





National Strategies to Prevent and Counter Violent Extremism in Africa

SYLLABUS

Stellenbosch, South Africa May 2018

NATIONAL STRATEGIES TO PREVENT AND COUNTER VIOLENT EXTREMISM (P/CVE) IN AFRICA

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SYLLABUS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

About the Africa Center

Overview

Terrorism and Violent Extremism in Africa

Strategies against Terrorism and Violent Extremism in Africa

Legislation against Terrorism and Violent Extremism

Anti-Money Laundering/Combatting the Financing of Terrorism

Border Management in P/CVE and CT Strategies

Peace Support Operations in Contexts of Terrorism and Violent Extremism

About the Africa Center

Since its inception in 1999, the Africa Center has served as a forum for research, academic programs, and the exchange of ideas with the aim of enhancing citizen security by strengthening the effectiveness and accountability of African institutions, in support of U.S.-Africa policy.

VISION

Security for all Africans championed by effective institutions accountable to their citizens.

Realizing the vision of an Africa free from organized armed violence guaranteed by African institutions that are committed to protecting African citizens is the driving motivation of the Africa Center. This aim underscores the Center's commitment to contributing to tangible impacts by working with our African partners – military and civilian, governmental and civil society, as well as national and regional. All have valuable roles to play in mitigating the complex drivers of conflict on the continent today. Accountability to citizens is an important element of our vision as it reinforces the point that in order to be effective, security institutions must not just be "strong," but also be responsive to and protective of the rights of citizens.

MISSION

To advance African security by expanding understanding, providing a trusted platform for dialogue, building enduring partnerships, and catalyzing strategic solutions.

The Africa Center's mission revolves around the generation and dissemination of knowledge through our research, academic programs, strategic communications, and community chapters. Drawing on the practical experiences and lessons learned from security efforts on the continent, we aim to generate relevant insight and analysis that can inform practitioners and policymakers on the pressing security challenges that they face. Recognizing that addressing serious challenges can only come about through candid and thoughtful exchanges, the Center provides face-to-face and virtual platforms where partners can exchange views on priorities and sound practices. These exchanges foster relationships that, in turn, are maintained over time through the Center's community chapters, communities of interest, follow-on programs, and ongoing dialogue between participants and staff. This dialogue—infused with real world experiences and fresh analysis—provides an opportunity for continued learning and catalyzes concrete actions.

MANDATE

The Africa Center is a U. S. Department of Defense institution established and funded by Congress for the study of security issues relating to Africa and serving as a forum for bilateral and multilateral research, communication, exchange of ideas, and training involving military and civilian participants. (10 U.S.C 342)

Overview

Background

The past decade has witnessed a rapid rise of *terrorism* – a debated term meaning roughly 'acts of physical violence by non-state actors that intentionally target civilians for political purposes' – across the African continent, generating threats and problems of considerable cost, scale, gravity, and complexity. Africa is also experiencing a rise in *violent extremism* (VE) – another debated term that means approximately 'the political, ideological, social, and economic forces that support and sustain terrorism, including by justifying terrorist acts and glorifying terrorist actors.' African nations have addressed these ills head on, responding at the international, regional, subregional, and national level to mounting challenges. Yet Africans' reactions have not stemmed the terrorist tide, and responses may not have a lasting positive impact, if they are not well organized, clearly framed, and demonstrate respect for human rights and the rule of law.

All African nations – those currently affected by terrorism, those that might face a terrorist challenge in the coming years, and those primarily affected through terrorism's spillover and transnational implications – could likely benefit from establishing national preventing or countering violent extremism (P/CVE) strategies or counterterrorism (CT) strategies. Whatever the title, such a strategy serves to orient a nation's activities toward identifiable long-term objectives, to generate legitimacy within the entire government and all of society, and to harmonize a nation's actions with (sub)regional and international approaches.

This program focuses on African countries where terrorism and violent extremism, especially their international versions associated with Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State, do not manifest as full-blown threats to security and stability. Nonetheless, elements of these challenges – whether in the form of considerations in security cooperation, features of transnational crime, early stages of radicalization, or even incipient armed struggles – have real defense and security implications for countries that we might call 'on the periphery of terrorism.' Such countries are not directly caught up in a contemporary international terrorist conflicts and crises, and for them international violent extremism and terrorism may be of second-order or even marginal strategic concern. But distance does not mean isolation. Africa's nations on the periphery of international terrorism are inevitably implicated in the challenge through economic impacts; diplomatic engagements; (sub)regional and international agreements; and globalized flows of information, people, and goods.

Above all, the reality of international terrorism and violent extremism shape how nations on the periphery cooperate (sub)regionally and internationally. How should nations on the periphery of terrorism prioritize and domesticate CT norms and standards set by (sub)regional and international bodies? How should such states prepare in advance to prevent the spread of international terrorism and violent extremism into their own sovereign territory? How should states on the periphery of international terrorism actively support African nations in the center of the storm?

This program convenes governmental and non-governmental defense/security and civilian leaders from more than a dozen African nations, along with representatives from (sub)regional bodies, multilateral actors, and external partners, in order to share experiences, insights, practices,

and lessons, among countries and across regions. The discussions aim to hone insights into CT approaches for African states on the periphery of international terrorism.

Anticipated Outcomes

- 1. Participants will have a greater understanding of and appreciation for national CT strategies.
- 2. Participants will be empowered to advocate for appropriate national CT strategy processes that enhance their national security, facilitate (sub)regional cooperation, and improve international CT partnerships.
- 3. Participants will join a network and community of interest of like-minded security professionals that will strengthen, sustain, and enrich their respective national CT strategy processes.

Preparation, Delivery, and Resources

The program will feature presentations by an array of voices, including policy-makers, practitioners, and academics. Interactive question-and-answer sessions will follow the presentations in each plenary session. Participants will be divided into working groups, where facilitators with relevant expertise and background will lead the interaction toward concrete deliverables. As is customary, all activities will be conducted under a policy of strict non-attribution. This policy allows for candid and productive deliberations during the event.

Participants are provided with this syllabus, which discusses pertinent aspects of the various sessions and includes references to relevant publications. The syllabus serves to outline the flow of the program and sets the stage for working group interactions. Neither the syllabus nor the readings represent the position of any government or institution. Rather, these documents serve as academic input for critical thinking and deliberation. The program will be conducted in Portuguese and English.

Terrorism and Violent Extremism in Africa

Objectives

- Examine the nature, scope, and impact of international terrorism and violent extremism in Africa;
- Forecast likely trends in international terrorism and violent extremism in Africa;
- Consider the implications of international terrorism and violent extremism in states on the periphery of terrorism.

Background

In recent years, Africa has witnessed the growth and expansion of terrorism and violent extremism, which have unleashed extraordinary levels of death, destruction, and disruption on the continent. The challenge has come from groups active in hotspots in different zones and regions. Today's international terrorist organizations and hotspots in Africa include Al-Shabaab in Somalia and the Horn, al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) in Algeria and the Sahel, Boko Haram in Nigeria and the Lake Chad Basin, and the Islamic State in Libya in the Maghreb – with many splinter and rival groups in between. Small cell and so-called lone wolf terrorists operating at a distance from organizations and their leaders have exacerbated Africa's international terrorism challenge. In recent years, first-time attacks have taken place in several countries, radicalization has penetrated previously unaffected areas, and recruitment into the Islamic State (IS) has extended the problem into new regions. As a result, international terrorism and violent extremism have been destabilizing some African governments, exacerbating religious and communitarian tensions, fueling large-scale migration, undermining economic and development plans, affecting diplomatic commitments, and more.

While terrorist attacks and groups are concentrated in a handful of hotspots, these international terrorism epicenters have also indirectly affected neighboring nations, including a set of countries on the periphery of international terrorism – a step removed from the crises but not immune to their impacts. Countries of Africa's Great Lakes region remain at a distance from East Africa's international terrorism challenge, for example, just as many littoral West African countries remain on the fringe of the AQIM and Boko Haram challenges. At the continental level, Southern and Central Africa are less directly caught up in international terrorism and violent extremism challenges than Northern, Western, and Eastern Africa. In these nations and subregions on the periphery of international terrorism, understanding relevant trends and prospects, calculating probable threats, and calibrating appropriate responses to terrorism and violent extremism requires subtle assessments of the security landscape, steering clear of both alarmism and overconfidence.

Reflection Questions

- 1. How is international terrorism and violent extremism affecting your nation, your neighbors, and your (sub) region?
- 2. What are the top three threats to your national defense and security objectives? Do international terrorism and violent extremism figure among them?
- 3. Would you describe your country as at the center or on the periphery (or something else) of international terrorism and violent extremism threats in Africa?

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Strategies against Terrorism and Violent Extremism in Africa

Objectives

- Examine the actions, campaigns, and strategies currently implemented against international terrorism and violent extremism in Africa;
- Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of these approaches;
- Consider the role taken by states on the periphery of international terrorism to the threat posed in Africa.

Background

International terrorism and violent extremism threaten African nations in different ways and to different degrees, and responses across the continent vary as a result. In all cases, however, nations are more likely to reduce terrorism and to achieve their national defense and security goals if they have a strategy. The word *strategy* can refer to a document, a process, an outlook, and more. In simplest terms, strategy means taking an 'ends, ways, and means' approach to human activity. Strategy implies articulating explicitly a set of values, setting a vision, and deriving corresponding interests, and then identifying and prioritizing threats or challenges to these desired ends. It means going on to determine the ways by which these threats and challenges will be addressed and overcome in order to achieve the ends. Finally, strategy explains the alignment of means, or resources, in order to enable the ways to the ends.

Countries can use the logic of strategy to formulate a national security strategy (NSS), which establishes the country's overarching values, vision, and interests and assesses terrorism as one threat to them. As a subsidiary process, or under political, temporal, resource, and other constraints, a nation may decide to draft a threat-based strategy, such as a national CT strategy. In either case, *process* can be as valuable as the *product* in strategy formulation. Launched and overseen by a government entity, the strategy team must corral stakeholders into an inclusive and efficient process that integrates all voices while retaining policymakers' confidence. Once the product is validated, it must be implemented, and succeeding *plans* are also as valuable as any *product*. Implementation usually involves dissemination and delegation of roles and responsibilities to various actors who must figure out their own ways of meeting top-line objectives. At the same time, concentrated leadership to oversee or at least track the strategy's implementation is necessary and may take the form of new structures, such as a national counterterrorism center. Monitoring and evaluating is a final essential element of a national CT strategy, in order to ensure that the strategy remains up-to-date and renewed through regular review and reform.

Developing a strategy against international terrorism and violent extremism can serve the interests of countries on the periphery of terrorism in Africa. Citizens of these nation should identify and gauge the threat international terrorism and violent extremism do or do not pose to their own country – a separate but related question from how these threats affect their neighbors and their (sub)region. When nations develop CT strategies that meet their own needs, they determine whether and how international terrorism and violent extremism do or do not threaten their own desired national defense and security ends, and then plan to act accordingly. They choose to focus on areas of particular relevance for their own situation, and they may even be able to prevent the growth or spread of international violent extremism and terrorism in their own territory.

Reflection Questions

- 1. What are key strengths and shortcomings of responses to international terrorism and violent extremism in Africa?
- 2. Does your country have a national security strategy that positions the country to fight international terrorism and violent extremism?
- 3. Are their national values, interest, or strategic ends threatened by international terrorism and violent extremism in your country?

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Legislation against Terrorism and Violent Extremism

Objectives

- Review national anti-terrorism laws in Africa;
- Examine the (sub)regional and international context for anti-terrorism laws in Africa;
- Consider the needs, responsibilities, and concerns regarding anti-terrorism laws in Africa's nations on the periphery of international terrorism;
- Recommend concrete actions these nations could take regarding anti-terrorism legislation.

Background

Terrorism can become at certain times and in certain places a threat to security and even stability, but terrorism is always and everywhere a crime – or at least, it should be. To make this a reality, countries need legislation and laws that criminalize acts of intentional violence against civilians for political gain. Where terrorism is not a present danger, deciding when and how to adopt or update anti-terrorism laws is not straightforward. Addressing such laws can seem irrelevant or become politically fraught, leaving security and political leaders loathe to take on the project. Under such circumstances, why is crafting, enacting, and enforcing anti-terrorism important?

Updating national anti-terrorism laws is often part of honoring existing commitments. All African nations participate in organizations that have made concrete decisions on norms for anti-terrorism laws. In 2006, for example, the United Nations General Assembly adopted by resolution (A/RES/60/288) a Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy that includes requirements about rigorous rule of law standards, including in the Plan of Action an obligation that member states endeavor to legally prohibit incitement to terrorism. Other international organizations with African members have also set strategies and standards by adopting treaties, conventions, and protocols – some of which have implications for international terrorism and anti-terrorism legislation. These organizations include, among others, the Arab League, the Organization of Islamic Conference, and the Global Counterterrorism Forum. Moreover, African nations themselves have made commitments to African multilateral instruments with implications for anti-terrorism laws, including instruments at the regional level through the African Union (AU), as well as at the subregional level through Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and other regional organizations.

Renewing anti-terrorism laws can serve specific purposes in nations on the periphery of international terrorism. Certain aspects of the problem – such as funding, material support, and sanctuary – can find ample support outside hotspots, and nations on the periphery of terrorism may find themselves extraditing terrorist suspects, determining refugee status of people displaced by terrorist conflicts, or handling other specialized legal questions. Anti-terrorism laws can serve as a precaution, and they may also serve as a deterrent, dissuading terrorist organizations from exploiting the weak legal framework of a country to further their own aims.

While important, updating laws to fight international terrorism and violent extremism presents some challenges. External actors can pressure nations on the periphery of terrorism to focus on this threat and to address it in predetermined ways that do not correspond to a nation's actual defense and security priorities and needs. Politicizing the criminalization of terrorism and

especially violent extremism can paradoxically create new threats. Profiling and securitizing specific communities may generate new grievances, making concerns about a terrorist threat a self-fulfilling prophecy. In this counterproductive cycle, prevention of terrorism becomes promotion of terrorism. Couching anti-terrorism legislation within a national CT strategy process can help avoid some of these pitfalls. As part of the strategy process, citizens and communities that risk feeling unduly targeted could share in consultations on the drafting and enforcement of the new law.

Reflection Questions

- 1. Does your nation have an anti-terrorism law? If so, when was it last reviewed and what are its major provisions?
- 2. Has your law enforcement and judicial system employed anti-terrorism laws in arrests, prosecutions, convictions, and sentencing for terrorism crimes?
- 3. What facets of the legal framework might be reinforced to strengthen your country's response to international terrorism and violent extremism?

- "International Instruments related to the Prevention and Suppression of International Terrorism."
 - https://www.unodc.org/documents/terrorism/Publications/Int_Instruments_Prevention_and_Suppression_Int_Terrorism/Publication_- English_- 08-25503_text.pdf
- "OAU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism".
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- "Protocol to OAU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism"
 https://au.int/sites/default/files/treaties/7787-treaty-0030_ protocol to the oau convention on the prevention and combating of terrorism e.p df
- The African Model Anti-Terrorism Law. Available in English and Portuguese. http://www.peaceau.org/en/article/the-african-model-anti-terrorism-law-1

Anti-Money Laundering/Combatting the Financing of Terrorism

Objectives

- Review national anti-money laundering/combatting the financing of terrorism efforts in Africa;
- Examine the (sub)regional and international context for anti-money laundering/combatting the financing of terrorism efforts in Africa;
- Consider the needs, responsibilities, and concerns regarding anti-money laundering/combatting the financing of terrorism efforts in Africa's nations on the periphery of terrorism;
- Recommend concrete actions these nations could take regarding anti-money laundering/combatting the financing of terrorism efforts.

Background

Creating, sustaining, and spreading terrorism and violent extremism requires money. A suicide bomber in a crowded market can detonate an improvised explosive device (IED) assembled from cheap parts, killing and injuring dozens of victims and destroying infrastructure with a minimum amount of money. Such operations, however, usually rely on a wider structure that entices young people into a group through microcredit loans and salaries, provides for terrorist cells in hiding, gains community tolerance through investments in social services, maintains an online presence to publicize and frame a group's violence and cause, and so on. Even so-called lone actor terrorism often finds its origins in online or face-to-face radicalization involving a sustained relationship across months, and the actual attack can follow training and may in fact receive limited assistance from other terrorist operatives.

In Africa, sources of terrorist revenue overlap strongly with areas of operations. Terrorists steal and seize resources from the places and the people they control, occasionally enhancing and prolonging their revenue streams by commandeering local economies. But terrorists do gain some wealth from well beyond the crisis epicenter as well. Terrorists in Africa regularly profit from trafficking and other transnational crimes (by conducting or 'taxing' illicit trade, piracy, etc.) that tie a hotspot to the wider region. In this way, terrorist financing can affect established commerce and commodity prices throughout a subregion, including in states on the periphery of international terrorism. When Boko Haram disrupts cattle markets, livestock prices fluctuate and herders can suffer across West and Central Africa; when Al-Shabaab in Somalia intervenes in the charcoal trade, charcoal production bans in neighboring nations aimed at preserving trees and forests can come under increased pressure.

International funding expands terrorist revenue streams even beyond the periphery. Whether from state sponsors, organized criminals, or diaspora communities, money from across and outside the continent flows into and out from terrorist groups in ways that affect Africa's banking and financial systems. International responses aimed at combatting the financing of terrorism (CFT) include anti-money laundering (AML) measures, for example, to obstruct illicit financial flows. These measures can strike a blow against terrorists and violent extremists, curtail corruption and transnational organized crime, build trust with international institutions, and demonstrate national will to join the international struggle against terrorism. Done with inexactness, however, fighting this genuinely global threat can also excessively limit banking and finance, hamper foreign direct investment, and hinder crucial remittance payments – thereby

punishing communities rather than terrorist groups. Properly calibrating the AML/CFT response, and fitting this tool into a comprehensive approach to the threat, is best done through a national CT strategy process. An inclusive process will hear a variety of voices and perspectives on vulnerabilities to terrorism and violent extremism funding – from experts and economists to shopkeepers in markets along borders – and use their insights to develop tailored approaches that fill potential security gaps.

Reflection Questions

- 1. How does your nation have in place in its government and financial institutions to support international CFT/AML efforts?
- 2. How should government and society engage civil society and nonprofit organizations to ensure they meet CFT standards?
- 3. How might CFT/AML work be improved in your nation or in your (sub)region?

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Border Management in P/CVE and CT Strategies

Objectives

- Review national border management approaches in Africa;
- Examine the (sub)regional and international context for border management in Africa;
- Consider the needs, responsibilities, and concerns regarding border management in Africa's nations on the periphery of international terrorism;
- Recommend concrete actions these nations could take regarding border management.

Background

By definition, transnational threats like today's international terrorism cross national borders. As a result, ports of entry (e.g., seaports, airports, etc.) and Africa's long land and sea borders carry critical defense and security implications. Just as terrorist funding can flow across national borders, so can the materiel and personnel - the guns, ammunition, papers, laptops, and cell phones, as well as the trainers, operatives, radicalizers, and leaders who sustain the conflict. At the same time, people fleeing terrorist epicenters may cross several borders to escape the crisis. If contiguous countries receive tens or even hundreds of thousands of refugees displaced by terrorist crises, nations on the periphery of international terrorism can also find hundreds or thousands of displaced victims on their doorstep, occasionally creating a new subcommunity within a country and novel security considerations. Nations on the periphery of international terrorism also face the challenge of foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs). Many countries have seen a few of their citizens depart for terrorism hotspots near or far (e.g., Syria and Iraq), with a fraction of them eventually returning. Foreign fighters necessarily exit a port of entry or cross a border, sometimes passing through (or even settling in) a second or third country when traveling to a conflict zone or returning to their home. These FTF flows again carry serious implications for Africa's nations on the periphery of terrorism.

Simply shutting down borders to prevent such risks, however, is counterproductive. African nations have made remarkable strides in (sub)regional integration, including significant steps toward the free movement of goods and people across borders. These achievements play a critical role in Africa's economic, diplomatic, and political advancement. Not only does truly sealing borders lie well beyond many states' capabilities, it would violate norms like *non-refoulement*, and even partial success could generate backlash effects. Border closings can cut off marginalized citizens from relatives and sources of revenue on the other side, ironically exacerbating grievances that might indirectly foment violent extremism within.

To be effective, defense and security concerns about international terrorism crossing borders must be incorporated into robust and nuanced comprehensive approaches, best developed through a national CT strategy effort. Border security (and defense) should fit within a broader conception of border management, a system that determines who and what crosses, where, when, why, and how. Calibrating this system is critical to tackling international terrorism and violent extremism without placing undue cost and burden on circulation, a lifeblood of any nation's wellbeing. Many stakeholders should be included in the national CT strategy process and its recommendations regarding borders, so that opportunities and risks associated with altering border regulations and controls are clearly understood.

Reflection Questions

- 1. How many (and which) departments and agencies are present at your ports of entry and borders? What mechanisms are in place to ensure interagency cooperation?
- 2. How has the challenge of FTFs affected your country and (sub)region?
- 3. How might border management be improved to work against international terrorism and violent extremism in your nation or in your (sub)region?

- "Good Practices in the Area of Border Security and Management in the Context of Counterterrorism and Stemming the Flow of "Foreign Terrorist Fighters." GCTF. 2016. https://www.thegctf.org/Cross-Cutting-Initiatives/Border-Security-Initiative
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Peace Support Operations in Contexts of Terrorism and Violent Extremism

Objectives

- Review peace support operations in contexts of international terrorism and violent extremism in Africa;
- Examine the (sub)regional and international context for such peace support operations in Africa;
- Consider the needs, responsibilities, and concerns regarding such peace support operations in Africa's nations on the periphery of international terrorism;
- Recommend concrete actions these nations could take regarding such peace support operations.

Background

Terrorism hotspots engender peace support operations (PSOs) and trouble them at the same time. Since terrorism is defined by universally condemned tactics, tends to cross borders, and figures as an international security priority, coordinated multilateral actions, including military interventions supported by (sub)regional and external actors, are a common response. Today most terrorist hotspots in Africa have a PSO led and supported by some mix of (sub)regional and international actors. The Lake Chad Basin Commission, alongside the AU and with help from abroad, oversees the Multinational Joint Task Force and its fight against Boko Haram. For over ten years, the African Union Mission in Somalia has fought Al-Shabaab in that country, with assistance from the European Union and other external partners. In Mali, the African-led International Support Mission to Mali transitioned to the Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali, under United Nations (UN) control, which continues to patrol the country and provide civilian protection in the face of devastating attacks. These PSOs have played an essential role in limiting terrorist groups' ability to operate widely, retain territory, build up sanctuaries, and directly control the lives of African citizens.

Yet PSOs are an awkward fit for the challenge of terrorism and violent extremism. The international bases and mandates for such actions, derived from the AU and UN, sketch scenarios quite unlike the asymmetric threats of today. The UN Charter, for instance, sanctions peacemaking (in Chapter 6) and peace enforcement (in Chapter 7), yet contemporary missions often sit uncomfortably in between – in a grey zone sometimes called 'Chapter 6.5' because terrorist and violent extremist groups fundamentally reject the international order, thereby precluding any pacific settlement of disputes and dangerously redefining peace as victory by a PSO force that is party to the conflict. Moreover, the relationship between PSOs and terrorism is not unidirectional, as the case of Libya demonstrates, and international violent extremist and terrorist threats have at times persisted and indeed grown in the presence of a PSO. Some have even argued that PSO interventions actually lay the groundwork for international terrorism by disrupting political systems (sometimes with expeditionary international forces), then permitting international terrorists to move in and take advantage of a chaotic landscape, rising grievances, and foreign military targets.

The evolution of PSOs in Africa is critically important for nations on the periphery of terrorism, and their national CT strategies ought to help determine whether and how to engage in such

efforts. All African nations share some responsibility for Africa's PSO missions and mandates prepared at the (sub) regional level. At the same time, joining a PSO in a hotspot where a terrorist group operates can precipitates direct threat to a contingent, their nationals, and their homeland, bringing a country from periphery rapidly toward the center of a conflict. There may be very good reason to take on PSO roles to fight terrorism across the continent, but the decision should be done strategically, with input from the nation's military, civilians, and civil society actors likely to be deployed, as well as from citizens concerned about their nation's commitments and use of force abroad.

Reflection Questions

- 1. Has your nation prepared or sent military, law enforcement, and government civilians for participation in PSO? What role (if any) have asymmetric threats played in those missions?
- 2. How might African nations improve PSOs in a context of international terrorism and violent extremism?

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