

**Opening Remarks of Ambassador Francisco Caetano José MADEIRA,
AU Chairpersons' Special Representative for Counterterrorism
Cooperation/Director of the African Centre for the Study and Research on
Terrorism (ACSRT)**

**Training Course on Operational Intelligence Analysis
ACSRT, Algiers, Algeria: 23 September – 01 October 2013**



**Your Excellency, Ambassador Boukrif Amid Representative of the
Government of the Peoples' Democratic Republic of Algeria,
Your Excellency Lingenthal Gotz, Ambassador of Germany to Algeria,
Your Excellencies members of the diplomatic corps,
Distinguished delegates,
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you all to the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT) for the opening ceremony of the training course on Operational Intelligence Analysis. I wish to thank the Governments of Algeria and Germany for their continued commitment and support to our Centre.

This training course represents yet another important step taken by the AU Commission and the Government of Germany in their concerted effort to consolidate and harmonize the African Union action to thwart the scourge of terrorism and help strengthen Africa's counter terrorism capacity.

The collection of information and its transformation into accurate operational intelligence is a crucial part of the struggle to stem radicalization and violent extremism to free the region of terrorism and organized crime. The region needs a critical mass of young, bright and dynamic officers with the required scientific and technical skills to timely deliver operational intelligence where it is needed.

This course is the first of two courses of its kind to be organized this year by the AU in straight collaboration with and multifaceted support of the German, Bundeskriminalamt, the second training will take place in Bamako in the next month and a half. It is one of the immediate responses of the AU to the region's call for capacity reinforcement. During 8 consecutive days 32 intelligence officers from 14 Sahelo Saharan countries are going to be exposed to different techniques of analyzing information and transforming it into actionable operational intelligence.

Excellencies,

We are meeting at a moment when the liberation of the northern part of Mali has allowed for a free and fair election to take place throughout the country and the installation of a democratically elected head of state in Bamako putting an end to the constitutional crisis that had arisen as a result of the March 2012 military coup. This is an important development as it enhances the legitimacy of those who are entrusted with the responsibility of seeking lasting solutions to the many challenges facing Mali and the region. There is space for optimistic about

Mali as the concerted effort of Mali and its international partners are helping change the security situation in the country. But we need to remain vigilant.

The concerted action of the international armed coalition in Mali since last January was a remarkable success. As a result, AQIM, Ansar Dine, MUJAO and other narco-terrorists, traffickers in different commodities and organized criminals, violent extremists and armed groups of different ideological and political affiliations, have lost their safe havens in northern Mali as well as a considerable amount of resources. Their logistical network was disrupted and destroyed and they are constantly on the run.

They lost important battles and have been gravely impaired. However, they do not believe they have lost the war. Indeed, despite seriously crippled, the enemy has not been totally wiped out.

Their hybrid nature of terrorist-criminal organizations, as well as their confessed goal of seeking to gain the power necessary to establish, by the force of arms Sharia law over the entire Sahel and West African Region, remains intact.

Terrorist threat in Mali and the rest of the region remains real and terrorist's potential to continue to reorganize, recruit and expand beyond the Sahel and the West African region is enormous.

Evidence is showing that they are regrouping, reconstituting their cells, adapting to the new realities on the ground, rebuilding their logistical network and resource basis, recruiting and fighting back. The recent merger between Belmokhtar's those who sign with blood and MUJAO is one of the examples of this. The different attacks that we have witnessed in the region are another example.

The continued abductions, kidnappings, trafficking in arms and drugs, robbery against traders, extortion and cattle rustling within the sub-region remain an important source of finance for terrorists.

The ongoing cross border movement of terrorists from neighboring countries into Mali and vice versa and the concerted breaking into heavily guarded prisons in a number of countries in the region and the freeing of hardcore terrorists are indications that the threat is still there and terrorist's continued international connections and networking ability remain factor we must prepare to confront;

The increasing complexity of the terrorist threat has reinforced the conviction that the security situation in Mali and that of the Sahelo Saharan region should not be viewed in isolation. They must be considered as a whole requiring a robust, sustained, and concerted and complementary action. This action must aim at eliminating the causes of terrorism, preventing terrorists from successfully carrying out their activities as well as enhancing the capability to limit the damage after an attack has occurred. This requires considerable resources and the convergence of likeminded institutions specialized in different aspects of the counter-terrorism action. In such a situation, cohesion, harmonization, coordination and cooperation among all stakeholders and networks become indispensable.

The realization of these facts led the AU, CISSA, UFL and 13 countries of the Sahelo Saharan region to launch what is now known as the Nouakchott process. The Nouakchott process evolves within the context of efforts aimed at enhancing security cooperation and the operationalization of the African Peace and Security Architecture in the Sahelo Saharan Region.

Within the Nouakchott framework the heads of intelligence and security services of these 13 Shaelo Saharan countries agreed to meet regularly every two months under the auspices of the AU while their ministers of foreign Affairs also meet regularly every three months.

The aim of these meetings is to intensify interaction among the countries and the organizations mentioned above to ensure continues follow up and mutual updating on the security situation in the region and on the evolution of the threats posed by terrorists and criminal groups.

Promote confidence building and transparency measures in the relations among the different actors as the guiding principle to facilitate the enhancement of regional security cooperation;

Encourage the exchange of contact details between the heads of intelligence and security services in order to facilitate the speedy sharing of information.

Reinforce counter terrorism technical and operational capacity of member states through continues training and practice.

A very important issue emerging from the Nouakchott process is the development and strengthening of not only single agency mechanisms, but also those applicable to inter-agency cooperation, for example between the police and intelligence services, both nationally and intra-regionally.

Similarly, the establishment of dedicated and specialized national or intergovernmental bodies can facilitate and strengthen core counter-terrorism activities, not least the exchange of information, and improve inter-agency dexterity, as was done by the Countries of the Sahel through the establish Fusion and Liaison Unit (UFL).

Such cooperation may take many different forms, which include access to centralized evidence, forensic and criminal databases; joint border patrol arrangements like the ones that are already happening between Nigeria and Niger and between Niger and Chad, joint investigations; the establishment of a joint task force; and cooperation with the judicial branch of government, including the training and capacity building of police, military and intelligence services officials.

The course that is starting today is a direct result of the Nouakchott Process and the evaluation missions that the Centre carried out since 2010 to 14 member states of the Sahelo-Sahel region as well as East Africa and the Horn. The evaluation missions were aimed at assessing the countries state of preparedness to face the threats emerging from terrorism, organized crime and other associated scourges.

The Evaluation missions' findings and the Nouakchott Process meetings point out to serious capacity deficits in several counter terrorism domains within the Member States. Among these, we identified reduced capacity to counter acts of

incitement to commit acts of terrorism; reduced number of properly trained and experienced intelligence officials and low capacity to collect terrorism related data and process it into intelligence that can be used to detect terrorist threats, identify terrorists and put them out of action before they can perpetrate their heinous acts and help secure peace and stability in the community. Reinforcing the judiciary and training cadres in the protection of critical infrastructures and sensitive sites ensure security of the borders and other areas where capacity weaknesses were detected.

The ACSRT, as a component of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), is actively involved in the Nouakchott Process and this training is part of the implementation of the decisions reached by Heads of Intelligence and Security Services with regards to tackling intelligence capacity deficits. The Centre has therefore had to adjust its priorities and direct part of its efforts into helping Member States provide an adequate and effective response to these weaknesses and challenges through training in this domain.

During the course of the week, highly qualified and experienced experts are going to administer training on intelligence collection, analysis and evaluation to participants drawn from the Sahelo-Saharan countries that include Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Saharawi Democratic Republic, Senegal, Togo and Tunisia. To improve coordination and maximize synergies we would welcome the operationalization of all the fusion centres that may be existent in the Sahelo-Saharan region. Indeed, this will go a long way in facilitating better information sharing and intelligence processing in the region. Surely, with such efforts in place, the African Peace and Security Architecture and its resultant Nouakchott Process will rejuvenate Africa's and the region's efforts to prevent and thwart terrorism and it have allied transnational organized crime in the continent and the region. I wish all participants great success in your training.

Thank you