

# Africa as a Model for Cross-Border Terrorism



**Report on lens of Terrorist operations  
in Africa – 2021**



## **Report Summary**

# **The 2021 Annual Report on Terrorism in Africa Africa as a Model of Cross-Border Terrorism**



## Introduction

The impact of terrorism in Africa is magnified day by day. African armies with their limited capabilities and African regional entities are powerless in light of inadequate funding and lack of logistical capabilities and adequate training in order to extinguish the raging flame of terrorism. Africa has become a fertile ground for the emergence and growth of terrorist organizations given the turbulent political and security conditions in the continent, which are further exacerbated by the spread of the global Coronavirus pandemic and its repercussions.

Over two years since the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic and the countries' preoccupation with addressing its dangerous repercussions, terrorist organizations have significantly intensified their activities. **In 2021**, the activities of terrorist groups were characterized by several features; the **first** is the armed groups and rebel movements pledging allegiances to ISIS; the **second** is the targeting of the security forces and the army in the areas under their control; the **third** is the increase in the activity of terrorist groups in light of the escalating jihadist competition between Al-Qaeda and ISIS given the losses incurred by the two organizations. The **last feature** is the clear expansion and spread of the phenomenon of cross-border terrorism. The expansion of al-Qaeda and ISIS in the African continent is highly evident especially after these organizations began to establish branches in most countries, encircling all regions of Africa.

For the second year in a row, **Maat for Peace, Development, and Human Rights** has been monitoring terrorist operations that affect all parts of Africa on a daily basis in order to track the activities of terrorist organizations and to determine the extent of their





spread. This is in addition to highlighting the concerted efforts and initiatives to address terrorist expansion in Africa.

**One year after monitoring terrorist operations, it is clear that Africa was plagued by 600 terrorist operations, in addition to terrorist acts that were carried out by rebel and separate groups and the terrorist incidents in which the number of victims have not yet been announced. Maat also recorded about 10,200 victims of terrorism in 2021, not to mention tens of hundreds of abducted, displaced and injured people, which is a very high number compared to 2020 about 525 bloody operations in 27 African countries, resulting in the deaths of at least 7,030 people.**

Believing in the realization of SDG 16 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and aspiration 4 of African Union's Agenda 2063 for Sustainable Development, Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights presents this report along with a set of recommendations in the hope of establishing justice and peace in Africa.



## **Monitoring terrorist operations in Africa for the year 2021**

Through this section, terrorist operations and violent incidents that occurred in most African countries during 2021 will be listed, according to what was monitored by Maat over the course of last year.

This section is divided into five basic demands, through which the report presents terrorist incidents and violent acts in the five geographical regions. This is after the African continent witnessed at least 600 terrorist attacks, killing more than 10,200 victims.

# North Africa



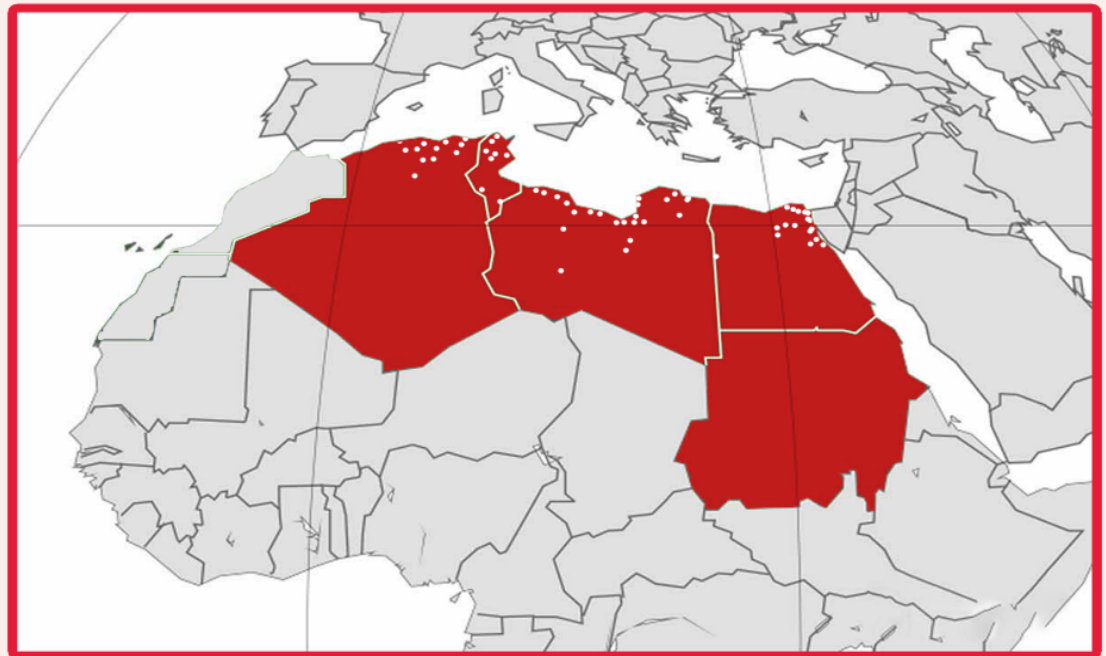
**Casualties**

74



**Terrorist elements**

323



**Total percentage  
of victims in Africa**

**% 3.16**

## Maghreb between ISIS and Al-Qaeda

Since 2006, Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, or AQIM, began committing terrorist acts involving most of the countries of North Africa. Key Islamist militant groups have established a front in northern and eastern Burkina Faso: such as Ansarul Islam, the Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims (GSIM), and the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS).

However, the region is witnessing a state of calm about terrorist activity, especially with the concerted regional and African efforts to defeat the expansion of the Brotherhood, which is exploiting the political vacuum in some countries of the region, such as Libya.

# East Africa



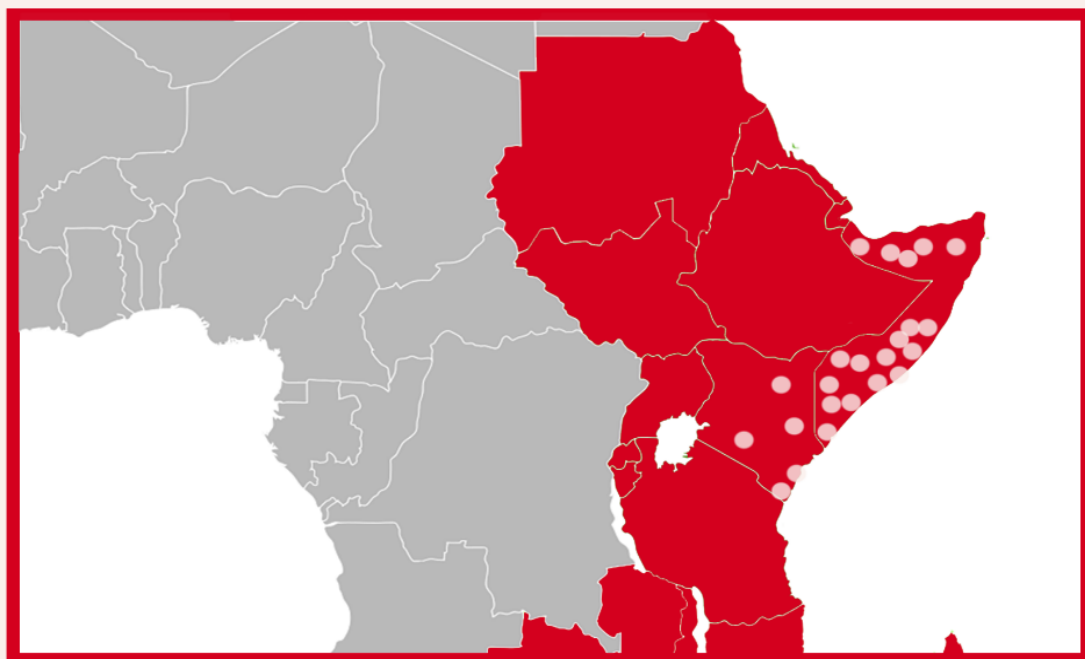
**Casualties**

**5173**



**Terrorist elements**

**868**



**Total percentage  
of victims in Africa**

**50.7%**

## Erosion of democracy and absence of political stability... Key factors

East Africa is unique; it brings together two of the most dangerous types of terrorist activities that the report monitors. East Africa has one of the fiercest terrorist organizations in the world, the Somali Al-Shabab movement, which extends its activities to neighboring countries such as Kenya and Ethiopia. The other type is the armed rebel militias, which are based in the same way in South Sudan and Ethiopia, such as the Lord's Resistance Army

Terrorist organizations are still rampant in East Africa; as it is a major center for attracting rebel groups. In terms of the continuing crisis of the nation-state in Somalia, as well as the obstruction of some peace agreements between North and South Sudan, the countries of the eastern region represent also a suitable environment for sympathy and recruitment in the ranks of the organizations, especially with the exposure of the majority of the population of those countries to crises, conflicts, discrimination and the loss of state control

### Third: Terrorist operations in west Africa region:



## West Africa



**Casualties**  
2526



**Terrorist elements**  
1803



**Total percentage  
of victims in Africa**

**24.7%**

### **Terrorism in West Africa... A threat to political stability**

The countries of the West African region have been striving since 2002 to get rid of one of the oldest and bloodiest organizations in Africa, the Boko Haram group, which began its extremist activities and expanded until it reached most of the countries of the Western region

With the group declaring its allegiance to ISIS in 2015, the group has witnessed remarkable growth, taking advantage of the state of democratic erosion and the grinding policy in the region, in addition to the crisis of repeated military coups and the accompanying phenomenon of infection, let alone the preoccupation of these countries with facing political tensions in light of the global health crisis. All these factors have made the phenomenon of terrorism very complex and tragic to the governments of West Africa



## Fourth: Terrorist operations in Central Africa

# Central Africa



**Casualties**

1014



**Terrorist elements**

64



**Total percentage  
of victims in Africa**

**9.9%**

## ISIS terrorist organization...ongoing expansion

ISIS expanded until it reached the center of Africa, so a new branch of ISIS was announced in the Democratic Republic of the Congo "Heart of Africa" under the name of the Allied Democratic Forces; which launches its attacks constantly on the provinces of Kivu and Ituri in the face of the governments of the countries of the region

: Terrorist operations in South Africa region:



## South Africa

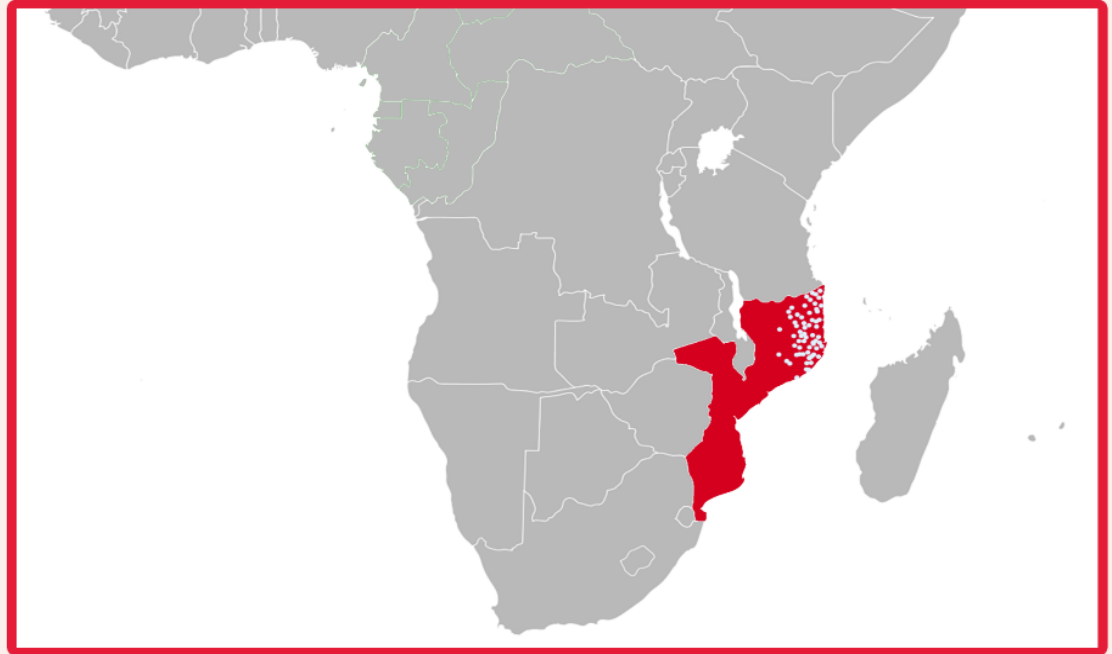
Fifth



**Casualties**  
450



**Terrorist elements**  
11



**Total percentage  
of victims in Africa**

**4.4%**

## ISIS and the Allied Democratic Forces in South Africa... Signs of Expansion

South African countries, which have always been remote, face all forms of terrorism. However, with the expansion of ISIS in Mozambique, in addition to the payment of huge funds to the armed groups declaring allegiance to ISIS. What complicates the matter and facilitates the expansion of terrorism in the region, in addition to the concentration of Islamists in the politically unstable Cabo Delgado region since 2017, is the presence and expansion of the Allied Democratic Forces there



## **Statistics of Terrorist Operations... What Do the Numbers Say?**

For maximizing the benefits of monitoring terrorist operations, these incidents must be analyzed and stated in a quantitative manner to facilitate their analysis and study. The effects of these operations can be shown and analyzed through the following three indicators:

### **First: A numerical classification of the victims of terrorist operations in Africa by country:**

This classification focuses on the numerical distribution of victims in the countries that suffered human losses as a result of terrorist operations. These African countries are ranked from the most dangerous to the least severe.

The Federal State of Ethiopia, which is still suffering from an intense political conflict between different ethnicities, ranked first with more than 3,821 victims, followed by Nigeria with 1,321 people killed by the expanding Boko Haram group. The Republic of Sudan ranked third despite its partial control and containment of major terrorist organizations and cordoning on its terrorist. The political turmoil and violence and the repercussions of the transitional phase in Sudan resulted in hundreds of wounded, dead and displaced persons with about 930 dead in late 2021.

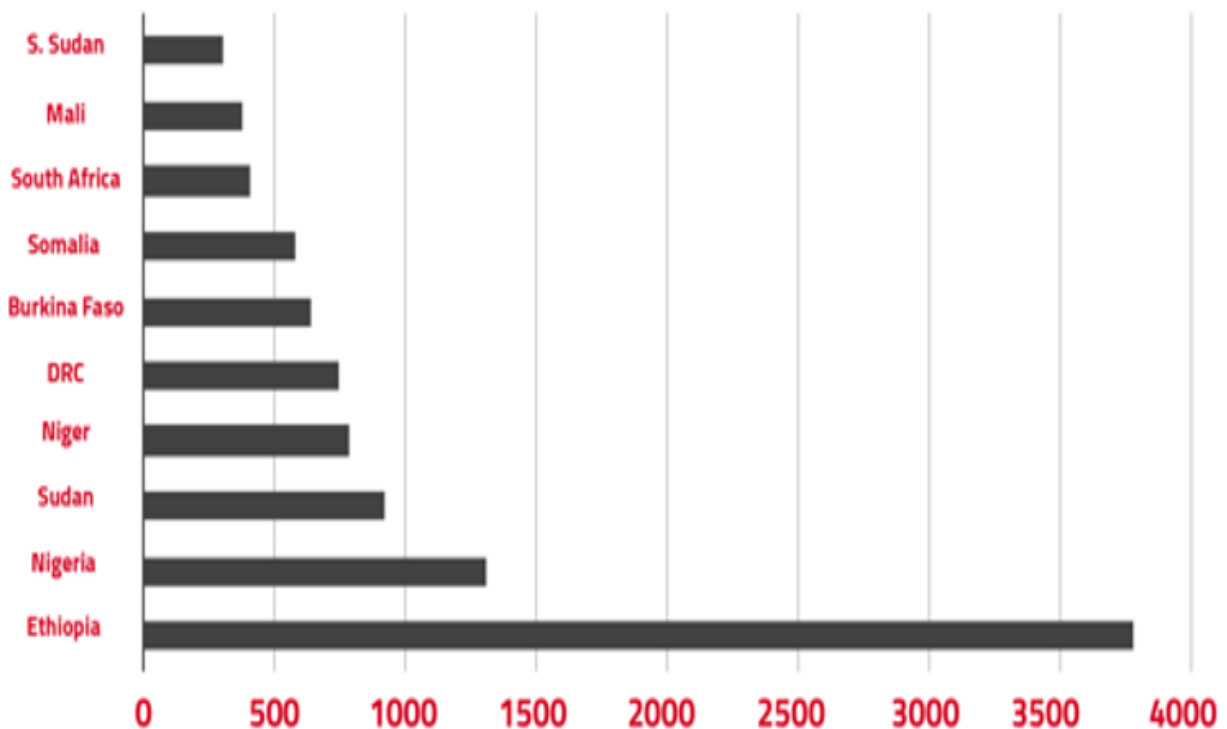
Niger came in fourth place with 782 victims, a large number of which (195 deaths) was recorded in March. The Democratic Republic of the Congo came in fifth place with at least 756 people killed during 2021 by criminal acts of the Allied Democratic Forces. Burkina Faso came in sixth place with 645 people killed by terrorist groups operating in



West Africa. Somalia came in seventh place after the Al-Shabab movement destroyed many of its strategic locations and caused the death of 587 people.

South Africa came in eighth place with 409 people killed by the ISIS expansion to the south and the displacement of hundreds of people. Mali came in ninth place with 378 or more people killed. Finally, South Sudan came in tenth place, which suffered from ethnic conflicts, with at least 304 people killed.

## Numerical distribution of victims based on countries





## Numerical classification of the victims according to the months

Month	Number of terrorist incidents	Death toll	Number of injured	Observations
January	66	624	96	Ethnic tensions were at the forefront of the causes that led to so many casualties
February	56	413	171	Severe attacks on schools and educational facilities
March	45	1835	Unavailable	Ethnic clashes in Ethiopia and South Sudan
April	59	559	265	A large number of kidnapped and displaced
May	42	766	75	A large number of the disappeared and displaced, which is about 200 people or more.
June	47	694	Unavailable	Da'esh expansion is clear in southern Africa
July	34	822	Unavailable	Successive attacks in South Africa as well as the Ethiopian Afar region
August	60	1300	85	West Africa witnessed the most dangerous attacks, especially with France's renewed intention to withdraw
September	61	1006	Unavailable	In view of the ethnic conflicts that Ethiopia is witnessing at the present time, Ethiopia ranked first among the countries with the highest number of victims at the level of Africa
October	37	559	150	Somalia is witnessing a worrying increase regarding the phenomenon of terrorism, both quantitatively and qualitatively
November	42	748	Unavailable	Terrorism is still rampant in South African countries in an alarming way
December	Unavailable	883	Unavailable	The situation has been tense due to the demonstrations, acts of violence and the deteriorating security prevailing in Sudan

# The Number of Victims in each Country During 2021

country	Jan.	Feb.	March.	April.	May.	June.	July.	August.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Total
<b>Countries of North Africa = 74</b>													
Egypt	5	7	0	0	0	0	5	10	0	0	0	3	30
Libya	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	9	13
Tunisia	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Morocco	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16
Algeria	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	11
<b>countries of East Africa = 5.713</b>													
Somalia	52	46	45	24	30	66	18	62	30	156	12	37	587
Sudan	207	50	10	145	8	48	4	19	5	8	0	426	930
S. Sudan	5	24	39	35	85	2	45	59	5	4	0	1	304
Kenya	17	0	4	8	0	0	0	3	3	0	0	0	35
Ethiopia	87	50	1326	364	342	46	240	350	541	93	345	28	3821
Uganda	0	4	0	0	0	2	7	0	0	0	0	0	13
Burundi	0	0	0	0	0	18	0	5	0	0	0	0	23
<b>countries of West Africa = 2.526</b>													
Nigeria	22	147	53	109	91	201	70	170	194	110	63	91	1321
Niger	100	9	195	23	52	0	23	144	0	19	116	51	782
Mali	14	19	58	7	21	42	9	90	20	29	0	69	378
Chad	0	35	2	69	6	6	0	48	0	3	0	6	175
Burkina	7	28	0	32	50	160	9	221	0	20	77	41	645
<b>countries of Central Africa</b>													
Cameroon	19	3	2	0	0	3	11	35	12	5	15	22	127
DRC	93	22	62	59	102	94	35	56	49	64	58	62	756
Central	3	0	0	0	9	1	20	6	0	47	12	33	131
<b>countries of South Africa = 450</b>													
Mozambique	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	28	0	4	0	1	41
South Africa	0	0	0	0	0	0	337	36	0	0	0	0	409



## **Second: The volume or activity of terrorist operations according to geographical distribution**

This indicator is based on the classification of the five geographical regions in Africa according to the number of victims killed in each region during 2020, whether because of the operations of terrorist groups, of which the Boko Haram and Al-Shabab groups had the largest share, the ethnic clashes, as is the case in Sudan and South Sudan, governments' violent practices, particularly the systematic violence that the Ethiopian government has recently adopted, or the political disagreements and rebel groups. This classification focuses on the numbers of victims in all regions.

East Africa came in first place with 5,173 victims, which constituted approximately 51% of the number of victims. West Africa came in second place with about 25% of the victims, owing to the activities of the Boko Haram terrorist group. Central Africa came in third place with 10% of the total victims of terrorism caused by the ISIS expansion in the region. South Africa came in fourth place after with 1014 people dead, making up 4.4% of the total victims of terrorism. Finally, North Africa came in fifth place accounting for about 3.16% of the victims.

## **Third: Classification of governments' efforts in combating terrorism**

This indicator depends on the efforts of African governments to address terrorism on their territories. The goal here is not to list the efforts undertaken by the state, as much as to focus on the number of extremist elements that these countries were able to eliminate, as a quantitative comparison between human losses suffered by the state and terrorist groups. The concerted international and regional efforts in Africa



succeeded in eliminating nearly 3,070 rebel elements among those belonging to terrorist groups and the rebel and separatist movements. Maat Association monitored these efforts and classified them by country:

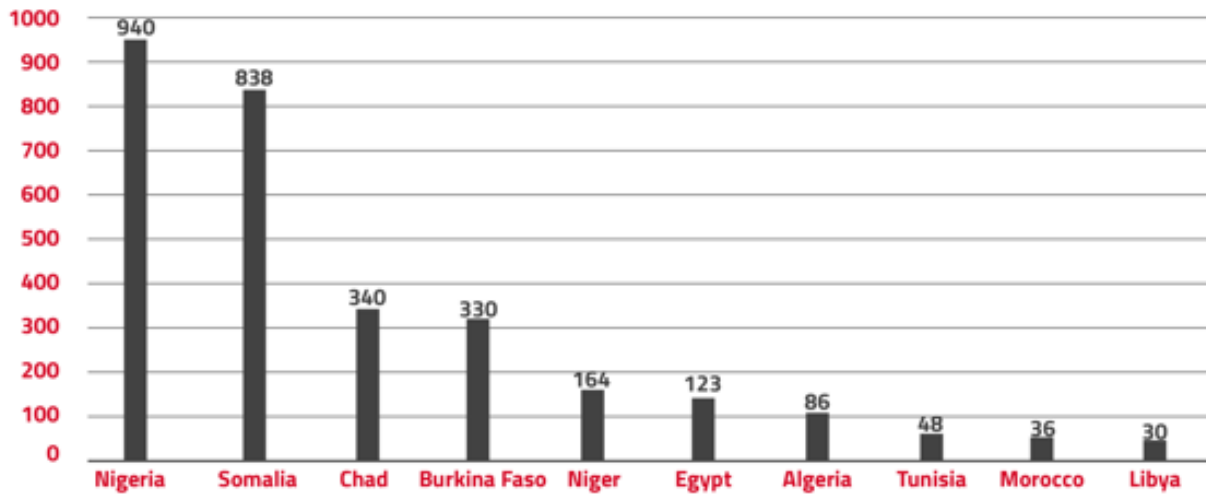
Nigeria came in first place with 940 members of the terrorist group Boko Haram eliminated. Somalia came in second place where the concerted efforts succeeded in eliminating 838 terrorists affiliated with the Somali Al-Shabaab movement. Chad came in third place with 340 terrorist elements in West Africa eliminated. Burkina Faso came in fourth place with 330 terrorist rebels eliminated. Niger came in fifth place with 164 terrorist elements neutralized and eliminated as part of the concerted efforts to defeat terrorism in West Africa. Egypt came in sixth place with more than 123 terrorist elements eliminated, after the qualitative operations it carried out in the Sinai Peninsula. Algeria came in seventh place with 86 rebels belonging to terrorist groups eliminated. Tunisia came in eighth place with 48 terrorists eliminated as part of the national efforts taken by North African countries to purify terrorism. Morocco came in ninth place with 36 rebels eliminated, followed by Libya in tenth place with about 30 terrorists eliminated.





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## counter - terrorism efforts by states in 2021



# Counter-Terrorism efforts according to states

The following charter shows the number of terrorist elements fell down in each country in 2021

country	Jan.	Feb.	March.	April.	May.	June.	July.	August.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Total
<b>North African countries= 323</b>													
Egypt	2	0	1	4	6	0	0	103	3	0	0	4	123
Libya	0	5	1	0	0	0	0	0	32	0	0	2	30
Tunisia	6	5	3	3	29	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	48
Morocco	0	0	4	0	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	26	36
Algeria	11	11	3	6	0	9	0	0	0	0	0	46	86
<b>East African countries= 868</b>													
Somalia	189	31	57	34	35	87	70	214	12	70	5	34	838
Sudan	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	0	0	4	0	0	13
Kenya	0	0	0	0	7	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	17
<b>West African countries= 1803</b>													
Nigeria	64	100	89	0	163	26	30	105	0	141	60	162	940
Niger	0	0	0	0	0	0	40	100	0	24	0	0	164
Mali	20	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	5	29
Chad	0	0	0	340	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	340
Burkina Faso	11	11	0	0	13	100	0	95	0	0	0	100	330
<b>Central African countries = 64</b>													
DRC	0	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	10	0	2	20
Central Africa	44	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	44
<b>South African countries = 11</b>													
Mozambique	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	4	11



## **Flowing Blood: Why is the phenomenon of terrorism rampant across Africa?**

During the global developments of the phenomenon of terrorism, especially the events of September 11, 2001, terrorist groups continued non-stop until they reached South Africa. Despite international and regional efforts extending across the continent to stop the continuous bloodshed resulting from the activity of armed and extremist groups, the blood of innocents is still bleeding due to the repeated incidents.

The report focuses in this part on seeking and researching the changes that Africa has witnessed recently, which led to the growth of this phenomenon. Undoubtedly, there are many reasons and factors that can be mentioned in this regard, but by focusing on the most prominent local and international factors that have reflected the continuation of crises that the nation-state has suffered in Africa for decades and have contributed to the transformation of its lands into a major center for the growth of terrorist groups.

Of course, the reasons for the growth of the phenomenon of terrorism are endless, but Maat is trying in this part to focus on the unconventional dimensions, in addition to those that were affected by the year 2021 in particular. Accordingly, Maat has reached the following reasons.

### **First: Internal Factors**

#### **A. A flaw in the strategies of facing terrorism in Africa**

For two years, Maat has pursued national and international strategies to counter terrorism. Despite the efforts made, they do not lead to the elimination of terrorist groups absolutely, but in fact, they only lead to the displacement of the group's concentration from one region to another, taking advantage of the internal conflicts in countries or a region, particularly after the spread of the (Covid-19) virus and the weakening of the capabilities of African countries in the face of terrorism<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Chatham house. Terrorism in Africa. 15 September 2021. Link: <https://bit.ly/33KRujr>



## **B. Climate change and fueling terrorism**

Undoubtedly, many terrorist groups have succeeded in exploiting the negative repercussions of climate change that Africa is witnessing to expand their activities in terms of quantity and quality. Where both Da'esh and Boko Haram have succeeded in exploiting climate changes in the continent, where; Desertification, drought, sea-level rise, and its consequent repercussions such as displacement and deterioration in living standards - in strengthening its extremist activity and expanding its geographical reach.

As a result of the repercussions of climate change, a large segment of the population was attracted, and these groups worked to train and finance them, taking advantage of the governments' failure to achieve stability for them and then attracting them into the fighting ranks to support their extremist activities.

For example, in the Lake Chad region; with the increase in drought rates in the lake and the increase in temperatures, along with the increase in population around the lake, its area has shrunk by about 90%, and thus decrease in the water levels and the natural resources that it produces. These repercussions resulted in the migration of the population to Ahri areas, especially in light of the government's reduced response to the crisis.

For its part, the Boko Haram group stationed in that area succeeded in exploiting the displacement conditions that the residents of that area were subjected to and the subsequent economic and social effects by attracting and financing them, especially in light of the decline in the state's role in securing a decent life for the affected population.<sup>2</sup>

Taking advantage of climatic changes and the consequent reduction in vital natural resources, terrorist groups are controlling the natural resources that lie in the areas under their control. Extremist groups have recently begun to use natural resources as a force, especially in light of the security vacuum and the often fragile state control.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> المركز المصري للفكر والدراسات الإستراتيجية، التغيرات المناخية والإرهاب: هل من علاقة؟، 1 نوفمبر 2021، الرابط: <https://bit.ly/3LVtuyj>

<sup>3</sup> مرجع سبق ذكره





### C. The crisis of the nation-state in Africa

The African countries are still suffering from a clear crisis in implementing the nation-state model that provides a safe and secure life for its members. From the end of the colonial period until now, conflicts and civil wars have accompanied many African countries, which have reached the extent of what is known as the "fragile state". Among the 15 most fragile countries in the world, 11 are African.<sup>4</sup>

Despite the national efforts of the African countries, they are still subjected to the danger of civil wars, ethnic conflicts, and others, which clearly affects the rates of political and security stability, and then the rates of spread of terrorist organizations there.

One of Africa's most prominent fragile countries is the state of Somalia, which is controlled by Al-Shabaab, one of the world's most dangerous terrorist organizations linked to Al-Qaida. Because of the continued fragility of states, this group is still expanding its activities in the Somali regions, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

The crisis of political instability and long-armed conflicts, where terrorist groups find in this situation a fertile environment for nourishment and growth and the practice of all extremist actions, which in its concept are broader and more dangerous than terrorist operations carried out under the guise of religion, as is the case in countries such as South Sudan, Congo Democracy, and Central Africa.

In addition to this, the phenomenon of successive military coups and the contagion of coups is the dilemma that Africa suffers from alarmingly. With Da'esh losing its caliphate in Syria and Iraq, and in conjunction with the turbulent political and security conditions, those terrorist organizations expelled from the Middle East find their new home in Africa.<sup>5</sup>

### D. Structural inequality in promoting equality

Terrorism has clearly increased in African regions, one of the main reasons explaining the growth of this phenomenon is the negative impact of structural inequality in

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<sup>4</sup> صندوق الأمم المتحدة لبناء السلام، مؤشر الدولة الهشة، 2021

<sup>5</sup> حمدي عبد الرحمن، 3 أزمات ساخنة تضرب أفريقيا.. استشراف مقلق لغيوم 2022، 6 يناير 2022، الرابط: <https://bit.ly/3BI7Y8w>



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promoting equality in all its forms. African governments suffer from a real crisis in promoting economic equality, political and social justice, in addition to the clear failure to achieve cultural equality, especially in African countries that are characterized by diverse ethnic and racial compositions within their borders.

Hence, the failure of African governments to achieve equality between their multiple communities and the consequent kind of marginalization has left a chance for terrorist organizations to develop their speeches and their recruitment processes by exploiting these situations. The most prominent terrorist group that exploit the failure of governments to achieve equality for their people, particularly economic and social; was the Boko Haram group in West Africa. This extremist group has always succeeded in attracting the Tuareg of Niger who suffers discrimination against their culture, as is the case in most West African countries and around Lake Chad.<sup>6</sup>

## Second: External Factors

### A. Geographical and spatial factors and their relationship to neighboring countries

The association of a number of African countries, especially those located in East and North Africa and close to some centers of conflicts and turmoil in the Middle East, led to the movement of terrorist elements to Africa, and international ambitions on the continent that were linked to the search for pretexts for foreign interventions<sup>7</sup>.

### B. The repercussions of Covid-19 and the withdrawal of foreign forces from Africa

The repercussions of Covid-19 and the global economic crisis have prompted foreign governments to cut back on their foreign expenditures and focus on protecting their own borders in the first place. The pandemic prompted many western countries, led by the United States of America and France, to reduce the number of their soldiers deployed in the areas of concentration of terrorist groups in Africa, and then increase their activities and operations, taking advantage of the security vacuum and political instability of the governments of those countries in the first place.

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<sup>6</sup>المستقبل للأبحاث والدراسات المتقدمة، أفريقيا مشنتة بين الانتقال السياسي المتعثر والإرهاب والتدخل الخارجي، 25 نوفمبر 2021، الرابط:

<https://bit.ly/3pbSUuD>

<sup>7</sup>مرجع سبق ذكره



During the year 2021, France announced on more than one occasion the withdrawal of forces from the Sahel and Sahara region, and the end of Operation Barkhane, which France was waging to fight militants in the region. It is also remarkable that US President Biden avoided talking about the US strategy in counter-terrorism in Africa during his election campaign, which is a matter of concern, especially after America's decision to reduce the number of its soldiers in Somalia within the activities of the AFRICOM mission.

But it is worth noting that the decision to reduce or withdraw foreign military forces from the region does not come in connection with the success of those forces in purifying those areas completely, but as we mentioned because of the desire of those countries to reduce their expenditures and protect their vital surroundings in the first place, especially with the continued instability of the security situation in those areas; especially Mali and Somalia.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Terrorism in Africa: Explaining the Rise of Extremist Violence Against Civilians. Joseph Mroszczyk and Max Abrahms. 9 April 2021. Link: <https://bit.ly/3JT0hPN>

# causes of terrorism phenomenon in Africa

## Internal Factors



### **A flaw in the strategies of countering terrorism in Africa**

Despite the efforts made, they do not lead to the elimination of terrorist groups absolutely, but in fact, they only lead to the displacement of the group's concentration from one region to another, taking advantage of the internal conflicts in countries or a region



### **Climate change fueling terrorism**

Terrorist organizations have succeeded in exploiting the negative repercussions of climate change that Africa is witnessing to expand their activities both quantitatively and qualitatively.



### **The crisis of the nation-state in Africa**

In the absence of the nation-state model in Africa, terrorist groups found a fertile environment for nourishment, growth, and the practice of all extremist activities.



### **Structural inequality in promoting equality**

The failure of African governments to achieve equality among their various societies, left a door for terrorist organizations to develop their rhetoric and their recruitment processes

## External Factors



### **Geographical and spatial factors and their relationship to neighboring countries**

Due to the association of a number of African countries, especially those located in East and North Africa, which are close to some centers of conflicts and turmoil in the Middle East



### **The repercussions of Covid19- and the withdrawal of foreign forces from Africa**

The pandemic prompted many Western countries to reduce the number of their soldiers deployed in the areas of concentration of terrorist groups in Africa, and then increase their activities and operations, taking advantage of the security vacuum.





## **Efforts of African mechanisms to combat terrorism in 2021... An Evaluation Vision**

The impact of terrorism in Africa is magnified day by day. African armies with their limited capabilities and African regional entities are powerless in light of inadequate funding and lack of logistical capabilities and adequate training in order to extinguish the raging flame of terrorism. The role played by the various African mechanisms to confront the threat of terrorism, whether through soft power tools or financial tools, cannot be overlooked even though soft power tools are the most present in light of poor funding.

This part of the report attempts to assess African efforts to combat terrorism in 2021 by reviewing the efforts made by African mechanisms and monitoring developments in the African reality about confronting terrorism.

### **First: A review of the efforts made by African mechanisms to confront terrorism**

The Peace and Security Council of the African Union adopted the Algerian proposals at its ministerial meeting held on September 30, 2021. The Algerian proposals aim to combat terrorism in the Sahel-Saharan region through the African Union Organization mechanisms. These mechanisms included activating the role of the Counter-Terrorism Subcommittee and activating this African arrest warrant, in addition to a set of material and intellectual measures, including:

#### **1. Material Measures:**

##### **1. Activating the African Counter-Terrorism Fund**

Activating this fund would represent a purely African nucleus for financing counter-terrorism operations at the level of the continent without the need for conditional external funds.

##### **2. An African list of persons, groups and entities involved in terrorist acts, including foreign fighters and terrorists**

You must know your enemy to fight it. Therefore, the formation of databases on terrorist movements coupled with accurate logistical and intelligence information facilitates the monitoring and follow-up of those movements at all levels, which helps to detect any early movement of these movements, thus predicting their activities and then preventing them.



### **3. African Union Mechanism for Police Cooperation (Afrapol)**

This mechanism is an organization that facilitates the exchange of information between African police forces regarding international crime, terrorism, drug and arms trafficking in Africa.

#### **2. Intellectual Actions:**

##### **1. The African Center for Studies and Research on Combating Terrorism in the African Union**

The African Centre for Studies and Research on Combating Terrorism in the African Union is assisting African countries in providing the necessary information support to combat and prevent terrorist risks. Its activity is based on strengthening cooperation between member states, coordinating efforts at the continental level, and organizing technical assistance provided by the union's partners.

##### **2. The Eighth High-level Conference on Peace and Security in Africa, held in Oran, Algeria**

The conference focused on discussing the continued activity of terrorist groups, their ability to finance their activities and adapt them to different situations, many of them possessing high-tech weapons, and the risks that may result from the return of terrorist fighters to their countries. These problems require African countries to formulate multidimensional national strategies based on prevention and rapid response to terrorist operations.

#### **Second: To what extent have African mechanisms and international efforts succeeded in confronting terrorism?**

Many African countries cannot integrate into another regional power. Despite its experience with intra-regional violence, it is difficult to transition and consolidate into a regional force due to the funding problem. Many African countries suffer from instability due to political and economic weakness or natural disasters, which caused the logistical shortage of the African force, which hinders the maintenance of peace and security within the continent. We mention below the cases of terrorism on the continent during the year 2021, and the extent of the success of African mechanisms in confronting them:



### **. African Union mediation in a daring crisis**

The Union is entitled to intervene in the affairs of any Member State if it witnesses serious events such as war crimes, genocide, and crimes against humanity, under the Constituent Act of the African Union, with the decision of the Assembly of the Union. In November 2020, Ethiopia refused to mediate three African presidents in its war with Dharai, so the African Union did not enjoy impartiality until it was valid between the parties to the conflict. The African Union did not heed the executions, rapes, and ethnic cleansing that accompanied the military operations carried out by the Government of Addis Ababa in the Territory. He chose neutral diplomatic mediation through the African Union Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa, Olusegun Obasanjo. He feared that the capital Addis Ababa would fall into the hands of the Front for the Liberation of the People of Djaray in mid-November 2021.

The Union did not interfere through its mechanisms to prevent the war and the siege on the Tigray people. African mechanisms were unable to cope with the deteriorating conditions, as evidenced by the systematic terrorism against the civilians of Tigray, and the victims of ethnic movements' terrorism, which the war increased during the past year and a half.

### **b. Terrorism of extremist jihadist movements**

There is considerable overlap between the different regions of West to North, Centre, East, and South in Africa, and each region has an African regional grouping under the names of Creation (East Africa), Icas (Central Africa), and Ekwas (West Africa). In a geopolitical analysis of the spread of terrorist movements in Africa, which include: (Boko Haram, Ansar-ul-Din, West African Jihad, and Unification, Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, Young Mujahideen in Somalia). It extends from the far west to the east of the African coast, where jihadist organizations are deployed in Somalia and the Horn of Africa region.

In this theme, we highlight terrorism in West Africa. The nature of West Africa has facilitated the proliferation of terrorist groups, organized crime from country to country, and uncontrolled borders in Central and Eastern Africa. Those States citizens did not encounter difficulties in moving from place to place, and ease of obtaining travel



permission and the nationality of one of the 15 States of EKWAS under the terms of the membership of States in an organization, all of which facilitated the movement of jihadist extremist groups. Because of the inability of African mechanisms to deal with such cross-border terrorism, there have been various forms of foreign intervention within the continent, which were found under the pretext of countering terrorism, which we will mention in the following point.

### **C. Foreign presence to counter terrorism in the African continent:**

The foreign presence on the African continent continues under various names, including joint exercises to raise the efficiency of African forces or through the use of countries by multinational companies under the same guise of joint exercises, the UN peacekeeping forces in the disputed areas, and confronting terrorism.

In light of the diversity and multiplicity of this foreign presence, a derogation from the sovereignty of African countries, a pretext to interfere in the internal affairs of African countries, and a declaration of the inability of African mechanisms to confront terrorism within the continent's territories. Among these forms are the following:

#### **1. Flintlock Training**

On February 20, the commander of US Army operations in Africa, Jamie Sands, launched the "Flintlock" military exercise in Côte d'Ivoire. The training includes more than 400 soldiers from Ghana, Cameroon, and Niger, with support from Canada, France, the Netherlands, Britain, Norway, and Austria, to raise the efficiency of the forces, some of which are subjected to regular attacks by armed groups linked to Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State. Guinea, Mali, and Burkina Faso are not participating in these military exercises after they were subjected to military coups<sup>9</sup>.

#### **2. Barkhane, Takoba, and Saber forces**

The French forces decided to withdraw their forces after a long presence in the African Sahel region since 2013, after the citizens of Mali were fed up with the French presence, which is no longer useful in the face of terrorist movements in the African Sahel region, with almost complete penetration of the sovereignty of those countries, and their information and intelligence security, in light of There are 3 French military bases in

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<sup>9</sup> الحرية، بعد "برخان" و"تاكوبا".. ماذا تعني تدريبات "فلينتلوك" لأفريقيا؟، <https://arbne.ws/E1JBTf3>



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northern Mali, with the participation of about 5,500 soldiers who have been deployed in Mali, Niger and Chad<sup>10</sup>. The French army has two permanent military bases in the coast, the first stationed in the capital of Niger, Niamey. In addition to a combat unit, the French military unit complements the base located near the area known as the Three Borders (Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger).

### 3. Private security companies

Following the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Convention on the Prohibition of Mercenaries in 1977, article 1 of which states that a mercenary is a person: "who is selected locally or internationally to fight in an armed conflict, directly participates in hostilities, whose desire for personal gain constitutes the motive for his participation in the fighting, and who may often have promised material compensation for his participation in the fighting by either one of the parties to the conflict or on behalf of either of them."- There was circumvention by some international entities that set up private security companies to carry out combat, intelligence and weapons operations. These companies have become increasingly involved with the escalation of terrorist operations and the weakness of African armies and regional entities with various mechanisms to defeat those terrorist movements.

These companies often perform their proxy role on the policies of some States, which are reluctant to demonstrate their sponsorship of such companies because of international standing, so it is often only an attempt at persuasion for the destruction of State sovereignty, under the guise of security, logistical and intelligence support.

In Central Africa, a United Nations report issued in June 2021 recorded the involvement of private military companies and other elements operating in the Central African Republic in "excessive use of force, indiscriminate killings, occupation of schools, and widespread looting and looting involving humanitarian organizations."<sup>11</sup>

In Mali, which despite the French presence, ISIS and Al-Qaeda controlled vast areas of central Mali and along the borders with Niger and Burkina Faso, and more than

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<sup>10</sup> فرنسا 24، "برخان" و"تاكوبا" و"سابر"... أبرز العمليات العسكرية الفرنسية والأوروبية بمنطقة الساحل، <https://bit.ly/8UDB8p3>

<sup>11</sup> <https://bit.ly/3h7PkgI> جوييتشة فيلة، لماذا يزداد اعتماد روسيا على المرتزقة والشركات العسكرية الخاصة؟،



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8,000 civilians were killed by terrorist attacks. In a dramatic move, the Chief Finance Officer announced his use of the Russian company Wagner before the United Nations General Assembly, following the failure of French forces to defeat terrorist movements after 8 years of their presence in the Sahelian region and the enormous potential we mentioned earlier.<sup>12</sup>

In Mozambique, the government uses private military companies and equipment to combat terrorism, including the use of Wagner and the South African DIC Consulting Group. Where the areas rich in gas, facing the terrorism of ISIS elements, and their attempt to control the oil sources and the port of Mocimboa da Praia.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> الأهرام، الأمريكي يتقاضى ألف دولار يوميا.. العالم السرى لشركات توريد «المرتزقة»، <https://gate.ahram.org.eg/News/3092228.aspx>

<sup>13</sup> سكاي نيوز عربية، من أنغولا إلى مالي.. الشركات الأمنية الخاصة تهدد أفريقيا، <https://bit.ly/Rs8W8s3>





## Conclusion

In 2021, the African continent became a necessary model for the phenomenon of cross-border terrorism, with terrorist organizations forming sub-arms in almost all five geographical regions. This has helped the growth of these terrorist groups, along with a number of internal and external factors that have contributed to the rapid and massive growth.

Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights tracked the growth and development of the phenomenon of terrorism in Africa for the second consecutive year. In this report, Maat for Peace listed most of the terrorist operations witnessed by the majority of African States throughout 2021, especially in the light of global and regional data, which directly and indirectly affected that phenomenon.

## Recommendations

The outcome of the issue of terrorism in Africa, particularly in the eastern and western regions, raises many questions about the extent to which African mechanisms, strengthened by efforts, provide a safe and secure life for millions of unarmed civilians, who have lost their chances of a better life and have lost their chance of achieving a decent and humane development in their countries.

These questions are recurring in the minds of human rights defenders, and for its part, Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights is trying to come up with recommendations regarding this phenomenon, in order to contribute to improving the conditions of victims of terrorism on the African continent.

### First: Recommendations to African Governments

- A. Maat for Peace reiterates its recommendations on the importance of activating a special counter-terrorism unit under the umbrella of the African Rapid Intervention Force, as well as the need to activate a working group involving all relevant parties to combat terrorism, including the Military Staff Committee of the Peace and Security Council, regional bodies and UN cooperation agencies.



- B. Political stability is the foundation for the emergence and growth of terrorism and all acts of violence and crime, and then Maat for Peace recommends that the East African government not abuse the rights of their peoples and different ethnicities, which in turn affect security and peace.
- C. In the context of the recurring crisis of the military access to power and the dangerous escalations that follow, Maat for Peace that the governments of West and Central Africa strengthen security and political stability on their lands and avoid the contagion of military coups in the region, which in turn affects the right to security and peace for the citizens of their countries.
- D. With the continuation of the Ethiopian Civil War and the continued bleeding of Tigray and neighboring regions, Maat recommends both the Ethiopian government and the leaders of the Tigray Liberation Front to sit at the negotiating table and reduce the loss of life among civilians and military personnel. Maat for Peace also calls on the Ethiopian authorities to open urgent investigations into hundreds of deaths, as well as work on formulating a national policy to prevent terrorism on the basis of race.
- E. We recommend that African governments secure strategic areas on their lands, in addition to areas of natural resources, mines, and others, to prevent the concentration and control of terrorist groups in those strategic areas and to tighten their control over the population of those areas, as is the case in the Lake Chad region in West Africa, which is developing to push the inhabitants of the region to join in ranks of these terrorist organizations.
- F. Under the declaration of the group "Democratic Allied Forces" as a branch of ISIS, there is a real danger of insecurity in the region. Maat recommends serious and effective coordination between the Governments of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda to address armed militia attacks.
- G. Maat for Peace is sounding the alarm about the phenomenon of cross-border terrorism; It reiterates it call on the Governments of Southern Africa, in particular Mozambique and Tanzania, to activate their cooperation and counter-terrorism strategies, particularly the border insurance process, as the two efforts penetrate the common borders of the two States.



- H. If foreign States are used to counter terrorism in a State, such operations must be time-bound and logistical in order to preserve the sovereignty of African States and prevent interference in their internal affairs.

## **Second: Recommendations to the African Union**

- A. Maat for Peace recommends the concerned parties especially, African Union, that the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, as it is concerned with the establishment of human rights norms on the continent, contribute to accelerating the process of urgent investigations into a crisis of aggression and take the task of overseeing it.
- B. Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights stresses the need to activate all elements of the Algerian initiative that it has called for in order to confront terrorist movements, both physically and intellectually.
- C. The African Union must take decisions that are not neutral with regard to humanitarian massacres for the benefit of any Government, group or group, that are formed by more than one party to ensure the effectiveness of such mediation and that they are accompanied by what will make such mediation a success.
- D. Since the use of private security companies has expanded and has become a political player in the international community, it is imperative that entities operating under the umbrella of the African Union be activated to monitor the activities of such companies and to take all necessary measures to regulate their conduct, thereby protecting the rights of African peoples.

## **Third: Recommendations to civil society**

- A. We recommend that civil society institutions working on the phenomenon of terrorism in Africa join forces and promote joint initiatives to raise awareness and combat hate speech, which has become the vehicle for terrorist organizations to attract women and men as well as children within their ranks.
- B. The reputation of civil society organizations active in the East African region specifically calls for the integration of all community groups and ethnocentrism in order to reduce the worsening of the tribe, which has become the cause of the spread of the poisons of war calling primarily for tribal identity.



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- C. Reiterates its appeal to African human rights civil society organizations to actively participate in the activities of the African Union and its entities on the human rights situation in their States, thereby contributing to the promotion of an excellent legal environment for their States, in particular conflict States and those suffering from political instability in general.
- D. Civil society organizations have called for the activation of their role in the peace and security of the African ICOSOK in order to achieve a comprehensive response to terrorism in Africa.