

## Africa Overview

*“Every nation that seeks peace faces a common enemy today in global terror. The recent attacks in Mombasa remind us that Africa is on the front lines of the war against terror. All our citizens know the awful price of terror, and we will not rest until we have defeated terrorism in all its forms.”*

*President Bush's address to the African Growth and Opportunity Act Forum, 15 January 2003*

The simultaneous attacks against a commercial airliner and a hotel in Mombasa, Kenya, in November that killed 12 Kenyans and three Israeli tourists provides dramatic and tragic evidence that sub-Saharan Africa continues to suffer from terrorism, from both indigenous, insurgent groups that use terrorist tactics and international terrorist groups.

The commitment and support of Kenya, Djibouti, and Ethiopia have been vital in the successful pursuit of US counterterrorism efforts in the Horn of Africa and Arabian Peninsula. The desire to cooperate in this global effort against terrorism has extended from Sudan to South Africa and from The Gambia to a number of groups in Somalia.

In 2002, Sub-Saharan African governments almost universally maintained their commitment to fight global terrorism through both unilateral and multilateral efforts.

To this end, in September 2002 the African Union (AU) held a counterterrorism conference in Algiers. (Note: the Organization of African Unity (OAU) became the African Union in 2002.) The September meeting also produced a plan of action to implement the 1999 OAU Convention on Preventing and Combating Terrorism and agreed to establish an African Terrorism Study and Research Center to be based in Algeria. The AU strongly supports UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1373, which, among other stipulations,

requires states to prevent and suppress the financing of terrorist acts. The AU also strongly supports UN Security Council Resolution 1269, which reaffirms that the suppression of acts of international terrorism, including those in which states are involved, is an essential contribution to maintaining international peace and security. The 16 members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) met in September to consider the establishment of a regional criminal investigation and intelligence bureau that would give special attention to terrorism, as well as to illicit drug trafficking, money laundering, illicit arms running, and counterfeiting.

The United States engaged African countries in a number of ways to enhance their counterterrorism capabilities. One, the Pan Sahel Initiative (PSI), is a US Department of State program designed to assist Mali, Niger, Chad, and Mauritania in protecting their borders, tracking movement of persons, combating terrorism, and enhancing regional stability. The PSI will assist these countries in countering known terrorist operations and border incursions as well as the trafficking of persons and illicit materials. Along with US training and material support will be a program to bring military and civilian officials from the four countries together to encourage greater cooperation on counterterrorism and border issues within and among the governments of the region. It also includes training and assistance to improve critical skills for police and security forces, strengthen airport security, and tighten immigration and customs procedures.

A number of African countries have moved to become parties to the 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism, as UNSCR

1373 calls on states to do. African countries that are parties to all 12 of the conventions and protocols include Botswana, Mali, and Ghana. Many African governments have taken positive steps to combat terrorist financing by freezing assets of individuals and entities designated by the United States pursuant to Executive Order 13224. Many African governments also have taken steps to freeze the assets of persons and entities included on the UNSCR 1267 Sanctions Committee's consolidated list as having links to Usama Bin Ladin and members of al-Qaida and the Taliban, whose assets UN-member states are required to freeze pursuant to Chapter VII of the UN Charter.

Despite attempts to enhance counterterrorism efforts since 11 September 2001, conditions that make many countries in Africa desirable locations for terrorists still persist. These include a shortage of financial and technical resources, areas of instability and prolonged violence, corruption, weak judicial and financial regulatory systems, and porous borders and unregulated coastlines facilitating the movement of persons and illicit goods.

Sudan, one of the seven state sponsors of terrorism, is discussed in the state sponsorship section of this report.

## **Angola**

In April, following the death of Jonas Savimbi, Angola ended its 27-year civil conflict with the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), an organization responsible for numerous brutal attacks on civilians. Separatists in Cabinda Province continued their guerrilla campaigns against the Government. In May, there was a grenade attack on a convoy of US oil workers in Cabinda. Although no one claimed responsibility, the attackers were likely Cabindan separatists. The Government has cooperated in increasing security for private oil companies in Cabinda.

Angola is a party to three of the 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism.

## **Djibouti**

Djibouti, a critical frontline state in the global war on terrorism and a member of the Arab League, has taken a strong stand against international terrorist organizations and individuals. Djibouti hosts Coalition forces from five countries and the only US military base in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Government has closed down terrorist-linked financial institutions and shared security information on possible terrorist activity in the region. The counterterrorism committee under President Guelleh moved to enhance coordination and action on information concerning terrorist organizations.

In October, the United States established the Combined Joint Task Force—Horn of Africa (CJTF—HOA). Based in Djibouti, CJTF—HOA coordinates Coalition counterterrorism operations in six East African countries and Yemen.

Djibouti is a party to three of the 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism.

## **Ethiopia**

Ethiopia has been consistently helpful in its cooperation in the global war on terrorism. Significant counterterrorism activities included political, financial, media, military, and law-enforcement actions. The Ethiopian Central Bank has been prompt in complying with US requests for name checks and asset freezes as part of the effort to curb terrorist financing. To counter the threat from the Somalia-based Al-Ittihad al-Islami (AIAI), Ethiopia has undertaken increased military efforts to control its lengthy border with Somalia. The Ethiopian Government believes the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), an indigenous group, was responsible for a June attack on a railway station in

Dire Dawa and a September bombing of an Addis Ababa hotel. The OLF denied responsibility for the hotel bombing.

Ethiopia is a party to four of the 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism.

## Kenya

Kenya was hit once again by terrorist attacks on 28 November 2002, when terrorists fired missiles at an Israeli airliner carrying over 200 passengers and drove a car bomb into a hotel popular with Israeli tourists in the coastal city of Mombasa. The missiles barely missed the plane, but 12 Kenyans and three Israelis were murdered by two suicide bombers in the hotel attack. Al-Qaida claimed



Kenyan police inspect a missile launcher that was used to fire two missiles at a Boeing 757 Israeli airliner bound from Mombasa, Kenya, to Tel Aviv, Israel, 29 November 2002.



Israeli army investigators survey the ruins of the Mombasa Paradise Hotel, where a bomb blast occurred on 28 November 2002.

responsibility for the simultaneous attacks. If true, it represents the second al-Qaida attack on Kenyan soil since the car-bomb explosion at the US Embassy in Nairobi on 7 August 1998, which killed 291 and wounded over 5,000 persons. While Kenya continued to be a key partner and lend high-level support in the global war on terrorism, its counterterrorism capacity continued to be limited by inadequate training and resources. There has been ongoing law-enforcement cooperation and sharing of information between the United States and Kenya concerning suspected terrorists. Kenya also participates in the US Terrorist Interdiction Program and is a party to 11 of the 12 international counterterrorism conventions and protocols.

## Mali

Mali has taken active steps to combat terrorism and has been responsive on terrorist financing issues. In May, the National Assembly ratified the remaining six international counterterrorism conventions, making Mali a party to all 12. The Malian Government has been receptive to the idea of strengthening its borders, and it held discussions in October 2002 with a US delegation concerning the Pan Sahel Initiative. Mali has a border-security agreement with Niger, Algeria, and Mauritania, although a lack of resources hampers its effectiveness.

## **Nigeria**

Nigeria remained committed to the global war against terrorism and has continued diplomatic efforts in both global and regional fora concerning counterterrorism issues. At a White House ceremony in March, the Nigerian ambassador renewed Nigeria's solidarity with the US-led antiterror Coalition. Nigeria has been helping to monitor threats to US citizens living in Nigeria and has cooperated with the United States on tracking and freezing terrorists' assets. Nigeria's relatively large and complex banking sector, combined with widespread corruption, makes combating terrorism financing more difficult, however. There are growing concerns about the rise of radical Islam in Nigeria, home of Africa's largest Muslim population.

Nigeria is a party to four of the 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism.

## **Rwanda**

Rwanda is a party to eight of the 12 international counterterrorism conventions and protocols, and the government has continued to give full support to US-led efforts to combat terrorism. The Government has been responsive to US requests to eradicate terrorism financing; has begun to track radical Islamist groups; and has increased surveillance of airports, border controls, and hotel registrations in an effort to identify terrorists. Rwanda established an intergovernmental counterterrorism committee and has an antiterrorism section in its police intelligence unit. During 2002, the Government aggressively pursued the Army for the Liberation of Rwanda (ALIR), an armed rebel force composed of former Rwandan Army soldiers and supporters of the previous government that orchestrated the 1994 genocide. The group, which operates in Rwanda and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, employs terrorist tactics. In 1999, ALIR was responsible for the kidnapping and murder of nine persons, including two US tourists in Bwindi Park. The Rwandan National Police have several

suspects in custody and have been very supportive of the ongoing FBI investigation into the murders of the US citizens. In March 2003, the Rwandan Government transferred custody of three of the suspected perpetrators of these murders to the United States. ALIR remained operational, although at a lower level than in 1999.

## **Somalia**

Somalia's lack of a functioning central government; protracted state of instability and violence; and long coastline, porous borders, and proximity to the Arabian Peninsula makes it a potential location for international terrorists seeking a transit or launching point to conduct operations elsewhere. Regional efforts to bring about a national reconciliation and establish peace and stability in Somalia are ongoing. The US Government does not have official relations with any entity in Somalia. Although the ability of Somali entities to carry out counterterrorism activities is constrained, some have taken limited actions in this direction. The Somali-based al-Ittihad al-Islami (AIAI) has committed terrorist acts in the past, primarily in Ethiopia. AIAI was originally formed in the early 1990s with a goal of creating an Islamic state in Somalia. In recent years, AIAI has become factionalized, and its membership is difficult to define. Certain extremist factions may continue to pose a regional terrorist threat. Somalia is not a party to any of the 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism.

## **South Africa**

South Africa has taken a number of actions in 2002 in support of the global war on terrorism. President Mbeki has voiced his opinion several times that "no circumstances whatsoever can ever justify resorting to terrorism." South Africa enacted legislation establishing a financial intelligence unit, which targets money laundering. A draft antiterrorism law was approved by the cabinet and

informally submitted to the Parliament. South Africa provided support to the United States by extraditing a member of the Symbionese Liberation Army. There were two acts of domestic terrorism in South Africa in 2002. A series of bombings in Soweto in late October killed one and wounded another, and in mid-November, a pipe bomb exploded at the serious violent crimes police unit in Cape Town, but no injuries occurred. A previously unknown right-wing extremist group, "Warriors of the Boer Nation," claimed responsibility for the Soweto attack. Police were searching for the culprits in the Cape Town case, although People Against Gangsterism and Drugs (PAGAD) is suspected. The activities of PAGAD remained severely curtailed in 2002 by a broadly successful law-enforcement and prosecutorial effort against leading members of the organization. South Africa is a party to five of the 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism.

## **Tanzania**

Tanzania has been a supportive partner in the global Coalition against terrorism. The Tanzanian Government has cooperated with the United States to bring to justice those responsible for the 1998 bombing of the US Embassy in Dar es Salaam. In 2001, for example, a Tanzanian national—extradited from South Africa to the United States to stand trial for his role in the Embassy bombing—was convicted and sentenced to life in prison. The US and Tanzanian Governments cooperated on a number of bilateral programs to combat terrorism in 2002, including civil aviation security, anti-money-

laundering initiatives, border control, and police training. Tanzania also worked through multilateral organizations, such as the World Bank and the United Nations, to enhance its counterterrorism efforts. New legislation was approved by Tanzania's Parliament in November that criminalizes support for terrorist groups operating in Tanzania or overseas. Tanzania is a party to seven of the 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism.

## **Uganda**

Uganda continued its firm stance against local and international terrorism in 2002. Uganda is a party to four of the 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism, and in 2002 it worked to complete the process required to become a party to all 12. In May, the government enacted the 2002 Suppression of Terrorism Act, which imposes a mandatory death penalty for terrorists and potential death penalty for their sponsors and supporters. The Act's list of terrorist organizations includes al-Qaida, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), and the Allied Democratic Front (ADF). There were many attacks against civilian targets in northern Uganda by the LRA during 2002, resulting in hundreds of deaths. In March, Uganda launched a major military offensive to destroy the LRA in southern Sudan and northern Uganda. The Ugandan military continued its successful operations against the ADF, resulting in a decrease in ADF activities in western Uganda.