



General Assembly

Distr.: General
27 February 2023

English only

Human Rights Council

Fifty-second session

27 February–31 March 2023

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Written statement* submitted by Organisation internationale pour les pays les moins avancés (OIPMA), a non- governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[6 February 2023]

* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



Substantial Challenges With Regard to The Implementation Of the Right to Development In The Least Developed Countries Stalled By Conflicts and Terrorism

SDG 16 aims to promote peaceful and inclusive societies, providing access to justice for all and building effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels. With the rise in terrorism in the Sahel region, the middle east, and south Asia, such attainment appears far reachable in Least Developed Countries (LDCs). As of today, the status quo reflects the importance of good security sector governance (SSR) for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

According to the Global Terrorism index 2022, the Sahel is home to the world's fastest growing and most deadly terrorist groups. While the five countries of Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, the Niger (the G5) in the region are among the top list of LDCs.

Data has shown an essential alteration in dynamics being more concentrated in the Sahel region with the impact of a variety of crisis and in Afghanistan with the Taliban takeover and lack of governmental control.

The current situation in LDCs with terrorism surges cannot reflect enough the need to strengthen relevant national institutions through international cooperation, build capacity at all levels, and prevent and combat terrorism.”

As clearly portrayed in the Agenda, high levels of armed violence and insecurity have a destructive impact on a country's development. Today, to some nations, they are barriers to a status change from ‘underdeveloped’ to ‘developing.’

Sexual violence, crime, exploitation, and torture are prevalent where there is a conflict or no rule of law, such as in most LDCs on the African continent.

Mali

In its 2022 Global Index on Terrorism report (GITR 2022), the Institute for Economics & Peace (IEP) has classified Mali as one of the top countries impacted by terrorism, with an increase in terrorist attacks affecting soldiers and civilians.

To give an example, as part of the deadliest terrorist attacks in the year 2021, two of them were in Mali, resulting in 33 deaths each, including civilians.

Since the rise in tensions between Bamako and Paris, which has led to the French troop's withdrawal, the situation has been deteriorating, going in the reverse direction of attaining the 2030 goals.

Observed in March 2022, the use of mercenaries as a tool to combat the surge in terrorist groups is fueling the problem and can lead to atrocious human rights violations on both sides of the conflict. Overall, to the detriment of the civilian population and creating obstacles towards providing justice to all and building effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels.

Overall, in 2022, several attacks have been recorded across the country, in addition to the above-mentioned Moura massacre. These include simultaneous ones that took place last July, leaving at least 66 dead. Just recently, at the beginning of 2023, a terrorist attack was conducted between Dia and Diafarabe villages, killing at least 14 soldiers and wounding 7. This spread of attacks reflects the terrorist groups' aim to isolate the populations of the capitals, away from political power, whose roles are to protect civilians and promote peace.

The state of affairs in Mali echoes international and African actors' inefficiency in strengthening peace and security in the Sahel and the failure of a purely security strategy.

Afghanistan:

As it already was a bitter situation, ever since the United States of America troops' withdrawal and the takeover by the Taliban, terrorism in Afghanistan has been on the rise. Today being de facto governed by an insurgent terrorist group known for its archaic actions towards women and non-Muslims, little room is left for the aim of SDG 16. Withal with the lack of governmental control and political harmony, alongside some regional religious disunity, the rise in terrorism from the Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP) has culminated over the past two years.

According to the 2022 Global Index on Terrorism report, Afghanistan remains the country with the highest impact from terrorism before Iraq and Somalia, with 1,426 terrorism-induced deaths in 2021. Further, Afghanistan recorded the deadliest attack of 2021 when an ISKP suicide bomber detonated his explosives at Afghanistan's Kabul International Airport, resulting in 170 deaths and over 200 injuries. It was the deadliest attack in the country since 2007.

This domestic opposition from the ISKP has immensely deteriorated the situation to the detriment of the civilian population. As an LDC, Afghanistan can easily be considered at the bottom list of nations capable of achieving the 2030 agenda.

ISKP appears to be duplicating ISIL's strategy. At first, focusing on Shi'a civilian targets such as schools (especially girls' schools) and mosques; in recent events, it attacked a Sunni Sufi center, the Russian embassy, and government ministries in current events. In September 2022, the group even instigated an attack on an educational center for girls in Western Kabul, killing nearly 60 individuals.

This internal instability illustrates the Taliban's failure to restore security and promote peace while further discrediting its international legitimacy.

Yemen:

As common knowledge to the international community, the plight of Yemen is ongoing. Alongside the persistent internal conflict, terror attacks prevail in the country's south. Just in September 2022, an Al-Qaeda attack killed 21 Southern Transitional Council soldiers in the Abyan province.

On top of the recent Houthi terrorist drone attacks last October, striking the Al-Dubba oil terminal and alarming the international community because of the significant threat it poses to the peace process and stability across the nation, tensions have re-started. Even though the situation has recently been proclaimed stable, highlighting the importance of resuming the political process, in line with SDG 16, terrorism remains a constant threat to the whole population.

It is today essential to give prominence to the prevailing 'calm' period that has occurred in Yemen, with a significant decrease in casualties, and for all stakeholders to ensure no escalation in terrorism, as it is the main threat to the peace process. It is essential to find comprehensive solution including the Southern issue, and to put pressure on the Houthi militia to refrain from attacking economic infrastructures; it threatens to plummet Yemen back into conflict, depriving Yemenis of needed resources and exacerbating the humanitarian crisis.

Somalia:

The 2017 election, due to political rest in Mogadishu, reflects progress toward achieving SDG 16. Afterward, some slight improvement has been reflected across the nation with an essential focus on eradicating FGM, increasing women's political participation, and, more importantly, aiming to make justice accessible for all. However, bringing a closer look at such issues reflects the situation's urgency.

According to the IEP in its GITR 2022, Somalia remains the third most affected country by terrorism in 2022. Deaths in Somalia decreased by 18 percent in 2021. This was mainly driven by a decline in terrorist activity in Mogadishu, with 37 percent fewer deaths. Mogadishu has long been the epicenter of terrorist activity by Al-Shabaab.

Al-Shabaab remains a constant threat to the country, even beyond its borders, as observed in Kenya. Just last October, the Mogadishu car bomb, which killed at least 100 people and injured more than 300, should alarm the international community and requires its utmost attention. Categorized as a failed state, Somalia's situation portrays a regress toward the 2030 agenda. As expressed by the chairperson of the African Union Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, it is essential for the international community to "redouble its efforts to ensure robust international support to Somalia's institutions in their struggle to defeat terrorist groups."

OIPMA condemns all barbaric acts committed in terrorism-affected LDCs, whether omitted by the military, terrorist groups, or PMSCs. The withdrawal of foreign states' military forces is comprehensible following decades of fighting with no solutions in sight, resulting in countless soldiers' deaths. Even so, as soon as troops have left, the downturns have shown significant regress in Mali, Somalia, Afghanistan, and potentially soon in Burkina Faso. OIPMA recommends intensifying research to find plausible counterterrorism solutions in LDCs and build bridges between states, militaries, and civil society, per the 4 pillars of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in line with GA resolution and Plan of Action (A/RES/60/288).
