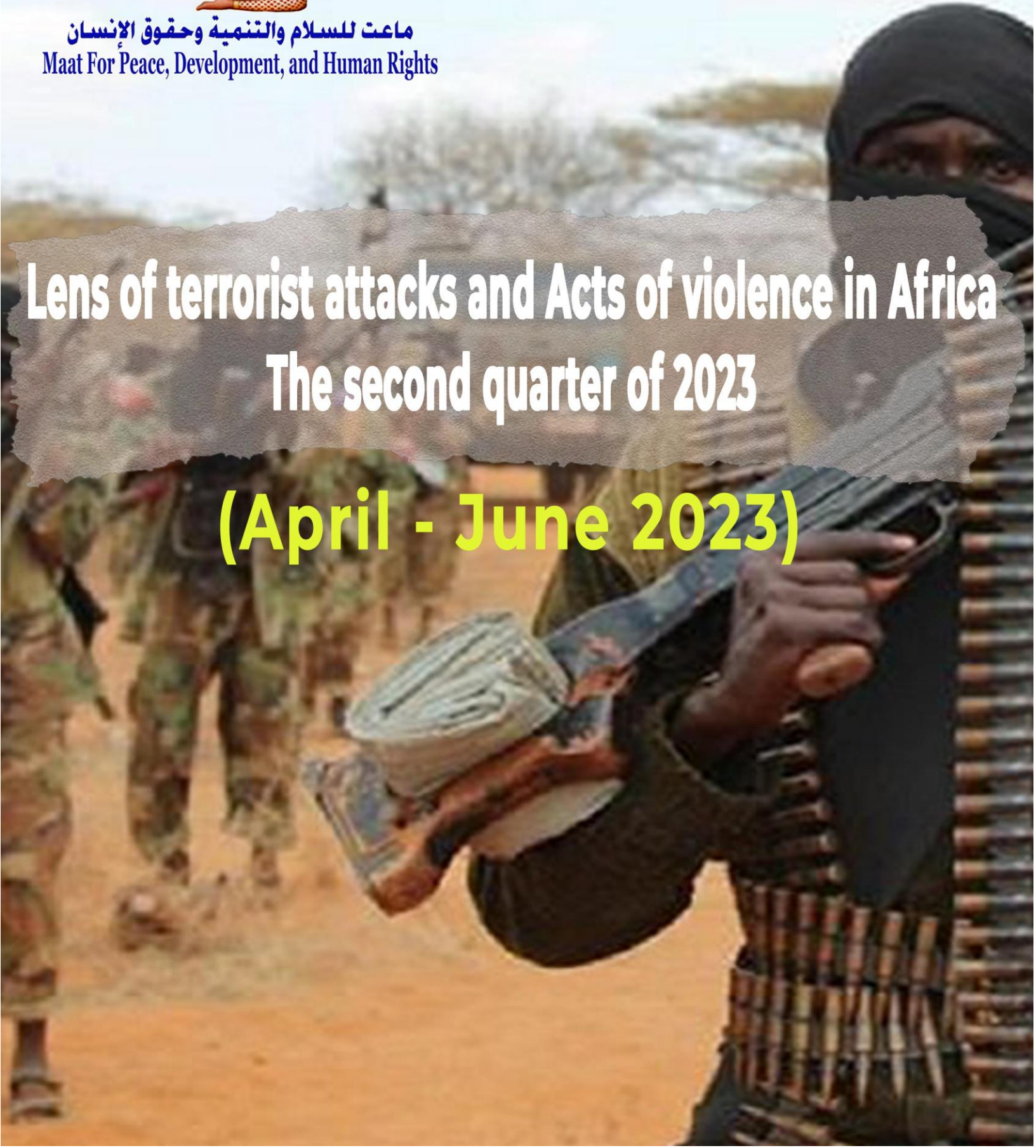




ماعت للسلام والتنمية وحقوق الإنسان  
Maat For Peace, Development, and Human Rights

# Lens of terrorist attacks and Acts of violence in Africa The second quarter of 2023

## (April - June 2023)



## Report Summary

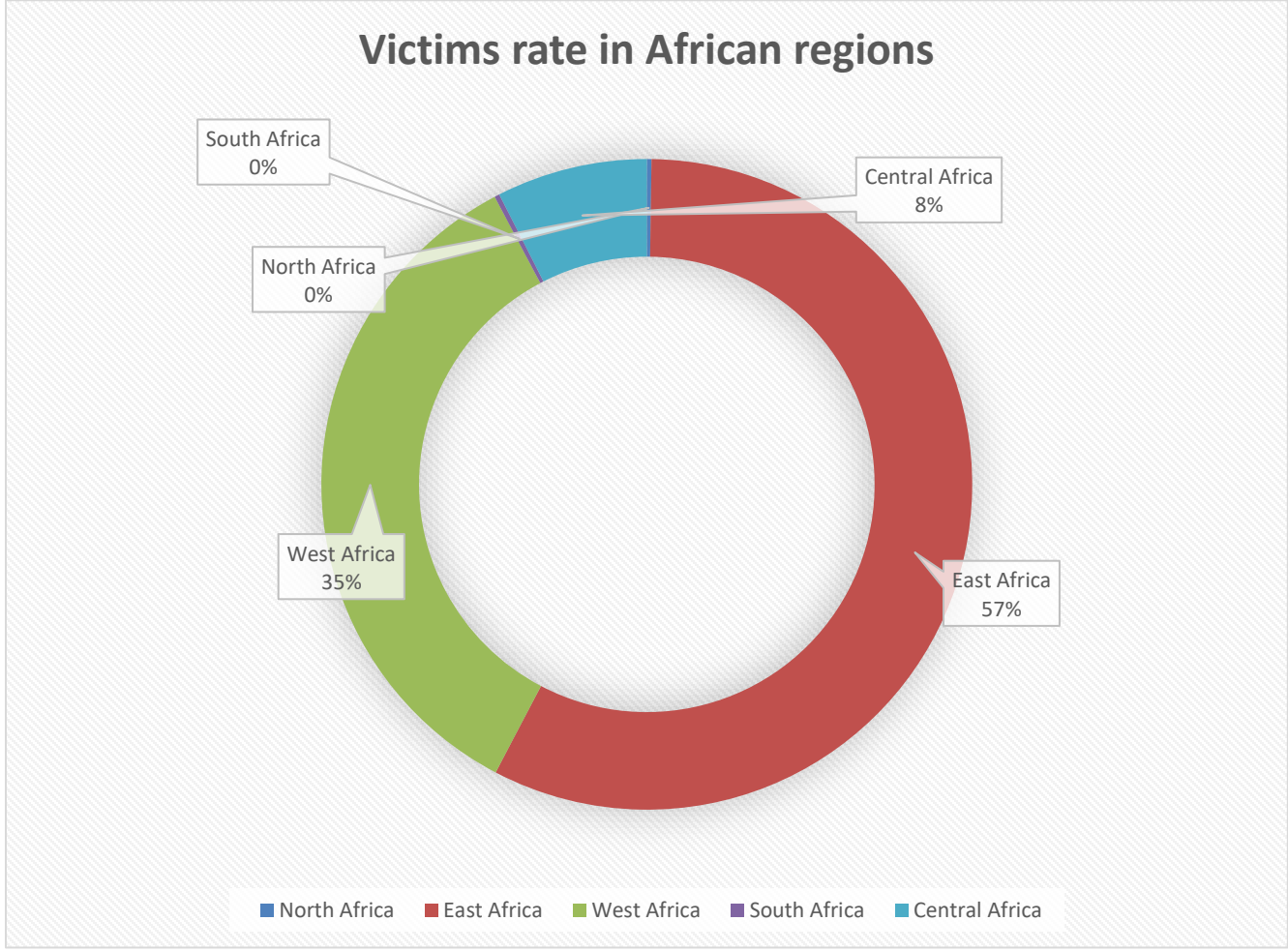
### Lens of Terrorist Operations and Acts of Violence in Africa, Q2 2023

Terrorism continues to cast a shadow over Africa, escalating violence and terrorizing the population, making Africa one of the largest hotbeds of violence and extremism in the world. Africa provides a fertile environment for the growth and spread of terrorist organizations due to several intertwining factors that nurture violent conflicts and extremist ideologies. During the second quarter of 2023, at least 5,353 killings were recorded as a result of terrorism and acts of violence, which is a very high number, compared to 705 killings in March. Although the beginning of 2023 witnessed a continuous decline in the number of victims of violence and terrorism in Africa, the situation changed in the second quarter due to many variables, topped by the armed conflict in Sudan. As part of its efforts to combat this phenomenon, Maat issues its quarterly report, "**Lens of Terrorist Operations and Acts of Violence in Africa**", which monitors the changes taking place in this phenomenon on a quarterly basis, and follows up the international and regional efforts exerted to confront and define it. The aim of this initiative is to support efforts that seek to reduce terrorism in Africa, in order to achieve a peaceful and secure world for all.

The report "**Lens of Terrorist Operations and Acts of Violence in Africa**" adopts a methodology of direct monitoring of terrorist operations reported in the Arab, Western and African media on the African continent, which mainly relies on open sources such as the Internet, as well as reliable and credible news websites. However, for the sake of accuracy and reliability, scientific honesty obliges us to highlight the "error coefficient", which is likely to occur given the fact that some sources, whether local or international, may provide different numbers of victims or update their data a few days after the monitoring process.

Hotbeds of terrorism are spread across five regions in Africa, but the situation is very different in each. Northern and Southern regions rank last in terms of the number of victims and violence, while Eastern, western and Central regions consistently top the list. Although some regions rank last, this does not mean that they are immune to the threat of terrorism. Extremist groups were able to infiltrate them and unexpected commit terrorist. African countries are working hard to combat and suppress terrorism, but they still have long way to go and require huge international efforts to combat this danger.

From April to June, the eastern region ranked first with 3,236 deaths due to the escalation of violence in Sudan, while the western region ranked second with 1,947 cases, the central region ranked third with 422 cases and the northern and southern regions rank last, with 13 and 14 killings, respectively.

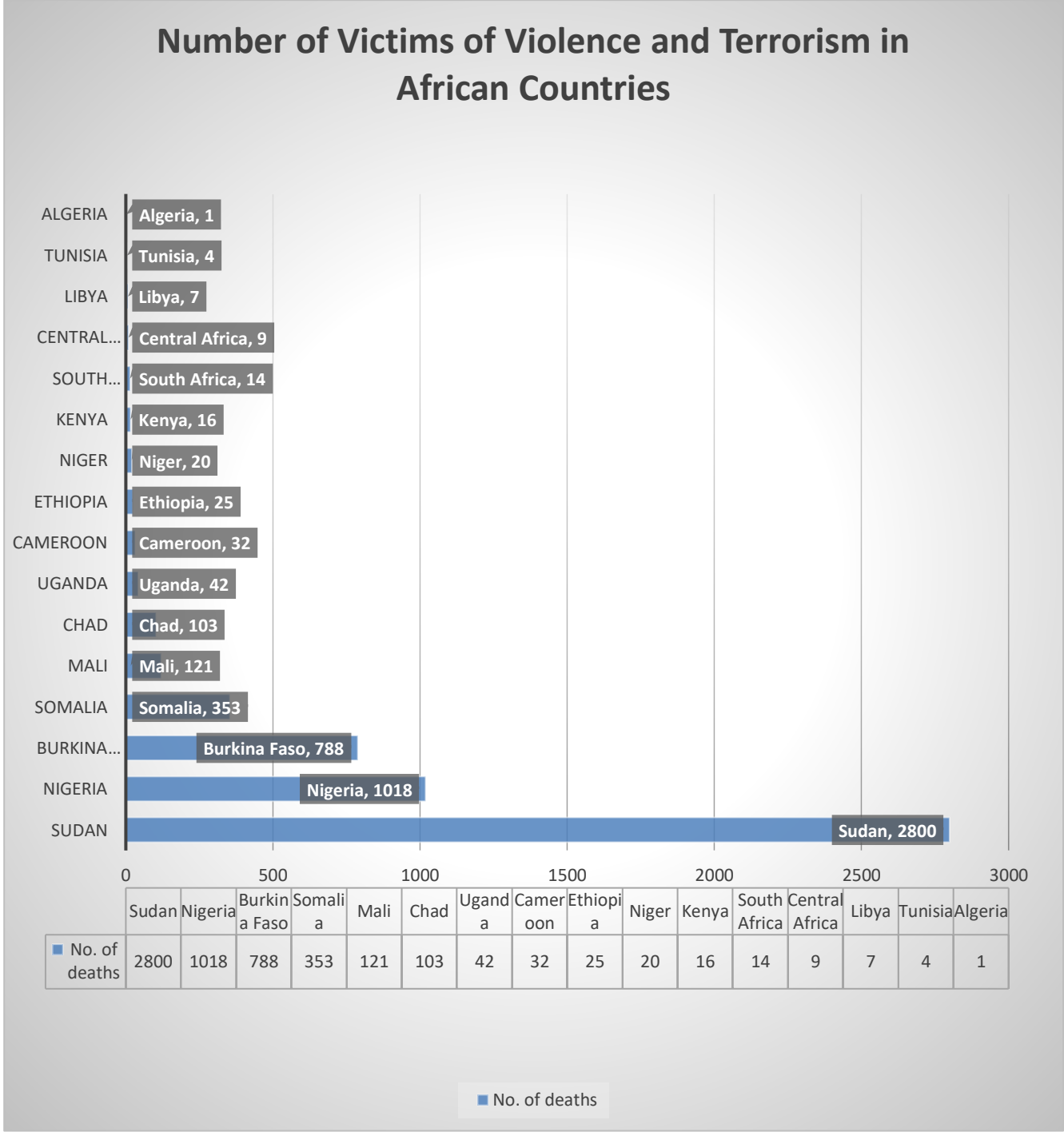


In recent years, Africa turned into a hotbed for terrorist organizations, exposing states to various levels of threats. North and South Africa, in particular, are witnessing a relative stability in the number of terrorist attacks, other countries suffer from a significant escalation of this threat, which may witness the implementation of hundreds of terrorist operations within one month. In this context, Sudan ranked first in terms of the number of victims, with 2,800 killings, after an armed conflict that broke out in mid-April between the army and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), which pushed Sudan to the first place in terms of the number of deaths in Africa till the end of June.

Nigeria ranks second with 1,018 killings, after a significant escalation in the second quarter of 2023, as the country recorded only 240 cases in April before the pace of

terrorist operations accelerated in May and June. Burkina Faso ranks third, with 788 killings, in a decreasing wave of terrorist operations in the country after their rise in April.

Somalia ranks fourth, with 353 killings, after the start of the downward curve in terrorist operations, as a result of counter-efforts led by the state in cooperation with international and regional partners. The Democratic Republic of the Congo ranked last, with 278 killings, and the increased numbers of victims are attributed to the magnitude of the operations qualitatively, not numerically.



Today, paying more attention to the threats of terrorism is no longer an option but a necessity; its repercussions and effects extended beyond the borders of the continent and are now threatening the entire world. Thus, international community has no choice but to take serious steps to eradicate it. In April, May and June, we monitored some of these efforts at several different levels.

- The Human Rights Council concluded its 52<sup>nd</sup> session on April 4<sup>th</sup> on the human rights situation; it expressed concern about the persistence of intolerance and violence based on religion in Africa. The Council also condemned all forms of violence and discrimination on the basis of religion and called on states to prevent such acts and punish those responsible for them, stressing that terrorism cannot and should not be associated with any religion, nationality or civilization.
- A session was held in the Security Council on April 12<sup>th</sup> to discuss the report submitted by the UN Mission to Mali on March 30<sup>th</sup>. The report highlighted the progress in the transitional process and the implementation of the Peace and Reconciliation Agreement in Mali, and the government's strategy to achieve stability in the central regions. There was also talks about the escalating clashes between armed groups and the catastrophic humanitarian crisis in the region. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Mali stressed that the situation remains volatile, and called on the signatories to the Peace and Reconciliation Agreement to stop prioritizing their own interests and meet the aspirations of the Malian people. The Security Council must continue to support the Malian People and request the necessary assistance from all parties.
- Ms. Martha Bobby, Assistant Secretary-General for Africa, briefed the Security Council on May 16<sup>th</sup>, warning of the threat posed by terrorist and violent extremist groups to the border areas. Bobby highlighted the exacerbation of the dire humanitarian situation due to the security crisis in Burkina Faso and Mali, and warned of the difficulty of reversing the security path in the region without achieving significant security gains, stressing that insecurity will expand towards West African coastal countries. Eric Tiare, Executive Secretary of the Group of Five for the Sahel, emphasized the need for sustainable financing and the mobilization of all forces to root out terrorist groups and stressed the need to address climate change in the region. The representative of Ghana, also speaking on behalf of Gabon and Mozambique, described the repercussions of the ongoing crisis in Libya and its spillover into Togo and Benin as a cause of regional instability, and

encouraged coordination between the three pillars of governance under the UN-coordinated Integrated Strategy for the Sahel. On May 7<sup>th</sup>, the President of the Security Council issued a press statement condemning the terrorist attack on the Bulo Marer base in Somalia and expressing her sympathy with the families of the victims and the government of Uganda. On June 27<sup>th</sup>, the Security Council passed Resolution 2687 (2023) endorsing the continued support of the UN to Somalia in achieving peace and security and combating terrorism and violent extremism. The Council also requested the Government of Somalia, the African Union and the UN to conduct a joint technical assessment by August 2023 to assess the first phase of the phase-out of the ATMIS, and to support Somalia in implementing this withdrawal. The spokesperson also called on the UN Secretary-General to continue supporting Somalia in combating terrorism and improving peace and security in the region.

- The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is mobilizing aid for the refugee crisis caused by the armed conflict in Sudan, where there are more than 400,000 Sudanese refugees in 13 camps as well as local host communities in eastern Chad. UNHCR assesses the needs of the newly arrived and prepares a joint situation response plan and is deploying emergency teams to respond to urgent needs related to protection and humanitarian assistance. It is also working to boost supplies of core relief items and identify new locations to host more arrivals. Plans are underway to move the families to a refugee camp far from borders. UNHCR teams are also working with partners at border crossing points to monitor new arrivals and provide them with assistance. Urgent support is needed to ensure timely assistance is provided to those fleeing the fighting.
- A humanitarian center was established in the coastal city of Port Sudan on the Red Sea, to coordinate humanitarian operations in Sudan after fighting between competing military forces, and hundreds of staff and their families were relocated from the Sudanese capital, Khartoum. The population is facing shortages of food, water, medicine and fuel, and the prices of basic materials and means of transportation have skyrocketed. The humanitarian team works to provide medical assistance and distribute basic resources to the population, while civil society networks respond to the most urgent needs in their communities. The UNHCR states that about a third of the Sudanese population - about 15.8 million

people - needed assistance before the fighting broke out, besides the burden of war and the devastation of armed conflict.

- The UN Secretary-General has sent the head of humanitarian affairs to the region to help mitigate the humanitarian crisis in Sudan, and the Red Cross has sent a shipment of humanitarian aid to the region. The UN urges the warring parties in Sudan to stop fighting, protect civilians, and promote the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. China enhances the capacity-building of the developing world in the field of combating terrorism and stresses the serious threat posed by Daesh, Al Qaeda and their affiliated terrorist organizations.
- The African Union appealed to the Sudanese Armed Forces and the RSF for an immediate ceasefire, in order to protect civilians and vital infrastructure and to support political dialogue. The Union also appealed to the UN and international development agencies to intervene to put pressure on Sudan and support the joint mechanism between the African Union and the UN to end violence that destabilize the region.
- Egypt and the European Union organized a side event before the 21<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Fund's Coordination Committee, to discuss the challenges of combating terrorism and violent extremism in Africa, and the role of the local community and women in this regard, in cooperation with the Cairo International Center for Conflict Resolution and Peacekeeping and the International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law.
- The UNCHR expressed concern about the abduction of more than 50 women in Burkina Faso and called for their immediate and unconditional release. The kidnappings took place near the village of Arbinda in the Sahel region, and it is suspected that armed groups carried them out, according to a statement by the Commissioner for Human Rights (CHR)
- A new project was launched by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime and the UN Regional Institute for Crime and Justice Research in February, to strengthen capacities to address the nexus between terrorism and organized crime in Africa. The project aims to analyze the link between terrorism and organized crime in Africa, provide technical and legislative assistance, and enhance cooperation in Africa to combat the challenges posed by this relationship. This project is funded by the UN Peace and Development Trust Fund. The UN Office on Drugs and Crime works to strengthen African states' responses to terrorism and violent extremism,

and provides technical assistance to law enforcement, the judiciary, and border control agencies to enhance cross-border cooperation and intelligence sharing to bring terrorists to justice.

According to the report, the phenomenon of terrorism is surging dramatically in Africa, and requires further measures, which leads to diverting the resources of poor countries in the continent military spending to combat terrorism, and increasing the demand for foreign aid. This leads to the exploitation of African lands for arms testing and the exercise of influence without effective support to combat terrorism. The report indicates significant changes in the distribution of the map of terrorist operations and the spread of violence, especially after the escalation of tensions in Sudan, and the increase in the number of victims in Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Somalia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

**In light of the above, Maat provides a set recommendations including:**

- **First:** Maat expresses its deep regret over the situation in Sudan, and calls on the military parties there to immediately and permanently stop hostilities, and to return to dialogue in order to reach an appropriate agreement guaranteeing achievement of stability, followed by a clear and explicit agreement with the political forces in order to end the transitional period and resort to a legitimate authority that guarantees stability.
- **Second:** In the context of the crises afflicting Africa, which has a large volume of resources and poor economies, Maat recommends writing-off Africa's debts and turning them into real investments, in order to help the continent overcome crises of violence and terrorism, and pay attention to development issues.
- **Third:** The recent years of confrontation between regular armies and terrorist groups have revealed a defect in the military capabilities, even of the most powerful armies, in the face of those groups that rely on guerrilla warfare in cities and residential neighborhoods. This approach is not allowed to use heavy arms, so military literature must increase to understand this type of war, especially in countries that have experiences in confronting terrorism.
- **Fourth:** Maat believes that, in addition to the military war on terrorism, there must be fortification development that works to combat the conditions leading to terrorism and to build societies based on equality and justice among citizens.



- **Fifth:** Foreign intervention in Africa, under the name of combating terrorism, has become a nightmare. This intervention has neither launched war against terrorism nor did it help African countries build their capabilities to combat terrorism. Instead, foreign intervention seeks to exploit Africa's rich resources under the disguise of war on terrorism, which has escalated the situation and complicated the relations between major powers seeking to achieve self-interests at the expense of Africa. Therefore, Maat recommends that any intervention to combat terrorism in Africa should be guided by the UN and governed by international law.