

## HIGH-LEVEL PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE

### *“Understanding the terrorist threat in Africa: new challenges and necessary measures”*

**30-31 March 2022**

Doha, the State of Qatar

*(In-person with limited online access)*

**La Cigale Hotel**

(60 Suhaim Bin Hamad Street, Al Sadd, Area Doha, Qatar)

## I. BACKGROUND

The threat posed by the rapidly growing presence and activity of terrorist organizations in African continent in the recent years has become one of the most critical international concerns. According to the Global Terrorism Index, such African states as Nigeria, Somalia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali, Burkina Faso, Mozambique, Libya, and Egypt are among world countries most affected by terrorism.<sup>1</sup>

Following its defeat in Syria and Iraq in 2017, Da’esh has managed to extend its influence in several African states, where local terrorist groups pledged allegiance to Da’esh such as local groups in Nigeria and the Sahel, which fight under Da’esh’s banner. In 2019, Da’esh has stated that its “Central Africa Province” includes parts of the Mozambique and Democratic Republic of Congo, where it reportedly developed alliances with local armed groups. To date, Da’esh and al Qaeda carry out their activities in almost all regions of Africa via their numerous branches and affiliates, including Al-Shabaab, Boko Haram, al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), the Islamic State Central Africa Province (ISCAP), the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS), and the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP).

The Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team, in its recent twenty-ninth report to the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning Da’esh and Al-Qaida, indicated that most Da’esh and Al-Qaida affiliates have continued to advance in Africa. In West Africa, particularly in the Sahel region, those groups have successfully exploited local grievances and weak governance to command growing numbers of followers and resources, notwithstanding internal divisions and rivalries.<sup>2</sup>

The report also maintains that the success of Da’esh and Al-Qaida affiliates in Africa throughout 2021 remains deeply concerning to Member States. Da’esh affiliates in Mozambique and the Sahel have both suffered setbacks but are assessed to pose significant ongoing threats. The

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.visionofhumanity.org/maps/global-terrorism-index/#/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://undocs.org/en/S/2022/83%C2%A0>

Da'esh affiliate in the Lake Chad basin has grown in strength, thereby confirming its status as, numerically, the strongest Da'esh province outside the core region and looking poised to expand its area of operations. Meanwhile, the key Al-Qaida affiliates in both Somalia and the Sahel have continued to grow in strength and ambition, leaving Member States concerned that they have been inspired by the example of the Taliban in Afghanistan.

The Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, in his statement at the thirteenth “Report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by Da'esh to international peace and security,” underlined that the spread of Da'esh in Africa has been the most alarming development in 2021, with spillover from Mali into Burkina Faso and Niger, incursions from Nigeria into Niger, Chad and Cameroon, and from Mozambique into Tanzania. He stressed that the expansion of Da'esh in Central Africa, and especially in northern Mozambique, could have far-reaching implications for peace and security in the region and need to be addressed through a coherent, regional approach as a matter of priority. He also noted that the situation in the wider region could be aggravated by the relocation of terrorists and other foreign fighters from Libya.<sup>3</sup>

Serious concerns over the worsening scourge of terrorism and violent extremism in Africa were expressed in the communiqué, adopted by the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU) at its 1048th meeting, held on 15 November 2021 on “Countering Extremist Ideology, Radicalization, and Financing of Terrorism in Africa.” In the communiqué, the PSC of AU particularly underscored the urgent need for Member States to make more concerted and coordinated efforts to effectively deprive terrorists and their organisations of all sources of funding as well as requests the AU Commission, working in collaboration with the Member States, the Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs), as well as with relevant international organizations, including the United Nations and bilateral partners, to urgently compile a continental list of persons, groups, and entities involved in terrorist acts.<sup>4</sup>

The issue of growing threat of terrorism in Africa was set among the top African priorities for 2022 at the 35th session of the Assembly of African Union Heads of State and Government, held on 5 February 2022 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The Chairperson of the African Union Commission, H.E. Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat, described the scourge of terrorism on the continent as being at an unprecedented scale and which, coupled with the resurgence of unconstitutional changes of government, calls for a new approach in addressing security on the continent, especially in light of “new destabilising factors” in Africa.<sup>5</sup>

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[https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/sites/www.un.org.counterterrorism/files/20210819\\_usg\\_voronkov\\_sc\\_briefing\\_13th\\_daesh\\_report\\_final\\_as\\_delivered.pdf](https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/sites/www.un.org.counterterrorism/files/20210819_usg_voronkov_sc_briefing_13th_daesh_report_final_as_delivered.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.peaceau.org/en/article/eng-communique-of-the-1048th-meeting-of-the-au-peace-and-security-council-psc-held-on-15-november-2021-on-countering-extremist-ideology-radicalization-and-financing-of-terrorism-in-africa>

<sup>5</sup> <https://au.int/en/pressreleases/20220205/outlining-african-priorities-2022-assembly-african-union-begins-its-35th>

## II. RATIONALE

By the adoption of the United Nations Global Counter Terrorism Strategy (UNGCTS A/RES/60/288), Member States resolved to undertake necessary measures to prevent and counter terrorism. The four pillars of the Strategy reflected the proposed measures, including thought addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, building capacity of Member States, strengthening the role of the UN in prevention and combating of terrorism, as well as ensuring respect for human rights for all and the rule of law as the fundamental basis of the fight against terrorism. In the bi-annual reviews of the Strategy, the Member States have been increasingly stressing the importance of strengthening the coordinated efforts and measures of prevention of violent extremism (PVE) conducive to terrorism.

However, to undertake any measures, it is important to properly understand the gist of the problem, examine its root-causes and dynamics, identify main actors and drivers, which often derive from poor governance, negative human rights records, inequality, poverty, inadequate regulation of public sphere etc. There are many instances, when countries become vulnerable to terror threat due to lack of capacity relevant state organs, economic challenges, and other objective factors, many of which must be addressed via adoption of robust legislation and comprehensive oversight of its implementation.

Despite the substantial counter-terrorism efforts of Members States, the deteriorating situation on the ground shows that the Member States and the key international institutions, including the UN, need to enhance their efforts and undertake more vigorous measures to prevent the rapidly spreading extremism and terrorism in the African continent via a well-coordinated efforts and comprehensive cooperation among Member States

To facilitate such cooperation, it is essential to ensure that the legislative bodies, relevant security and law enforcement organs of Member States engage in a dialogue on the development of effective solutions and robust measures, including by ensuring the harmonisation their national legislation and regulations on PVE and counter-terrorism (CT) in line with the relevant resolutions and recommendations of the UN Security Council and General Assembly as well as the international standards and best practices.

Considering the crucial role of parliaments, as the key legislative body with the oversight functions, it is critical to engage with the parliaments of Member States in a meaningful discussion on the existing and emerging terrorist threats and development of adequate measures to address and mitigate these threats. In fact, the importance of engaging parliamentarians in counter-terrorism efforts is well recognized in the decisions of the General Assembly and Security Council related to terrorism and violent extremism, which also corresponds to the UN Security Council recommendations on promotion of the whole of government and whole of society approach. The UNGCTS, its reviews and relevant resolutions of the Security Council refer to the role of parliaments by specifying legislative and other measures, which should be taken by Member States to prevent and counter terrorism and violent extremism.



Based on its mandate and expertise in the area of counter terrorism, [UNOCT Programme Office on Parliamentary Engagement in Preventing and Countering Terrorism](#), in partnership with the [African Parliamentary Union](#) (APU) and [the Shura Council of the State of Qatar](#), have come up with a joint initiative to convene a high-level parliamentary conference, dedicated to the issues of the current and emerging terrorist threats in Africa and necessary measures to address these threats. The Conference is to be held in Doha, the State of Qatar on 30-31 March 2022.

*The UNOCT Programme Office on Parliamentary Engagement in Preventing and Countering Terrorism, based in Doha, was established in 2021, in cooperation with the Shura Council of the State of Qatar and thanks to the generous contribution of the State of Qatar.*

### III. MAIN OBJECTIVE

The two-day high-level parliamentary conference “Understanding the terrorist threat in Africa: new challenges and necessary measures” will aim to discuss the main existing and emerging terrorist threats in the African continent in order to develop a set of measures that contribute to mitigate and address these threats.

### IV. EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The high-level parliamentary conference has the following as specific outcomes:

- Identify and discuss the main current and emerging terrorist threats in Africa, including the nature, root-causes, key actors, and drivers of these threats;
- Develop and discuss a set of the relevant immediate measures that contribute to mitigation, prevention of these threats;
- Discuss the role of the parliaments in Africa in prevention, mitigation and addressing the existing and emerging terrorist threats;
- Identify the needs of the parliaments in Africa for technical assistance and capacity building in specific areas of CT&PVE, including the development or revision of the national CT&PVE strategies and action plans;
- Discuss a need and possibility of establishing of a CT&PVE network of African parliamentarians.

### V. PARTICIPANTS

- Representatives of African national parliaments and parliamentary assemblies.
- Representatives of African national parliaments – **2 persons** from each country, 54 African countries.



- Representatives of the parliamentary assemblies:
  - Arab Parliament (AP)
  - Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union (AIPU)
  - Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA)
  - ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA)
  - Central African Economic and Monetary Community Parliament (CAEMC Parliament)
  - Commonwealth Parliamentary Assembly (CPA)
  - European Parliament (EP)
  - Inter-Parliamentary Union of Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IPU - IGAD)
  - Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)
  - Inter-Parliamentary Assembly of Member Nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States (IPA CIS)
  - Inter-parliamentary Committee of the G5 Sahel (CIP G5 Sahel)
  - Latin American Parliament (Parlatino)
  - NATO Parliamentary Assembly (NATO PA)
  - OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA)
  - Pan African Parliament (PAP)
  - Parliament of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)
  - Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE)
  - Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM)
  - Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic Speaking Countries (TURKPA)
  - Parliamentary Union of the OIC Member States (PUIC)
  - Southern African Development Community Parliamentary Forum (SADC PF)
- Other participants – **10 persons**: thematic experts, including UNOCT programmes on [Fusion Cells](#), [Border Security and Management](#) (BSM) and other programmes/projects.

## VI. ORGANIZATIONS ASPECTS AND TIMELINE

The event will be organized by the UNOCT Programme Office on Parliamentary Engagement, in partnership with the African Parliamentary Union and the Shura Council of the State of Qatar, on 30 – 31 March 2021, in Doha, the State of Qatar. UNOCT will bear the travel and accommodation costs of two representatives from the African Parliamentary Union and participating national parliamentary delegations, and one of each parliamentary assembly. Simultaneous interpretation will be provided in Arabic, English, and French. For further information, please see the provisional agenda and logistical note attached.



## VII. CONTACTS

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