

### IN THIS ISSUE

- p1 CTITF Holds Open Briefing for Member States
- p2 Message from the CTITF Chairman
- p2 Building an Online Library of Counter-Narratives
- p3 CTITF Inter-agency Meeting
- p5 Addressing WMD Attacks
- p6 Central Asian States Press on for a Common Front Against Terror
- p8 Security Council Committee Examines Prevention of Terrorism
- p9 UNODC launches Counter-Terrorism Learning Platform
- p10 Securing the Borders of the Maghreb and the Sahel
- p11 Crime and Terrorism
- p12 Interview with CTED Executive Director Mike Smith
- p15 Activities of the CTITF Office
- p16 Upcoming Events

## CTITF Holds Open Briefing for Member States

The United Nations Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) held an open briefing on 12 May 2011, in New York, to update Member States on the latest activities and progress that the Task Force has made in supporting governments implement the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy adopted in 2006.

In his opening remarks, General Assembly President Joseph Deiss recounted the impact of terrorism

around the globe. “In various parts of the world, the menace of terrorism continues to resurface regularly, wreaking havoc, destroying lives, inflicting pain and instilling fear to ordinary people. We see horror in the eyes of all the victims of terrorism around the world”, he said.

Mr. Deiss hailed the unequivocal and resolute stance that the international community has taken against terrorism. *continues on page 4*

## Message from the CTITF Chairman

As we continue our work for the implementation of the Global Counter-terrorism Strategy, joining forces and strengthening cooperation is the key to our success. Governments are increasingly mobilizing in the fight against terrorism and we need to continue to work even more closely with United Nations Member States. On 12 May 2011, the CTITF Office organized an open briefing to the United Nations General Assembly. For the first time, the briefing included not only UN entities but also Member States involved in CTITF projects. This gave an opportunity to interested governments to present their work to the rest of the UN membership, encouraging further engagement from Member States with our work. Many welcomed this development.



Robert Orr

Just as we reach out to Member States in new and proactive ways, the CTITF's biennial retreat for inter-agency coordination which followed the General Assembly briefing looked at how CTITF entities can further strengthen cooperation and improve information sharing. The Integrated Assistance on Countering Terrorism (I-ACT) initiative received particular attention as a unique platform for partnership between the United Nations and governments as well as substantive, practical and targeted tool to share information. A decision was made to re-model the CTITF website in order to make it a more comprehensive resource for the range of projects and activities undertaken by the CTITF entities. The conversation during part of the retreat with Mr. Gilles de Kerchove, the European Union Counter-Terrorism Coordinator, and Ambassador Daniel Benjamin, the United States' Coordinator for Counter-Terrorism, showed the increasing importance of multilateral counter-terrorism efforts for major players.

For the first time since the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy was passed, the CTITF Office will organize in September an event at the ministerial level, hosted by the Secretary-General, to discuss the way forward. The Secretary-General's Symposium on International Counter-Terrorism Cooperation will focus on key priorities to further the implementation of the Global Strategy at the international, regional and local level. Regional cooperation in particular is critical to our counter-terrorism efforts. That is why in late July the CTITF Office and the Government of Ethiopia will bring together States of the Eastern Africa region to discuss ways to promote the regional implementation of the Strategy. Additionally, the Counter-Terrorism Committee is planning an event to commemorate the adoption of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001). Over the summer, we will provide updates as we make progress on these and other activities.

The upcoming ten year anniversary of the attacks on September 11th in the city of New York reminds us of all the tragedies around the world and the need to continue to work together, through enhanced coordination and strong collaboration. I continue to count on all of you to achieve our common objectives against terrorism.

Robert Orr  
Assistant Secretary-General for Strategic Planning,  
Executive Office of the Secretary-General

## Building an Online Library of Counter-Narratives

### Working Groups

Following its landmark conference this January in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, the CTITF Working Group on Countering the Use of the Internet for Terrorist Purposes continued to support Member State initiatives to use the Internet more effectively to counter the appeal of terrorism. The Working Group, in partnership with the Office of the National Coordinator for Counter-Terrorism (NCTb) of the Netherlands, held a two-day expert workshop in The Hague on 6-8 April in order to translate proposals from the Riyadh conference into operational plans.

The meeting focused on a specific recommendation to build a global online library of counter-narratives. While participants agreed that there was no shortage of themes and examples of counter-narratives, there was a need to collect and order this material and make it available in a systematic way.

Richard Barrett, Coordinator of the 1267 Monitoring Team and Co-chair of the Working Group, said that it was encouraging to see how quickly and enthusiastically Member States were following up the discussions and proposals that emerged from the Riyadh conference.



A number of Member States have since expressed interest in supporting the development of such a library and

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## CTITF Inter-agency Meeting

### CTITF Initiatives

The Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force held its annual inter-agency coordination meeting at Greentree Estate, New York, on 12–13 May 2011. While the agenda focused on building support for implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and improving coordination and coherence of UN counter-terrorism efforts, it also provided an opportunity for a thorough discussion on threat analysis and other related developments, including Arab revolutions and the death of Osama bin Laden.

“We are at the defining moment of the counter-terrorism struggle. The death of Osama bin Laden and developments in the Middle East and North Africa are milestones in the counter-terrorism efforts. They add a new dimension to the international community’s discourse on peaceful transformations and counter-terrorism strategy”, said Mike Smith, head of CTED.

The European Union Counter-Terrorism Coordinator, Gilles de Kerchove, cautioned against the conviction that bin Laden’s death was the demise of

terrorism. “The death of bin Laden does not mean the death of Al-Qaida and end of terrorism. The franchise lives on and the threat remains high and more complex”, he said.

The challenge for Member States is how to deal with the landscape after bin Laden and the ongoing Arab spring which has brought a mixed bag of opportunities. On the one hand it has discounted the al-Qaida narrative that change can only be brought about through violence and on the other has resulted in the collapse or weakening of the security service apparatus essential to combat terrorism. The ongoing turmoil also provides terrorist groups with opportunities for easy weapons acquisition and movement across fragile borders.

In the wake of weakened security services, Daniel Benjamin, U.S. Counter-Terrorism Coordinator, called for multilateral support to affected

countries. “Democracy is good but security benefits could be strategic. The whole architecture of security services has been shaken in the Middle East and North Africa. The release of prisoners compounded with weak state institutions is quite worrying. There is need to build greater capacities and design resilient security services”.

Another troublesome trend which Benjamin noted was the movement of



*Counter-Terrorism Coordinators Gilles de Kerchove (E.U.) and Daniel Benjamin (U.S.A.).*

peripheral terrorist groups. “Al-Qaida senior leadership is under pressure but there are still many worrisome peripheral groups in the Arabian Peninsula, South Asia, the Sahel and Maghreb which have become more active. We do expect retaliation in the wake of bin Laden but efforts are being made to have a suitable approach for dealing with a threat that will not go away soon”, he added.

Turning to the CTITF, Interim Chairman Robert Orr hailed the Task Force’s increasing cooperation with Member States and encouraged the entities to speak with one voice on counter-terrorism efforts of the United Nations to reinforce institutional coordination and cooperation.

The CTITF inter-agency coordination meeting brought together 27 member entities of the Task Force and counter-terrorism coordinators of the European Union and the United States as keynote speakers. ■

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discussions about format, structure and management are currently under way.

The Working Group on Countering the Use of the Internet for Terrorist Purposes has also been involved in a number of discussions on the broader aspect of cyber-security. One noteworthy discussion is on developing “critical terminology foundations”



*Richard Barrett*

on cyber-security led by Moscow State University (MSU), in partnership with the East-West Institute (EWI). The terminology foundations project aims to inform broader multilateral discussions about cyber-security by agreeing to definitions for terms such as “cyber-terrorism”, “cyber-warfare”, and “cyber-conflict”. The draft version of the list of terms is available at [www.ewi.info](http://www.ewi.info). ■

## CTITF Holds Open Briefing for Member States

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terrorism. “The key challenge is the effective implementation of the Strategy. While Member States have the primary responsibility for its implementation, the support of the UN system in this effort is indispensable. I would like to acknowledge the critical role of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) in this respect”, he added.

His sentiments were echoed by CTITF Interim Chairman Robert Orr who said, “Countering terrorism was no longer a niche activity at the United Nations”. Since the adoption of the Global Strategy, the CTITF has been supporting counter-terrorism efforts of governments through joint projects and initiatives. The Governments of Indonesia, the United States of America, the Netherlands, Nigeria and Algeria reported on some of the recent activities jointly conducted with the Task Force.



*General Assembly President  
Joseph Deiss*

Ambassador Hasan Kleib of Indonesia spoke on the South-East Asia regional workshop on promoting: “In-depth knowledge of the global counter-terrorism strategy”, which took place in Bali in 2010. He recommended that similar workshops be held in other regions to enhance cooperation, information-sharing and capacity-building.

Ambassador Bukun-Olu Onemola of Nigeria gave a presentation on the ongoing I-ACT initiative to ensure



an integrated implementation of the Global Strategy in his country. Following the conclusion of a mapping and gap analysis this past year, three project proposals have been developed on conflict prevention and countering the appeal of terrorism through education and dialogue; training for criminal justice practitioners on counter-terrorism legal frameworks, the rule of law and human rights; and enhancement of internal coordination and information-sharing among law enforcement agencies.

The CTITF entities also took turns to brief Member States on the activities of the Working Groups on human rights, border management, preventing and responding to WMD terrorist attacks, tackling the financing of terrorism and the use of the internet to counter the appeal of extremist violence.

The Member States were briefed by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) of the two newly adopted legal instruments against terrorism: the Convention on the Suppression of Unlawful

Acts Relating to International Civil Aviation and the Protocol Supplementary to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft 2010.

The briefing was concluded with a number of questions by representatives of Iran, Cuba, South Africa, Norway and Pakistan. Iran raised a question on the applicability of the new legal instru-

**“The key challenge is the effective implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. While Member States have the primary responsibility for its implementation, the support of the UN system in this effort is indispensable.”**

ments particularly since they were adopted by a vote and not by consensus. Cuba inquired on how such instruments could be applied in extradition cases. South Africa posed a question concerning the role of human rights on the subject of listing and delisting of individuals linked to terrorist organisations while Pakistan posed a question concerning the process for assessing gaps and needs for Member States. ■

## Addressing WMD Attacks

### Working Groups

In the absence of a single inter-agency coordination mechanism dealing with terrorist attacks using chemical and biological weapons, the CTITF Working Group on preventing and responding to weapons of mass destruction (WMD) attacks convened a meeting in The Hague from 16 to 17 May 2011 to discuss how the international community should address this vacuum.

Participants concluded that it was essential for regional and international organizations providing assistance to have a competent authority to interact with when providing initial advice and agreeing on the most effective means of providing assistance.

“Unlike the situation for radiological and nuclear events where the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) would have the lead, responses to chemical and biological weapons terrorist attacks would involve a broader array of agencies at the national and international levels. Lead roles may change as the scenario unfolds and there is no single inter-agency coordination mechanism to deal with chemical weapons and biological weapons events”, said Krzysztof Patujej, Director, Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

The workshop hosted by the OPCW is part of the CTITF project to carry out a comprehensive review on how the UN system and international organizations from different disciplines would respond, individually and as a whole, to a terrorist use of WMD, as well as the level of planned coordination among the different entities in the rapid provision of assistance to the affected state/states.



*Krzysztof Patujej, Director, Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)*

The Hague meeting examined two exemplary scenarios on how the international community would respond to and mitigate a chemical or biological weapons attack. The subsequent analysis demonstrated the differences in the response requirements for each attack.

The findings of the Workshop confirmed that the initial actions to mitigate the impact must be taken within minutes to hours, leaving the first responders and local authorities to handle the initial situation with the resources they have at their immediate disposal. Even ready-to-go, pre-packaged assistance such as that to be provided through the OPCW is likely to arrive too late to deal with the initial impact of a chemical attack.

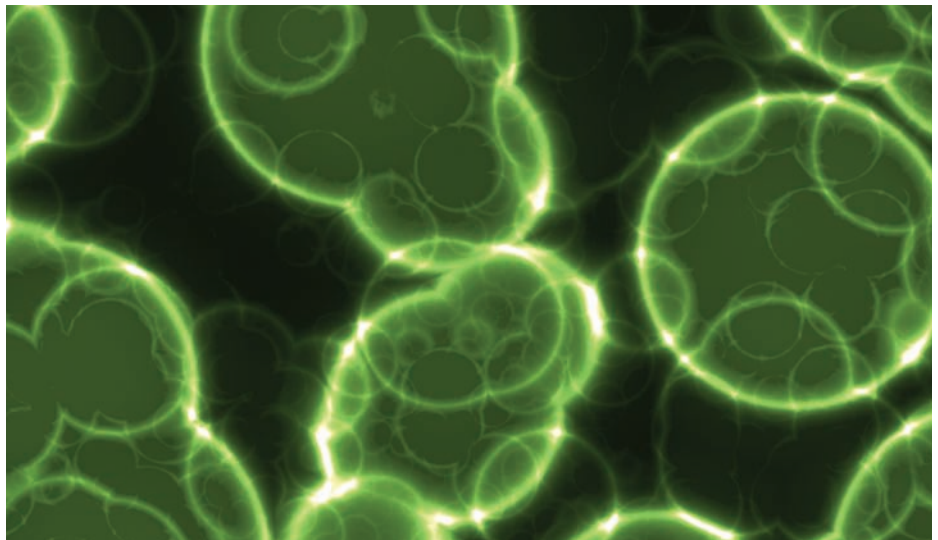
The participants agreed that unlike chemical weapons, the manifestations of the consequences of a biological weapons attack can take several days to weeks to develop. The main challenge often is to detect that an event involving a deliberate

**The findings of the Workshop confirmed that the initial actions to mitigate the impact must be taken within minutes to hours, leaving the first responders and local authorities to handle the initial situation with the resources they have at their immediate disposal.**

release has taken place. On the other hand, the time frames are such that they allow for an international response if requested, and also there is a risk that the infection spreads past the initial location(s) and affects other countries—calling for international coordination and information-sharing.

The result of the review of current mechanisms, observations and recommendations of the working group will be published in a CTITF working group report to be issued later this year.

The workshop was attended by representatives of OPCW, IAEA CTITF Office, ICAO, IAEA, DPI, DSS, UNICRI, UNODC, UNODA and WHO. In addition Europol and BTWC ISU also attended the event. ■



## Central Asian States Press on for a Common Front Against Terror

**Working Groups**

Plagued with terrorist networks and cross-border trafficking of arms and narcotics, Central Asian States are forging ahead to develop a joint plan of action on implementing the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy to head off these threats. On 29-30 March 2011, counter-terrorism experts from the region and beyond met in Dushanbe to discuss measures to prevent and combat terrorism.

The Dushanbe meeting was the second in a series of expert meetings

intended to review the Global Strategy pillar-by-pillar, identify gaps and best practices and propose concrete recommendations on how the region could boost its counter-terrorism efforts.

**The participants acknowledged Central Asia's vulnerability to terrorism given the acute problem of narcotics trafficking which essentially contributes to instability, criminality and financing of terrorism.**

The participants acknowledged Central Asia's vulnerability to terrorism given the acute problem of narcotics trafficking which essentially contributes to instability, criminality and financing of terrorism. Participants strongly supported cross-country cooperation in all areas—be it law enforcement, border management, technical assistance—with political will as the central force to the process.

**COOPERATION IS KEY TO SUCCESS**

“In the struggle to prevent and combat terrorism in Central Asia, cooperation among States, institutions and organizations in the region is key to success. Not only should we ensure that the relevant legal and normative instruments are adopted, we should also properly implement them, and support must



*Representatives of Central Asian States, regional organizations, UN and EU discussing measures to prevent and combat terrorism at a meeting in Dushanbe.*

be provided to states towards that end”, said Miroslav Jenca, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA), during the meeting.

Norwegian Ambassador Dag Halvorsen called for a balanced approach between preventive and combative measures. “An integrated and long-term approach to the fight against international terrorism must strike a balance between preventive and combative measures. If we fail to take a long-term perspective in our fight against terrorist groups today, we may face new, stronger terrorist groups with greater popular support tomorrow. We risk undermining our own goals. It can only be won by making use of a wide range of methods, including political, humanitarian, economic, legal and military means”, he said.

#### BALANCED IMPLEMENTATION CRITICAL

The Global Strategy takes into account traditional and non-traditional tools such, law enforcement, education, socioeconomic development, political inclusion, religious tolerance, respect for human rights and the rule of law and etc, a point highlighted by Ambassador Eduard Auer of the European Union. “The UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy is a complete set of measures which must be implemented in its totality and as such offers an opportunity to recalibrate all efforts and develop more balanced responses to the threat of terrorism by bringing together security, rule of law, development and protection of fundamental values”, he said.

The discussion in Dushanbe focused on enhancing the implementation of regional and international counter-terrorism



*Counter-terrorism experts from Central Asian and beyond meeting in Dushanbe.*

**“The UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy is a complete set of measures which must be implemented in its totality and as such offers an opportunity to recalibrate all efforts and develop more balanced responses to the threat of terrorism by bringing together security, rule of law, development and protection of fundamental values”**

instruments; improving law enforcement cooperation for prevention and combating of terrorism; countering the financing of terrorism; countering the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes; responding to attacks using weapons of mass destruction; and denying illicit trafficking of weapons.

These are the challenges that only States are in a position to address, a point underscored by Muhammad Rafiuddin Shah,

Officer-in-charge of the CTITF Office. “The primary responsibility to implement the Strategy remains with Member States. Only Member States know how best to implement the Strategy given the dynamics, priorities and realities on ground”, he said.

#### UN EU JOINT INITIATIVE

The meeting was co-organized by CTITF and the European Union with the support of UNRCCA and the Republic of Tajikistan. It brought together 61 representatives from the Central Asian region, neighbouring countries, UN and EU.

The first meeting was held in Bratislava, Slovakia, last year. It examined the particular and prevailing conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism as well as measures and practices in place to safeguard human rights and the rule of law while countering terrorism. The third experts meeting is slated for 21-22 July 2011 in Almaty, Kazakhstan. ■

## Security Council Committee Examines Prevention of Terrorism

The Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee, with the support of the Council of Europe, held a special meeting on the prevention of terrorism on 19-21 April 2011 in Strasbourg, France. This meeting, the sixth of its kind in the Committee's 10-year history, brought together representatives from more than 50 States and 40 organizations and entities. The list also included 7 experts drawn from civil society. The event gave the Committee an opportunity to discuss various elements of the United Nations counter-terrorism framework with international, regional and subregional organizations.

Security Council resolutions 1373 (2001), 1624 (2005) and 1963 (2010) call on Member States to take a number of steps to counter terrorism, progressively paying more attention to preventive measures and factors that lead to terrorist activities.

In 2006, the General Assembly expanded the legal framework with the

adoption of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy which, among other things, requests Member States to address the factors conducive to terrorism. These might include prolonged unresolved conflicts, discrimination, violations of human rights and lack of good governance.

### PREVENTION IS CENTRAL

At the special meeting in Strasbourg, over 160 participants discussed three topics related to prevention: policies, comprehensive and integrated strategies, and the role of law enforcement and the criminal justice system. They also shared best practices, codes and standards that can assist States in fighting terrorism and in reacting to emerging threats, such as the use of the Internet to spread violent messages.

“Just as the nature of terrorism is continuously evolving, so should our policies and strategies. Prevention is one important piece of the puzzle”, said

Hardeep Singh Puri, Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations and Chairman of the Committee.

For Mr. Puri, terrorism is the “greatest threat today”, one that Mr. Thorbjørn Jagland, Secretary-General of the Council of Europe, says “remains acute”. Responding to such a challenge requires strong, joint action, and the United Nations plays a central role in the global fight against terrorism. The United Nations and its partners are working tirelessly and in a concerted manner to counter this scourge”, said Mr. Puri.

### KEY MEETING POINTS

In his closing statement, Mr. Puri summarized key points discussed in Strasbourg, such as the importance of respecting human rights, involving civil society and the private sector, and exchanging information to prevent terrorism. He also highlighted that concrete measures developed by organizations add value to international counter-terrorism efforts. A document outlining the outcome of deliberations will be distributed to participants to assist them in their future work. ■

*H. E. Prof. Dr. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, Secretary General, Organization of the Islamic Conference, H. E. Mr. Thorbjørn Jagland, Secretary General, Council of Europe, H. E. Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri, Chair, Counter-Terrorism Committee and Mr. Mike Smith, Executive Director, Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED)*



Candice Imbert © Council of Europe





## UNODC Launches Counter-Terrorism Learning Platform

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)'s Terrorism Prevention Branch (TPB) launched its new online Counter-terrorism Learning Platform (<http://ctlp.unodc.org>) in Vienna on 17 March 2011. The Platform is an interactive tool specifically designed for the provision of tailor-made training to criminal justice officials in the fight against terrorism, while incorporating practitioners involved in counter-terrorism across the globe into a single virtual community where they can share their experiences and perspectives in the fight against terrorism.

### ADVANTANGES OF ONLINE TRAINING

The Vienna launch saw TPB experts presenting the significant advantages of the Platform to Member States and the wider UNODC community. Although TPB's online learning activities will not replace standard workshops involving face-to-face interaction with participants, this new delivery method will provide significant added-value in terms of TPB's global impact. The advantages

of offering distance-learning activities include: sharing UNODC/TPB expertise with a worldwide audience; increasing opportunities for training by reducing time and space barriers for participants; allowing them to study while remaining on-the-job and significantly reducing travel expenses. In order to reach a worldwide audience, the interface of the platform is available in the six official languages of the United Nations.

**UNODC's Counter-terrorism Learning Platform is an interactive tool specifically designed for the provision of tailor-made training to criminal justice officials in the fight against terrorism.**

Two six-week online training courses have since been delivered through this new Platform to assist criminal justice officials to develop the skills and knowledge required to utilize effectively the channels for international legal



cooperation envisaged in the universal legal regime against terrorism. The first course, for student judges of the National School for Magistrates in Algeria, focused on "Global norms against terrorism". The second course, on "International criminal cooperation against terrorism", was organized jointly with INTERPOL and was taught to selected magistrates in the Sahel region (Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania and Niger).

TPB is delivering a new session of the Online Training Course on "Global Norms against Terrorism at Work: Setting International Law in Motion", in English, from 3 June to 15 July 2011.

Further information on the Platform and its activities can be accessed through the following website address: <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/terrorism/unodc-counter-terrorism-learning-platform.html>. ■

## Securing the Borders of the Maghreb and the Sahel

While States in the Maghreb and Sahel subregions of Africa struggle to manage thousands of kilometers of porous borders, organized criminals and terrorist groups try to exploit vulnerabilities and take advantage of the subregions' strategic location.

Irregular migration, drugs and arms trafficking threaten border security and pose challenges to all the States in the subregions. The regional Governments'

end, they have engaged in constructive dialogue with eight States in the Maghreb and in the Sahel, namely Algeria, Burkina Faso, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Mali and Senegal.

Officials from these States as well as international and regional partners came together in Nouakchott, Mauritania, from 4 to 6 April 2011 to discuss practical ways in which they could strengthen their counter-terrorism efforts.

identified by participants, who also indicated that extending access to INTERPOL databases to all border posts would help officials identify and stop wanted persons from crossing borders.

Recognizing the impact that conflicts have had in the region, participants said that combating arms trafficking is essential to prevent terrorists from acquiring the weapons they need to carry out their acts. Smuggled arms, sometimes transported by people and sometimes by cargo, are security concerns that should be addressed.

Participants agreed that developing a subregional counter-terrorism strategy



lack of resources, including equipment and adequate training, to protect vast land and maritime borders has also facilitated the activities of terrorist groups, such as Al-Qaida, in the Islamic Maghreb.

The Counter-Terrorism Committee and its Executive Directorate (CTED) have been monitoring the situation closely throughout the years, as part of their efforts to assist States in implementing counter-terrorism measures in line with Security Council resolutions 1373 (2001) and 1624 (2005). To this

“A coherent and coordinated approach can go a long way towards improving the chances that States in the area have to prevent terrorists from organizing and moving freely across borders. This means national authorities in different agencies need to share information with each other, follow a common strategy and transfer this spirit of cooperation to the regional level”, said Mike Smith, head of CTED.

Joint border posts and community policing are among the good practices

would improve cooperation. Such a strategy would be complemented by an institutional and operational subregional platform for the exchange of information.

The workshop in Nouakchott was organized by the International Organization for Migration in close cooperation with CTED. This event was the second in a series that the Executive Directorate designed with its partners to address challenges related to border control. The previous workshop was conducted in East Africa. ■

## Crime and Terrorism

Over 350 representatives from more than 100 UN Member States and 36 UN entities, international, regional and sub-regional organizations met in Vienna on 16–17 March 2011, to look at the growing connections between criminality and terrorism and step up efforts against these twinned threats.

The UNODC-organized symposium on links between crime and terrorism comes on the back of an ever-evolving terrorist modus operandi which has seen an increase in acts being funded and sustained through criminal profits. Drug trafficking, transnational organized crime, the movement of illicit

firearms and money laundering have all become integral parts of terrorism with an increasing presence in the world of criminality.

Speaking at the Symposium, UNODC Executive Director Yury Fedotov commented on today's criminal market which spans the planet: "In many instances criminal profits support terrorist groups. Globalization has turned out to be a double-edged sword. Open borders, open markets and increased ease of travel and communication have benefited both terrorists and criminals. Thanks to advances in technology, communication, finance and transport,

loose networks of terrorists and organized criminal groups that operate internationally can easily link with each other. By pooling their resources and expertise, they can significantly increase their capacity to do harm".

While criminal components in many cases sustain terrorist groups, they present increased threats and challenges to global security on a number of levels. In Afghanistan, Taliban activities are boosted through the production of opium—a key cash source; similarly, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) are able to carry on operating through the cultivation and trafficking of cocaine and kidnapping for ransom.

*UNODC assists Member States in their efforts to eradicate illicit drugs, crime and terrorism.*



*Yury Fedotov Executive Director of UNODC*

During the opening session of the Symposium Austria's Foreign Minister Michael Spindelegger noted the need for enhanced collaboration in the face of terrorism: "Terrorists connect with other criminal groups making use of new technology to operate across borders. We must counter this through stronger international cooperation under the UN umbrella".

Representing a network of individuals affected by terrorism, the Symposium was addressed by Carie Lemack, director and co-founder of a survivor-focused NGO, the Global Survivors Network: "The victims of terrorism are so often just seen as figures—numbers which get lost as data. We want to help give the nameless names and project their voices to and work against the deadly, misguided messaging being spread around the world".

The Terrorism Symposium marks a decade since the adoption of the Vienna Plan of Action against Terrorism in September 2001 which spearheaded UNODC's assistance programme for countering terrorism. In the past 10 years, UNODC's work in supporting rule of law-based responses to terrorism has increased considerably, with significant progress made by Member States in implementing the international legal regime against terrorism. ■



## Interview with CTED Executive Director Mike Smith

Effective counter-terrorism in any country calls for robust coordination between different agencies to ensure that critical information reaches the place where and when it is most needed. Over recent years, the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) has been working with Member States to set up the mechanisms needed to enable effective coordination and information-sharing between national authorities.

In an interview with Verona Lambert, Mike Smith, CTED Executive Director, discussed some of the challenges and suggested solutions on how information-sharing could be improved between national agencies.



**Q:** *CTED has been working on enhancing national coordination between different agencies to facilitate information-sharing with those who most need it. How would you describe the state of affairs on this issue?*

**A:** For many years, CTED has been conducting assessment missions to countries that include a range of partner organizations that have particular technical expertise. For example, we normally have in our delegation a police officer from INTERPOL, a customs agent from the World Customs Organization, a maritime security expert from the International Maritime Organization, and so on. And when we visit a country to do one of these assessment missions, we normally begin the mission with a round-table meeting with all the agencies that have responsibility for different parts of the country's defences against terrorism. Often we notice that this meeting marks the first time that these agencies have actually sat down together.

**“When we visit a country to do one of these assessment missions, we normally begin the mission with a round-table meeting with all the agencies that have responsibility for different parts of the country's defences against terrorism. Often we notice that this meeting marks the first time that these agencies have actually sat down together.”**

We also know from historical examples of terrorism that certain attacks could have been prevented if all relevant agencies had been in possession of the available information. For example, the 9/11 Commission here in the United States concluded that there was information in the system that might have helped authorities to predict and prevent the attacks but the dots were never connected because the agencies that might have made the connections

were not in receipt of that information. So this is an issue even in countries with highly developed counter-terrorism capacities.

**Q:** *What are some of the reasons why agencies are not willing or have not been able to share information with others?*

**A:** Firstly, all agencies have their own structures and they operate like hierarchies, so stove piping of information occurs. Information passes up and down the hierarchical chains, but does not necessarily jump across from agency to agency. Secondly, there is the reality of institutional culture. For example, police officers trust other police officers and they tend therefore to be more open to passing information to them, formally and informally. They do not necessarily have the same level of trust with regard to officers from other agencies even if they are working towards the same goals. In order to bring a successful prosecution against a terrorist, it is obvious that there has to be a significant level of cooperation between law enforcement agents investigating the crime and gathering the evidence, and the prosecutors who are going to have to convince the court to convict the individual. But, because of the very different ways in which they have been trained and what they do, and because of different institutional cultures, that level of cooperation does not always exist. Getting over the challenge of different institutional cultures is something that needs to happen if we are going to have genuine cooperation between government agencies.

Incompatible IT systems can also make information-sharing difficult. Partly, it is the way decisions are made on adoption of such systems. When I worked for the Australian Government it was not always a simple matter to transfer information automatically. There were different communications systems operating in different

departments. For example, the cable system in the foreign ministry was not easily accessible to other domestic agencies. While officers in the foreign ministry could read the cables on our computer screens, some other relevant agencies had to get hard copies through special channels which meant they received the information late and often left it unread. Systems like that need to be integrated and streamlined, especially when people are dealing with time-sensitive and operational information.

Combined with this is the challenge of national security classifications and systems. Intelligence agencies use very highly classified systems and national laws generally preclude them from sharing certain types and classification levels of information with other agencies because those agencies may not be able to protect the information properly, or because their personnel do not have the relevant clearances.

**Q:** *How do you get around that?*

**A:** In some instances, it means that intelligence agencies have to downgrade or reclassify some information. Already there is a major cultural change in intelligence and law enforcement agencies around the world, brought on partly by the global terrorist threat. The ruling security principle used to be the so-called “need to know” principle, i.e. that only those who needed it received classified information. Nowadays we have moved to a point where we talk about “the need to share” principle. In other words, we need to spread

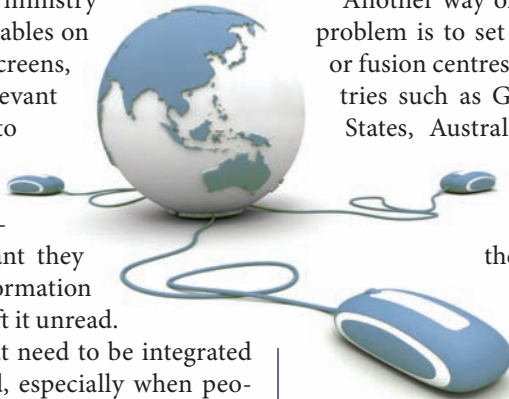
information much more widely because very often we do not know who needs to know.

Another way of getting around the problem is to set up joint task forces or fusion centres. A number of countries such as Germany, the United States, Australia, and the United Kingdom, just to name a few, have these types of task forces and fusion centres. These have often stood up as long-term or permanent offices that are staffed with representatives from a number of different operational agencies—such as police, intelligence, immigration and foreign affairs. Even if their IT systems feeding back to their home agencies are not compatible, the individual officers can talk to each other directly and cross-check information in real time. The representatives can work together

to create integrated threat assessments, or to plan operations, or conduct investigations—sharing their findings on the spot.

There is another important aspect to this. We encourage countries as a matter of course to draft and adopt a comprehensive national counter-terrorism strategy that sets up some high-level mechanisms to provide policy coordination and an umbrella under which exchange of operational information can occur. Often adopting such a strategy is a matter of political will.

In the country I know best, Australia, the Government decided in 2002 to improve coordination through establishing a national counter-terrorism committee, chaired by the Prime Minister’s National Security Policy Advisor. It included all the relevant agencies from the federal level and the states, since Australia has a federation system. The committee meets about four times a year. I am sure the first few meetings were stiff and not at all easy, but later people were



*CTED Executive Director Mike Smith speaks with Verona Lambert of the CTITF office.*

able to build a sense of camaraderie and common purpose simply through the personal relationships built up through regular meetings hosted in different states. Those personal networks built across agencies have proven incredibly effective when there have been cases of national emergency.

*Q: In addition to what you have highlighted, how is CTED addressing this issue?*

*A:* We have started to gather together relevant national agencies to brainstorm on how things could be improved. Last year we conducted a workshop in Nairobi. We brought together up to 10 agencies from each of three participating countries—so almost 30 agencies—from Kenya, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda that mostly had mandates to do with border control issues: immigration, customs, border police and intelligence, to identify what is working and what is not working with regards to cross-border cooperation, internal and regional cooperation, etc. The participants recognized that many of their daily frustrations were related

**“Another challenge is that if you have a terrorist plot that has been conceived in one country and the investigation is being carried out in another, how do you get that evidence into your court? You have to arrange for police and intelligence officers from the other country to give evidence and be cross-examined.”**

to the fact that these agencies were not able to share information and were not as coordinated as they should be. For instance, at the border posts, there was not much interaction between the customs and immigration officials, even though they were co-located, and they



did not always coordinate or share information with the local military force that was responsible for patrolling the area beyond the official entry point. There was a real sense from participants—who were skeptical when they first came to the workshop—that there are a lot of small, practical steps they could take, even at the working level, to make the border control system in their region work better. Using the same model, we followed that up with a couple of similar activities with participants from different countries.

It is worth noting that there are some counter-terrorism professions that do not ordinarily engage much with their international counterparts in the way that, necessarily, border management agencies do. An example of this group is prosecutors who therefore miss out on the opportunity to compare experience with counterparts from other countries. This was the impetus behind a decision to hold a special workshop for selected prosecutors representing different

regions and different legal systems in December this past year in New York. The prosecutors talked about particular challenges they face in trying to conduct a terrorist prosecution. One of the most challenging parts of their job is presenting evidence to prove that someone is guilty, where that evidence has come from intelligence sources. It is often very difficult to put the source of that information on the witness stand.

Another challenge is that if you have a terrorist plot that has been conceived in one country and the investigation is being carried out in another, how do you get that evidence into your court? You have to arrange for police and intelligence officers from the other country to give evidence and be cross-examined. I think that the feedback we received from participants of this prosecutors' workshop was that this exercise was really useful and interesting. At least they started a bit of a network and compared notes on how they could deal with the problem. ■

## Activities of the CTITF Office

CTITF Office participated in the Tenth Homeland, Corporate Security and Defense Conference and Expo which took place on 12–13 April 2011 in Athens, Greece. A CTITF representative spoke in the peace and security plenary session of the conference on the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and CTITF activities on supporting implementation of the Strategy. ■

At the invitation of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), CTITF Office participated in a seminar on the OPCW’s contribution to security and non-proliferation, which took place in The Hague on 11–12 April. 2011. A CTITF representative

gave a presentation on the work of the CTITF Working Group on Preventing the Responding to WMD, co-chaired by OPCW and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). ■

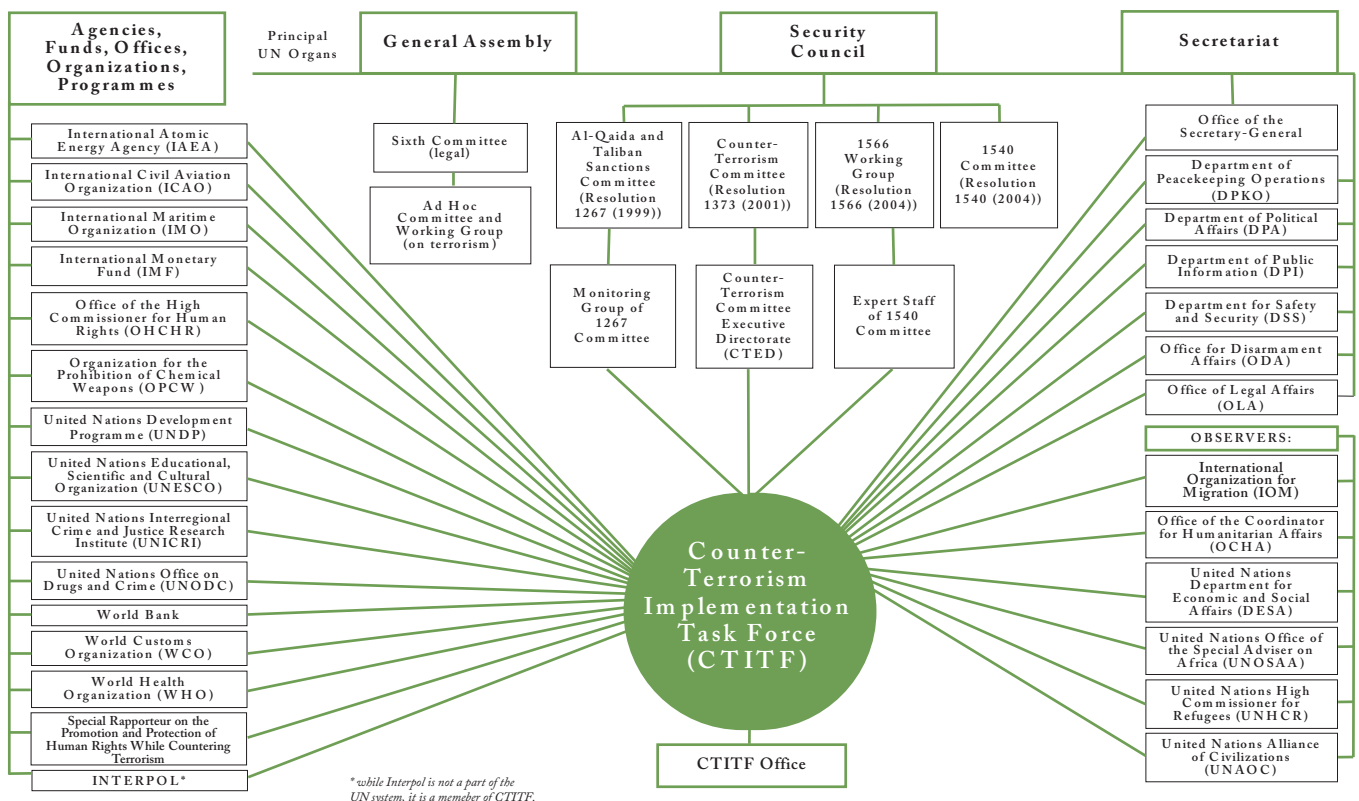
A CTITF Office representative delivered a keynote presentation on the relevance of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the role of the CTITF Office, and the work of the CTITF Working Group on Tackling the Financing of Terrorism at the first regional workshop of the CTED-led Working Group project on “Preventing abuse of the non-profit sector for the purposes of terrorist financing” which took place in Bangkok, Thailand, from 22–24 March 2011. ■

At the Fifth International Forum on Partnership of State Authorities, Civil Society and the Business Community in Ensuring Information Security and

Combating Terrorism, a CTITF Office representative delivered a keynote presentation on the Task Force’s work on “Countering terrorist use of the Internet”. The Forum was organized by Moscow State University and the National Security Council of the Russian Federation in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany from 25–28 April 2011. ■

The CTITF Office participated in the consultative meeting of international experts to renew the draft ECOWAS Counter-Terrorism Strategy and Implementation Plan, held in Abuja, Nigeria, from 9–10 May. The CTITF Office highlighted the relevance of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy for regional and subregional counter-terrorism approaches and also briefed ECOWAS members on the Integrated Assistance for Countering Terrorism (I-ACT) Initiative. ■

### Main Actors of the United Nations System in Counter-Terrorism Efforts



At the invitation of the Foreign Ministry of the Russian Federation, the CTITF Office met with counterparts in the ministry and visited the People's Friendship University in Moscow on 1 April 2011. On the same day, a meeting with the First Deputy of the Head of the Senate on National Counter-Terrorism Policies took place in the Senate of the Russian Federation. ■

The CTITF Office participated in the general meeting of the Counter-Terrorism Action Group (CTAG) of G8 on 15 March 2011. The meeting, held in Vienna, was organized to facilitate interaction between the CTAG representatives and counter-terrorism experts from different regions, to discuss links between drugs trafficking and terrorism, and the United States' Global Counter-Terrorism Forum (GCTF) initiative and the future of the CTAG. ■

A CTITF Office representative also attended the Counter-Terrorism Expo

## CTITF *The* BEAM

The Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) was established by the Secretary-General in 2005 to enhance coordination and coherence of counter-terrorism efforts of the United Nations system. The Task Force consists of 31 international entities which by virtue of their work have a stake in counter-terrorism efforts. Each entity makes contributions consistent with its mandate.

**The BEAM Editorial contact:**

Verona M. Lambert  
 Counter-Terrorism  
 Implementation Task Force Office  
 Email: [lambertv@un.org](mailto:lambertv@un.org)

[www.un.org/terrorism/index.shtml](http://www.un.org/terrorism/index.shtml)

### Upcoming Events:

- 3rd Experts Meeting on Central Asia on 17-18 July in Kazakhstan
- Workshop on the Regional Implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Eastern Africa on 27-28 July in Ethiopia
- Secretary-General Symposium on International Counter-Terrorism Cooperation on 19 September 2011 in the United States.
- Symposium and Exhibition on MRTDs, Biometrics and Security Standards from 12 to 15 Sept 2011: <http://www.icao.int/mrtdsymposium2011/>
- MRTD Regional Seminar from 31 Oct to 2 Nov 2011 in Qatar
- MRTD Regional Seminar in Dec 2011 in Singapore

2011, in London as a panellist in a discussion on “Preventing and combating global terrorism—10 years from 9/11”. The representative met with counter-terrorism officials at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. These consultations focused on the possible avenues of partnership between the United Nations and the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum. ■

On 16–17 March, the CTITF Office representative participated in the UNODC Symposium on links between crime and terrorism held in Vienna. The representative served as a panellist to the discussion on, “Taking Stock and Defining the Way Forward: Strengthening the Response to Terrorism by Addressing Connections with Related Criminal Activities” and also briefed on the I-ACT initiative. ■

The CTITF Office organized, together with the European Union (EU) and the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA), the second expert meeting for Central Asia, addressing “Pillar II of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.” The event was held on 29-30 March 2011 in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. ■

### Staff Movement in CTED

Howard Stoffer retired from the United Nations in March 2011. Howard joined the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) as Director of Administration and Information at a crucial time nearly six years ago, when CTED was building its team of experts to assist the Security Council and Member States in their efforts to prevent and combat terrorism.



Howard brought to CTED a wealth of experience in political affairs, disarmament and management. He worked for 26 years at the U.S. Department of State, where he held senior positions around the world, including in New York.

All of us in the counter-terrorism community of the United Nations wish Howard every success in his future endeavors, and we look forward to continuing to work with him in one capacity or another over the years to come. ■