

Remarks by
Ms. Alison August Treppel
Executive Secretary of the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism (CICTE)
during the special meeting of the Counter-Terrorism Committee commemorating the 20th
anniversary of the adoption of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) and the establishment of the
Counter-Terrorism Committee
November 4, 2021

His Excellency Tarek Ladeb, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Tunisia to the United Nations and Chair of the Security Council Committee,

Assistant Secretary-General and CTED Executive Director, Michèle Coninsx,

Esteemed authorities,

I'm honored to help commemorate the 20th anniversary of Security Council resolution 1373 and the subsequent creation of the Counter-Terrorism Committee and its Executive Directorate. These and countless other efforts undertaken over the past two decades remind us that the attacks of September 11, 2001 marked “a before and an after” in the global fight against terrorism.

This is particularly true for the Western Hemisphere. Although the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism (CICTE) had actually been created two years earlier in 1999 (largely a result of the terrorist attacks against the Israeli Embassy and the AMIA Jewish Community Center in Buenos Aires, Argentina), the events of September 11 prompted a strong and decisive regional response.

Not only did OAS Member States create the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism, the first legally binding treaty of its kind, but they also created the CICTE Secretariat to facilitate greater technical cooperation and assistance throughout the Hemisphere.

And over the past twenty years, the work of CICTE and its Secretariat – like that of our regional and international partners-- has evolved as the terrorist threat landscape has continued to evolve.

Twenty years ago, and in line with Resolution 1373, we focused efforts on strengthening effective border controls and on preventing the fraudulent use of identity papers and travel documents. Of course these issues remain critically important, particularly given the strong linkages between transnational organized crime and terrorism in our region.

But today our Member States must also remain alert to the threat of violent extremism, foreign terrorist fighters and the use of ICTs for recruitment and radicalization. As the COVID-19 pandemic has clearly illustrated, our Member States must also strengthen biosecurity and other CBRN preparedness measures. And they must also ensure that bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies are not misused to finance terrorist activity.

In short, Chair, the scourge of terrorism not only persists but crosses physical and digital boundaries in ways we simply never imagined twenty years ago.

Today, we know that no single state or region can succeed in successfully addressing these threats in isolation. Creating a more peaceful and secure world --in short, a world without terrorism-- is a shared responsibility.

That's why the work of the United Nations and that of regional organizations such as OAS/CICTE remains critical. As multilateral institutions with convening power, we can help facilitate dialogue and cooperation among all relevant stakeholders. Perhaps more importantly, we can help encourage those same stakeholders to translate words into action with timely, cost-effective, and practical measures for addressing terrorism, always with full respect for human rights and the rule of law.

Because, as we look ahead to the next twenty years, we believe that greater practical cooperation will be key to our collective success in protecting our governments, our cities, our critical infrastructure and our citizens from the threat of terrorism.

CICTE's 24/7 network to promote the real-time exchange of operational information around terrorist threats is just one example of the practical cooperation we are promoting in the region.

And so, Chair, we believe it's important to look ahead, but we must never forget the thousands of victims lost to terrorism in the Americas over more than 2 decades.

The OAS and CICTE will strive to honor their memory by strengthening collaboration with our regional and global partners, including CTED. Not only to continuously assess the evolving threat landscape, but also to seek greater understanding of the root causes of terrorism, to identify safer alternatives for our region's young people, to foster greater degrees of preparedness and resiliency -- both physical and digital--, and yes, to encourage more practical cooperation at all levels. Our peace and security depend on it. Thank you.