



Media Foundation for West Africa
&
Centre National de Presse Norbert Zongo
&
Maison de la Presse du Mali

July 5, 2022

Accra, Ghana

Joint Statement

The Centre National de Presse Norbert Zongo (CNP-NZ) of Burkina Faso, the Maison de la Presse of Mali, and the Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA), their regional partner in Ghana, have learnt with great shock and outrage of the recent terrorist attacks on populations in Burkina Faso and Mali.

Recently, on July 2-3, 2022 and July 3-4, 2022, terrorists attacked Namissiguima (northern Burkina Faso) and Bourasso (northwestern Burkina Faso) respectively, killing about 30 people.

On June 11, 2022, terrorists struck overnight in the commune of Seytenga, part of Seno province (Burkina Faso), killing at least 86 people, according to government official reports.

On June 18-19, 2022, extremist groups attacked several villages in the Bankass circle, Bandiagara (Mopti region, Mali), killing some 132 civilians and burning down several homes and shops, according to government reports.



On March 4-5, 2022, a terrorist attack on an army base in central Mali killed at least 27 soldiers and wounded 33 more, the government of Mali said, adding that at least seven soldiers were missing following the complex attack in the rural commune of Mondoro.

These recent attacks were also preceded by other violent and cruel acts of barbarity that caused millions to flee their homes.

Notable recent attacks include:

- On August 8, 2021, heavily armed men on motorbikes massacred more than 50 civilians in Ansongo (in the Gao region of Mali), leaving several wounded, houses ransacked and burned, and carrying away animals.
- On June 4-5, 2021, armed men attacked the village of Solhan in north-eastern Burkina Faso killing some 160 people.
- On May 29-30, 2020 there were attacks in the eastern Kompienga region, and in the northern provinces of Sanmatenga and Loroum. This includes the attack by unidentified gunmen in a cattle market which killed at least 25 people.
- On November 14, 2021, 50 gendarmes were killed by an armed terrorist group in Inata, in the Sahel Region.

We note with concern the fact that the phenomenon of violent extremism in the Sahel region is increasingly spilling over to the coastal states with recent attacks reported in Togo and Benin.

These attacks, and the threat of kidnapping, have considerably undermined the press freedom environment in Burkina Faso and Mali. Journalists and media houses having to report the facts and cover these events as well as counter-terrorist efforts run the risk of being branded and targeted by either side. Besides the security risks, the terror attacks have negatively affected economic activities including the advertising market.



While we strongly condemn these brazen attacks, the MFWA together with its partners in Mali and Burkina Faso wishes to express its full solidarity and its sincere empathy to the people of Burkina Faso and Mali. We pray for the peaceful rest of the souls of the many civilian casualties and members of the defense and security forces who have lost their lives in the line of the patriotic duty of defending their country and compatriots against violent extremists. We wish the wounded civilians and members of security forces speedy recovery.

The MFWA, CNP-NZ and the Maison de la Presse also express their support to defense and security forces in their valiant efforts to neutralise the terrorists, and restore peace and stability in these two countries.

We urge ECOWAS Member States to remove all obstacles that may hinder the efforts of Burkina Faso and Mali in the fight against extremist groups.

We commend the media in these countries for its important contribution to the national efforts to contain the extremist violence, despite the numerous security and sustainability challenges confronting the media sector.

Giving the increasing regionalization of the unprecedented violence, we urge all countries in the sub-region, under the aegis of ECOWAS, to lend support to the counter-terrorism efforts of the governments of Mali and Burkina Faso.