



Implementing the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in West Africa

*By Jason Ipe, James Cockayne, and Alistair Millar
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Center on Global
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Cooperation

Authors

Jason Ipe is deputy director for the Center. Mr. Ipe has provided research and written contributions to numerous book chapters and reports on issues of counterterrorism, money laundering, and nonproliferation. He received his BA in international relations from Connecticut College in New London, Connecticut, and his MA in international security policy from the Elliott School of International Affairs at The George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

James Cockayne is a senior fellow and director of the Center's New York office. Before joining the Center, Mr. Cockayne was a senior fellow at the International Peace Institute and previously director of the Transnational Crime Unit in the Australian Attorney-General's Department. He has an LLM in international legal studies from New York University and an LLB (Hons I) and BA (Hons I and University Medal) in government and public administration from the University of Sydney.

Alistair Millar is director of the Center. He teaches graduate-level courses on counterterrorism and U.S. foreign policy at Johns Hopkins University and The George Washington University and has lectured at the Department of Homeland Security's Center of Excellence on the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism at the University of Maryland. He is also a 2009/10 nonresident senior fellow at The George Washington University Homeland Security Policy Institute. He has written numerous chapters, articles, and reports on international counterterrorism efforts, sanctions regimes, and nonproliferation. Mr. Millar is author, with Eric Rosand, of *Allied against Terrorism: What's Needed to Strengthen Worldwide Commitment* (2006). He has an MA from Leeds University and is a PhD candidate at the University of Bradford in the United Kingdom.

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This report is the seventh component of a broader effort by the Center to enhance implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in different regions around the globe, which includes past projects on southern and eastern Africa as well as a recently completed assessment of North Africa. The goal of this effort is to stimulate enhanced and more effective regional counterterrorism cooperation and complement ongoing efforts to implement the Strategy around the world.

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Acronyms

ACSRT	African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (AU)
AQIM	Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb
AU	African Union
CTED	Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate (UN Security Council)
CTITF	Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (UN)
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UN)
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
FATF	Financial Action Task Force
GIABA	Intergovernmental Action Group against Money Laundering
GSPC	Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat
I-ACT	Integrated Assistance on Counter-Terrorism (CTITF)
OAU	Organization of African Unity
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UN)
SSR	Security Sector Reform
TPB	Terrorism Prevention Branch (UNODC)
TSCTP	Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership
UNDP	UN Development Programme
UNODC	UN Office on Drugs and Crime
UNOWA	UN Office for West Africa
WANEP	West Africa Network for Peacebuilding
WAPCCO	West African Police Chiefs Committee
WACSO	West Africa Civil Society Forum

Executive Summary

Although terrorism is not a new threat for many countries in West Africa, it is of increasing concern in the subregion. This is in part due to heightened attention to radicalization in the region as a result of an attempted bombing of an aircraft landing in Detroit by a Nigerian youth on Christmas Day 2009 and to a perceived migration southward through the Sahel of terrorist, kidnapping/hostage-taking, drug smuggling, and other transnational criminal activities. States in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) region are increasingly aware that terrorism is a threat to the security and economic development of the subregion as a whole and requires a more coordinated subregional response. West Africa, however, lacks either a subregional counterterrorism framework or a mechanism for facilitating cooperation and capacity-building activities to deal with the growing threat.

This report makes the case for West African states and partners to develop counterterrorism capacities and cooperation in the subregion, using the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, unanimously adopted by the General Assembly in 2006, as their point of departure and working closely with and possibly through ECOWAS.

This report is based on recommendations that emerged from a large stakeholder meeting cohosted with the ECOWAS Commission in Abuja and a series of smaller consultations at the Danish Representation to the European Union in Brussels and the Danish Mission to the United Nations in New York. The Abuja consultation included the counterterrorism focal points of each ECOWAS member state and relevant officials from the ECOWAS Commission, the African Union's (AU) African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT), the United Nations, other relevant multilateral organizations, and key partner countries. The goal of these meetings was to identify and prioritize the unmet counterterrorism and related capacity needs of countries in West Africa, across the four pillars of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The meetings also aimed to consider recommendations for strengthening counterterrorism-related cooperation among states in West Africa and between the subregion and the United Nations.

This report begins with an overview of the Strategy and its significance for the subregion. It argues that the Strategy is particularly relevant for the countries of West Africa because it encompasses a broader understanding of the scope and substance of counterterrorism by including not only traditional measures to prevent and combat terrorism and related capacity-building efforts but also measures to address underlying conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism and measures to ensure respect for human rights and the rule of law. The Strategy emphasizes the linkages between terrorism and other transnational threats, which are priority concerns for states in the subregion, and situates terrorism within a broader comprehensive peace and security framework.

This report additionally provides an analysis of issues and challenges relevant to Strategy implementation in West Africa and an overview of the Strategy-related efforts of some of the key stakeholders in the subregion. It

emphasizes that although implementing the Strategy is above all the responsibility of states, regional and subregional bodies, the UN system, and civil society each have important contributions to make as well. Strategy implementation efforts, the report argues, would benefit from a counterterrorism framework at the subregional level to help translate the commitments in the document into coordinated action on the ground.

This report outlines the different manifestations of the terrorist threat and related security challenges in West Africa and looks at the subregional response to those threats by ECOWAS. It notes that although a good deal has been done to address the related challenges of drug trafficking, transnational crime, and conflict prevention, the contributions of ECOWAS specifically on counterterrorism have been somewhat limited to date. The report argues that an enhanced subregional framework on terrorism could serve to promote comprehensive national and subregional responses to the threat and enhanced cross-border cooperation, as well as provide a platform for helping to address the enormous capacity challenges facing most countries in the subregion.

This report also discusses the AU regional response—its normative contributions and the practical contributions of its technical counterterrorism related arm, the ACSRT—as well as efforts by the United Nations to help build the counterterrorism and related capacities of West African states through, among other things, the work of the UN Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force and its constituent entities. This report argues that given the vulnerabilities and capacity shortcomings in many West African countries, a wide variety of UN actors have a role to play in helping build state capacity in the subregion, not only those traditionally associated with counterterrorism, but also nontraditional counterterrorism actors such as the UN Development Programme, UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, and UN Office for West Africa. It argues for a more integrated approach to the delivery of assistance by the full range of UN actors working on Strategy-related assistance and offers practical recommendations for coordinated action on the ground.

Next, this report looks at the efforts of other external partners, such as the European Union (EU) and the United States, which have increasingly sought to engage the subregion on counterterrorism issues and urges them to do more to coordinate their efforts in the context of the Strategy. This report argues that the capacity-building efforts of the EU and the United States, as well as that of the United Nations and other partners, would benefit from the existence of a subregional framework and mechanism that could help to coordinate those activities, evaluate the needs of ECOWAS member states, convey that information to relevant bilateral donors and multilateral assistance providers, and pool resources and avoid duplication of effort.

This report concludes with a set of action-oriented recommendations that outline steps ECOWAS and its partners could take to develop such a subregional framework and mechanism and offers other recommendations aimed at strengthening counterterrorism cooperation in West Africa among those different stakeholders and states in the subregion and between the subregion and the United Nations.

I. The Significance of the Strategy for West Africa

Speaking before the UN Sixth Committee in October 2009, the Nigerian Ambassador to the United Nations stressed that, “[a]s a global threat, terrorism requires a global and comprehensive response.” The Ambassador observed that the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy adopted unanimously by the General Assembly in September 2006 signified

the international community’s unity of purpose and commitment in this regard ... offering a comprehensive framework for a coherent international response to terrorism, [that] gives priority attention to addressing underlying conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, such as poverty, prolonged unresolved conflicts, dehumanization of victims of terrorism, ethnic, national and religious discrimination, political exclusion, socio-economic marginalization and lack of good governance ... [and] emphasizes the imperative for respecting human rights and promoting the rule of law as a *sine qua non* to the successful combating of terrorism and the implementation of the Strategy.¹

Terrorism cannot be addressed through military force alone. It requires a broad range of policy responses, including capacity building, promotion of human rights, and development assistance, both to strengthen state capacity to combat terrorism and address underlying conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism. As the Permanent Representative of Denmark to the United Nations stated on the occasion of the first review of the Strategy in September 2008, “If international cooperation to assist developing countries in building up their resilience against terrorism is to be effective, we need to overcome a recurrent hesitation to combine the development and the security agendas. Including counter terrorism capacity building as an aspect of development programs is a delicate but nevertheless important task.”²

In few places in the world is this connection between development and security clearer than in West Africa.³ The subregion suffers from recurring deficiencies in governance, a lack of state capacity to address a range of interlinked security and development challenges, a history of intra- and interstate conflict, and segments of the population that are arguably increasingly vulnerable to radicalization and recruitment by extremist movements and criminal organizations. As the International Crisis Group has noted, in the Sahel in particular, “[A]n effective counter-terrorism policy ... needs to address the threat in the broadest terms, with more development than military aid and greater U.S.-European collaboration.”⁴

The Strategy identifies a broad range of counterterrorism measures, including measures to build state capacity and promote sustainable development, underpinned by the commitment to uphold the rule of law and human rights. As such, it offers countries in West Africa and the subregion as a whole a broad-based, long-term agenda that will facilitate not only the development of state capacities to thwart and respond to terrorist attacks, but also social capacities that help to prevent local populations from turning to terrorist violence in the future. One of

the Strategy's primary achievements is its attempt to bridge the divide between the security interests of the global North and the development priorities of the global South, putting the need to address conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, including by improving the quality of governance, front and center. Yet, operationalizing the connection between security and development embodied in the Strategy and translating what is a useful policy agenda into coordinated capacity-building programs on the ground will be challenging. This reports identifies specific measures being taken and that might be taken to realize these linkages.

The Strategy's significance also lies in its reinforcement of the notion that although member states have primary responsibility to protect their citizens from terrorism and other security threats, effective long-term counterterrorism requires a sustained multi-stakeholder approach. Thus, the Strategy highlights the roles that the UN system, regional and subregional bodies, and an array of relevant civil society actors can and, in some cases, must play in working with states to render states and societies resilient to extremist ideologies and terrorist threats.

The Strategy was the first UN counterterrorism instrument to explicitly recognize the role civil society can play in countering terrorism. It contains specific language encouraging civil society to engage on its implementation and therefore provides a common framework for states and civil society to engage on the issue. This is of particular significance for West Africa, where civil society groups and networks have become increasingly vibrant and active, playing a significant role in early-warning, conflict prevention, protection of women's and minority rights, peace-building, anticorruption, rule of law, and good governance efforts, often working in close collaboration with governments to foster social, economic, and political development in the subregion.

West Africa, however, lacks either a subregional counterterrorism framework or a mechanism for facilitating subregional capacity-building activities and cooperation in this area. Such frameworks and mechanisms in other regions and subregions have proven crucial to efforts to translate the commitments made by states in adopting the Strategy into practice.

II. Terrorist Threats in West Africa: Rhetoric or Reality?

With the exception of Nigeria and Senegal and countries in the Sahel, West African states confront few obvious immediate and direct terrorist threats. However, there have been occasional incidents related to the activities of foreign terrorist groups in the region, ranging from allegations of Islamist terrorist participation in West Africa's diamond economy, to the arrest of members of Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) in Guinea-Bissau. Most recently, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, a Nigerian citizen radicalized in London and Yemen, was arrested in the United States after attempting to set off a bomb on Northwest Airlines flight 253 on Christmas Day 2009.

According to many observers, West Africa has a number of characteristics that make it increasingly vulnerable to exploitation by terrorist groups.⁵ West Africa is a particularly underdeveloped subregion

recovering from several prolonged conflicts. Its relative proximity by sea to Latin America and lax maritime and airspace security has made the West African coast and Gulf of Guinea favored transshipment points for Latin American drug cartels seeking to do business in the European market, creating a vibrant and lucrative underground political economy, from which clandestine organizations of all stripes may benefit. In addition to alarming levels of transnational crime, West Africa is home to increasing numbers of young under- or unemployed men who may prove vulnerable targets for those who seek to turn their resentment and despair toward violent and other illicit purposes.⁶

The security challenges along the subregion's northern frontier are particularly daunting. Many experts currently consider the terrorist threat in this area to be the most troubling.⁷ According to Abdel-Fatau Musah, a senior conflict prevention adviser to ECOWAS, the genuine grievances in the communities in the Sahel "have been adulterated with terrorism, trafficking in humans, drugs, and cigarettes to transform the [vast, sparsely populated, and undergoverned] northern parts of Niger and Mali into the most insecure zones of West Africa."⁸

Partly as a result of successful efforts by Algerian security forces, AQIM has been forced southward toward the more thinly populated areas of Algeria's vast border with Mali, Mauritania, and Niger and possibly the disputed territory of Western Sahara. In the last two years, AQIM appears to have begun to move beyond its narrowly Algerian historical routes, developing a more truly regional recruiting pool and training system distributed across the Sahel and beginning to develop new operational fronts around the Sahelian periphery. In 2007, Nigerian prosecutors alleged that five men arrested by Nigerian authorities had received two years' training with the Groupe Salafiste pour la Prédication et le Combat (GSPC), later renamed AQIM, in Algeria. There have been suggestions that AQIM may be looking to serve as a training base for operations for Nigerian terrorists.⁹ In late 2009, AQIM reportedly sent messages of support to militant Islamist groups in northern Nigeria and possibly offered them operational and training support.¹⁰ Yet, Nigerian militants, like other militants with whom AQIM has allegedly forged tactical alliances in the Sahel, such as Touareg groups in Niger, have been focused to date more on local grievances than those highlighted in AQIM's increasingly globalized rhetoric. Real questions remain, therefore, about the extent to which any tactical alliance between AQIM and other terrorist groups, on the one hand, and local militant organizations, on the other, will lead to the entrenching of a long-term terrorist threat focused on domestic authorities or the use of West Africa as a base for activities directed against foreign targets.

This may indeed be occurring, however, in Mauritania and Mali. AQIM has attempted to assassinate Mauritanian leaders, attacked the Israeli embassy in Mauritania, and murdered four French tourists in the country and may now see the Mauritanian hinterland as a staging base for attacks throughout the broader region. The growth of AQIM in Mauritania, as well as the emergence of a local franchise, the Mauritanian Group for the Teaching of Jihad, may have been facilitated by the increasing influence of *salafist* ideology in Mauritanian society, in part under the influence of Saudi Arabian missionaries.¹¹ Also, Mali has recently become a site of terrorist operations, with the murder by AQIM of kidnapped British tourist Edwin Dyer in May 2009, subsequent military clashes between Malian and AQIM forces, and the assassination of a Malian military leader in Timbuktu in June 2009. This appears to have significantly complicated AQIM's relations with local Touareg leaders, who may be

under increasing pressure from Mali's government not to cooperate with AQIM.¹² Yet at the same time, Tablighi proselytization among the Touareg may have laid the groundwork for AQIM to convince Touareg leaders to align their own on-again, off-again insurgency with AQIM grievances.¹³ (Of course, al-Qaida and its affiliates have used this pattern with great effect elsewhere, for example in Indonesia, Iraq, Pakistan, and Somalia.) It is notable that an Algerian recently charged in Ireland with leading a conspiracy to assassinate the Swedish artist, Lars Vilks, appeared in court in traditional Touareg costume, perhaps in an attempt to co-opt Touareg identity politics to the cause of al-Qaida.

Yet, the true nature of this AQIM-Touareg alliance may be more mercenary than such a "political" reading suggests. Algerian Islamist groups have long been closely involved in the *trabandiste* economy in the Sahel and in northeastern Algeria and through clandestine networks into Europe.¹⁴ As one analyst said, "Cooperation between these tribes in the Sahel and the Algerian jihadists is based on mutual interest in generating revenue and avoiding interference from state security services."¹⁵ Although there have been numerous allegations, especially by Western analysts, that AQIM is engaged in "smuggling (mostly cigarettes, drugs, arms, and vehicles), money laundering, extortion, kidnapping, and racketeering across the neighboring borders of Mauritania, Niger, Libya, Chad, and Mali,"¹⁶ a closer look at the available open-source information suggests that AQIM cells in the Sahel, particularly the cell led by Mokhtar Ben Mokhtar, appear to be providing racketeers' protection to smugglers, rather than exerting monopolistic control over territory or even engaging in smuggling themselves.¹⁷ Still, the sums generated by such protection are likely to be very substantial and in time may fund larger military or political ambitions. Recent intelligence suggests the fee for transport from entry into, to departure from, African shores would be around \$2,000 per kilogram. The crash of a Boeing 727 in eastern Mali in October 2009, which is reported to have been carrying a large amount of cocaine, perhaps 10 tons, from Latin America, also has rung alarm bells.¹⁸

Drug trafficking is not the only source of illicit revenue for AQIM in the Sahel; kidnapping and ransom also now provide significant funding.¹⁹ AQIM cells in the Sahel or local groups who sell the abductees to AQIM have kidnapped British, Canadian, French, German, Italian, Spanish, and Swiss nationals in the last few years, with AQIM usually earning \$2–3 million in ransom for the release of each abductee.²⁰ State payment of ransoms to groups in the subregion with alleged connections to AQIM remains problematic and divisive. In addition to AQIM activity in the Sahel and the increasing cooperation between drug traffickers and members of AQIM, according to Gani Yoroms of the Nigeria War College, "the illicit trade in diamonds and other precious commodities in Liberia, Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of Congo is a source of fundraising for Hezbollah, al-Qaida and other terrorist organizations."²¹ Although the extent to which al-Qaida has profited from the illicit diamond trade in West Africa has been disputed,²² such allegations point to the vulnerabilities that exist in a subregion rich in natural resources and their illicit exploitation and trade.

Yet, the magnitude of the threat posed by AQIM should not be overstated. Too much remains uncertain, notably in relation to the integration of AQIM and other terrorist groups into the transnational threat vectors that now run across West Africa and the Sahel, carrying drugs, cigarettes, and people toward Europe and increasingly

toward East Africa and the Arabian Gulf. There is a marked absence of reliable, independent assessments, especially from inside the subregion itself, of these threat vectors and their likely impact in coming years. It must also be acknowledged that some Western assessments of the threat from AQIM have been overblown, and there may be sound reasons to think that elements in the subregion might have encouraged the most negative view possible of the threat.²³

The danger posed by AQIM's presence in the Sahel is that it will provide significant revenues and uncontrolled training and planning space for the group, not that it will control the Sahel itself. As the U.S. Counterterrorism Coordinator Daniel Benjamin stated,

AQIM represents less of a threat to stability in its region than do al-Qa'ida in the Federally Administered Territories in Pakistan or al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula in Yemen. The group cannot seriously threaten governments or regional stability, nor is it poised to gain significant support among the region's population. AQIM cannot drive a wedge between the U.S. and its partners; it also cannot ignite an ethnic-based civil war as al-Qa'ida in Iraq nearly did.²⁴

What cannot be denied is West Africa's continuing vulnerability to violent extremism of many forms, as demonstrated by its history of interethnic conflict and civil war in recent decades. This vulnerability stems in no small part from weaknesses in state capacity, including in the capacity of the state to address social concerns and development problems through effective policing, rights-respecting dispute resolution, and community-driven development. For example, the police in many West African countries are rated as the most corrupt sector of society.²⁵ Also, law enforcement across West Africa is hindered by the reactive (rather than proactive) nature of investigations; the lack of information sharing within and between security agencies (e.g., police and *gendarmes*) and among states in the subregion; insufficient funds for operations; lack of equipment; and an almost total lack of forensic capabilities. Weak law enforcement capacity, coupled with widespread political instability and a general lack of state capacity to exert sufficient control over large swaths of territory and borders, leaves West Africa vulnerable to exploitation by a wide range of clandestine actors. According to a senior UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) official, this has led to "West Africa becom[ing] a black hole where any kind of wanted person can come and operate or hide ... be they terrorists or other kinds of criminals.... It's a criminal paradise."²⁶

Although violence is prevalent in the subregion, according to Professor Eboe Hutchful, this violence is generally "viewed through the lens of ethnicity, identity politics, poverty, governance, and struggles over natural resources, rather than terrorism."²⁷ This perception helps explain in part both why governments and the public do not generally consider terrorism as such to be a top priority, particularly when compared to the other threats facing the subregion,²⁸ and why counterterrorism may be perceived as a form of racial, ethnic, or religious profiling in the ethnically and religiously diverse societies of West Africa.²⁹ In fact, the latter has already occurred in Nigeria, which has developed a robust response to the threat, but where a 2005 draft counterterrorism bill was

withdrawn “due to opposition from northern Senators who argued that the motivation for such a bill was anti-Muslim sentiment.”³⁰

The political discourse surrounding terrorism and counterterrorism in West Africa, as elsewhere on the continent, remains sensitive. Many continue to view terrorism as a predominantly Western narrative, indeed a “Western problem,” and counterterrorism as a Western-imposed priority and argue that many more people in the subregion are directly affected by disease, crime, poverty, and hunger than by terrorism. Yet, this fails to take into account the inexorable linkages between security and development that exist, perhaps nowhere more prominently than in West Africa. Realization of the subregion’s development agenda is more difficult so long as it remains vulnerable to terrorist recruitment, radicalization, and penetration, which threaten not only to dominate the agenda for cooperation with donors, but also to threaten political stability and therefore the investment and growth climate in the subregion. African leaders recognized “the destructive effects of terrorism, and the obstacle it poses to development and stability on the African Continent” in the Dakar Declaration against Terrorism, adopted in October 2001 by the African Summit Against Terrorism and reiterated in the 2002 Plan of Action of the African Union for the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism.³¹

There are significant linkages among counterterrorism, good governance, and Security Sector Reform (SSR). Measures aimed at strengthening the capacity of West African states to address terrorist recruitment, financing, movement, training, propaganda, and operations also help to address broader good governance and development goals. For example, strengthening the criminal justice sector can assist in dealing with drug and human trafficking. Strengthening border controls can assist with small arms and light weapons proliferation, as well as facilitating trade and increasing states’ customs revenue. Bolstering state security forces’ respect for human rights not only helps to prevent radicalization and violent extremism, but also strengthens the states’ ties to civil society and social resilience to other threats.

The tendency following 2001 to treat counterterrorism as an exceptional response to an exceptional threat, however, and the consequent proliferation of donor counterterrorism programming, often with a military or other security-related focus, has risked obscuring these linkages. The positive benefits of counterterrorism programming in the areas of rule of law promotion, SSR, criminal justice reform, conflict prevention, peace building, or combating drug and human trafficking is often lost in the fog of mistrust and suspicion that the counterterrorism label brings with it. As a result, uncoordinated, poorly messaged counterterrorism interventions by outside donors may risk making the generation of public support for allocating scarce public resources to address the terrorist threat even more challenging.

III. Responses: The Need for West African Ownership

All of this helps explain why the subregion has yet to formulate a comprehensive strategy for preventing and combating terrorism, despite its clear links to other cross-border criminal activities, which are increasingly seen as threats to peace, stability, and development in the subregion. Those activities perceived as more immediate threats to subregional stability have been prioritized. For example, the UN Security Council, at the prompting of Burkina Faso, then the Council President, issued a Presidential Statement addressing these issues in December 2009.³² Earlier, in June 2009, ECOWAS heads of state adopted an ECOWAS Regional Action Plan on illicit drug trafficking and organized crime. Yet, there are good reasons why such an agenda would benefit from parallel consideration of subregional cooperation on counterterrorism. Legal and other cross-border counterterrorism cooperation, including border monitoring and the sharing of intelligence and other information, remains inadequate across much of West Africa, despite the transnational nature of many of the terrorist threats.

A number of West African states, alone and in partnership with other states, have taken important steps in recent years to strengthen their capacities to prevent and combat terrorism in response to the increasing threat of terrorism in some parts of the subregion. In addition, partners, including the Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED), UNODC, the AU, the EU, and the United States, have provided technical and other counterterrorism capacity-building assistance to a number of countries in the subregion, as this report explores at more length below. Nevertheless, limitations at the institutional and operational levels remain significant, and systemic cooperation on counterterrorism measures among all West African states is relatively limited.

Many countries in the region would benefit from ongoing training for and assistance to police, judges, and prosecutors; improved land, sea, and air border controls; strengthened interdepartmental cooperation; upgraded communications equipment and facilities; improved financial regulation; enhanced passport and document forgery systems; and progress in combating illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons. Most countries continue to lack counterterrorism legislation and, more broadly, an effective criminal justice system and other democratic institutions essential not only for combating terrorism, but also crime and corruption. Furthermore, the impact of security forces on human rights remains a major concern, fuelling unrest and instability and creating vulnerabilities that extremists and terrorists may exploit.

West African ownership of any agenda for action for the subregion is absolutely essential to its success. The Strategy reinforces the important role that regional and subregional bodies can play in promoting counterterrorism cooperation and enhancing counterterrorism capacities and the need, in many cases, to strengthen the capabilities of those bodies to be able to contribute in these areas.³³ As the strongest of Africa's subregional bodies, ECOWAS has the potential to play a leading role in advancing Strategy implementation and improving counterterrorism cooperation and capacity building in West Africa.³⁴

ECOWAS was established in 1975 for the purpose of promoting economic cooperation, integration, and development among its member states. Starting in 1989, however, faced with a host of political crises, conflicts, and civil wars that undermined the political and economic stability of the subregion, the work of ECOWAS expanded to include the promotion of subregional peace and security. Although ECOWAS has become a leader in conflict management and prevention issues, its current level of engagement in counterterrorism is limited. As with a number of other African regional economic communities, ECOWAS seeks to create a common market by the removal of obstacles to the free movement of persons, goods, services, and capital between member states. Yet, insufficient attention has been given to the creation of a common approach to address risks related to the movement of terrorists (accompanied by weapons and money) in the common market, which may threaten the stability and development of the subregion. This circumstance exists because, among other reasons, terrorism has fallen relatively low on the list of priorities for many ECOWAS member states, which in turn has resulted in “no institutional structures or resources devoted specifically to fighting terrorism” and the absence of a subregional framework on counterterrorism.³⁵

Nevertheless, ECOWAS has adopted a series of instruments aimed at addressing a number of related security challenges confronting the subregion. These include (1) the 1999 Protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security, which is aimed at strengthening subregional cooperation in areas including “international terrorism”; (2) the January 2008 Conflict Prevention Framework, which was adopted to help the subregion address the interlinked challenges of cross-border crime, small arms and light weapons proliferation, and political, security, and resource governance; and (3) the 2009 ECOWAS Regional Action Plan on illicit drug trafficking and organized crime.

The counterterrorism portfolio within the ECOWAS Commission is assigned to the Office of the Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace, and Security, but ECOWAS has not created a dedicated unit within the office to deal with counterterrorism. ECOWAS has identified focal points in each ECOWAS member state that it hopes to build into an operational network. That network is based on the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT) network and, once operational, could complement the ACSRT’s work with and in the subregion. ECOWAS, in collaboration with the Center on Global Counterterrorism Cooperation, convened the first meeting of those focal points in February 2010. The Commission continues to work with partners, including the ACSRT, UNODC, and CTED, as well as nongovernmental partners such as the Institute for Security Studies³⁶ and the Center on Global Counterterrorism Cooperation, to further counterterrorism cooperation in the subregion.

Although ECOWAS’ institutional contributions to counterterrorism as such have been limited so far, it has initiated other activities that do contribute to addressing the threat and implementing the Strategy in the subregion. For example, it has developed a subregional mechanism to combat money laundering and terrorist financing based on a shared concern across much of West Africa on the need to protect banking and other financial systems from abuse. Established by ECOWAS in 1999, the Intergovernmental Action Group against Money Laundering (GIABA) seeks “to provide a common framework for combating money laundering and the

financing of terrorist activities and to promote cooperation between member states with different legal and financial systems.”³⁷ Although no country in West Africa is a member of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), as a FATF-style regional body, GIABA in effect expands the application of FATF standards, which are explicitly referenced in the Strategy, to the subregion and is working with ECOWAS member states to help them implement those standards and best practices.

In addition, the 15 ECOWAS member states are members of the West African Police Chiefs Committee (WAPCCO), which facilitates the exchange of information among its members on potential terrorist and other international criminal activity. With Interpol’s subregional bureau in Abidjan, WAPCCO has developed and implemented a series of practical counterterrorism-related programs. Interpol’s subregional bureau and WAPCCO have assisted countries in carrying out joint police operations on small arms and light weapons and on stolen vehicles, which were also aimed at assisting countries to combat and prevent terrorism and terrorism financing in the region.³⁸ They have also worked with UNODC to train magistrates across the region and familiarize them with Interpol databases and communication tools.³⁹ With regard to the related issue of drug trafficking in the region, WAPCCO and Interpol are working together with other relevant partners to implement the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan on illicit drug trafficking and organized crime and cooperate in the establishment of transnational crime units in West African countries.⁴⁰

Although these subregional activities are important, GIABA, WAPCCO, and other networks of security officials in the subregion are too narrow in their substantive focus and composition and do not adequately address the need for a subregional counterterrorism framework. ECOWAS, as the primary organization responsible for peace and security in West Africa with its highly developed peace and security framework, norm-setting authority, and established secretariat, is uniquely suited for developing a subregional counterterrorism framework and mechanism within its secretariat for overseeing its implementation.

The ECOWAS Commission has expressed an interest in developing a more robust counterterrorism program that complements and builds on the efforts of the United Nations and the AU. Among some initial priorities for the Commission are the adoption of a subregional strategy and plan of action, the development of a multidimensional counterterrorism office at the Commission, and the establishment of an operational network among the counterterrorism focal points of ECOWAS member states.

Such an enhanced framework could serve to promote comprehensive national and subregional responses to the threat and enhanced cross-border cooperation, as well as a platform for helping to address the enormous capacity challenges facing most countries in the subregion, many of which are shared. By assuming a more active counterterrorism role in the subregion, ECOWAS might be able to provide or facilitate the provision of training opportunities and equipment to its member states; put in place coordination systems that allow for better cooperation within the subregion and between the subregion and other regions and subregions, as well as the United Nations; and operationalize its subregional network of national counterterrorism focal points. ECOWAS, with the support of a more active Commission in this area, could offer experts from member

states in the subregion a platform to meet periodically to exchange best practices, build trust, and receive training and other forms of capacity-building assistance.

A first step in adopting a subregional counterterrorism framework would be for ECOWAS to complete an assessment of the threats and vulnerabilities in West Africa. This assessment should be completed in cooperation with a West African think tank and highlight for ECOWAS member states the linkages between terrorism and a range of other security challenges confronting the subregion, helping to explain how a more coherent response is needed to protect West African communities from terrorism. In turn, this could enhance the capacity of the subregion to confront other criminal activities that are seen as more pressing, such as drug and human trafficking. With a sophisticated assessment in hand, it will be possible to cultivate the political and other support necessary for adopting an ECOWAS strategy and plan of action and helping ECOWAS member states to implement that plan. The development of such a strategy must be initiated by ECOWAS member states and the Commission. A locally conducted threat assessment would help to refine the strategy and plan of action and build subregional support for their adoption.

The finalized ECOWAS framework should, among other things, enumerate specific concrete steps ECOWAS member states should take across the full range of measures in the Strategy and outline achievable goals that would allow the measurement of collective progress. It also should establish a multidimensional counterterrorism office in the Commission to monitor and assist ECOWAS member states in implementation and provide a platform for the facilitation of counterterrorism cooperation and coordination among them and between the subregion and external partners such as the United Nations and for the delivery of subregional technical assistance and other capacity-building initiatives.

The process of refining the ECOWAS counterterrorism framework should involve opportunities for counterterrorism practitioners from ECOWAS member states and external partners, including the United Nations, key partners and donor countries, the AU, and civil society, to provide their input. The Commission should convene a meeting of national counterterrorism focal points and other stakeholders for the purpose, among others, of presenting them with a draft of the subregional framework for their review. Consulting with practitioners and partners is critical to ensuring buy-in from each for their roles in implementing the strategy and plan of action.

An inclusive approach to finalizing an ECOWAS counterterrorism framework would provide an important opportunity for states in the subregion, donors, and other stakeholders to think strategically about their counterterrorism programs and capacity-building efforts in the subregion and allow for the development of concrete assistance packages to support implementation of that framework. Also, it would help ensure that implementation efforts are developed and supported across the full range of measures outlined in the Strategy (and any eventual ECOWAS strategy and plan of action) and help bolster the capacity of all states in the subregion, not just those most immediately or obviously affected. A coherent subregional approach is critical to ensuring that

successful counterterrorism efforts in one country do not simply displace terrorists to less secure, more hospitable areas elsewhere in the subregion.

An eventual ECOWAS counterterrorism framework would need to confront the fact that the terrorist threat and the measures needed to combat it encompass a wider geographic area, which includes countries of the Sahel that are not ECOWAS members. Therefore, it might be necessary to find some accommodation that would permit the inclusion of non-ECOWAS member states, such as Mauritania, in any eventual framework.

Any eventual ECOWAS strategy and plan of action on counterterrorism should highlight the important contributions of civil society and provide for the role that civil society groups will play in its implementation. The ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework recognizes the important role that civil society plays in conflict prevention and provides guidelines and entry points for civil society and other actors to engage in prevention initiatives in the subregion.⁴¹ Engagement with civil society should build on the work West African civil society groups are already doing through related peace and security networks such as the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) and the West Africa Civil Society Forum (WACSOFF), which provide institutional platforms for interacting with ECOWAS and states in the subregion.⁴² Those networks and individual civil society organizations are critical to promoting awareness of the threat of terrorism and the Strategy and the importance of developing a subregional response.

The next step could be to seek external support to ensure that the Commission has the necessary human and financial resources to oversee implementation of this plan. If properly resourced, the Commission could serve as a more effective subregional partner for the United Nations as it continues to ramp up its counterterrorism activities in West Africa and as a platform for counterterrorism training and related capacity-building activities in West Africa. In the end, however, as has proven the case with the Southern African Development Community and for similar reasons, efforts to ratchet up ECOWAS engagement on counterterrorism issues should proceed step by step, seeking to build and maintain political support from the critical stakeholders along the way.

IV. The Role of External Partners: The African Union, United Nations, United States, and European Union

African Union

Although West Africa does not have its own counterterrorism framework as such, African states, working through the AU and its predecessor, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), had begun developing legal instruments and other mechanisms for addressing terrorism well before the 2001 attacks in the United States. In response to escalating terrorist violence in Algeria, East Africa, and elsewhere across the continent during the 1990s, the OAU adopted the Convention to Combat and Prevent Terrorism in 1999. In 2001, African leaders gave

new impetus to implementation of that convention with the adoption of the Dakar Declaration against Terrorism, which paved the way for the development in 2002 of the AU Plan of Action on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism in Africa. The plan gave concrete expression to the obligations laid out in the OAU convention and UN Security Council Resolution 1373. Two years later, an AU protocol to the OAU convention was adopted in an effort to update the 1999 convention and address the lack of implementation of the convention and plan of action. That framework includes many of the same preventive measures and acknowledges many of the same conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism and human rights concerns identified in the Strategy and relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

In addition to those normative contributions, the AU has sought to promote practical counterterrorism cooperation through the work of its technical counterterrorism related arm, the ACSRT, which is based in Algiers and was established as a result of the 2002 AU plan of action. Its mandate is to support national efforts to implement the AU counterterrorism framework, including by improving counterterrorism information sharing (e.g., sharing best practices and other national experiences) and cooperation and coordination among its members, the regional economic commissions, and the United Nations, with a view to raising awareness of terrorist threats across Africa and helping African states gain access to needed capacity-building assistance.

The ACSRT was envisaged as a highly integrated network of regional economic commission and state focal points coordinated centrally through Algiers, with each AU government setting up a counterterrorism coordination unit involving representatives from the relevant ministries and appointing someone from that unit to liaise with the ACSRT in Algiers depending on the issue. Forty-four of 53 AU member states have appointed ACSRT focal points.⁴³ Seven of eight regional focal points have been appointed.⁴⁴ Those focal points communicate through a secure information system with Algiers on the state of the threat, national responses, and capacity needs. That information is processed and sent to the AU Commission in the form of recommendations and referred to the focal points. The ACSRT also performs an analytical and support function. It conducts regional and subregional threat assessments and, with funding support from the United States, European governments, and Algeria, has organized a number of training and other capacity-building activities for African officials, mostly related to enhancing capacity and cooperation in fields related to Pillars II and III of the Strategy (e.g., law enforcement capacity, critical infrastructure protection, force protection, combating the financing of terrorism, and terrorist use of the Internet).⁴⁵ Some of these workshops have focused specifically on West Africa.

In addition to the growing focal point network, the ACSRT is seeking to develop a confidential database that would include information submitted by the focal points on terrorist threats and trends, as well as names of terrorists and terrorist groups and sources of funding across the continent. This information would then be analyzed and cross-checked by ACSRT staff to determine whether it merits inclusion in the database.⁴⁶ The ACSRT also is developing a database of African experts on terrorism so that AU members can more readily draw on expertise and experiences from other countries. Both databases are expected to be operational in 2010.

The ACSRT has augmented its activities in the past few years, partly as a result of increased donor support, but continues to suffer from a lack of human and financial resources, which limits its ability to make practical contributions to fulfilling its wide-ranging mandate. Although it has now succeeded in organizing a number of continental and subregional training seminars, it has had difficulty working with the national and subregional focal points in a sustained manner, and it remains to be seen whether it will be able to stimulate the practical expert-to-expert cooperation that is critical to building trust among countries in West Africa and elsewhere on the continent. Much as with UN counterterrorism actors based in New York and Vienna, the ACSRT needs committed subregional partners across Africa to carry out its work most effectively and efficiently, something that by most accounts remains elusive in West Africa.

Although designated as the focal point for counterterrorism activity within the AU, a number of other parts of the organization other than the ACSRT could play a significant role in furthering the implementation of the Strategy, particularly Pillars I and IV, in West Africa and elsewhere on the continent. These include the AU Peace and Security Council, the Early Warning System, the Panel of the Wise, the newly established African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights, and the New Partnership for Africa's Development and its African Peer Review Mechanism. The Pan-African Parliament could play a significant role in strengthening parliamentary oversight of legislation on terrorism issues. These African institutions, which are involved in issues related to efforts to reduce poverty and marginalization, improve governance, strengthen the rule of law, and combat corruption, may play significant roles in time in ensuring that the Strategy is implemented in an integrated manner. Every effort should be made to involve them in AU counterterrorism discussions and in efforts to develop an ECOWAS plan of action for Strategy implementation.

United Nations

With the vulnerabilities and capacity shortcomings in West African countries, a number of entities within the UN system have been actively promoting and supporting efforts to implement UN counterterrorism mandates, including the Strategy, in West Africa. To date, the UN Security Council's CTED and UNODC's Terrorism Prevention Branch (TPB) have been the most active. Both have focused their efforts on enhancing national legislative frameworks and criminal justice and other law enforcement-related capacities, as well as trying to promote greater cross-border cooperation in terrorism-related matters.

CTED

CTED's approach to helping build counterterrorism and related capacity in West Africa has shifted to focus more on identifying and helping to address common subregional needs and priorities rather than looking at countries individually. Building on an initial meeting it organized in New York in July 2007, which brought together officials from West African countries and relevant bilateral and multilateral donors to discuss West Africa's counterterrorism technical assistance needs,⁴⁷ CTED arranged for the ACSRT to host a training workshop in June 2009 for law enforcement and other criminal justice officials from West African countries. In addition,

CTED facilitated EU funding for law enforcement and border control training for two countries in the Sahel and partnered with the International Civil Aviation Organization in April 2009 to organize a regional training course in West Africa on machine-readable travel documents. CTED has also developed close cooperative relationships with a number of regional and subregional organizations working in West Africa, including the ACSRT, ECOWAS, and GIABA.

CTED's New York-based staff has conducted a number of West African country visits of different shapes and sizes. During these country visits CTED leads a group of UN system entities, occasionally joined by relevant regional or subregional bodies, to meet with a range of government officials and technical experts to discuss national implementation efforts. Such visits to West Africa, which have sometimes included representatives from the ACSRT, ECOWAS, and GIABA, have allowed CTED to gain a better understanding of the realities on the ground and work with the country concerned to identify the priority areas where work needs to be done and where technical assistance is needed. Among other things, CTED has used the opportunity of the visits to highlight the importance of having a mechanism in place at the national level that brings together and helps coordinate the work of a range of government agencies involved in counterterrorism strategy and implementation, beyond simply security and intelligence services.

In addition to adopting more of a subregional rather than country-by-country approach to West Africa, CTED has focused its efforts regarding Resolution 1373 on law enforcement and border control issues specifically, rather than trying to cover all aspects of the resolution. The factors triggering this shift include the belief that this narrower focus will produce more tangible results and the facts that the capacity gaps in these two areas are especially significant and that there are an increasing number of other organizations assessing the other elements of Resolution 1373 (e.g., GIABA's focus on issues related to anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism) and the interest in avoiding duplication of effort. To help improve the subregion's capacity to control its borders, CTED has approached donors on behalf of countries in West Africa for border control equipment, but with little success. CTED has emphasized improving the security of travel documents issued by countries in the subregion as well, including by facilitating the April 2009 training seminar on machine-readable travel documents. Lack of computerized national civil registries across West Africa, however, negatively affects the ability of some countries in the subregion to produce reliable travel documents, and CTED routinely recommends that countries in the subregion establish reliable civil registries and extend access to Interpol's critical I-24/7 network beyond the National Central Bureau in capitals to all border checkpoints. Although improving border control is an important priority for the subregion, in addition to emphasizing the provision of technical assistance and equipment, more emphasis could be placed on developing creative approaches such as promoting community policing as options for patrolling borders.

CTED is also recognizing the increasing importance of implementing Resolution 1624 in the subregion, which calls on states to take measures to counter incitement to terrorism and to prevent the subversion of educational, cultural, and religious institutions by terrorists and their supporters.

Through increased engagement with officials in capitals and more strategic outreach, CTED has produced more concrete results under its new leadership. Yet, the impact of CTED's work in West Africa could be further enhanced if it had additional on-the-ground presence, either through placement of experts or through double-hatting staff in the UN Office for West Africa (UNOWA) or through secondment of an officer to the ECOWAS Commission, as currently occurs with the secondment of UN staff members to the AU Commission to support the Peace and Security Council. Such an approach would improve CTED's follow-up capacities and enable it to interact more effectively with national experts and representatives from UN country and regional teams working on Strategy-related issues, particularly in nontraditional fields of counterterrorism; ECOWAS; and other relevant subregional actors, as well as civil society. This would allow CTED to take subregional and local cultural and political perspectives more fully into account, enabling it to gain a deeper understanding of the capacity needs of the subregion, and could create more opportunities to integrate UN counterterrorism activities into wider and related UN efforts in the subregion. Establishing a field presence in West Africa would require Security Council authorization. This could serve as a pilot project for CTED to establish a field presence in other regions and subregions. Alternatively, a UN Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) official could be placed or double-hatted in UNOWA, which would not require Security Council authorization. Regardless, CTED and other CTITF entities should continue to find ways to deepen cooperation with those other UN entities engaged in capacity building or other activities to promote stability in West Africa, including UNOWA, and already deeply engaged in security sector reform in the subregion.

Given the linkages among the range of security challenges confronting the subregion, the need for holistic responses at the national and subregional levels, and the often-limited absorption capacity that exists within West African governments when it comes to receiving technical assistance, an integrated UN approach in and toward West Africa is essential. In this light, a recent positive development was CTED's first-ever participation in the work of the Peacebuilding Commission on Guinea-Bissau and Sierra Leone (and Burundi). In a meeting organized by the Peacebuilding Commission, CTED discussed priorities for counterterrorism programs to be implemented in Sierra Leone with the support of the "Groups of Donors and Friends of Sierra Leone." In addition, CTED provided input on counterterrorism issues in the context of the development of a Peacebuilding Strategic Framework for Guinea-Bissau, took part in the Inter Agency Group Assessment Mission for the Security Sector of Guinea-Bissau, and contributed analysis for the security sector support exercise for Sierra Leone.⁴⁸ More active CTED engagement, both in New York and in the field, with those parts of the United Nations engaged in trying to address some of the broader causes of instability in West Africa, with a view to better integrating the UN counterterrorism program into these wider efforts, should be encouraged.

UNODC

Since the launch of its Global Project on Strengthening the Legal Regime against Terrorism in January 2003, UNODC, through its TPB, has delivered various forms of counterterrorism-related assistance aimed at helping countries join and implement the universal instruments against terrorism. This assistance has included legislative drafting aid and the training of criminal justice professionals. Drawing on its Vienna-based staff, its

network of local consultants, and UNODC regional representatives based in Dakar, TPB has provided most ECOWAS members with technical assistance bilaterally or in regional or subregional settings. As a result, it has provided dozens of national criminal justice officials from countries in West Africa with “specialized training on the legal regime against terrorism, especially the legal aspects and obligations arising from the universal legal instruments against terrorism and related Security Council resolutions and the mechanisms of international cooperation in criminal matters (extradition and mutual legal assistance).”⁴⁹ Partly as a result of this training, among ECOWAS members, the Gambia, Mali, Niger, and Senegal have all adopted counterterrorism legislation.⁵⁰

Although its bilateral training activities are important, TPB’s regional and subregional initiatives are particularly useful as they bring together criminal justice officials from across West Africa and allow for the cross-border networking, exchange of information, and building of trust that is essential to effectively combat terrorism in West Africa, but that has proven slow to develop. With the support of Spain, TPB has organized workshops aimed at strengthening international cooperation in criminal matters relating to terrorism among states in West Africa, with the most recent one in Las Palmas in June 2009 focusing on consolidating bilateral, regional, and international instruments on extradition and mutual legal assistance. Among other things, the resulting declaration and plan of action recognized the importance of strengthening international cooperation to combat and prevent terrorism and related criminal activities. Participating West African states also committed to promoting “operational synergies leading to simultaneous progress in the fight against terrorism and transnational organized crime through the use of the existing legal instruments and improved judicial cooperation.” In addition, the states requested UNODC to finalize the “[c]ompendium of bilateral, regional, and international instruments on extradition and mutual legal assistance’ as soon as possible, with a view to its publication and wide distribution in the ECOWAS Member States.” TPB has already completed a “[c]ompendium of bilateral, regional and international agreements on extradition and mutual legal assistance” for criminal justice officials, judges, and prosecutors from Niger.

UNODC’s expertise extends to other terrorist-related issues, such as organized crime, terrorist financing, money laundering, and drugs and human trafficking. The officials that deal with these different international crimes in many countries and the themes raised in many UNODC training sessions are often the same. UNODC has grown increasingly aware of and responsive to the need to provide criminal justice officials in underresourced countries more unified assistance that better reflects the obvious links. Particularly in West Africa, UNODC has played a leading role in mobilizing the attention of the international community to the threat posed by drug trafficking and related crimes in the subregion and in devising integrated programs to address these threats. For example, in April 2008 it convened an informal ministerial session in Vienna with a number of West African ministers to discuss the security situation in the subregion, with a special focus on the Sahel band, where among the needs identified for technical assistance were counternarcotics, criminal justice reform, anticorruption, border management, intelligence sharing, terrorism prevention, and a halt to the illicit trade in small arms.⁵¹ Through its Operations Directorate, UNODC is providing or will soon provide technical assistance through integrated national training programs to a number of ECOWAS member states, including Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, and Sierra Leone.

In addition, UNODC joined forces with the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), UNOWA, and Interpol to launch the West Africa Coast Initiative, which is aimed at strengthening the national capacities of some of the subregion's most fragile states, including Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, and Cote d'Ivoire. The initiative is part of growing cooperation among UN actors to address the threat posed by illicit drug trafficking and organized crime to the already fragile states of West Africa. One UN official explained that the initiative, which includes placing UN police on the ground as mentors, will be "regionally coordinated, internationally mentored, but locally owned."⁵²

This approach, which integrates the work being carried out by a number of different UN entities and is carried out in close cooperation with a subregional partner to help ensure local ownership, should be welcomed and may offer a best practice for maximizing UN synergies in building national capacities to address cross-cutting security issues elsewhere in West Africa and beyond. Yet, neither of the main UN counterterrorism capacity-developing actors, UNODC's TPB nor CTED, is included in this otherwise multidimensional UN program.

Starting within UNODC, more attention needs to be given to ensuring that UN counterterrorism capacity-building activity is incorporated into wider UN programs to build the capacities of criminal justice systems and other relevant national institutions to address a number of interrelated security challenges. This is particularly important in subregions such as West Africa where the absorption capacities of often weak national institutions to receive technical assistance are limited and counterterrorism is not necessarily a top national priority, despite the vulnerabilities to and threat from terrorism.

UNDP

Another area where strengthened programmatic linkages within the United Nations would contribute to more effective programs to enhance national and regional capacities to counter terrorism revolves around enhancing cooperation between UN development and counterterrorism actors.

One of the main achievements of the Strategy is its emphasis on the link "between the traditional development agenda: poverty reduction, social development, rule-of law programmes and the fight against terrorism."⁵³ Key to making this connection in practice is the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which, although it is not mentioned explicitly in the Strategy and lacks an explicit counterterrorism mandate, has a potentially significant role to play in promoting Strategy implementation, especially with regard to Pillar I and efforts to build rule of law (Pillar IV).

UNDP contributes to addressing the underlying conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism identified in Pillar I through its core program work in the areas of poverty reduction, democratic governance, crisis prevention and recovery, and the environment, as well as HIV/AIDS, gender equality, and human rights. For example, UNDP has worked with countries in the subregion to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, collaborated with ECOWAS, DPKO, and other partners to help countries in the subregion emerge from conflict, and worked

in conjunction with ECOWAS to help implement the Moratorium on the Importation and Manufacture of Small Arms.⁵⁴ Despite the relevance of its work to building counterterrorism-related capacity and addressing root causes of conflict and terrorism in the subregion and the fact that it is a CTITF member, UNDP generally has been reluctant at a policy level and at the practical level to associate its work or coordinate its efforts with UN or other counterterrorism actors for fear that doing so might unduly politicize its work on the ground.

The move away from the “global war on terror” rhetoric that had dominated the post–September 11 era has opened up the space to begin a discussion on how to break down the walls that have been built between development and security actors, which would pay dividends for West Africa, where greater engagement from UNDP could potentially improve both the coordination of counterterrorism-related capacity-building efforts and subregional ownership of the Strategy.

UNDP Resident Representatives, which are present in all West African countries, are generally also the UN Resident Coordinators responsible for promoting coherence among the different parts of the UN system operating in a particular country. They potentially have a key role to play in assisting the CTITF to coordinate in-country technical assistance programs, serving, perhaps informally, as focal points for in-country implementation efforts. To help build public support for and ownership of counterterrorism capacity building in the subregion, UNDP and other relevant UN actors could encourage national partners to treat such programs “as part of development assistance to ‘peace and security’ and ‘good governance’ and therefore as part of the national development plan of the country in question.”⁵⁵ In doing so, this might help increase the likelihood that “counterterrorism is perceived as a national priority and that it is reflected in national policies and strategies.”⁵⁶ A first practical step in this direction could be for UNDP to consult with relevant UN counterterrorism capacity-building actors such as UNODC’s TPB and CTED to learn more about counterterrorism capacity needs and priorities as it works with local officials to develop national development plans and the UN Development Assistance Framework. In addition, in the context of enhancing coherence and efficiency at the country level and increasing joint UN activities, UNDP and other relevant UN actors, as well as donors, could include counterterrorism capacity-building projects among the projects that can be funded out of the “multi-donor trust funds” that UNDP is often called on to administer.⁵⁷

There is a need for the UN Secretary-General and West African member states to call on UNDP to become more engaged on these issues and for donors to reassure those that are concerned about the possible securitizing of development work that the goal is for counterterrorism capacity-building efforts to be seen as part of a broader development agenda and not the other way around.

CTITF

One area where more active UNDP engagement is particularly important is the work of the CTITF, in particular its initiative on Integrated Assistance on Counter-Terrorism (I-ACT). This potentially important initiative brings together a number of UN entities involved in Strategy-related capacity building with a view to

offering a “one-UN approach” for countries interested in receiving UN assistance in Strategy implementation. It aims to bring greater coherence to ongoing UN efforts in this area, including by linking traditional UN counterterrorism actors, i.e., CTED and UNODC’s TPB, with those who engage in strengthening rule of law and human rights, reforming education curricula, and reducing poverty, all of which are critical elements of the Strategy and, more broadly, any effective counterterrorism strategy.

The I-ACT initiative essentially has three components. The CTITF Office together with UNODC’s TPB has developed an automated information-sharing system that will compile all information submitted by CTITF members regarding their previous and ongoing work with partnering countries. Based on the information shared by all CTITF entities, the CTITF Office in partnership with the country at issue then completes a gap analysis to identify priority areas for assistance with Strategy implementation. The CTITF through its support office then develops a national action plan for implementation of the Strategy, while also engaging with bilateral and multilateral donors outside of the CTITF as it seeks to help the country concerned plug identified capacity gaps.

Active participation from non-traditional UN counterterrorism actors, such as UNDP, both from the Resident Representatives and in terms of contributing the necessary information regarding country-specific, Strategy-related capacity-building initiatives, will be needed to ensure a truly integrated UN response to the country concerned across all four pillars of the Strategy and one that is framed in terms of the country’s broader needs and priorities. Nigeria and Burkina Faso are two of the three countries to have approached the CTITF for assistance.⁵⁸

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) is one of the most active nontraditional counterterrorism actors in the CTITF. Through the CTITF and on its own OHCHR has increasingly sought to provide member states and UN bodies with guidance on human rights and counterterrorism by, among other things, devising a fact sheet on counterterrorism and human rights,⁵⁹ working to convene regional meetings on human rights and counterterrorism, providing capacity building assistance in the form of human rights trainings and legislative drafting assistance, and issuing and updating its *Digest of Jurisprudence of the United Nations and Regional Organizations on the Protection of Human Rights while Countering Terrorism*.⁶⁰ As part of the CTITF working group on Protecting Human Rights While Countering Terrorism, OHCHR will be releasing a series of reference guides on relevant issues such as stopping and searching and security infrastructure, which will be presented to member states in the fall of 2010.⁶¹ OHCHR has also ramped up its presence in the subregion with the establishment in 2008 of a regional office for West Africa. That office was intended, among other things, to improve OHCHR’s outreach in and to the subregion, to provide a resource for countries in the subregion, and to support country offices and those states that do not have any local OHCHR representation.⁶² OHCHR (and the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering

terrorism and other relevant CTITF entities) has also been involved in dialogue with Nigerian authorities through the comprehensive I-ACT process regarding their draft counterterrorism bill.⁶³

United States and European Union

In recent years, West Africa and the Sahel have also attracted heightened attention from the United States and the EU as destinations for counterterrorism capacity-building assistance, targeting the capacities of the countries in the subregion and the subregion as a whole.

The EU, which has “identified the risks presented by the Sahel as the second key terrorist threat to the EU,”⁶⁴ has increasingly sought to engage the Sahel subregion on counterterrorism and is considering how to contribute to building the counterterrorism and related capacities of the Sahel countries. Among other things, the EU is considering a French proposal to establish “a regional security academy, with EU support ... which will help these countries address the fundamental issue of improving their ability to secure their own territory, as well [as] improve regional coordination by developing personal contact between the countries concerned and giving them a common basis of understanding of security issues.”⁶⁵ The EU also has indicated its intention to support related efforts to implement the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan on illicit drug trafficking and organized crime by “increasing operational capacities of ECOWAS, its Commission as well as ECOWAS Member States, and their deeper involvement in addressing” these illicit activities.⁶⁶ More broadly, the EU is formulating a common EU approach to “support the development and security policies in the Sahel region” to address underlying conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism. To this end, the EU sent a member state expert mission to Mali, Niger, and Mauritania in June 2009 to explore possible counterterrorism efforts to support at the national and regional levels and supported discussions of a possible Sahel-Sahara regional conference on the nexus of security and development initiated by the president of Mali.⁶⁷

A significant development in the EU’s ability to play a more effective role in building counterterrorism capacity in West Africa and elsewhere outside of Europe is the inclusion of the “first global counter-terrorism measures developed by the [European] Commission together with experts from EU member states in the 2009–2011 Indicative Programme for the Instrument of Stability.”⁶⁸ Although not including West Africa as such, the programme includes the Sahel region as among the key priorities. Given the prominent role that CTED will play in helping the EU identify priority needs under this program,⁶⁹ it appears that Security Council Resolution 1373 will continue to be the focus of EU efforts to support counterterrorism capacity building in third countries, even with the existence of the broader, more politically palatable Strategy. As a result, EU-backed capacity-building efforts are likely to focus primarily on Pillar II and Pillar III measures within the Strategy, rather than focusing on Pillar I (‘conditions conducive’) and Pillar IV (human rights and the rule of law) concerns.

The United States also has increased its counterterrorism-related assistance to the subregion significantly. In addition to narrow, bilateral counterterrorism capacity-building assistance that focuses on enhancing national law enforcement and other security-related capacities,⁷⁰ the United States has sought to facilitate horizontal security

cooperation among the states of the Sahel and the wider subregion. The primary vehicle for that has been the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP), which grew out of the more narrowly focused Pan-Sahel Initiative.⁷¹ The goals of the TSCTP include “strengthening regional counterterrorism capabilities; enhancing and institutionalizing cooperation among the region’s security forces; promoting democratic governance; discrediting terrorist ideology; and reinforcing bilateral military ties with the United States.”⁷² The TSCTP is a multiagency initiative ostensibly led by the U.S. Department of State that includes a “combination of military-to-military security assistance and development programs that aim to reduce support for violent extremism.”⁷³ For example, as part of the TSCTP, the State Department “has hosted educational programs intended to marginalize violent extremists; [the U.S. Agency for International Development has] supported efforts to improve education and health; and [the Department of Defense] has provided counterterrorism training in marksmanship and border patrol to the militaries of partner countries.”⁷⁴ Notably under the auspices of the TSCTP, the United States has had some success “in gathering around the same table a large number of officials from countries whose strategic and defence interests are incongruous, and to convince them to coordinate their antiterrorist operations.”⁷⁵

In a recent speech covering a number of issues including the Sahel, Robert Godec, the principal deputy coordinator for counterterrorism at the State Department, noted that the United States

must work with our partners. Local leaders are key. They are the ones best placed to understand and to discredit violent extremism. The United States can help, but we cannot lead. We can help empower local leaders through programs, funding, or by simply providing them with space—physical or electronic—to challenge violent extremist views. Non-traditional actors such as NGOs, foundations, public-private partnerships, and private businesses are some of the most capable and credible partners in local communities.⁷⁶

Operationalizing this new policy direction will be a challenge, but it would help to strengthen initiatives to include more stakeholders in Strategy implementation.

The EU and the United States have increasingly sought to engage the subregion in a manner that combines military and nonmilitary approaches to the threat and seeks to foster cooperation across the broader region. Some observers have argued, however, that this policy of security-based intervention is counterproductive. The presence of the U.S. military, its support to authoritarian regimes, and joint military exercises with regional partners have, they suggest, served to stoke anti-Americanism and cynicism regarding U.S. motives and contributed to growing radicalization and separatist violence across Northwest Africa.⁷⁷

Moving forward, the Strategy may therefore offer an alternative and more palatable framework for the United States and other external partners to provide counterterrorism-related assistance. The Strategy and cooperation with UN partners offer a way to internationalize counterterrorism efforts and avoid further stoking anti-Western sentiment as well as a framework within which to better coordinate international assistance efforts with a view to ensuring that all the priority needs are addressed. As the EU and other external actors continue to

engage with countries in West Africa on counterterrorism, careful attention should be paid to ensure that this engagement cuts across all four pillars of the Strategy in a coherent and mutually reinforcing manner and that efforts are made to stimulate more horizontal cooperation, i.e., between and among countries in the subregion, in all aspects of the Strategy.

As is the case with UN capacity-building work in the subregion, the EU, the United States, and other donors would benefit from the existence of a subregional framework in which to carry out these different activities and a subregional mechanism, including possibly under the auspices of ECOWAS, to help ensure sustained local ownership over them.

V. Conclusions and Recommendations

The Strategy offers ECOWAS member states a framework to develop a comprehensive subregional counterterrorism strategy and plan of action on counterterrorism. Its holistic approach encourages a broader focus on issues such as poverty and governance improvements and emphasizes the links to, and common approaches required for tackling, other related transnational security challenges confronting the subregion, such as illegal trafficking, small arms proliferation, and regional instability.

As this report has argued, although translating the commitments in the Strategy is above all the responsibility of states, functional, regional, subregional, and nongovernmental organizations each have important contributions to make as well. This report has discussed the contributions of many of those stakeholders to implementing the Strategy in West Africa. In each of these areas, the report has emphasized, those efforts might be rendered more effective if the subregion were to develop its own framework and mechanism for counterterrorism cooperation and capacity building, using the Strategy as a guide and starting point.

The following recommendations were developed through consultations with counterterrorism focal points from ECOWAS member states, the ECOWAS Commission, and other relevant stakeholders, although they ultimately represent the views only of the Center on Global Counterterrorism Cooperation. They outline steps ECOWAS and its partners could take to develop such a subregional framework and mechanism as well as other recommendations aimed at strengthening counterterrorism cooperation in West Africa among those different stakeholders and states in the region and between the region and the United Nations.

ECOWAS

1. The ECOWAS member states working in conjunction with the ECOWAS Commission should finalize and adopt a subregional strategy and plan of action for addressing threats from terrorism and violent

extremism in West Africa that is driven by local and subregional needs and priorities. The finalized strategy and plan of action should:

- Enumerate specific concrete steps ECOWAS member states should take across the full range of measures outlined in the Strategy and outline achievable goals that would allow the measurement of collective progress.
 - Establish a multidimensional counterterrorism office in the Commission to monitor and assist ECOWAS member states in implementation as well as provide a platform to facilitate counterterrorism cooperation and coordination among them and between the subregion and external partners, such as the United Nations, and the delivery of subregional technical assistance and other capacity-building initiatives.
 - Operationalize the ECOWAS network of member state counterterrorism focal points, building on the ACSRT network. Consideration should be given to using this network as a platform for developing further cross-border cooperation among security services, law enforcement, and prosecutors, including in cooperation with existing regional networks such as WAPCCO.
 - Encourage civil society to engage with ECOWAS and ECOWAS member states on its implementation.
2. As a first step, ECOWAS should complete an assessment of the threat and vulnerabilities in West Africa in cooperation with a West African think tank that highlights for ECOWAS member states the linkages between terrorism and a range of other security challenges confronting the subregion. That locally conducted threat assessment should help explain how a more coherent response is needed to protect West African communities from terrorism and help to refine the strategy and plan of action and build subregional support for their adoption.
 3. Before adoption, ECOWAS should convene a multi-stakeholder meeting to solicit feedback on the draft counterterrorism strategy and action plan from relevant UN bodies, ECOWAS counterterrorism focal points, external partners, and civil society and to provide an opportunity for those stakeholders to think strategically about their counterterrorism programs and capacity-building efforts in the subregion and allow for the development of concrete assistance packages to support efforts to implement the subregional framework.
 4. As part of its efforts to establish a multidimensional counterterrorism office in the Commission, ECOWAS should clarify the modalities of cooperation between the different bodies within the Commission dealing with issues related to counterterrorism, including any eventual counterterrorism mechanism within the

Commission itself. To the extent possible, these efforts should seek to build on and be framed within the context of existing ECOWAS structures and programs wherever possible.

5. Efforts should be made to include Sahel states, which are not members of ECOWAS, such as Mauritania, in ECOWAS activities to develop Western African capacity to combat and prevent terrorism through partnership status or other arrangements.

ECOWAS member states and external partners

6. All relevant stakeholders, including the ACSRT, the United Nations, external partners such as the United States and EU, and civil society, should work together to provide input on and support ECOWAS efforts to adopt a subregional counterterrorism framework and establish a multidimensional counterterrorism office within the Commission.
7. ECOWAS member states should establish multidimensional counterterrorism units within their own governments to improve interdepartmental cooperation and liaise with international, regional, and subregional focal points.
8. Donors and other assistance providers should continue to provide material and technical support to ECOWAS member states to enable them to combat and prevent terrorism effectively but ensure that implementation efforts are developed and supported across the full range of measures outlined in the Strategy (and any eventual ECOWAS strategy and plan of action) and help bolster the capacity of all states in the subregion, not just those most immediately or obviously affected.
9. More emphasis should be placed on developing creative approaches to helping countries in the subregion control their long and often unmanned borders. For example, this could include promoting community policing as an option for monitoring borders, rather than emphasizing the provision of technical assistance and often expensive equipment to help countries monitor the official land, sea, and air entry points.
10. Counterterrorism capacity-building activities in West Africa should be carried out in the context of the broader and more politically acceptable framework outlined in the Strategy. These activities should be coordinated with and reinforce programs aimed at improving governance and strengthening national capacities to address an array of cross-border criminal activities, including but not limited to terrorism.
11. To help build the operational links between counterterrorism and other security-related initiatives and development work, there needs to be more engagement between the often distinct security and development communities. Specifically, counterterrorism considerations should be integrated into national development strategies.

12. Donors should employ a two-level approach to assessing and funding Strategy-related activities in West Africa: one at the national level that identifies local priorities and gaps that need immediate attention; the other at the subregional level, by focusing on multilateral activities that strengthen and sustain cooperation among ECOWAS member states.

The United Nations and implementation of the Strategy

13. Given all of the ongoing capacity-building and other counterterrorism-related activity now underway in West Africa, member states in conjunction with the CTITF or on their own should commission local experts to map the Strategy to see what is being done under the different pillars in West Africa and identify what programs are being implemented, where the gaps lie, and where the Strategy intersects with other existing strategies in the subregion, e.g., any adopted by ECOWAS or the AU, to address different security-related challenges.
14. CTED should continue to find ways to deepen cooperation with UN entities engaged in capacity building and other activities to promote stability in West Africa, including UNOWA. Consideration should be given to the placement or double-hatting of a CTED officer in UNOWA or to secondment of an officer to the ECOWAS Commission. This could serve as a pilot project for CTED to establish a field presence in other regions and subregions.
15. The CTITF, in close cooperation with UNOWA in Dakar, the ACSRT, and ECOWAS, should convene West African states and donors in New York and in the subregion to discuss their capacity needs across all four pillars of the Strategy. This initiative would build on CTED's successful efforts to convene West African member states in the context of the implementation of Resolution 1373, which is largely limited to Pillars II and III of the Strategy, and could be part of or in addition to discussions surrounding an ECOWAS counterterrorism strategy and plan of action.
16. Nontraditional counterterrorism actors within the UN system, in particular UNDP and the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, should increase their engagement on Strategy implementation and engage proactively in the work of the CTITF and its working groups. The UN Secretary-General and West African member states should call on those actors to become more engaged on these issues.
17. UNDP Resident Representatives and UN Resident Coordinators responsible for promoting coherence among the different parts of the UN system operating in a particular country should assist the CTITF to coordinate in-country technical assistance programs, serving, perhaps informally, as focal points for in-country implementation efforts.
18. UNDP and other relevant UN actors should encourage national partners to treat such programs as part of national development plans.⁷⁸ UNDP should consult with relevant UN counterterrorism capacity-

building actors, such as UNODC's TPB and CTED, to learn more about counterterrorism capacity needs and priorities as it works with local officials to develop national development plans and the UN Development Assistance Framework.

19. Counterterrorism actors should coordinate their efforts with relevant ongoing UN and ECOWAS programs in the subregion on drug trafficking and transnational crime, in particular efforts to support implementation of the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan on illicit drug trafficking and organized crime.

Civil society

20. The Strategy provides a common framework for West African states, ECOWAS, and civil society to engage on counterterrorism issues and build on the rich contributions of civil society to furthering human security in West Africa. Given the importance of ensuring national and subregional ownership over the counterterrorism agenda in West Africa, more attention should be given to reaching out to and involving civil society in this area.
21. Any eventual ECOWAS strategy and plan of action on counterterrorism should highlight the important contributions of civil society and provide for the role of civil society groups in its implementation.
22. Outreach by states and multilateral bodies to West African civil society groups on Strategy-related issues should involve engagement with grassroots organizations, including youth and women's groups, and academic researchers and think tanks to develop locally based, credible assessments of terrorism-related threats and vulnerabilities in the subregion.
23. In addition, such engagement should build on the work West African civil society groups and networks are already doing to promote the rule of law, good governance, and peace and security, as well as the broader economic, social, and political development of the subregion. Where appropriate, Strategy and counterterrorism-related issues more broadly should be integrated into existing civil society networks in the region, such as WANEP and WACSO.
24. Civil society organizations and networks in the region should work to promote awareness of the threat of terrorism and the Strategy and the importance of developing a subregional response.

NOTES

¹ Bukun-Olu Onemola, Statement on behalf of Nigeria to the UN Sixth Committee, New York, 7 October 2009.

² Carsten Staur, Remarks on behalf of Denmark on the Occasion of the First Review of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, September 2008.

³ For the purposes of this report, “West Africa” is defined as the member states of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cote D’Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo). As discussed in greater detail in the body of the report, however, the nature of the threat and the measures needed to combat it encompass a wider geographic area, including countries in the Sahel (including Mauritania) that are not members of ECOWAS.

⁴ International Crisis Group, “Islamist Terrorism in the Sahel: Fact or Fiction?” *Africa Report*, no. 92 (31 March 2005), <http://allafrica.com/peaceafrica/resources/view/00010608.pdf>.

⁵ See, e.g., Gani Yoroms, “Counter-Terrorism Measures in West Africa,” in *Understanding Terrorism in Africa: Building Bridges and Overcoming the Gaps*, ed. Wafula Okumu and Anneli Botha (Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 2008); Eboe Hutchful, “Economic Community of West African States Counterterrorism Efforts,” in *African Counterterrorism Cooperation: Assessing Regional and Sub-regional Initiatives*, ed. Andre Le Sage (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press and Potomac Books, 2007).

⁶ UN Office for West Africa, “Youth Unemployment and Regional Insecurity in West Africa,” 2006, <http://www.un.org/unowa/unowa/studies/yunemp-v2-en.pdf>.

⁷ “Workshop on Building Capacity in the Area of Counterterrorism in West Africa in the Framework of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy,” Abuja, 16–17 February 2010.

⁸ Abdel-Fatau Musah, “West Africa: Governance and Security in a Changing Region,” *International Peace Institute Africa Program Working Papers Series*, February 2009, p. 3. http://www.ipacademy.org/asset/file/425/west_africa.pdf. In 2002 the remote and open reaches and loosely policed borders along the trans-Sahara region, coupled with the presence of tribal groups operating in the northern parts of Mali and Niger, began attracting attention from U.S. counterterrorism officials concerned that it would become the “next Afghanistan,” i.e., “a safe haven where terrorists would train, test their weapons and organize attacks on the United States.” Nicholas Schmidle, “The Saharan Conundrum,” *New York Times*, 12 February 2009, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/15/magazine/15Africa-t.html?_r=1.

⁹ BBC News, “Five Nigerians on Terror Charges,” 23 November 2007.

¹⁰ Arezki Daoud, “What a Start!” *North Africa Journal*, 8 March 2010, http://www.north-africa.com/social_polics/security_politics/1marchten45.html.

¹¹ See Christopher Boucek, “Saudi Extremism to Sahel and Back,” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, February 2009, <http://www.carnegieendowment.org/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&id=22891>.

¹² Lianne Kennedy-Boudali, “Examining U.S. Counterterrorism Priorities and Strategy Across Africa’s Sahel Region,” testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on African Affairs, 17 November 2009 (hereinafter Kennedy-Boudali testimony).

¹³ On this proselytization and Wahhabi proselytization in Mauritania, see ICG, “Islamist Terrorism in the Sahel”; Ricardo Laremont and Hrach Gregorian, “Political Islam in Western Africa and the Sahel,” *Military Review* 86, no. 1 (January–February 2006).

¹⁴ See Jean-Luc Marret, “Al-Qaeda in Islamic Maghreb: A ‘Glocal’ Organization,” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 31, no. 6 (June 2008): 542.

¹⁵ Kennedy-Boudali testimony.

¹⁶ Monica Czwarno, “In the Spotlight: Organization of Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb,” Center for Defense Information, 27 April 2007, http://www.cdi.org/program/document.cfm?documentid=3938&programID=39&from_page=../friendlyversion/printversion.cfm.

¹⁷ “Algeria Says al Qaeda Guards Sahara Drug Smugglers,” Reuters, 22 February 2010; “Mauritanie: des islamistes ‘sécurisaient’ un convoi de drogue,” AFP, 1 March 2010. See “Al-Qaida au Maghreb taxe les trafiquants de drogue,” *Le Figaro*, 19 March 2010.

¹⁸ “Al-Qaida au Maghreb taxe les trafiquants de drogue,” 19 March 2010; intelligence agency personnel, conversations with CGCC staff.

¹⁹ “Al-Qaïda et le ‘business’ des otages occidentaux au Sahel,” *Afrik.com*, 16 December 2009.

²⁰ See Michael Petrou, “Source: Germany and Switzerland Paid Ransom for Kidnapped Canadian Diplomats,” *Macleans.com*, 29 April 2009; David Lewis, “Crime Pays at al-Qaeda’s African Offshoot,” *Scotsman*, 13 February 2010; Dario Cristiani and Riccardo Fabiani, “AQIM Funds Terrorist Operations With Thriving Sahel-Based Kidnapping Industry,” *Terrorism Monitor* 8, no. 4 (28 January 2010).

²¹ Yoroms, “Counter-Terrorism Measures in West Africa,” p. 91. See Andrews Atta-Asamoah, “Counter-Terrorism and the National Security of African States: Points of Convergence and Departure,” *Journal of Security Sector Management* 6, no. 1 (March 2008), p. 4, http://www.ssronline.org/jofssm/issues/jofssm_0601_atta-asamoah.pdf?CFID=1392754&CFTOKEN=22425822. Claims of al-Qaida fund-raising in West Africa have been refuted by the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation and later the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States.

²² For example, the 9/11 Commission in its final report concluded that it had “seen no persuasive evidence that al Qaida funded itself by trading in African conflict diamonds.” National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, “The 9/11 Commission Report,” July 2004, p. 171. Intelligence and law enforcement officials continue to disagree over the veracity of those claims. See, e.g., Dennis Lormel, “I Thought Diamonds

Were Supposed to Be Clear? Then Why Are They So Grey?” *Counterterrorism Blog*, 30 August 2005, http://counterterrorismblog.org/2005/08/i_thought_diamonds_were_suppos.php.

²³ See Paul Knight, “Terror in the Maghreb,” 26 August 2009, <http://www.e-ir.info>.

²⁴ Daniel Benjamin, “Examining U.S. Counterterrorism Priorities, Strategy Across Africa’s Sahel Region,” testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on African Affairs, Washington, D.C., 17 November 2009, <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/rm/2009/132082.htm>.

²⁵ UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), “Organized Crime Plundering West Africa, Says UNODC Report,” 7 July 2009, <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/frontpage/2009/July/organized-crime-plundering-west-africa-says-unodc-report-.html>.

²⁶ Pascal Fletcher, “W. Africa Is Crime, Terrorism ‘Black Hole’—UN expert,” Reuters, 13 January 2008, <http://www.reuters.com/article/africaCrisis/idUSL13455450>.

²⁷ Hutchful, “Economic Community of West African States Counterterrorism Efforts,” p. 114.

²⁸ Shastry Njeru, “Africa: Post 9/11 Aid, Security Agenda and the African State,” *Pambazuka News*, 4 September 2008, <http://allafrica.com/stories/200809050414.html>.

²⁹ Hutchful, “Economic Community of West African States Counterterrorism Efforts,” p. 116.

³⁰ U.S. Department of State, “Africa Overview,” *2007 Country Reports on Terrorism*, 30 April 2008, <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/crt/2007/103705.htm>.

³¹ *Plan of Action of the African Union for the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism*, preamble, para. 2, <http://bibliotecavirtual.clacso.org.ar/ar/libros/iss/pdfs/oau/PoAfinal.pdf>.

³² UN Security Council, *Statement by the President of the Security Council*, S/PRST/2009/32, 8 December 2009.

³³ UN General Assembly, A/RES/60/288, 8 September 2006, sec. II, para. 8.

³⁴ CTED staff, interviews with authors, New York, February and March 2009.

³⁵ Hutchful, “Economic Community of West African States Counterterrorism Efforts,” p. 120.

³⁶ The Institute for Security Studies and the ECOWAS Commission signed a Memorandum of Understanding in October 2009 that made specific reference to transnational crime, terrorism and maritime security. Under the terrorism component the ISS will assist ECOWAS in conducting vulnerability and training needs assessments. These assessments will be useful towards adopting a counterterrorism strategy for the subregion.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Interpol officials, e-mail correspondence with authors, 12 February 2009.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ The Transnational Crime Units program envisions international experts working alongside nationals in a teaching, advising, and mentoring capacity to ensure sustainability in the region and a comprehensive and cohesive approach to transnational crime issues.

⁴¹ Thelma Ekiyor, “ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework: A New Approach to an Old Challenge,” *WACSI Op-Ed*, 1 June 2008, <http://www.wacsi.org/wacseries/785vc7691r2u3h68594OP-ED.pdf>.

⁴² Thelma Ekiyor, “The Role of Civil Society in Conflict Prevention: West African Experiences,” *Disarmament Forum*, no. 4 (2008), <http://www.unidir.ch/pdf/articles/pdf-art2835.pdf>.

⁴³ “Workshop on Building Capacity in the Area of Counterterrorism in West Africa in the Framework of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy: Summary and Recommendations,” 16–17 February 2010, p. 5, http://globalct.org/images/content/pdf/summaries/10Feb16-17_Summary_Recommendations.pdf.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ “The African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT) Activities—January–December 2008,” March 2009 (copy on file with authors).

⁴⁶ The EU has provided ACSRT with €1 million to establish the database, to which the focal points will have access.

⁴⁷ This resulted in identifying common technical assistance needs for West African member states in the fields of legal, financial law and practice, law enforcement, and border control.

⁴⁸ “Semi-Annual Report on the Work of the Counterterrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) 1 July to 31 December 2008,” para. 41 (copy on file with authors).

⁴⁹ UNODC Terrorism Prevention Branch (TPB), “Note of Accomplishments: Technical Assistance Provided to African Countries for Strengthening the Legal Regime against Terrorism,” 31 December 2008 (copy on file with authors).

⁵⁰ UNODC TPB, “Note on Programme Implementation: Delivering Technical Assistance for Strengthening the Legal Regime against Terrorism, January 2003 – December 2008,” December 8, 2008 (copy on file with authors).

⁵¹ Countries represented at the meeting (predominantly ministers of justice and security) included Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Chad, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, and Togo. UNODC provided the ECOWAS Commission with the necessary technical and financial support that led to the adoption of the ECOWAS Action Plan on Drug Trafficking and Related Crimes and the ECOWAS Implementation Plan and Monitoring Mechanism in December 2008 and June 2009, respectively.

⁵² “UN Launches Initiative to Rid West Africa of Organized Crime, Drug Trafficking,” UN News Centre, 8 July 2009, <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=31413&Cr=west+africa&Cr1>.

⁵³ UN General Assembly, *United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy: Activities of the United Nations System in Implementing the Strategy: Report of the Secretary-General*, A/62/898, 7 July 2008, p. 3.

⁵⁴ UN Development Programme (UNDP), “UNDP Promotes Small Arms Control in Ghana,” 25 November 2008, <http://www.undp-gha.org/news&event.php?id=91>.

⁵⁵ Julian Brett and Finn Skadkaer Pedersen, “Study to Identify Good Practices of Development Assistance in Support of Counter-Terrorism Capacity Building in Developing Countries,” July 2008, p. 2 (copy on file with authors) (hereinafter Brett and Pedersen report).

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ According to UNDP, a “multi-donor trust fund is a funding instrument through which donors pool resources to support national priorities and facilitate UN agencies to work and deliver in close coordination and collaboration.” UNDP, “UNDP’s Role in the Development System,” 2008, http://www.undp.org/publications/annualreport2008/undps_role_un.shtml.

⁵⁸ In cooperation with the Nigerian government, and through the comprehensive I-ACT process, relevant CTITF entities have exchanged comments with Nigerian authorities on their draft counterterrorism bill. A CTITF mission is expected to visit Nigeria in August 2010 to exchange views and brief the government on the mapping and gap analysis for their additional input and to discuss developing a national action plan for implementation of the Strategy. Burkina Faso is in the early stages of the I-ACT process. CTITF officials, e-mail correspondence with authors, 23 July 2010.

⁵⁹ “Human Rights, Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism,” Fact Sheet No. 32, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/Factsheet32EN.pdf>.

⁶⁰ *Digest of Jurisprudence of the UN and Regional Organizations on the Protection of Human Rights while Countering Terrorism*, HR/PUB/03/1, <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/DigestJurisprudenceen.pdf>.

⁶¹ OHCHR officials, e-mail correspondence with authors, 15 July 2010.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ CTITF officials, e-mail correspondence with authors, 23 July 2010.

⁶⁴ Council of the European Union, “EU Counter-Terrorism Strategy—Discussion Paper,” 14 May 2009, p. 12, <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/09/st09/st09717.en09.pdf>.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Council of the European Union, “15th ECOWAS-EU Ministerial Troika Meeting: Final Communiqué,” 11146/09 (Presse 183), 16 June 2009, para. 15, http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/er/108576.pdf.

⁶⁷ Ibid. See “Papier d’options: Proposition conjointe Commission-Conseil pour une approche de l’Union Européenne sur la ‘Sécurité et développement’ dans la région Saharo sahélienne,” 11 February 2009 (copy on file with authors). This conference has been postponed due to political reasons.

⁶⁸ Council of the European Union, “EU Counter-Terrorism Strategy—Discussion Paper,” p. 9.

⁶⁹ Commission of the European Communities, “The Instrument for Stability—Multi-annual Indicative Programme 2009–2011,” C(2009)2641, 8 April 2009, p. 14, http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/ifs/docs/mip_2009_2011_en.pdf.

⁷⁰ These include the U.S. State Department’s antiterrorism assistance, terrorism interdiction, and related programs. See U.S. Department of State, “Congressional Budget Justification: Foreign Operations, Fiscal Year 2010,” <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/123415.pdf>.

⁷¹ The TSCTP includes the pan-Sahel countries of Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger, as well as Algeria, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, and Tunisia.

⁷² U.S. Africa Command, “The Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership,” n.d., <http://www.africom.mil/tsctp.asp>.

⁷³ Lianne Kennedy-Boudali, “The North Africa Project: The Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership,” Combating Terrorism Center, April 2007, p. 3, <http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA466542&Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf>.

⁷⁴ U.S. Government Accountability Office, “Combating Terrorism: Actions Needed to Enhance Implementation of Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership,” GAO-08-860, July 2008, <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d08860.pdf>.

⁷⁵ Yahia H. Zoubir, “American Policy in the Maghreb: The Conquest of a New Region?” *Real Instituto Elcano Working Paper*, no. 13/2006 (24 July 2006).

⁷⁶ Robert F. Godec, “U.S. Counterterrorism Policy” (speech, Washington, D.C., 30 June 2010), <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/rm/2010/143809.htm>.

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DC Office

1111 19th Street, NW, 12th Floor
Washington, DC 20036
Phone: (202) 464-6007 | Fax: (202) 238-9604

New York Office

801 Second Avenue, 13th Floor
New York, NY 10017
Phone: (212) 682-0998 | Fax: (212) 697-3316