Strengthening the Protection of Vulnerable Targets

Website:
www.un.org/terrorism/vulnerable_targets.shtml

Members:
• Department of Safety and Security (DSS) (lead)
• International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) (lead)
• United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) (lead)
• Department of Political Affairs (DPA)
• Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO)
• International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)
• International Maritime Organization (IMO)
• United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Additional Partners:
• United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)

Purpose:
Among its recommended measures to prevent and combat terrorism described in Pillar II of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the General Assembly invites the UN to “step up all efforts to improve the security and protection of particularly vulnerable targets, such as infrastructure and public places.” Therefore, the Working Group on Strengthening the Protection of Vulnerable Targets aims to establish mechanisms to facilitate the sharing and development of best practices to protect “soft” targets.

The Department of Safety and Security, the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), and the UN Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) lead the working
The working group has set up a referral center housed at INTERPOL’s headquarters to facilitate the sharing of vulnerable-target protection resources using the organization’s existing worldwide law-enforcement network. Moreover, the UN Department of Safety and Security (DSS) is collaborating with UN entities and the NGO community to compile and analyze data on security incidents relating to terrorism to identify emerging threats and take measures to mitigate them.²⁵⁹

INTERPOL is using its National Centre and Regional Bureaus to compile best practices in protecting vulnerable targets and contact information for ministry units and other relevant resources. It has gained input from a total of 134 states. INTERPOL offers assistance to states, upon request, to develop protection strategies through its network of experts identified through the Referral Centre.²⁶⁰ The center has also initiated an awareness campaign to keep member states up-to-date on the initiatives of the working group.

UNICRI has undertaken a number of initiatives to promote public/private partnerships in the security field. In 2007 it launched its program Enhancing Public-Private Partnerships to Protect Vulnerable Targets (2007) from its Centre on Public-Private Security Policies in Lisbon. After holding a number of workshops, experts meetings, and action-oriented analysis and testing events, UNICRI has published two works, a report on Public Private Partnerships for the Protection of Vulnerable Targets: Review of Activities and Findings (January 2009), and a Handbook to Assist the Establishment of Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) to Protect Vulnerable Targets (June 2009). UNICRI subsequently held workshops in Norway (June 2009), Portugal (February 2010), and Abu Dhabi (March 2010) in an effort to promote these partnerships.²⁶¹

UNICRI also promotes public-private partnerships through its International Permanent Observatory on Major Events Security (IPO), which includes two regional initiatives: EU-SEC, which is implemented in Europe in cooperation with Europol and twenty-four EU member states; and IPO Americas, implemented in cooperation with twenty-seven members of the Organization of American States (OAS).”²⁶² Both of these regional initiatives aim to promote security cooperation and preparation among states at major events.