



ECOWAS political declaration and common position against terrorism



ECOWAS POLITICAL DECLARATION AND COMMON POSITION AGAINST TERRORISM

We, the Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS);

Reaffirming our commitment to the Revised ECOWAS Treaty signed at Cotonou, Benin, on 24 July 1993, in particular, Article 58 of the Treaty, which enjoins Member States to work to safeguard and consolidate relations conducive to the maintenance of peace, stability and security within the Community;

Considering Article 3 (paragraph 4) of the Protocol A/P1/12/99 Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security, signed at Lomé, Togo, on 10 December 1999; paragraph 40 of the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework MSC/REG.1/01/08, signed at Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, on 16 January 2008; and Article 24(2) of the Protocol A/SP1/12/01 on Democracy and Good Governance Supplementary to the Protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security, signed at Dakar, Senegal, on 21 December 2001;

Considering measures undertaken by the Community in order to promote and consolidate cooperation among Member States on criminal matters, including *inter alia*, the ECOWAS Convention A/P1/7/92 on Mutual Assistance in Penal Matters signed at Dakar, Senegal, on 29 July 1992; Convention A/P1/8/94 on Extradition, signed at Abuja, Nigeria, on 6 August 1994; Protocol on Non-Aggression, signed at Lagos, Nigeria, on 22 August 1978, Protocol A/SP3/5/81 on Mutual Assistance on Defense Matters, signed at Freetown, Sierra Leone, on 29 May 1981; Convention A/P5/5/82 on Administrative Assistance on Customs Matters, signed at Cotonou, Benin, on 29 May 1982; Protocol A/P1/01/06 on the Establishment of a Bureau of Intelligence and Investigation on Criminal Matters, signed at Niamey, Niger, on 12 January 2006; and the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunitions and Other Related Materials, signed at Abuja, Nigeria, on 14 June 2006; as well as the Political Declaration on the Prevention of Drug Abuse, Illicit Drug Trafficking and Organized Crimes in West Africa;



Considering the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism, signed at Algiers, Algeria, on 14 July 1999, which, inter alia, provides a common African definition of terrorist acts, and the Protocol thereto, signed at Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 8 July 2004; and the African Union (AU) Plan of Action on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism in Africa adopted at Algiers, Algeria, on 14 September 2002; as well as various decisions adopted by the AU relating to the prevention and combating of terrorism in Africa;

Guided by the principles and regulations enshrined in the universal conventions and protocols and relevant resolutions of the United Nations (UN) on the prevention and combating of terrorism, in particular, Security Council resolutions, including 1373 of 28 September 2001, 1267 of 15 October 1999, 1540 of 14 April 2004, and 1624 of 14 September 2005; General Assembly resolutions on measures to prevent and eliminate terrorism and the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy adopted on 8 September 2006; as well as other resolutions adopted by the UN and its agencies relating to the prevention and combating of terrorism;

Inspired by Article 5 of the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, signed at Nairobi, Kenya, on 27 June 1981, which stipulates that every individual shall have the right to the respect of the dignity inherent in a human being and to the recognition of his legal status. All forms of exploitation and degradation of humankind, particularly slavery, slave trade, torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment and treatment, shall be prohibited; and Article 29 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in New York, on 10 December 1948, which states that, in the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society;

Conscious of the fact that the West African region is adversely affected by the phenomenon of terrorism, and that the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism are complex and require robust and proactive policies aimed at addressing the underlying economic and socio-political factors that give rise to or fuel terrorism;

Seriously concerned at the recent manifestations of terrorist activities within the Community, notably terrorist bombings, suicide attacks, kidnappings, hostage-



taking, hijacking, mass murder, wanton assassinations, piracy and acts of sabotage of public and private properties, as well as the torching and desecration of religious and sacred places;

Noting that these acts in the region have resulted in loss of innocent lives, serious injuries, damage to property, and spread awe and intimidation, as well as having other far-reaching humanitarian ramifications on victim communities;

Convinced that a terrorist act in all its forms and manifestations constitutes the most serious and egregious crime that violates fundamental human rights, including the rights to physical integrity, life, freedom from fear, liberty and security, and aggravates poverty through its debilitating effects on economic development and social cohesion;

Concerned at the risk of terrorists' acquiring weapons of mass destruction, including biological and chemical warfare agents and nuclear and other radioactive materials, for the purpose of committing terrorist acts;

Aware that terrorists exploit the cyberspace for the purpose of recruitment and spreading propaganda, as well as for planning and executing terrorist acts, including the unlawful attacks or threats of attack on computers, networks and other scientific and technological information systems; the intention of which is to intimidate, instil fear, or coerce a government, private business or segment of the population thereof for the purpose of advancing political, ideological or social objectives, whether directly or indirectly;

Bearing in mind the linkages between terrorism and other forms of criminality, including trans-national organised crimes such as trafficking in drugs and human beings, arms smuggling and illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons, corruption and money laundering;

Determined to eliminate and stamp out the scourge of terrorism in the region and to create an enabling environment for effective regional integration, economic development, peace, security and stability in West Africa;

Stressing that all activities undertaken to prevent and combat terrorism should be consistent with states' obligations under international human rights and humanitarian



law, including the UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, signed at New York, on 16 December 1966;

Convinced that achieving this objective requires a resolute and firm commitment by Member States acting in close collaboration at all levels of inter-governmental actions on border surveillance, regular information sharing on both national and cross-border criminal networks, mutual assistance in criminal matters, including investigation and prosecution of terrorist suspects, as well as in the seizure and freezing of terrorist assets and finances; and

Desirous of establishing a common framework for inter-governmental action and cooperation on practical matters on the prevention and combating of terrorism and to ensure synergies in states' actions at the national, regional and international levels.

The Authority of Heads of State and Government hereby therefore solemnly declares as follows:

1. **Unequivocally condemns** terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including acts of kidnapping, hijacking, hostage-taking and the demand and payment of ransom, bombing of public and private properties and critical infrastructures, acts of sabotage and the desecration of religious and other cultural sacred places;
2. **Equally condemns** any movement, group or individuals using religious, ethnic or other social or cultural differences to incite or indulge in violence and other hostile activities resulting in death, injuries or damage to property, the intention of which is to intimidate or coerce a government, private business or segment of the population thereof for the purpose of achieving political or social objectives;
3. **Determined** to take all necessary measures to bring to justice persons or entities that participate in financing, planning, directing or perpetrating terrorist acts. To this end, Member States shall freeze or confiscate without delay funds and other financial assets or economic resources of persons, organisations or groups that knowingly recruit individuals for, encourage, facilitate, incite, finance, participate or act as an accomplice in the planning, financing and



commissioning of a terrorist act or any of its links mentioned above, whether directly or indirectly;

4. **Reaffirms** the commitment of Member States to refrain from encouraging, facilitating, financing or tolerating activities that are terrorist in nature or any complacency thereto; as well as to prevent Member States' territories from being used as safe havens for the training, planning and execution of terrorist acts;
5. **Calls on** all Member States, particularly those that have not done so, to consider as a matter of extreme urgency the immediate ratification and/or accession to all the relevant ECOWAS conventions and protocols (as listed in annex IV), the OAU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism and its Protocol thereto, including other relevant continental instruments (as listed in Annex III), as well as the eighteen universal conventions and protocols on the prevention and combating of terrorism (as listed in annex II) and others adopted by the UN;
6. **Further calls** on all Member States to put in place the operational measures for the full and effective implementation of the legal counter-terrorism instruments mentioned in paragraph 5 above, including but not limited to the enactment and enforcement of national legislations with appropriate criminalisation of terrorist crimes, including severe penalties for perpetrators of such acts; the establishment of national coordinating mechanisms or centres; and taking advantage of technical assistance programmes, including adopting the AU Comprehensive African Anti-Terrorism Model Law;
7. **Undertakes** to strengthen cooperation, synergies and joint endeavours in the areas of intelligence gathering and sharing, investigation, prosecution and law enforcement in the prevention and combating of terrorism;
8. **Encourages** relevant civil society and non-governmental organisations, including the media, to work in conjunction with Member States in order to coordinate and mutually reinforce their activities aimed at preventing and combating terrorism within the Community;
9. **Adopts** a zero-tolerance policy against terrorism within the Community. To this end, a terrorist threat to one Member State shall constitute a threat to the whole



Community. In the application of this policy, Member States categorically reject any circumstances, including economic, political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious, cultural, medical and health or other motives, as justification for the commission of a terrorist act within or outside the Community and/or by a citizen of the Community;

10. **Reaffirms** the commitment of Member States to uphold international law and to streamline all activities undertaken within the framework of preventing and combating terrorism with the applicable international humanitarian and human rights law, including the African Charters on Human and People's Rights and the Rights and Welfare of the Child; as well as the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. To this end, all Member States collectively Abhor torture and other degrading and inhumane treatment of terrorist suspects, and undertake to strengthen democratic practices and rule of law to ensure due process, fair trial and equality before the law for all citizens;
11. **Decides** to adopt the ECOWAS Counter-Terrorism Strategy and Implementation Plan, based on an integrated approach and which elaborates a comprehensive set of measures to be undertaken by various agencies in Member States and provides a strategic policy direction towards the containment and elimination of the threat posed by terrorism to the Community. To this end, the Authority approves the establishment within the Community, as called for in the Strategy, of: a) an ECOWAS Counter-Terrorism Coordination Unit; b) an ECOWAS Arrest Warrant; c) an ECOWAS Black List of Terrorist and Criminal Networks, in order to facilitate coordination and information-sharing among Member States and d) a sub-regional Counter-Terrorism Training Centre;
12. **Requests** the President of the Commission to submit to the next session of the Authority detailed proposals on the operational modalities, including budgetary implications and funding sources, for the mechanisms mentioned in paragraph 11 above;
13. **Further requests** the President of the Commission to submit to the Authority an annual report on the state of terrorism in West Africa, including threats and vulnerabilities, as well as the measures taken by Member States and



the Commission to implement this Declaration and the ECOWAS Strategy mentioned in paragraph 11 above;

14. **Appeals** to the international community, including technical assistance institutions, development partners, relevant international organisations and civil society groups, to coordinate their activities with ECOWAS and to strengthen financial, material and technical support (including training, research and exchange of information) for the effective implementation of this Declaration and the Strategy mentioned therein; and

15. **Decides** to remain seized of the matter.

Adopted in Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire, on 28 February 2013



ANNEX I

ECOWAS Counter-Terrorism Strategy

ANNEX II

United Nations and Universal Counter-Terrorism Instruments for which signature, ratification and/or accession of all ECOWAS Member States is recommended

1. 2010 Convention on the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Relating to International Civil Aviation (not yet entered into force);
2. 2010 Protocol Supplementary to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft (not yet entered into force);
3. 2005 International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (entered into force: 7 July 2007);
4. 2005 Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (to enter into force once ratified by two-third majority of states parties);
5. 2005 Protocol to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation (entered into force: 1 March 1992);
6. 2005 Protocol to the Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Fixed Platforms Located on the Continental Shelf (entered into force: 28 July 2010);
7. 1999 International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism (entered into force: 10 April 2002);
8. 1997 International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings (entered into force: 23 May 2001);



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9. 1991 Convention on the Marking of Plastic Explosives for the Purpose of Detection (entered into force: 21 June 1998);
 10. 1988 Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts of Violence at Airports Serving International Civil Aviation (entered into force: 6 August 1989);
 11. 1988 Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation (entered into force: 1 March 1992);
 12. 1988 Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Aircraft Fixed Platforms Located on the Continental Shelf (entered into force: 1 March 1992);
 13. 1980 Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (entered into force: 8 February 1987);
 14. 1979 International Convention against the Taking of Hostages (entered into force: 3 June 1983);
 15. 1973 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Internationally Protected Persons, including Diplomatic Agents (entered into force: 20 February 1977);
 16. 1971 Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation (entered into force: 26 January 1973);
 17. 1970 Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft (entered into force: 14 October 1971); and the
 18. 1963 Convention on Offences and Certain Other Acts Committed On Board Aircraft (entered into force: 4 December 1969).



ANNEX III

Relevant African Union Counter-Terrorism Instruments for which signature and/or ratification is recommended for ECOWAS Member States

1. 2007 African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (entered into force: 15 February 2012);
2. 2005 African Union Non-Aggression and Common Defence Pact (entered into force: 18 December 2009);
3. 2004 Protocol to the OAU Convention on Prevention and Combating of Terrorism (to enter into force 30 days after the deposit of the fifteenth instrument of ratification);
4. 2003 African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption (entered into force: 5 August 2006);
5. 2003 Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (entered into force: 25 November 2005);
6. 1999 OAU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism (entered into force: 6 December 2002);
7. 1995 African Nuclear-Weapons-Free-Zone Treaty (Treaty of Pelindaba) (entered into force: 15 July 2009);
8. 1981 African Charter on Human and People's Rights (entered into force: 21 October 1986); and the
9. 1977 Convention for the Elimination of Mercenarism in Africa (entered into force: 22 April 1985).



ANNEX IV

Relevant ECOWAS Instruments for the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism, to which ratification and/or accession is required for all ECOWAS Member States

1. 2006 ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunitions and Other Related Materials;
2. 2006 Protocol A/P1/01/06 Relating to the Establishment of an ECOWAS Bureau of Intelligence and Investigation on Criminal Matters;
3. 2001 ECOWAS Protocol A/P3/12/01 on the Fight against Corruption;
4. 2001 Protocol A/SP1/12/01 on Democracy and Good Governance Supplementary to the Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security;
5. 1999 Protocol A/AP1/12/99 Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security;
6. 1994 ECOWAS Convention A/P1/8/94 on Extradition;
7. 1992 ECOWAS Convention A/P1/7/92 on Mutual Judicial Assistance in Criminal Matters;
8. 1982 Convention A/P5/5/82 on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Customs Matters;
9. 1981 Protocol A/SP3/5/81 on Mutual Assistance on Defence Matters;
10. 1978 Protocol on Non-Aggression; and the
11. 1977 Framework Agreement of the Protocol on Non-Aggression and Assistance in Defence Matters.



ECOWAS Counter-Terrorism Strategy

Contents

LIST OF ACRONYMS	13
SECTION I: BACKGROUND	16
INTRODUCTION.....	16
PRINCIPAL CAUSES OF TERRORISM IN WEST AFRICA.....	19
RESPONDING TO TERRORISM IN WEST AFRICA	21
SECTION II: STRATEGIC VISION	23
PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES	23
GUIDING PRINCIPLES	23
DEFINITION OF TERRORISM.....	24
SECTION III: STRATEGIC APPROACH	25
PILLAR 1: PREVENT	25
PILLAR 2: PURSUE	31
PILLAR 3: RECONSTRUCT.....	38
SECTION IV: IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISMS	40
SECTION V: SUMMARY OF THE STRATEGY	44
SECTION VI: WAY FORWARD	44



Acronyms

ACSRT	African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism
AfCHP	African Commission on Human and People's Rights
AfDB	African Development Bank
APA	Africa Prosecutors Association
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
AQIM	Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb
AU	African Union
BWC	Biological (or Bacteriological) Weapons Convention
CAPCCO	Central African Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization
CCSS	Committee for the Coordination of Security Services
CEMAC	Central African Economic and Monetary Community
CGCTC	Centre for Global Counter-Terrorism Cooperation
CISSA	Committee of Intelligence and Security Services in Africa
CSOs	civil society organisations
CTBTO	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization
CTC	United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee
CTED	United Nations Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate
CTITF	Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force
CTTM	Counter-Terrorism Training Manual
CTTC	Counter-Terrorism Training Centre
EAC	East African Community
EAPCCO	East African Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECOCTB	ECOWAS Counter-Terrorism Bureau
ECOLIST	ECOWAS Black List of Terrorist and Criminal Networks
ECOWARN	ECOWAS Early Warning and Response Mechanism
ECOWARRANT	ECOWAS Arrest Warrant
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EUROPOL	European Police Organization



FATF	Financial Action Task Force
FIU	Financial Intelligence Unit
GIABA	Inter-Governmental Group Against Money Laundering
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IGAD	Inter-Governmental Authority on Development
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMO	International Maritime Organization
INTERPOL	International Police Organization
ISS	Institute for Security Studies
KA IPTC	Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre
MANPADS	Man-Portable Air Defence Systems
MEND	Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta
MFDC	Movement of the Democratic Forces in Casamance
MUJAO	Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
OAU	Organization of African Unity
OPCW	Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons
PERIS	Periodic Evaluation and Reporting on the Implementation of the Strategy
REC	Regional Economic Community
RSD	Regional Security Division
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SARPPCO	Southern Africa Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization
TF	Terrorist Financing
TNT	Trinitrotoluene (used in explosives)
UMA	Arab Maghreb Union
UN	United Nations
UNICRI	United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Institute



UNODC	United Nations Office for Crime and Drugs
UNOWA	United Nations Office for West Africa
UNPoA	United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms
UNREC	United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa
WANEP	West Africa Network for Peace-Building
WAPCCO	West Africa Police Chiefs Committee
WCO	World Customs Organization



Section I: Background

INTRODUCTION

1. Terrorism poses a serious threat to international peace, security and stability. It is a criminal act that undermines the pursuit of democracy, good governance and development, as well as the full enjoyment of human and people's rights. Attacks or even the threat of attack have far-reaching ramifications on trade, investment, tourism and the free movement of people, goods and services. It can also create or entrench social and cultural cleavages among people on either a racial or religious basis. Terrorism is therefore inimical to the noble aims and objectives of the Community, particularly the goals of promoting integration, economic development, peace, security and stability and raising the living standards of citizens in the Community, as enshrined in the Revised ECOWAS Treaty.
2. Terrorist activities in the region have demonstrated the seriousness of the threat of terrorism to West Africa and the need for firm and sustained countermeasures. A number of Community Members have experienced various acts such as kidnapping and hostage-taking, hijacking, explosive bombing, gruesome and senseless murder and assassination, and other terrorist and mercenary attacks that have deprived citizens of the Community of their basic human rights, including the rights to life and freedom from fear. In addition, citizens of the Community have been recruited into terrorist groups, which have committed atrocious acts around the world. Terrorism must therefore be categorically condemned and cannot, under whatever circumstances, be justified on any political, economic, social, ethnic, cultural, religious, ideological or health grounds.
3. The Community encompasses a diverse region of increasing openness and interdependence, allowing for free movement across borders of people, ideas, technology and resources. To this end, the internal and external aspects of the security of the Community Members are inextricably linked. Terrorism in one Member State is a threat to all Member States. Terrorists and other criminal networks exploit conditions of poverty, armed conflict and political instability, bad governance and poor democracy, abuse of human rights, corruption and the absence



of the rule of law to recruit, train, plan, strengthen networking, acquire materials, carry out clandestine transactions to raise funds, and execute terrorist acts.

4. Community Members are confronted with a variety of challenges to peace, security, stability and development. No single Member is capable on its own of dealing with the multifaceted challenges posed by terrorism. The imperative for cooperation is premised on the fact that modern terrorism is a result of globalisation and a combination of communal and local variables. Coordination and the pooling of resources among states are key to effectively and efficiently eliminating the threat of terrorism. Terrorist activities, particularly those that are transnational or international in nature, involve several other countries. The successful prosecution of such acts requires cooperation and joint actions among various agencies in different states. In this context, cooperation in all spheres of terrorism related-matters at the Community, continental and international level is essential.
5. Countering terrorism requires robust and dynamic policies that are grounded in the rule of law, democracy and respect for human rights. Under no circumstances should counter-terrorism be used as a justification for the violation of human and people's rights. Community Members have undertaken a number of firm and binding commitments to pursue joint and common policies in the areas of defence and security, through a number of conventions and protocols that are also applicable to the fight against terrorism. These include, inter alia:
 - i. 2008 ECOWAS Protocol on the Fight against Corruption;
 - ii. 2008 ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework;
 - iii. 2006 ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and Other Related Materials;
 - iv. 2001 Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance Supplementary to the Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security;
 - v. 1999 Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security;
 - vi. 1994 Convention on Extradition;
 - vii. 1992 ECOWAS Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters;



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- viii. 1982 Convention for Mutual Administrative Assistance in Customs Matters;
 - ix. 1981 Protocol on Mutual Assistance in Defence;
 - x. 1978 Protocol on Non-Aggression; and the
 - xi. 1977 Framework Agreement of the Protocol on Non-Aggression and Assistance in Defence.
6. In addition, the Community has adopted various decisions and strategies to fight transnational organised crime in the region, including the ECOWAS Political Declaration and Action Plan on the Prevention of Drug Abuse, Illicit Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime in West Africa, adopted in Abuja, Nigeria, in December 2008. The full and effective implementation of these instruments will contribute to minimising the threat of terrorism to the region. In particular, Article 3 (d) of the Protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Peacekeeping and Security provides for the enhancement of cooperation in the areas of conflict prevention, early warning, peacekeeping operations and control of cross-border criminality and international terrorism, and the proliferation of small arms. Community Members are also bound by the OAU (Organization of African Unity) Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism and its Protocol thereto, the African Union (AU) Plan of Action on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism in Africa, and all other decisions and measures taken by the AU, including the Comprehensive African Anti-Terrorism Model Law. The latter provides a holistic framework for enacting counter-terrorism legislation for the domestication of regional, continental and international counter-terrorism instruments.
7. Community Members have also entered into binding agreements at the international level, including the fourteen universal conventions and the four additional protocols, as well as various resolutions adopted by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly and the Security Council, most notably the landmark Security Council Resolution 1373 (2001) adopted under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, and the General Assembly Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (2006), which provides for a global plan of action against terrorism.



8. Pursuant to these initiatives taken at the regional, continental and international level to prevent and combat the scourge of terrorism, this Strategy is intended to provide an operational policy framework for ECOWAS counter-terrorism actions and to promote a common regional approach to the prevention and combating of terrorism within the Community. It also seeks to harness support and resources at the continental and international level to enhance the capabilities of Community Members to enforce their continental and international counter-terrorism obligations and to enable them to undertake rapid responses to terrorist acts. To this end, Community Members hereby commit to strengthen collaboration, synergy and consultation on various matters related to the prevention and combating of terrorism.

PRINCIPAL CAUSES OF TERRORISM IN WEST AFRICA

9. In order to develop a common strategic approach to fight terrorism within the Community, it is important to have a common perception of the threats the region faces and its vulnerabilities to terrorism. Several geographical, environmental, political, economic and socio-cultural factors motivate individuals to commit terrorist acts or incite, support and harbour those who commit them. The interplay of these factors is of particular relevance to West Africa. It is a region well endowed with natural resources, geo-strategically located, rich in cultural, religious and ethnic diversity; and which concurrently is one of the most impoverished regions with a history of violent conflicts, coups d'état and political instability, and transnational organised crimes, including human, drug and arms trafficking, all of which have presented conditions conducive to terrorism in West Africa. In addition, the globalisation and transnational nature of most contemporary criminal networks (the al-Qaeda phenomenon) has also contributed to the spread of terrorism within the region. The main factors that account for vulnerabilities in the region include:

- Presence of violent religious extremist groups and international terrorist organisations;
- History of intractable conflicts, coups d'état, collapsed states and acute political instability;
- High urban criminality rate and organised crime, including piracy and drug, arms and human trafficking;



- Proximity of the vast Sahel region (with little or no law enforcement) – a conduit for terrorists and traffickers;
- Black markets for natural resources, including diamonds (which serve as a funding source for terrorists);
- Widespread corruption, bad governance and the absence of a democratic culture based on the rule of law; and
- Poverty, youth unemployment and inequalities (in relation to unemployment and wealth) and a lack of dynamic government policies for disadvantaged and marginalised communities.

10. Although these factors are not peculiar to the region, the manifestation of terrorism in West Africa exhibits unique characteristics. Secular and religious factors have been used to justify terrorism in the region. The main secular factors are political and economic in nature and relate to mismanagement of natural resources, inequalities (and injustices), unemployment, marginalisation and environmental and ecological degradation. Religious factors have included frustration with secular governments and the desire to replace them with dogmatic religious caliphates.

11. Religion is not a cause of terrorism and the main religious groups in West Africa have lived in peaceful coexistence for centuries. Religious extremism, however, particularly its violent radicalisation, has been used as a tool by terrorist groups in order to secure a pool of support and sympathy for their actions, as well as to guarantee recruitment. Terrorist groups in West Africa are both home grown (or domestic) and international. The most notable home-grown groups that have committed terrorist acts in West Africa include Boko Haram, Ansaru, Ansar-Dine, Ansar al-Sharia, Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) and Katibat El Moulethemoune Brigade (which merged to form 'al-Murabitoon'), Mouvement des Forces Democratiques de la Casamance (MFDC) and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). International terrorist groups that have cells or have committed acts of terrorism in West Africa include al-Qaeda (originally founded by Osama bin Laden), al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and Hizbollah cells.

12. In addition, global factors such as power politics (conflicts in Afghanistan, Iraq and Somalia), clashes among peoples and nations, and clashes among world religions (the age-old Muslim-Christian conflict) have also contributed to the



vulnerability of the region. The scientific and technological developments in information and communication, especially with regard to the cyberspace, internet and mobile phone revolutions, have not only eliminated geographic boundaries but have also given terrorist groups new tools for propaganda, recruitment and the execution of terrorist acts.

RESPONDING TO TERRORISM IN WEST AFRICA

13. In recognition of the threat posed by terrorism to their countries, Community Members have individually taken various national measures to prevent and combat terrorism. Some have adopted national legislation and others have strengthened relevant aspects of their penal law to criminalise terrorism. States in the Community have also cooperated with the international community by signing, ratifying and/or acceding to regional, continental and international counter-terrorism legal instruments. To this end, all states in the region have ratified at least seven of the eighteen universal instruments, while a vast majority has ratified the OAU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism. In addition, all states in the region have submitted at least one report to the UN Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1373 adopted in 2001. In a few cases, ECOWAS Member States have established national mechanisms such as counter-terrorism units and other centralised structures to coordinate national counter-terrorism measures. Financial institutions, including central and commercial banks, have taken measures to strengthen regulations on financial and economic activities to suppress or prevent the abuse of financial systems by terrorists.
14. Despite these measures Community Members continue to face a growing threat of terrorism intertwined with other criminal acts, such as money laundering, illicit smuggling and the proliferation of small arms, and trafficking in drugs and human beings. The main challenge to counter-terrorism in the region, which indeed provides the *raison d'être* for this Strategy, is the need to harmonise the efforts of Community Members and to provide a framework within ECOWAS for the prevention and combating of terrorism. The Strategy lays out a strategic vision and the actions that Member States should take in order to prevent and combat the threat of terrorism in the region.



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15. In view of the challenges highlighted above, there is a dire need for robust and proactive policies. The old adage that ‘prevention is better than cure’ is an important precept underpinning this Strategy. States should develop de-radicalisation programmes that seek to counter radical ideologies and terrorist propaganda, as well as promote mainstream religious teachings and interfaith dialogue at all levels, broad-based social awareness programmes involving civil society groups, employment and community-based programmes for youth groups, and broad-based participation in political and economic policies and institutions. Faith-based institutions, including churches and mosques, and traditional chiefs should be encouraged to participate in government programmes and to institute initiatives to prevent radical ideas and extremist elements that seem to empathise with terrorism. States should also develop counter-terrorism curricula for schools and universities to promote awareness of and support for counter-terrorism.
16. Terrorists are anarchists who take advantage of and/or seek to provoke conditions of lawlessness. Many terrorist groups are known to have emerged from or be fuelled by prolonged armed conflicts, biased government policies, corrupt regimes, and human rights abuses. Addressing these conditions is a vital endeavour to prevent terrorist acts within the Community. ECOWAS has adopted several decisions and legally-binding instruments to promote peace and security, as well as democracy and good governance. The full and effective implementation of these instruments and decisions will go a long way in curbing the threat of terrorism within the region. Removing the conditions of anarchy, such as armed conflicts and political and economic instability, would also help states to reassert their authority and the rule of law. Policies should be aimed at cutting off terrorists’ access to weapons, funds and recruitment.



Section II: Strategic vision

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

17. The purpose of this strategy is to give effect to regional, continental and international counter-terrorism instruments and to provide a common operational framework for action to prevent and eradicate terrorism and related criminal acts within the Community, while protecting human security, and human and people's rights, and creating conditions conducive to sound economic development and the wellbeing of all the Community's citizens. In this context, this Strategy seeks to strengthen operational capabilities for effective responses to terrorism. It is also aimed at achieving the following objectives:

- Enhance coordination among Member States, particularly in the fields of intelligence, law enforcement, investigation and the prosecution of terrorist crimes;
- Strengthen national and regional capacities to detect, deter, intercept and prevent terrorist crimes;
- Promote a criminal justice approach that emphasises the rule of law, due process, respect for human rights and the protection of civilians in counter-terrorism activities;
- Prevent and combat violent religious radicalism/extremism;
- Harmonise responses to terrorism, including counter-terrorism legislations; and
- Promote regional and international cooperation on terrorism-related matters, including extradition and mutual legal assistance.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

18. In view of the transnational and international dimensions of terrorism in West Africa, this Strategy is anchored in the belief that cooperation among Member States in various fields of preventing and combating terrorism is critical to achieving its objectives. In this context, Member States at all times shall share and coordinate critical information on terrorist elements and shall afford one another the greatest measure of assistance in their efforts to prevent and combat



terrorism in all the pillars that constitute this Strategy. Other core principles underpinning this Strategy include:

- Terrorism has emerged as a serious threat to peace, security, stability, development and social cohesion in West Africa;
- The primacy of prevention and the respect for human rights;
- Good governance and a democratic culture are prerequisites for effective counter-terrorism;
- Counter-terrorism requires both military and non-military strategies and tools; and
- Cooperation among states and technical assistance in all fields constitute the cornerstone for the successful implementation of this Strategy.

DEFINITION OF TERRORISM

19. For the purpose of this Strategy, terrorism shall be generally understood as defined by the OAU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism. In addition, specific offenses such as those against the making of plastic bombs and against terrorist bombings shall be understood in the context of relevant international treaties to which Member States are parties.



Section III: Strategic approach

20. In order to achieve its stated objectives, this Strategy is based on three main pillars for actions against terrorism in the Community, namely 1) Prevent, 2) Pursue and 3) Repair. Community Members shall, as a priority, make every possible effort to prevent terrorism from occurring. Failing that, they shall pursue and bring to justice at all cost the perpetrators of terrorist acts and repair any damage that such acts may bring to bear on victims and society as a whole.

PILLAR 1: PREVENT

21. The goal of the 'Prevent' pillar is to identify key areas where Member States should take actions with a view to detect and prevent terrorism before it emerges. The 'Prevent' pillar therefore seeks to address and eliminate conditions conducive to terrorism as contained in the UN General Assembly's 2006 Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. States are encouraged to promote policies aimed at addressing the root causes of terrorism, including poverty and widespread unemployment, economic and political marginalisation of some groups, human rights abuses, corruption, weak security institutions and illicit trans-border activities. Specific policies should also be developed to counter terrorist propaganda, dissuade and deter people from turning to terrorism and deny terrorists access to funds, materials and space with which to plan and launch their attacks.

22. The ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework identifies a number of cooperation areas, actions, activities, programmes and institutions likely to assist in the effective prevention of conflicts and threats from terrorism. The effective prevention of terrorism involves various national and regional authorities, including legislative, financial, law enforcement, military, judicial, educational and social institutions, all of which enable a state to detect, intercept and disrupt terrorist activities. A successful preventive measure is one that is conducted with the full or strategic involvement of local communities. Terrorists have families, friends, relatives and collaborators, who could provide important clues about their activities, whereabouts and support means.



Priority areas of intervention

a) Total rejection of terrorism

- Every Member State should unambiguously and unequivocally reject terrorism in all its forms and manifestations irrespective of wherever it may occur or whoever may have committed it, as a serious criminal offence; and
- Implement a zero-tolerance policy on terrorism.

b) Eliminate conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism

- Intensify efforts to fully implement all ECOWAS, AU and UN instruments relating to the maintenance and promotion of peace and security in West Africa and for the prevention and combating of terrorism;
- Cooperate with the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Taskforce (CTITF) to effectively implement the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, which identifies areas where states must take actions to eliminate conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, including measures to prevent and combat terrorism, measures to build and strengthen states' capacity and for the full respect of human rights;
- Intensify efforts to resolve all armed conflicts and other conditions of instability by promoting national reconciliation, interfaith dialogue, conflict prevention, management and resolution;
- Adopt and, where necessary, review and strengthen legislation and policies to ensure transparency, equality, inclusivity and the broad-based representation of various segments of society, including ethnic, religious, gender and youth groups, in all government's political and economic platforms;
- Implement a zero-tolerance policy against racism and other forms of discrimination based on ethnicity, gender, religion, nationality or political opinions; and
- Strengthen the role of relevant civil society and media organisations on matters relating to counter-terrorism, particularly in the domains of communication and negotiation.

c) Enhance early warning and operational intelligence coordination

- Develop and strengthen proactive and operational capabilities to anticipate, detect and disrupt terrorist activities;
- Expand the mandate of the ECOWAS Early Warning and Response Network (ECOWARN) to include terrorism indicators;



- Enhance operational coordination with intelligence services (including the Committee for Coordination of Security Services (CCSS), police and military services) at both the national and regional level. The CCSS shall serve as a central body for the coordination of information and activities of police and law enforcement agencies working on counter-terrorism issues, particularly those involved in the collection of information about, investigation of and first response to criminal acts;
- Enhance the sharing of information among Member States, at both the regional and international level;
- Develop a West African database on terrorist activities, including terrorist groups, networks, their leaders, headquarters, movement, training camps, means and sources of funding, and means of acquisition of arms and explosives, as well as on their recruitment, communication and propaganda methods;
- Strengthen operational collaboration with INTERPOL, the AU Committee of Intelligence and Security Services in Africa (CISSA) and the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT), as well as other regional and international mechanisms, with a view to receive, share and disseminate relevant information;
- Coordinate and share information with other regional mechanisms such as SADC, IGAD, ECCAS/CEMAC and UMA, as well as with other organisations and partners;
- Support and collaborate with relevant civil society organisations on the collection and dissemination of information for the detection and prevention of terrorist activities;
- Support the creation of programmes in Member States for dealing with vulnerable youths; and
- Strengthen the capacity of States through the provision of adequate equipment to deal with terrorists.

d) Deny terrorists the means, space and technical capacity to carry out operations

- Suppress the financing of terrorism by freezing all terrorist funds and assets, and enforce strict regulations on financial and non-financial institutions, including money transfer networks and businesses, to ensure that such transactions and funds do not support terrorism whether directly or indirectly. To this end, states should ratify and/or accede to and fully implement the UN Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and all relevant UN resolutions, including the Security Council's resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1373 (2001);



- Scrupulously implement all relevant instruments and decisions adopted by ECOWAS policy organs, including the existing AU, UN and international legal instruments on preventing and combating the illicit manufacture and development, acquisition or possession, proliferation, circulation, transfer, accumulation or stockpiling and use of small arms and light weapons, and weapons of mass destruction, including biological, chemical, nuclear and radiological weapons. In particular, Member States should ensure that such acts are strictly prohibited and criminalised under national law with severe penalties for perpetrators, in order to deny terrorists access to such weapons. These instruments include, inter alia:
 - * 2006 ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and Other Related Materials;
 - * 2005 International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism;
 - * 2001 Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime;
 - * 2000 UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime;
 - * 1998 ECOWAS Declaration on the Moratorium on the Importation, Exportation and Manufacture of Light Weapons in ECOWAS Member States;
 - * 1997 International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings;
 - * 1997 Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction;
 - * 1996 African Nuclear-Weapons-Free-Zone Treaty (Treaty of Pelindaba);
 - * 1992 Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction;
 - * 1991 International Convention on the Marking of Plastic Explosives for the Purpose of Detection;
 - * 1980 Convention for the Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials and the Amendment thereto; and
 - * 1972 Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction.



- Intensify efforts to refuse terrorists access to explosive materials, including commercial explosives such as TNT and dynamites, by enforcing international standards, including stringent requirements for the marking of explosives and end-user reporting, in order to prevent illicit transfers and misuses of explosive materials;
- Adopt and enforce stringent regulations on the control of the transfer and circulation of small arms and light weapons. Such measures should include compulsory inventory, identification and declaration at various levels of transfer and end user. Of particular importance is the need to regulate and monitor the production, stockpile, possession, acquisition of and access to weapons and explosives, particularly their transfer to non-state end users. States should enforce stringent control measures such as inventory, licensing of dealers, record-keeping of sales and purchases, and a ban on all transfers of man-portable air defence systems (MANPADS);
- Cooperate with relevant regional and international institutions that provide expertise and technical assistance on such matters, such as the ECOWAS Programme on Small Arms, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), UN Programme of Action on Small Arms (UNPoA), Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) and Executive Directorate (CTED), Security Council Resolution 1540 Committee, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) Panel, and the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), as well as relevant civil society and media organisations;
- Ensure maximum security and comply with international safety standards for nuclear energy installations, including the transfer of sensitive facilities, technology and material (such as uranium) usable for nuclear weapons or other explosive devices. Any enrichment facility or enrichment technology should be designed or operated in accordance with internationally approved standards. To this end, states shall enforce a strict ban on the unlawful possession, transfer of and trade in uranium and other materials that may be diverted towards the production of explosives or their precursors;
- Develop and strengthen national legislations and capacity to enforce cyber-security regulations, including the ability to detect, monitor and intercept terrorist activities through the use of the internet and other forms of wireless and electronic communication; and
- Prohibit and criminalise the use of their territories, including air, land, and maritime spaces, for planning, recruiting, financing and supporting the commission of terrorist acts against their people or against other states.



e) Prevent extremism and radicalisation

- Develop measures to identify and counter the propaganda methods used by extremist sects to lure and recruit youths and other vulnerable groups into violent and radical ideologies;
- Work with religious and community leaders, scholars and relevant civil society groups to develop de-radicalisation and reintegration programmes and to promote mainstream religious teachings, interfaith and inter-ethnic dialogues, and reconciliation. Such programmes should seek to address the conditions conducive to youth radicalisation, including unemployment, lack of participation and representation in political and economic processes, injustices, lack of education, social delinquencies, frustration and deprivation;
- Faith-based institutions, including churches and mosques, should be encouraged to participate in government programmes and to take initiatives to prevent radical ideas and extremist elements that seem to have empathy with terrorism;
- Develop and, where necessary, enhance counter-terrorism curricula for schools and universities to promote awareness of terrorism and counter-terrorism measures;
- Develop and, where necessary, strengthen national laws to criminalise recruitment, propaganda, incitement, support for or the attempt or conspiracy to participate in violent radical ideologies, including hate crimes and the use of religion to commit violent acts leading to death, injury or damage to property;
- Eliminate racism and other forms of discrimination; and
- Prevent occupation, colonialism and other forms of domination.

f) Promote democratic practices and the protection of human rights

- Intensify democratic practices as enshrined in the ECOWAS Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance Supplementary to the Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security, the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, as well as other relevant international legal instruments to which Community Members have acceded;
- Promote broad-based participation and equitable representation, as well as accountability and transparency in all government economic, socio-political and cultural programmes and institutions;
- Ensure that human rights as enshrined in the 1981 OAU Charter on Human and People's Rights, various UN conventions and the 1948 Universal Declaration on



Human Rights and the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights are protected and enjoyed by every ECOWAS citizen. To this end, Member States shall take every measure to ensure that actions taken to prevent and combat terrorism, including the legislative and operational activities of police and law enforcement officers, do not infringe on these rights;

- Prohibit torture in all its forms and manifestations and other degrading and inhumane forms of treatment, as well as discrimination on racial, ethnic or gender basis against minorities and terrorist suspects;
- Ensure that the arrest, detention, imprisonment or forced expulsion/deportation and other sanctions against terrorist suspects are conducted strictly within the framework of the law. To this end, all Member States shall ensure that the arrest, detention, forced expulsion/deportation and/or imprisonment of terrorist suspects are conducted in strict compliance with the due process of the law;
- Ensure that police and law enforcement officers are properly trained on counter-terrorism and human rights issues. To this end, ECOWAS shall develop its own appropriate Counter-Terrorism Training Manual that shall include modules on specific regional challenges, with a view to build and augment Member States' capacities and skills in core counter-terrorism areas, including the protection of human rights, implementation of international, continental and regional counter-terrorism instruments, intelligence gathering and sharing, investigation of terrorism-related offences and strengthening counter-terrorism cooperation in West Africa; and
- Take all necessary measures to discourage and stamp out corruption in both private and government sectors, particularly among police and other security and judicial officers, and set out severe penalties for violators.

PILLAR 2: PURSUE

23. While priority will be given to every endeavour to prevent terrorism from occurring, in the event where terrorism does occur, Member States shall take all necessary measures to minimise its impacts on communities and on national security in general. The 'Pursue' pillar is aimed at enabling Member States to undertake rapid, timely and effective responses to terrorism when it occurs. The main objectives are to disrupt terrorists' planning, networks and activities; investigate and bring terrorist leaders and their followers, supporters and sympathisers to justice to the full extent provided by the law; cut off terrorists'



funding and access to equipment, finances, training and meeting grounds; and create a hostile environment for terrorists in the region with a view to eliminate future threats.

Priority areas of intervention

a) Sign, ratify and/or accede to and effectively implement regional, continental and international counter-terrorism legal instruments

- Become party to all ECOWAS, AU, UN and other universal conventions and protocols against terrorism, as a matter of urgent priority (see annex for list of instruments);
- Take all necessary legislative, executive and judicial measures to fully domesticate and enforce the provisions of the abovementioned instruments;
- Establish at the level of the Commission a Counter-Terrorism Technical Assistance Directory to enable states in need to find and receive technical assistance; and
- Monitor effective implementation by maintaining an updated list of States' compliance with all regional, continental and international legal instruments.

b) Enhance the rule of law and cooperation on criminal justice matters

- Strengthen the legal framework and codification regimes against terrorism;
- Make terrorist offences punishable with severe penalties under national law;
- Encourage Member States, particularly those that have not done so yet, to, as a matter of urgency, enact and where necessary strengthen national legislation to domesticate and enforce relevant AU norms and regulations, and to incorporate all criminal justice aspects of counter-terrorism as provided in the AU Comprehensive African Antiterrorism Model Law, 1999 OAU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism and its Protocol thereto, as well as the fourteen universal conventions and four additional protocols against terrorism. Legislation need to:
 - * Criminalise wilful attempts to commit acts of terrorism, including inciting, supporting, abetting, and soliciting support, and/or providing, receiving or participating in training or instructing, recruiting and/or possessing materials intended for the commission of a terrorist act;
 - * Ensure that any emergency powers of the police and law enforcement agencies to search, arrest and detain terrorist suspects are asserted in accordance with national and human rights law;



- * Provide clear guidelines on the seizure and forfeiture of terrorist assets, including materials, weapons and finances, with a view to prevent, disrupt and suppress plans to commit acts of terrorism;
 - * Provide for a central authority for receiving and coordinating requests for extradition and mutual legal assistance;
 - * Provide support to victims of terrorism;
 - * Protect human rights in counter-terrorism actions;
 - * Guarantee physical and social protection to witnesses and their family members and collaborators;
 - * Prohibit terrorist blackmail and demands for ransom;
 - * Prohibit the payment of ransom to terrorists and other criminal groups; and
 - * Combat other transnational organised crimes with proven links to terrorism.
- Extend to one another all measures of cooperation in and assistance on criminal matters, including the investigation and prosecution of terrorist acts. Such cooperation, whether at the international or regional level, may be formal and informal, to enable the flexibility and efficiency of national judicial systems to pursue terrorists everywhere in a timely manner within the region, and to handle complex counter-terrorism cases, including issues related to the forensic, technological and financial aspects of investigation and prosecution of terrorist crimes;
 - Regularly train and sensitise criminal justice officials, including judges, investigators, prosecutors and defence lawyers, on new developments in the field of international cooperation on criminal matters and counter-terrorism;
 - Cooperate on matters relating to extradition as provided in the ECOWAS Conventions on Extradition and Mutual Legal Assistance in order to enhance cooperation on criminal matters and to be able to bring terrorists to justice. To this end establish and recognise the legality of an ECOWAS Arrest Warrant (ECOWARRANT), an ECOWAS Counter-Terrorism Coordination Bureau (ECOCTB) and an ECOWAS Black List of Terrorists and Criminal Networks (ECOLIST). The ECOWAS Warrant shall also enable Member States to cooperate in giving and obtaining evidence in other Member States; and
 - Regularly update national legislations and regulations on international cooperation in criminal matters and encourage states to conclude regional agreements on cooperation on extradition and mutual legal assistance with neighbouring and non-ECOWAS countries. To this end, Member States should be strongly encouraged to ratify and/or accede to the Rabat Convention on Extradition and Mutual Legal Assistance and other relevant regional and international agreements.



c) Improve cooperation on border control and surveillance, including aviation and maritime security

- Strengthen cooperation on border control and surveillance at both formal and informal ports of entry/exit, without prejudice to the ECOWAS protocols and regulations on the free movement of persons, goods and services;
- Establish and/or strengthen and equip common border patrol mechanisms, including joint border commissions, to regularly conduct assessments of threats and vulnerabilities of borders;
- Strengthen measures to detect forgery and falsified documents and to report and share such information with relevant Member States;
- Report all suspicious passports and identification documents, including goods and services not in compliance with the ECOWAS protocols and regulations on inter-state road transit of goods and inter-state road transportation between ECOWAS Members;
- Scrupulously enforce provisions of relevant international conventions and protocols on the safety of civil aviation, law of the sea, maritime navigation and fixed platforms on the continental shelf;
- Enact and, where necessary, strengthen national legislations and the criminal justice regimes against piracy and other criminal activities on the high seas to ensure that perpetrators of such acts are effectively investigated, prosecuted and deterred;
- Ensure that all vessels sailing on or using states' maritime spaces are registered with long-range identification and tracking systems, and that commercial users are properly registered and licensed;
- Strengthen cooperation and coordination with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), World Customs Organization (WCO), International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the UNODC to put in place specific regulations for the inspection of cargo originating in, exiting, transiting or being trans-shipped through a state, for the promotion of customs-to-customs cooperation on the in-bound and out-bound security inspection and the use of standardised targeting and screening criteria to detect and prevent drug, arms and human trafficking within the framework of relevant regional, continental and international instruments; and
- Stamp out corruption at border control points, particularly air, sea and land borders, to render them more effective in detecting criminals and terrorist elements, including drugs, illicit arms and other unlawful activities.



d) Suppress and criminalise the financing of terrorism and associated money laundering

- Criminalise terrorist financing, including the attempt to finance terrorism and ancillary offences consistent with the requirements of the UN 1999 Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, and UN Security Council resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1373 (2001);
- Make the offence of terrorist financing a predicate offence to the money laundering offence. To this end, the criminalisation regimes should be carried out on the basis of the 1988 UN Convention of Vienna and 2000 UN Convention of Palermo;
- Ensure that both financial and non-financial sectors are subjected to stringent anti-money laundering/anti-terrorism financing obligations consistent with the FATF Recommendations, in particular customer due diligence, reporting suspicious activities and monitoring transactions and business relationships;
- Criminalise the demand for payment of ransom by terrorist groups and make the payment of ransom to such groups a predicate offence under national law with appropriate and proportionate punishment;
- Establish a fully operational Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) in each state and improve its capacity to receive, analyse and disseminate suspicious money laundering/terrorist financing-related transactions/activities;
- Ensure that money/value transfer services are registered or licensed and subject to all national, regional and international regulations, including the FATF Recommendations that apply to financial institutions. To this end, states should adopt and harmonise regulations, including those relating to wire transfers and remittances, and non-profit or charity groups/organisations, as well as those of cash couriers, in accordance with GIABA regulations, to ensure that they are not exploited by terrorist and other criminal groups;
- Develop and strengthen capacities (human, material and financial resources) and regularly train personnel in charge of combating terrorist financing and money laundering (including police, law enforcement agents and FIUs) and, where necessary, seek technical assistance to build such capacity, including from GIABA and other specialised institutions;
- Put in place effective mechanisms to provide the widest possible range of mutual legal assistance and information exchange on cross-border illicit financial activities and movements of terrorist assets, as well as measures aimed at strengthening states' ability to monitor, detect and disrupt suspicious or terrorist activities. Offences related to terrorist financing should apply to natural and legal persons



who knowingly engage in terrorist financing activities. They should be subject to effective, proportionate and dissuasive sanctions; and

- States are to carry out these measures in full respect of human rights and in a manner that does not disrupt or impede in any way the smooth flow of economic activities.

e) Protect critical infrastructure and diplomatic premises and other foreign interests

- Identify and increase security at critical infrastructures and soft targets, including airports, seaports, major roads, historical and cultural infrastructure, government offices, markets and shopping malls, stadiums, stock exchanges, social theatres, and foreign diplomatic premises and installations (including companies, organisations, vessels, cars and couriers);
- Criminalise acts that target critical infrastructure and diplomatic premises and other foreign interests in the territories of Member States, and provide for severe penalties for offenders;
- WAPCCO together with Interpol shall issue periodic alert notices, based on well-informed intelligence, to public bodies, international organisations, diplomatic representations and other agencies, about any possible threats from terrorism, particularly in relation to hidden weapons, parcel bombs and other dangerous materials; and
- Regularly train personnel on the protection of critical infrastructures; to build a readiness capacity to respond rapidly to a terrorist attack; and to perform technical operations such as disarming or deactivating explosives, cordoning off the crime area, dealing with victims and collecting materials for forensic evidence.

f) Enhance the ability of Member States to develop a criminal justice response to terrorism

- Develop dedicated units of prosecutors in Member States who can be called upon to prosecute terrorism-related cases; and
- Assist Member States to establish specialised units within law enforcement agencies and the Gendarmerie (assisted by the military where necessary) to investigate terrorism-related offences, hostage negotiations and bomb disposal.



g) Strengthen cooperation with civil society and media organisations on the prevention and combating of terrorism

- Put in place a framework with which to engage civil society and the media in order to enhance their contribution to the prevention and combating of terrorism;
- Encourage media reporting on terrorist incidents to focus on the plight of victims and the criminal nature of the attacks, with a view to eliminate sympathy for, empathy with or the glorification of the perpetrators of terrorist acts;
- Provide regular information to the media on the government's counter-terrorism strategy;
- Sensitise communities about the consequences of terrorism on economic development and the government strategy;
- Develop national strategies for better communication on matters relating to the prevention and combating of terrorism, utilising all possible channels and networks of communication to ensure an effective and coherent strategy; and
- Involve civil society and media organisations in all major national, regional and international counter-terrorism forums and other platforms.

h) Training and capacity-building on the prevention and combating of terrorism

- Allocate substantial resources, including personnel, materials and equipment, for the prevention and combating of terrorism;
- Put in place within the Commission, an ECOWAS capacity-building programme against terrorism in order to effectively coordinate, harmonise and implement counter-terrorism training programmes for both civilian and military personnel;
- Develop specialised training courses on counter-terrorism matters, including intelligence gathering and sharing, investigation, prosecution and extradition, and international cooperation. To this end, an ECOWAS Counter-Terrorism Training Manual shall incorporate special modules for criminal justice officials; and
- Regularly train relevant states officials with a view to develop and strengthen operational skills to undertake technical counter-terrorism operations, including capabilities to perform forensic analysis, preparation of statutory reports, and drafting and processing mutual legal assistance (MLA) and extradition requests.



PILLAR 3: RECONSTRUCT

24. The aftermath of terrorism and even counter-terrorism could destroy the social fabric of society. People lose confidence in the state and its ability to protect them, and at times terrorism pits social groups against each other in accusations and counter-accusations. The 'Reconstruct' pillar is aimed at rebuilding society and enabling the state to heal social wounds caused by terrorism and counter-terrorism.

Priority areas of intervention

a) Protect the rights of victims

- Establish an institutional and legal mechanism with the mandate to protect the rights of victims of terrorism, and endow such mechanism with all the means and resources, including powers to utilise funds and proceeds seized from terrorists for the benefit of victims;
- Funds seized or recovered from terrorists may be distributed to terrorist victims or their families, with a view to facilitate their social rehabilitation and reintegration, as well as their security;
- Provide other forms of assistance to victims, including medical care and reintegration into normal social life; and
- Ensure that the international dimension of counter-terrorism, such as extradition, takes into account the victims' rights and best interest. In this context ensure that victims are kept well informed of proceedings and outcomes.

b) Support and reconcile communities

- Support in every manner the communities of victims of terrorist acts, including moral, political, economic and social support;
- Take measures aimed at reconciling communities, particularly in the aftermath of a terrorist incident, by promoting dialogue and emphasising the individuality of terrorists and not their social, economic, racial, ethnic, cultural, religious or political background. In this context, the goal is to isolate the terrorists, their ideology, slogans and propaganda from the communities that they claim to represent; and



- Rebuild and strengthen state and social cohesion by implementing programmes that unite communities, promote national pride, and demonstrate state control of the situation, as well as its determination to bring perpetrators to justice.

c) Repair social contract

- Take immediate actions in the aftermath of a terrorist attack to reassure the people that the state is in control of the situation, keeping people well informed about measures being taken, including the investigation and prosecution of suspects;
- Enhance operational synergies in the activities of law enforcement agencies and local communities in order to bring security closer to local communities and to ensure trust and transparency;
- Promote education and other social benefits, including community development projects for victims of terrorist acts;
- Promote counter-terrorism curricula in schools and universities and training on what to do in the event of a terrorist attack; and
- Establish direct hotlines and emergency numbers and persons or places to contact in the event of a terrorist act or suspicious terrorist activity.

d) Develop national counter-terrorism strategies

- Develop a national counter-terrorism strategy that addresses the various dimensions of the threat of terrorism, including an approach to counter terrorists' propaganda, recruitment, sources of funding and radicalisation. Such strategies should draw from and aim at giving practical effect to the full implementation of this (ECOWAS) Strategy and other applicable instruments;
- Ensure that all relevant national stakeholders are involved in the development and implementation of the strategy; and
- Promote national awareness to strengthen support for and implementation of this strategy.



Section IV: Implementation mechanisms

25. The primary responsibility for the full and effective implementation of this Strategy shall remain with states. However, in order to ensure systematic follow-ups and effective monitoring of the implementation of this Strategy, the following mechanisms are recommended to assist, complement and strengthen states' capacities in this endeavour:

NATIONAL TASKFORCE

26. For the purpose of effective implementation of this Strategy and coordination at the regional, continental and international level, Member States shall establish a National Authority or Inter-Departmental Taskforce wherever such a mechanism does not already exist to serve as a focal point for counter-terrorism matters at the national level and for effective coordination at the regional, continental and international level. States may also decide to utilise existing mechanisms such as the Focal Points designated for the purpose of coordination with the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT).

PERIODIC EVALUATION AND REPORTING ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS STRATEGY (PERIS)

27. In order to ensure continued focus on the implementation of this Strategy, and to regularly reassess progress and challenges, Member States shall agree on a timeframe for periodic evaluation and reporting on the measures taken and challenges encountered in the implementation of this Strategy. PERIS shall be held at least twice a year at different policy levels and at least one meeting shall be at the level of Heads of State and Government. On the basis of these evaluations, this Strategy may be amended or revised in order to bring it up to date.



ECOWAS COMMISSION

28. The Regional Security Division (RSD) of the Commission shall be entrusted with the overall responsibility of coordinating the implementation of this Strategy. It shall serve as the focal point of the Commission on counter-terrorism matters. The RSD shall examine the reports submitted by Member States, and compile and submit such reports to the Authority of Heads of State and Government for policy direction. It shall follow up with Member States on any aspect related to the effective implementation of this Strategy.

ECOWAS COURT OF JUSTICE

29. The Community Court shall be charged with the enforcement of the rights of victims of terrorism in conformity with its jurisdiction.

CCSS

30. The CCSS shall coordinate the aspects of intelligence cooperation on the implementation of this Strategy, including liaison with ECOWARN and relevant regional, continental and international mechanisms.

ECOWARN

31. ECOWARN shall be responsible for gathering information to predict and detect activities of terrorist groups, in liaison with CCSS.

ECOWAS COUNTER-TERRORISM TRAINING CENTER (CTTC)

32. In order to strengthen the development of appropriate skills and expertise on the prevention and combating of terrorism, Member States shall establish a regional centre of excellence for counter-terrorism. The centre shall provide standardised training, threat assessments, research and analysis, development and dissemination of data and information, and provide technical assistance in the field of counter-terrorism. The centre shall work in close coordination



with ACSRT and other regional and international institutions. The Commission shall develop the modalities and legal framework for the establishment and functioning of the centre.

COUNTER-TERRORISM COORDINATION UNIT

33. The Commission shall establish within the RSD a coordination unit that shall be responsible for monitoring states' implementation; carry out technical functions related to the prevention and combating of terrorism; and make recommendations on measures for strengthening the implementation of this Strategy. The Unit shall also be responsible for the coordination of training activities of the CTTC in the region. It shall liaise with similar national, continental and international mechanisms.

GIABA

34. GIABA shall coordinate activities related to the suppression of terrorist financing and associated money laundering. It shall regularly review and conduct threat and vulnerability assessments, as well as make regular recommendations on measures to suppress the financing of terrorism in West Africa.

INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND PARTNERS

35. This Strategy shall be implemented in collaboration with relevant international organisations and international partners, which shall contribute to building capacity for the prevention and combating of terrorism in West Africa. They shall also ensure synergies and coordination on various counter-terrorism matters at the international and continental level.

CIVIL-SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS (CSOS) AND MEDIA NETWORKS

36. Recognising their diverse nature, CSOs and the media shall play a complementary role in the implementation of this Strategy. They shall support both ECOWAS and Member States' activities aimed at preventing and combating terrorism. Wherever appropriate they shall be consulted to contribute to various aspects in the prevention and combating of terrorism, including raising



awareness, providing training and expertise, and supporting national reconciliation and healing programmes.

ECOWAS COUNTER-TERRORISM TRAINING MANUAL

37. In order to develop and enhance the capacity of Member States in various areas of the prevention and combating of terrorism, ECOWAS will develop a specialised Counter-Terrorism Training Manual (CTTM), to be used for all counter-terrorism training. The purpose of the Manual shall be to promote a coordinated and harmonised approach and to impart knowledge and skills among relevant states' agencies, including police, gendarmerie, intelligence, investigators, judiciary (including prosecutors, lawyers, judges and justices), customs, diplomats and other law enforcement agencies involved in counter-terrorism. The manual shall be tailored to address counter-terrorism challenges unique to West Africa, including in the following areas:

- Trends and developments in the manifestation and threat of terrorism and associated transnational organised crimes such as piracy, drug and human trafficking, and money laundering;
- Terrorism in the media, including cyber-terrorism through the use of the Internet;
- Regional, continental and international legal frameworks on the prevention and combating of terrorism;
- National legislation and other measures taken by states;
- Intelligence and counter-intelligence;
- Crime scene management and the investigation of terrorist crimes;
- Financing of terrorism, including organised crime and money laundering;
- Border control and surveillance;
- Protection of critical infrastructures;
- Hostage negotiation;
- Bomb disposal and weapons of mass destruction; and
- International cooperation on counter-terrorism matters.



Section V: Summary of the strategy



Section VI: Way forward

38. There shall be regular consultations among government agencies that are involved in counter-terrorism, including ministers of foreign affairs and cooperation, ministers of justice and interior, judges and justices, police and security chiefs, intelligence chiefs, investigators, prosecutors and other stakeholders, to monitor, evaluate and recommend more effective measures for strengthening coordination on counter-terrorism matters among Member States.