

UN Counter-Terrorism Compact Retreat
“Strengthening partnerships between regional organizations and the UN Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact to support the coordination of policy interventions and capacity-building efforts”

Thematic Session I: Understanding Capacity-Building Challenges at the regional level: West Africa, East Africa, Gulf Cooperation region and Central Asia

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Excellencies, colleagues, distinguished guests,

The global threat landscape remains unpredictable and complex. Terrorist groups are rapidly adapting and exploiting regional and international instability to expand their reach, and many Governments are struggling with shifting priorities and constrained budgets, leading to a severe strain on funding availability for overseas development and counter terrorism initiatives.

This situation is particularly critical in Africa, where escalating security threats require sustained international support. The 2024 Global Terrorism Index confirms that the epicentre of terrorism has now shifted to the Sahel, with West Africa experiencing the greatest impact, precisely the region where we are concentrating our training efforts.

It also highlights compelling evidence of the urgent need to enhance law enforcement capabilities and improve intelligence-sharing at all levels.

These developments call for a strategic and adaptive response that is grounded in international cooperation and guided by a human rights-based approach because, as the threat evolves, so too must our response.

At UNOCT, particularly within the Special Projects and Innovation Branch, we recognize that traditional bilateral support is no longer sufficient.

We must move toward new multilateral models of capacity building that are measurable and sustainable. There is also an urgent need for strengthened international collaboration at all levels.

A key example of our strategic focus is the yearly high-level conference known as the Marrakesh Platform. Now in its fourth year, this high-level event held just last week in Agadir, Morocco brought together 64 heads of intelligence and security services, with delegations from all over the world. Since its inception, four years ago, the Platform has firmly established itself as a leading forum for exchanging expertise, enhancing regional and international cooperation, and identifying capacity-building priorities to counter terrorism across Africa.

This year's edition builds on the successes of previous gatherings, further solidifying the Platform's role as a vital mechanism for advancing multilateral counter-terrorism efforts and as a cornerstone for promoting continental collaboration and inter-agency engagement.

We also believe that being closer to our beneficiaries enables us to adapt quickly to this evolving landscape. That's why we have relocated our training

programmes to key regional hubs in Budapest, Doha, Madrid, Nairobi and Rabat, allowing us to deliver initiatives that are tailored to the specific needs of our beneficiaries.

Our Global Fusion Cells Programme has this year increased its reach of specialized training, and so far, has trained law enforcement and intelligence officers from 32 African countries. A new “Train-the-Trainer” curriculum and multilingual modules, including on data analytics, have been introduced to ensure long-term sustainability.

Looking ahead, the programme is on track to deliver 55 technical training events this year while expanding into Cameroon, Ethiopia, Kenya, and other priority countries.

Another impactful initiative is our Counter-Terrorism Investigations Programme, also based in Rabat, which has played a key role in advancing our knowledge-sharing efforts.

The Specialized Training on Counter-Terrorism Investigations has been accredited as an executive master’s programme by the New England Commission for Higher Education. This milestone marks a significant shift in how we deliver capacity-building, with a lasting impact on careers and lives.

Other highlights include our Global Programme on Security of Major Sporting Events, which so far has reached over 30 African countries, and this year will

partner with the African Union and CAF to support Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda as they prepare for the 2027 Africa Cup of Nations.

Our Global Programme on Protection of Vulnerable Targets has supported national action plans in Kyrgyzstan, Tunisia, and Senegal, to name a few.

On the other hand, the Autonomous and Remotely Operated Systems (AROS) Programme continues to train security personnel in remotely operated systems and threat mitigation, with recent certification courses in Senegal and Malaysia. And we also recognize the role of legislators and youth in counter-terrorism efforts through our Parliamentary Engagement Programme.

Finally, the UN Countering Terrorist Travel Programme has grown to support 88 Member States, conducting capacity building, legislative reviews, technical consultations, and launching new regional working groups in East Africa and the MENA region.

In SPIB, we remain committed to Results-Based Management.

We continuously evaluate the impact and sustainability of our programmes to ensure they deliver real value for our Member States. As we look ahead to 2025, we are planning the establishment of a new law enforcement Academy for Africa, which is a joint initiative with the kingdom of Morocco and will provide dedicated law enforcement and counter-terrorism training across the continent.

Looking ahead, we know the path will not be without its challenges, but it holds great promise. Through strengthened partnerships, innovation, and a shared sense of purpose, we will remain focused and optimistic and keep moving forward with determination.

As the nature of terrorism changes, so too must our strategies. Through closer partnerships, smarter investment in capacity-building, and a deepened commitment to cooperation, we can strengthen our collective resilience. Guided by the principles of the *Pact for the Future*, we will continue to scale our impact and deliver meaningful, lasting change in the fight against terrorism.

Thank you, and I look forward to your questions.