Implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia
Concept Paper

Background

The UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, unanimously adopted in September 2006 by the UN General Assembly in the form of a resolution and an annexed Plan of Action (A/RES/60/288), is a unique instrument to enhance national, regional and international efforts to counter terrorism. Its adoption marks the first time that all Member States of the United Nations have agreed to a common strategic and operational framework to fight terrorism. In so doing, they sent a clear message that terrorism is unacceptable in all its forms and manifestation, and resolved to take practical steps, both individually and collectively, to prevent and combat it. The Strategy is the first ever comprehensive, collective and internationally approved framework for tackling the problem of terrorism. It builds on Member States' consistent, unequivocal and strong condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purposes.

The UN Global Counter Terrorism Strategy consists of four pillars:
- Pillar (I)addressing conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism;
- Pillar (II) preventing and combating terrorism;
- Pillar (III) building States' capacity to prevent and combat terrorism and strengthen the UN system's role in this regard; and
- Pillar (IV) ensuring respect for human rights and the rule of law as the fundamental basis of the fight against terrorism.

With these pillars, the Strategy anchors the United Nations' counter-terrorism work into the broad agenda of the Organization, which focuses on maintaining international peace and security, promoting sustainable development and protecting human rights. The four pillar approach also encourages and enables Member States to take a similarly integrated approach to countering terrorism on the national level and creates a common framework for regional and global support to their national efforts.

Through Resolutions emanating from two biennial reviews (A/RES/62/272 adopted during the of 62nd Session of the General Assembly in September 2008, and A/RES/64/297 adopted during the 65h Session in September 2010), the General Assembly has reaffirmed the primary responsibility of Member States in implementing the strategy, while recognizing the important role of the United Nations, including the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF), along with other international, regional and sub-regional organizations, in facilitating and promoting coordination and coherence for implementing the Strategy in an integrated manner and in all its aspects.

The Strategy creates a common platform for bringing together the efforts of the 30 international entities that make up the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF). The CTITF was established by the UN Secretary-General in 2005 with the aim of promoting the implementation of the Strategy and supporting the overall coordination and coherence of the UN system's counter-terrorism efforts. The international entities which consist of the CTITIF contribute to the counter-terrorism effort of the United Nations according to their own mandates, while simultaneously taking part in various CTITF working groups and initiatives. The CTITF Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution – led by the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) and including ten other UN entities[1] – has taken the initiative to assist Member States and regional and sub-regional organizations in addressing conditions conducive to terrorism, including by strengthening the UN's own capacities in the field of conflict prevention and resolution.

The Project on Implementing the Global UN Counter Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia

It is with this mandate in mind that the CTITF Working Group on Preventing and Resolving Conflict, in collaboration with Member States in the region, has developed an initiative to assist Central Asian States to devise a regional Plan of Action to implement the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The project, funded through the support of the European Union (EEAS) and the Government of Norway and launched in New York on 7 September 2010, is being coordinated by the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA) located in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan.

The initiative aims at supporting the Governments of Central Asia, as well as regional and international organizations operating in the region, in the implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and its four pillars. This will be achieved through organizing three expert meetings, two to be held in Central Asia and one in the EU during 2010-2011. These meetings, co-sponsored by the UN and the EU, are designed to enable to address experiences and challenges in implementing the different pillars of the Strategy. They will bring together key stakeholders, including the Governments of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, relevant regional and sub-regional organizations (e.g. CIS, CSTO, SCO, OIC, OSCE and NATO), the UN system, representatives of neighbouring Governments, civil society, as well as regional and international experts to share experiences and good practices in implementing the Global UN Counter Terrorism Strategy. The meetings are also aimed at facilitating an exchange of knowledge and good practices on countering terrorism, identifying gaps, catalyzing international support for initiatives and building consensus on common approaches and coordinated cooperation for implementing the Strategy in the region. A network of counter-terrorism practitioners in the region would be established to ensure continued dialogue, coordination and information-sharing in Central Asia.

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[1] The ten other UN members are: Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), Executive Office of the Secretary-General (EOSG), Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Office of Legal Affairs (OLA), UN Development Programme (UNDP), UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) participates as an observer.

Final Outcome

The outcome of the project will be a Joint Plan of Action of Central Asian states for the implementation of the UN Global Strategy in Central Asia. This document will be elaborated on the basis of recommendations emerging from the three expert meetings. Its expected adoption during a Ministerial Conference convened to that effect will make the joint Action Plan the first coordinated approach for the implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism strategy. It will consist of a tangible set of initiatives for governments, regional and sub-regional organizations and the United Nations to pursue jointly in the region in order to implement the Strategy. It is expected that implementation progress updates would be conducted periodically, either through General Assembly reviews or further regional meetings.

Project Methodology and Timeline

The expert meetings will cover one or more of the pillars of the UN Global Counter-terrorism Strategy. The tentative dates, the location and the main goals of the meetings are as follows:

Date	Activities	Location
September 7, 2010	Public launches of the Central Asia counter-terrorism initiative at UN Headquarters	New York
December 15-16, 2010	First expert meeting on implementing pillars I and IV of the Strategy	The Slovak Republic
March 29-30th, 2011	Second expert meeting on implementing pillar II of the Strategy	Dushanbe, Tajikistan
July 21-22nd 2011	Third expert meeting on implementing pillar III of the Strategy	Almaty, Kazakhstan
Summer 2011	Refining recommendations emerging from the three expert meetings into a draft Plan of Action on implementing the Strategy in Central Asia	
Summer/Fall 2011	Ministerial-level meeting to adopt the Plan of Action on Implementing the Strategy in Central Asia	Central Asian state

Themes to be Discussed in Each of the Meetings:

1) First Expert Meeting on Implementing Pillars I and IV of the Strategy

Pillar I: Measures to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism.

Member states committed to undertake measures aimed at addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, including prolonged unresolved conflicts, dehumanization of victims of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, lack of the rule of law and violations of human rights, ethnic, national and religious discrimination, political exclusion, socio-economic marginalization and lack of good governance, while recognizing that none of these conditions can excuse or justify acts of terrorism.

> **Pillar IV: Measures to ensure respect for human rights for all and the rule of law as the fundamental basis of the fight against terrorism.**
>
> Member States committed to adopting measures to ensure respect for human rights for all and the rule of law as the fundamental basis of the fight against terrorism. They further resolved to take measures aimed at addressing violations of human rights, and to ensure that any measures taken to counter terrorism comply with their human rights obligations. They recognized that effective counter-terrorism measures and the protection of human rights are not conflicting, but complementary and reinforcing goals.

Themes discussed in the First Meeting included:

Conflict prevention and mitigation of trans-national security threats in Central Asia to address conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism
- Prevention and mediation of conflicts within Central Asia.
- Trans-border security threats: Drug trafficking, organized crime and extremism.
- Wider regional instability and threats of terrorism (Afghanistan and Pakistan).

Measures to address conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism through social development and social inclusion
- Measures to tackle conditions conducive to terrorism through social inclusion, poverty reduction and the realization of Millennium Development Goals.
- Reinforcement of development and social inclusion agendas, especially youth unemployment, in ways that reduce socio-economic marginalization and the sense of victimization that propels extremism and the recruitment of terrorists.

Inter-ethnic and inter-religious tolerance and dialogue to address conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism
- Promoting dialogue, tolerance and understanding among peoples and religions.
- Measures to counter conditions for terrorism through mutual respect for, and prevention of the defamation of, religions, religious values, beliefs and cultures.
- Measures to counter religious and ethnic discrimination and lack of tolerance, and ensure respect for the right to freedom of religion or belief.
- Inter-faith and intra-faith dialogue in the region.
- Role of education and public awareness programmes in fostering tolerance for diversity.
- Role of the media in fostering tolerance and breaking stereotypes.

Ensuring respect for human rights and the rule of law, including good governance, to address conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism
- Ratification and implementation of international human rights law, refugee law and international humanitarian law instruments, including through the adoption of national legislation and policies.
- Strengthening criminal justice systems and ensuring access to justice, including respect for due process guarantees, in compliance with international human rights standards.
- Access to information on detentions and the use of force, and the role of the media in this regard.

<u>Measures to ensure respect for human rights for all and the rule of law as the fundamental basis of the fight against terrorism</u>

- Protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism: ensuring that all measures adopted for counter-terrorism, comply with States' international human rights obligations. These could include detention and related judicial guarantees, right to privacy; fair trial issues etc.
- The role of and cooperation with UN human rights mechanisms on issues related to human rights in the context of countering terrorism, including the Human Rights Council and its special procedure mandates, as well as UN treaty bodies.
- The role of national human rights institutions in the context of countering terrorism.
- Addressing the needs of victims through national and regional systems of assistance

2) <u>Second Expert Meeting on Implementing Pillar II of the Strategy</u>

<u>Pillar II: Preventing and combating terrorism.</u>

Member states committed to undertake measures to prevent and combat terrorism, in particular by denying terrorists access to the resources and means to carry out their attacks and to protect particularly vulnerable targets.

Themes to be discussed in the Second Meeting include:

<u>Enhancing Legal and International Instruments</u>

- Adoption and implementation of the universal legal instruments as a basis for the legal framework for multilateral actions.
- Monitoring and promoting implementation of Security Council resolutions 1267 (1999), 1540 (2004), 1373 (2001) and 1624 (2005).
- Ratification and implementation of the United Nations Convention against Trans-national Organized Crime, including trafficking and smuggling of drugs, firearms and persons.
- International legal framework for counter-terrorism and regional organizations' frameworks.

<u>Improving Law Enforcement Cooperation for Prevention and Combating of Terrorism</u>

- Strengthening coordination and cooperation in combating trans-national organized crime and illicit arms trade.
- Developing regional and international cooperation on law enforcement.
- Improving border and customs controls and enhancement of mutual cooperation, legal assistance, and capacity building.
- Identifying and addressing shortfalls in areas of transport security.
- Measures to implement terrorists travel-related obligation
- Security of identity and travel documents
- Enhancing information-sharing and cooperation in the exchange of timely and accurate information through the use of different tools.
- Experiences of regional projects and international cooperation on border controls and transport security.

- Protection of infrastructure and vulnerable targets, including equipment needs, data bases and software instruments.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism
- Tackling the financing of terrorism through the implementation of international standards and financial investigations.
- Implementation of recommendations on terrorist financing promulgated by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).
- Compliance with standards on money laundering through the implementation of international standards embodied in the FATF's Forty recommendation on Money Laundering
- Compliance with standards on anti-corruption through the implementation of UN Convention Against Corruption (Resolution 58/4).

Countering the Use of the Internet for Terrorist Purposes
- Countering the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes.
- Legal and technological measures to adopt.
- Use of the Internet as a tool for countering terrorism
- Counter the appeal of terrorism through the internet.

Responding to Attacks Using Weapons of Mass Destruction and Denying Illicit Trafficking
- Mitigation and planning response to an attack using nuclear, chemical, biological or radiological weapons or materials.
- Coordination and cooperation for preventing the proliferation of toxic weapons and materials that may be used for weapons of mass destruction.
- UNICRI's planned Center of Excellence for chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) mitigation in Central Asia

3) **Third Expert Meeting on Implementing Pillar III of the Strategy**

> **Pillar III: Measures to build States' capacity to prevent and combat terrorism and to strengthen the role of the United Nations system in this regard.**
>
> Member states recognized that capacity-building in all States is a core element of the global counter-terrorism effort, and resolved to undertake measures to develop State capacity to prevent and combat terrorism and enhance coordination and coherence within the United Nations system in promoting international cooperation in countering terrorism.

Themes covered by the Third Meeting include:

State Capacity to Prevent and Combat Terrorism
- Identifying needs and gaps in state capacity to prevent and combat terrorism.
- Strengthening the capacity of existing institutions.
- Enhancing multidisciplinary cooperation between agencies.

- Identification of gaps and needs on the basis of established and recognized criteria by governments and by international and regional organizations.
- Mechanisms for sharing of best practices in counter-terrorism capacity-building.
- Capacity building for the rule of law and related UN roles and responsibilities
- Capacity-building in the CBRN area.
- National mechanisms to address the risk of CBRN terrorism, and related activities, and capacity building.
- Prevention of recruitment and radicalization

The Role of Regional Organizations in Addressing State Capacity
- Best practices and gaps in providing technical assistance to states.
- Mechanisms for identification of priorities, gaps and needs, including on technical expertise, training and capacity building.
- Responding to States' requests for technical assistance including in the form of hard goods (such as technology and equipment.)
- Improving the coherence and efficiency of technical assistance delivery by regional organizations.
- Strengthening cooperation and coordination with and among regional organizations.

Strengthening the Role of the UN System on Building State Capacity to Prevent and Combat Terrorism
- Activities of the UN CTITF and it participating entities in supporting States' capacity building.
- Enhancing coordination and coherence within the United Nations System.
- Improving coherence and efficiency of technical assistance delivery by the UN.
- The role of UN CTITF entities to map and make available offers of assistance to support capacity building efforts.
- The CTITF Initiative on Integrated Assistance for Countering Terrorism (I-ACT)

Enhancing information sharing on counter-terrorism technical assistance and Public Awareness
- Institutionalized mechanisms for sharing of information and best practices
- Enhancing exchanges of information on cooperation and technical assistance on implementing the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.
- Enhancing information sharing between technical assistant providers/facilitators and the donor community on developing States' capacities.
- Clearinghouse mechanisms in the UN community to facilitate match-making between requests and offers of assistance. Raising public awareness about international, regional and national counter-terrorism strategies and instruments in order to enhance capacity building.
- Role of media and civil society.

Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs)
- The role of private sector in contributing to counter-terrorism and capacity building
- Best practices on PPPs.

- PPPs in the protection of vulnerable targets and critical infrastructure.
- Coordination and cooperation between the public sector and the private sector in monitoring implementation and ensuring that international standards are being maintained.

Participants

Participants of the meetings consist of government representatives from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, representatives of CTITF entities, EU (EEAS), UN agencies, and representatives of regional organizations (CIS, CSTO, NATO, OIC, OSCE and SCO), representatives of neighbouring countries and other international partners, civil society, as well as regional and international experts.

For each meeting, a different combination of representatives will be invited in order to address the specific themes/pillars under review. Governments are encouraged to send relevant representatives according to the themes of the meetings. It is envisaged that in addition to traditional law enforcement agencies involved with counter terrorism, including National Security Committees, State prosecutors and judicial authorities, representatives of other institutions that deal with conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, such as those responsible for questions of religion, ethnicity, human rights and development, be sent to the relevant meetings.

The specialized agencies of the CTITF are expected to make available specialized documentation on respected themes as well as expertise during the meetings.