



Priorities and Key Initiatives

Implemented by the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism through the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre and the newly established Special Projects and Innovation Division

UN Countering Terrorist Travel Programme - Building Member State Capacity to Prevent, Detect, and Investigate Terrorism and other Serious Criminal Offences by Using Travel Data Including Advance Passenger Information (API) and Passenger Name Record (PNR).

The global UN Countering Terrorist Travel Programme seeks to build Member States' capacity to prevent, detect, and investigate terrorist offences and other serious crimes using technology to process all passenger data and identify them through risk indicators and watchlists. The Programme thereby assists Member States to meet the obligations of Security Council Resolution 2178 (2014), 2396 (2017) and 2482 (2019), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Annex 9 Standards and Recommended Practices and other international obligations. This innovative initiative, launched in May 2019, is implemented by the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism in partnership with CTED, UNODC, ICAO, OICT and INTERPOL as part of an 'All-of-UN' approach.

The Programme assists requesting Member States in establishing a national inter-agency targeting center, or Passenger Information Unit (PIU), with a solid legal framework, well-trained operators and state-of-the-art technology. The national PIU will receive travel information (API/PNR and other) from air and possibly later maritime carriers in a single window, empowered by the donated GoTravel software system which cross-checks suspected individuals against national and international watchlists and risk indicators. The PIU will detect and track threats, and alert national competent authorities, helping to stop or investigate suspects. Regional Informal Working Groups are also being established with beneficiary Member States to enhance regional and global multilateral cooperation and interoperability.

Victims of Terrorism

The General Assembly, through its resolution on the Review of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (A/72/284), recognises "the role that victims of terrorism can play, including in countering the appeal of terrorism, and [emphasizes] the need to promote international solidarity in support of victims of terrorism." It further encourages Member States to promote the resilience of victims and their families in their national counter-terrorism strategies, "including by providing victims and their families with proper support and assistance immediately after an attack and in the long term and sharing on a voluntary basis the best practices and lessons learned related to the protection of victims of terrorism, including regarding the provision of legal, medical, psychosocial or financial support."

Promoting and protecting the rights of victims of terrorism and addressing their needs is a top priority for the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism. In this context, the global Victims of Terrorism Support Programme seeks (i) to strengthen solidarity with the victims of terrorism and raise awareness of their experiences, (ii) to strengthen victims' voices and their role in preventing and countering violent extremism, and (iii) to increase the capacities of Member States and civil society organisations to support victims of terrorism.

Recent activities under the Programme include:

- The development of 'Guidelines and Principles to Assist, Protect and Support Victims of Terrorism in Asia Pacific', which will be published in early 2020.
- In August 2019, on the occasion of the second International Day of Remembrance of and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism, a photo exhibition was organized on 'Surviving Terrorism: The Power of Resilience.' The exhibit, featuring photo stories of twenty victims of terrorism from twenty countries, was launched by the Secretary-General.
- A documentary 'Surviving Terrorism: Victims' Voices from Cameroon and Nigeria' was presented as part of the Lake Chad Basin documentary series.

The first Global Victims of Terrorism Congress will be held during Counter-Terrorism Week in June 2020 to highlight the nature and scope of issues confronting victims.

Countering Financing of Terrorism (CFT) through Effective National and Regional Action

Since March 2015, the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism has implemented a global flagship capacity-building programme on Terrorist Designations and Asset Freezing. This includes providing technical assistance and training to Member States (national regulatory agencies, financial intelligence units, relevant ministries and private sector institutions) and regional bodies on the effective implementation of targeted financial sanctions against terrorism and terrorism financing. The programme also supports Member States and regional bodies in adopting mechanisms to safeguard their financial systems and address terrorism-financing techniques. The programme was reviewed in mid-2017 to meet the emerging needs of Member States.

In response to the newly adopted resolution 2642 (2019), the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism and its partners are strengthening their capacity to meet interested States' requests for technical assistance. These include a broad range of pressing CFT topics such as protecting the NPO sector, sharing financial intelligence, promoting public-private partnerships, conducting sectoral risk assessments, and other

priority topics identified by FATF and FATF-style regional bodies. The capacity of national authorities and relevant stakeholders to combat the financing of terrorism within their jurisdictions and regionally is especially important. As such, the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism aims to provide strategically coordinated knowledge, skills and expertise and ensure a more sustained impact of the assistance delivered.

Recent achievements of the CFT Programme include:

(i) capacity-building assistance on CFT to Tunisia which led to the adoption of a decree on asset freezing; (ii) assistance to the Eastern and Southern Africa Anti-Money Laundering Group (ESAAMLG) on the development of a regional CFT Operational Plan that was adopted at the Ministerial level; and (iii) creation of impact-oriented training packages on the freezing of assets in partnerships with FATF-Style Regional Bodies (FSRBs) in Asia, East Africa and the Middle East.

Border Security and Management (BSM)

Ensuring effective border security and management is essential for preventing and countering the flow of suspected terrorists and foreign terrorist fighters across land, air, and maritime borders. BSM is also imperative to curb the illicit cross-border movement of arms, ammunition, explosives, hazardous materials, goods and cargo that may be used for terrorist purposes. Despite enhanced measures taken by Member States in recent years to strengthen border security - especially in light of the evolving FTF phenomenon - capacities among States differ and gaps still exist. In particular, disparities are seen in the effective control of identity papers and travel documents, screening processes, technical equipment and trained border personnel, and coordinated border management.

The global BSM programme provides tailored technical assistance to Member States and regional organisations in implementing the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and relevant Security Council resolutions such as resolutions 1373 (2001), 2178 (2014) and 2396 (2017). In particular, it aims to prevent cross-border movement of terrorists and stem the flow of Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs), through improved border security and management and cross-border cooperation among beneficiary countries.

To date, the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism has been delivering targeted capacity-building training based on established best practices for border security management. This work has is being delivered through an “All of UN” approach with key Global Compact partners including UNODC, IOM, WCO, and INTERPOL. While the programme focuses primarily on priority regions where both the threat of terrorism and the need for border management assistance is greatest - namely in Africa and Central Asia - activities are also envisaged in the Middle East-North Africa, Caribbean-Latin America and South East Asia. In the future, the programme will extend its focus to maritime border management capacities and further enhancing Member States’ capacities to responsibly collect, use and share biometrics to counter

terrorism as called for in Security Council resolution 2396 (2017).

Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs)

FTFs that remain in conflict zones, return to their countries of origin or nationality, or relocate to third countries, continue to pose a serious threat to international peace and security. In response to the evolving FTF phenomenon, S/RES/2396 (2017) establishes and reinforces international obligations related to border security and information sharing. These include the use of Passenger Name Record (PNR) and advance passenger information (API), biometrics, and watchlists. The resolution further calls for strengthened judicial cooperation and implementation of appropriate prosecution, as well as rehabilitation, and reintegration strategies for FTFs and their accompanying family members.

To support requesting Member States in their efforts, the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism is implementing projects to increase States’ ability to identify, track, and disrupt FTF mobility through enhanced information sharing, as well as to strengthen their capacities in the Internet for investigations related to FTFs. The Office also supports Member States in adopting human rights-based treatment of children associated with foreign terrorist fighters. Additionally, programmes/projects on border security and management, API/PNR, countering terrorist financing and cyber security are being developed to address the evolving FTF phenomenon.

In response to requests from several Member States following the promulgation of the Key Principles for the Protection, Repatriation, Prosecution, Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Women and Children with Links to United Nations Listed Terrorist Groups, the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism has been working with The United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) and UNODC, to develop a programme to support Member States in the screening, prosecution, rehabilitation, and reintegration, of individuals suspected or convicted of committing terrorist acts, including FTFs, their families and associates. Consultations with CTED and UNODC are ongoing to develop a Global initiative to collect, analyse and document current approaches of Member States and experts on the screening and PRR of suspected terrorists, including FTFs, their families and associates.

Global Programme on Security of Major Sports Events, and Promotion of Sports and its Values as a Tool to Prevent Violent Extremism (PVE)

This programme seeks to (i) increase Member States awareness of terrorism-related threats against vulnerable targets in the context of major sporting events, (ii) use sport and its values as a tool to build resilience especially among youth, (iii) to prevent violent extremism, and (iv) increase the ability of Member States to prevent and counter threats against major sporting events. Youth resilience is recognized as an enabler of sustainable development in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in Security Council resolution

2419 (2018) on Youth, Peace and Security, as well as in General Assembly resolution 73/24 on Sport.

A significant component of the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism and its partners' work will be devoted to promoting sports and its value as an important tool to prevent radicalization and violent extremism conducive to terrorism. Activities will include the collection and dissemination of good practices, provision of technical assistance to Member States, the organization of a campaign with sport champions, and the promotion of international and regional cooperation. This project will be launched and implemented in cooperation with relevant United Nations entities, in particular CTED, the United Nations Alliance of Civilization (UNAoC), and the United Nations Interregional Criminal Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) through a 'All-of-UN' approach. The component on sport and security will also count on the partnership with the International Centre for Sport and Security (ICSS). The programme will be implemented in close consultation with other relevant organizations, including INTERPOL and in coordination with other organizations including UNODC, GCTF, Council of Europe, European Union, academia and key public and private sector partners.

Cybersecurity

The Cybersecurity programme aims to enhance capacities of Member States and private organizations in preventing cyber-attacks carried out by terrorist actors against critical infrastructure. The project also seeks to mitigate the impact and recover and restore the targeted systems should such cyber-attacks occur.

The UN Office of Counter-Terrorism has several initiatives within the field of new technologies, including the use of social media to gather open source information and digital evidence to counter terrorism and violent extremism while respecting Human Rights. It has provided expertise in international fora on the use of unmanned aerial systems (UAS) and will develop further programming in this area. Some key milestones include:

- In 2019, the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism implemented Phase I of the Cybersecurity programme for South East Asia and Bangladesh, delivering an awareness raising workshop for the 11 beneficiary Member States. In-depth pilot training workshops were also organized for Thailand, Brunei, Philippines, Bangladesh and Lao PDR.
- In June 2019, the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism and INTERPOL published the 'Handbook on using the Internet and Social Media for counter-terrorism investigations'.
- In September 2019, the Office will complete the implementation of a project for Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines to enhance capacities of officials regarding the exploitation of social media and the internet to investigate and prosecute FTFs and violent extremists.
- In 2020, the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism will implement Cybersecurity Phase I for East Africa, Horn of Africa and the Sahel.

Programme on Preventing and Responding to Weapons of Mass Destruction/Chemical Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (WMD/CBRN) Terrorism

The Programme seeks to advance Member States' and International Organizations understanding of the level of the threat of WMD/CBRN terrorism, and support their prevention, preparedness and response efforts at their request. It builds on the development of partnerships to contribute to the ongoing capacity-building efforts of the international community and provides capacity-building support, focusing on areas such as border and export control, strategic trade control, illicit trafficking, protection of CBRN materials and critical infrastructure, incident response and crisis management, CBRN forensics, among others.

Three pilot Projects were developed under this Programme: (i) *Enhancing national capabilities to prevent and respond to chemical and biological terrorist attacks in Iraq*. The project focuses on biological and chemical security, investigation, intelligence sharing, security culture in academia and CBRN response.

(ii) *Enhancing capabilities to prepare for and respond to CBRN terrorist attack in Jordan*. The project includes the identification of Jordan's needs through self-assessment; the delivery of a training course; the organization of a field and virtual reality exercise and the issuance of recommendations. It is jointly implemented with NATO in close coordination with the Jordanian authorities.

(iii) *Promoting Universalization and effective implementation of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism*. The project, jointly implemented with UNODC, includes high-level awareness raising activities, trainings for law enforcement, prosecutors and border/customs officials, legislative assistance, and a study on the causes of lack of adherence to the convention

Support to Member States on Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) Policy-Making and Developing National and Regional PVE Plans

The Secretary-General's 2015 Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism calls on all Member States to enact national action plans. The Global PVE policy assistance programme of UN Office of Counter-Terrorism seeks to provide coordinated PVE policy support to Member States and regional organizations to develop, harmonize, and implement national/regional PVE plans of action to comprehensively address the drivers of violent extremism. The UN Office of Counter-Terrorism also coordinates and complements the work of UN agencies in countries where they are supporting Member States and developing PVE strategies or related legislative and policy frameworks.

The Office is actively engaged in supporting Member States in Central Asia, South-East Asia and West Africa as part of the program. In the future, support will be extended to Member States in the Horn of Africa and South Asia in 2019 and 2020. This support will be guided by its "Reference Guide on

Developing national and Regional Action Plans to Prevent Violent Extremism”, launched in September 2018. This Guide outlines principles for Member States consideration in designing comprehensive and integrated PCVE action plans, in line with the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, relevant UN Security Council resolutions and the UN PVE Plan of Action (A/70/674), among other documents.

[Dissemination of good practices on ensuring respect for Human Rights as the fundamental basis of the fight against terrorism](#)

The UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (A/RES/60/288), as well as several General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, underscore Member States’ obligations under international law. In particular international human rights law, refugee law and humanitarian law necessitate the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism conducive to terrorism. Through capacity building to address gaps identified by Member States, the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism supports requesting Member States in implementing their human rights obligations in the context of counter-terrorism and PVE.

The technical assistance to Member States is provided in collaboration with relevant UN Agencies such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). These include delivering human rights training to law enforcement and security officials, developing human rights training modules for border officials, organizing regional and national-level consultations and awareness events for policymakers, and producing publications on key human rights principles applicable to screening at border. A handbook is also being developed on key principles to ensure the human rights-based treatment of children accompanying or associated with foreign terrorist fighters.

The UN Office of Counter-Terrorism is expanding its capacity building support by adapting and utilising already developed training tools, handbooks to deliver training-of-trainers for senior and mid-level law enforcement officials and policy makers on human rights and counter-terrorism. The UN Office of Counter-Terrorism is also planning interventions to raise awareness on the shrinking space for human rights defenders and civil society actors to exercise their freedoms as a consequence on counter-terrorism measures that are not human rights-compliant.

[Youth](#)

The UN Office of Counter-Terrorism has initiated a Youth Programme to empower young people to contribute meaningfully in the global, regional and national efforts to prevent and counter violent extremism and terrorism. In line with its mandated role to provide leadership across the UN system on counter-terrorism, the Youth Programme aims to contribute to international efforts to strengthen the resilience of youth to violent extremism and terrorism.

By 2020, the Youth Programme aims to ensure that programmatic and policy engagement with young people globally is evidence-based, data-driven, youth-informed, human rights compliant, and promoting international youth-led and youth-focused efforts to prevent and counter violent extremism. The programme will enhance the meaningful participation of youth in development and in the implementation of programmes, projects, policies and action plans to prevent and counter violent extremism and terrorism by strengthening resilience and increasing the number of joint UN programmatic activities with and for youth aiming to prevent and counter violent extremism.

[Gender](#)

The programme aims to (i) support Member States to ensure that counter-terrorism and PVE measures are grounded in gender analysis and take into account women’s human rights, gender equality and women’s empowerment and (ii) guarantee that all the areas of the work of the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism - such as programming, policy, capacity-building and communications - systematically include the Women, Peace and Security Agenda and gender perspectives in line with international law including international human rights law, humanitarian and refugee law.

The UN Office of Counter-Terrorism is developing a comprehensive Gender Policy, including a gender marker system for its projects, to ensure that a gender dimension is integrated in all aspects of its work, spanning project development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Currently, a project is being implemented in partnership with UN Women on ‘Security Sector Reform in an Era of Terrorism and Violent Extremism: Women’s Rights in the Sahel Region’. Another project emanating from the Global Compact Gender Working Group is in the approval stage. It will promote the implementation of the UN Guidelines on Gender Sensitive Approaches to Screening, Prosecution, Rehabilitation and Reintegration together with UN Women, UNODC and CTED.

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