



**Joint Statement on Behalf of The A3 (Kenya, Niger,
Tunisia) plus Saint Vincent and The Grenadines**

Delivered by
H.E DR. Martin Kimani,
Permanent Representative of The Republic of Kenya to
the United Nations

during the Open VTC on the

**United Nations Office in West Africa and Sahel
(UNOWAS)**

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Please check against delivery

Thank you, Mr President,

1. I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the A3 +1 members of the Council namely, Kenya, Niger, and Tunisia + St Vincent and the Grenadines.
2. Before delivering this statement, let me begin by conveying my sincere condolences to the people and Government of Niger, through Ambassador Abarry, for the lives lost during the wanton attacks meted on innocent civilians on 2nd January in the southwestern region of Niger. This heinous act demonstrates not only the volatility, but also the transboundary nature of security threats in the region. As we stand in solidarity with the Government and the people of Niger, our resolve should be to do whatever we can to eliminate the threat of terrorism in the region and the continent at large.

Mr. President,

3. Let me join other delegations in thanking SRSG Mohamed **Ibn** Chambas for his briefing and for his dedication to promote dialogue through good offices, which have certainly contributed in overcoming political impasses in the subregion. In this regard, we remain convinced that preventive diplomacy should continue to be a priority task of UNOWAS. We also commend him for his leadership that has seen UNOWAS efficiently discharge its mandate against a backdrop of an increasingly challenging regional environment.
4. We welcome the positive developments in the region including the successful conduct of elections in Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia and Niger. **We are encouraged by the fact that the people of these countries, aspiring and longing for peace and prosperity, have shown political maturity during these elections. The region's achievements in democratic governance ought to be consolidated.**
5. We also welcome the addition of climate induced security threats to UNOWAS mandate as a pragmatic acknowledgment of the clear climate-security nexus in the entire region. Beyond the excellent role being played by UNOWAS in this regard, it is our view that it is now time that the UN and the Security Council engage on concrete actions on how to respond to climate and security threats,

including on the proposal for the establishment of an office of a Special Envoy of the Secretary General for Climate and Security.

6. It is important to prioritize support for countries in the region to build resilience and ensure tangible progress in the actualization of the aspirations of the UNOWAS climate mandate. We stress the need for a holistic approach involving political, security and socio-economic development interventions that will lead to lasting peace and stability in the region.
7. Furthermore, along climate change issues, intercommunal violence is exacerbating the fragility of the region and becoming the bedrock of recruitment for terrorists and armed groups. Recent events in the tri-border area in central Sahel, in Nigeria or in Chad are just another reminder that more concrete attention need to be dedicated to this issue. Hence, the A3+1 stresses the urgent need for a holistic solution by forging stronger partnership between the G5 Sahel, the UN and development partners such as the World Bank and European Union through a Joint Project that will concretely tackle the root cause of intercommunal violence and prevent their recurrence.
8. Also, as most challenges are often transboundary in nature, and cannot, as such, be dealt with by a single country alone, we urge the UNOWAS, Peacebuilding Commission and all partners to give greater support to regional initiatives such as the new cross-border cooperation pilot project, called Integrated Territorial Development Project, between the municipalities of the Sahel (Burkina Faso), Timbuktu (Mali) and Tillabéri (Niger) regions – (home to 5.5 million inhabitants), planned for a period of one year and financed to the tune of \$1.8 million by the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU).
9. The pervasive insecurity and political instability in the region call for the structured and focused implementation of the UNOWAS mandate to effectively address the root causes towards sustainable development. We encourage enhanced cooperation between UNOWAS, the African Union and other sub-regional Organizations in collaboration and coordination with key players in the region, neighbouring regions, as well as with regional and international organisations in the search for practical solutions, **including through enhancing the regional implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).**

Mr. President,

10. The continued terrorist attacks against civilians, security, and defence forces as well as peacekeepers in Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, and Lake Chad Basin countries remains **a matter of great** concern. Early warning mechanism plays a key role in the concerted efforts of the region and international partners. To that effect, we call on UNOWAS to resume supporting the G5 Sahel's Sahelian Center for Threat Analysis and Early Warning.
11. We are encouraged by UN Support Plan which prioritises the empowerment of women and youth for peace and development in West Africa and the Sahel and call on UNOWAS to redouble its efforts in supporting the various stakeholders in the region to focus on women and youth for development and peace.
12. The A3+1 **expresses grave concern about** the significant impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on livelihoods and governance structures and systems including electoral and political dialogue processes; humanitarian situations; socio-economic situation; and regional and multilateral engagements **and** commend UNOWAS for its relentless efforts in support of the COVID-19 response in the region, **as well as the coordinated regional response led by ECOWAS.**
13. Finally, we believe that the most sustainable solution to the situation in West Africa and the Sahel lies in comprehensive strategies that address the root causes of insecurity and instability.

I thank you