

[concept note]

**Joint open briefing of the Counter Terrorism Committee and the
1267/1989/2253 ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee**

“Challenges in Countering Terrorism in West Africa”

*Conference Room 4, United Nations Headquarters, New York,
Tuesday, 27 June 2017, 3:00pm to 6:00pm*

I. Introduction

1. The terrorist threat to West Africa — including the Sahel and Lake Chad Basin subregions — is multifaceted and derives from many sources. Al-Qaida affiliates — most notably Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Al-Mourabitoun and Ansar Eddine — remain active in northern and central Mali and pose a sustained threat to local defence and security forces, as well as to international targets. The threat posed by these groups was further heightened by their recent merger under the banner of Jama'ah Nusrah al Islam w al Muslim (whose constituent organizations carried out more than 250 attacks across the region in 2016 alone). Neighbouring States — including Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire — have also been targeted by Al-Qaida affiliates. Ansaroul Islam continues to be active in northern Burkina Faso, and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, also known as Da'esh) continues to step up its operations in West Africa and the Sahel. ISIL-related attacks — allegedly committed by a splinter group of Al-Mourabitoun called the “Islamic State in the Greater Sahara” — have been reported in northern Burkina Faso and western Niger. In the south of the region, the ISIL-affiliated Boko Haram faction known as “Islamic State West Africa Province” continues to carry out indiscriminate attacks against civilians. These various groups continue to finance their operations through, inter alia, trafficking of arms, drugs and human beings; kidnapping for ransom; cattle stealing; and banditry.

2. The threat posed by Boko Haram has evolved from a purely Nigerian concern to a regional concern that also involves Cameroon, Chad and Niger. Sustained military pressure applied by the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) is reported to have confined most Boko Haram fighters in the south of Borno State, Nigeria, and in the Sambisa forest. However, Boko Haram-aligned fighters are also reported to be active in northern and central Mali.

3. For many years, counter-terrorism had not been a priority concern for most of the region. However, all States of the region — particularly those neighbouring conflict zones — have now realized the scale of the threat posed to their territories, not just by terrorism, but also by violent extremism. There is also a growing recognition that security measures are an essential component of national development strategies. In this regard, the United Nations has supported the design and implementation of the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (UNISS), which is founded upon three key strategic goals, one of which is to enhance the capacity of national and security mechanisms to address cross-border threats. Moreover, in its presidential statement of 20 January 2017 (S/PRST/2017/2), the Security Council encouraged “further progress by the United Nations system and its partners toward the implementation of the UNISS, including through support to the Group of 5 for the Sahel (G-

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5), in order to assist in addressing the security and political challenges to the stability and development of the Sahel region”.

4. Following its visit to the four States of the Lake Chad Basin region, conducted from 2 to 7 March 2017, the Council adopted resolution 2349 (2017), which calls upon “relevant United Nations entities, including UNOCA, UNOWAS, and the United Nations Office to the African Union to redouble their support for Governments in the region, as well as subregional and regional organizations, to address the impact of Boko Haram and ISIL violence on the peace and stability of the region, including by addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, and violent extremism that can be conducive to terrorism, in line with the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy”.

II. Objective and topics

5. The Counter-Terrorism Committee and the 1267/1989/2253 ISIL (Da’esh) and Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee propose to organize a joint open briefing aimed at discussing current threats posed by terrorism and violent extremism in West Africa (including the Sahel and the Lake Chad Basin), as well as significant remaining gaps in Member States’ efforts to counter terrorism and violent extremism in the region. The joint open briefing would also highlight initiatives of the United Nations to assist Member States to enhance their capacity to counter terrorism in West Africa and thereby strengthen global efforts to fight terrorism and violent extremism.

III. Format of discussions

6. The proposed briefing would consist of opening statements by the two Committee Chairs, as well as three substantive sessions (arranged in “presentation/question-and-answer” format to encourage interactive discussion). The participants would consider (i) the evolution of the terrorist threat in West Africa; (ii) an overview of outstanding gaps in Member States’ efforts to counter terrorism and violent extremism in the region; and (iii) the assistance facilitated and provided by the United Nations to enhance Member States’ capacity to counter terrorism and violent extremism in West Africa (*draft agenda attached for the Committee’s consideration*).

7. The two Committee Chairs would act as moderators.

8. The briefing would be open to the wider United Nations membership, as well as to other relevant United Nations entities and international and regional organizations. Participants would be encouraged to raise issues and questions relating to the above-mentioned topics. As there would not be sufficient time to hear written statements, participating delegations would be requested to submit statements to CTED and/or the Monitoring Team for inclusion on their respective websites. In due course, CTED and the Monitoring Team would circulate an annotated agenda, meeting documentation, and other logistical information, which would also be posted on the websites of both Committees.

IV. Date and venue

9. It is proposed that the briefing be held at United Nations Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 27 June 2017, in Conference Room 4, from 3.00 p.m. to 6.00 p.m.

V. Outcomes

10. The outcomes of the briefing would include a joint Chairs' summary of the presentations and discussions, to be posted on the two Committees' respective websites.

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Draft agenda

3.00-3.10 Opening session

Opening statements:

- H.E. Mr. Amr Abdellatif Aboulatta
Chair, Counter-Terrorism Committee
- H. E. Mr. Kairat Umarov
Chair, 1267/1989/2253 ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida Sanctions
Committee

3.10-3.30 Session I: Evolution of the terrorist threat

The Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team established pursuant to resolutions 1526 (2004) and 2253 (2015) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and the Taliban and associated individuals and entities will discuss the evolution of the terrorist threat in West Africa, as well as the evolution of the operating methods of terrorist groups active in the subregion.

Moderator:

Chair, Counter Terrorism Committee

Panellist:

- Hans-Jacob Schindler, Coordinator, Monitoring Team

3.30-4.00 Session II: Overview of gaps in Member States' efforts to counter terrorism and violent extremism in West Africa

Representatives of CTED will discuss outstanding gaps in Member States' efforts to counter terrorism in West Africa, including in areas relating to the applicable legal and administrative frameworks, terrorism financing, border control, and law enforcement.

Moderator:

Chair, 1267/1989/2253 ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee

4.00-4.20 Presentations to be followed by questions & answers (20 mins.)

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4.20-5.20 Session III: Assisting Member States to Enhance their Capacity to Counter Terrorism in West Africa

Speakers will provide a comprehensive update on United Nations efforts to assist Member States of the subregion, including efforts to strengthen inter-agency coordination and cooperation for the implementation of the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (UNISS) and to enhance information exchange between United Nations entities and external partners, including the Group of 5 for the Sahel (G-5 Sahel).

Panellists:

- Mr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS).
- Mr. Pierre Lapaque, Regional representative, Office for West and Central Africa.
- Mr. Jehangir Khan, Director, Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF)/United Nations Center for Counter-Terrorism (UNCCT).
- Ozonnia Ojielo, Regional Cluster Director, Governance and Peacebuilding in Africa, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Moderator:

Chair, Counter-Terrorism Committee

5.20-5.45 Presentations to be followed by questions & answers (25 mins.)

5.45-6.00 Closing session

Closing remarks:

- H.E. Mr. Amr Abdellatif Aboulatta
Chair, Counter-Terrorism Committee
- H. E. Mr. Kairat Umarov
Chair, 1267/1989/2253 ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee