



## **INTER-AMERICAN COMMITTEE AGAINST TERRORISM (CICTE)**

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**PRESENTATION BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF  
THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTORATE OF THE COUNTER TERRORISM COMMITTEE (CTED)  
OF THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL, MR. MIKE SMITH**

(Delivered at the Second Plenary Session held on March 5, 2009)

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It is my pleasure to be back here again. CICTE is one of our closest regional collaborators and we value highly the role you play in raising awareness of the terrorism threat in the Hemisphere and in helping your Member States to address their counter-terrorism infrastructure and organizational needs. I always learn something new and useful every time I meet with the CICTE Secretariat and Members.

When I had the privilege to address you 12 months ago, I said that we in CTED were reviewing the way that the Directorate was structured and was working, with the aim of strengthening our relevance and ability to assist the Member States of the United Nations. That review led to a number of changes and I would like, this morning, to explain them and then suggest ways in which these will enhance our interaction and engagement with your region.

#### Technical Groups

Firstly, within the office we set up 5 technical groups and two small units that cut horizontally across the geographic clusters within which CTED had traditionally operated. These groups addressing, respectively, legal issues; countering the financing of terrorism; border control, law enforcement and arms trafficking; human rights; and technical assistance; have helped to ensure that the 3 clusters are not only equally strong in these technical areas, but that the judgments they make are appropriate and harmonized.

Already we are seeing greater productivity and consistency as a result of the new structure. In June last year we had the first Global Implementation Survey adopted by the Committee and noted by the Council. This is an analysis of how the world, region by region, is tackling the challenge of global terrorism. This has helped us all work out where the regional gaps are, what the long-term challenges will be, and where there are critical needs for technical assistance.

The Working Groups have also produced a Technical Guide to the implementation of resolution 1373. This has yet to be adopted by the Committee but when it is, it will not only serve as a handbook for all our experts in their analysis of countries' counter-terrorism efforts, but will hopefully help the governments work out what they still need to do in this field.

#### Visits

A second change to CTED's *modus operandi* in the last 12 months relates to the way we conduct our visits. In the past we had conducted assessment missions to only around 8 countries a year because of the resources involved and the intensity of those visits. Typically these involved delegations of up to a dozen experts from 6 or 7 agencies spending a week or more in a place. This was not only a considerable logistical burden on the country concerned, but increasingly they took on the appearance of inspection missions or audits – in other words exercises in finding fault. They also

seemed to take place exclusively in developing countries.

This approach was not only politically unsustainable, but it made no sense. All countries face a terrorist threat; all countries find counter-terrorism work challenging; and no country is implementing resolution 1373 fully.

So we proposed to the Committee that in the future we increase the range and tempo of our visits. In order to do so, we proposed conducting new focused visits – concentrating on one or two parts of a country's counter-terrorism activities, not every element of the resolution. Moreover we suggested that instead of just criticizing we look for best practices in areas where the country was doing well.

The Committee agreed and in June 2008 it approved a new list of 43 countries that we should seek to visit before the end of our current mandate – December 2010. Included in that list were countries from every region and most sub-regions, including, of course from this Hemisphere.

So far, just this year, we have visited 4 EU states to look at their assets freezing regimes; 3 West African states to consider their border control arrangements; and a first assessment mission to a Central America state –Panama. There we discussed, earlier this week, the system they had in place to counter the financing of terrorism given that Panama has an active banking and financial sector and is something of a regional transport and financial hub. We also looked at the way it was successfully securing the Panama Canal – after all a critical and strategic asset in the global trading networks– from terrorist attacks.

#### Technical Assistance

The third area where we re-thought CTED's approach last year was our system for facilitating the delivery of technical assistance. Too often in the past we played a passive role simply recording the technical assistance requirements identified or requested on a data base that, frankly, few donors consulted.

In July last year, however, we launched a revamped strategy for pro-actively facilitating the delivery of technical assistance based on a recognition that our value-added lay in match-making.

We do not have a mandate or the funding to deliver technical assistance ourselves. What we can do, however, is:

- prioritize the technical requirements of recipient countries;
- obtain their commitment to addressing shortcomings in the counter-terrorism infrastructure; and
- bring the technical assistance needs to the attention of the most prospective donors, be they international or regional organizations, or donor states.

We identified 14 categories of assistance falling into 4 general fields, notably legislative drafting; strengthening institutional infrastructure; operational training; and equipment.

This new strategy follows certain principles, notably that:

- Firstly, our focus will be on obtaining active take-up of a limited number of high priority referrals;
- Secondly, visited states will be the main source of our referrals. After all, only in these states where we have a good on the ground knowledge of the situation, can we be confident that the assistance is genuinely needed and going to be useful;
- Thirdly, we will work to increase the pool of potential donors, looking beyond the conventional or traditional donor states. For example, on our visit to Panama we explored the potential for the Panama Canal Authority to provide training to others regarding the systems that they used to protect the security of such a major transport and engineering facility.
- Fourthly, we will have a clear definition of benchmarks of success and finally CTED will play a proactive role subsequent to referral, tracking this through to the final delivery of the assistance.

How have we done with the new strategy? Well it is still early days but in the 8 months it has been operational we have made 84 referrals. Donors have agreed to follow-up on 34 of these and 5 have reached to the next stage, with recipient countries agreeing to the specific modalities for delivery.

This may look like a low rate of success for the investment involved, but there are often long lead-times involved and I expect many more to have moved ahead by the end of 2009.

#### Relevance to the Americas

Now I hope I have not bored you talking about our internal changes, but truly these have relevance to the Hemisphere and I believe will drive a much enhanced engagement by CTED in this region.

As I mentioned earlier, we hope to visit a number of countries in South and Central America over the next 18 months, in order to deepen our dialogue on counter-terrorism issues. In this process, hopefully, we will be able not only to help countries identify their vulnerabilities but we will learn from those that have had to respond to terrorism in the past –what works, not what does not work.

Our key partner in all of this will continue to be this forum and its Secretariat which, as I noted at the beginning, is already playing such an active role in promoting good counter-terrorism practices in the region through the many training courses and workshops that Carol Fuller and her team conduct.

We have other important international partners in this work –all of which are active in this region, notably UNODC, Interpol, ICAD, WCO, IMO and IOM, to name just a few.

In 2007 the CTC held its Fifth Special Meeting with international and regional organizations focused on the theme of preventing terrorists from crossing borders. CICTE was a prominent participant at that meeting and has been amongst the most active in organizing follow-up activities, including a number in which CTED has participated.

Later this year or early in 2010 a Sixth Special Meeting will be held to build on this momentum.

Distinguished representatives, let me conclude by again underlining the importance of our relations with CICTE. The cooperation, communications and mutual support that characterizes this relationship has helped both of us to implement our respective mandates and achieve our goals.

But there is still more we can do. And I am determined as I know Carol Fuller and her team are, to see that potential realized to the extent possible.