



General Assembly

Distr.: Limited
27 March 2019

English only

Western Asia Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Fourteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

Beirut, 26–28 March 2019

Draft report

Rapporteur: Abdullah F. Al- Ansary (Saudi Arabia)

Addendum

II. Conclusions and recommendations (*continued*)

B. Substantive items and workshops

- 4 **International cooperation and technical assistance to prevent and address all forms of crime: (a) terrorism in all its forms and manifestations; and (b) new and emerging forms of crime (agenda item 6); and current crime trends, recent developments and emerging solutions, in particular new technologies as means for and tools against crime (workshop 4)**

Summary of deliberations

1. The Meeting highlighted the pivotal role of regional and international cooperation among practitioners and among policymakers through enhanced regional and international mechanisms that enable the exchange of practical solutions and good practices to address the challenges that undermine effective cooperation and to enable practical solutions.
2. Participants also stressed the importance of enhancing the capacity of law enforcement and other criminal justice officials and underlined that accelerating international cooperation was the cornerstone in the fight against new and emerging forms of crime. Regional platforms for the regular exchange of practical and operational information as well as mutual learning among criminal justice practitioners and institutions were given special attention during the Meeting.
3. The Meeting stressed that the implementation of relevant United Nations conventions and of resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the Security Council as well as regional and bilateral treaties were important to effectively address the growing threats of transnational organized crime and terrorism. In this regard, the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto, the United Nations Convention against Corruption and the 19 instruments to counter terrorism were noted as being instrumental to successfully counter traditional and new forms of crime.



4. Participants shared their national experiences in concluding regional and bilateral agreements addressing new forms of crime including organ removal and maritime piracy. They also discussed how their countries were affected by these new and emerging crimes including trafficking in cultural property.
5. Several participants noted the need for a new legal framework to address cybercrime in addition to the existing instruments, including the Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime (Budapest Convention). One speaker referred to the unresolved gap between the positions of Member States on such new legal instrument on cybercrime and noted that the Intergovernmental Expert Group on Cybercrime provided a forum for the exchange of practical experiences and other technical aspects related to this phenomenon, welcoming thereby the Expert Group's workplan.
6. The misuse by terrorists and their organizations of modern information and communication technologies, such as the Internet and social media, was also discussed by the participants, noting that these technologies were misused for the purpose of indoctrinating youth and minors, propaganda, recruitment, funding and training.
7. Terrorism in all its forms and manifestations was condemned by the Meeting and reference was made to it not only being a security threat to the international community but also an ideological threat. The Meeting also noted that the promotion of dialogue and tolerance as well as activating the role of the society to support their Governments was required to prevent crimes that foster hatred and racism. The phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters was also discussed and the complex challenges faced by governments, particularly those related to developing efficient criminal justice responses against terrorist threats, including responses to threats posed by the so-called "lonely wolves".
8. Information was shared by participants on national efforts to counter terrorism and transnational organized crime, such as border control management and national coordination mechanisms that aimed to detect falsified documentation.
9. Participants stressed the importance of regularly reviewing national legislations in order to respond effectively to terrorism, corruption, and new and emerging forms of crime, such as money-laundering and cybercrime. The establishment of national committees to counter terrorism and trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants were also noted as a good practice.
10. Participants noted the need to bring domestic laws in compliance with international instruments on money-laundering in order to support the identification and combating of illicit financial flows. In this regard, regional and international cooperation with other States and with financial institutions were noted as important measures to track illicit financial flows, and also to freeze, seize and recover assets deriving from criminal activities.
11. The Meeting stressed the need of leveraging the use of the advancements in information and communication technologies for the benefit of law enforcement agencies and criminal justice institutions in the fight against crime. On the other hand, and in looking at how these advancements facilitate crime, the Meeting noted that strengthened and concerted efforts are needed to prevent and counter the misuse of information and communication technologies for criminal purposes, such as cryptocurrencies.
12. Technical assistance and capacity-building provided by UNODC in the area of international cooperation was recognized by the Meeting as an important enabler to address and respond to terrorism and to emerging challenges relating to cybercrime, trafficking in cultural property and wildlife crime.
13. Good practices of cooperation between the national authorities, the Arab Interior Ministers Counsel, the League of Arab States, INTERPOL and other relevant actors were shared in the Meeting. A participant highlighted the usefulness of cooperation with the Programme Network Institutes of Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

Outcome of deliberations

14. The following recommendations, which were not negotiated by the participants were identified:

(a) Examine the best possible approaches to further enhance international cooperation among criminal justice practitioners, in particular, those in the central authorities and explore effective approaches of capacity-building for criminal justice institutions and practitioners;

(b) Encourage the strengthening of formal and informal channels of international cooperation, including with a view to strengthen cooperation on terrorism to deal, among others, with foreign terrorist fighter-related cases, such as through the Multi-Agency Task Force of the Middle East and North Africa, established with UNODC's support;

(c) Identify and assess the risks of terrorist financing within national economies, including the risks of misuse of non-profit organization and charitable funds for terrorist funding, and take appropriate measures in response;

(d) Strengthen cross-regional cooperation to detect and intercept cross-regional movements of foreign terrorist fighters and conduct rule of law-based and effective investigations and prosecutions of terrorism cases;

(e) Implement the provisions of the United Nations Drug Control Conventions, the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its protocols, the United Nations Convention against Corruption, and the 19 instruments to counter terrorism, in order to advance international cooperation. Call upon States that have not yet done so, to consider becoming parties to those conventions;

(f) Explore ways and means that enable criminal justice practitioners to utilize evolving information and communications technologies, including artificial intelligence, big data to fight against criminals and criminal syndicates that take full advantage of such innovation;

(g) Strengthen the capacity of law enforcement officers in charge of international cooperation and enhance the use of platforms for the exchange of information;

(h) Request UNODC to continue supporting the establishment and functioning of central authorities responsible for dealing with mutual legal assistance requests and provide technical assistance to Member States, upon request, in order to enhance the capacity of practitioners to effectively and expeditiously deal with such requests;

(i) Enhance the role of UNODC in providing technical assistance and capacity-building to Member States, upon their request, including through its Global Programme on Cybercrime;

(j) Explore ways to make use of tools developed by UNODC, such as model laws and the Mutual Legal Assistant Request Writer Tool, to enhance international cooperation in criminal matters and respond efficiently to transnational crime.
