

UNODC Executive Director's Remarks
10th Global CT Coordination Compact Committee Meeting
Session: Outcome-oriented discussion amongst UN Global Counter-Terrorism
Compact entities

24 January 2024

[Mr. Secretary-General,]
Under-Secretary-General Voronkov,
Distinguished Ambassadors,
Excellencies,
Colleagues,

I am pleased to join you to discuss the importance of coordinating our efforts against terrorism in the African continent.

Today, insecurity and rule of law deficits in Africa are feeding inter-linked challenges of terrorism, organized crime, governance, and conflict, as terrorist groups exploit instability and weak borders, and engage in criminal activities for funding.

Terrorism presents a multi-faceted threat that none of us can tackle alone.

Coordination is key, whether between different agencies on the national level, between different Member States, or between UN entities and international organizations, and specifically among compact entities.

Excellencies,
Colleagues,

The UN Office on Drugs and Crime is on the ground supporting African countries to apply rule of law solutions to address terrorism and terrorism financing, links with organized crime, strengthening border security, and preventing radicalization in prison settings.

Our Strategic Vision for Africa, launched in 2021, considers preventing and countering terrorism as one of its main pillars.

We have a field presence in 40 countries in Africa, including 40 personnel specifically working on terrorism issues, implementing terrorism prevention activities in 51 countries across all subregions of the continent.

In 2023 alone, UNODC implemented over 250 activities in Africa to improve the capacity of nearly 4,000 criminal justice practitioners and other relevant stakeholders on preventing and countering terrorism.

We are leveraging our long-standing relationships in the region with governments and organizations.

UNODC works closely with entities such as the African Union and its African Center for the Study and Research on Terrorism, the Lake Chad Basin Commission, the Southern Africa

Development Community, and the Eastern Africa Police Chiefs' Cooperation Organization, to name a few.

With the latter, we organized 24 capacity building activities in 2023, with more than 560 participants in the East Africa region.

We do work with several Compact member entities as well, and we hope to do more.

With UNOCT, we work on prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration, as well as countering terrorist travel and addressing chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear terrorism.

With UNICRI, we launched a joint project last year to tackle the nexus between terrorism and organized crime.

With CTED, we work on facilitating the use and admissibility of battlefield evidence to prosecute terrorism offences, and we are actively providing technical assistance in this area in West Africa and Mozambique.

We are also supporting Djibouti in its efforts to regulate the use and sharing of biometric data, in accordance with the rule of law, human rights and international good practices.

We will continue to look for opportunities for cooperation to face current and emerging terrorism threats in Africa.

In this regard, I would like to highlight two important considerations to achieve long-term results, together.

Firstly, we need to support African Member States in moving beyond purely security-focused responses to terrorism, and towards more comprehensive and sustainable approaches.

This means investing more in prevention and promoting inclusive whole-of-society engagement.

It also means strengthening the role of criminal justice systems, to ensure full accountability for terrorism crimes as well as justice for victims.

And secondly, we need to make the best possible use of existing coordination mechanisms in each African sub-region, such as the West African Network of Central Authorities and Prosecutors, the Multi-Agency Task Force, and the Sahel Judicial Platform.

To strengthen regional coordination, UNODC held an Africa Cooperation Meeting in November 2023, bringing together law enforcement from across the continent, including police chiefs' organizations of the African sub-regions.

Moving forward, we can improve coordination and efficiency by looking to connect existing networks, rather than establishing new and possibly overlapping mechanisms.

UNODC stands ready to work with all of you to improve synergies and deliver together, for peace, security, and rule of law in Africa.

Thank you.