

Briefings by the Chairs of the Security Council subsidiary bodies

Statement of

**H.E. Mr. Gustavo Meza-Cuadra Velásquez
Chair of the Counter-Terrorism Committee**

United Nations Headquarters, New York, Wednesday, 3 October 2018

Mr. President,

I thank you for this opportunity to brief the Security Council on the work of the Counter-Terrorism Committee and its Executive Directorate.

Terrorist groups, including ISIL, Al-Qaida, and their affiliates, continue to pose grave threats to peace and security around the world.

ISIL has suffered significant losses, but has transformed itself into a global network that continues to motivate its supporters and followers around the globe to commit attacks.

The growing sophistication of the methods used by terrorists requires innovation in our responses, while ensuring that those in place are both effective and sustainable.

Not long ago, we were concerned with the flow of foreign terrorist fighters to the conflict zones of Iraq and Syria.

Our concerns now include not only the activities of those FTFs who remain in the conflict zones, but also returning and relocating FTFs and their family members, and the potential risks posed by the forthcoming release of imprisoned FTFs and others convicted on terrorism-related charges.

In this regard, the Committee is currently preparing a special meeting to update its 2015 Madrid Guiding Principles on stemming the flow of FTFs.

Pursuant to Council resolution 2396 (2017), CTED is engaging with Member States, in cooperation with the relevant organizations, including ICAO, to assist with the implementation of Advance Passenger Information (API) and Passenger Name Records (PNR) systems and the use of biometric data to identify terrorists, in compliance with domestic law and international human rights law.

I would note, in connection to this, the recent issuance of the United Nations Compendium of Recommended Practices for the Responsible Use and Sharing of Biometrics in Counter Terrorism, developed by the CTITF.

CTED is also supporting the development of comprehensive and tailored prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration strategies for former members of terrorist groups, including in the Lake Chad Basin.

Similarly, the Committee and CTED continue to focus on the many evidentiary and jurisdictional challenges that hinder attempts to prosecute returning FTFs.

Mr. President,

Since our previous briefing, the Council also adopted resolution 2395 (2017), which renews the mandate of CTED and reaffirms its role as a special political mission, acting under the policy guidance of the Committee.

Pursuant to the same resolution, CTED has reported to the Committee on ways to strengthen its assessment tools and improve the utility of its assessments to Member

States, technical assistance providers, implementing partners, the UNOCT, other relevant UN agencies, and international and regional organizations.

Since the beginning of 2018, CTED has conducted 13 country assessment visits on the Committee's behalf, in cooperation with international and regional organizations.

I wish to note that the Committee recently received consent to visit Mali and Saudi Arabia and that Finland, the United Kingdom and the United States of America have invited assessment visits in 2019.

Mr. President,

We are concerned about the impact of terrorism on children and at the role played within terrorist groups by women, who are often victims of terrorism, but may also be perpetrators and facilitators.

In June, the Committee held a briefing on children and terrorism, with the participation of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict and UN University.

In the same vein, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the OCT joined in September the Committee for a briefing on the human rights aspects of counter-terrorism, including the rights of victims and survivors.

Human rights and gender issues have also been streamlined throughout all Committee and CTED activities, including within the framework of assessment visits and thematic briefings.

Mr. President,

As you are aware, cooperation with and among international and regional organizations and among the relevant United Nations entities is essential.

In March, CTED organized a subregional consultation of the Governments of Afghanistan, the Maldives and Sri Lanka on promoting the adoption and implementation of national strategies to counter violent extremism.

Last July, the Committee held an open briefing on Central Asia, focusing on the current counter-terrorism situation in the region, the progress achieved by the five States of the region, and the remaining challenges.

Just last week, CTED, UNODC and the International Association of Prosecutors jointly launched a Practical Guide for requesting Electronic Evidence Across Borders for investigators, prosecutors and central authorities.

CTED also continues to promote and facilitate cooperation with other major actors and partners in the private sector, civil society, and the research community, including through the CTED Global Research Network.

And participants in the Asia ICT and Counter-Terrorism Dialogue have discussed countering incitement and violent extremism leading to terrorism, the development of counter-narratives, enhancing the practices of private online communications service providers, and empowering online communities.

In this regard, the Committee held in May an open meeting on countering terrorist narratives and preventing terrorist use of the internet.

Mr. President,

Countering terrorist financing also continues to be a major focus of our attention.

The CTED Executive Director notably played an active role in the international conference “No Money for Terror”, held in Paris in April 2018.

Pursuant to Council resolutions 2331 (2016) and 2388 (2017), CTED continues to investigate the possible links between transnational organized crime and terrorism, particularly human trafficking and terrorism.

In cooperation with UNODC and UNICRI, the Committee will hold an open briefing on the nexus between international terrorism and transnational organized crime, on 8 October 2018; and will also hold a joint special meeting on this topic, in accordance with the Statement by the President of the Security Council of 8 May 2018 (S/PRST/2018/9).

Mr. President,

Acting under the guidance of the Committee and in accordance with Council resolution 2395 (2017), CTED has also continued to strengthen its cooperation with the United Nations Office of Counter Terrorism.

A joint CTED/UNOCT report on enhanced coordination and cooperation was issued as a Security Council document and addendum to the Secretary-General’s report to the General Assembly on the biennial review of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

Moreover, CTED and the OCT have conducted joint high-level consultations to Iraq, Kenya, Nigeria, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan.

Continued efforts have also been made to match the activities of the UNOCT with the technical assistance needs and recommendations set forth in the Committee's visit reports.

In conclusion, I wish to reaffirm the determination of the Committee and CTED to develop and implement comprehensive responses to the evolving terrorism threat, in close cooperation with other relevant United Nations entities and with their international and regional partners.

Thank you.