

High-level event to launch the updated United Nations Compendium of Good Practices on the Protection of Critical Infrastructure against Terrorist Attacks

Monday, 5 June 2023, 10:00–11:45 a.m. (EST/New York time)

Opening statement of

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Excellencies, distinguished participants,

Allow me to begin by thanking the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism for organizing this event and by congratulating Under-Secretary-General Voronkov and his office for the successful and timely launch of the updated *Compendium of Good Practices on the Protection of Critical Infrastructure against Terrorist Attacks*, to which CTED contributed. I also wish to express my gratitude to the State of Qatar for its continuous support.

This is timely indeed considering that States are increasingly introducing security enhancements to protect critical infrastructure and soft targets, while terrorists continue to seek ways to exploit their vulnerabilities. In addition to more traditional modalities – such as the use of suicide bombers, improvised explosive devices and active shooters – terrorists are continuously upgrading to more advanced methods of attack using new technologies, such as unmanned aircraft systems.

This leads me to highlight the importance of States keeping pace with the evolving security environment by conducting ongoing and systematic threat and risk assessments to ensure effective security measures are implemented and applied.

CTED's work is based on Security Council resolution 2341 (2017), which focuses on the protection of critical infrastructure. Recognizing that no guidance on the topic existed at the time the resolution was adopted, CTED worked together with UNOCT and

INTERPOL to develop the 2018 *Compendium* as part of the work of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact Working Group on Emerging Threats and Critical Infrastructure Protection, which is chaired by INTERPOL. However, given the prevailing security environment, information on practices, tools and assistance have become more available.

In addition, in its resolution 2396 (2017), the Council introduced the concept of soft-target protection, highlighting the importance of conducting national risk and threat assessments, developing appropriate contingency and emergency-response plans for terrorist attacks, and establishing partnerships, including public-private partnerships.

Critical infrastructure and soft-target protection are now also an integral part of CTED's ongoing assessment and analysis, and the e-DIS, an enhanced assessment and stocktaking tool for the Committee and CTED, is a way to illustrate the importance of the issues to the Council, the Committee and CTED.

The relevant guiding principles on critical infrastructure and soft target protection were also added to the addendum to the guiding principles on foreign terrorist fighters (2018), which has the added political weight of being supported by the Security Council.

Within the framework of its assessments conducted on behalf of the Committee, CTED has identified the need for States to further develop necessary measures to prevent, protect, mitigate, investigate, respond to, and recover from damage caused by terrorist attacks against critical infrastructure and soft targets. These efforts should involve a wide range of actors, as well as close engagement with local leadership, local communities, and civil society.

We have learned, through our assessments, that identifying and/or defining critical infrastructure and soft targets and implementing effective security measures can be extremely challenging. In its recommendations to visited States, CTED has also encouraged many States to share their existing good practices in this area with other States.

All States should ensure that any such measures respect the rule of law and comply with their international human rights obligations. Those measures should also be integrated at all levels, including the practical and operational levels.

We see the added value of the updated *Compendium* in increasing awareness of existing practices, including through case studies, consideration of the risk and threat to critical infrastructure, and consideration of new and emerging threats, as well as increasing awareness of the importance of engaging with all relevant stakeholders from early stages of planning and designing security measures in this context.

We are delighted that the *Compendium* addresses critical areas, from legislative and institutional frameworks to inter-agency coordination and information-sharing, and highlights sector-specific issues that States should consider in their efforts to strengthen critical infrastructure protection.

I encourage States and other practitioners to benefit from the *Compendium* in the development of responses to attacks, from prevention to recovery, and towards sustainable security approaches.

CTED is a proud partner in the United Nations Global Programme on Countering Terrorist Threats against Vulnerable Targets, through which it leads the national capacity consultations.

CTED will continue to work actively with and to support UNOCT and implementing partners by promoting the *Compendium* during CTED's assessment visits and dialogue with States and other partners.

Thank you.