

Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) Office

Location:

New York, USA

Contact Information:

Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force

Department of Political Affairs

United Nations

405 East 42nd Street

Room: TB-08004A

New York, NY 10017 (USA)

Focal Point:

Mr. Fabrizio Trezza

Tel: +1 212 963 4134

Fax: +1 212 963 4199

E-mail: trezza@un.org

Website: www.un.org/terrorism

Year of Establishment: 2009

CTITF Working Group Membership:

- Border Management Related to Counter-Terrorism (co-chair)
- Preventing and Resolving Conflicts
- Tackling the Financing of Terrorism
- Countering the Use of the Internet for Terrorist Purposes
- Protecting Human Rights While Countering Terrorism

In the aftermath of the September 11th terrorist attacks, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Kieran Prendergast chaired the Policy Working Group on Terrorism and oversaw the development of the report, which formulated, for the first time, a comprehensive vision of how the United Nations might best contribute to efforts to combat global terrorism.

The Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) was established by Secretary-General Kofi Annan in 2005 to enhance coordination and coherence in the United Nations' counterterrorism activities. The Task Force consists of twenty-five entities and six observer entities identified as contributing to counterterrorism within their respective mandates in some form.¹

In 2009, the CTITF was institutionalized within the Department of Political Affairs by the General Assembly with a small core staff to support the work of the thirty-one constituent entities. In subsequent resolutions, the CTITF's mandate was further broadened to provide support to states in their efforts to implement the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (henceforth, Global Strategy), adopted unanimously by the General Assembly in 2006.

The CTITF Office, based at UN Headquarters in New York City, was established to provide the CTITF with a secretariat and a central focal point for counterterrorism efforts at the UN. It is staffed by a small core team of professional and administrative officers, sometimes supported by staff seconded by member states through the "Junior Professional Officer" or "JPO" program.

Many UN entities engage with states on specific aspects of the Global Strategy related to their respective mandates. The CTITF Office is mandated to work with the UN system as a whole, as well as member states, to promote implementation of all four pillars of action outlined in the Global Strategy and address any gaps in these efforts. These pillars include:

- I. Measures to address the conditions conducive to terrorism
- II. Measures to prevent and combat terrorism
- III. Measures to build states' capacity to prevent and combat terrorism and to strengthen the role of the United Nations in this regard

IV. Measures to ensure respect for human rights for all and the rule of law as the fundamental basis of the fight against terrorism

To that end, the CTITF Office serves a number of purposes. These include:²

- Ensuring coordination and coherence in the overall counterterrorism efforts of the United Nations system;
- Providing policy inputs to the Secretary-General and relevant intergovernmental bodies on UN system-wide counterterrorism efforts, including preparation of relevant reports for/on behalf of the Secretary-General;
- Drawing on the CTITF membership to identify and utilize the leading substantive expertise available with respect to the various actions outlined in the four pillars of the Global Strategy;
- Performing the substantive, outreach, organizational, and administrative functions associated with the mandate and purpose of the office;
- Mobilizing and managing extra-budgetary resources for CTITF initiatives in support of technical assistance delivery for implementation of the Global Strategy;
- Working with each of the CTITF working groups, which serve as a liaison between states, experts, and CTITF entities.³

In 2010, Jean-Paul Laborde, chairing the CTITF at the time, observed:

The problem is that the [UN Global Counter-Terrorism] Strategy was not promoted enough following its adoption and also no adequate resources were committed to launch an aggressive in-depth knowledge campaign. We have to publicize the Strategy in the field through a series of seminars, targeted briefings to all relevant stakeholders, utilizing the CTITF focal points and other instruments at our disposal.⁴

Consequently, the CTITF Office has embarked on a series of regional workshops to promote the Global Strategy and familiarize national governments, experts, and practitioners with the holistic and

multifaceted approach adopted by member states in the Global Strategy.⁵ The first initiative took place in Bali, Indonesia in fall 2010, and subsequent workshops were held in Budapest in June 2011 and in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in July 2011.

To highlight the work of CTITF members and working groups, the CTITF Office, in partnership with the International Peace Institute (IPI), hosted a series of side events around the second biennial review of the Global Strategy in September 2010. Mandated by the 2006 resolution for the Global Strategy, each biennial review offers UN member states an opportunity to assess the progress made on implementation as well as key areas that require greater attention and support.⁶ These side events allow the broader UN community to get a better understanding of the CTITF's efforts in areas such as enhancing regional cooperation to counter terrorism, upholding human rights in all counterterrorism efforts, and engaging with civil society to combat terrorism.⁷

One key initiative of the CTITF highlighted at the second biennial review was CTITF's web based information system known as Integrated Assistance for Countering Terrorism (I-ACT). I-ACT is designed to promote integrated implementation of the Global Strategy by providing online information to all CTITF members and participating states on counterterrorism assistance (needs assessments, and completed, ongoing and planned assistance). I-ACT aims to facilitate synergies and minimize the duplication of efforts among CTITF members.⁸ Although each entity continues to provide assistance through its own mandate, the I-ACT system works to ensure that the needs of states to implement all four pillars of the UN Global Counterterrorism Strategy are met, by matching requested states with external bodies that can offer assistance if requests for assistance cannot be met by CTITF entities.

The interface for I-ACT was developed by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and other CTITF entities. It has sections available to the public which provide information on relevant legal instruments, the Global Strategy, and thematic publications and tools related to counterterrorism. I-ACT also provides country-specific information, which identifies the needs of a country that has

requested assistance and develops a tailored plan of assistance. As of summer 2011, Nigeria, Madagascar, and Burkina Faso have requested assistance and participated in the I-ACT system.⁹ The CTITF has conducted country visits to Madagascar and Nigeria to identify gaps in counterterrorism assistance delivery and to develop plans of action to implement various components of the Global Strategy. For example, In Nigeria, the UNODC together with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) developed a proposal to provide training to criminal justice practitioners on the counterterrorism legal framework and the rule of law.¹⁰

In order to facilitate increased interaction between states, the broader UN community, and the CTITF, in 2010, the office began to publish a quarterly newsletter, *The Beam*, available on the website www.un.org/terrorism. *The Beam* aims to apprise its readers of the activities of CTITF entities as well as thematic developments in relevant areas. Additionally, the CTITF Office holds quarterly briefings for member states, and offers think tanks and civil society organizations individual briefings, on a case-by-case basis, upon request.

Following the institutionalization of the CTITF and its office in 2009, Jean-Paul Laborde was appointed chair of the CTITF and director of the CTITF Office. Since his departure in December 2010, Robert Orr, Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Planning, has assumed the position of interim chair of the CTITF, reprising an earlier role as the Chair of CTITF, during which time he developed the role and function of the task force as well as initiatives such as the working groups and I-ACT. Currently, the officer in charge of the CTITF Office is Muhammed Rafiuddin Shah.¹¹

In 2011, CTITF signed a ten million dollar (US dollars) contribution agreement with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia allocated over three years to establish a United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCTC), which will be housed in the CTITF office, in the UN Department of Political Affairs in New York. The centre will build on the work of the CTITF to assist states with implementation of the Global Strategy, promote regional and international cooperation, provide capacity building, and develop a database of best practices to counterterrorism. UNCTC will be overseen by the Secretary General

and the Chairman of the CTITF—currently Robert Orr—will be the Executive Director of the Centre. The UNCTC has its own Advisory Board made up of twenty-one countries and one regional organization. The Advisory Board sets strategic priorities for the Center’s programming. While not an entity of the CTITF, the Center is located within the CTITF Office and will operate under the direction of the Secretary-General and will contribute to promoting the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy through the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force.