

2021 United Nations Counter-Terrorism Week

21–30 June 2021

Virtual side event

“Preventing terrorists from acquiring weapons: towards technical guidelines to facilitate the implementation of Security Council resolution 2370 (2017), related good practices and international standards”

Thursday, 24 June 2021, 12.30-2.00 p.m. EDT

Opening statement of

**Assistant Secretary-General Michèle Coninx
Executive Director, CTED**

Excellencies, distinguished participants,

Allow me to begin by welcoming you all to this side event, which has been co-organized by CTED with UNOCT and UNIDIR, under the sponsorship of the Russian Federation.

Preventing terrorists from gaining access to weapons remains an extremely complex challenge, which requires multi-layered responses by States at the legislative, administrative and operational levels.

Building upon Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), Council resolution 2370 (2017) established a comprehensive set of provisions and approaches on this issue and strengthened CTED’s mandate to address it through its assessments and dialogue with Member States.

Council resolution 2482 (2019) focused on the nexus between counter-terrorism and organized crime, including the trafficking of weapons.

In 2018, the Council adopted the Addendum to its 2015 *Madrid Guiding principles on stemming the flow of foreign terrorist fighters*, adding a new principle on “Preventing and combating the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons”.

CTED has assessed that many States lack the necessary capacity, resources, and modern technology and equipment for effective weapons control, and also suffer from inadequate implementation mechanisms.

The need to manage and secure lengthy, porous borders in order to effectively disrupt trafficking routes and detect and seize weapons also poses significant difficulties for many States.

CTED also monitors new risks and trends deriving from international arms trafficking via the Internet and the evolving threat posed by the sophisticated use of IEDs and other explosives.

Although a number of States have expressed concern at the nexus between international terrorism and transnational organized crime, it seems that the actual level of investigation and prosecution of cases involving both criminal and terrorist groups remains low.

The project on “Preventing terrorists from acquiring weapons”, funded by UNOCT and implemented under the Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact Working Group on Border Management and Law Enforcement, chaired by CTED, will establish a comprehensive set of technical guidelines to facilitate implementation of Council resolution 2370 (2017) and other relevant resolutions.

The project is an excellent example of a “One-UN” approach benefitting from the specific expertise of all relevant member entities of the Global Compact.

The technical guidelines will serve as a unique tool, highlighting the existing instruments and protocols aimed at preventing supply and access to weapons by terrorists and at addressing the nexus between terrorism and transnational organized crime.

Scheduled for release in September this year, the guidelines will also address the human rights and gender-related aspects of combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, IEDS, and unmanned aircraft systems.

Excellencies, distinguished participants,

It is essential that States remain committed to implementing the Council's resolutions on preventing illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons and their illicit supply to terrorists.

It is equally essential that we continue to assess their capacity to do so.

CTED will ensure promotion and full use of the guidelines in its dialogue with Member States and during its assessment visits to Member States on behalf of the Counter-Terrorism Committee.

The guidelines will provide States with practical guidance aimed at enhancing States' implementation and will also support the design, programming and funding of technical assistance projects and activities aimed at building States' capacity to counter terrorism.

Thank you. I wish you all a successful event.