

# West Africa Network for Peacebuilding- Ghana

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS FOR PEACE

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## HUMAN SECURITY EARLY WARNING BRIEF

JANUARY TO MARCH 2022

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### ABOUT THE EW BRIEF

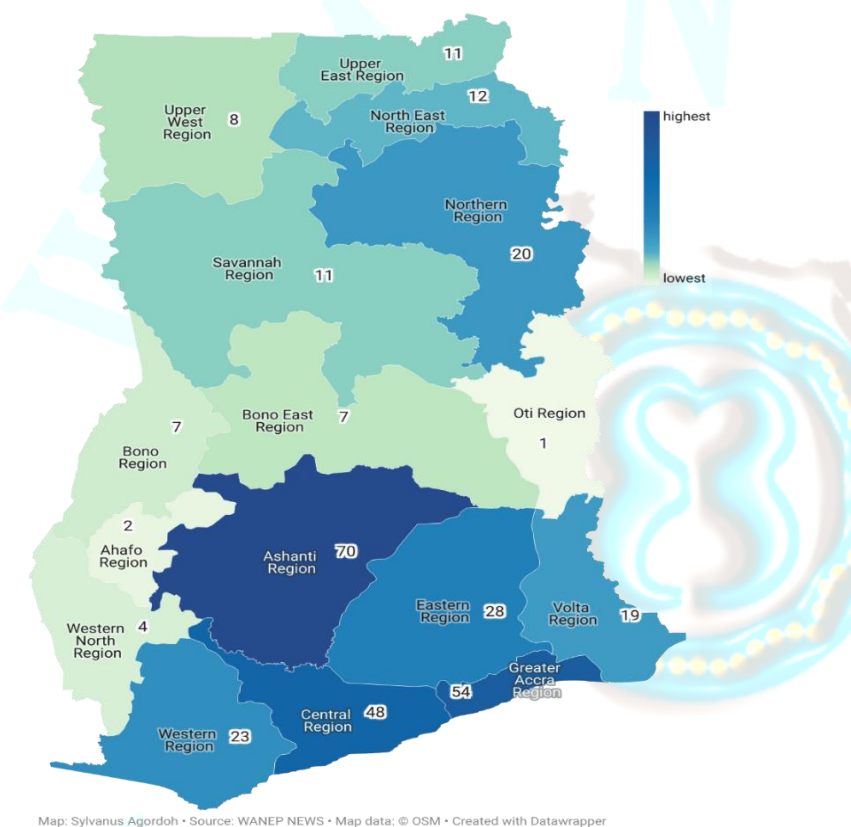
The Human Security Early Warning Brief from the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP), Ghana, is a periodic bulletin, which highlights human security concerns within each period under review. The briefs are prepared based on data from WANEP's online Early Warning System and predefined indicators reported by Regional and Community Monitors across the sixteen regions of the country especially in hotspot communities. Analysis of the data is informed by proximate causes and threats to human security in the country and additional reference to relevant sources of information and stakeholder interface interaction. The brief contains recommendations for informed responses by critical stakeholders in Peace and Security across the country. It complements the broader National Early Warning System (NEWS) of WANEP on Human Security with various prioritised thematic areas.

WANEP - GHANA

## INTRODUCTION

Within the first quarter of 2022, three hundred and twenty three (323) human security related incidents with a total casualty of 596 (227 fatalities, 369 injuries) were recorded in the WANEP-Ghana National Early Warning System (NEWS).<sup>10</sup> In terms of frequency of incidents recorded in each region, the Ashanti (70), the Greater Accra (54), and the Central (48) regions recorded the most incidents.<sup>11</sup> The incidents captured for the remaining thirteen regions were less than 25 each as presented in the Figure 1 below.

**Figure 1: Distribution of Incident within the Quarter**



**Quarterly Focus**

- ✓ Parliament passes E-Levy amidst minority walk out.<sup>1</sup>
- ✓ Police Officers suspected in the syndicate responsible for the killing of a fellow colleague in bullion van armed robberies.<sup>2</sup>
- ✓ President Akufo Addo's State of the Nations Address 2022 (SONA)<sup>3</sup> 10,875 km of roads built inconsistent with the data presented by the Ministry of Roads and Highways<sup>4</sup>
- ✓ Apeatse explosion incident<sup>5</sup> Thirteen people killed; 59 others injured as the entire village is raised down.<sup>6</sup>
- ✓ Bawku Conflict between the Kusasis and the Mamprusis. Three military officers injured, at least four civilians confirmed dead in renewed bawku chieftaincy/ethnic conflict<sup>7</sup>
- ✓ Violent Extremist attacks in Burkina Faso with proximity to Ghanaian communities such as Sapeliga, Pulmakom and Kulungungu in the Bawku West District.<sup>8</sup>
- ✓ Demonstrations and strikes by UTAG Lecturers and other labour unions and the consequent impact on social service delivery.<sup>9</sup>

The category of Incidents with the highest frequency are **Arrests/Detentions** (100), **Homicides** (49), **Road Accidents** (34), and **Armed Robberies** (26).<sup>12</sup>

The incidents with the highest fatalities as captured by the WANEP-Ghana National Early Warning System within the quarter were road accidents (116), and homicides (49). Majority of the injuries resulted from road accidents (231) and explosions (63).<sup>13</sup> A regional level distribution of the data and risks considered most threatening based on the data captured during the period are presented in the ensuing pages. The objective of this presentation is to contribute to strengthening peace and security, with informed data by highlighting the threats, impact and recommend options for stakeholders' responses.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.graphic.com.gh/news/politics/e-levy-passed-but-minority-walks-out-on-motion.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.myjoyonline.com/4-more-officers-one-civilian-arrested-in-bullion-van-robberies-investigation-police/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.myjoyonline.com/sona-2022-akufo-addo-rallies-support-for-fight-against-illegal-mining-green-ghana-project/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://thefourthestategh.com/2022/03/31/sona-2022-has-the-npp-govt-indeed-built-10875-km-of-new-roads/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/disaster/ot-2022-000152-gha>

<sup>6</sup> <https://thefourthestategh.com/2022/03/31/sona-2022-has-the-npp-govt-indeed-built-10875-km-of-new-roads/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://wanep.org/wanep/news-situation-tracking-three-military-officers-injured-at-least-four-civilians-confirmed-dead-in-renewed-bawku-chieftaincy-ethnic-conflict/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://3news.com/govt-beefs-up-security-in-bawku-over-jihadist-attack/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.graphic.com.gh/news/general-news/utag-suspends-strike-action-indefinitely.html>

<sup>10</sup> WANEP Ghana NEWS Monitoring

<sup>11</sup> Ibid

<sup>12</sup> Ibid

<sup>13</sup> Ibid

## REGIONAL VULNERABILITIES

The Table 1, below, presents a nationwide summary of incidents captured by WANEP-Ghana's NEWS within the quarter ending March 31, 2022. It presents the distribution of incidents captured in all the regions of the country and further shows incident categories and the frequencies recorded under each category.

**Table 1: Cumulative Regional Security Threats Recorded for The First Quarter, 2022.**

Incidents	Ahafo	Ashanti	Bono East	Bono	Central	Eastern	Greater Accra	North East	Northern	Oti	Savannah	Upper East	Upper West	Volta	Western	Western North	Totals Per Incident
Armed Attacks	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Armed Clashes	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	1	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	7
Armed Robberies	0	8	2	0	2	0	5	1	1	0	2	1	0	0	4	0	26
Arrests	0	16	2	1	15	9	19	5	6	0	3	2	3	10	7	2	100
Bee Invasion	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Building Collapse	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chieftaincy Disputes	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3
Counterfeiting	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Demonstrations	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Destructive Rainstorm	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Disease Outbreaks	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	4
Drowning	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Drug Trafficking	0	1	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	5
Ethnic Disputes	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Explosions	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3
Fire Outbreak	0	5	0	0	2	0	4	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	14
Fraud	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Homicides	0	15	0	0	3	4	6	4	1	0	2	4	2	5	2	1	49
Illegal Arms Manufacturing	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Illegal Mining	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
Impersonation	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Land disputes	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Lynching	0	4	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	11
Physical Assaults	0	1	0	0	4	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	8

Rape/Defilement	0	1	0	0	6	2	9	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20
Road Accidents	2	6	1	1	6	4	3	0	2	1	0	0	1	2	4	1	34
Smuggling	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Strike	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Suicide	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Theft	0	1	0	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	9
Youth Clashes	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	5
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>323</b>

Disaggregated frequency data by location and incident type **Source:** WANEP Ghana National Early Warning System (NEWS)



## HIGHLIGHT OF THE TOP THREE RISKS

Per the data captured of the incident categories within the period, the most recurrent threats include criminal issues such as **homicides** and **armed robbery**, as well as **road accidents**. These are highlighted based on the frequency of their occurrence, the number of casualties, and the potential for increasing vulnerabilities if stringent mitigation measures are not implemented.

### Risk 1: Homicide (including attempts & Suicides) Events

Among the various crimes committed within the quarter, homicide is the most recurrent. This has raised concerns about the safety of vulnerable populations, particularly women and young girls. WANEP Ghana's statistics show 52 cases of homicides (including suicides) were reported. These reports however represent only those reported in the media and captured by the system.

From figure 2 below, data collected within the period indicates the Ashanti region had the highest number of homicides (15 murders and 2 suicides) as indicated in the graph with the highest casualties of 21 (19 deaths, 2 injured), compared to the other regions.

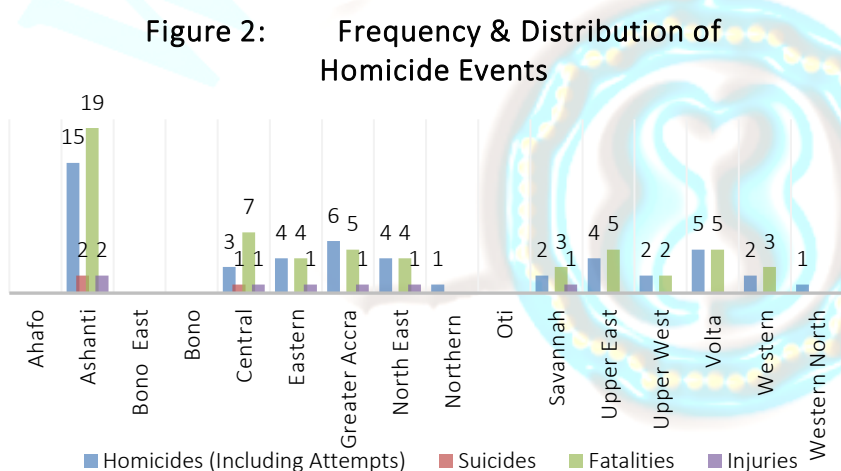


Figure 2 Indicates the spread and frequency of homicide incidents across the regions in the country. (Data Source: WANEP NEWS)

Apart from the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2021 in which the Central region recorded the highest frequency of cases of homicide, the Ashanti region had the highest frequencies consistently from the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter to the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter in 2021, and this first quarter of 2022.

This trend implies preventive and mitigative responses are required to curb the trend in homicide cases in the Ashanti region.

The sources relating to these homicides included chieftaincy, armed robbery, domestic assaults, mob actions and murder for body parts. A new dynamic in the trends in homicide cases is ritual murder, with women particularly being the victims. For example, a female victim in the Ashanti region was found dead at Taabre in the Atwiman Nwabiagya North District with her internal organs and head missing.<sup>14</sup> Several other incidents occurred in which the bodies were dumped at locations although with no visible sign for organ harvesting at the time of reporting. For instance, in the Central region, the body of a 24-year-old man was dumped in a river at Abesewa in the Upper Denkyira East District.<sup>15</sup> In the Northern region, the body of a man was discovered at a refuse dump in the Nyohini forest located within the Tamale Metropolis.<sup>16</sup> The fear and panic resulting from these homicides among the populations and in the specific communities is a cause for concern, especially within regional dynamics of rising incidences of cross border crimes, and the threat of violent extremism.

### Risk 2: Road Accidents

The second highest threat as captured by the WANEP-Ghana early warning system within the period is road accidents. Nationwide, the number of accidents reported in the media and from WANEP-Ghana's monitors during the quarter was 34 as against 38 in the quarter before. Of these incidents, 116 people as against 90 in the previous quarter, died, while 213 people as against 141 in the previous quarter, sustained various degrees

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Woman-60-found-dead-with-head-decapitated-other-parts-of-the-body-missing-1473410>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Man-24-stabbed-to-death-dumped-in-river-at-Abesewa-1437550>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Man-butchered-to-death-in-Nyohini-forest-1436350>

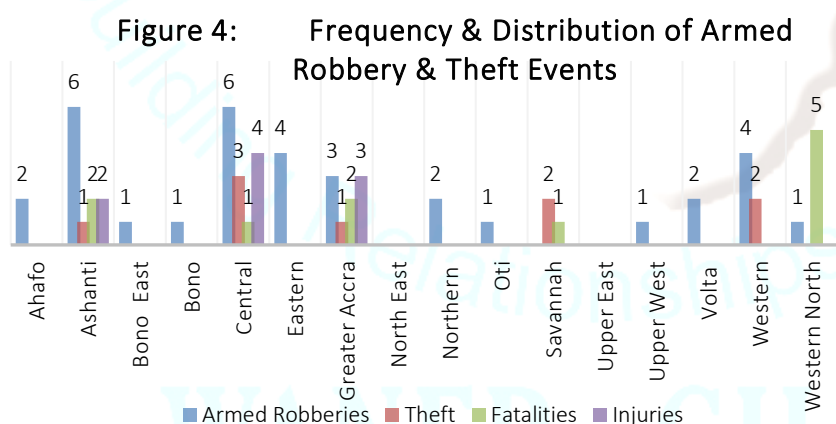
of injuries.<sup>17</sup> This depicts a rise in the number of casualties as well as a consistent frequency in road accidents. The Central Region remains consistent in the lead from last quarter, however equalized in frequency with the Ashanti region in this quarter as depicted in figure 3 below.<sup>18</sup>

Again, it can be observed from figure 3 that, although the individual frequencies were generally low, if compared with cases of homicides, the casualties recorded were higher. This is particularly evident in the Eastern Region, which recorded high frequency in injuries (58). Additionally, 28 fatalities were recorded in the Western Region in the reporting period.

It is however important to note that in the Western-North region, where a single accident was recorded, it had the highest number of casualties in one instance, as compared to the other accidents across the country. This accident occurred on the Bibiani-Anhwiaso road where a fully loaded Sprinter bus collided head-on with a Metro Mass transit bus, after a misjudged overtaking. Thirteen (13) people lost their lives while twenty (20) sustained injuries.<sup>19</sup>

To reduce the incidences and impact of road accidents on human security in Ghana, a multi-sectorial strategy is imperative. Existing traffic laws and policies should be strengthened and enforced at all levels. Also, public education and sensitization on road safety measures should create space for inclusive participation and engagement of all stakeholders given the impact of road accidents on the populations in the country.

### Risk Three: Armed Robberies and Theft



Thirty-five (35) key incidents in total were captured for crime especially armed robberies (26) and theft (9) in this reporting period. Eleven (11) related fatalities and 9 injuries resulted from these crimes. As shown in the Figure 4, the occurrences were concentrated in the Ashanti and Central regions.

Threat of armed robbery in Ghana is a cause for concern, as mirrored in the data projected in Figure 4. Armed

robbery was listed among the top 5 criminal incidents in the country in 2021, according to a public safety and crime report.<sup>20</sup> Seventy-four percent (74%) of reported armed robbery cases featured weapons, and more

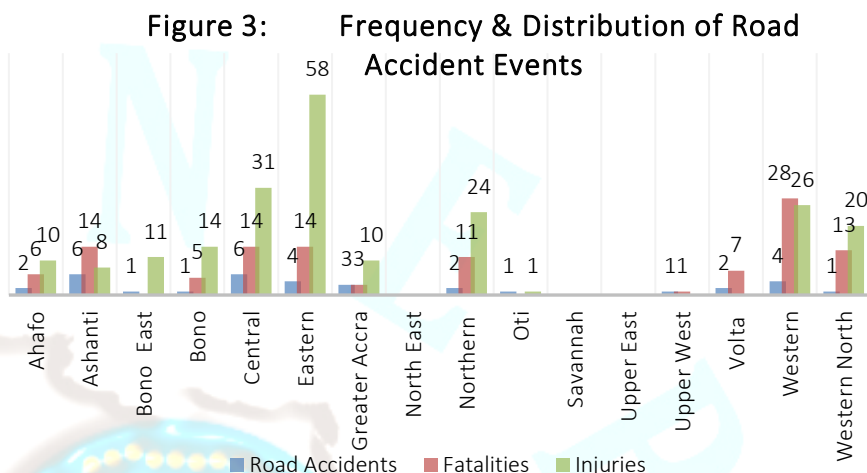


Figure 3 Indicates the spread and frequency of road accident events across the regions in the country. (Data Source: WANEP NEWS)

<sup>17</sup> WANEP Ghana NEWS Monitoring

<sup>18</sup> WANEP Ghana NEWS Monitoring

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.adomonline.com/shs-students-others-feared-dead-in-bibiani-anhwiaso-road-accident/>

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.ghanabusinessnews.com/2021/07/30/violent-crimes-in-ghana-up-by-20-from-january-to-june-2021-report/>

than 95 percent of the robberies took place outside of residences. The cases mostly occurred on the roads and highways, offices, business or trade spaces, places of worship, and other transitional locations.<sup>21</sup> The frequency in armed robberies and related crimes could be ascribed to people's worsening economic circumstances, perceived expansion of wealth disparities and circumstantial lack of police presence in some instances. Perception of affluence produces uneasiness for such people, especially in metropolitan and peri-urban settings where these differences are clearly noticed. According to a World Bank research, Ghana has 12% youth unemployment and over 50% underemployment, both of which are greater than the total unemployment rate in Sub-Saharan African countries.<sup>22</sup> Efforts by the current and previous governments to generate long-term employment opportunities to absorb the youth bulge, particularly graduates, appear inadequate to meeting the challenge. This situation continues to affect the socio-economic livelihoods of the country's most vulnerable young people, driving some of them to commit armed robberies as well as other crimes.

Of particular concern in the country is the threat of violent extremism as well as radicalization. Ghana was rank 93rd along with other countries, in the Global Terrorism Index.<sup>23</sup> Compared worldwide, the country is among the safest locations. Notwithstanding this, data from the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) shows a shift in the dynamics of violent extremism, with it becoming more concentrated in regions and countries suffering from political instability and conflict. Violent conflict remains a primary driver of terrorism, with over 97% of terrorist attacks in 2021 taking place in countries in conflict.<sup>24</sup>

In Ghana's case, the chieftaincy, ethnic and land conflicts that persist in parts of the country, the influx of small arms & light weapons, and irregular migration propelled also by porous borders, increasing operation of violent extremist groups in Burkina Faso and radicalization of Ghanaian youth by jihadists may be the recipe that changes the country's state of security to insecurity. The data shows that South Saharan African countries, especially those in the Sahel region, and which is relatively proximal to Ghana, had 48% of the global fatalities recorded due to violent extremism in the region. This is a situation which spells the rapid deterioration of security in the region according to IEP research. The situation is coupled with eight attempted coups in Burkina Faso, Mali, Guinea, and Chad in the last eighteen months. Poor water use, shortage of food, starvation, significant population growth, and weak governments are among the underlying reasons, with most terrorist activity occurring along borders where government control is weakest. To add to the complication, several criminal organizations are increasingly posing as Islamic insurgents.<sup>25</sup>

## RECOMMENDATION

Based on the data presented above, WANEP-Ghana wishes to emphasise the following responses.

### Road Accidents, Armed Robberies, Homicides etc.

- The Government through agencies such as the Ghana Police Service's Motor Traffic and Transport Unit (MTTU) and the Ghana Road Safety Commission should strengthen collaboration between drivers' union, the media and other relevant stakeholders to intensify public road safety education and campaigns and strengthen enforcement of traffic regulations in the country.
- The Ghana Highways Authority should make visible road signs in the country
- The Ghana Police Service, along with other security agencies like the Ghana Immigration Service, the Customs Excise and Preventive Service as well as the Defence Intelligence Unit of the Ghana

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.ghanabusinessnews.com/2021/07/30/violent-crimes-in-ghana-up-by-20-from-january-to-june-2021-report/>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2020/09/29/addressing-youth-unemployment-in-ghana-needs-urgent-action>

<sup>23</sup> Institute for Economics & Peace. Global Terrorism Index 2022: Measuring the Impact of Terrorism, Sydney, March 2022. Available from: <http://visionofhumanity.org/resources> (accessed 7th April 2022).

<sup>24</sup> Institute for Economics & Peace. Global Terrorism Index 2022: Measuring the Impact of Terrorism, Sydney, March 2022. Available from: <http://visionofhumanity.org/resources> (accessed 7th April 2022).

<sup>25</sup> Ibid

Armed Forces, supported by community monitoring information, should strengthen coordination, and share intelligence on criminal networks, their cross-border movements, and the movement of illicit goods such as weaponry, ammunition, and drugs between Ghana and its neighbours. Armed crime rates may be reduced if arms trafficking particularly is suppressed.

- Psychosocial therapy centres in the country should be strengthened to engage in counselling and outreach to support vulnerable individuals with psychosocial challenges.

## CONCLUSION

In the first quarter, the security landscape of the country has been dominated by threats of armed robberies, homicides, and road accidents. This has resulted in fatalities, injuries, and destruction of properties in the affected areas of the country. To assuage the impact on human security, it is imperative for critical stakeholders to strengthen collaboration to increase the capacity of security agencies to bolster security, enforce traffic regulations and strengthen resilience of communities.

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