



The Eleventh United Nations  
Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice,  
18-25 April 2005, Bangkok, Thailand

## INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AGAINST TERRORISM AND LINKS BETWEEN TERRORISM AND OTHER CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES

### Global Programme against Terrorism

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) launched its global technical cooperation programme on “Strengthening the legal regime against terrorism” in October 2002. The programme provides the framework for UNODC’s specialized assistance to States for ratifying and implementing the universal conventions and protocols related to the prevention and suppression of international terrorism and for establishing effective mechanisms for international cooperation.

Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) called upon Member States to “become parties as soon as possible to the relevant international conventions and protocols . . . and . . . to increase cooperation and fully implement the relevant international conventions and protocols”. During the last two years, UNODC’s activities have reached out to over 100 countries, either through country-specific “direct” legislative assistance or by promoting the universal anti-terrorism instruments and Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) in subregional workshops.

### Nexus between terrorism and transnational organized crime

The resolution also noted a “close connection” between international terrorism and transnational organized crime, trafficking in illicit drugs, money-laundering, illegal arms trafficking and illegal movement of nuclear, chemical, biological and other potentially deadly materials. Most recently, the report of the Secretary-General’s High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, “A more secure world: our shared responsibility”, confirmed that, more than ever before, security threats, including terrorism and organized crime, are interrelated.

The General Assembly, in its resolution 58/136 of 22 December 2003, invited Member States to provide the Secretary-General with information on the nature of links between terrorism and other forms of crime in order to increase synergy in the delivery of technical assistance. The information received from Member States, as well as the findings of a subsequently conducted review of open sources, indicates that links between terrorism and other forms of crime are mostly of an operational, logistical or financial nature, that is, they are alliances of convenience.

Often, the aim of terrorist groups in committing other crimes is to obtain financial or other means to commit terrorist acts. In the absence of other means of support, terrorist groups have become involved in various forms of lucrative crime in order to support themselves and finance their main activities. An important component of this involvement is the smuggling of various forms of contraband across borders. The commodities that are smuggled are usually one of five types: prohibited products such as drugs or nuclear materials; differentially taxed products such as cigarettes; regulated products such as arms, endangered species and cultural property; stolen property such as cars or art and antiquities; and counterfeit goods. According to Interpol, intellectual property crime is becoming the preferred method of funding for a number of terrorist groups.

Document fraud and theft is one of the crimes that can have a “dual use” for terrorist groups, because besides facilitating free and undetected movement of members of terrorist organizations, it also generates criminal proceeds to fund other activities.

### **International cooperation against terrorism**

“A security threat to one State is a threat to all States, no matter whether weak or strong. No State, no matter how powerful, can by its own efforts alone make itself invulnerable to today’s threats. Every State requires the cooperation of other States to make itself secure. It is in every State’s interest, accordingly, to cooperate with other States to address their most pressing threats, because doing so will maximize the chances of reciprocal cooperation to address its own threat priorities,” pointed out the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change.

There are at present 191 Member States of the United Nations, with significant variations in capacity in intelligence-gathering, law enforcement, prosecution and judicial expertise. Thus, groups that engage in transnational criminality, including terrorism, are always trying to find countries where they can seek refuge, obtain support or operate without much risk of detection.

### **For further information:**

[www.unodc.org](http://www.unodc.org) and [www.unis.unvienna.org](http://www.unis.unvienna.org)

Consequently, the development of better instruments for universal and national counter-terrorism cooperation, all within a legal framework that is respectful of civil liberties and human rights, is an essential component of a comprehensive response to terrorism. UNODC can contribute to the implementation of such a comprehensive response through, inter alia, efforts to reinforce both intra-state as well as inter-state cooperation.

To enhance its efficiency and effectiveness, UNODC conducts joint activities with other international and regional organizations, as well as national institutions. In order to ensure the exchange of expertise, transparency and cost-effective access to information, UNODC maintains a website that contains important information on the programme, including a legislative guide and a legislative checklist to the universal anti-terror instruments to assist countries in drafting and implementing new laws: <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/terrorism.html>.