

A Critical Analysis of International Cooperation in the Fight Against Terrorism and United Nations Cooperation with Regional Organisations in Peace-Making and Peace-Keeping

Adeola Akindoju,
Department of Research and Studies,
Nigerian Institute of International Affairs Lagos.

Abstract

It is believed International cooperation is the only way to effectively tackle a threat that cannot be dealt with on an exclusively national basis and in this regard, the main international organizations have taken on the fight against terrorism as one of their main tasks. Across the globe, the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) leads and coordinates an all-of-UN approach to prevent counter terrorism and violent extremism. Regional organizations as well as International organizations, particularly the UN, have a critical role to play in establishing and monitoring the implementation of international legal frameworks, which provide the essential basis for the cooperation between states in combating terrorism and bringing terrorists to justice. The United Nations is uniquely placed to assist Member States to effectively prevent terrorist acts within their borders and across regions. From 2001, the Council's dedicated Counter-Terrorism Committee oversees the implementation of resolutions relevant to preventing and addressing terrorism by all Member States. Therefore, this paper will examine the importance of international cooperation in the fight against terrorism and also examine the United Nations cooperation with various regional organizations in peace keeping and peace making thereby advocating for states to implementing treaties and international laws within their national borders instead of just signing agreements.

Introduction

Terrorism is not a new Phenomenon in the world. It poses a threat to security, to the values of democratic societies and to the rights and freedom of every citizen. Between 2009 and 2013 there have been several failed, foiled or completed attacks carried out in different countries by terrorists which, have resulted in the death of so many people. In addition, there has also been massive kidnapping and killing of

innocent people by terrorist groups around the world. The phenomenon of fighters from different continents travelling to different locations to fight the jihad, and the security threat they may pose in their respective continents when they return, are also likely to persist in the coming years. Since these threats do not recognise borders, they must be confronted at the national, regional and international levels.

Cooperation is a fundamental component in the fight against terrorism by states. In recent years, cooperation agreements have been reached in areas such as the financing of terrorism, transport and borders, mutual legal assistance or extradition.

Another important part of the external dimension of the fight against terrorism involves working closely with other international and regional organisations to build international consensus and promote international standards for fighting terrorism. For instance, the African Union works with international organisations including the United Nations and the Global Terrorism Forum and regional organisations such as the Council of Europe, the OSCE, the League of Arab States or the Organisation for Islamic Cooperation.

It is pertinent to note a number of basic points regarding cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in peace-making and peace-keeping and they are as follows:

1. That the founders of the United Nations envisaged a significant role for regional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security. The basic legal and constitutional framework for this is found in Chapter VIII of the Charter (Articles 52-54). Important provisions are also found in other chapters of the Charter.
2. There is a long history of involvement by regional organizations alongside the United Nations in peacemaking and peace-keeping. However, given the limitations on the United Nations' role in international peace and security during the Cold War, until recently, examples of such cooperations have been limited. There were, in fact, some instances of spirited competition in the Cold War period.
3. At a time of retrenchment and consolidation, following the rapid expansion of UN activities in the immediate aftermath of the end of the Cold War, the United Nations is now entering into a more intensive and organized pattern of cooperation with regional organizations.

This paper dwells on the importance of international cooperation in the fight against terrorism and also critically examines the United Nations cooperation with regional organisations in peacemaking and peacekeeping. The paper advocates that there is need for states to move beyond the rhetorics of signing agreements and ratifying treaties to actually implementing these treaties and international laws within their national borders. The paper also states that international and regional cooperation against terrorism should be further encouraged, and existing ones strengthened.

Conceptual Clarification

International Cooperation

International cooperation is the coming together of different nations of the world, naturally with diverse political, cultural and economic backgrounds themselves, in order to achieve a common goal or set of objectives. International cooperation denotes the willingness of the different countries to come together for a common purpose, and to put aside whatever differences they may have, in order to achieve a commonly beneficial result.

Terrorism

There is yet to be a universally acceptable definition of terrorism. The definitional impasse has prevented the adoption of a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism.¹ The prime reason is the standoff with the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC). The Arab Terrorism Convention and the Terrorism Convention of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) define terrorism to exclude armed struggle for liberation and self-determination. The OIC is still looking for ways to exclude “the activities of the parties during an armed conflict, including in situations of foreign occupation” from the purview of the Convention. On November 7, 2014, the Chairman of the General Assembly Working Group that was established to finalize a draft convention on international terrorism, Mr Rohan Perera, circulated an oral report in which he named the outstanding issues. He highlighted the OIC demand “to distinguish between acts of terrorism and the legitimate struggle of peoples under foreign occupation and colonial or alien domination in the exercise of their right to self-determination.”²

Terrorism is commonly understood to refer to acts of violence that target civilians in the pursuit of political or ideological aims³. In 2004, the Security Council, in its resolution 1566 referred to terrorism as “criminal acts, including against civilians, committed with the intent to cause death or serious bodily injury, or taking of hostages, with the purpose to provoke a state of terror in the general public or in a group of persons or particular persons, intimidate a population or compel a Government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act.”⁴

Anti-Terrorism

Terrorism aims at the very destruction of human rights, in particular the rights to life, liberty and physical integrity. Terrorist acts can destabilize Governments, undermine civil society, jeopardize peace and security, threaten social and economic development, and may especially negatively affect certain groups.⁵ The right to life, which is protected under international and regional human rights treaties, such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, has been described as “the supreme right” because without its effective guarantee, all other human rights would be without meaning.⁶ As such, there is an obligation on the part of the State to protect the right to life of every person within its territory⁷ and no derogation from this right is permitted, even in times of public emergency. In addition,

international and regional human rights law has recognized that, in specific circumstances, States have a positive obligation to take preventive operational measures to protect an individual or individuals whose life is known or suspected to be at risk from the criminal acts of another individual,⁸ which certainly includes terrorists.

In order to fulfil these obligations, states are required to take swift and decisive measures, to stop terrorist attacks, prevent future attacks and also to prosecute offenders. This is where the term “anti-terrorism” comes in. Simply put, anti – terrorism encompasses all the steps states take to combat, fight, and prevent terrorism.

It is pertinent to note that the European Union States are committed to jointly fighting terrorism and providing for the best possible protection for its citizens. To this end, in 2005 the Union adopted the EU Counter-terrorism strategy. The strategy is focused on four main pillars: prevent, protect, pursue and respond. Across these pillars, the strategy recognises the importance of cooperation with third world countries and international institutions.

An Overview of Bilateral and Multilateral Conventions on Anti-Terrorism

Bilateral conventions are negotiated between a limited number of states, most commonly only two, establishing legal rights and obligations between those two states only. On the other hand, a multilateral treaty is a written agreement among three or more sovereign states establishing the rights and obligations between the parties. They often result in international conference or gathering of nations done under the auspices of international organizations.⁹ Various countries of the world enter into bilateral relations, and by extension, conventions. Two states that share common interests or hope to attain a common goal can come together and enter into a bilateral convention in furtherance of their objectives. More often than not, such conventions aim at creating a symbiotic relationship, where the two parties are benefitting. Economic and trade bilateral conventions are the most common. However, with the increase in terrorist activities around the globe, more countries are entering into bilateral conventions on terrorism.

In August 2013, Nigeria ratified bilateral agreements bothering on curbing terrorism with Niger Republic and the United Kingdom.¹⁰ Also, in 2012, Nigeria and the Republic of Cameroun signed a bilateral agreement to jointly tackle the challenges of security and fight terrorism.¹¹ As recent as 2015, Nigeria and Chad entered into a bilateral agreement to end acts of terror in the border regions.¹²

The United States of America, as one of the leading actors against global terrorism, has entered into many bilateral agreements with countries and even international organizations. The U.S has signed a bilateral agreement with the EU - the Terrorist Finance Tracking Programme (TFTP) - regulating the transfer of financial messaging data. The EU has signed bilateral Passenger Name Record (PNR) Agreements with the United States, Canada and Australia. PNR data is information provided by passengers during the reservation and booking of tickets and when checking in on flights, as well as collected by air carriers for their own

commercial purposes.¹³ In 2009, the U.S and Columbia entered into an Agreement for Cooperation and Technical Assistance in Defence and Security. This was a supplement to an earlier agreement signed in 1962. However, the supplemental was necessary to address security and defence issues.¹⁴

In November 2013, the U.S and Afghanistan agreed on a security and defence cooperation agreement. The purpose of continue to foster close cooperation to strengthen security and stability in Afghanistan, counter-terrorism, contributes to regional and international peace and stability, and enhance the ability of Afghanistan to deter internal and external threats against its sovereignty, security, territorial integrity, national unity, and its constitutional order.¹⁵ The Lancaster House Treaty of 2010 is a treaty between the United Kingdom and France for defence and security cooperation.¹⁶ Key aspects of the treaty include cooperation on anti terrorism and defence matters. There are numerous other examples of bilateral conventions or treaties on anti terrorism.

Multilateral conventions, which are conventions among three or more states, are mostly initiated by international organizations, with various countries subscribing to and ratifying it. Naturally, many multilateral conventions on anti terrorism have originated from the United Nations. Some examples are

- 1963 Convention on Offences and Certain Other Acts Committed On Board Aircraft (Tokyo Convention)
- 1970 Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft (Hague Convention)
- 1971 Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Civil Aviation (Sabotage Convention or Montreal Convention)
- 1973 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes Against Internationally Protected Persons (Diplomatic Agents Convention)
- 1979 International Convention against the Taking of Hostages (Hostages Convention)
- 1980 Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (Nuclear Materials Convention)
- 1988 Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts of Violence at Airports Serving International Civil Aviation (Airport Protocol)
- 1988 Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Maritime Navigation (Maritime Convention)
- 2005 International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (Nuclear Terrorism Convention)
- 2010 Convention on the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Relating to International Civil Aviation (Beijing Convention)
- 2010 Protocol Supplementary to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft (Beijing Protocol)¹⁷

Apart from the above conventions, there are also regional conventions on anti terrorism. Some examples are Organisation of American States Convention to Prevent and Punish Acts of Terrorism,¹⁸ Arab Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism 1998, Convention of the Organization of the Islamic Conference on Combating International Terrorism 1999, OAU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism, adopted at Algiers on 14 July 1999, Treaty on Cooperation among States Members of the Commonwealth of Independent States in Combating Terrorism, done at Minsk on 4 June 1999.¹⁹

Africa and International Cooperation on Anti-Terrorism: A Historical Perspective

The transnational nature of terrorism makes it necessary to ensure effective and efficient international and regional cooperation in criminal matters related to terrorism.²⁰ In her book, Martha Crenshaw defined terrorism as a tactic that uses violence or the threat of violence as a coercive strategy to cause fear and political intimidation – was a feature within resistance movements, military coups, political assassinations, and various intra- and inter-state wars that have affected most African states at some point during the continent's transition to independence and subsequent post-colonial period.²¹ As was earlier emphasised, Terrorism is a global phenomenon, Africa inclusive.

Contemporary and historical scholarship on terrorism in Africa, particularly since the early post-colonial years, has highlighted themes of international terrorism, as well as domestic incidents, where terrorism was employed. Africa has played a role in several high profile terrorist events and movements that originated in other parts of the world. For example, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was felt in East Africa when in June 1976 Palestinian terrorists hijacked a commercial Air France plane carrying 248 passengers and took it to Entebbe, Uganda. While this event was quickly resolved through a raid carried out by the Israeli Defence Forces, it nevertheless illustrated the intersection of transnational terrorism and the African continent²². The role that the Egyptian-based Muslim Brotherhood (MB) played in the Islamist ideology to inspired many neo-jihadist groups today. In the 1960s, a theologian and member Sayyid Qutb laid the foundation for the religiously justified violence that has repeatedly expressed itself today in various terrorist movements, Al-Qaeda, being, but one example.²³

Terrorism has also been employed during many domestic state and non-state campaigns within Africa throughout the last half century. Examples of violent non-state actors include the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) in Algeria, the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) in Eritrea, and the African National Congress (ANC) in South Africa – to highlight just a few – which incorporated terrorist tactics within their modes of conflict waging²⁴ through its military wing “Umkhonto we Sizwe” (‘Spear of the Nation’), the ANC publicly sought to rationalize its use of terror tactics in its campaign against the Apartheid regime. In 1969, it specifically called for opposing the “political, economic, and social structure of South Africa by means of political subversion and propaganda and sabotage and terrorism.”²⁵ During the 1980s, the ANC was responsible for several large-scale terrorist attacks, including the May 1983 car bombing that took place on a busy street in Pretoria, near the office block

housing South African Air Force personnel.²⁶ There is of course the Boko Haram sect too in Nigeria that has by now claimed hundreds of thousands of lives. There have also been instances of state-sponsored terrorism. The Rhodesian Bush war is an example. Regardless of the conditions or situations that gave rise to, and have exacerbated the problems of terrorism in Africa, the continent as a whole has taken some active steps to halt this widespread menace. Apart from the actions that have been taken by individual states, they have also come under the auspices of the African union to join the global fight against terrorism.

The contexts for combating terrorism in Africa, both in its domestic and transnational forms, have changed in recent decades. Scholars and policy makers have increasingly recognized the limitations of a typical African government's ability to effectively combat a sophisticated domestic terrorist threat – particularly one with transnational linkages.²⁷ In terms of the transnational dimensions of the threat since 9/11, the past decade has shown an increasing willingness by the U.S. and other Western countries to fund joint training exercises and other initiatives meant to foster cross-national collaboration in countering terrorism. Perhaps more importantly, we are also seeing an increasing willingness among African nations to participate in these initiatives,²⁸

In 1992, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), meeting at its 28th Ordinary Session, held in Dakar, Senegal, adopted a Resolution on the Strengthening of cooperation and coordination among African States [AHG/Res.213 (XXVIII)] in which the Union pledged to fight the phenomena of extremism and terrorism.²⁹ In 1999, OAU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism adopted by the 35th Ordinary Session of the OAU Summit, held in Algiers, Algeria, in July 1999. The Convention requires that State Parties criminalize terrorist acts under their national laws as defined in the Convention. It defines areas of cooperation among states, establishes state jurisdiction over terrorist acts, and provides a legal framework for extradition as well as extra-territorial investigations and mutual legal assistance. The Convention entered into force in December 2002 and to date, 40 Member States have ratified it.

The African Union High-Level Inter-Governmental Meeting on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism in Africa, held in Algiers in September 2002, adopted the African Union Plan of Action on the Prevention and Counter Terrorism strategy. The Plan of Action adopts practical Combating of Terrorism measures that substantially address Africa's security challenges which include measures in areas such as police and border control, legislative and judicial measures, financing of terrorism and exchange of information.³⁰ The African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT) was established in 2004 in Algiers to serve as a structure for centralizing information, studies and analyses on terrorism and terrorist groups and to develop counter-terrorism capacity building programmes. The ACSRT also provides a forum for interaction and cooperation among Member States and Regional Mechanisms. The centre plays an important role in guiding the African Union's Counter Terrorism efforts and works in collaboration with a number of regional and international partners to ensure coherent and coordinated Counter Terrorism efforts in the continent. These include the European Union (EU); the UN

Counter Terrorism Committee (CTC) and its Counter Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED); the UN Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF); the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC); the relevant committees established pursuant to UN Security Council resolutions; the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the Global Counter Terrorism Forum (GCTF).

An additional Protocol to the 1999 Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism was adopted by the 3rd Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union, held in Addis Ababa in July 2004. The proposal for the adoption of the Protocol was made by 28 Heads of States meeting in Dakar, on 17 October 2001, which adopted the Dakar Declaration Against Terrorism. The Protocol recognizes the growing threat of terrorism in the continent and the growing linkages between terrorism, drug trafficking, transnational organized crimes, money laundering, and the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons. The Protocol aims to give effect to Article 3(d) of the protocol relating to the establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, which states that the objective of the Council, *inter alia*, is to 'co-ordinate and harmonize continental efforts in the prevention and combating of international terrorism in all its aspects'. The protocol will enter into force following the deposit of the 15th instrument of ratification. To date, twelve (12) states have ratified the Protocol.³¹

Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA) is a specialised institution of the Economic Community of West African States responsible for facilitating the adoption and implementation of Anti-Money Laundering (AML) and Counter-Financing of Terrorism (CFT) in West Africa. GIABA was established in 2000 and has its headquarters in Dakar, Senegal. GIABA consists of 15 member states. The Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP), established in 2005, is a U.S.-funded and implemented, multi-faceted, multi-year effort designed to build the capacity and cooperation of military, law enforcement, and civilian actors across North and West Africa to counter terrorism. Areas of support include: (1) enabling and enhancing the capacity of North and West African militaries to conduct counterterrorism operations; (2) integrating the ability of North and West African militaries and other supporting partners to operate regionally and collaboratively on counterterrorism efforts; (3) enhancing individual nations' border security capacity to monitor, restrain, and interdict terrorist movements; (4) strengthening the rule of law, including access to justice, and law enforcement's ability to detect, disrupt, respond to, investigate, and prosecute terrorist activity; (5) monitoring and countering the financing of terrorism (such as that related to kidnapping for ransom); and (6) reducing the limited sympathy and support among communities for violent extremism. TSCTP partners include Algeria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon (joined in 2014), Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, and Tunisia.³²

The partnership for Regional East African Counterterrorism was Established in 2009, PRACT is a U.S.-funded and implemented multi-year, multi-faceted program designed to build the capacity and cooperation of military, law enforcement, and civilian actors across East Africa to counter terrorism. It uses law enforcement,

military, and development resources to achieve its strategic objectives, including (1) reducing the operational capacity of terrorist networks, (2) developing a rule of law framework for countering terrorism in partner nations, (3) enhancing border security, (4) countering the financing of terrorism, and (5) reducing the appeal of radicalization and recruitment to violent extremism. PRACT member countries include Burundi, Comoros, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda.

In addition to the above, countries in Africa are members of many multilateral conventions on terrorism. Clearly, international cooperation on anti terrorism has a relatively long history in Africa. African countries and Africa as a continent have been very committed to tackling the scourge of terrorism. They have also not hesitated in seeking assistance from the international community and cooperating with other countries and international organizations in attempting to find a solution to terrorism.

UN Cooperation with Regional Organizations in Peace-Making and Peace-Keeping

The Quest for Greater Cooperation with Regional Organizations

Indeed, an emerging conventional wisdom can be discerned which holds that regional organizations can and should play greater roles in peacemaking and peacekeeping and in so doing, share some of the burden now being carried by the United Nations itself. Such cooperation is increasingly seen in “win-win” terms. For example, Alan Henrikson has stated that “the novel possibility today is that *both* the universal body - the United Nations - and the regional institutions that have come into existence will become stronger and gain in acceptability as producers of international peace and security”.³³ The rationale for closer involvement of regional organizations in peace and security was well summarized by the Secretary-General himself in a recent speech:

Finding the right division of labour between the United Nations and regional organizations is not easy. But such cooperation brings greater legitimacy and support to international efforts. It eases the material and financial burden on the United Nations. It allows for comparative advantage. And it brings more actors to the world stage, helping to democratize the international system. The founders of the United Nations proposed regionalism and universalism working not at odds, but together. The search for closer and more effective United Nations regional cooperation will be a positive factor for the future of peace-keeping.³⁴

As an aspiration, and guideline for the future, one cannot quarrel with such a statement. In general terms, greater involvement by regional organizations can promote pluralism and diversity in the international system. There are also compelling practical reasons. Due to the financial crisis now facing the United Nations, there are obvious limitations on UN action. The utility and indeed necessity

for closer cooperation with other actors, not only regional organizations, has become imperative.

But what exactly are the comparative advantages of regional organizations? And do they validate the new conventional wisdom? These are relevant questions, for there is an unfortunate tendency to treat greater reliance on regional organizations as a panacea that can be magically utilized to solve many of the problems now confronting the United Nations.

In the broadest sense the future role of regional organizations is a question of global governance and an emerging network of international institutions. Some commentators certainly foresee a world system based on regionalism, with at least an implied greatly expanded role for regional organizations in peace-making and peace-keeping, as well as in other fields. This question, however fascinating, is one that this paper will not explore. It would instead like to look at recent experiences of cooperation in the peacemaking and peacekeeping areas as a way of testing the validity of the new conventional wisdom regarding regional organizations.

Do Regional Organizations Have Comparative Advantages?

It is often asserted that regional organizations are in a better position, because of their proximity and more intimate knowledge of conditions in their regions, to perform such functions as early warning, preventive diplomacy and even peacekeeping, including peace enforcement. The fact that many conflicts are now internal to states adds weight to these particular arguments.

It is pertinent to note that certain regional organizations do indeed enjoy some comparative advantages. If one examines closely the recent experiences of cooperation, comparative advantages of regional organizations become evident.

The difficulties faced by the United Nations in Somalia and Bosnia have, for example, demonstrated that the United Nations is ill-suited to carry out peace enforcement actions. Coalitions of Member States or military organizations such as NATO are better suited. In other situations it has been shown that groups of “friends” can command political support that the Secretary-General alone could not bring to bear on the settlement of different conflicts.

Furthermore, regional organizations can sometimes act with greater dispatch than the United Nations and can mount operations in their own regions when the Security Council has limited interest in these situations. Georgia and Liberia are examples. Some regional organizations also have access to financial resources that dwarf those of the United Nations.

However, some of the other purported comparative advantages of regional organizations can be double-edged swords. Proximity to a conflict, for example, can make it difficult for a regional organization to be viewed impartially. Similarly, it is difficult for regional organizations to view conflicts or potential conflicts impartially. Again, to quote the former Secretary-General, “those close to a problem and well equipped to handle it may also be too close to its living historical associations: in short, regional involvement may raise old fears of regional hegemony and intervention”.³⁵

It is submitted that the examples of completely successful cooperation with regional organizations are not numerous. Many of the examples cited as successes, on close examination, reveal a more mixed evaluation. For example, in Liberia a UN mission, UNOMIL, has been co-deployed with the ECOWAS peacekeeping force, ECOMOG. In the view of some observers, and this has been alluded to in several UN reports, ECOMOG has not been entirely impartial and in fact has often given the appearance of promoting the interests of one state rather than those of West Africa as a whole. One could also cite the numerous instances in which regional organizations have failed to prevent or resolve a conflict which has then led to the involvement of the United Nations (Somalia, Western Sahara, Burundi).

For all of its faults and weaknesses, the United Nations is often financially and administratively in a better position to take action than most regional organizations, and many "clients" seem to prefer a universal organization that can be relied upon to be impartial. Even organizations with a very secure financial and administrative base, such as the European Union, cannot be said to have had great success in peacemaking. Witness the role of the EU in the former Yugoslavia.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations must essentially be carried out in an ad hoc and flexible manner. The extent and nature of such cooperation will depend on the nature of the situation being addressed, the capacities and experience of the regional organization involved, as well as the approach to the problem adopted by the Security Council.

One of the main issues to be addressed is the problem of coordination and coherence: how to avoid duplication, working at cross purposes, "forum shopping" and similar phenomena. The principles put forward by the former Secretary-General seek to address these. Another question which will loom large in the future is that of the equitable sharing of resources. There are two kinds of regional organizations, those with money and those without. If indeed the international community finds it desirable to involve a range of regional organizations in peacemaking and peacekeeping in a more consistent and systematic manner, then some attention has to be devoted to the resource issue.

Regional cooperation against terrorism should be further encouraged, and existing ones strengthened. Such cooperation can be equally vital to creating the proper focus on key regional threats, and on building trust on a regional level. Regional cooperation are additional keys to both strengthening counterterrorism at the functional level, and creating the kind of transparency that shows neighboring nations can be trusted. The current arrangement between Nigeria and her neighbours namely Niger, Chad, Cameroun and Togo within the framework of the Lake Chad Basin Commission to create the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) as a mechanism to combat the Boko Haram insurgency and the recent successes that have been recorded underscores the need for and utility of regional cooperation against terrorism.

There is need for states to cooperate across ideological, religious and socio-economic and cultural causes of terrorism. Western and Muslim populated countries need to move beyond their differences to work together to combat terrorism. Nations cannot afford compartmented efforts that breed mistrust and the kind of divisions that terrorists can exploit. In fact, some of these governments – like Jordan and Saudi Arabia – are making far more effective efforts in the area where Western efforts will be limited at best – directly challenging extremists for their perversion of Islam³⁶. The current US led coalition against the Islamic State IS comprising of Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates is a classic example of such cooperation. This should be encouraged more amongst states, states with differing culture, religion and ideologies need to work together to curb terror.

The resource issue is of course only one aspect of the larger problem of upgrading the capacities of regional organizations to enable them to be better prepared to engage in peacemaking and peacekeeping in their regions.

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