

Multilateral counter-terrorism cooperation: the United Nations

Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact—Global Counterterrorism Forum partnership

30 June 2021, 8 – 9.30 am EDT (via Microsoft Teams)

Statement by Ambassador Andreas Künne, Germany

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, dear friends and colleagues,

I am pleased and honoured to speak to you today as one of the co-chairs of the West Africa Working Group of the Global Counterterrorism Forum. Countering and preventing terrorism and violent extremism continue to be high priorities for Germany.

Terrorism, as a multidimensional and global phenomenon, can only be tackled successfully by working together, by sharing experiences and best-practices, by further strengthening national, regional and international cooperation. That is why I would like to reiterate once again on this occasion that Germany remains committed to multilateral cooperation in addressing the global threat of terrorism in full compliance with

the rule of law and international law, including human rights law and international humanitarian law.

The close partnership between UN and GCTF is a central component of multilateral counterterrorism cooperation. It helps to render the international counterterrorism architecture more effective in addressing the evolving threats; to respond to these threats in a comprehensive and sustained manner; and to ensure compliance with obligations under the Charter of the United Nations, relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions, and international law.

The GCTF – as a forum where national CT officials develop good practices documents and tools for policy-makers and practitioners – supports the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, and the UN CT Framework of the Coordination Compact more broadly.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Based on such understanding of the GCTF, its role and its principles, Germany has taken over the co-chairmanship of the West Africa Working Group of the GCTF two years ago. Together with our close partner and friend Algeria, we did not only aim to support the development and implementation of National Action Plans and to strengthen the relationship and the exchange between experts of related programmatic areas in the

region. We also agreed from the outset that one of our major objectives is to strengthen the Working Group's capacity to coordinate and cooperate on counterterrorism with regional and international organizations.

That is why, next to organizing specific workshops e.g. on police and justice cooperation, border management and countering terrorist financing, we have reached out to multiple regional and international organizations that already play a crucial role in our shared endeavor to fight terrorism in West Africa. The Cooperation with the UN is of particular importance for us and has proven time and again very fruitful – from the strategic to the operational level; from New York and Vienna to the regional offices.

Our conceptual starting point was, of course, the UN Global Counterterrorism Strategy with its four pillars. In 2019, together with Algeria and the members of the West Africa Working Group, we developed eight priorities which we wanted to focus on during the time of our co-chairmanship from 2019 until 2022. These priorities are based on the GCTS. Within this framework we have identified together with our West African Partners ways to strengthen all four pillars.

On a more tactical level, we knew from the start that a successful term would hinge on an able implementer, all the more because Algeria and Germany planned on establishing

national trainings within the framework of the GCTF in addition to the regular program. To implement this idea, we partnered with UNODC. Not only do they bring their great expertise in the field to the table; they also have an excellent network that has proven invaluable for our work. Furthermore, the West Africa Working Group benefits from an on-the-ground perspective the regional offices of UNODC are able to provide, allowing us to address the topics with a great variety of speakers with specific local insight. And, on multiple occasions our GCTF Working Group has benefited and will further benefit from the profound knowledge and expertise that can be found in the Compact.

On a very practical level, the measures and activities of the West Africa Working Group represent another piece in the much larger puzzle of the international community's efforts in the Sahel region to counter terrorism within a comprehensive approach. Our GCTF Engagement forms part of Germany's strong commitment to West-Africa and the Sahel – reaching from our contributions to MINUSMA in Mali to EU training activities, such as EUCAP Sahel and EUTM Mali and Niger, to increased bilateral stabilization and developments efforts in the Gulf of Guinea states and the border areas with Burkina Faso.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Recent tragic events in Burkina Faso and Niger as well as last week's attack on German MINUSMA soldiers in Northern Mali have demonstrated that the terrorist threat in the Sahel needs to remain high on our common agenda. To be effective, we have to work together – in a complimentary manner, based on the same principles.

We are looking forward to continuing and increasing to work closely with partners from the UN Counterterrorism Coordination Compact – with a view to tackling common challenges and thus achieving the important goals we share.

Please let me close by expressing my thanks to all participants and the hosts of this side event, the Global Counterterrorism Forum and the UN Counterterrorism Coordination Compact.

Thank you very much.