

8<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE MEETING OF THE PARTIES  
TO THE WATER CONVENTION

HIGH-LEVEL SPECIAL SESSION

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Lake Chad Basin Commission

**Lake Chad Basin Commission's Strategies for  
Preventing Conflict and Ensuring Peace and Security**

The LCBC was established by the Fort Lamy Convention on 22 May 1964 by the following founding members: Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and Niger. They have been joined by Central African Republic – 1994 and Libya – 2008 to raise the current membership to six. Sudan, Egypt, the Republic of Congo, and Democratic Republic of Congo enjoy observer status.

2. The three mandates of the LCBC which are designed for conflict prevention, management and resolution, are as follows:

- i. To manage the waters of Lake Chad and the other trans-boundary water resources in the Lake Chad basin in a sustainable and equitable way;
- ii. To conserve the ecosystem of the conventional basin;
- iii. To promote regional integration and safeguard peace and security in the conventional basin.

3. Member countries have been united in their resolve to guarantee security to the people although several factors, some self-made, others beyond their control, have stood in the way. They include:

- i. Neglect of the region by each of the four riparian states, resulting in lack of development;
- ii. Environmental challenges: desertification, drying up of the lake;
- iii. Terrorism and the resultant humanitarian crisis.

4. Since its establishment in 1964, the LCBC has adopted several strategies to prevent the emergence of conflicts among the communities and among member states. They include:

i. **Establishment of the LCBC**

- a. The establishment of the LCBC as a cross-regional treaty-based organisation cutting across language barriers and different colonial experiences, happening as early as 1964, is, in itself, a unifier and a pillar of regional integration.
- b. The **resolve of the leaders**, since the founding fathers, to bend over backwards and solve all problems amicably has been central to the success of the LCBC;

ii. **Periodic Consultations**

- a. The structure of the LCBC is such that enables Periodic consultations at various levels of authority (experts, ministers) up to the Summit, which is the highest decision-making level, to nip any problem in the bud;
- b. A **common training** institution, the Ngala School, and the periodic joint training workshops also promote bonding and camaraderie among the various categories of trainees of diverse nationalities.

iii. **Regulatory provisions.**

The various statutes of the LCBC have inbuilt mechanisms for conflict prevention and settlement of disputes when they arise.

- a. In addition to the Fort Lamy Convention of 1964 and the Statutes of the Commission, which form the constitutive documents of the LCBC, there are **bilateral agreements** between member countries that regulate the use of the waters on their common borders.

b. Chapter 15 of the **Water Charter**, in particular, provides the procedure for peaceful settlement of disputes.

iv. **Border management.**

Notwithstanding the conflict prevention measures taken by the LCBC, a few incidents did occur between members. The period of drought of the 1980s and 1990s witnessed several competing claims over new islands that suddenly appeared on the lake. Member countries commissioned **border delimitation and demarcation** exercises and **joint border patrols** to curb transboundary criminal activities in the area;

v. **Military cooperation.**

To address the threat of Boko Haram insurgents, the four affected member countries entered into multilateral military cooperation agreement which gave birth to the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF), and bilateral military arrangements between the national operations of neighboring countries.

-The cross-boundary security cooperation resulted in a **new political rapprochement** that did not exist before, thereby deepening the developing regional integration process

vi. **Stabilization Programme**

At the moment, humanitarian and other challenges in the affected areas are a major source of concern for peace and security in the area. There is, therefore, an urgent need to stabilize the situation.

a. The LCBC, with the support of the African Union, has produced a **Regional Stabilization Strategy**, which was validated by the Council of Ministers of the LCBC on 30 August 2018 in Abuja.

b. The 9-pillar strategy seeks to establish a common approach and an inclusive framework for all stakeholders to support a timely, coordinated, and effective transition from stabilization to early

recovery and the resumption of the stalled development process in the affected area.

- c. The implementation of the strategy will be guided and overseen by a steering committee of stakeholders, reporting to the LCBC Council of Ministers.

**vii. Sustainable development**

The war against Boko Haram cannot be said to have been won until poverty and the other underlying factors that facilitated the acceptance and spread of the Boko Haram ideology are addressed through development.

- a. The development programs, which are captured in the LCBC's Vision 2025 and the Strategic Action plan, include the Sustainable Development Programme of the Lake Chad (**PRODEBALT**); and
- b. the follow up project, the Programme for the Rehabilitation and Strengthening of the Resilience of the Socio-Ecological Systems of the Lake Chad Basin (**PRESIBALT**);
- c. the Inter-Basin Water Transfer Project (**IBWTP**) aimed at recharging the Lake.
- d. The Emergency Program on Priority Development for the Youths and Vulnerable People of the Lake Chad Basin (**PURDEP**) (for poverty alleviation among the youths and other vulnerable persons). It was authorized by Council Meeting of 13 April 2015 comprising.

5. Given the centrality of water security to the achievement of the larger human security, the most durable solution to the Lake Chad crisis is the one that seeks to restore water to the lake because the lack of it is one of the root causes of the problem. More than any other single factor, it is the shrinking of the lake that deprive the people of their means of livelihood.

6. This underscores the urgent need to recharge the Lake to enable the farmers, the fishermen and the herders to resume their economic activities. Several options of recharging the lake have been examined and the most viable one seems to be the Inter-Basin Water Transfer from the Congo Basin to the Lake Chad Basin.

Astana, Kazakhstan  
10 October 2018