

United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI)

Location:

Turin, Italy

Contact Information:

United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute
Security Governance and Counter-Terrorism Laboratory

Viale Maestri del Lavoro 10

10127 Turin

Italy

E-mail: lab@unicri.it

Focal Points:

Mr. Francesco Cappè

Head of the Security Governance and Counter-Terrorism Laboratory

UNICRI Office on Dialogue and Innovation

Tel : +39 0583 418 506

Fax: +39 0583 719 405

E-mail: cappe@unicri.it

Year of Establishment: 1969

Websites: www.unicri.it

Security Governance/Counter-Terrorism Laboratory:

<http://lab.unicri.it/>

Centre on Public-Private Security Policies:

http://lab.unicri.it/lisbon_centre_ppp_security_policies.html

CTITF Working Group Membership:

- Protecting Human Rights While Countering Terrorism
- Supporting and Highlighting Victims of Terrorism
- Preventing and Responding to WMD Terrorist Attacks
- Countering the Use of the Internet for Terrorist Purposes.
- Strengthening the Protection of Vulnerable Targets

The United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) is one of the United Nations five Research and Training Institutes. It is mandated to engage with states, nongovernmental organizations, and experts to develop policies and programs in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice.

UNICRI is governed by a board of trustees, staffed by experts in the management of research, training, technical cooperation, and documentation, and supported by consultants selected according to project requirements. Its main offices are in Turin, Italy, but the other UNICRI Security Governance and Counter Terrorism Laboratory offices are based in Lucca (Italy) and Lisbon (Portugal), and UNICRI liaison desks are located at UN headquarters in New York and Geneva.

UNICRI's work focuses primarily on Pillars I and II of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, "addressing conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism" and "preventing and combating terrorism."¹⁸⁴ In this context, UNICRI is involved in a broad variety of issues, such as countering the appeal of terrorism, promoting private-public partnerships for the protection of vulnerable targets, promoting engagement with civil society, and examining the security implications of advances in biotechnology and trafficking in chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear weapons (CBRN).

Given these areas of interest, UNICRI is a member of several working groups of the UN Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, within which it has undertaken a series of projects designed to bring together experts, practitioners, and governments to develop creative responses to criminal and other security threats, such as terrorism. For example, building on the work of a former working group it led on "addressing radicalization and extremism that lead to terrorism," UNICRI launched a Center on Policies to Counter the Appeal of Terrorism in Lucca, Italy in 2010, which is run in close

cooperation with the CTITE.¹⁸⁵ Among the objectives of this center are the establishment of a searchable web-based database containing information about different strategies employed by states to counter the appeal of terrorism, the production of an annual analytical report, and the organization of a series of workshops bringing together key stakeholders to exchange lessons learned and best practices.

As a co-chair of the Working Group on Strengthening the Protection of Vulnerable Targets, UNICRI produced a report on how public-private partnerships can contribute to protecting “soft targets” from criminal and terrorist acts, published in January 2009 and disseminated in cooperation with the International Criminal Police Organization’s (INTERPOL) Referral Center.¹⁸⁶ Some ideas for the report were tested in Kenya and Mexico, with the support of the UN Department of Safety and Security (DSS) and in cooperation with The Inter-American Committee on Terrorism (CICTE), in order to examine the application of the report’s findings to real-time situations.

UNICRI also promotes the role of public-private partnerships through its International Permanent Observatory on Major Events Security (IPO) and the implementation of two regional initiatives. One of these, EU-SEC, is implemented in Europe with support from the European Commission and in cooperation with Europol and twenty-four regional states. The second is IPO Americas, a joint project between UNICRI and CICTE, supported by the government of Canada and the Organization of American States (OAS). Building on these experiences, UNICRI has designed three additional regional platforms: IPO Africa, IPO Asia-Pacific, and IPO Gulf and Middle East.¹⁸⁷

Another example of UNICRI’s work related to counterterrorism is a project examining present and future security implications of advances in biotechnology, focusing primarily on the dual-use potential of synthetic biology and nanobiotechnology and their implications for criminal or terrorist activities. Along similar lines, UNICRI is cooperating with the European Commission to create Chemical, Biological, Nuclear, and Radiological (CBRN) Centers of Excellence, to help states mitigate the threat posed by these weapons. These centers will aim to work with international and regional organi-

zations, and states, to develop tailored assistance packages to address their specific needs.

Examining another area where efforts to address criminality and terrorism overlap, UNICRI began to undertake a comprehensive program on witness protection in 2006 based on a regional operative approach. Initially devoted to Latin America, this program focused on improving the skills of public prosecutors and other relevant law-enforcement officials investigating criminal and terrorist acts, as well as working with witnesses and victims to develop appropriate support mechanisms.¹⁸⁸

In addition to co-chairing the CTITF Working Group on Strengthening the Protection of Vulnerable Targets, UNICRI is also a member of the Working Groups on Supporting and Highlighting Victims of Terrorism, Preventing and Responding to WMD Terrorist Attacks, Countering the Use of the Internet for Terrorist Purposes, Protecting Human Rights While Countering Terrorism, and Border Management Related to Counter-Terrorism. UNICRI also participates in the CTITF project on Integrated Assistance for Countering Terrorism (I-ACT), which aims to map the assistance being received by countries and identify counterterrorism capacity gaps that still need to be addressed.¹⁸⁹