

Niger/Nigeria bilateral workshop on “Prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration approaches for persons associated with Boko Haram

Virtual platform, Monday, 31 January 2021, 9.30–10.00 a.m. EST

Opening remarks of

**H.E. Mr. T. S. Tirumurti
Chair**

**Security Council Committee established pursuant
to resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism**

Excellencies,

Distinguished participants,

On behalf of the Counter-Terrorism Committee and its Executive Directorate, allow me to begin by commending Niger and Nigeria for your continued efforts to counter Boko Haram, Islamic State in West Africa Province, and other terrorist groups active in your respective territories.

Today’s event provides a welcome opportunity for me, as the newly elected Chair of the Committee, to reaffirm the Committee’s support for your efforts to counter terrorism, and in particular for your proactive approaches to the prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration of persons associated with terrorism.

I would also like to thank the Government of Niger for hosting this event in these challenging circumstances.

I would like to re-iterate that the threat of terrorism is grave and universal and can only be defeated by collective efforts of all UN member states. Terrorism in one place can directly impact peace and security in another. Terrorism in all its forms and

manifestations should be condemned and there cannot be any exception or justification for any act of terrorism, regardless of motivations behind such acts, and wherever, whenever and by whomsoever committed. The menace of terrorism should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization, or ethnic group.

The death of the Boko Haram leader Abubakar Shekau has provided a welcome opportunity to degrade that organization's capacities but has also increased pressure on your institutions to deal effectively with the thousands of individuals who are surrendering.

At the same time, ISWAP continues to menace communities, and ISIL continues its efforts to expand across the continent. With the ISIL affiliate in Lake Chad Basin growing in strength, we should spare no efforts to offset the risks that ISWAP absorbs the followers of the deceased Boko Haram leader.

As you are aware, the Security Council and the Counter-Terrorism Committee have been closely monitoring the security situation in the Lake Chad Basin region for many years.

The expansion of ISIL, through its affiliates, especially in Africa, is a matter of grave concern.

The relevant Security Council resolutions stress the vital need for regional and judicial cooperation in countering terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism.

The Council's March 2017 visit to the Lake Chad Basin region led to the adoption resolution 2349 (2017), on the impact of Boko Haram and ISIL, which encouraged States to cooperate across the region and to develop vetting criteria and processes facilitating prompt assessment of all persons associated with Boko Haram and ISIL

in the custody of authorities, in order to prosecute, rehabilitate and reintegrate them, as appropriate.

The efforts undertaken by both Nigeria and Niger to develop innovative responses which take into account the different experiences of persons who have been associated with Boko Haram and ISWAP are commendable.

The work of the Multinational Joint Task Force, and the important role of the military in collecting evidence that could be used by criminal justice actors, should also be commended.

Niger and Nigeria have adopted multi-agency approaches to screening and bringing terrorists to justice and have developed dedicated programmes to rehabilitate and reintegrate persons in alternative settings and in prisons.

We welcome the opportunity to learn more about how your national approaches interact and how they are compatible and coordinated at the regional level.

As Boko Haram and ISWAP continue to exploit the borders and territories of the Lake Chad Basin, regional coherence and cooperation are essential to ensuring sustainable responses.

Needless to say, developing these approaches takes time and work.

The human rights and international humanitarian law aspects of counter-terrorism measures and the gender dimension should also be mainstreamed into their development and implementation.

Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED)

We must all continue to stand in solidarity with the many victims of terrorism and seek justice for their sake.

Let me conclude by reiterating my thanks to Niger and Nigeria and to reaffirm the continued support of the Committee and CTED for their efforts to counter terrorism.

We look forward to the constructive dialogue with your experts and agencies on a range of topics.

Thank you.