

Statement to the Summative workshop at the AUC Headquarters

Addis, 10 October 2012



Your Excellencies

The African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism is a Peace and Security Commission counter terrorism executive arm, which is responsible for monitoring the effective implementation by member states of the AU and Universal counter terrorism regime, creating and maintaining a DATA BASE of terrorist activities and terrorist groups, enhancing the technical and operational capacity of African counter terrorism experts through training courses seminars and symposia, carrying out studies and analysis of terrorism trends and developments and make recommendations on measures to be taken by member states to effectively prevent and combat terrorism.

To carry out this mandate and keep member states alert and abreast of terrorism developments on the continent and beyond, the African Centre emits regular terrorism threat alerts, produces the African Journal for the Prevention and combating of terrorism, the daily Terrorism news briefs, the Biweekly terrorism press

review, the African Centre news letter, the African Union terrorism Situation Report and the terrorism analysis report every six months.

To enhance counter terrorism technical capacity of African experts the Centre designs and implements both alone and in collaboration with regional mechanisms, African Scholars and international partners, training programs in priority areas which it identifies through assessment missions to African Regions and African member states. In this context, training courses and seminars have been held in all the five regions of the continent and, with the support of our partners a few more will be carried out in the remainder of this year and many more in the coming years.

To monitor the implementation, by member states, of the AU counter terrorism Plan of Action and their capacity to effectively do so, the African Centre has been carrying out regional and national counter terrorism evaluation missions.

Evaluation missions carried out to the five regions of the continent by the Centre until 2009, identified serious weaknesses in the regions' capacity to effectively prevent and combat terrorism. These weaknesses included, among others, poor regional counter terrorism institutional coordination mechanism, insufficient technical and operational capacity, shortage of human and material resources, absence of adequate counter terrorism legislation and inexistence of specific regional counter terrorism task force.

Based on these regional findings, the 4th ACSRT annual Focal Points meeting adopted a strategic plan of action for the years 2010 to 2013 in which clear instructions were given to the centre to extend these evaluations to a number of terrorism most exposed African member states.

Funding made available by the EU Commission to the CENTRE, has allowed for an initial evaluation program of 12 AU member states selected from West and East Africa to be adopted. So far 9 of these 12 countries have already been evaluated and the remaining three will be evaluated before the end of this year. These evaluation missions are planned and conducted with the consent of, and in cooperation with individual member state evaluated.

These missions seek to assess the counter terrorism capacities of the selected member states by assessing their actual implementation level of the AU Plan of Action (2002) the existing capacity to implement the commitments taken with regards to the action plan, the level of national inter-institutional cooperation and coordination in the prevention and combating of terrorism, the technical, material and human resources available, challenges faced as well as their assistance needs. .

One of the objectives of the evaluation visits is to ascertain if the weaknesses identified are due to lack of technical assistance or originate from other factors.

The visits are an opportunity to engage different government departments on the way they are conducting the fight against terrorism. They enable the AUC to better understand and appreciate the nature of terrorist threat, vulnerabilities and

challenges faced by a specific AU member state as well as best practices and successes registered.

Given the central role played by the Focal Point structure in coordinating national and regional counterterrorism effort, it is important for the Centre to establish the real capacity of this strategic body. In this context, the visits provide the possibility for the Centre to ascertain the degree to which the Focal Points are materially, organizationally and technically equipped to perform their duty.

The findings, conclusions and recommendations of these evaluation missions will be implemented as a pilot program in a number of selected member states. This will facilitate the development of an African Compendium of Counter terrorism best practices and lessons learnt including the development of guidelines to operationalize CT coordination structures.

At the end of each evaluation visit, the mission produces a report and makes recommendations which it submits to the evaluated member state and relevant AU organs.

The present workshop is intended to make a summary and consolidate the findings of the evaluation missions to four east African countries and the recommendations emanating thereof.

One of my colleagues will provide us with a general overview of the terrorism threat in the region. The other will present us with a summary of our findings. Representatives of individual member states will elaborate on the terrorism situation in their respective countries and tomorrow we hope to come up with a document depicting the conclusions of our workshop. Thank you