



PREVENTING TERRORISM IN PEACEKEEPING THEATRES IN AFRICA

MALI COURSE REPORT

28th January – 1st February, 2019



Introduction

The last activity of the *Improving Response Capacities to Terrorism in Peacekeeping Theatres in Africa* project occurred in Mali from January 28th to 1st February, 2019. It brought to an end the one year project significantly happening in an environment that served as the empirical case for the project. The last event brought together the largest number trained so far (36) and was witnessed by a cross section of diplomats, military generals and practitioners. The training was held at the Ecole de la Maintien de la Paix, Alioune Blondin Beye, Mali. It was sponsored by the Japanese government with technical support from the UNDP with the KAIPTC as the implementing partner.

Aims and Objectives

The 5 day course sought to contribute to enhancing the operational effectiveness of peacekeepers in Africa against terror attacks through research and training. It further sought to contribute to an improvement in the training curricular of pre-deployment training given to peacekeepers.

Selection of Participants

In a bid to reach out to more actors in the security arena in Mali and by extension the Sahel, an invitation was sent to through the Ministry of Security and Civil Protection as well as to the G5 Sahel to nominate personnel for the training program. While the Malian authorities responded through the National Small Arms Commission on Small Arms and Light Weapons, unfortunately the G5 Sahel were unable to send personnel despite a favorable initial response. Thirty six personnel eventually turned up out of the original 38 participants' anticipated. These were made

up of 32 men and 4 women. These also came from security agencies such as the police, gendarmie and military.

Opening Ceremony

On the 28th of January, 2019, an opening ceremony for the course was held at the EMP to officially kick-start the proceedings for the last training event under the project. Present at the high table was Ghana's ambassador to Mali, H. E Brig. Gen (Rtd) Francis Adu-Amanfoh, a representative from the EMP Col Sidibie, a representative from the National Commission on Small Arms and Light Weapons Comdt. Diarra and Mrs. Afua Lamptey from the KAIPTC. The Ambassador reiterated the importance of the Training Course within the evolving security threats particularly in Mali and hoped that participants would be able to learn some skills to stand them in good stead in such hostile environments. The Host, and representative from the EMP welcomed all participants to the course and thanked the KAIPTC for the continuing collaboration between the two centers of excellence. Mrs. Afua Lamptey in her opening remarks outlined the history of the program and stressing on its critical importance in ensuring that there was a more proactive role played by peacekeepers in reducing casualties within missions. A group photograph was then taken with the Commandant of the MLAIPTC

Course Proceedings and Facilitators

Starting of the course was the pre-existing module on an overview and introduction to Terrorism in Peacekeeping Theatres in Africa. Dr. Bruno Mpondo –Epo from the MINUSMA gave an in-depth analysis and information on the concept of terrorism and its many facets, as well as a contextual analysis of the conflict in Mali. His rich background as the political Affairs Director also ensured that his sessions were interspersed with practical examples from the field and the realities of the peacekeeping mandate in fighting Terrorism on the ground. This was followed by a foray into the Terrorism Planning Cycle which was taken by Dr. Festus Aubyn from the KAIPTC. Dr. Aubyn used practical examples from previous Terrorist activities in the sub-region and beyond to tease out the linkages and nuances on Terrorism Planning Cycles. Participants were taught to think outside the box if they wanted to track the activities of terrorists

and to be vigilant as security operatives in connecting seemingly innocuous events to trace and intercept terrorist activities before they hatch. Next on the agenda was the Organized Crime and Terrorism module which portrayed the various modus operandi and linkages between organized crime and terrorism. Mr. Frank Okyere, A Senior Research Associate from the KAIPTC displayed a rich understanding and mastery of the topic and led participant to appreciate the various ways in which money laundering, arms smuggling, drug trafficking and human smuggling could contribute to terrorism in diverse ways. Mr. Mustapha Abdallah brought up the rear at the end of the day leading participants to appreciate how people got radicalized and became violent extremists. He pointed out that radicalization was not a preserve of the Muslim religion but the religion had become a tool that was being used by militant and terrorist groups to perpetuate their violent agenda.

The following few days saw presentations from Mrs. Serwaa Allotey-Pappoe, who focused on Mediation in complex situations reminding participant of the need to peel off the layers of issues to get to the bottom of the real concerns of parties to a conflict. Ambassador Diarra from the research Centre at the EMP in Mali presented the legal and policy frameworks on Terrorism including the UN, AU and ECOWAS policies which sought fundamentally to prevent the predisposing factors that led people to resort to terrorism. The use, functions and objectives of intelligence in peacekeeping missions was also interrogated. This session was led by Col Paul Tanye-Kulono, an experienced soldier and Chief Coordinator of the KAIPTC. Participants were made aware of the distinctions between gathering intelligence for ones' country and for the UN mission. Further peacekeepers also had a role to play in capturing information that could be used as intelligence in the theatre of operations. Gender issues were also mainstreamed I the one week course as Mrs. Afua Lamptey, a Research Associate at the KAIPTC presented the module on Women Peacekeeping and Terrorism. Essentially the module clarified basic concepts on gender as well as touched on issues of vulnerability, role of women in terrorism and counter terrorism efforts as well as international legal and policy frameworks on women. It sought to highlight the complimentary role women play in peacekeeping as well as advocate for gender mainstreaming in peacekeeping missions.

Areas on Mine awareness and incidence scene preservation undertaken by the Malian military and police respectively, allowed participants to understand how mines and IEDs appeared and

were used by the militant groups. The latter also helped them understand the importance of preserving the scene after incidents in the field. These were followed by scenario based exercises which built upon and expanded the classroom sessions with suitable demonstrations depicting actual realities on the ground. Overall the modules were well executed and highly praised giving participants the necessary skills and knowledge in the areas of improving their capacities to terrorism in peacekeeping theatres in Africa.

Closing Ceremony

The five day course came to an end on Friday February, 1st, 2019 at 11:30am. An array of dignitaries were present to commemorate the last course in Mali. These included Ghana's ambassador to Mali, HE. Brig Gen (Rtd) Adu-Amanfoh, the commandant of the EMP, Cheick Dembele, the deputy commandant of the KAIPTC Brig. Gen Irvine Aryeetey, and the Head of the National Commission on SALW, Col Nema Sagara. The head of the Conflict Management Programme gave some information on the project implementation processes, this was followed by some remarks by the Course representative in the person of Ms Fanta Traore. Certificates were then handed to deserving participants after which the deputy commandant of the KAIPTC urged participants to use the knowledge gleaned in their work whilst thanking all partners for the great collaboration. This was followed by a speech from Col Sagara who reiterated the timeliness of the project and thanked all supporting institutions for their great insight for the course. Bringing up the rear, the Ambassador intoned the significance of the course and declared the course formally closed. Below are pictures of the dignitaries at the closing ceremony.



Evaluation

The following are some few comments that were made by the participants to the course.

The facilitators were excellent in their presentation; they gave practical examples and shared field experiences with us. This enhanced our understanding of various approaches used by the terrorist as well as the practical measures which can be put in place to prevent their activities.

The training has come at the right time due to the security situation in the country. From the presentations, I noted that some of the facilitators have vast knowledge on terrorism which aided my understanding of issues including terrorism planning cycle, IED's and sources of funds for terrorist activities among others.

The training has enhanced my understanding on terrorism issues. As an instructor involved in the development of trainings, I believe the knowledge will help me in developing modules related to terrorism and extremism.

As a result of the training, I was able to get a background information on the terrorism situation in Mali. Through the training I got to know the geo-political nature of the terrorism challenges currently faced by our country.

Challenges

Only 4 female participants were trained, this continues to be a challenge and must be addressed in the long to medium term.

Recommendations

Nomination of female participants. To address the issue of gender balance, the invitation letter to some countries must specify the exact numbers of female participants needed for the course.

Conclusion

The last course run at the EMP in Mali went well in terms of both the training content and attendance. Participants got a good sense of the conflict dynamics in Mali and more importantly their own unique roles in improving their response capacities to terrorism in peacekeeping theatres. Continuous engagement and capacity building courses such as these are therefore critical in the sub-region to reduce the threat and incidence of terrorism.