



United Nations Global  
**COUNTER-TERRORISM**  
Coordination Compact

# Tenth United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact Committee Meeting

Strategic Coordination of Counter-  
Terrorism Initiatives in Africa:  
Challenges and Opportunities

24-25  
**JANUARY**  
2024  
NEW YORK

24 JANUARY: HYBRID  
25 JANUARY: VIRTUAL

**Meeting Summary**



#UniteToCounterTerrorism

“ Our collective response to terrorism must be grounded in the principles that define our shared humanity – respect for human rights, the rule of law, and the pursuit of peace.”



**António Guterres**  
United Nations Secretary-General



“ Stemming the increasing terrorist threat across the continent demands a more robust response that draws on the best knowledge, which is well coordinated and adequately funded.”



**Vladimir Voronkov**  
Under-Secretary-General for  
Counter-Terrorism



Day 1 – Hybrid







			
			
			



**Virtual Speakers**

**TENTH COMMITTEE MEETING**

24 January 2024



Day 2 – Virtual

				
				
				



**TENTH COMMITTEE MEETING**

24-25 JANUARY 2024



# Executive Summary

1. The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact Committee (Coordination Committee) held its tenth meeting on 24 - 25 January 2024 in New York, in a hybrid format, under the theme “Strategic Coordination of Counter-Terrorism Initiatives in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities.”

**The first day** was opened by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. António Guterres, and chaired by the Under-Secretary-General (USG) for Counter-Terrorism and Chair of the Coordination Committee, Mr. Vladimir Voronkov. It was attended by three Under-Secretary-General, eight Assistant Secretary-Generals and seven Directors of 28 Counter-Terrorism Compact entities, the President of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Commission, the Director of the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT/CAERT), the Permanent Representatives of the State of Qatar, the Republic of Kenya, and the Kingdom of Morocco, as well as representatives from civil society, private sector, and the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF).

At the end of day one, the Coordination Committee adopted its **Joint Programme of Work for 2024-2026**, which includes the Counter-Terrorism Compact’s overarching strategic priorities, developed in consultation with the Counter-Terrorism Compact Working Groups’ chairs and vice-chairs, as well as Member States, regional organizations, civil society, and academia.

**The second day** was chaired by the Chief of the Policy, Knowledge Management, and Coordination Branch (PKMCB) of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), Mr. Rafi Shah. It was attended by 115 participants and featured four sessions: (i) overview of the counter-terrorism landscape in Africa; (ii) strengthening counter-terrorism coordination through identifying key challenges and gaps; and sharing of best practices and lessons learned; (iii) coordination with regional organizations, civil society, and the private sector in preventing and countering terrorism in Africa; and (iv) updates from the Counter-Terrorism Compact Secretariat on key achievements and the way ahead, with participation from the Deputy Executive Secretary for Regional Integration of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), Chairs of Counter-Terrorism Compact Working Groups, as well as principals or senior representatives from Counter-Terrorism Compact entities, regional organizations, and civil society.

2. **The main objectives** of the tenth Coordination Committee meeting were to:
  - **Gain** an enhanced and updated understanding of the terrorism and violent extremism landscape and its anticipated trajectory in Africa;
  - **Identify** the key challenges and gaps in the internal and external coordination of counter-terrorism and prevention of violent extremism efforts on the continent;

- **Exchange views** on best practices and lessons learned from Compact entities implementing programmes in Africa for reference and guidance;
  - **Discuss** recommendations on how the United Nations System can enhance its support to national and regional organizations, and other relevant actors, stressing the importance of a human rights-compliant, gender-responsive, victim-centered approach and tangible outcomes through an African-led and African-owned approach;
  - **Exchange views** on the action plan for resource mobilization through the United Nations Joint Appeal for Counter-Terrorism in Africa, launched in June 2023 and comprised of ten inter-agency flagship initiatives; and
  - **Adopt** the Joint Programme of Work for 2024-2026 to drive common efforts in addressing the evolving terrorist threat.
3. In his opening remarks, Secretary-General [António Guterres](#) underscored that Africa has become the global epicentre of terrorism in recent years, noting that “Da’esh, Al-Qaida and their affiliates are exploiting local conflict dynamics and fragilities to advance their agendas, while shredding the social fabric of entire countries with the blades of violence, mistrust and fear.” The Secretary-General further noted that “our collective response to terrorism must be grounded in the principles that define our shared humanity – respect for human rights, the rule of law, and the pursuit of peace,” as well as “in strategies that reflect marginalized and vulnerable communities.” He called on the international community to continue standing together and forging new solutions that lift the shadow of terrorism, once and for all, “for Africa, for Africans and for the world we share.”
  4. The Chair of the Coordination Committee, [USG Vladimir Voronkov](#), underlined that “despite more than a decade of multifaceted counter-terrorism efforts, Da’esh, Al-Qaida and their affiliates continue to exploit instability and conflict to expand and intensify attacks in parts of Africa,” with Sub-Saharan Africa remaining the most affected region. These developments jeopardize human rights and the rule of law and hinder sustainable development. USG Voronkov underscored that the situation “demands a more robust response that draws on the best knowledge, which is well coordinated and adequately funded,” highlighting in this regard the relevance of the United Nations Joint Appeal for Counter-Terrorism in Africa. He also announced the launch of a new Working Group dedicated to the use of Behavioral Sciences to prevent radicalization and violent extremism, which will work closely with UNOCT’s International Hub on Behavioural Insights to Counter Terrorism based in Doha, Qatar, and further underscored that “this Compact provides us with a framework for effective collaboration to support Member States’ counter-terrorism efforts, and is a testament to our shared commitment to a world free from terrorism.”
  5. The meeting focused on how to best integrate and coordinate approaches in addressing the increasing violence and continued expansion of terrorist groups in parts of Africa, as well as aligning counter-terrorism efforts with the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want. During the regional perspectives segment, the President of the ECOWAS Commission stressed that terrorism is the major security threat faced by



ECOWAS Member States, noting that the threat was initially confined to certain countries in the Sahel (Mali and Niger) and the Lake Chad Basin (Nigeria), before spreading to Burkina Faso, and to coastal countries (Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Togo). The President also noted ECOWAS' proposal to integrate the various initiatives proposed over the years by different stakeholders into a regional plan of action to facilitate coordination, promote ownership, and enhance inclusion. The Permanent Representatives of the State of Qatar, the Republic of Kenya and the Kingdom of Morocco underscored that terrorism presents a great risk in parts of Africa, and highlighted the Counter-Terrorism Compact's crucial role in enhancing coordination at local, regional and global levels, as well as for pooling resources and capacities in addressing this evolving and persistent threat. The ACSRT/CAERT Director noted that despite our individual and collective efforts, the terrorist 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. The Director informed that in 2023, Africa registered over 3,000 terrorist incidents that resulted in over 16,000 deaths, stressing that the increased and transnational nature of the threat commands priority attention and synergy at all levels.

6. The European Union Special Envoy for Counter-Terrorism and GCTF Co-Chair underscored the importance of: (i) inclusive African-led approaches and African-owned initiatives; (ii) collective action through strengthening multilateral and regional cooperation; (iii) engaging local communities; and (iv) strengthening our work on countering terrorist narratives and propaganda. Representatives from civil society organizations, namely Women In International Security (WIIS) Horn of Africa and the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism (GIFCT), respectively emphasized that addressing socio-economic factors and developing inclusive policies reflective of gender dynamics remain a cornerstone for tackling terrorism, while underscoring that the promotion and protection of human rights is a key component in efforts to prevent and counter terrorism online.
7. Guest speakers and representatives from Counter-Terrorism Compact entities pointed to the nexus between terrorism, proliferation of weapons, drug trafficking and other forms of organized crime as a "risk multiplier" to the prevailing insecurity in parts of Africa. They also highlighted that a human rights-based and gender-responsive approach must always underpin our collective efforts in addressing the evolving threat, emphasizing the importance of prevention as a shared priority, and the need to further enhance action-oriented collaboration and horizontal cross-fertilization to address the underlying conditions of terrorism together with converging threats, including, armed conflict, poverty and inequality, the proliferation of new and emerging technologies, climate emergency, and lawless cyberspace. Moving forward, they noted the need for: (i) addressing both immediate security concerns and underlying conditions that can be exploited by terrorist groups, from poverty to inequality, socio-economic grievances, and governance challenges; (ii) protecting human rights, including in online spaces; (iii) strengthening partnerships with regional organizations, governments and partners on the ground; (iv) enhancing intelligence and information sharing capacities and improving border control and counter terrorist financing measures; (v)

integrating multiple existing initiatives into a regional framework to foster greater coordination and enhance inclusion through African regional organizations; and (vi) enhancing operational coordination through the Counter-Terrorism Compact, including through the United Nations Joint Appeal for Counter-Terrorism in Africa.

8. On the second day of the meeting, the Chief of UNOCT's Policy, Knowledge Management and Coordination Branch, Mr. Rafi Shah, highlighted a concerning surge in terrorist activities in several parts of Africa, both in scale and sophistication, with various terrorist groups continuing to gain traction. In this regard, he underscored the importance of ensuring international and regional cooperation to effectively address the evolving terrorist threat, noting the pivotal role of the Counter-Terrorism Compact and its Working Groups in facilitating this cooperation.

The Deputy Executive Secretary for Regional Integration of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), Ms. Angele Makombo N'tumba, emphasized that Southern Africa is a training and recruitment hub for terrorist groups and noted the establishment of the SADC Regional Counter-Terrorism Center to coordinate efforts among the 16 SADC Member States, five of which have developed national counter-terrorism strategies and implementation plans.

Representatives from Counter-Terrorism Compact entities and Working Groups chairs flagged a major extension of Da'esh in the Greater Sahara as a possible immediate consequence of the increased terrorist violence observed in West Africa and the Sahel, as well as concern that the group's center of gravity may be shifting from Syria/Iraq to West Africa. Working Groups chairs also briefed the Coordination Committee on their activities and achievements in several parts of Africa, stressed the importance of fostering cooperation at regional, sub-regional and national level and of comprehensive and holistic responses to contain the increased terrorist threat, and outlined future priorities within the Counter-Terrorism Compact Joint Programme of Work for 2024-2026.

The Team Leader of UNOCT's Counter-Terrorism Compact Secretariat, Ms. Elisabeth Neugebauer, presented the Compact's achievements in 2023, including progress by the Working Groups on the implementation of the Options Paper to enhance regional coordination, adopted by the Coordination Committee in December 2021, and the publication of a dedicated Member State page on the Compact Coordination Platform. She also outlined the Compact's strategic priorities for 2024-2026 and informed about the interest expressed by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) to join the Compact as an observer in 2024.

9. The Strategic Discussion on "**Strategic Coordination of Counter-Terrorism Initiatives in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities**" (24 January) and **interventions** made by Counter-Terrorism Compact Working Groups chairs, senior representatives from Counter-Terrorism Compact entities, regional organizations, and civil society (25 January) are annexed to the summary as Annex I and Annex II respectively.

10. **Key outcomes and way forward:**

Priority Areas Discussed	Recommendations / Way Forward
<p><b>1. Terrorism and violent extremism landscape in Africa</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Addressing both immediate security concerns and underlying conditions that can be exploited by terrorist groups, from poverty to inequality, socio-economic grievances, and governance challenges.</li> <li>b. Enhancing intelligence and information sharing capacities, and improving border control and counter terrorist financing measures.</li> <li>c. The importance of inclusive African-led approaches and African-owned initiatives.</li> <li>d. Our response to the terrorist threat in Africa must be grounded in respect for human rights and the rule of law, as well as in strategies that reflect marginalized and vulnerable communities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Identification of key issues, challenges, and gaps in coordination</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Fragmentation of various initiatives have given rise to problems of coordination, ownership, and inclusion. There is a need for greater integration through increased coordination.</li> <li>b. The need to protect human rights and the rule of law, including in online spaces.</li> <li>c. The need to monitor and address the nexus between terrorism, proliferation of weapons, drug trafficking and other forms of transnational organized crime as a “risk multiplier” to the prevailing insecurity in parts of Africa.</li> <li>d. Addressing socio-economic factors and developing inclusive policies reflective of gender dynamics remain a cornerstone for tackling terrorism.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Methods to overcome the challenges</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Integrating multiple existing initiatives into a regional framework to foster greater coordination and enhance inclusion through African regional organizations.</li> <li>b. A human rights-based and gender-responsive approach must always underpin collective efforts in addressing the evolving threat, with prevention as a shared priority.</li> <li>c. Implementing border management strategies, strengthening efforts to identify terrorist financing sources, leveraging emerging technologies, fostering cooperation among counter-terrorism agencies, and adapting the collective</li> </ul>

	<p>experience of African Member States to the current context of terrorist attacks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. There is a need to further enhance action-oriented collaboration and horizontal cross-fertilization to address the underlying conditions of terrorism together with converging threats, including armed conflict, poverty and inequality, the proliferation of new and emerging technologies, climate emergency, and lawless cyberspace.</li> <li>b. The Counter-Terrorism Compact plays a crucial role in enhancing operational coordination at local, regional and global levels, as well as pooling resources and capacities in addressing the evolving and persistent terrorist threat, including through the UN Joint Appeal for Counter-Terrorism in Africa.</li> <li>c. The importance of continuous monitoring and evaluation of programmes and projects to assess real impact, best practices and lessons learned.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. Involvement of Member States, regional organizations, civil society, and the private sector in preventing and countering terrorism in Africa</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Need to strengthen partnerships with regional organizations, governments and partners on the ground, including further engaging with local communities to strengthen comprehensive prevention frameworks.</li> <li>b. Bilateral, regional, and multilateral cooperation is crucial in addressing terrorism and violent extremism.</li> <li>c. The participation and active engagement of representatives from Member States, regional organizations, GCTF, and civil society brought a valuable perspective and an additional layer of expertise to the Coordination Committee, which set the ground for enhanced coordination and cooperation in the future.</li> <li>d. The Global Counter-Terrorism Compact Coordination Platform should be increasingly utilized to coordinate and manage counter-terrorism related information, including system-wide response to counter-terrorism challenges through over 1,050 focal points of 46 Compact entities, 137 Member States and 14 regional organizations.</li> </ul>

“Ensuring efficient international and regional cooperation is essential to effectively address the evolving terrorist threat. The United Nations, acting through the Counter-Terrorism Compact and its Working Groups, plays a pivotal role in facilitating this cooperation.”

**Mr. Rafi Shah**

Chief of the Policy, Knowledge Management and Coordination Branch, United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism

