

REPUBLIQUE DE COTE D'IVOIRE

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Speech

**of Honourable Minister in the Office of the President in
charge of Defence**

**at the 2nd Meeting of Heads of Intelligence and
Security Services of the Countries Sahelo-Saharan
Region**

Abidjan, 20 and 21 June 2013

- Mr. President Pierre Buyoya;
- Honourable Minister of Presidential Affairs;
- The National Intelligence Coordinator;
- The Representative of the Commission of the African Union;
- The Representative of the ECOWAS Commission;
- The Representative of the UN;
- Distinguished Heads of Intelligence and Security Services in the Region;
- General Officers, Senior Officers, Officers and NCOs;
- Ladies and Gentlemen, Invited Guests,
- All Protocols observed,

It is with real pleasure that I chair this morning the meeting of the Heads of Intelligence and Security Services of the countries of the Sahelo-Saharan region of the Continent, organised under the auspices of the African Union.

On behalf of the President of the Republic, His Excellency Alassane Ouattara and the Government, I welcome you or wish you the traditional "AKWABA" to Abidjan, in Cote d'Ivoire land.

I respectfully commend President Pierre Buyoya for his contribution to the establishment of AFISMA and MINUSMA and all the Heads of Intelligence Services who have travelled to Abidjan.

The choice of Cote d'Ivoire thus honours us, bears witness to the esteem of the African Union for our country whose Head of State chairs the ECOWAS since 18 months.

The Malian crisis affecting the Sahelo-Saharan region has increased the risk of insecurity in the area and the use of our intelligence and security services.

Today, with the operation of the AFISMA, supported by the Serval operation, then MINUSMA, by a resolution of the UN Security Council, with the signing of the Ouagadougou Agreement these days there is some kind of calm which is observed. However, the terrorist threat remains and is evidenced by the "suicide" operations in Mali, in the neighbouring countries such as Algeria, Niger and Somalia showing that no one is safe from this danger. We must remain vigilant

Consequently, while remaining serene, it behoves us to take appropriate measures to face the situation, and one of them is to build the intelligence and security services capacity. This can only be done through the exchange of intelligence information, develop common strategies, the anticipation and good analysis of threats, of circuits and networks, in brief, through cooperation and pooling of resources.

To attain this objective, the cooperation tools already exist within the African Union, like the Fusion and Liaison Unit (UFL), the African Centre for Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT) or the Committee of Intelligence and Security Services in Africa (CISSA), whose representatives I salute.

The intelligence services are often the poor relatives of the security systems in Africa, because the result is obtained through patience and time while developed countries, the Governments devote huge means. We, therefore, appeal to our bilateral and multilateral partners to increase their support.

In Côte d'Ivoire, the threats that we have been experiencing since the post-election crisis, led us to develop good cooperation with our neighbours. This enabled us to improve the level of security and to anticipate these risks.

The African Union becomes a privileged instrument with Regional organisations like ECOWAS to enhance intra-continental cooperation.

I would like, therefore, to thank the AU, ECOWAS, the UN, the EU and all the partners, present or absent, for all the efforts made to preserve the security of people and their property in the Sahelo-Saharan region.

At this juncture of my remarks, may I congratulate and encourage the initiators of this meeting which is the result of the Ministerial meeting held on 17 March 2013 in Nouakchott on the Enhancement of Security Cooperation and the Operationalisation of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) in the Sahelo-Saharan region.

The meeting is also a follow up of the Bamako meeting of 18 April 2013. While wishing you a pleasant stay in Abidjan, I declare open the meeting.

Long live African Cooperation!

I thank you.