

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

Support to AU/NEPAD (Period of July 2010 to June 2011)

Against the background of the ECOSOC Resolution 2006/21 relating to the Programme of Action for Africa 2006-2010 on strengthening the rule of law and the criminal justice systems in Africa, where reference is made to Operative paragraph 4 that "Invites all African States and regional and sub regional institutions to mainstream crime and drug control measures in their national and regional development strategies, to mobilize all national stakeholders and to make every effort to allocate national resources for the implementation of the Programme of Action"; and to Operative paragraph 8 that "Requests the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, within available extra budgetary resources but not excluding the use of existing resources appropriated to it from the regular budget of the United Nations, to support the implementation of the Programme of Action, 2006-2010, in cooperation with all African States, the African Union and other regional organizations, in particular in the context of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)", such requested support has been ongoing through UNODC's Field Offices in Africa.

Additionally, as called upon in the revised "AU Plan of Action on Drug Control and Crime Prevention, 2007 –2012" (AUPA), which was endorsed at the African Heads of State Summit in January 2009, UNODC is currently offering its technical assistance to the African Union Commission (AUC) and various regional and sub-regional organizations and mechanisms, including NEPAD, for the implementation of the AU Plan of Action. Such assistance is being provided through UNODC's network of Field Offices in Africa.

In addition, a joint AUC-UNODC project support a core project team at the AUC in order to enable the AUC to establish the required partnership with the Regional Economic Communities. Such will establish the necessary operational and monitoring mechanism to implement the AUPA at the continental, regional and national level. In this context, AUC has established an inter-departmental coordinating mechanism in support of the objectives of the AUPA to coordinate all AUC activities related to the AUPA. Members of the mechanism include, besides the Department for Social Affairs, Political Affairs and Peace and Security, the NEPAD Coordinator Office from Economic Affairs as well as offices dealing with civil society organizations (not part of the Department for Social Affairs) and external relations. The Commissioner of Social Affairs acts as the convener of the mechanism.

The African Union Plan of Action on Drug Control and Crime Prevention aims, inter alia, "to strengthen the capacities of [...] regional economic communities and Member States for drug control and crime prevention policy development and coordination of implementation". In the context of its implementation in West Africa, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) – UNODC's key strategic counterpart in West Africa – has adopted a Political Declaration on the Prevention of Drug Abuse, Illicit Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime in West Africa and developed a Regional Action Plan to Address the Growing Problem of Illicit Drug Trafficking, Organized Crime and Drug Abuse in West Africa (2008-2011), with the support of UNODC. UNODC has continuously mobilized the international community's attention on the threats of illicit trafficking and transnational organized crime to the security in the region and its global impact. UNODC has also continuously requested the international community and development partners to increase support to ECOWAS and its Member States to overcome the challenges.

UNODC has addressed the Security Council on several occasions to update on the situation related to illicit trafficking and organized crime in the region and progress made in the implementation of the ECOWAS Political Declaration and Regional Action Plan. Moreover, in 2009, a Threat Assessment on Transnational Trafficking and the Rule of Law in West Africa was published and launched at the UN Security Council in New York, during a briefing session on West Africa. In 2010 and beyond, UNODC continues conducting research and analysis on the region.

In December 2010, the UNODC Regional Programme for West Africa 2010-2014 was launched in New York at a High Level Briefing Session on Illicit Trafficking and Organized Crime in West Africa, co-chaired with ECOWAS, and in partnership with DPKO, DPA, UNOWA, and INTERPOL, to support the implementation of the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan. Prevailing and emerging threats to security and development in the region were discussed and the international community was once again asked to continuously assist the region in addressing the complex challenges. The Regional Programme foresees the development of National Integrated Programmes against illicit trafficking and organized crime, embedded in national developmental frameworks, for all countries in the region, with six of them already ongoing. Moreover, in the context of the Regional Programme, UNODC is implementing the West Africa Coast Initiative, a joint technical assistance programme with DPKO, DPA, UNOWA, and INTERPOL, addressing post-conflict scenarios contributing to security sector reforms.