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## **Preventing Terrorism in Peacekeeping Theatres in Africa Course**

22nd October to 2 November, 2018

KAIPTC, Accra

Course Report



## **Introduction**

The changing nature of conflicts today and the complex dilemmas faced in peacekeeping theatres necessitates a critical rethinking of the content of pre-deployment peacekeeping training of police and Troop contributing countries (P/TCCs) in Africa. For instance, the peacekeeping mission in Mali demonstrates the first time peacekeepers have been sent to regain control over areas contested by terrorist groups. Further, it has earned the lamentable distinction as one of the most dangerous missions, with the UN estimating that more than 146 peacekeepers have lost their lives since 2013. Elsewhere in South Sudan peacekeepers continue to face threats posed by militants in their efforts to protect civilians in refugee camps. As the UN seeks an effective way around the management of terror attacks in peacekeeping theatres, the question remains as to whether or not peacekeepers are well prepared for their assignments prior to their deployment by their respective countries. In further strengthening the current levels of preparedness, the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC) in Accra, in collaboration with the Government of Japan and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), organised the two weeks training course on 'Preventing Terrorism in Peacekeeping Theatres in Africa. This training course forms the first of three training programmes of the **“Improving Response Capacities to terrorism in Peacekeeping theatres in Africa”** project.

This project will engage selected troop/police contributing countries in West Africa with a view to identifying training gaps and developing appropriate guidelines for filling such gaps. Ultimately, the capacities of up to 100 officers from the training units of military, police and gendarmerie in Senegal, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Togo, Guinea, Nigeria and Ghana shall be developed in three separate training sessions

## **Aims and Objectives**

The objective of this training course is to contribute to enhancing response capacities of peacekeepers from eight (8) police/troop contributing countries in West Africa. The selected countries include: Burkina Faso, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo. It is also expected that at the end of the course, participants who were largely instructors of peacekeeping training units will further incorporate relevant aspects of the training in their own existing peacekeeping pre-deployment training programmes to enhance overall response capacities to terrorist attacks in peacekeeping theatres.

### **Selection of participants**

The course targeted a total of thirty-four (34) peace support operations instructors from the military, police and gendarmerie from the eight (8) participating countries. However, a total of 32 participants actually took part in the training. This figure was made up of twenty-seven (27) males and five (5) females. The ranks of participants ranged from a Brigadier General, colonels, Majors and captains from the military and the gendarmerie while that of the police comprised Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP).

### **Opening Ceremony**

The opening ceremony for the course was attended by the Deputy Commandant of the KAIPTC, Brigadier General, Irvine Ayeetey, the Country Director of UNDP-Ghana, Ms, Gita Welsh, the first Secretary of the Embassy of Japan, Mr. Yosunori Nakamura Dr. Emma Birikorang, the Deputy Director of the Faculty of Academic Affairs and Research (FAAR), Mr. John Pokoo, the Programme Head of the Conflict Management Programme of KAIPTC, and other programme staff of UNDP and project staff of the KAIPTC. The Deputy Commandant of the KAIPTC, indicated in his opening speech, that the changing nature of conflicts increasingly requires a rethinking of how peacekeeping is done and more so, strategies and measures to protect and preserve the lives of peacekeepers who operate in volatile situations now more than ever. It is against this backdrop, that the KAIPTC in partnership with UNDP-Ghana and with support and funding from the government of Japan have initiated efforts to contribute to the improvement of response capacities to terrorism in peacekeeping theatres. He

thanked the government of Japan and the UNDP for their continuous support in contributing to peace and security in the Africa. In her speech, Ms Gita Welsh, Country Director, UNDP-Ghana also reiterated the fact that the nature of today's, conflicts force peacekeepers to operate in peacekeeping theatres where there is actually no peace to keep. She recounted that, an estimate of 146 UN peacekeepers have lost their lives since 2013 and more efforts are required in terms of training and preparation to prevent more peacekeepers from losing their lives in the line of duty. Finally, Mr. Yosunori Nakamura, first secretary of the Embassy of Japan acknowledged the thriving relationship between all partners and expressed the commitment of the Japanese government to contribute to promoting peace and security in Africa, hence, their support to such laudable initiatives.

This segment was then followed by a group picture of participants with all invites speakers, guests and a brief media interaction.

### **Course Proceedings**

After the opening ceremony, the KAIPTC team began a session on setting the context which outlined the objectives of the course, explained the series of processes leading to the development of the course. The team also facilitated introduction of participants and facilitators for the course and outlined the administrative procedures and expectations for the ten-day course. The course then began with the introductory module on Terrorism in peacekeeping operations. The objective of the module is to enhance participants' knowledge of terrorism in peacekeeping contexts. It therefore discusses issues such as radicalisation, violent extremism and terrorism, terrorism financing, organised crime and terrorism planning cycle. The module also provides a contextual analysis of West Africa and its security challenges in a bid to help situate and give an understanding to and the increasing threat of terrorism in the region.

Module two focuses on mine awareness, counter Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear weapons (CBRN) and the importance of incidence scene preservation (forensics) in the incidence of terrorist attacks. The

rational for this module is that at the end of the lesson, participants would be able to identify and apply the necessary protocols in dealing with Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EODs) and CBRN.

Module three discusses Legal and Strategic Frameworks for counter Terrorism. Elements within this module include International Humanitarian Law (IHL), International Human Rights Law and Terrorism, the 19 international Legal Instruments on Terrorism, judicial aspects of counter terrorism as well as an overview of the United Nations, African Union and the Economic Community of West African States counter terrorism strategies.

Module four focuses on Information Gathering and Intelligence Sharing Strategies. The module is intended to enhance participants' ability to apply the rudiments of intelligence and the mechanisms of coordination. Module five hinges on the theme of Women, Peacekeeping and Terrorism. The module gives an awareness of vulnerable groups in peacekeeping countering terrorism. It also emphasizes the role and importance of women in peacekeeping and counter-terrorism.



The course also provides an opportunity for scenario-based training and exercises to equip participants with the necessary skills to conduct relevant activities involved in counter terrorism in peacekeeping. Some of these exercise included: detainee handling, incidence scene management, ambush and counter-ambush drills and demonstrations on mines and IEDs. The Army Combat Training School (ACTS) of the Ghana Armed Forces prepared a number of exercises for the scenario based exercises. In the case of mine awareness, the officers demonstrated simple methods and devices used to produce IEDs as well as some of the cunning but equally dangerous methods employed by some terrorists and criminal gangs to set up IEDs. Scenarios on detainee handling also created simulation exercises to bring out key lessons in international humanitarian law, human rights, procedures and processes for interrogating suspected elements and procedures for preserving an incident scene. Participants were then taken to the Bundase military training camp to witness a simulation of an ambush and counter-ambush drill. Ambushes are typically, very deadly incidents when they occur in peacekeeping theatres. However, the essence of the exercise was to tease out basic safety tips and reporting procedures for surviving peacekeepers.

In all, the combination of lectures, group exercises, discussions, scenario-based demonstrations and field based demonstrations rendered the course practical and provided a conducive environment for learning and experience-sharing for participants.

To help participants to relax and de-stress from the 10 days intensive, course, participants were treated to a leisure trip to the Afrikiko Resort in Akosombo where participants engaged in a number of outdoor games, boat rides and board games to relax, network and bond with colleagues.

### **Course Facilitators**

Ten (10) subject matter experts and practitioners were constituted to facilitate the course. These included Dr. Bruno Mpondo-Epo, the Director of Political Affairs in MINUSMA. Having worked in UN missions for over twenty years, he brought to the fore, a wealth of experience and knowledge of the evolving nature of conflict, peacekeeping and adaptations of the international system over the years. Ms. Izumi Wakugawa, a Japanese expert facilitated the module on Women, Peacekeeping and Terrorism. Ms. Wakugawa currently works with the British High Commission in Japan as political advisor and had previously facilitated on the Border Security Management Course five years ago. Three military experts from the Ghana Armed Forces also facilitated the modules on mine awareness, counter IEDS and Information sharing and Intelligence gathering respectively while three subject matter experts from the KAIPTC facilitated topics on terrorism planning cycle, radicalization and violent extremism terrorism financing. All these facilitators had either been involved in the consultations or development stages of the training course. This varied mix of facilitators brought about different experiences and perspectives to enhance the quality of the training programme.

### **Challenges**

Two main challenges were identified during the course. First, is the gender composition of participants. As has been the case in previous training programmes, there was a low female participation, although great efforts had been taken to request for more female

participants. This may partly be due to the fact that very few females actually work within the positions of the requested target group i.e. peace support operations instructors.

Second, relates to logistical challenges with participants' accommodation. The course was organised during the peak time for KAIPTC activities, therefore there was no accommodation for participants on-site. This meant that, participants had to commute by bus from the hotel to the training centre each morning. Therefore, this did not allow for after-class group assignments and readings as there were challenges with access to good internet service in the hotel.

### **Closing Ceremony**

The two weeks course came to a successful end on Friday, 2nd November, 2018. The closing ceremony was attended by the Deputy Commandant of KAIPTC, the Director of Training, Col. Robert Affram and Mr. John Pokoo, head of Conflict management programme. In his closing remarks, the deputy commandant congratulated all participants for the successful completion of the two weeks course. He lauded their demonstration of commitment and the sharing of rich and diverse experiences with fellow participants and facilitators alike. He urged them to share their knowledge acquired from the course with their colleagues and to make it relevant in their line of duty. He wished all a safe journey back to their various destinations.

A representative of the class, Lieutenant Colonel Frank Kofi Adzasu on behalf of the course participants expressed their appreciation to the KAIPTC and all relevant partners for putting together such a training course. He indicated that the training programme was particularly relevant in augmenting existing capacities in responding to current threats confronting peacekeepers.

Participants were presented with certificates for the successful completion of the training course.

### **Conclusion**



Generally, the course recorded positive feedback from participants, facilitators and support staff, indicating that it was largely successful. Participants found both the lectures, group assignments, panel discussions and the field and scenario based exercises relevant to the line of duties. Others also commended the depth of knowledge, experience and skills of the different facilitators and appreciated the new knowledge and skills acquired during the course of the two weeks training.