantly in addressing its root causes. This will also ensure alignment of Local CT Efforts with the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063: the Africa We Want.
15. The effectiveness of this approach will, however, depend to a large extent on the level of commitment and mutual trust among the relevant stakeholders. It requires open channels of communication, respect for each other's perspectives, and the willingness to put aside differences or perceived competition for the greater good. We must strive for concrete and honest partnerships, invest in sustainable capacity-building programs, and promote the operationalization of international legal frameworks to ensure effective cooperation.

**Distinguished participants,**

16. In conclusion, bilateral and multilateral cooperation in counter-terrorism are no longer options. There are a necessity. It reflects our shared responsibility and commitment to safeguarding humanity from the scourge of terrorism. As we move forward, let us reaffirm our dedication to this essential approach and strive to work together in unity and harmony. Only through such collective action can we truly overcome the challenges of terrorism and create a safer, more secure world for ourselves and generations to come.
17. I wish to finish by reiterating that the ACSRT and the African Union look forward to working with the UN on encouraging Member States to develop National Comprehensive CT Strategies and Support States in Africa in their effective Implementation.

**I thank you all for your kind attention.**

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