

Tenth Meeting of the Global Counter-Terrorism Compact Coordination Committee

25 January 2024

Border Management and law enforcement working group

- I am delighted to represent CTED as the Chair of the BMLE working group and provide you with a brief to highlight main challenges withing the areas that the WG covers and actions that can support the joint efforts to counter terrorism in Africa:
 1. The main deliverable of 2023 was the seed funded joint initiative on preventing terrorists from acquiring weapons including promoting, through regional workshops in the Sahel/Maghreb and East Africa, the *Technical guidelines to facilitate the implementation of Security Council resolution 2370 (2017) and related international standards and good practices on preventing terrorists from acquiring weapons*, launched in March 2022. The WG will continue this initiative including taking into account the Secretary General’s 2023 report on Small arms and light weapons which recalls small arms and light weapons were the second most prevalent weapons used in terrorist attacks in 2022, following explosive devices. In the Sahel region alone, firearms were used in 70 per cent of attacks, while the rest of sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and North Africa, also saw significant firearm use in this context. North Africa region, there has been a notable increase in the use of firearms in terrorist attacks. The continued trend of terrorist groups benefiting from easy access to large quantities of weapons remains a cause for concern across Africa. Against this background, the technical guidelines provide a comprehensive set of measures to strengthen efforts to disrupt flow of weapons to terrorists and terrorist groups including by providing solutions that support establishment of national coordination mechanism, overall border management and proper risk based approaches.
 2. The WG continues efforts to promote its compendium on the responsible use and sharing of biometrics in counterterrorism and the Counterterrorism watchlisting toolkit developed under the GCTF watchlisting initiative, co-led by the United States and the UN, to advance the requirements by Council resolution 2396. In the absence of these tools, CTED has assessed that the capacity to detect potential terrorist suspects, including FTFs, at the border remains limited across Africa. This provides an opportunity to increase promotion of the Compendium and toolkit to respond to the specific needs of the African countries and using the UN biometrics Compendium and the watchlsiting toolkit as practical guidance tools.
 3. The BMLE working group also has regular updates on the developments under the CT Travel Programme facilitating the global implementation of API and PNR. Currently CT Travel is providing support to 28 African Member State and created the Regional Informal Working Groups (IWGs), for West and South Africa have already shown significant success in bringing together key actors. Despite the gaps in API/PNR data collection systems throughout Member States in Africa, the region’s progress is extremely positive because as of December 2020, only 2 countries in Africa had API in place and 0 had PNR

in place. Considering the figures currently the region has made significant progress in the last 3 years.

4. Of significant concern are also threats to civil aviation, despite recent terrorist threats and CTED/CTC recommendations for Member States to strengthen internal cooperation on threats and risks to civil aviation (as well as other modes of transportations such as Maritime), many Member States face severe challenges with establishing preventative mechanisms due to institutional structures which limit the flow of threat information required to perform aviation security activities.
5. The BMLE working group supported CTC and CTED in the development of the non-binding guiding principles on the “*Threats posed by the use of unmanned aircraft systems for terrorist purposes*”, adopted by the Counter-Terrorism Committee in December. Considering the increasing number of security related incidents committed by using UAS by terrorists and other non-State groups in many African countries, these non-binding guiding principles are of high importance to support States in preventing and responding to this threat and for international community to develop related capacity building initiatives. In this regard, the WG will support the UNOCT-led Programme on Autonomous and Remotely Operated Systems (AROS).
6. The working group will initiate a joint project to develop a guidance/manual containing all UN approach assisting Member States to establish a systematic risk management methodology applicable to identify terrorism related threats and to mitigate risks at national and sector specific levels. Systematic risk management can provide African states with critical tool to focus resources to where main vulnerabilities are that terrorists may exploit.
7. WG will continue briefings as well as human rights implications in focused areas including with Briefings by the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism. The WG work plan includes dedicated briefings by regional organizations, including by AU and the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT).
8. The geographical desks of CTED’s Africa section will be invited to provide the working group with updates on regional developments and technical assistance needs in the field of border management and law enforcement and brief on the main findings of assessment visits scheduled for this year in the African continent. CTED will ensure that the TA recommendations deriving from visits to Africa are updated to the compact online platform to be accessed by member entities.