



2021 Counter-Terrorism Week SIDE EVENTS

24-30 JUNE 2021

UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS • NEW YORK

FUSION CELLS GLOBAL PROGRAMME

Making a Case for Fusion Cells: Key Takeaways from Global Partners.

Date: Wednesday, 30 June 2021

08:30 – 10:00AM EST

CONCEPT NOTE

Event Description

The United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), as part of its annual CT week, will hold a virtual side event: a roundtable discussion to make a case for National Interagency Coordination Mechanisms, also known as Fusion Cells. The event will highlight the important role Fusion Cells can play in assisting Member States in the development of interdisciplinary expertise and situational awareness and in facilitating information sharing. The event will make the case for how Fusion Cells can assist law enforcement and their security partners in preventing, protecting against, and responding to crime and terrorism at the local, national, regional, and international levels.

The event will bring together international experts to discuss the added value of and ways in which Fusion Cells benefit Member States and the impact they have on national counter-terrorism efforts and exchange their practical experiences.

Background

Governments across the world continue in their efforts to combat the COVID-19 pandemic by enacting various measures to support public health systems, safeguard the economy and to ensure public order and safety. During this period of increased vulnerability, terrorist organizations and violent extremists are aiming to capitalize on the crisis by seizing on the uncertainty created by the COVID-19 pandemic to advance their violent agendas and spread their hateful messages.

The need for vigilance is high, specifically regarding maintaining awareness and understanding of emerging threats, hence the importance having access to timely all-source assessed information. As Member States

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and the international community continue to face a wide range of threats – distinct in scale, intensity, and impact – it is imperative to understand and analyse the impact of these threats both on terrorism and counter-terrorism. Although the impacts will not be felt consistently across Member States or regions, there is a need for enhanced National level Interagency cooperation and coordination, to which Fusion Cells offer a solution.

Interagency cooperation and coordination are critical to creating an environment for sharing information and in keeping Member States up-to-date with criminal and terrorism-related activities and to support law enforcement agencies, intelligence agencies, and reassure the general public. Fusion Cells can also be used to analyse emerging threats, produce threat assessments, establish the national threat level, or identify critical, at-risk infrastructure and targets across a country, particularly when coordinating with law enforcement at all levels. For example, cooperation with local law enforcement enables Fusion Cells to obtain ground-level information, such as through community monitoring programmes or channels of communication with the public, which can then be passed on to the appropriate authorities at national and even international levels, thus allowing this valuable information to be utilised more effectively.

Roundtable Focus

With this in mind, counter-terrorism stakeholders around the globe are often confronted with the following questions:

- Why do Fusion Cells need a clear mandate and line of authority?
- What are the primary functions and responsibilities of Fusion Cells?
- In a national context, how are their costs justified in terms of added value?
- What are the main obstacles to interagency cooperation?
- How are Fusion Cells managing data whilst addressing privacy concerns?
- How do Fusion Cells enhance interagency cooperation at the national, Regional, and international levels?
- Could a Fusion Cell support other national threats such as pandemics and crises? If so, how?
- Do Fusion Cells violate civil liberties?

Targeted Audience

The event is open to participation, upon registration, to representatives from:

- Member States
- United Nations entities
- International & regional organizations



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