

2021 United Nations Counter-Terrorism Week

Side event on

“Towards sustainable peace: implementing screening, prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration strategies in the Lake Chad Basin, a regional and national challenge”

Monday, 28 June 2021, 1.30–3.00 p.m. EDT

Closing remarks of

**Assistant Secretary-General Michèle Coninsx,
Executive Director, CTED**

Excellencies, distinguished colleagues and participants,

Thank you all for joining us today and for your active interest and participation.

It has been a pleasure to hear from such a diverse and talented range of panellists, including representatives of Member States, international and regional organizations, civil society, researchers, and United Nations entities.

The complex context of the Lake Chad Basin and the challenges posed by individuals associated with Boko Haram require that we examine the question of prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration from multiple perspectives.

That is exactly what our speakers have done today, and I welcome their perspectives.

We have learned about the progress achieved in recent years.

From listening to our speakers, I believe that a key enabler has been teamwork.

Regional and UN actors have worked together to support national authorities while also benefiting from the invaluable contributions of civil society.

Our speakers have also noted ideas that should be explored to make PRR a viable pathway and ensure that individuals who have been associated with Boko Haram are held accountable when they should be, and rehabilitated and reintegrated as and when appropriate.

Excellencies, distinguished colleagues and participants,

We must of course recognize that, despite the involvement of numerous stakeholders in the Lake Chad Basin, and despite the undeniable progress achieved, countering terrorism in the region remains a considerable challenge, which will not be resolved in the short term.

I hope that this event will inspire us all to consider how we can further enhance our efforts and reinforce our collective determination and motivation to do so together.

I believe that, despite the unique nature of the Lake Chad Basin context, we have learned inspiring lessons that can serve elsewhere.

Among those lessons, I would point to the foundational role of the Security Council requirements on PRR, which provide essential guidance for maintaining the delicate balance between the various interests at stake.

The regional framework developed by the Lake Chad Basin Commission and the African Union has further contextualized these provisions into a common regional approach on SPRR and guided efforts on the ground.

I also welcome the region's focus on tailoring SPRR strategies to gender and age sensitivities.

The Lake Chad Basin contains some of the youngest populations in the world.

Girls and women have been abducted, brutalized and deployed as suicide bombers.

Tailored approaches are critical to ensuring that the many imperatives at stake (justice, the rights of victims and communities, and the need to bring peace to the region) are all served.

The final lesson I would like to highlight is the central role of the local and national authorities and stakeholders in implementing SPRR strategies.

International actors can and should support them, but can never replace them.

I would like to close by thanking our audience, our speakers, our co-sponsors (Niger and the Lake Chad Basin Commission) and our co-organizers (UNOCT and UNODC) for making this side event possible.

Thank you.