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## Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

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**Integration and coordination of efforts by the  
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and by  
Member States in the field of crime prevention and  
criminal justice: ratification and implementation  
of the international instruments to prevent and  
combat terrorism**

## Technical assistance in implementing the international conventions and protocols related to terrorism

### Report of the Secretary-General

#### *Summary*

The present report reviews the progress made in 2020 by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in supporting Member States in becoming party to and implementing the international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism, as well as in implementing relevant United Nations resolutions. The report also highlights key achievements of the Office in delivering technical assistance on the legal and criminal justice aspects of countering terrorism while responding to emerging challenges and evolving needs of Member States, in particular the challenges posed by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) health crisis. The report presents a set of conclusions for consideration by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

\* [E/CN.15/2021/1](#).



## I. Introduction

1. Preventing terrorism and addressing conditions conducive to terrorism are crucial for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) contributes to the implementation of several Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls), Goal 11 (Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable) and Goal 16 (Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels).

2. UNODC is mandated to provide countries, upon request, technical assistance in normative, policy, strategic, institutional and operational aspects of preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism. The General Assembly has reiterated and elaborated this mandate in a number of its recent resolutions, including resolution [74/194](#) and resolution [75/145](#), on measures to eliminate international terrorism; resolution [74/175](#), on technical assistance provided by UNODC related to counter-terrorism; resolution [73/305](#), on enhancement of international cooperation to assist victims of terrorism; resolution [72/196](#) and resolution [73/186](#), on strengthening the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme, in particular its technical cooperation capacity; and resolution [72/284](#), on the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy review.

3. In its resolution [74/175](#), the General Assembly requested UNODC to continue provide assistance to Member States related to the international legal instruments against terrorism; international legal and judicial cooperation pertaining to countering terrorism; criminal matters related to foreign terrorist fighters; international cooperation in criminal matters; collecting, analysing, preserving, storing, using and sharing forensic and electronic evidence for the investigation and prosecution of terrorism and terrorism-related offences; mutual legal assistance; counter-terrorist financing measures; links between transnational organized crime and terrorism; criminal justice responses and strategies for reducing the risk of terrorist attacks on critical infrastructure; chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear terrorism; programmes for victims of terrorism; mainstreaming gender perspectives into criminal justice responses to terrorism; and preventing the involvement of children in terrorist groups, ensuring the rehabilitation and reintegration of children associated with such groups, and ensuring that children alleged to have, accused of having or recognized as having infringed the law, particularly those who are deprived of their liberty, and those who are victims and witnesses of crime are treated in a manner that is in accordance with international law.

4. The Office's work is also guided by recent Security Council resolutions, including resolution [2482 \(2019\)](#), on threats to international peace and security; resolution [2467 \(2019\)](#), on women and peace and security and sexual violence in conflict; resolution [2462 \(2019\)](#), on threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts and preventing and combating the financing of terrorism; resolution [2341 \(2017\)](#), on terrorist threats against critical infrastructure; resolution [2347 \(2017\)](#), on the destruction of cultural heritage and the smuggling of cultural property by terrorist groups in situations of armed conflict; resolution [2354 \(2017\)](#), on countering terrorist narratives; resolution [2368 \(2017\)](#), reaffirming the sanctions regime against Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) (Da'esh); resolution [2370 \(2017\)](#), on preventing terrorists from acquiring weapons; and resolution [2396 \(2017\)](#), on terrorist fighters returning and relocating to their countries of origin or nationality, or to third countries. Pursuant to resolutions [2444 \(2018\)](#) and [2498 \(2019\)](#), the Office, through the Indian Ocean Forum on Maritime Crime, is mandated to work with Somalia and relevant countries to develop strategies to disrupt the illicit trafficking of charcoal and other goods that finance Al-Shabaab in Somalia.

5. The present report covers major activities undertaken by UNODC from 1 January to 31 December 2020. During the reporting period, UNODC assisted

Member States and regional organizations in their efforts to prevent and combat terrorism, in line with the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The Office's support focused on helping Member States adhere to and implement the 19 international legal instruments to prevent and combat terrorism and develop efficient crime prevention and criminal justice responses that meet human rights and rule of law standards. Following the consequences of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) health crisis, the Office quickly adapted its assistance to Member States in response to their changing needs and restricted access.

## II. Coronavirus disease (COVID-19): impact and responses

6. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the manifestations of terrorism. In several countries, the threat of terrorism has been further exacerbated by the pandemic. In part, this is attributable to the redirection of resources originally reserved for law enforcement and criminal justice officials fighting terrorism, to deal with the health crisis. The pandemic has also highlighted vulnerabilities to new and emerging forms of terrorism, such as the misuse of digital technology, cyberattacks against critical infrastructure and bioterrorism. As much of daily life has increasingly shifted towards online activity for many people, including the many millions of young people who are now learning remotely, terrorists are exploiting social media and communication tools to radicalize, recruit, raise funds and incite attacks.

7. The pandemic has impeded efforts to repatriate individuals with suspected links to terrorist groups from conflict zones, including women and children. Vital services for victims of terrorism, such as criminal justice processes and psychosocial support, have been interrupted, delayed or ended. Terrorist groups have seen the uncertainty created by the pandemic as a window of opportunity to exploit the disruption and negative socioeconomic and political impacts of the pandemic. There has been an increase in terrorist attacks in parts of Africa and the Middle East. In Austria, a terrorist attack was carried out in a busy restaurant district in Vienna in November 2020 on the eve of a month-long COVID-19 lockdown.

8. Adapting to the restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Office ensured that Member States continued to receive the critical support needed for terrorism prevention. UNODC transferred the delivery of much of its counter-terrorism technical assistance online, which has resulted in the training of over 1,000 criminal justice and law enforcement officials since the start of the pandemic. The primary tool used has been the UNODC Counter-Terrorism Learning Platform, which alone has contributed to the training of over 720 practitioners. Recordings related to training sessions conducted through the platform were viewed or downloaded 2,325 times throughout 2020. The platform allows for extensive outreach to criminal justice and law enforcement practitioners, counter-terrorism experts, training institutions, civil society and the private sector, and facilitates online networking, follow-up training sessions and the monitoring of long-term impacts.

9. UNODC developed a new tool for the platform, known as "iRooms", designed to provide a secure environment to train counter-terrorism practitioners to address emerging threats. The iRooms act as one-stop shops for technical assistance delivery, good practices, stocktaking and the development of new tools on terrorism prevention. They also host relevant resources such as manuals, key resolutions, reports, guides, e-learning courses and webinar series. The iRooms are aimed at enhancing cooperation in terrorism cases across different legal systems and providing users with a wide range of tools and functions designed to foster interaction between participants and experts.

10. Some examples of workshops delivered through the platform include a workshop on investigative techniques in cross-border contexts for Bangladesh, held in August 2020, and workshops for Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia on implementation of Security Council resolution [2396 \(2017\)](#), held in October and December 2020. An advanced training course on conducting open-source intelligence and social media

investigations was delivered to officials of Lebanon in May 2020. UNODC used the platform to conduct an expert group meeting in April 2020 to develop a training module on digital evidence with partners from international organizations and training academies worldwide.

11. UNODC, in partnership with the International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law, organized several activities on remote access to criminal proceedings in terrorism cases, to support authorities in continuing their work during the pandemic in a safe environment. The activities included two online expert group meetings that covered legal and technical issues, with an emphasis on human rights. The Office also published a booklet entitled “Guidelines for policing during the COVID-19 emergency” in Nigeria to reduce the risk of infection among officers working to protect the public from criminal and terrorist activity.

12. The Office worked to raise awareness and understanding of appropriate measures to prevent and respond to violence against children, especially in the context of terrorism, and on how to protect the rights of children deprived of liberty during the COVID-19 pandemic. In consideration of the counterparts’ limited accessibility during the COVID-19 pandemic, a suite of five e-learning modules was under development in 2020, to be made available in 2021. In addition, needs assessments, round tables and workshops were conducted online for several regions. The Office also developed a publication on how to better protect children deprived of liberty during the COVID-19 pandemic, including those charged with terrorism-related offences.

### **III. Delivery of technical assistance**

#### **A. Criminal justice responses to terrorism**

13. Since 2003, UNODC has provided Member States, at their request, with assistance in their criminal justice responses to terrorism, providing normative and strategic advice and building the capacity of more than 30,000 individuals. The assistance covers all aspects of the criminal justice response, including adherence to international legal instruments and developing conforming legislation at the national level; the development of national strategy, policy and action plans for terrorism prevention; strengthening the capacity of authorities responsible for the enforcement of laws aimed at preventing and countering terrorism, including to facilitate inter-agency cooperation at the national and international levels; strengthening capacity to prevent the illegal acquisition and trafficking of firearms by terrorists; enhancing the capacity of prosecutors to build and prosecute terrorism cases; facilitating mutual legal assistance between prosecutors and central authorities; building the capacity of judges responsible for adjudicating terrorism cases; and supporting initiatives on prison reform, alternatives to imprisonment, the prevention of violent extremism conducive to terrorism, and the rehabilitation and reintegration of victims, witnesses and offenders.

14. Assistance is delivered at the request of Member States and responds to, inter alia, priority needs identified through Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate country assessment visits, to which UNODC actively contributes. The Office’s terrorism prevention programme is implemented by its Terrorism Prevention Branch, as well as by programme and other staff based at its headquarters and across its extensive field network.

##### **1. Legislative assistance**

15. UNODC continued to advocate for universal adherence to the 19 international legal instruments against terrorism, assisting Member States in becoming party to them and implementing their provisions at the national level. In 2020, Cuba became the fifth Member State to have become party to all 19 instruments, joining Côte d’Ivoire, the Dominican Republic, Kazakhstan and Turkey.

16. As a result of the Office's technical assistance, in 2020, Saint Kitts and Nevis became a party to the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, and Angola and Eritrea became parties to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and its Amendment.

17. In September 2020, amid mounting concerns over the potential use of biological agents by terrorist groups, the Office developed and held an online awareness-raising event on the international legal framework against biological terrorism. The event was aimed at raising awareness of the existing international legal instruments that address the threat of biological terrorism and discussing synergies and complementarities.

18. The Office, jointly with the Office of Counter-Terrorism, implements a global project, funded by the European Union, aimed at promoting the universalization and effective implementation of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, including by assisting Member States with adherence to and legislative incorporation and implementation of the Convention. The project activities have included awareness-raising activities such as high-level meetings and national advocacy events involving representatives of legislative bodies and policymakers, the conducting of an academic study on reasons and challenges preventing Member States from becoming party to the Convention and capacity-building workshops on enhancing nuclear security. In 2020, in the framework of the project, UNODC conducted a review of the national legislation of Paraguay, at its request, in relation to the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, and the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and its Amendment. In October 2020, UNODC held an online training event on the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism for English-speaking African States not party to the Convention.

19. The project complements ongoing work on strengthening legal frameworks for nuclear security funded by Canada. In that context, UNODC produced an e-learning module on the international legal framework against chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear terrorism. The module is currently available in all six official languages of the United Nations, as well as Portuguese. By December 2020, over 1,200 practitioners from over 90 countries had successfully completed the module. In February 2020, UNODC held a national workshop on the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism for the Philippines. In the same month, the Office held a workshop for countries of the Caribbean Community on the universalization of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material.

20. In 2020, UNODC developed and launched a series of webinars on the theme "Countering chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear terrorism: international legal approaches and criminal justice responses". The webinars were aimed at strengthening the capacity of Member States to detect and respond to the threat of non-State actors acquiring chemical, biological, radiological materials or weapons, including for nuclear terrorism; raising awareness of the applicable international legal framework; and enhancing the capacities of criminal justice officials and other relevant stakeholders to investigate, prosecute and adjudicate cases. In 2020, 11 such webinars were delivered, in either English, French or Spanish.

21. Chad adopted a new law on counter-terrorism in April 2020, the result of support provided by UNODC in the form of legislative drafting workshops and advocacy efforts involving national stakeholders. Importantly, the law ended the death penalty for terrorism offences. In January 2020, Ethiopia approved new counter-terrorism legislation, which was in part based on the recommendations provided by UNODC and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate.

22. Over the course of 2020, UNODC supported the drafting of a revised Criminal Procedure Code for Mali, together with the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali and other United Nations entities. The

Office's contribution included detailed provisions on special investigative techniques to facilitate the processing of counter-terrorism cases, as well as provisions on judicial cooperation and the protection of victims and witnesses.

23. In July 2020, the Office provided legal advisory services to the Government of Kazakhstan in relation to the draft version of a set of forthcoming rules and timelines for the social rehabilitation of children affected by terrorist activities.

24. In the framework of the joint programme of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the Office of Counter-Terrorism and UNODC on the role of parliaments in addressing terrorism and violent extremism leading to terrorism, a series of expert online consultations on model legislation relating to victims of terrorism were held in 2020. The meetings represented a first step in drafting model legislative provisions on victims of terrorism. In the context of the programme, the partners also worked together in providing advice to Member States in relation to counter-terrorism legislation.

25. UNODC continued to maintain its online counter-terrorism legal databases available on the Sharing Electronic Resources and Laws on Crime (SHERLOC) knowledge management portal. The platform hosts information related to national and regional legislation on countering terrorism and related crimes, serving as a technical assistance and information tool for policymakers, law enforcement and judicial practitioners, academia and the media. The platform also includes a case law database that contains national jurisprudence on terrorism and related crimes.

## **2. Policy and strategy development**

26. The Office supported the development of the national strategy of Burkina Faso on anti-money-laundering and countering the financing of terrorism. The Office also supported the drafting of strategies to counter maritime crime, including legal provisions establishing maritime terrorism offences, in Ghana and Nigeria. In the Lake Chad basin, UNODC supported the Lake Chad Basin Commission, the African Union and the Member States affected by Boko Haram in the implementation of a regional strategy on the screening, prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration of Boko Haram-associated persons in the Lake Chad basin countries.

27. Mozambique and UNODC agreed on a strategy and cooperation framework document that outlines comprehensive crime prevention and criminal justice measures for the country, including terrorism prevention measures. The document, referred to as the "Maputo road map", was endorsed by the Prime Minister of Mozambique in 2020 and guides UNODC assistance to support Mozambique in addressing security and governance challenges. In that context, UNODC continued to provide and expand its counter-terrorism capacity-building assistance to Mozambique.

28. In 2020, the Office supported authorities of countries in South and South-East Asia in the development of multidisciplinary and collaborative national plans, strategies and approaches to prevent terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism in the context of COVID-19, including responses to address the phenomenon of returning or relocating foreign terrorist fighters and their family members. On the basis of the technical assistance provided by the Office and other United Nations entities, the Government of Maldives developed and approved the National Action Plan on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism for the period 2019–2024 in July 2020.

29. In Indonesia, the Office provided input to the draft national plan of action to prevent violent extremism, and other strategic policy documents and regulations pertaining to countering terrorism, supporting victims of terrorism and protecting children associated with terrorist groups. In 2020, UNODC co-organized a high-level event on children recruited and exploited by terrorist and violent extremist groups, involving the participation of delegates from Indonesia, Malaysia, Maldives and the Philippines. The objective of the event was to gauge political willingness to adopt the

UNODC “Roadmap on the treatment of children recruited and exploited by terrorist and violent extremist groups”. Following the conclusion of the event, the Government of Indonesia launched the Bali Call for Action, a political declaration that endorses the road map and commits to translating it into tangible action at the national level.

30. In 2020, Pakistan and UNODC agreed on a strategic framework on terrorism prevention aimed at strengthening the criminal justice response in Pakistan to prevent and counter terrorism. A key objective of the framework is to support federal and provincial stakeholders by establishing common practices to harmonize efforts in preventing terrorism more effectively. The framework follows on the implementation of the Pakistan’s Action to Counter Terrorism project, which was developed jointly with the Government of Pakistan, in partnership with the European Union. The project is ongoing and has strengthened inter-agency coordination and processes related to pre-investigations, investigations, prosecutions and adjudication of terrorism cases in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh Provinces.

31. As requested by the Security Council in its resolution 2482 (2019), UNODC worked jointly with the Office of Counter-Terrorism to prepare a report of the Secretary-General on actions taken by Member States and entities of the United Nations Global Compact to address the issue of linkages between terrorism and organized crime. The report, based on input received from Member States, outlines measures already adopted by States and identifies good practices and areas for further action to guide Member States in better responding to links between terrorism and organized crime.

### **3. Capacity-building on criminal justice responses to terrorism**

32. The Office continued to support Member States in their criminal justice responses to prevent and counter terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism.

#### **(a) Africa and the Middle East**

##### *West Africa*

33. In partnership with Nigeria, the European Union and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, the Office supported the strengthening of criminal justice responses to terrorism, with a focus on supporting Nigeria in addressing criminal justice challenges in the north-east of the country, the region most affected by terrorism. Technical assistance focused on the collection of evidence in conflict situations and the training of prosecutors, defence attorneys and judges actively working to process cases involving Boko Haram suspects. The assistance included facilitating the regular access of Nigerian prosecutors to the joint investigation centre in north-eastern Nigeria to review case files and consult with investigators, and the access of Nigerian public defence attorneys to the accused prior to trial, to ensure access to justice and respect for human rights.

34. In Nigeria, UNODC utilized the newly developed *Nigeria Training Module on Gender Dimensions of Criminal Justice Responses to Terrorism* to support officials in addressing issues of gender in the counter-terrorism context. In 2020, through a partnership with the National Association of Women Judges of Nigeria, more than 300 Nigerian judges and prosecutors received training based on the training module. Furthermore, in January 2020, at the request of the Ministry of Justice of Nigeria, UNODC conducted a scoping mission on preventing and responding to violence against children perpetrated by terrorist and violent extremist groups.

35. UNODC technical assistance on terrorism prevention in the Sahel contributed to the implementation of the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel. In the Niger and Nigeria, the Office provided technical assistance to promote accountability for and prosecution of terrorism offences by enhancing capacity and inter-agency coordination at the national level in the collection, preservation and sharing of information and material gathered by the military from conflict zones. That

specialized technical assistance was further expanded to cover other countries in the region, including Burkina Faso and Mali.

36. The Office supported judicial and investigative units specializing in counter-terrorism in Burkina Faso, Mali and the Niger. Activities focused on investigating and prosecuting terrorism-related cases, with an emphasis on the use of special investigative techniques, the protection of witnesses and victims, and international cooperation. Highlighting the links between the abduction and enslavement of women and children by terrorist groups and trafficking in persons, the Office also worked with the police component of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali on trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants.

37. To enhance the support to victims of terrorism in the Niger, the Office organized two activities involving practitioners from different institutions, introducing them to the international legal framework on support to victims of terrorism, the roles civil society organizations can play, and the types of legal and psychological aid that can be offered to victims of terrorism.

38. Responding to the needs expressed by the National Committee for the Coordination of Activities against Money-Laundering and Terrorist Financing of Burkina Faso, in 2020, UNODC provided national authorities with videoconferencing equipment and delivered several online training courses to strengthen their capacity to detect, investigate and disrupt terrorism financing, and to improve national and regional coordination mechanisms.

39. In 2020, UNODC supported Ghana and Togo, in the context of the West Africa Region Working Group of the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum, in strengthening their responses to terrorism. Technical assistance focused on strengthening international police cooperation and information-sharing through the use of International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) tools and databases, investigating and prosecuting cases of foreign terrorist fighters, and border security and management.

40. In cooperation with the World Customs Organization (WCO), UNODC delivered training to customs, police, anti-narcotics and other law enforcement officials on strategic trade and export control. Furthermore, in 2020, UNODC participated in Operation Tentacle, led by WCO to support West African States in countering bulk cash smuggling. The initiative has a specific focus on advancing money-laundering and terrorism financing investigations following border seizures.

41. UNODC, in the context of its Global Firearms Programme and in cooperation with INTERPOL, coordinated a cross-border operation in Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and the Niger in 2020. The operation, code-named KAFO II, focused on intercepting illicit firearms, ammunition and explosives, and disrupting the trafficking networks used to supply terrorists across West Africa and the Sahel. Under the operation, front-line officers checked the identity of more than 12,000 individuals, vehicles, containers and goods against international criminal databases and carried out physical searches. In addition to arresting suspected terrorists, officers seized firearms and a range of illicit goods, including dynamite, detonator cords, ammunition and illicit drugs. Furthermore, new trends were observed, as the seizures included contraband fuels trafficked for the purpose of financing terrorist groups in the region and smuggled explosives used for illegal mining, also a source of terrorist financing.

#### *East Africa*

42. In 2020, UNODC supported the Regional Counter-Terrorism Centre of Excellence of the Eastern Africa Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization. The support was aimed at assisting the Centre in becoming a regional knowledge and training hub for countries in Eastern Africa to facilitate collaboration in countering terrorism and included jointly producing several issue papers and trends reports on counter-terrorism and organizing regional capacity-building activities relevant to the needs of the region.



43. UNODC continued to deliver technical assistance on financial investigations in the context of countering the financing of terrorism, with Somalia and Eritrea being the primary recipients of related training in the region. In 2020, UNODC developed an e-learning module on financial disruption in the context of countering terrorist financing. The module is currently tailored to Somalia but will be adapted to different contexts and languages in the next phase.

#### *Southern Africa*

44. UNODC expanded its support to countries of the Southern African Development Community, including Botswana, Mozambique and South Africa, in strengthening rule of law-based criminal justice responses to prevent and counter terrorism. In Mozambique, UNODC delivered capacity-building assistance on counter-terrorism, the first of its kind in the country, providing practical training and mentoring to investigators, prosecutors and judges, including senior criminal justice officials and those most actively involved with terrorism cases. UNODC also promoted inter-agency cooperation on counter-terrorism matters, leading to the development of recommendations for further action. The assistance was delivered in the framework of the road map of technical assistance developed by UNODC and the Government of Mozambique, which was endorsed in 2020.

#### *North Africa*

45. The Office supported authorities in Morocco in efforts to counter terrorist financing. In 2020, assistance was provided to develop the operational capacity of criminal justice officials to prevent, investigate, prosecute and adjudicate terrorism financing cases. Under the framework, a national steering committee on countering the financing of terrorism was established. The committee is comprised of the Financial Intelligence Processing Unit; the Presidency of the Public Prosecutor; the Ministry of Justice; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccan Expatriates; the Royal Gendarmerie; the Customs and Excise Administration; the Superior Council of the Judiciary; the Higher Institute of the Judiciary; and the Directorate General of National Security of Morocco. The steering committee, with the support of UNODC, developed an instructional manual for criminal justice practitioners on investigating the financing of terrorism.

46. In January and February 2020, advanced technical training on the investigation and prosecution of offences related to the use of the Internet for terrorism-related purposes was provided to authorities in Morocco and Tunisia. Practitioners identified recommendations regarding further needs for assistance on normative and legislative frameworks, inter-agency coordination, international cooperation, partnerships with the private sector and related tools and training.

47. The Office provided specialized training on intelligence in the criminal justice process to authorities of Tunisia in March 2020. In partnership with the Counter-Terrorism in the Middle East and North Africa programme, funded by the European Union, and despite the global pandemic, in November 2020, the Office also delivered in-person assistance to authorities of Tunisia regarding crime-scene management following terrorist attacks.

48. In line with Security Council resolution [2396 \(2017\)](#), and to support authorities of countries in North Africa with cross-border investigations, online workshops were delivered for Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia in October and December 2020. The workshops focused on the normative and technical capacity required for the use of passenger data and other relevant information to prevent and combat terrorism, in accordance with international standards.

#### *Middle East*

49. In October 2020, UNODC resumed in-person technical assistance to support practitioners in Iraq. Specialized training was delivered on human rights-compliant and gender-inclusive investigation, prosecution and adjudication of terrorism cases.

The assistance was focused on legislative, strategic, ethical, psychological and practical measures to ensure accountability while supporting social integration. In November 2020, the Office delivered a series of training activities to the Anti-Money-Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism Office of Iraq and relevant officials to support the implementation of the sanctions regime against Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh) and promote cooperation with regional counterparts to counter the financing of terrorism.

50. UNODC supported a study on promoting the role of female Iraqi officials to counter terrorism in Iraq that surveyed the role of women in law enforcement and criminal justice institutions. The study presented recommended avenues to further their representation and empowerment in national counter-terrorism efforts. UNODC also supported the development of a version of the publication *Foreign Terrorist Fighters: Manual for Judicial Training Institutes* for the Middle East and North Africa to strengthen the investigation and prosecution of terrorism offences committed by foreign nationals and foster related cross-border cooperation in the region.

51. In 2020, the Office also supported Jordan and Lebanon in responding to foreign terrorist fighters through specialized technical assistance activities on open-source intelligence and social media-based investigations, interviewing techniques for vulnerable populations, and crime scene management. As a result, law enforcement and criminal justice officials acquired skills to facilitate the giving of complete, accurate and reliable accounts by victims, witnesses and suspects and avoid false confessions. UNODC delivered technical assistance in July 2020 to respond to the threat of terrorist infiltration in refugee camps and settlements in Lebanon. The assistance was focused on the best use of international crime and terrorism-related databases and lists to respond to the threat.

52. The Office supported the strengthening of the capacities of law enforcement agencies in Lebanon to identify and interdict foreign terrorist fighters at international airports through a comprehensive capacity-building programme delivered in cooperation with INTERPOL in 2020. The programme was focused on the use of passenger data in risk assessment and identification of suspicious passengers, including foreign terrorist fighters and returnees.

## **(b) Asia**

### *West Asia*

53. The Office supported Afghanistan in countering the financing of terrorism, focusing on the implementation plan for the national risk assessment. The support included assistance related to investigating and disrupting the financing networks of terrorist groups, combating illicit flows of funds and improving the implementation of sanctions.

### *Central Asia*

54. UNODC, in partnership with the Office of Counter-Terrorism, the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, the Office for Disarmament Affairs and other partners, delivered technical assistance on addressing the terrorism-arms-crime nexus to countries in Central Asia in 2020. The aim of the assistance was to prevent and combat illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons and their illicit supply to terrorists, in support of the implementation of Security Council resolution [2370 \(2017\)](#) and the guiding principles on foreign terrorist fighters (the Madrid Guiding Principles). In addition, the Office initiated a series of self-assessments for five countries in Central Asia that were to be followed by meetings to perform in-depth analysis and plan for future actions to ensure that authorities would have enhanced capabilities to prevent and combat the illicit trafficking in arms and their illicit supply to terrorists.

55. UNODC, in collaboration with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), supported the implementation of Security Council resolution [2396](#)

(2017) by delivering basic and advanced workshops on countering the financing of terrorism in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

56. The Office continued to support countries in Central Asia in efforts towards the rehabilitation and reintegration of children affected by terrorism. In Kazakhstan, UNODC hosted a virtual round table in July 2020 at which it presented the conclusions of a technical assistance needs assessment on prevention of and responses to violence against children by terrorist and violent extremist groups. Government representatives endorsed the report. As a follow-up to the round table and at the request of the Government, UNODC delivered five capacity-building webinars to 571 participants. The webinars were aimed at strengthening interministerial and intersectoral coordination to ensure comprehensive and sustainable prevention and response strategies in support of children affected by terrorism.

57. In Tajikistan, UNODC, in partnership with the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre, held online consultative meetings in June and July 2020 with government representatives focused on prevention of and responses to violence against children, in particular those affected by foreign terrorist fighters. In November 2020, UNODC delivered its first hybrid (both in-person and online) workshop on the rehabilitation and reintegration of children affected by foreign terrorist fighters, involving 21 participants.

58. In 2020, the Office supported the Central Asian Network for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and delivered assistance to enhance the capacity of Government authorities and civil society actors in countries in Central Asia. The focus of the Network is on preventing violent extremism leading to terrorism by incorporating comprehensive and coordinated prosecutorial and rehabilitative responses to returning foreign terrorist fighters and their accompanying families.

59. UNODC developed e-learning modules dedicated to addressing the linkages between violent extremism and mental health, as well as practical aspects of multi-agency approaches to that issue, with a focus on returning foreign terrorist fighters and their families. The e-learning tools are to be produced in both English and Russian.

#### *South Asia*

60. The Office supported various countries in South Asia in countering the financing of terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction by non-State actors by building the capacity of relevant criminal justice officials to prevent, detect, investigate, prosecute and adjudicate related cases. In 2020, the Office assisted Pakistan with its national framework for countering the financing of terrorism, including through two simulated criminal investigation and trial exercises on the investigation and prosecution of terrorist financing for law enforcement and criminal justice officers from Sindh Province.

61. UNODC promoted the exchange of good practices among national authorities in South Asia in providing effective rehabilitation and reintegration responses to relocating or returning foreign terrorist fighters and members of their families, including alternatives to imprisonment, community-based interventions and the engagement of private and civil society actors. In response to requests from Bangladesh, Maldives and Sri Lanka, UNODC presented a draft road map on the development of a South Asian network of practitioners focused on preventing and countering violent extremism leading to terrorism, with a view to fostering regional cooperation. In 2020, UNODC began updating its training manual entitled *Investigation, Prosecution and Adjudication of Foreign Terrorist Fighter Cases for South and South-East Asia*, factoring in the challenges posed by COVID-19 and underlining the need to link criminal justice processes to rehabilitation and reintegration programmes. In addition, UNODC was in the process of developing a training tool for South Asia on gender perspectives within criminal justice responses to terrorism, with a focus on Bangladesh and Maldives.

62. In December 2020, UNODC held virtual consultations with representatives of 44 government agencies and civil society organizations as part of an analysis of the situation of children associated with terrorist groups in Maldives. The preliminary findings and recommendations of the analysis were disseminated and discussed with national counterparts during a national round table.

#### *South-East Asia*

63. UNODC delivered technical assistance on countering terrorism, including the financing of terrorism, to Member States in South-East Asia, leading to the development of pools of national trainers from multiple agencies, including financial intelligence units, police agencies, national counter-terrorism coordinating bodies, prosecution agencies and other government bodies in Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines. In Indonesia, the Office delivered its first online financial disruption course to stakeholders working in the area of counter-terrorism.

64. After receiving technical assistance in 2020 on prevention of and intervention against the use of the Internet and social media by young adults for terrorist recruitment and propaganda in South-East Asia, authorities in Malaysia reported that they had applied the newly acquired knowledge in various contexts. The training was also reported to have led to the development of enhanced mechanisms at the National Cybersecurity Agency for conducting online investigations, profiling and requesting digital evidence. In addition, the Agency reported that the assistance had helped to strengthen inter-agency cooperation in Malaysia.

65. The Office spearheaded the establishment of the Peace Hub in Indonesia. Overseen by the Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator for Indonesia, the Peace Hub is a platform for conducting joint programming on counter-terrorism and the prevention of violent extremism. Seven United Nations entities participate in the Hub, and multiple joint initiatives have been implemented through it.

66. In August 2020, at the request of the Government of Indonesia, UNODC shared good practices and case studies from Member States on the prosecution of terrorist and foreign terrorist fighters for terrorism offences and other transnational crimes. The collaboration was aimed at informing a study commissioned by the National Counter-Terrorism Agency of Indonesia. The Office provided support in relation to victims of terrorism, enhancing community policing to prevent violent extremism leading to terrorism, and gender mainstreaming. UNODC also provided support to the Government of Indonesia in relation to the management of violent extremist prisoners.

67. UNODC supported the Contact Group on Maritime Crime in the Sulu and Celebes Seas by providing a tamper-proof electronic vessel identification system for small craft in the Sulu Sea region. The effort, carried out in partnership with the Philippines Coast Guard, involved piloting the installation of QR code-labelled tally plates on maritime craft in the Sulu and Celebes Seas linked to the Philippine Coast Guard vessel registration database, to address maritime criminality, including the movement of terrorist support material.

#### **(c) Latin America and the Caribbean**

68. The Office continued to provide technical assistance to Colombia to enhance national coordination on counter-terrorism matters. Three inter-institutional committee meetings aimed at preventing and countering terrorism and its financing were carried out in the country in 2020. UNODC began providing legislative technical assistance to Colombia in support of its compliance with international obligations relating to terrorism financing and financial sanctions on designated individuals.

**(d) South-Eastern Europe**

69. In South-Eastern Europe, in partnership with OSCE, UNODC provided support to the authorities of Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina to strengthen frameworks and capacity related to countering the financing of terrorism.

*Cross-regional capacity-building activities*

70. The Office delivered training to authorities of Central Asian and North African countries to strengthen their criminal justice responses to terrorism, in line with Security Council resolution [2396 \(2017\)](#), including in connection with cross-border investigations. In Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, the Office provided technical assistance to law enforcement and criminal justice officials on the use of advanced investigative techniques, cross-border crime investigations and crime scene management in counter-terrorism contexts. In South and South-East Asia, UNODC delivered a series of activities to promote the implementation of several international legal instruments to counter terrorism, in line with Security resolution [2396 \(2017\)](#), and provided technical assistance to strengthen capacities to counter the use of improvised explosive devices in terrorism-related offences.

71. In 2020, UNODC, in the framework of the Airport Communication Project, supported countries in the Middle East and North Africa in the identification and interdiction of foreign terrorist fighters at international airports. Capacity-building activities were aimed at raising the awareness of front-line law enforcement officers on the use of passenger data for the identification of suspicious passengers, such as foreign terrorist fighters, and other illicit activities, including the smuggling of cash and precious metals, that could relate to the financing of terrorism or facilitating the travel of foreign terrorist fighters. Activities were delivered in cooperation with the Office of Counter-Terrorism, the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and INTERPOL. In November 2020, a subregional workshop was conducted to strengthen cross-border law enforcement cooperation to prevent and counter terrorism in Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and the United Republic of Tanzania.

**(e) Global capacity-building activities**

72. The Office of Counter-Terrorism launched the United Nations Countering Terrorist Travel Programme in 2019 to assist Member States in preventing, detecting, investigating and prosecuting terrorist offences and other serious crimes, including related travel, by collecting and analysing passenger data, in accordance with international obligations and standards, in particular Security Council resolution [2396 \(2017\)](#). The programme is implemented in partnership with the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, UNODC, the International Civil Aviation Organization, the Office of Information and Communications Technology and INTERPOL.

73. In the framework of the programme, UNODC provides legal support to Member States in the drafting and review of normative frameworks related to advance passenger information and passenger name records, as well as capacity-building support for the establishment of passenger information units. In 2020, assessment consultations led by the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and involving all programme partners were held with representatives of Botswana, Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Ghana, the Philippines and Sierra Leone. The Office provides legislative assistance on an ongoing basis to Azerbaijan, Botswana, Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Ghana, Sierra Leone, the Sudan and Togo.

74. In August 2020, UNODC supported the launch of the publication *From Victims of Terrorism to Messengers for Peace: A Strategic Approach*, which highlights the important role victims can play in promoting peace and delegitimizing justifications for terrorist violence, and is aimed at enhancing the capacity of Governments and other stakeholders to support victims in that regard.

75. To support Member States in addressing conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism and violent extremism, and in line with the priorities set out in the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, UNODC issued the publication *Preventing Violent Extremism through Sport: Technical Guide* in 2020. The guide, developed in the framework of the Global Programme for the Implementation of the Doha Declaration and in consultation with United Nations entities and academic experts, provides guidance to policymakers and practitioners on strengthening sport-based initiatives to prevent violent extremism leading to terrorism among young people.

76. The guide identifies five areas of intervention through sports: safe spaces, social inclusion, education, resilience and empowerment, and acknowledges the contribution of sport to promoting tolerance and respect, empowering youth and communities and increasing social inclusion. The guide is available in English and will be made available in Arabic and Russian. In addition, a practical guide for trainers and an e-learning course on the use of sport to prevent violent extremism will be developed to enable online capacity-building activities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

77. In July 2020, the Office launched an e-learning module on countering the financing of terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction by non-State actors. The module is aimed at enhancing understanding of the schemes used by terrorist groups to raise funds and examines the appropriate measures to prevent terrorist fundraising and seize funds.

78. In the framework of the Global Programme for the Implementation of the Doha Declaration and the Education for Justice (E4J) initiative, the Office developed educational materials and tools to empower educators to discuss issues related to terrorism with their students, including 15 university modules and a teaching guide on counter-terrorism, which are available in Chinese, English and Russian. Selected modules are also available in Arabic and Spanish. In November 2020, UNODC, in collaboration with the Beijing Normal University, held an online event to launch the Chinese version of the university module series on counter-terrorism. Online seminars and conferences were conducted in collaboration with academic institutions in Ghana and Kyrgyzstan to present and promote the use of the counter-terrorism modules.

79. Under the global initiative on military evidence developed by the Working Group on Criminal Justice, Legal Responses and Countering the Financing of Terrorism of the Coordination Committee of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact, UNODC facilitated the translation of the Guidelines to facilitate the use and admissibility as evidence in national criminal courts of information collected, handled, preserved and shared by the military to prosecute terrorist offences, into several languages, including Arabic and Portuguese.

80. To respond to the need for specialized expertise on legal, policy and operational questions arising where terrorist groups operate in contexts of armed conflict, UNODC developed a new online training course on counter-terrorism and international humanitarian law, which was delivered twice in the course of 2020, drawing on the contribution of experts from the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and the International Committee of the Red Cross. UNODC also delivered a new online training course on international crimes and terrorism-related offences.

#### **4. International cooperation and mutual legal assistance**

81. In continuing its work on cross-border cooperation and the management of electronic evidence, UNODC convened an online meeting in April 2020 bringing together representatives of Member States, regional and international organizations, and law enforcement and criminal justice training academies to gather input on a draft training module based on the *Practical Guide for Requesting Electronic Evidence across Borders*. In October, UNODC and its partners held online expert group

meetings on the guide with representatives of Member States and subsequently with service providers to support the exchange of electronic evidence.

82. The Office, in collaboration with authorities in Nigeria, Pakistan and South Africa, organized a number of online workshops on requesting electronic evidence from service providers in cross-border investigations relating to counter-terrorism. The workshop for Pakistan introduced participants to a draft country-specific guide for making requests for preservation, voluntary disclosure, emergency disclosure and mutual legal assistance in terrorist cases involving electronic evidence.

83. In the context of international cooperation and mutual legal assistance, UNODC partnered with entities such as the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, the International Association of Prosecutors, the Commonwealth Secretariat, the European Union, EuroMed Justice, EuroMed Police, the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol), the Organization of American States and OSCE. In addition, because communication service providers play an important role in regularly supporting the delivery of capacity-building events under the global initiative on exchanging electronic evidence across borders, UNODC partnered with providers of communication services and related services, including Facebook, Apple, Twitter, Uber, Careem, Google, Microsoft and EuroISPA, a pan-European association of Internet service providers.

84. In Eastern Africa, UNODC promoted regional cooperation by supporting the operationalization of the Regional Counter-Terrorism Centre of Excellence of the Eastern Africa Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization, jointly organizing regional capacity-building activities on a range of counter-terrorism issues, including border security, and addressing the links between terrorism and organized crime. The support resulted in the development of recommendations for strengthening regional cooperation on those issues.

85. The Office provided support to the West African Network of Central Authorities and Prosecutors against Organized Crime to facilitate international judicial cooperation in the region. Through its support to the Regional Judicial Platform of the Sahel countries, UNODC strengthened cooperation in criminal matters among Member States in the Sahel. A draft memorandum of understanding between the Regional Judicial Platform and the Group of Five for the Sahel was elaborated at the end of 2019. In May 2020, focal points of the Platform convened to discuss challenges arising from COVID-19-related restrictions concerning the processing of terrorism-related cases, which led to concrete and innovative solutions to overcome those restrictions. In Eastern and Central Africa, UNODC supported the Great Lakes Judicial Cooperation Network.

## **5. Prison reform, rehabilitation and reintegration**

86. UNODC has a long-standing history of supporting Member States in the management of violent extremist prisoners and supporting compliance with the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules). In that regard, the Office delivered technical assistance in Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tunisia and Uganda.

87. The Office successfully completed the construction of a high-security counter-terrorism court complex in Kenya, which included two specialized courtrooms that would enable trials to be conducted in a secure and human-rights compliant manner. Also in Kenya, UNODC constructed separation blocks to improve the management of violent extremist prisoners and reduce the risk of radicalization in prisons.

88. Following a major terror attack perpetrated by Al-Shabaab targeting the Central Prison of Mogadishu in August 2020, the Office supported the re-establishment of adequate security at the prison by providing equipment and security infrastructure. At that prison and other prisons in the country, UNODC promoted rehabilitation and supported the mitigation of risks of radicalization. UNODC supported vocational



training activities to build the skills and confidence of custodial officers. An increasing number of prisoners have been engaged in diverse vocational training programmes that contribute to improving the infrastructure of the custodial facilities and surrounding areas under the supervision of custodial officers.

89. To promote practices that are more accountable and human-rights compliant, a prisoner record management system was introduced in five prisons in Somalia. The system has led to the full digitalization of prisoners' registration information, while enabling officers to adequately record cases and detention-related information, including with regard to risks posed by the prisoners.

90. In 2020, UNODC continued to develop a technical assistance handbook for criminal justice officials and other relevant stakeholders on the effective use of appropriate non-custodial measures as alternatives to imprisonment for terrorism-related offences.

## **B. Coordination within the United Nations system**

91. UNODC was actively involved in the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact, serving as Chair of the Working Group on Criminal Justice Legal Responses and Countering the Financing of Terrorism. The Working Group was vice-chaired by the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate. In addition, UNODC served as Vice-Chair of the Working Group on Border Management and Law Enforcement Relating to Counter-Terrorism and Co-Chair of the Working Group on Resource Mobilization, and Monitoring and Evaluation. In addition, UNODC actively participated in all other working groups of the Compact.

92. In December 2020, the Office of Counter-Terrorism and UNODC signed a plan of action for collaboration and cooperation, with the aim of fulfilling the mandates and objectives of both entities with respect to supporting Member States in the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and other relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions.

93. UNODC collaborated with the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team to provide Member States with tailored technical assistance to effectively implement targeted financial sanction regimes, in accordance with Security Council resolutions [1267 \(1999\)](#) and [1988 \(2011\)](#).

## **C. Monitoring and evaluation**

94. In partnership with the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, UNODC started work in 2020 to conduct an independent meta-synthesis of evaluations carried out by entities of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact since 2018 under the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The results of the meta-synthesis are expected to enable Compact entities to share with a wide audience, including Member States, aggregate results, lessons learned and best practices from its work and identify possible ways forward and recommendations towards strengthening common evaluation approaches, frameworks and systems.

## **IV. Conclusions**

95. The consequences of the COVID-19 health crisis and the impact it has had on the manifestations of terrorism, in particular the increased reliance on technology and online networking, demonstrate that Member States' responses need to be increasingly networked and integrated, including by means of proportionate, legal, accountable and necessary real-time information-sharing, advanced intelligence and joint operations.



96. Social media and Internet companies have carried out research on and invested in connecting people and creating and expanding markets. Terrorists are hijacking the innovations resulting from those efforts to promote violent ideologies. Global capacity to address this problem remains limited and low-income countries need assistance to address it. Member States and the United Nations need to increasingly partner with companies, with a view to investing in solutions while respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms.

97. Member States should consider developing and implementing comprehensive strategies to ensure that children associated with terrorist and violent extremist groups are treated primarily as victims, in order to prevent the involvement of children with such groups and in violence; ensuring that any interventions targeting children associated with such groups identify as key objectives the rehabilitation, reintegration and best interests of those children; and establishing or strengthening juvenile justice systems to ensure that they are fair, transparent and child- and gender-sensitive.

98. Many Member States face considerable challenges regarding the rehabilitation and reintegration of persons suspected of having been associated with terrorist groups, including foreign terrorist fighters and their accompanying family members. Thousands of persons suspected of having been associated with terrorist groups, including spouses and children of suspected terrorists, have continued to be detained without trial or prospect for release, under circumstances violating human rights and amounting to a humanitarian emergency. Therefore, the development and implementation of comprehensive and tailored prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration strategies pursuant to Security Council resolution [2396 \(2017\)](#), including interventions aimed at deradicalization and the enhanced evaluation of rehabilitation efforts, remain a priority for many countries.

99. The need for integrated assistance to address evolving challenges in preventing and countering violent extremism leading to terrorism is more urgent than ever, as the world remains under pressure resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

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