

COMMUNIQUÉ

2nd REGIONAL SECURITY SUMMIT, ABUJA 2016

As a follow up to the Paris Summit of 17 May 2014, which was dedicated to security in Nigeria, the 2nd Regional Security Summit, held in Abuja, Nigeria on 14 May 2016 to take stock of the achievements by Benin, Cameroon, Chad, Niger, Nigeria, with the support of the European Union, USA, France and the UK in the fight against Boko Haram Terrorist Group. The Summit also discussed the ongoing humanitarian response and plan for the post conflict phase of the fight against Boko Haram.

2. In solidarity with the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) member countries, and Benin and, the President of France, the Heads of State of Central African Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Ghana, Senegal and Togo, as well as representatives of the People's Republic of China, and other International, Regional and Sub-Regional Organisations participated in the Summit.

3. The Summit took note and adopted the following:

- a) Acknowledged the progress made since the holding of the Paris Summit, including the heavy toll, both in human life and budgetary terms, the fight against Boko Haram has taken on the affected countries. In this respect, called on the international community to continue supporting these countries;
- b) Acknowledged that defeating Boko Haram Terrorist Group will require a sustained comprehensive approach based on clear and coordinated plans of engagement at regional level. Such an approach must confront challenges relating to effective security operations, providing civilian security and civil administration, restoring stability, and promoting economic development and job creation to break the cycle of violence in all countries where Boko Haram is active;
- c) Recommended that Member States of LCBC, affected by insurgency, should initiate preventive measures such as utilizing the services of community and religious leaders to prevent and discourage impressionable youth from being radicalized and provide an exit route for those prepared to renounce violence through effective deradicalization program, alongside measures to encourage civilians involved in security operations to demobilize and return to conventional life;
- d) Commended the resilience of the LCBC member countries and Benin, with the support of the P3 and EU, for their continuing support of the MNJTF. The MNJTF will continue to serve as the avenue for operational planning and coordination, intelligence sharing and ensuring that security operations are conducted in compliance with International Standards on Human Rights and Rule of Law in the conduct of the war, striving particularly for the protection of civilians;

- e) Reiterated its commitment to give priority to the improvement of the public education system and spare no effort in the continuing search for the Chibok school girls and all those abducted by Boko Haram, by pooling intelligence resources;
- f) Stressed the importance of supporting the victims of sexual violence or forced marriage, by Boko Haram, and the need to provide them with appropriate support including reintegration to communities;
- g) Reaffirmed the conviction that defeating the insurgency requires more than a Military solution, it also requires government-led development action to tackle the root causes of insurgency, in the Lake Chad Basin, through the development of education and economic opportunities;
- h) Renewed commitment to take immediate action to address the humanitarian crisis and widespread hunger affecting millions of IDPs, refugees and host communities in Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and Niger. The critical situation of the inhabitants of the newly liberated towns and villages was also adjudged to be very pathetic. The summit agreed to provide and rehabilitate facilities in the devastated towns and villages with a view to creating conditions for citizens to live without fear of violence and return to conventional life and called for additional support from the international community;
- i) Took a special note of the 20,000 unaccompanied children (below the age of 18 years) displaced by the conflict and over 6000 minors, under the age of five years, and agreed to work together with international organisations to reunite those children with their families. Nigeria acknowledged deployment of the scientific and low cost methods already deployed in reconnecting lost and missing persons and will, as a last resort, undertake DNA profiling of the North East Region with a view to reconnecting these children with their biological families;
- j) Appreciated the burden of Cameroon, Chad and Niger, as countries hosting refugees, resulting from the insurgency, and agreed to work together to generate conditions of security and public services necessary to enable refugees to return home in safety and dignity, in cooperation with the relevant international aid agencies;
- k) Agreed to accelerate, within three (3) years, the implementation of the **Lake Chad Development and Climate Resilience Action Plan as presented on the margins of COP21 in Paris in consultation with communities of the Lake Chad**. The accelerated implementation of the Action Plan would go a long way in bringing development to the Lake Chad Basin;
- l) Took special note of the impact of climate change on the Lake Chad and its implications for recruitment of unemployed youths into terrorism and other crimes, urged the LCBC and other willing partners to pursue the goal of inter-basin water transfer project with the view to restoring its normal level, mitigating drought, re-establishing fishery, irrigation and navigation;

- m) Encouraged Nigeria to set up, with the assistance of P3, EU and the World Bank, a Coordinating Mechanism for the post-conflict rehabilitation and development of the North East Region of Nigeria based upon the findings of the recovery and peace building assessment. Also encouraged the other affected countries to set up similar mechanisms;
- n) Urged the African Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) to ensure the review and implementation of the Support Implementation Agreement signed with the LCBC and the MOU signed between the AUPSC, LCBC and Troop Contributing Countries and also take concrete steps towards the swift disbursement of funds provided by the donors for the MNJTF;
- o) Condemned in the strongest terms the recent terrorist attacks in Mali, Burkina Faso and Cote d'Ivoire and called for increased cooperation, intelligence gathering and sharing among states of West, East and Central Africa Regions as well as strategic partners in view of the transnational nature of terrorism;
- p) Noted the need for the countries of the sub-region to collaborate and cooperate with the effort by ECOWAS, ECCAS and the GGC to stem the tide of increasing criminality in the West and Central Africa;
- q) Underscored the efficacy of International collaboration in tackling terrorism and agreed to strengthen existing channels by sustaining consultation among them in order to effectively counter terrorism;
- r) Agreed to meet every two years and the Republic of ----- has agreed to host the 3rd Regional Security Summit in May 2018. Also, agreed was that two ordinary sessions of Ministers Meetings would be held twice every year in a venue to be decided through Diplomatic Channel. When necessary, an Extra-Ordinary Meeting of Ministers will be called to discuss urgent issues; and

4. At the end of the summit the leaders conveyed their profound appreciation to His Excellency, Mr. Francois Hollande, President of the Republic of France, for initiating this very laudable Summit and, at the same time, acknowledged His Excellency, Muhammadu Buhari, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria for his gracious hosting of this very successful Summit. Accordingly, the leaders placed on record their appreciation for the cordial and brotherly reception accorded to them since their arrival in Abuja.

Done in Abuja, Nigeria

Saturday, 14th day of May 2016