

The General Assembly Creates a New Office of Counter-Terrorism

In a historic move, the General Assembly on 15 June 2017, adopted a consensus resolution and established a new Office of Counter-Terrorism Office. Member States welcomed Secretary-General António Guterres' initiative to transfer relevant functions out of the UN Department of Political Affairs (DPA) and into the new United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (OCT). A week later, on 21 June 2017, the Secretary-General appointed Mr. Vladimir Voronkov of the Russian Federation as its new Under-Secretary-General.

The creation of the OCT is the first reform initiative of Secretary-General Guterres to the Organization's peace and security architecture, which he first outlined when he was appointed Secretary-General last year.

A consultative Process

The Secretary-General had suggested in informal discussions with the General Assembly on 22 February 2017 to move the current Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) Office and the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT), together with their existing staff, as well as all associated regular and extrabudgetary resources, out of the Department of Political Affairs and into a new Office of Counter-Terrorism to be headed by an Under-Secretary-General.

The new Under-Secretary-General will serve as the Chair of the CTITF and as Executive Director of the UNCCT.

In his briefing to Member States, the Secretary-General stressed that the objective was to improve efficiency, and not to change the different mandates in the field of



counter-terrorism. The Secretary-General emphasized that the new Office would not have supervisory responsibilities over the Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED), or other Security Council subsidiary bodies. It would report through the Secretary-General to the General Assembly, and CTED would continue to provide gap analysis and reporting to the Security Council.

Informal consultations with Member States were followed by a report by the Secretary-General in April 2017, entitled the "Capability of the United Nations system to assist Member States in implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy."

Background

The fifth review of the General Assembly of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in July 2016, embodied in resolution [A/RES/70/291](#), aimed at updating the Strategy to more effectively address the evolving terrorist threat faced by the international community.

"The establishment of the OCT is the right thing to do at the right time. As terrorist attacks are now taking place with increasing frequency in many parts of the world, there is an urgent need for dedicated, high-level leadership in the UN's response to terrorism and violent extremism. OCT would help us achieve that."

Briefing to Member States, 22 February 2017

The review recognized that notwithstanding progress made by Member States and their recent military advances, terrorist groups such as Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and Boko Haram continued to pose a threat to international peace and security. In addition, terrorism has a devastating impact on sustainable development, human rights and humanitarian action at the global, regional and national levels.

In order to address this challenge, Member States highlighted that the UN's counter-terrorism efforts needed to be expanded to support the balanced implementation of the Strategy. While the review (A/71/858) of the capability of the United Nations system to assist Member States in implementing the Strategy demonstrated progress, the General Assembly realized that more needed to be done and passed resolution A/71/291 by consensus, establishing the Office of Counter-Terrorism.

Functions of the Office of Counter-Terrorism and its Under-Secretary-General

Under-Secretary-General Vladimir Voronkov will provide strategic leadership to United Nations counter-terrorism efforts, participate in the decision-making process of the United Nations and ensure that the cross-cutting origins and impact of terrorism are reflected in the work of the United Nations.

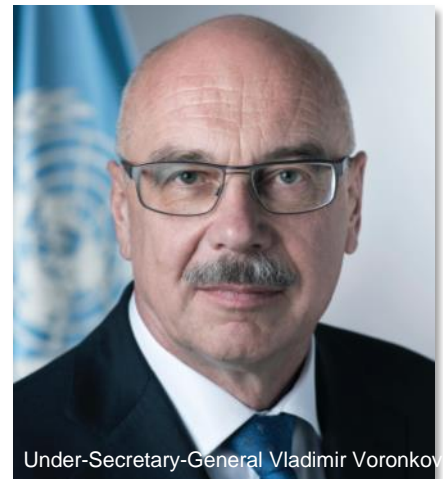
The five main functions of the new Office of Counter-Terrorism will be to:

1. provide leadership on the counter-terrorism mandates entrusted to the Secretary-General from across the United Nations system;
2. enhance coordination and coherence across the 38 CTITF entities to ensure the balanced implementation of the four pillars of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Strategy;
3. strengthen the delivery of United Nations counter-terrorism capacity-building assistance to Member States;
4. improve visibility, advocacy and resource mobilization for United Nations counter-terrorism efforts.
5. ensure that due priority is given to counter-terrorism across the United Nations system and to see that the important work on Preventing Violent Extremism is firmly rooted in the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

The Office will aim to have a close relationship with Security Council bodies and Member States,

strengthening existing and developing new partnerships through regular travel and attendance at counter-terrorism-related meetings.

OCT will fully respect the principles of national sovereignty and non-interference.



Under-Secretary-General Vladimir Voronkov

It will not monitor, supervise or interfere with efforts by Member States to implement the Strategy and the rest of the international legal framework against terrorism. Any activities of the new Office will be in support of and at the request of Member States, which have the primary responsibility to implement the Strategy. The aim of the Office will be to reinforce the partnership with Member States on countering the transnational threat of terrorism.

The restructuring of the United Nations counter-terrorism architecture will allow the United Nations to work better together and multiply its impact on terrorism at the national, regional and international levels. The new structure is consistent with the purpose of the overall management reform of the Organization, which, among other things, is to seek greater efficiencies, simplification, coordination and coherence.

Secretary-General Guterres spotlights UN reform initiatives to rescue multilateralism

In a public lecture in London on 10 May 2017, Secretary-General António Guterres stressed the need for reforming the United Nations to tackle main challenges the world is facing, including the changing nature of conflict. Mr. Guterres said greater collaboration is needed across the pillars of the UN's work – peace and security, development and human rights – so that resources can be reoriented to prevent crises. In this regard, he said he has launched several reform initiatives, including a change in the peace and security architecture and a realignment of the UN development system and management reform to better assist Member States.

United Nations – Central Asian Dialogue on Implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy

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Building peace requires culture, education – message of historic UN Security Council resolution

On 13 June 2017, the United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres chaired a “High-Level United Nations - Central Asian Dialogue on Implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia” in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan.

The High-Level Dialogue, the first of its kind on the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, provided an excellent opportunity to discuss strategic counter-terrorism and prevention of violent extremism challenges faced by Central Asian States.

It was attended by the Foreign Ministers of Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, the Interior Minister of Tajikistan, the Deputy Foreign Ministers of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, as well as senior officials from Afghanistan and the European Union.

Discussions focused on the need for a more systematic cooperation between state institutions and regional structures in implementing the Joint Plan of Action (JPOA) for Central Asia, as well as the need to step up prevention of violent extremism work in the region, with a view to eradicating the causes of terrorism through economic development, education and job creation.

The High-Level Dialogue also discussed the terrorist exploitation of cyber space and social media, the situation in Afghanistan, the need to strengthen border controls, counter illicit trafficking and the financing of terrorism, as well as address the flow of foreign terrorist fighters in the region.

At the end of the meeting, Central Asian Ministers adopted a Joint Declaration that underscored their concern over the evolving and dynamic nature of the terrorist threat in the region, welcomed the important role of the United Nations in this regard, and the recent initiative by the Secretary-General to establish the new Office of Counter-Terrorism.

They also expressed their continued support for the JPOA, as well as reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthen regional cooperation and coordination, including with the United Nations.

Secretary-General Guterres further called on the countries to continue to work together on issues such as countering the financing of terrorism, enhancing border security, nurturing dialogue with religious institutions and leaders, as well as highlighting the role of the media in addressing terrorism and violent

extremism. “Central Asia has the opportunity to show global leadership by developing national and possibly a regional plan of action to prevent violent extremism [...] the UN continues to stand ready to assist in these efforts,” he said.



“Policies that limit human rights only end up alienating religious and ethnic communities, who would normally have every interest in fighting extremism. Acknowledging and respecting people's dignity and rights – including their frustrations and critical opinions – helps to combat extremism, by building social cohesion and a sense of the common good.”

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres

UNODC assists Central Asian countries in addressing FTFs

UNODC's Terrorism Prevention Branch (TPB) in cooperation with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the Academy of Law Enforcement Authorities under the General Prosecutor Office of the Republic of Kazakhstan, organized a two-day regional workshop in Astana from 28 February to 2 March 2017 entitled “Central Asia and the Foreign Terrorist Fighters Phenomenon: New Legal Challenges”.

The workshop aimed to enhance the understanding of the international legal framework addressing foreign terrorist fighters, including counter-radicalization measures developed in the context of the obligations under Security Council resolution 2178 (2014).

Syria: UN study finds foreign fighters return 'disillusioned' by groups they joined

The United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) on 4 August 2017 issued a report on Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTF) in Syria. The report is the product of direct interviews with 43 fighters from 12 nationalities in six countries.

The report found that, at least for this sample, many FTFs come from communities in poor urban areas or on the periphery of cities that are somewhat removed from the main centres of commercial activity. In these areas, youth share low educational levels, poor job prospects, little hope for change, and limited opportunity for social or economic mobility.

The authors believe that despite some shortcomings – such as the small sample size – the survey remains a useful tool for Member States that wish to understand the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters, develop their capacities to deal with it, and design more effective policies and programmes to stem the flow and facilitate the effective reintegration of returnees.

This study calls for action at the national, regional, and international level based on a comprehensive and balanced approach that puts more emphasis on prevention. Warning against sweeping generalizations as there is no single profile for foreign terrorist fighters, the report's findings confirm the results of other similar studies, as detailed in the literature review.

The report did find that while foreign fighters are most likely to be male, young and disadvantaged

economically, educationally, and in terms of the labour market. Evidence also suggests that the flow of women, especially from Western countries, has increased since early 2016, while the flow of men has declined.

Most of those interviewed in this survey are neither well educated nor well off economically.

The report also found that a number of “disillusioned and disappointed” foreign terrorist fighters left Syria and returned to their countries of origin when they found these groups hardly make good on their promises, except promise of death and destruction.

This survey also suggests that friendship circles and social networks are the most dynamic and powerful mechanism through which recruitment occurs, with the Internet playing a far less significant role as an independent source of radicalisation than is generally assumed, and certainly a far less significant role than real life contact.

Disregard for the rule of law, discriminatory social policies, political exclusion of certain communities, inadequate courts, corruption, particularly in the distribution of state benefits, harassment by security authorities, and confiscation of passports or other identity documents, all contribute to feelings of despair, resentment, and animosity towards the government and provide fertile ground for terrorist recruiters, especially when the vision of a new life is presented in black and white simplistic terms.

The report says that the armed groups in Syria ultimately provide no positive outcomes to the youth they recruit. They hardly deliver on any of their promises, except the promise of death and destruction, both for recruits and for the Muslim communities they claim to defend.



Interview with outgoing Executive Director of CTED, Mr. Jean-Paul Laborde

The Beam interviewed Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), Assistant Secretary-General Jean-Paul Laborde, as he was preparing to leave his function at the end of July 2017, about the work of the United Nations in the fight against terrorism and the support provided by CTED to the Counter-Terrorism Committee of the Security Council. Mr. Laborde also shared glimpses from his extensive experience serving the United Nations, particularly over the last four years as Executive Director.

Q: Mr. Laborde, what is your assessment of the current terrorist challenges, particularly in terms of the threat to international peace and security?

A: First, the threat is constantly changing. The significant loss of territory for Daesh is both real and symbolic; it means that its forces no longer have the territory to train its cadres or to execute deadly attacks across the vast regions they used to control, and that those tempted by jihad can no longer idealize a territory as their so-called Caliphate. Second, since the Daesh-controlled territory is now very small, its fighters are moving to other parts of the world. They go to Africa, particularly Libya, but also to Nigeria where they bolster Boko Haram, or they join Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM).

Afghanistan is another important destination country, where Daesh is certainly still less powerful than the Taliban, but where Daesh conducts terrorist acts that result in numerous victims, such as the one against the Supreme Court in Kabul last February. But these foreign terrorist fighters can also settle in other territories, from where they plan, direct, or carry out attacks all over the world.

“The international community must take action that is both more focused and coherent, as each UN entity brings its specific and specialized comparative advantage to our collective efforts. This should be facilitated by the new Office of Counter-Terrorism.”

Q: What can the UN do to assist its Member States in their fight against this threat?

A: We need to strengthen and speed up international cooperation, because terrorism -- which is a global



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phenomenon -- requires a global response, and an almost immediate one; it cannot be done by individual States alone. International cooperation is crucial to counter

the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters returning to their countries of origin or joining other theatres of operation.

A concrete example of the advantages of international cooperation is a tool provided by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO); using the single passport database set up by ICAO, Member States benefit from a single point of contact for biometric data rather than relying on over 36,000 bilateral agreements. Another interesting example is INTERPOL's database on lost and stolen travel documents, which contains 68 million entries, provided by 174 countries, through which States can verify the documents of persons entering and leaving their territory. These are essential tools that countries should put to regular and active use. They do not sufficiently do so.

Also, the international community must take action that is both more focused and coherent, as each UN entity brings its specific and specialized comparative advantage to our collective efforts. This should be facilitated by the new Office of Counter-Terrorism (OCT), headed by an Under-Secretary-General, giving the revised structure the necessary weight to ensure increased coherence. In this regard, concerted efforts are needed to establish a comprehensive strategy for the countries most affected by terrorism according to the list drawn up by the Counter-Terrorism Committee of the Security Council.

Q: *Mr. Laborde, you have worked for the United Nations for over 20 years, holding positions related to the fight against terrorism and organized crime, as well as with UNODC in support of the criminal justice system, with the Office of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, and more recently, as head of CTED. In your opinion, how has the United Nations' approach to terrorism evolved over the years?*

A: Numerous measures have been put in place to support the restructuring of the criminal justice systems (from the police, via the penitentiary system, to necessary reforms pertaining to criminal law), especially when I headed the Terrorism Prevention Branch (TPB) within UNODC. These initiatives have been further strengthened since my departure from TPB, which makes me particularly glad.

With regard to the coherence of the mandates and efforts of the various UN entities working to counter terrorism, two important steps have been taken: first, with the creation, and then the institutionalization, of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, which originally included about 20 agencies and now 38. This confirms how sound and correct the initiative was, as it has since been completed with the establishment of the OCT. The latter will allow for a more interactive and dynamic approach, complemented by a clear political vision, thanks to the clear intention of Secretary-General António Guterres to make the fight against terrorism one of the priorities of the organization and through the appointment of Vladimir Voronkov as Under-Secretary-General and head of that office.

As for CTED and the support we provide to the Counter-Terrorism Committee, the Executive Directorate must be at the heart of the Security Council's work, monitoring the evolution of terrorism in real time and highlighting the most dangerous threats to which urgent responses must be provided by Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) and subsequent resolutions. During the past three years, the role of CTED has evolved considerably in support of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, which has been mandated to implement 18 additional resolutions; this demonstrates the Council's confidence in its Counter-Terrorism Committee and its Executive Directorate, but is also a development that requires significant additional resources.

As Executive Director of CTED, it has been an exciting experience to lead our counter-terrorism assessment country visits. These are carried out on behalf of the Committee with the active participation

of multiple accompanying entities such as the 1267 Committee, for example, as well as ICAO, IOM, IMO, INTERPOL, UNODC, and others. The Executive Directorate is an independent evaluation body established by the Security Council to carry out these visits in the context of our absolute neutrality and impartiality. This role constitutes one of the pillars of the *raison d'être* of CTED. Another pillar is the various alerts provided to the Council through special meetings and open briefings, as well as resulting from analyses supported by over 70 research institutions from CTED's Global Research Network. Setting up this network is one of the achievements I am most proud of, as it helps us carry out detailed and precise analyses that allow Member States to deepen and exchange their knowledge on good practices and to be alerted to current and future terrorist threats. I wish the Security Council would become more attentive to these analyses and good practices through increasingly direct exchanges between CTED and the Council.

Q: *Mr. Laborde, what can you say about the future efforts of the United Nations to counter terrorism?*

A: The fight against terrorism within the United Nations depends first and foremost on the will of Member States. In this regard, I remain convinced that both the General Assembly and the Security Council will continue to fight in an unwavering manner against terrorism in all its forms. That being said, it will be necessary to find means of implementation to which all Member States can agree. In order to do this, the Charter of the United Nations -- signed and ratified as it is by all Member States -- must always be respected: the rule of law, the protection of the weakest, in particular victims, the implementation of the principles and actions that are necessary for the proper functioning of the criminal justice system.

I would go even farther; I would say that in terms of the use of military action and intelligence, we must first and foremost always remember the principles for which we are fighting. If not, our fight against terrorism loses its meaning. Combining principles and action is certainly the most challenging but also the most stimulating task ahead.

This is where the UN, its decision-making bodies, including the Secretary-General, must speak up so that our children can live in a world where terrorism, coupled with our efforts to resolve conflicts, is no longer an obstacle to international peace and security.

Plan of Action for Religious Leaders and Actors to Prevent Incitement to Violence that Could Lead to Atrocity crimes

On 14 July 2017, the Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect (OGPRtoP) launched the Plan of Action for Religious Leaders and Actors to Prevent Incitement to Violence that Could Lead to Atrocity Crimes in a meeting opened by the Secretary-General.

The Plan of Action is the result of a series of consultations known as the Fez Process and consists of a number of actions that religious leaders and actors can take to prevent incitement to violence, especially in situations where there is a risk of atrocity crimes by state and non-state actors.

A total of 232 religious leaders and actors from 77 countries took part in the consultations. Participants included Buddhists, Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Jews and Sikhs from different groups and denominations, as well as representatives from various religious minorities, including Baha'i, Kakai, Yazidi, and Candomblé, as well as humanists. At least 30 percent of participants at all meetings were women.

The Plan of Action and related regional action plans are pioneering documents as they are the first to

engage with religious actors and religious leaders to develop context specific strategies to prevent incitement that could lead to atrocity crimes by state and non-state actors. Implementation of the Fez

Plan of Action and regional strategies, which will be discussed in a meeting planned to take place in fall 2017, could contribute to the prevention of atrocity crimes, especially in areas affected by religious and sectarian tensions and violence.

As the next step in the Fez Process, the OGPRtoP is supporting the organization of workshops with religious leaders in countries that have experienced or are currently experiencing hate speech, hostility or incitement to violence that targets communities based on their religious identity, to develop national strategies that religious leaders can implement, working in cooperation with each other across religions, and in

cooperation with the United Nations and national authorities.



Religious Leaders Discuss Concrete Measures for Peacebuilding in the Middle East at UNAOC Event

The United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) on 18 July 2017 organized a panel discussion at the UN Headquarters on "The Role of Religious Leaders in Peacebuilding in the Middle East".

"We recognized that peace cannot be attained through the endeavors of politicians alone," UNAOC High Representative H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser said. "We firmly believe that Religion is not the source of the problem. On the contrary, religion can be part of the solution [...] Religious leaders can and should play a role in peacebuilding in the Middle East."



CTED and ICT4Peace host U.S. launch of Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism in San Francisco

The Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) and partners ICT4Peace on 1 August 2017 hosted the U.S. launch of the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism (GIFCT) in San Francisco, a partnership initiative with tech giants Facebook, Microsoft, Twitter and YouTube to counter terrorism and violent extremism online.

The four tech giants have already developed and put in place policies and removal practices to take a hard line against terrorist or violent extremist content on their hosted consumer services. GIFCT will help further strengthen these “counter-speech” protections through research- and evidence-based efforts and technical and policy decisions around the removal of terrorist content. By working together, and through the sharing of the best technological and operational elements of their individual efforts, they believe they can have a greater impact on the threat of terrorist content online.

Home Secretary of the United Kingdom Amber Rudd, and Deputy Secretary for the Department of Homeland Security of the United States Elaine Duke both attended the launch in San Francisco, which CTED opened.

“Tackling terrorists’ use of the Internet requires a multi-stakeholder approach involving governments, international organizations, civil society, and the private sector. CTED is happy and proud to see our TechAgainstTerrorism initiative continue to develop and now be associated with GIFCT,” said David Scharia, Chief of Branch, CTED.

TechAgainstTerrorism is a joint initiative between CTED and ICT4Peace, pursuant to UN Security Council resolution 2354 (2017) and the mandate of the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee and its Executive Directorate (CTED).

The new Forum builds on initiatives, such as the European Union (EU) Internet Forum and the Shared Industry Hash Database as well as discussions with governments and the outcomes of recent G7 and European Council meetings.

*For more information on CTED, please visit:
<https://www.un.org/sc/ctc/>*

Security Council Urges Member States to Follow New Guidelines on Countering Terrorist Narratives

Unanimously adopting a resolution on 24 May 2017 that featured a new framework developed by its Counter-Terrorism Committee, the Security Council urged Member States to follow a number of concrete guidelines aimed at countering the narratives used by terrorist groups and amplifying positive and credible alternatives to audiences vulnerable to extremist messages.

By the text, resolution 2354 (2017), which was co-sponsored by nearly 60 delegations, the Council welcomed the Committee’s “Comprehensive International Framework to Counter Terrorist Narratives” (document S/2017/375), submitted pursuant to a 2016 presidential statement (see Press Release SC/12355 of 11 May 2016). While urging Member States to follow the guidelines set out in the text, they were also called upon to respect the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter, including respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of all States.

“The threat from ISIL has been intensified by its use of the Internet and social media to disseminate propaganda online to a wide international audience. This has led to multiple attacks, including in Belgium, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, Sweden, Turkey, and the United Kingdom.”

Briefing to the Security Council on 8 June 2017

Youth, Information and Communication Technologies: Preventing violent extremism in cyberspace

UNESCO in collaboration with the Lebanese National Commission for UNESCO organized in cooperation with the Information for All Programme (IFAP), an International Conference on Youth and Information and Communication Technologies: Preventing violent extremism in cyberspace, in Byblos, Lebanon from 17 to 19 May 2017.



The Conference brought together researchers, experts in sociology and social media, civil society representatives as well as government officials to explore ways of preventing youth violent extremism, violence, radicalization, discrimination and hatred on the internet. The conference focused on the importance of engaging youth in identifying the causes of the phenomenon, sharing good practices, and in developing proposals to counter violent extremism in line with UN Security Council Resolution 2250/2015.

Participants hailed from Algeria, Botswana, Egypt, France, Ghana, Grenada, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, the Netherlands, Oman, the Russian Federation, Senegal, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia and Qatar.

This conference was part of a series of conferences organized by UNESCO and IFAP on the same topic. Two initial conferences were held in Quebec, Canada and in Paris, France in 2016 and 2015 respectively. They focused on experiences on policy interventions, projects and processes to reduce the use of Internet as a tool for youth extremism and radicalization; and both sought to identify areas for UNESCO action, to improve the conditions that drive young people towards violent extremism, across UNESCO sectors and relevant youth programmes.

UNESCO launches a handbook for journalists covering terrorism

UNESCO on 2 February 2017 launched its new publication "Terrorism in the Media: A Handbook for Journalists" by Jean-Paul Marthoz, a Belgian journalist and long-time press freedom and human rights activist.

The handbook provides key advice to media and journalists on covering a terrorist attack. It also explores professional challenges, ethical dilemmas and raises fundamental questions about the impact of media coverage on society.

"We welcome the publication of this handbook, which is a really fantastic tool to improve journalists' skills in the context of this very sensitive issue," said Ricardo Gutiérrez, General Secretary of the European Federation of Journalists. "In such a situation, the risk of being instrumentalised and the risk of fuelling hatred is very high. The handbook, written by a journalist for the best interest of journalists, will foster the ethical

reflection in newsrooms regarding the coverage of terrorism issues. That reflection is needed now more than ever before."

Five key ground rules to media and journalists covering a terrorist attack

1. Respect the victims' dignity and rights.
2. Use the right terms.
3. Use figures and statistics cautiously.
4. Publish images which serve the public interest.
5. Differentiate facts from rumors and hate speech

To view the Handbook, please visit:
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002470/247074E.pdf>

Morocco:

Strengthen Response to Propaganda and Incitement to Terrorism

The terrorist propaganda machine is one of the biggest challenges to national and international efforts to prevent and combat terrorism and violent extremism.

The use of modern technologies by terrorists and their sophisticated communication techniques pose many obstacles at the legal, judicial and operational levels for the efficient prevention and prosecution of propaganda and incitement to terrorism, especially in the context of the foreign terrorist fighter (FTF) phenomenon, and taking into account the right for due process and respect for fundamental freedoms.

In this context and within the framework of UNODC's five-year Initiative on Strengthening the Legal Regime against FTFs in the Middle East, North Africa and South-Eastern Europe (2015-2020), UNODC's Terrorism Prevention Branch organized a national workshop on "The Reinforcement of the Judicial response to Propaganda, Apology and Incitement to Terrorism," in Rabat, Morocco, from 31 January to 2 February 2017.

The workshop was part of a series of national technical assistance activities under the UNODC FTF Initiative. It was organized in partnership with the Government of Morocco and with the active participation of more than 30 criminal justice officers, including judges, prosecutors, judicial police, gendarmerie, intelligence agents and student judges.

In addition to providing a thorough overview of the



legal framework to prevent and counter propaganda, and the glorification of terrorism, the workshop offered a comparative legal analysis on how these offences are prevented and prosecuted in France, Morocco and the United States of America. Participants also examined the respective national case law in the aforementioned countries and the experience of the European Court of Justice.

Special emphasis was put on the judicial use of the special investigation techniques of electronic communication channels, including social media, with the view of countering the use of the Internet by terrorists for propaganda and recruitment.

Strengthening regional cooperation in FTF criminal cases in North Africa

The Terrorism Prevention Branch of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC/TPB) held a regional training entitled "Strengthening regional cooperation in foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) criminal cases", in Tangier, Morocco, from 14 to 16 March 2017.

The regional training brought together about 20 senior criminal justice and law enforcement officials representing key counter-terrorism institutions from Algeria, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia. In addition, UNODC/TPB experts were joined by regional international experts representing Belgium, France, Spain and the League of Arab States.

The three-day event offered a forum to discuss practical methods and tools to further increase the cooperation on criminal matters in FTF-related cases at the regional level in the Maghreb.

UN Security Council welcomes deployment of regional force to combat terrorism and restore stability in the Sahel

The United Nations Security Council welcomed the deployment by the so-called Group of Five (G5) – Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger – of a joint force of up to 5,000 military and police personnel to tackle the threat of terrorism, as well as the serious challenges posed by transnational organized crime in Africa's restive Sahel region.



Unanimously adopting resolution 2359 on 21 June 2017, the Council welcomed the joint force's strategic concept of operations, saying it intended to review the deployment in four months' time.

The Council also urged the joint force of up to 5,000 military and police personnel, as well as the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) and French forces in that country to ensure adequate coordination and exchange of information regarding their operations, within their respective mandates.

The resolution welcomed the European Union's commitment to provide €50 million in financial support, and encouraged further support from bilateral and multilateral partners.

Emphasizing the important role of women in preventing conflict and supporting peacebuilding efforts, the Council underlined the need to take a gender perspective into account in implementing all aspects of the strategic concept of operations.

The Secretary-General welcomed the adoption of the new resolution and reiterated the UN's commitment, working closely with the African Union (AU) and other partners.

'Disproportionate emphasis' on security would undercut sustaining peace in the Sahel – UN deputy chief

The Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed in a meeting on the situation in the Sahel, jointly organized by the UN's Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) on 28 June 2017, described how transnational organized crime, violent extremism and terrorism have become growing threats to stability in the Sahel region, and how the scarcity of food and challenging living conditions have spurred a steady flow of migrants on dangerous, sometimes deadly, journeys through the desert towards the Mediterranean and beyond.

"The continuing deterioration of security in the Sahel is the result of several unresolved underlying causes of instability, including a lack of development, good governance and respect for human rights," she said, adding that the region has also chronically suffered from harsh climatic conditions, exacerbated by climate change. In that regard, she stressed the need for renewed efforts to close the gap between humanitarian and development work through an integrated approach to development, governance, security and human rights. **"Given the trans-border and multidimensional nature of instability in the Sahel region, there can be no purely military solution,"** she said in her remarks to the meeting.



Security Council cites terrorism, deteriorating humanitarian conditions as challenges for West Africa

The Security Council on 24 July 2017 welcomed recent positive political developments in some West African countries, but expressed concern over the threat of terrorism in the region.

“The Security Council strongly condemns all terrorist attacks carried out in the region, in particular in Northern and Central Mali and the Lake Chad Basin region, notably by Boko Haram and Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL),” said the Security Council President for the month of July, Liu Jieyi, in a presidential statement.

On behalf of the Council, Mr. Liu expressed particular concern over attacks on civilians – the primary victims of terrorist violence – while underscoring the importance of a holistic approach to degrade and defeat the terrorists in compliance with international law.

“The Security Council encourages Member States and multilateral partners to lend their support to the MNJTF (Multinational Joint Task Force) to ensure its full operationalization, including the provision of modalities to increase the timely and effective exchange of intelligence to further the region's collective efforts to combat Boko Haram, whenever possible and appropriate,” said the statement.

The Council underscored its commitment to work through the UN Office in West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) to strengthen cooperation in addressing cross-border security threats and curbing the spread of terrorism.

“The Security Council notes the collaboration undertaken between UNOWAS and the Peacebuilding Commission and encourages continued close and effective cooperation in support of sustainable peace in the region,” the statement stressed.

In tandem, it referenced the dire humanitarian situation caused by the terrorists' activities in the Lake Chad Basin region and called on the international community to “immediately support the provision of urgent humanitarian assistance for the people most affected by the crisis in Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria,” including by fulfilling the UN appeal for the Lake Chad Basin region.

The statement welcomed West African leadership in spearheading initiatives addressing terrorism challenges and encouraged collaboration between Member States, regional and sub-regional organizations, the UN and other stakeholders “to enhance social cohesion and to address challenges to good governance.”

EU and UNODC, in cooperation with the UK, partner with Nigeria Police Force to help bring terrorists to justice

Two groups of 30 Nigerian Police Force officers took part in an in-depth practical training course led by UNODC in partnership with the British High Commission with the aim of strengthening their capacity to build strong case files in support of successful prosecution of terrorist suspects while respecting human rights.

These 60 trained officers are now armed with the skills to approach a terrorism crime scene, collect evidence while avoiding contamination, convert intelligence into evidence, interview witnesses and suspects, and manage a case file.



Lake Chad Basin: integrating gender dimensions to fight terrorism

In early 2017, the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution condemning the actions of terrorist groups in the Lake Chad basin region, including early and forced marriage, rape, sexual slavery, and other gender-based violence. Beyond being sexually exploited and forced to perform household chores, women also play numerous active roles within Boko Haram, including as messengers, spies, smugglers, recruiters, providers of funds and other support.



In line with the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) organized a sub-regional workshop on Gender Dimensions of Criminal Justice Responses to Terrorism in Yaoundé, Cameroon, on 19-21 July 2017.

The objective of the workshop was twofold. First, it aimed at assisting States in strengthening the effectiveness of the criminal justice response to terrorism by integrating a gender perspective, and second, to ensure that women's rights are respected in the context of growing terrorism threats in the Lake Chad region.

29 representatives of various criminal justice institutions, ministries of social affairs and civil society organizations of the region, as well as from African Union institutions, participated in presentations and debates. "Boko Haram has been very effective at using existing patriarchal structures and gender roles to its advantage. It is high time that governments catch up and understand how a gender perspective can assist their fight against terrorism", said one of the participants, a women's rights activist from Niger.

The workshop sought to equip participants with a deeper understanding of how men and women may experience counter-terrorism laws and practices

differently. As Commissioner Lucy Asuagbor, the Special Rapporteur on Women's Rights in Africa of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights reminded participants in her closing remarks, "Gender integration also means taking into account women's specificities in deciding for or against detention and on conditions of detention; as well as when deciding which programmes, whether de-radicalization or disengagement programmes, to direct women to who are associated with or are victims of Boko Haram."

Workshop participants and UNODC experts also discussed the challenges of investigating and prosecution sexual violence committed by terrorist groups. "Terrorism investigations have to be conducted in a gender sensitive manner. Investigating sexual violence by terrorist groups requires expertise on interviewing women and girl victims, and on measures to protect them, which may be lacking in investigation teams specialized on counter-terrorism", explained Ms Hadiza Abba, a lawyer in UNODC's Country Office for Nigeria.

SADC-UNCCT workshop develops roadmap for the implementation of the Regional Counter-Terrorism Strategy for Southern Africa

From 15-16 March 2017, the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT) organized jointly with the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) Secretariat an expert workshop in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, on the implementation of the Regional Counter-Terrorism Strategy for Southern Africa, which had been adopted in August 2015. The workshop aimed at reviewing and updating priorities of the Strategy's Plan of Action in light of evolving circumstances and to ensure its full implementation through the development of a forward-looking roadmap. In his opening address, H.E. Mr. Hamad



Masauni, Tanzania Deputy Minister of Home Affairs, noted the timeliness of the meeting since terrorism has become a significant threat to Southern Africa due especially to its proximity to the Horn of Africa and to weak institutional capacities.

The workshop presented an opportunity to evaluate the different systems in place and gauge the progress made in implementing the Strategy. Senior officials from SADC Member States identified inadequate border management, lack of cooperation and coordination and little awareness on violent extremism as the main challenges. The participants showed an interest in moving the Strategy forward and in cooperating at the regional level.

The workshop concluded with an agreement on a time-bound roadmap, which was developed with national experts and partners, including experts from the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism, the Committee of Intelligence and Security Services of Africa, SADC, UNCCT, UNODC, UNDP, CTED and the DPA Liaison Team to SADC. The roadmap articulates areas considered as critical, which build on the priorities identified in the Strategy such as creating and operationalising national counter-terrorism coordination mechanisms; preventing radicalisation and violent extremism; and strengthening national and regional capacities in different fields.

The roadmap was approved by the SADC Ministerial Committee of Organs on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation on 21 July. The Office for Counter Terrorism is working closely with the SADC Secretariat to support SADC Member States in their implementation of the activities identified.

Disrupting the financing of terrorism in the MENA region

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force on 11 May 2017 co-organized a regional training course for Middle East and North Africa (MENA) countries on disrupting the financing of large terrorist networks such as Daesh (ISIL).

The workshop was delivered by experts from UNODC's Terrorism Prevention Branch, the Global Programme against Money Laundering, Proceeds of Crime and the Financing of Terrorism and the Corruption and Economic Crime Branch. The event contributed to UNODC's ongoing counter-terrorism efforts in the region.



The regional training concluded with a live exercise during which counter-terrorism experts from the MENA region used a range of new techniques to understand the 'business model' of terrorist networks, identify critical vulnerabilities and then synchronize a range of disruption options to gradually break down the terrorist network's ability to operate.

UNODC's financial disruption strategy and tools have been collated from good practices worldwide and are now being used by experts to protect against strategic threats to national security by maximising the impact of their financial disruption operations while minimizing the cost and risks associated with them.

Strengthening regional cooperation in FTF criminal cases in North Africa

The Terrorism Prevention Branch of UNODC (UNODC/TPB) held a regional training entitled "Strengthening regional cooperation in foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) criminal cases", in Tangier, Morocco, from 14 to 16 March 2017.

The regional training brought together 20 officials from key counter-terrorism institutions from Algeria, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia as well as international experts from Belgium, France, Spain and the League of Arab States.

Participants were provided with a set of recommendations and concrete measures to improve mutual legal assistance and extradition requests in the Maghreb regional level.

UNCCT Partners with Pakistan Youth Programme to Support Technical and Vocational Schools

Skills development of youth is highlighted as a major priority in the United Nations Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism and the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy notes that youth unemployment is a key condition that is conducive to the spread of terrorism.

Unskilled labour and less-than-optimal labour productivity are common problems across South Asia. Given the number of young people reaching employment age, skills-training programmes are scant and that which is available often does not take into account the different socio-economic contexts and learning needs of different segments of the poor and vulnerable. Women are particularly disadvantaged.

Under Goal 8 and Goal 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Member States resolved to promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all, promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

As part of the United Nations' engagement with Pakistan, the UNCCT in collaboration with the Pakistan Prime Minister's Youth Programme and with technical support from the International Labour Organization (ILO) completed the delivery of a five-workshop programme that involved more than 200 principals and senior instructors at technical and vocational training institutes across Pakistan.

One training workshop at the national level and four at the provincial level focused on key topics, such as the legal framework, institute management and leadership, competency-based instruction, accreditation, vocational guidance and placement services, access and equity, and entrepreneurship development. All principals worked through group exercises to develop institute management plans and identify ways to integrate best practices in the day-to-day running of their vocational school.

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres on 10 April 2017 designated children's rights activist and Nobel Laureate Malala Yousafzai as a UN Messenger of Peace with a special focus on girls' education. "You have been to the most difficult places [...] visited several refugee camps.

Your foundation has schools in Lebanon, in the Beka'a Valley," said Mr. Guterres at a ceremony in the Trusteeship Council chamber at UN Headquarters, in New York. "[You are a] symbol of perhaps the most important thing in the world, education for all," he highlighted.



"I've been fighting for girls' education since I was 10 or 11, when in Swat Valley, in Pakistan, terrorism started and girls couldn't go to school.

And I have learnt so much in my 20 years of life – from seeing terrorism, extremism, to then being attacked at the age of 15 and now at the global stage fighting for girls' education.

And what I have learned is that the future generation, they need education, they need quality education.

And if we want to see our future bright, developed, if we want to make our lives better, we have to invest in girls' education. That is crucial."

Malala Yousafzai, UN Messenger of Peace

UNCCT Aviation Security Project in Nigeria

Since July 2016, the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT) has been implementing a highly successful capacity-building project on aviation security in Nigeria, in partnership with the Government and with co-funding from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Designed to address major vulnerabilities related to training and quality assurance, the project has had an immediate and positive impact on the aviation security sector in Nigeria, and contributed to the Government's overall efforts to counter terrorism.

In addition to establishing two training centers in Nigeria in 2016, the project finalized the training of 35 Nigerian aviation security Master Trainers on 5 May 2017, who immediately began rolling out a Nigerian led two-week training to Airport Security Officers (ASOs) and Airport Security Supervisors (ASSs) on 19 May in Abuja. To mark this important milestone, UNCCT organized a graduation ceremony for the Master Trainers and the first class of 24 ASOs whom they had trained.



On 22 May, the first graduating class of ASOs started working at two key airports in Nigeria. During the first eight hours of their shift, they prevented three illegal shipments of gold and one 9 mm pistol with ammunition from being carried on board an aircraft.

As of the end of June 2017, the Master Trainers had delivered training to a total of 92 ASOs and 12 ASSs, all of whom have since been deployed to airports in the country. The project has also supported the review of all relevant Nigerian regulations, thus ensuring compliance with international aviation security standards.

UNCCT intends to continue to provide holistic capacity-building support to Nigeria in this area, while

at the same time expand this initiative to other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa by leveraging the gains made under the project.

Antigua And Barbuda Workshop on Border Control Management

The February 2017 workshop on Air Travel Border Control Management (BCM), hosted by Antigua and Barbuda and arranged by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) under the auspices of its Traveller Identification Programme (TRIP), was a significant step in carrying out the Canadian-funded project "Strengthening Border Control Management in the Caribbean region". The project is being implemented by ICAO in cooperation with the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED).

The goal of the Caribbean project is to help Member States in the region implement the ICAO TRIP Strategy by enhancing their border control management. States are required to comply with the international obligations contained in ICAO's Annex 9 – *Facilitation*, as well as UN Security Council resolutions. BCM encompasses the fourth and fifth elements of the ICAO TRIP Strategy, namely Inspection Systems and Tools and Interoperable Applications, supporting the overarching objectives of identification management and travel document security.

Project activities include developing the ICAO TRIP Guide on BCM; organizing two workshops on BCM (Antigua and Barbuda in February 2017 and Jamaica in November 2017); and conducting four technical assessment missions (TAMs).

The discussions held during the workshop provided input to the development of the ICAO TRIP Guide on Border Control Management. The guide will become available to States and the international community by the end of 2017.

Breakout sessions were facilitated by experts from ICAO, States and Regional and International organizations. Topics covered Advance Passenger Information (API), Passenger Name Record (PNR), ePassports, the Public Key Directory (PKD) and other border control management tools.

Some 23 representatives from nine States participated in the workshop, including border control management officials from Barbados, Dominican

Republic, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint-Lucia, Saint-Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago.

Additionally, six International and Regional Organizations participated in the Workshop, including representatives from the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), CTED, the International Air Transport Association (IATA), INTERPOL, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). Members of the ICAO Implementation and Capacity Working Group (ICBWG) also provided expertise.

The collaboration fostered during the workshop enabled exchanges of views between State officials and international experts. Workshop support was provided by CARICOM and OECS, who also held a consultative meeting to identify the States where the four TAMs would be performed in 2017. Jamaica was selected for the first TAM, which was held in March 2017.

Expert Consultation on Ensuring Human Rights Compliance of API Legislation

On 28 July 2017, the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT) convened the "Expert consultation meeting on ensuring human rights compliance of Advance Passenger Information (API) legislation" in Geneva, Switzerland. The meeting was organized by the UNCCT's Border Security and Management programme. The objective of the consultation was to review key elements to be considered by Member States in developing API legislation in compliance with international human rights obligations. The development of such legislation is required under Security Council resolution 2178 (2014). The conclusions of the

meeting have been set out in a 'legislative implementation guiding document' that can be used as a practical tool to assist Member States in developing their own legislation on API. The document takes into consideration relevant international human rights standards, with a strong focus on the right to privacy, while also covering other issues such as the freedom of movement, the right to due process and the right to asylum. In addition to this, the experts also agreed that States need to implement laws to protect the privacy, of both their citizens and non-citizens, independent of API legislation.



One major issue that drew the most attention was the purposes for which API could be legitimately used, as the purpose will determine the time period for which Member States can retain API as well as who they can transfer the API to. While some experts took a limited view that API should be used only for the purpose specified under UN Security Council resolution 2178 (2014), others stressed that in reality, API

can be used for much wider purpose, such as for airline passenger facilitation under Annex 9 of the Chicago Convention, intercepting drug trafficking, and aviation and border security.

There was general consensus that data on the usefulness of API is lacking, especially concerning the interception of FTFs. This is largely due to this type of data being confidential as it relates to a States' national security.

The following entities and experts participated: the Special Rapporteur on the right to privacy, Professor Joe Cannataci, the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, Mr. Ben Emmerson, the incoming Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, Professor Fionnuala Ni Aolain, CTED, IATA, ICAO, INTERPOL, IOM, OSCE, OHCHR, UNODC and WCO.

Building peace requires culture, education – message of historic UN Security Council resolution

Unequivocally condemning unlawful destruction and pillaging of cultural heritage such as religious sites and artefacts, the United Nations Security Council on 24 March 2017 adopted an historic resolution that is expected to strengthen protections for such heritage during armed conflicts where they are most vulnerable.

"The deliberate destruction of heritage [...] has become a tactic of war to tear societies apart over the long term, in a strategy of cultural cleansing," said Irina Bokova, the Director-General of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) following the resolution's adoption. "This is why defending cultural heritage is more than a cultural issue, it is a security imperative, inseparable from that of defending human lives," she added.

In her briefing to the Security Council, she explained that since the adoption of Resolution 2199 (in 2015), which prohibits trade in cultural property from Iraq and Syria, efforts were well-underway to disrupt terrorist financing through the illicit trafficking of antiquities. "Together, UNESCO, INTERPOL, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), customs services, the private sector and museums are all bolstering cooperation, coordinating new action," she noted.



Through the newly-adopted resolution, the Security Council also underlined that such destruction can hamper post-conflict reconciliation, undermine economic and cultural development and, that, in certain conditions, could constitute a war crime. "Building peace requires culture also; it requires education, prevention, and the transmission of heritage," added Ms. Bokova. "This is the message of this historic resolution," she stated.



The Director-General said that in addition to making every effort to implement the international legal and normative framework on protection of culture, as well as strengthen international cooperation, a response was needed from global criminal justice to prevent trafficking in cultural property by disrupting organized criminal and terrorist networks. "We need to put a stronger focus on investigation, cross-border cooperation and exchange of information, and on bringing in private and public-sector partners, including dealers and the tourism sector, to promote supply chain integrity and stop the illicit trade and sale of cultural property."

"Violent extremists target schools, because they know the power of knowledge to counter their rhetoric drawing on false visions of faith and history, they destroy culture, because they know it can foster dialogue and help people live together in their diversity."

Director-General of the UN Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Irina Bokova

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