

**COMMUNIQUE OF THE 1048TH MEETING OF THE AU PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL (PSC) HELD ON 15 NOVEMBER 2021 ON COUNTERING EXTREMIST IDEOLOGY, RADICALIZATION AND FINANCING OF TERRORISM IN AFRICA**

Adopted by the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU) at its 1048th meeting held on 15 November 2021 on Countering Extremist Ideology, Radicalization and Financing of Terrorism in Africa:

The Peace and Security Council,

Recalling its previous decisions and pronouncements on preventing and combating terrorism, radicalization, and violent extremism in Africa, including its Communiqué of the 749th meeting held on 27th of January 2018, as well as its communique of the 1040th meeting held on 22 October 2021;

Deeply concerned by the growing threat to peace and security in Africa posed by the spread of radicalization and extremist ideologies, which promote terrorist activities and undermine AU efforts to end violent conflicts, and to achieve sustainable peace, security and stability on the Continent; noting with concern that the threat of terrorism, and extremism has become more diffuse, impacting various regions of the continent, and reiterating its resolve to combat this threat;

Also deeply concerned by the growing **linkages** between terrorism, the spread of radicalization and extremist ideologies on the Continent, **with trans-national organized crime**, including money laundering, illicit financial flows, smuggling, as well as illicit trade;

Underscoring that terrorism in all forms and manifestations constitutes one of the most serious threats to Africa's peace and security, and that any acts of terrorism are criminal and unjustifiable regardless of their motivations; and emphasizing that **terrorism cannot and should not be associated with any religion, nationality, or civilization**;

Taking note of the statements made by H.E. Sameh Shoukry, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Arab Republic of Egypt and Chairperson of the PSC for November 2021 and by H.E. Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security; also taking note of the presentations made by the Director of the Egyptian Money-Laundering and Terrorist Financing Combating Unit; Acting Director of Al-Azhar Observatory for Combating Extremism; and Acting Director of African Center for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT).

Acting under Article 7 of its Protocol, the Peace and Security Council,

1. Expresses deep concern over the worsening scourge of **terrorism and violent extremism in Africa, including the influx of foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs)**, as well as the growing interlinkages between terrorism, spread of radicalization and extremist ideologies, and transnational organized crime;

2. Condemns all terrorist acts, methods, practices and incitements, regardless of the pretext under which they are committed; also condemns extremist ideologies and narratives, noting that they play a direct role in the ultimate execution of terrorist acts; in this regard, strongly condemns the recent terrorist attack in northern Burkina Faso which led to the loss of lives and expresses condolences to the Government of Burkina Faso and to the affected families for the lives lost and wishes quick recovery for these injured;

3. Underscores that Member States have the primary responsibility in countering terrorist acts, violent extremism; and in this regard; underscores the necessity of adopting a comprehensive and holistic approach to counter terrorism, by addressing the underlying root causes, including **unemployment for youth and conditions that are conducive for terrorism, radicalization and spreading of extremist ideologies**;

4. Emphasizes that countering violent extremism, which can be conducive to terrorism, including preventing radicalization, recruitment of **FTFs** is crucial component of the comprehensive approach needed to address the threat of FTFs, and calls upon Member States, in this regard, to refrain from providing safe haven, logistical and financial support and supplying arms to FTFs, as well as not to facilitate their movement across borders;

5. Notes with concern the continued radicalization and spread of extremist ideologies on the African Continent, **with sponsorship from countries from outside Africa**, including by provision of funding; and in this regard, strongly warns that the Council will take strong measures against those found to be promoting terrorism, radicalization, and promotion of extremist ideologies in the Continent;

6. Reiterates the need to strengthen coordination and collaboration between all stakeholders, including the Member States, Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs), and the AU Commission, through the ACSRT, and the Committee of Intelligence and Security Services for Africa (CISSA);

7. Stresses the importance of countering all forms of racialization and extremist ideologies, and spread of hate speech in the Continent, wherever they emanate from; and highlights that **disseminating extremist ideologies, hate speech, and incitement to commit terrorist acts constitute a serious threat to continental peace and security, as major drivers of terrorism**;

8. Condemns the incitement to commit terrorist acts and deploring the misuse of information and communication technologies, including through the internet and social media networks by terrorist groups, in particular with respect to disseminating their deviant ideology, and attempting to recruit new followers, particularly the youth, and calls upon Member States to intensify efforts to combat that threat, and to formulate guidelines, in consultation with relevant stakeholders including interalia service providers, to ensure the swift removal of terrorist content;

9. Stresses the important role of the media, religious, educational, and cultural institutions in countering terrorist narratives, promoting inter-faith dialogue, tolerance and coexistence;

10. Recommends the inclusion of countering radicalization and extremist ideologies as a core component of the expected revision of the African Plan of Action on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism and Violent Extremism, as called for by the PSC at its 1040th meeting held on 22 October 2021;

11. Underscores the urgent need for Member States to make more concerted and coordinated efforts to effectively deprive terrorists and their organisations of all sources of funding, through concerted and sustained efforts by Member States to effectively destroy the financial lifelines of terrorist groups, and fight transnational organized crime, including piracy, kidnap-for-ransom (KFR), drug and human trafficking, money laundering, illicit financial flows, selling of antiquities, and illegal exploitation and selling of natural resources, while noting that **some terrorist organizations take refuge behind the non-profit sector**;

12. Encourages Member States to promote national community-based prevention programmes which include youth, women and religious leaders for prevention and fight against terrorism, violent extremism and radicalization; also appeals to Member States, who have not done so, to establish national counter-terrorism centers to coordinate national efforts in preventing and combating terrorism, as well as to coordinate with the efforts of the established regional centers;

13. Calls upon Member States to intensify efforts to exchange best practices, expertise, experiences, and lessons learned in combatting extremist ideologies, and to explore prospects of launching joint initiatives in the Continent;

14. Requests the AU Commission, working in collaboration with the Member States, the Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs), as well as with relevant international organizations, including the United Nations and bilateral partners, to urgently compile a continental list of persons, groups and entities involved in terrorist acts, including FTFs, as well as those sponsoring them;

15. Requests the AU Commission, through the ACSRT and other AU institutions working on the similar subject matter, to present a report to the PSC on the current state of efforts to prevent and combat radicalization and to counter extremist ideologies, as well as efforts to counter conducive environment to terrorism in Member States, with specific recommendations on addressing existing gaps, as well as on strengthening the role of the AU in this regard;

16. Decides to remain actively seized of the matter.