

ACP-EU JOINT PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

ACP-EU/100.880/10/fin.

RESOLUTION¹

on the security problem in the Sahel-Saharan region: terrorism and trafficking in drugs, arms and human beings

The ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly,

- meeting in Kinshasa (Democratic Republic of the Congo) from 2 to 4 December 2010,
- having regard to Article 17(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- having regard to the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 15 December 1997 in New York,
- having regard to the Protocol to the African Union Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism, adopted in Addis Ababa on 8 July 2004 at the 3rd ordinary session of the African Union Conference,
- having regard to UN General Assembly Resolution 60/288 of 8 September 2006 on the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy,
- having regard to the UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime of 15 November 2000, and the protocols thereto,
- having regard to the United Nations Programme of Action to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects, adopted in New York on 20 July 2001,
- having regard to the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement ('Cotonou Agreement'), and in particular to Articles 1, 8, 25 and 28 thereof,
- having regard to the additional relevant provisions of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), in particular Articles 3, 6, 21 and 39, and of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), in particular Articles 205, 208, 214 and 222,
- having regard to the European Security Strategy, adopted in Brussels on 12 December 2003,
- having regard to the EU Strategy Against Terrorism, adopted in Brussels on 30 November 2005,

¹ Adopted by the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly on 4 December 2010 in Kinshasa (Democratic Republic of the Congo).

- having regard to the Africa-EU Peace and Security Partnership, in particular initiatives 2, 7 and 8 of the Action Plan 2011-2013, adopted at the Africa-EU Summit, held in Tripoli on 29-30 November 2010,
- having regard to the Stockholm Programme¹, and its emphasis, in point 1.2.4, on greater coherence between the internal and external aspects of security issues and, in point 4.4.2, on a comprehensive approach, including external relations, to combating human trafficking,
- having regard to the Convention of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference on Combating International Terrorism, approved at the 26th session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers held in Ouagadougou from 28 June to 1 July 1999,
- having regard to the example set by national laws in Mali and Mauritania in identifying lasting solutions to this problem,
- A. having regard to the size of the Sahel-Saharan region and the austere nature of its environment,
- B. whereas its relief is characterised by mountains and caves overhanging vast stretches of dunes, sand and wadis,
- C. whereas Mali, Algeria, Mauritania, Niger, Libya and Chad are the main countries bordering the Sahel-Saharan strip,
- D. whereas, given the vastness of this sparsely populated 4 million square km territory and the length of its ill-defined borders, there is a need for effective coordination of information and action and sophisticated means of detection, protection and prevention,
- E. whereas all international, regional and national stakeholders should be mobilised in order to step up the fight against terrorism and strengthen security in the region, including through structured dialogue,
- F. whereas the Sahel arc is a pivotal area between Sub-Saharan Africa and Europe and whereas the situation in the Sahel-Saharan strip is therefore a key security issue for both Africa and Europe,
- G. whereas the transformation of the Sahel-Saharan strip into an area lending itself to illegal and dangerous activities and forms of trafficking is a threat to worldwide security,
- H. having regard to the underdevelopment of arid regions and its impact on young people, who are left without an occupation,
- I. whereas, in their recruitment efforts, the terrorists exploit the development deficit, insecure conditions, social deprivation and the poor employment prospects of many young people in the region with no prospects, by offering them illegal but substantial earnings,

¹ OJ C 115, 4.5.2010, p. 1.

- J. having regard to the harmful impact of terrorism and organised crime on states in the region and their respective local populations,
- K. having regard to the serious repercussions of insecurity on the region's economy, in particular the mining and tourism sectors, on its development and on job creation,
- L. whereas the region has developed into a transit and transaction area for drug traffickers, arms dealers and smugglers of illegal migrants into Europe,
- M. having regard to the upsurge in insecurity in this region, caused by the Maghreb branch of al-Qaeda (AQMI), with its abductions and taking of hostages, who are now being used as bargaining chips,
- N. having regard to the violation of the airspace of a number of neighbouring countries by traders in illicit products, including cocaine,
- O. having regard to the huge resources and possibilities which the terrorists and drug traffickers have vis-à-vis the countries under threat,
- P. whereas a number of countries have expressed their willingness to provide states bordering the Sahara with assistance in dealing with this situation,
- Q. whereas insecurity is making the implementation of development projects and the work of humanitarian NGOs difficult,
- R. having regard to the traditions of tolerance, solidarity and respect for the human person adhered to by Islam as practised in the region,
- S. having regard to the barbarity of the execution of innocent citizens,
- T. whereas kidnappings for ransom are more often connected to organised crime than to ideological or religious struggles,
- U. whereas the military option can only be effective if it is backed up by a policy of sustainable development in the Sahel-Saharan region,
- V. whereas the aforementioned international instruments form a basis for enhanced global cooperation which is also reflected in developments regarding the European Union's relations with third countries,
- W. whereas the International Centre for Terrorism Studies has documented the dramatic rise in terrorist attacks in North and West Africa, which have increased by over 500 % since 11 September 2001¹, killing over 1 500 people and wounding 6 000;
- X. whereas the region has been experiencing an alarming strengthening of linkages between drug traffickers in Latin America and in states in West/Central Africa, and whereas the latter now forms a key transit route for drug shipments to Europe, which accounts for more than 25% of the global consumption of cocaine; stressing that these trends require greater engagement by the European Union,

¹http://www.potomac institute.org/attachments/525_Maghreb%20Terrorism%20report.pdf

- Y. whereas in the Sahel there are increasing links between well-resourced and highly organised Latin American drug cartels and terrorist organisations, which seek the involvement of the local population,
- Z. whereas the 2003 European Security Strategy stated that terrorism 'poses a growing strategic threat to the whole of Europe' and whereas the Sahel-Saharan region is one of the EU's priorities in the fight against terrorism,
- AA. whereas it is essential to cut off the sources of funding for illicit trafficking and kidnappings and, to this end, to take every possible measure to avoid money laundering,
1. Honours the memory of the victims of terrorism; firmly condemns terrorism in all its forms and all its manifestations, and calls for the unconditional release of all hostages;
 2. Deeply deplores the deteriorating Sahel-Saharan security situation, which has cost many lives and threatens to undermine progress made in the last few years in countering terrorism in the region;
 3. Calls on the United Nations to quickly develop a more coordinated response on the Sahel, as advocated in the UN Security Council Presidential Statement of 10 July 2009 (S/PRST/2009/20) with regard to combating cross-border criminal activities and terrorist threats, particularly in the Sahel-Saharan strip, including the implementation of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in the region;
 4. Stresses the importance of providing assistance, support and psychological aftercare to the victims of terrorism and their families;
 5. Supports the strengthening of international cooperation on counter-terrorism, welcomes coordination by some countries, encourages all countries in the region to continue pooling their efforts to effectively combat terrorism and organised crime, and hopes that exchanges of information will not be hampered by regional rivalries;
 6. Calls on the United Nations Secretary-General, the President of the EU Council and the Chairperson of the AU Commission to facilitate a summit meeting of the Heads of State of Algeria, Mali, Niger, Mauritania, Libya and Chad with a view to establishing a common strategy to combat the AQMI and ensuring joint control over the Sahel-Saharan strip as a whole;
 7. Calls on the states of the Sahel-Saharan region to pool their communication and intelligence resources in order to be informed in real time of the position of Salafist groups;
 8. Calls on the international community to support the countries of the Sahel-Saharan region by means of effective air and land surveillance capabilities and, to this end, to provide them with the necessary military equipment and technical support to combat such terrorists;
 9. Urges the states of the Sahel-Saharan region to take all the necessary measures to identify those working in collusion with the AQMI and have them arrested;

10. Stresses the need for the international community and in particular for the European Union as well as the ACP members, especially the members of the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD), to adopt an efficient approach to combating violence in the Sahel-Saharan region;
11. Urges the Heads of State concerned to set up a permanent forum for consultations on peace and security in the region and to make it a pole of stability and development; further recommends that the links between security and development be clearly identified in order to maximise the effectiveness of the programmes undertaken;
12. Calls on the authorities in the neighbouring countries to conduct awareness-raising campaigns among the local populations in order to involve them in the management of the problem;
13. Calls on the EU and its Member States to mobilise all available resources to promote security and development in the Sahel-Saharan region in cooperation with the countries of the region, the United Nations and other international partners;
14. Supports the initiatives of ECOWAS and its international partners to prevent and combat drugs and human trafficking, as well as organised crime in the region, by developing a regional action plan, notably through the establishment of the office of Special Adviser on drugs, human trafficking and crime to the President of the ECOWAS Commission;
15. Stresses that effective measures should be taken to cut off sources of funding for terrorists and their accomplices, and calls for the states of the region to take the measures advocated by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), namely reform of criminal justice systems, anti-corruption laws, improved monitoring of the trade in light weapons and the freezing of suspects' bank accounts;
16. Welcomes the international pressure on states providing material and financial support to terrorist groups and commits itself to use political pressure in order to tackle the exponential growth in the financing of certain terrorist groups;
17. Strongly condemns the companies and organisations which, though technically not breaking the law, are widely known to provide support for terrorist organisations;
18. Encourages support for the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT), mandated to facilitate the implementation of African Union (AU) counter-terrorism initiatives, in its efforts to develop a confidential database that will include names of suspected terrorists and trends in terrorist activity;
19. Welcomes the fact that the use of funds from the EU's 'instrument for stability' has been extended to the Sahel-Saharan region;
20. Supports capacity building through a multilateral framework such as the United Nations;

21. Calls for all the measures taken to combat terrorism to comply with international human rights conventions and protocols;
22. Insists on the need to reconcile the fight against terrorist groups and the development of the region;
23. Calls on the European Union, in the context of the Regional Indicative Programmes (RIP) and National Indicative Programmes (NIP), to step up its action in support of the region's populations by helping to provide them with improved access to water and to public education and health services, as well as better infrastructure to open up business and trade activities in the region;
24. Points out that the activities of non-governmental organisations contribute substantially to development, democracy and human rights and that it could be useful to consult them in order to obtain valuable information concerning the situation in the field; points out that repressive counter-terrorism measures should not be allowed to form an obstacle to such organisations' efforts in the areas of development, democracy and human rights;
25. Points out that the Sahel is one of the regions most affected by climate change and loss of biodiversity, which have a profound impact on agriculture, farmers and local people's lives, and that this will increase poverty and inequalities;
26. Urges the European Commission to support measures to reverse the gradual desertification of this region, including by using research and local knowledge in this field;
27. Instructs its Co-Presidents to forward this resolution to the ACP-EU Council of Ministers, the President of the EU Council, the Vice-President of the European Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR), the United Nations Secretary-General and the governments of the countries of the Sahel-Saharan region.