

Africa Overview

Westerners and Africans alike continued to be the victims of terrorism in Africa during 2003. Nevertheless, the cooperation of African governments in the war on terrorism improved and strengthened during the year.

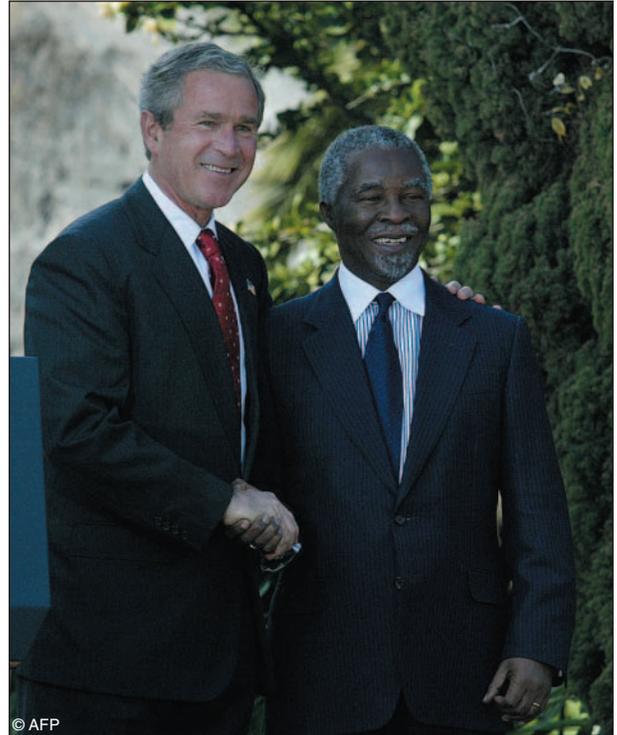
East Africa, particularly Somalia, continued to pose the most serious threat to American interests due to the presence of active al-Qaida elements.

In nearby Kenya, a policeman was killed in August when a terrorist suspect detonated a hand grenade, killing the suspect and the policeman, but permitting a confederate of the suspect to escape. As a result of this and other events, Kenyan authorities reevaluated their views of terrorism. They appear to have concluded that terrorism in Kenya is not just a foreign problem and that terrorism has put down roots in Kenya too.

The US East Africa Counterterrorism Initiative (EACTI) has dedicated sizeable resources to improving police and judicial counterterrorist capabilities in the East African countries of Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Djibouti, Eritrea, and Ethiopia. The EACTI also provides training and some equipment for special counterterrorism units for senior-level decisionmakers and for legislators who are concerned with drafting legislation on terrorist financing and money laundering. EACTI also includes a strong public diplomacy and outreach component.

During February and March, an Algerian terrorist group, the Salafist Group for Call and Combat (GSPC), kidnapped some 30 European tourists in Algeria. They took their captives to Mali, whose government was instrumental in securing their release in August. Members of the GSPC continued to hide in the Sahel region, crossing difficult-to-patrol borders between Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Algeria.

The United States continued to work with the Governments of Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Chad on the implementation of the Pan-Sahel Initiative, a program designed to assist those nations in protecting their borders, combating terrorism, and enhancing regional stability. Components of the program are intended to encourage the



President George W. Bush and South African President Thabo Mbeki shake hands after speaking to reporters in Pretoria, South Africa, 9 July 2003, during President Bush's trip through Sub-Saharan Africa.

participating countries to cooperate with each other against smuggling and trafficking in persons, as well as in the sharing of information.

Africans themselves have taken cooperative action against terrorism. Many nations made real efforts to sign and ratify the 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism. Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, and Sudan have signed all 12 protocols. The African Union (AU) has designated Algiers as the location of an AU counterterrorism center. Several nations have formed national counterterrorism centers.

The Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone no longer exists as a terrorist organization, although some former members have organized a political party that has a small following. The Allied Democratic Front terrorist organization in Uganda has lost the ability to function as a group. However, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) continues to kill and plunder Ugandan civilians and villages, even though the Ugandan Government has offered amnesty (though not for all) and negotiations

with the group. Sudan appears to have cut off the supplies for the LRA in large part. Sudan itself remains one of seven state sponsors of terrorism, however, and is discussed in the state sponsorship section of this report.

Angola

With a year having passed since the final peace agreement ending the Angolan civil war, Angola has made limited progress in reconstruction and national reconciliation. As a nonpermanent member of the United Nations Security Council, Angola actively supported UN antiterrorism efforts. It has publicly condemned acts of international terrorism and has worked domestically to strengthen immigration and border controls. In the past, Cabindan separatists have kidnapped Westerners, including an American citizen in 1990; however, there were no reports of terrorist incidents in Angola this year.

Djibouti

Djibouti, a staunch supporter in the global war on terrorism and a member of the Arab League, has taken a strong stand against international terrorist organizations and individuals. Djibouti hosts the only US military base in Sub-Saharan Africa. In addition to US forces, it hosts Coalition forces from four other countries including France, Germany, Spain, and Italy. There were no confirmed acts of domestic or transnational terrorism in Djibouti in 2003, but the Government took extraordinary measures from its limited resources to try and ensure the safety and security of Westerners posted in Djibouti. The Government also began an aggressive immigration campaign to remove illegal aliens from Djibouti in an attempt to weed out potential terrorists. The Government also has closed down terrorist-linked financial institutions and shared security information on possible terrorist activity in the region. The counterterrorism committee under President Guelleh moved to enhance coordination and action on information concerning terrorist organizations.

In October 2002, the United States established the Combined Joint Task Force—Horn of Africa (CJTF—HOA). Based in Djibouti, CJTF—HOA coordinates Coalition counterterrorism operations in six East African countries and Yemen.

Djibouti is a party to three of the 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism and signed the Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism on 15 November 2001.

Ethiopia

Ethiopia has been consistently helpful in its cooperation in the global war on terrorism. Significant counterterrorism activities included political, financial, media, military, and law-enforcement actions. To counter the threat from the Somalia-based Al-Ittihad al-Islami (AIAI), Ethiopia has undertaken increased military efforts to control its lengthy and porous border with Somalia. The Government also has enhanced counterterrorism coordination with the United States.

Ethiopia is a party to seven of the 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism.

Kenya

Kenya remains a responsive and active partner in the war on terrorism, providing assistance with ongoing terrorist investigations and stepping up efforts to target terrorist groups operating within Kenya. In 2003, Kenya began to more vigorously address institutional weaknesses that impede its ability to pursue terrorists and respond to threats. In April of 2003, Kenya published a draft “Suppression of Terrorism” bill and is in the process of redrafting the bill to incorporate concerns from civil society leaders who fear the bill may violate human rights.

Kenya and the United States continue to share information on suspected terrorists, including those associated with or supportive of al-Qaida. It has taken the initiative in arresting terrorist suspects and disrupting terrorist operations. Kenya, for example, is an active participant in the Terrorist Interdiction Program. As one of the nations affected by the East Africa bombings in 1998, Kenya remains fully cooperative in assisting the US investigations of those attacks.

The Kenyan Government has been more outspoken on the domestic nature of Kenya's terrorist threat and the involvement of Kenyan nationals in terrorist activity, particularly after a policeman was killed while attempting to apprehend



Mohamed Kubwa, Aboud Rogo Mohamed, Said Saggar Ahmed, and Mohamed Kubwa Seif, Kenyan suspects charged with murder in a suicide bomb attack on an Israeli-owned hotel in Mombasa, Kenya, wait in the courtroom's dock during their trial in Nairobi, 8 July 2003.

suspected terrorists in August 2003. Kenyan Cabinet ministers, some of whom had earlier downplayed the terrorist presence in Kenya, have called for communities to be vigilant in looking for terrorists working in their midst. Courageous leadership combined with success in revealing and disrupting terrorist activity has contributed to a nationwide change of attitude toward terrorism in 2003.

Kenya has ratified all 12 international counterterrorism conventions and protocols.

Mali

Mali has taken consistent and active steps to combat terrorism and has been particularly responsive on terrorist financing issues. The Government, for example, regularly distributes terrorist finance watch lists to the banking system.

The Malian Government has been receptive to the idea of strengthening its borders and is the key recipient of the Pan-Sahel Initiative, which is primarily focused on common border-security issues with Chad, Niger, Mali, and Mauritania. There were no acts of terrorism against US interests in Mali during 2003. However, the Government was actively involved in the freeing of European tourists in northern Mali who had been kidnapped in Algeria by the Algeria-based terrorist group the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat.

Mali has ratified all 12 UN conventions and protocols relating to terrorism.

Nigeria

Nigeria remained committed to the global war against terrorism and has continued diplomatic efforts in both global and regional forums concerning counterterrorism issues. The President and other African heads of state founded the New Partnership for African Development—geared toward sustainable development in Africa—which has helped African countries combat terrorism.

Nigeria has been helping to monitor threats to US citizens living in Nigeria and has cooperated with the United States on tracking and freezing terrorists' assets. Nigeria's relatively large and complex banking sector, combined with widespread corruption, makes combating terrorism financing more difficult, however. The Government has actively shared information about the rise of radical Islam in Nigeria—home of Africa's largest Muslim population.

Nigeria is a party to six of the 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism, including the Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism.

Rwanda

The Rwandan Government has continued to give full support to US-led efforts to combat terrorism. The Government has been responsive to US requests to eradicate terrorism financing and has increased surveillance of airports, border controls, and hotel registrations in an effort to identify potential terrorists. Rwanda established an intergovernmental counterterrorism committee and has an antiterrorism section in its police intelligence unit.

During 2003, the Government aggressively pursued the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda, formerly known as the Army for the Liberation of Rwanda (ALIR), an armed rebel force composed of former soldiers and supporters of the previous government that orchestrated the genocide in 1994. The group, which operates in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, employs terrorist tactics. In 1999, ALIR was responsible for the kidnapping and murder of nine persons, including two US tourists in Bwindi Park. With the assistance of Rwandan authorities in 2003, three

suspects in the attack were transferred to the United States for prosecution, and other evidence was obtained through interviews with witnesses.

Rwanda is a party to eight of the 12 international counterterrorism conventions and protocols.

Sierra Leone

The Government of Sierra Leone has cooperated in the struggle against terrorism. The Revolutionary United Front, essentially dismantled by the imprisonment of its leader Foday Sankoh in 2001, has disappeared as a terrorist organization, although some of its former members have organized into a political party that has attracted a small following. Allegations of West African and particularly Sierra Leonean diamonds being used by al-Qaida to finance terrorism have not been proven.

The government of Sierra Leone is a party to seven of the 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism.

Somalia

Somalia's lack of a functioning central government; protracted state of violent instability; and long coastline, porous borders, and proximity to the Arabian Peninsula make it a potential location for international terrorists seeking a transit or launching point to conduct operations elsewhere. Regional efforts to bring about a national reconciliation and establish peace and stability in Somalia were ongoing in 2003. The US Government does not have official relations with any entity in Somalia. Although the ability of Somali entities to carry out counterterrorism activities is constrained, some have taken limited actions in this direction.

Members of the Somali-based AIAI have committed terrorist acts in the past, primarily in Ethiopia. AIAI was originally formed in the early 1990s with a goal of creating an Islamic state in Somalia. In recent years, AIAI has become highly factionalized, and its membership is difficult to define. Some elements of AIAI continue to pose a regional domestic threat, other factions may be targeting Western interests in the region, while still other elements are concerned with humanitarian

issues. At least one faction is sympathetic to al-Qaida and has provided assistance to its members.

Somalia has signed, but has yet to become a party to, the Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism.

South Africa

South Africa has taken a number of actions in 2003 as part of the global war on terrorism. It has declared its support for the antiterrorism Coalition and has shared financial, law-enforcement, and intelligence information with the United States. Approximately one year after President Mbeki signed into law the Financial Intelligence Center legislation, the center is focusing on suspicious transaction reports and plans to broaden its services in the coming year.

Parliament's National Assembly adopted broad antiterrorism legislation entitled Protection of Constitutional Democracy Against Terrorists and Related Activities Bill. The measure is expected to pass the bicameral legislature in early 2004. Despite initial opposition to previous versions of the bill, all South African political parties supported the final version.

Public and private statements by South Africa have been supportive of US counterterrorism efforts. President Mbeki has, on several occasions, voiced his opinion that there is no justification for terrorism.

In the past year, South Africa acceded to four United Nations antiterrorism conventions, making South Africa a party to nine of the 12 UN antiterrorism conventions.

Tanzania

Tanzania continues to be a supportive partner in the global war against terrorism. It has cooperated on several multiyear programs to build law-enforcement capacity, enhance border security, improve civil aviation security, and combat money laundering and terrorist finance.

Tanzanian and US authorities established a close working relationship after the bombing in 1998 of the US Embassy in Dar es Salaam and have cooperated in bringing bombing suspects to trial in New York and Dar es Salaam; one suspect stood trial in Tanzania in 2003. Although cooperative, Tanzanian law enforcement authorities still have a limited capacity to investigate terrorist suspects and bring them to justice. A comprehensive Prevention of Terrorism Act—approved in late 2002—has yet to be enforced, and implementing regulations for the law have not been drafted.

Tanzania is a party to seven of the 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism.

Uganda

Uganda continued its firm stance against local and international terrorism in 2003. A new anti-money laundering bill is slated to go before Parliament for adoption in early 2004. In 2002, the Government enacted the Suppression of Terrorism Act, which imposes a mandatory death penalty for terrorists and potential death penalty for their sponsors and supporters. The Act's list of terrorist organizations includes al-Qaida, the LRA, and the Allied Democratic Front (ADF).

The Ugandan military continued its successful operations against the ADF, resulting in a decrease in ADF activities in western Uganda. There were no bombings by the ADF in 2003, although there were numerous fatal attacks by the LRA against civilian targets in northern Uganda.

Uganda is a party to 10 of the 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism.