



PRESS RELEASE

UNOCT AND ECOWAS SIGN AGREEMENT TO STRENGTHEN COOPERATION ON PREVENTING AND COUNTERING TERRORISM

New York, 22 September 2023 – The United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) today to strengthen their partnership in preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism.

The MoU establishes a framework for cooperation between both entities over the next five years on a range of security and counter-terrorism initiatives, including preventative efforts to counter terrorist travel, financing, access to weapons and misuse of information and communications technologies; border security and management; prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration (PRR), and the delivery of counter-terrorism training programmes in Africa. The agreement also makes provisions for UNOCT support to ECOWAS and its Member States in the implementation of the ECOWAS 2020-2024 Action Plan on Eradicating Terrorism.

The MoU was signed by **Dr. Omar Alieu Touray, President of the ECOWAS Commission**, and **Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism**, during a bilateral meeting on the margins of the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly High-Level Week.

Under-Secretary-General Voronkov noted that the signing of the MoU with ECOWAS marks a pivotal moment, as it establishes a comprehensive cooperation framework for the next 5 years.

Dr. Touray expressed ECOWAS commitment to the collaboration with the UN through UNOCT to address the multifaceted dimensions of terrorism, including the root causes such as youth empowerment, the fight against human rights violations and other governance deficits.

Following the signing, ECOWAS and UNOCT will develop a joint plan of action to put the agreement into practice, building on existing coordination platforms, such as the AU-UN Technical Working Group on Counter-Terrorism and PCVE. They will also explore opportunities to develop and undertake joint or collaborative activities with the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact. Moreover, jointly organize workshops, conferences, or other meetings and activities on topics and issues related to CT/PCVE, bringing together the relevant stakeholders at the global, regional, or national levels.

Yesterday (21 Sept.), ECOWAS participated in the Ministerial-Level meeting of African Member States on “Strengthening Regional Cooperation and Institution Building to Address the Evolving Threat of Terrorism in Africa” co-organized by Nigeria and UNOCT. The meeting provided African Member States and regional organizations an opportunity to share their views on the prevailing terrorism threat scenarios in Africa and propose actionable and outcome-oriented recommendations for the African Counter-Terrorism Summit (“Abuja Summit”) co-organized by UNOCT and Nigeria, which will be held in Abuja on 23-24 April. The Summit will seek to enhance multilateral counter-terrorism cooperation and reshape the international community’s collective response to terrorism in Africa.

For more information, please contact:

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