



UNITED NATIONS  
OFFICE OF COUNTER-TERRORISM  
UN Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT)



# GLOBAL SOUTH INITIATIVES TO COUNTER TERRORISM AND PREVENT VIOLENT EXTREMISM

**Handbook**





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The present *Handbook of Global South initiatives to counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism* was developed by the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT) of the Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT).

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# Table of Contents

<b>Abbreviations and acronyms</b> .....	v
<b>Boxes</b> .....	vii
<b>Foreword</b> .....	viii
<b>Executive summary</b> .....	x
<b>I. Introduction</b> .....	1
<b>II. General overview</b> .....	5
<b>III. Global South-led initiatives to counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism</b> .....	6
<b>1. CT/PVE initiatives in Africa</b> .....	6
1.1. Regional Centres of Excellence: strengthening capacities for CT/PVE research, information and analysis.....	6
1.2. Contributions of the G5 Sahel .....	8
1.3. Contributions of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF).....	10
1.4. Cooperation between Ethiopia and Kenya: Sustainable peace and socioeconomic transformation across borders .....	10
1.5. Kenya’s national strategy to counter violent extremism .....	11
1.6. Regional CT/PVE strategies for Central, Eastern and Southern Africa.....	12
<b>2. CT/PVE initiatives in Asia</b> .....	13
2.1. China: Strong supporter of South-South cooperation .....	13
2.2. Indonesia: A better partnership for prosperity .....	14
2.3. Central Asia’s experience with prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration .....	15
2.4. Philippines: Developing a national action plan on preventing and countering violent extremism .....	16
2.5. Singapore: Engaging youth in a “whole-of-society” approach .....	16
2.6. Pakistan: Rehabilitation and reintegration in the Swat Valley .....	18
2.7. Operation Sunbird: Strengthening the capacity of ASEAN countries’ police forces to combat terrorism and organized crime .....	19
2.8. Central Asia’s counter-terrorism strategy – the Joint Plan of Action .....	19
<b>3. CT/PVE initiatives in Latin America and the Caribbean</b> .....	21
3.1. Argentina: Fostering regional commitment to combat money laundering and terrorism financing .....	21
3.2. Brazil: Hosting safe sporting events .....	22
3.3. Colombia: Sharing experiences in combating transnational crime and cyber terrorism .....	23
3.4. CARICOM Counter-Terrorism Strategy: Developing innovative regional solutions .....	23

<b>4. CT/PVE initiatives in the Middle East and North Africa</b> .....	24
4.1. Jordan: The Aqaba Process and the Amman Message for diversity.....	25
4.2. Morocco: Centrality of South-South cooperation as part of foreign policy.....	25
4.3. Egypt: Strengthening the capacities of African countries for post-conflict reconstruction and development.....	27
4.4. Saudi Arabia: host of Centres of Excellence to further research for peace and security in Arab countries.....	27
4.5. Arab Intellectual Security Strategy.....	28
<b>IV. Conclusion</b> .....	30
<b>References</b> .....	31

## Abbreviations and acronyms

<b>ACIS</b>	Advance Cargo Information System
<b>ACSRT</b>	African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism
<b>APIS</b>	Advance Passenger Information System
<b>ASEAN</b>	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
<b>AUDA</b>	African Union Development Agency
<b>BAPA</b>	Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries
<b>BAPA+40</b>	Second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation
<b>CARICOM</b>	Caribbean Community
<b>CEWARN</b>	Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism
<b>CICTE</b>	Inter-American Committee against Terrorism
<b>CTC</b>	Counter-Terrorism Committee
<b>CT/PVE</b>	Countering Terrorism and Preventing Violent Extremism
<b>DAC</b>	Development Assistance Committee
<b>EAPCCO</b>	Eastern African Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization
<b>FATF</b>	Financial Action Task Force
<b>FTF</b>	foreign terrorist fighter
<b>GAFILAT</b>	Financial Action Task Force of Latin America
<b>GCTF</b>	Global Counterterrorism Forum
<b>GCTS</b>	United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy
<b>IMPACS</b>	Implementation Agency for Crime and Security
<b>ICEPCVE</b>	IGAD Centre of Excellence for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism
<b>IGAD</b>	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
<b>ISIL</b>	Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant
<b>ISWAP</b>	Islamic State in West Africa Province
<b>LCBC</b>	Lake Chad Basin Commission
<b>MERCOSUR</b>	Southern Common Market
<b>MNJTF</b>	Multinational Joint Task Force
<b>NEPAD</b>	New Partnership for Africa's Development
<b>OAS</b>	Organization of American States
<b>OAU</b>	Organization of African Unity
<b>ODA</b>	official development assistance

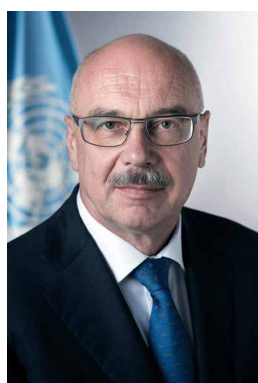
<b>OECD</b>	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
<b>PRR</b>	prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration
<b>SADC</b>	Southern African Development Community
<b>SSC</b>	South-South cooperation
<b>SSTC</b>	South-South and triangular cooperation
<b>TCDC</b>	technical cooperation among developing countries
<b>UNCCT</b>	United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Program
<b>UNOCT</b>	Office of Counter-Terrorism
<b>UNOSSC</b>	United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation
<b>UNRCCA</b>	United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia



## Boxes

- Box 1** South-South cooperation in the United Nations: From technical cooperation to a broad framework of collaboration
- Box 2** Comparative advantages of South-South and triangular cooperation (SSTC)
- Box 3** Triangular cooperation
- Box 4** African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT)
- Box 5** IGAD Centre of Excellence for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (ICEPCVE)
- Box 6** Regional Counter-terrorism Centre of Excellence of the Eastern Africa Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization (EAPCCO)
- Box 7** Kenya International Peace Support Training Centre (IPSTC)
- Box 8** Regional frameworks for CT/PVE: Central, Eastern and Southern Africa
- Box 9** Jakarta Centre for Law Enforcement Cooperation (JCLEC)
- Box 10** International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR)
- Box 11** Regional framework for CT/PVE in Asia
- Box 12** Regional framework for CT/PVE in Latin America and the Caribbean
- Box 13** South-South cooperation in Morocco: The role of the Moroccan Agency for International Cooperation (AMCI)
- Box 14** The Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO): Disseminating values of moderation, dialogue and coexistence for peace and prosperity
- Box 15** The reverse linkage of the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB): Innovative triangular arrangements
- Box 16** Regional framework for CT/PVE in Middle East and North Africa
- Box 17** Hedayah Centre: Strengthening the roles of families in preventing radicalization and recruitment
- Box 18** Silatech: A non-governmental organization focusing on youth in the Arab world

# Foreword



Over the past decades, and especially in the years following the tragic terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 in the United States, many countries including those from the Global South have been profoundly affected by terrorism and violent extremism.<sup>1</sup> This is reflected most notably in the high number of deaths caused by terrorism during these years. Although this number has declined since 2017, terrorism continues to impede the Global South's development efforts towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

This handbook will show that both the United Nations and those countries most impacted by terrorism and violent extremism have risen to the challenge. Following the 9/11 attacks, the Security Council took the unprecedented step of adopting strong anti-terrorism measures, including resolution 1373 (2001) by which it identified a range of universal mandatory counter-terrorism measures and established the Counter-Terrorism-Committee (CTC). In addition, various international and national organizations and centres were established to respond to new threats posed by terrorism and violent extremism. The Office of Counter Terrorism (UNOCT), which was established by the General Assembly in June 2017, is entrusted, inter alia, with the task of coordinating and leading efforts of all United Nations entities that are combating terrorism and preventing violent extremism conducive to terrorism, to ensure the balanced implementation of the four pillars of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

As the international community mobilized against the emerging security threats, the Global South presented a vision of shared and mutually reinforcing benefits by developing joint initiatives and creative solutions to counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism (CT/PVE). The cooperation and partnerships engendered among these countries, with the support of the United Nations, enabled them to attain strengths that otherwise would not have been possible.

This handbook features different examples in which the Global South has played a central role in developing regional instruments and mechanisms in the field of CT/PVE, whether through locally developed solutions that address the root causes of conflict or by creating momentum for regional commitment to international instruments, in the spirit of multilateralism.

During the Second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation, held in March 2019 in Buenos Aires, Argentina (known as BAPA+40), Member States reaffirmed their views of South-South

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<sup>1</sup> The outcome document of the High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation, held in Nairobi in December 2009, categorizes all developing countries as part of the Global South (see General Assembly resolution 64/222, annex).

cooperation (SSC) as a manifestation of solidarity among peoples and countries of the Global South which contributes to their national security, collective self-reliance, and the attainment of internationally agreed goals. These views were captured in the BAPA outcome document, and they remain valid today.<sup>2</sup>

According to Member States' representatives, combating violent extremism and terrorism was one of the key areas in which SSC could have an enhanced impact. With the advent of the global pandemic, the need for international cooperation to safeguard global health, peace and security, and development has been made more pressing than ever.

UNOCT promotes South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) in CT/PVE as a means of facilitating international cooperation in combating terrorism and violent extremism and as a complement to North-South cooperation, while offering an innovative framework that highlights principles of horizontality, solidarity and mutual benefits.

In that context, UNOCT launched a global project entitled "Enhancing South-South Exchange of Expertise in Countering Terrorism and Preventing Violent Extremism, as and When Conducive to Terrorism (CT/PVE) Between Experts from Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Latin America and the Caribbean" on the margins of BAPA+40. The project is funded through a generous contribution from the United Nations Peace and Development Trust Fund, established with the support from the Government of China.

UNOCT provides most of its technical assistance and capacity building support to Member States through the United Nations Counter Terrorism Centre (UNCCT) and the Special Projects and Innovation Branch (SPIB) at global, regional and national levels across all four pillars of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. UNCCT is implementing the global project and has been working closely with the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) in this endeavor.

UNOCT is committed to supporting Member States in sharing their CT/PVE-related knowledge and experiences in a sustained manner to foster South-South partnership and learning. This handbook is developed as a part of this effort.

In the spirit of the BAPA+40 recommendations and in line with SSTC principles, UNOCT encourages initiatives that allow for mutual learning, in an equal partnership based on solidarity. I hope that the initiatives featured in this publication will provide a useful reference to help connect Member States in the exchange of expertise, thereby further fostering collaboration and strengthening CT/PVE capacities in the Global South.



Vladimir Voronkov  
Under-Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism

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<sup>2</sup> General Assembly resolution 73/291.



# Executive summary

Twenty years have elapsed since the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 in the United States of America. In the aftermath of those attacks, there has been an exponential rise in terrorist acts worldwide, particularly in the Global South.

With the new international focus and efforts led by the United Nations to combat the increasing global threat of terrorism, countries from the Global South have become both recipients and providers of technical assistance for countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism (CT/PVE) in their regions and beyond. They have accomplished this through innovation and creative solutions, the results of which have been shared among countries in the developing world through South-South cooperation (SSC).

Although SSC has been in existence since the 1955 Bandung Conference, where it was conceived, its practical manifestation linked to development originated at the Conference on Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, held in Buenos Aires in 1978. SSC was further enhanced by “triangular” cooperation, the process by which donor countries and multilateral organizations facilitate South-South initiatives, to create South-South and triangular cooperation (SSTC).

Extending cooperation to security issues, such as combating terrorism and preventing violent extremism has added a new dimension to SSC. Considering SSC as a priority, UNOCT launched, in March 2019, in the margins of the Second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation (BAPA+40), a global project entitled “Enhancing South-South exchange of expertise between experts from Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Latin America and the Caribbean in countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism, as and when conducive to terrorism” as a pioneer initiative to reinforce this new dimension. This Handbook is part of this larger effort. It features national and regional CT/PVE initiatives in various regions of the Global South that can offer valuable collaboration and advantages for countries experiencing similar challenges. Ultimately, the Handbook aims at illustrating the significant potential and leadership the Global South could offer in the field of CT/PVE.

Regional Centres of Excellence in Africa are dedicated to strengthening CT/PVE cooperation through study and research to provide useful policy advice and facilitate technical cooperation among security forces. Cross-border cooperation between Ethiopia and Kenya is one instance of CT/PVE led by countries in the Global South, and supported by the European Union, in a triangular cooperation arrangement aimed at achieving sustainable peace among local communities.

Although there are few occurrences of terrorism in Latin America and the Caribbean, there is growing concern over the organized crime–terror nexus. A robust framework for SSC at national and regional levels could encourage SSC in CT/PVE, including the experiences of Argentina, which has become a strong advocate for hemispheric commitment to multilateral agreements, and Brazil, which relies on international cooperation to host safe mega sporting events.

Member States in various parts of Asia are collaborating to strengthen CT/PVE capacities. China, Indonesia and Singapore have offered their vision of SSC, highlighting dimensions such as mutual benefits and equal partnerships, as well as opportunities for technical cooperation and policy coordination in the region and beyond. From capacity-building of police forces by the member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to successful initiatives in prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration (PRR) in Central Asia, there is significant expertise available to increase cooperation, including with the valuable support of partner countries and international organizations, such as Operation Sunbird of INTERPOL, an initiative aimed at boosting the skills of police forces across the ASEAN region in combating terrorism and organized crime.

Countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) have also developed relevant CT/PVE initiatives to promote a moderate vision of Islam and to combat extreme narratives, through technology and religious discourse, as well as foster peace and security in Arab countries.

UNOCT hopes that the initiatives featured in this publication will continue to encourage and engender new partnerships and cooperation among Member States to promote development efforts towards the implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.



# I. Introduction

The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) defines South-South cooperation (SSC) as a broad framework of collaboration among countries of the South in the political, economic, social, cultural, environmental and technical domains. This cooperation involves two or more developing countries collaborating on a bilateral, subregional, regional, intraregional or interregional basis.<sup>3</sup>

There is a remarkable diversity of approaches and prescriptions within this “broad framework of collaboration” that vary from country to country as well as between regions and organizations. This diversity influences the way SSC is measured, understood, referenced and implemented in different regions (this will be addressed in subsequent sections of this publication). There are, nonetheless, several common traits, principles and comparative advantages that characterize SSC.

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**“South-South cooperation is a broad framework of collaboration among countries of the South in the political, economic, social, cultural, environmental, and technical domains.”**

*United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC)*

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**“South-South cooperation is a global exercise of all countries of the South to benefit everyone, including the Least Developed Countries. Every country, every partner has something to share or teach, whatever their circumstances.”**

*Rosemary A. DiCarlo,  
Under-Secretary-General for  
Political and Peacebuilding Affairs*

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<sup>3</sup> About South-South and Triangular Cooperation. Available at [www.unsouthsouth.org/about/about-sstc/](http://www.unsouthsouth.org/about/about-sstc/).

<sup>4</sup> Opening remarks at the second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation, Buenos Aires, March 2019.

### Box 1

#### **South-South cooperation in the United Nations: From technical cooperation to a broad framework of collaboration**

Although the first BAPA was dedicated to technical cooperation among developing countries, in the decades that followed, such cooperation was no longer restricted to technical cooperation. In 2013, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (SU/TCDC) was renamed the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC), in charge of “advocating for and coordinating South-South and triangular cooperation on a global and United Nations system-wide basis”.

Established in 1978, the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation,<sup>5</sup> the main policymaking body on SSC in the United Nations system, is a subsidiary body of the General Assembly. The Committee was originally made up of representatives of all countries participating in UNDP.

South-South cooperation is usually understood and implemented within the field of development cooperation. There is, however, increasing awareness of its potential in the peace and security domain. At the Ambassadorial-level meeting of the Peacebuilding Commission, in September 2019, the “shared commonality between the PBC’s approach to country-led engagements and the voluntary, participative and demand-driven nature of SSTC, and how PBC engagement is consistent with SSC principles” was underlined. It was also acknowledged that tracking SSC in the field remained a challenge.<sup>6</sup> Although there is no mention of peace and security in the 1978 BAPA, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development confirms the connection between peace and development, especially through Sustainable Development Goal 16, which the outcome document of BAPA+40 underlines as a potential area for increased SSC impact.<sup>7</sup>

This Handbook features various national and regional CT/PVE initiatives that have demonstrated results, as well as potential, for expansion. These initiatives, although not necessarily labelled or seen as SSC, offer valuable insights for other countries facing similar challenges and can contribute to accelerating the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals 16 and 17.<sup>8</sup>

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**“In line with the principles of national sovereignty and ownership, developing countries themselves initiate, design and manage South-South cooperation activities. Financing and programme inputs are likewise the primary responsibility of developing countries. Upon request, the United Nations entities and other partners play facilitation and catalytic roles.”<sup>8</sup>**

*United Nations System-wide Strategy on South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Sustainable Development (2020–2024)*

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<sup>5</sup> See [www.unsouthsouth.org/our-work/policy-and-intergovernmental-support/high-level-committee-on-south-south-cooperation/](http://www.unsouthsouth.org/our-work/policy-and-intergovernmental-support/high-level-committee-on-south-south-cooperation/).

<sup>6</sup> See [www.un.org/peacebuilding/content/chairs-summary-ambassadorial-level-meeting-south-south-and-triangular-cooperation](http://www.un.org/peacebuilding/content/chairs-summary-ambassadorial-level-meeting-south-south-and-triangular-cooperation).

<sup>7</sup> See [www.unsouthsouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/N1920949.pdf](http://www.unsouthsouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/N1920949.pdf).

<sup>8</sup> See [www.unsouthsouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/United-Nations-system-wide-strategy-on-South-South-and-triangular-cooperation-for-sustainable-development-2020%E2%80%932024.pdf](http://www.unsouthsouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/United-Nations-system-wide-strategy-on-South-South-and-triangular-cooperation-for-sustainable-development-2020%E2%80%932024.pdf).



## Box 2

### Comparative advantages of South-South and triangular cooperation (SSTC):

- Multi-stakeholder approaches
- Low transaction and implementation costs
- Speed of service and project delivery
- Greater flexibility
- Use of national systems
- Capacities and demand-driven approaches
- Focus on mutual benefits
- Equality of partners
- Complementarity of capacities
- Relevance of solutions shared among partners in the Global South who are facing similar development challenges

## Methodology

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This Handbook contains initiatives collected from Member States in different regions of the Global South: Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America and the Caribbean. Data and information were collected through desk research based on open sources, as well as through feedback, direct inputs from countries, consultations held within the framework of the UNCCT SSC project, and from exhaustive discussions conducted through virtual meetings. Relevant UNOCT teams also provided comprehensive inputs.

The consultation process, which involved many stakeholders, started with an expert meeting entitled “Promoting SSC in countering terrorism and preventing and countering violent extremism, as and when conducive to terrorism”, held in New York, on 20 and 21 November 2019. The meeting was followed by the submission of voluntary inputs on CT/PCVE good practices by participating Member States, and complementary desk research. The resulting data and information were carefully reviewed through desk research.

This Handbook contains reports from the initiatives implemented by countries in the Global South in relation to CT/PVE that fit one or more of the following criteria:

- National CT/PVE practices and policies that have worked at the national level and identified as having SSTC potential;
- National CT/PVE practices and policies that have been shared among developing countries;
- Regional CT/PVE practices and policies that have worked at the regional level and have identifiable SSTC potential for increased scope and/or interregional scaling-up;
- National or regional CT/PVE practices and policies involving one developed country and/or one international organization, and configuring a triangular cooperation arrangement.

This collection of initiatives is not intended to be exhaustive. It illustrates the significant potential of the Global South to offer innovative solutions and leadership in relation to CT/PVE. An initiative is considered to have SSTC potential when it is adaptable to other contexts, either because it is sensitive to cultural and historic similarities, or because it is cost-effective and sustainable.

**Box 3****Triangular cooperation**

Although SSC focuses on initiatives that are led by developing countries, it does not preclude the contribution and participation of developed countries. BAPA+40 reaffirmed that South-South cooperation is not a substitute for, but rather a complement to, North-South cooperation. Developed countries and international organizations are invited to participate in SSC initiatives as equal partners in what is known as a triangular cooperation arrangement to add value and facilitate synergies between SSC and traditional development assistance.



## II. General overview

Many States and regions around the world continue to face gaps in the implementation of counter-terrorism mechanisms and in building coherent responses to terrorism. These challenges can be addressed through effective implementation of comprehensive strategies and plans of action supported by adequate resources and built upon the understanding of local contexts.

The four pillars of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy take a comprehensive approach to countering the scourge of terrorism. Development and implementation of national and regional counter-terrorism strategies, based on the holistic framework provided by the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism are key requirements to effectively counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism in a comprehensive, integrated and preventative manner.

While documentation is replete with accounts of how SSC has evolved from its original role of collaboration among countries in the Global South, the emphasis in the following sections of the Handbook is on various initiatives that countries in the Global South are collaboratively implementing to combat terrorism and prevent violent extremism.

The aftermath of the 11 September 2001 attacks in the United States of America saw a surge in terrorism and violent extremism across the globe. In a sense, these attacks gave a boost to existing security threats by Al-Qaida and other terrorist groups owing to a plethora of grievances. They also precipitated the emergence of new terrorist groups such as Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), Boko Haram, Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP) and Al-Shabaab. Subsequently, the collapse of Al-Qaida and the defeat of ISIL in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic resulted in the relocation of foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) to various regions to enhance local jihadist terror groups, in particular in North and West Africa, and gave rise to a spike in violence in the already fragile States of the Global South and beyond.

Countries in the Sahel and West Africa have embarked on multilateral and regional approaches by establishing, for example, the G5 Sahel and the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) to combat terrorism and violent extremism. Other regions have also developed several initiatives towards the same objective.

# III. Global South-led initiatives to counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism

The wealth of CT/PVE expertise in the Global South is largely overlooked. SSC offers the opportunity and innovative framework for leveraging and sharing this expertise. This section highlights CT/PVE initiatives that are led by countries in the Global South – Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America and the Caribbean. They are either SSTC or have the potential to be shared in SSTC frameworks.

## 1. CT/PVE initiatives in Africa

From working within families and communities to strengthening regional CT/PVE capacities, African Member States are undertaking key initiatives to tackle terrorism and the spread of violent extremism on the continent. This section highlights the African Union’s approach to counter-terrorism and to SSC through the establishment of regional Centres of Excellence, and showcases national experiences as well as triangular projects and initiatives among countries, some of which are supported by international organizations.

### 1.1. Regional Centres of Excellence: strengthening capacities for CT/PVE research, information and analysis

The African Union and its predecessor, the Organization of African Unity, adopted significant measures for encouraging national commitments to regional counter-terrorism efforts. The African Union’s main instrument to combat terrorism is the 1999 Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism. Convinced that terrorism is a violation of human rights that impedes socioeconomic development through destabilization, member States declared their determination to eliminate terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Furthermore, the Convention, and its accompanying protocols, define areas of cooperation in an attempt to further the objective of coordinating and harmonizing continental efforts in preventing and combating international terrorism.

Another initiative is the 2002 African Union Plan of Action on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism, which requires the establishment of a range of measures to strengthen existing commitments and obligations, and encourages the implementation of the 1999 Convention and other international counter-terrorism instruments. This includes the fostering of technical assistance for intraregional cooperation in border control, legislative and judicial measures, combating the financing of terrorism, as well as information exchange.

In 2004, the African Union inaugurated the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism, in Algiers, to help strengthen regional and international cooperation. Another initiative is the Eastern Africa Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization, which was established in 1998. Its membership comprises 14 police chiefs from Eastern Africa. It was established with the main purpose of harmonizing and strengthening police cooperation and joint strategies, as well as sharing crime-related information to combat transnational organized crime. The Organization has three main pillars: (1) research and analysis on counter-terrorism-related projects; (2) coordination planning and action against terrorism; and (3) sharing of experiences and best practices. The Organization has also established a Regional Counter-Terrorism Centre of Excellence.

#### **Box 4**

##### **African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT)**

The African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT) is an African Union initiative inaugurated in 2004 as a structure of the African Union Commission, in accordance with the provisions of the African Union's Plan of Action on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism in Africa. It is mandated to:

- Strengthen international cooperation and facilitate the achievement of the African Union's counter-terrorism goals;
- Serve as a research centre of excellence in matters concerning the prevention and combating of terrorism in Africa;
- Maintain databases, collect and centralize information, studies and analyses on terrorism and terrorist groups;
- Build counter-terrorism capacity in member States and develop training programmes, workshops, meetings and symposia, with the assistance of various partners at the national level.

Since the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)<sup>9</sup> was established in 1996, it has embarked on a broad-based partnership, involving governments, civil society organizations, religious leaders and the private sector, to counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism. It has created the IGAD Centre of Excellence for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism, which is based in Djibouti. The Centre was established in 2016, but officially launched in 2018. It is a venue for strengthening regional cooperation, coordination, collaboration, training, dialogue, research and knowledge-sharing related to preventing and countering violent extremism through an inclusive and holistic approach.

#### **Box 5**

##### **IGAD Centre of Excellence for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (ICEPCVE)**

In 2018, IGAD member States (Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda), with the support of a regional grant from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), officially launched the Centre of Excellence for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism, dedicated to preventing and countering the threats of violent extremism in Eastern Africa. The Centre relies on an inclusive and holistic approach that includes building member States' capacity in research and strategic communication, community outreach, knowledge-sharing and collaborating with multiple stakeholders to build the capacity of communities at risk of radicalization.

<sup>9</sup> IGAD is one of the African Union's Regional Economic Communities (RECs).

African countries have also made significant progress in collectively defining priorities for SSC, including through the adoption of Agenda 2063 and the transformation in 2018 of New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)'s Planning and Coordination Agency into the African Union Development Agency-NEPAD. In 2019, the Agency partnered with UNDP, the Islamic Development Bank and the Ibero-American General Secretariat to launch the First African South-South Cooperation Report.<sup>10</sup> The report received contributions from 11 African countries, which shared information on their major development cooperation activities led by developing countries and key SSC players during 2017. Besides the collection of data, the report aims to promote regional dialogue around key issues that can enable SSC in Africa and, therefore, enhance integration and intra-African partnerships towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Union 2063 Agenda for development.

#### Box 6

##### **Regional Counter-terrorism Centre of Excellence of the Eastern Africa Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization (EAPCCO)**

With the support of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), the Eastern Africa Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization (EAPCCO) created a Regional Counter-terrorism Centre of Excellence. Based in Nairobi, and hosted by the Organization, the Centre of Excellence fosters knowledge-sharing and capacity-building at the regional level among members of the Organization to counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism in Eastern Africa. Its mission is to be the leading coordinating agency for the timely flow of relevant information, analysis and capacity-building relating to CT/PVE among police forces in the region.

## 1.2. Contributions of the G5 Sahel

The Sahel region stretches across Northern Africa from the Atlantic Ocean to the Red Sea. The region is noted for widespread terrorism and violent extremism, unbounded transnational organized crime and illicit cross-border flows, which have drawn international attention and concern. The risk of a possible spillover of instability from the Sahel to the neighbouring countries and regions further complicates the situation.

In that context and in view of the resurgence of insecurity and the proliferation of terrorist acts and cross-border organized crime in the Western Sahel, the Heads of State of Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and the Niger decided to join forces within an organization whose main objective is the coordination of development and security policies and strategies. They met in 2014 in Nouakchott to create the Group of Five for the Sahel (G5 Sahel).

In 2017, the G5 Sahel constituted, with the support of the international community, a force of 5,000 troops called the G5 Sahel Joint Force. This new-generation multinational special force, more adapted to the

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**“There is no lasting development without security nor enduring security without effective development... We have agreed to unite our efforts to tackle this double challenge of security and lasting development in the Sahel.”<sup>11</sup>**

*Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz,  
President of Mauritania (2014)*

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<sup>10</sup> See [www.africa.undp.org/content/rba/en/home/library/reports/first-african-south-south-cooperation-report.html](http://www.africa.undp.org/content/rba/en/home/library/reports/first-african-south-south-cooperation-report.html).

<sup>11</sup> Statement delivered at the Summit to create the G5 Sahel, held in Nouakchott in February 2014.



UN Photo/MINUSMA

multiple security challenges in the region, aims to share the military knowledge and expertise of the five member countries, especially in the joint fight against terrorism.<sup>12</sup>

Thereafter, the G5 Sahel set up a defence college as a regional effort to create a transnational war school dedicated to the training of its joint forces. The cooperating countries lead the high-level training school, which also benefits from support from partner countries such as Germany and France, in a triangular cooperation arrangement. In November 2017, the G5 Sahel Joint Force conducted military operations code-named Operation Hawbi along the borders of Burkina Faso, Mali and the Niger; and in 2018, Operation Pagnali was conducted along the borders of Burkina Faso and Mali.

UNCCT, in partnership with the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) and the G5 Sahel Permanent Secretariat, launched the project, “Supporting Regional Efforts of the G5 Sahel Countries to Counter Terrorism and Prevent Violent Extremism”, in the framework of the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (UNISS), involving the G5 countries over the period 2017–2019. UNISS is a results-focused multidimensional approach around key priorities in governance, security, and resilience. It was designed to address the root causes of the Sahel security crisis, while supporting national and regional capacities for peacebuilding.

Based on countries’ needs assessments and aligned with the priorities established by the G5 Sahel countries, the project sought to support all the challenges identified under four thematic areas through the UNCCT Integrated Assistance for Countering Terrorism (I-ACT) Initiative, namely: (1) preventing violent extremism; (2) border management and cross-border cooperation; (3) rule of law and criminal justice; and (4) overall counter-terrorism coordination. The I-ACT Initiative aimed to reinforce the support provided by the United Nations system and bilateral partners to the G5 Sahel region.

The project actively engaged government officials from relevant agencies involved in countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism, as well as civil society organizations in the region. Facilitated by United

<sup>12</sup> G5 Sahel, Mot du Secrétaire Exécutif, 26 juin 2020. Available at <https://www.g5sahel.org/mot-du-secretaire-permanent-mr-maman-s-sidikou/>.

Nations agencies and organizations, the project was an example of triangular cooperation, in which countries from the Global South were central players, supported by developed countries and international organizations.

### **1.3. Contributions of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF)**

The Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) is an ad hoc military coalition, established by four members of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) – Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria –, in March 1994, as a stabilization mechanism to tackle cross-border criminal activities involving arms smuggling around the Lake Chad Basin area. It is headquartered in N'Djamena and led by a Nigerian Army General. Each member State bordering Lake Chad is responsible for a particular national area of the four operational sectors: Sector 1, in Mora (Cameroon); Sector 2, in Baga Sola (Chad); Sector 3, in Baga (Nigeria); and Sector 4, in Diffa (Niger). The four countries maintain cooperation and coordination by allowing cross-sector operations during hot pursuit up to 25 kilometres outside their sectors.

The members of the LCBC decided, at their fourteenth ordinary summit, held in N'Djamena on 30 April 2012, to reactivate and expand the mandate of the Task Force to combat Boko Haram, ISIL-affiliated Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP) and other terrorist groups spreading terrorism and violent extremism across the Lake Chad Basin region; reclaim and stabilize areas occupied by terrorists; and deliver assistance to affected populations.

The Task Force was formally established as MNJTF at the Extraordinary Summit of the LCBC, held in Niamey in October 2014. Benin later joined the Task Force. The Task Force started to gain momentum with support from the African Union – which acts as a strategic and technical partner –, the European Union, France, the United States of America and others. Some of its achievements have been rescuing hostages, reclaiming territories from terrorists, destroying terrorist training camps, inflicting casualties on and capturing terrorists, as well as their weapons.

With a current strength of 10,000 uniformed personnel, the Force has fostered regional cooperation among its participating members in combating the diverse threats that terrorists pose in the Lake Chad Basin region. At a workshop of Task Force commanders, held in N'Djamena in October 2020, representatives and countries from LCBC member States agreed to: (1) expand their cooperation and consult more with technical experts and representatives in operational matters so as to gain local support against the activities of Boko Haram and ISWAP; (2) plan and design a joint information and communication system against extremism; and (3) put together methodologies and communication channels for the dissemination of messages to targeted local audiences.<sup>13</sup>

### **1.4. Cooperation between Ethiopia and Kenya: Sustainable peace and socioeconomic transformation across borders**

The national boundaries of most African countries were established during the colonial era without any particular consideration to the socioeconomic and cultural links of the communities who live in the region. Several communities that have been divided by these artificial national borders, including the Borana and Gabra who live across the borders of Ethiopia and Kenya, attest to the arbitrariness of the divisions. Cross-border movements of the Borana and Gabra communities are related to traditional trade in goods and services, use of common natural resources, and participation in social and cultural activities. The latter includes pilgrimages from Kenya to traditional holy sites in Ethiopia, and gatherings of large clan settlements

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<sup>13</sup> David Doukhan, "Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) against Boko Haram – Reflections", International Institute for Counter-Terrorism, December 2020.



on specific lunar dates for blessing ceremonies and other ritualistic activities.<sup>14</sup> If not properly planned and managed, cross-border relations could result in an increase in conflicts, proliferation of small arms, human and drug trafficking, besides general instability that leads to loss of lives and property.

Determined to reduce the conditions for the recruitment of youths for terrorist activities, Ethiopia and Kenya have designed socioeconomic policies to increase household incomes, create employment opportunities, promote equity, increase access to education and social services, and create sustainable livelihoods for the communities where extremist groups recruit potential terrorists. In that regard, the Governments of the two countries, in partnership with IGAD – through its Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN) –, the European Union, UNDP and the respective United Nations country teams, launched, in December 2015, the Ethiopia-Kenya Cross-border Integrated Programme for Sustainable Peace and Socioeconomic Transformation, focusing on the Marsabit County in Kenya, and the Borana and Dawa zones in Ethiopia.

The objective of the Programme is to enable mediation of intercommunal conflicts, promote cross-border peace and development cooperation among border communities and ethnic groups living in Kenya's Marsabit County and Ethiopia's Borana and Dawa zones, a region that is known for its vulnerability to chronic violence, poverty, violent extremism and resource competition.

In the short term, the main objective of the Programme is to reduce vulnerability and increase the resilience of communities affected by conflicts in the border region, through identification and promotion of sustainable livelihood projects and conflict-management strategies. In the long term, the Programme aims to economically empower the communities through a combination of socioeconomic transformative programmes that include infrastructure development, industrial and agricultural development projects, and the building of health and educational facilities.

## 1.5. Kenya's national strategy to counter violent extremism

In 2016, Kenya launched its national strategy to counter violent extremism. This strategy has become an important reference in the region since it offers a comprehensive overview of national efforts to counter violent extremism, and underlines the role to be played by different stakeholders – from civil society organizations to the private sector – besides local and national authorities. Since its implementation, there has been increased articulation through a multi-agency security operation that has strengthened the Government's capacity to detect, deter and disrupt the activities of terrorists.

### Box 7

#### Kenya International Peace Support Training Centre (IPSTC)

The International Peace Support Training Centre was established in January 2001 as part of the Kenyan Defence Staff College. The Centre initially focused on training Kenyan forces for United Nations peacekeeping missions, and later African Union Peace Support Operations. In 2009, the Peace Support Training Centre in Karen (Nairobi) merged with the International Mine Action Training Centre (IMATC) to form the International Peace Support Training Centre (IPSTC). The International Centre aims to become the premier Peace Support Training, Research and Education Centre in Africa. The former Peace Support Training Centre in Karen was renamed the Peace and Conflict Studies School (PCSS) and International Mine Action Training Centre was renamed the Humanitarian Peace Support School (HPSS). It became an independent entity in 2011 through partnership with the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Japan, Kenya, Germany and UNDP.

<sup>14</sup> UNDP Kenya, Cross-border integrated programme for sustainable peace and socioeconomic transformation: Marsabit County, Kenya and Borana Zone, Ethiopia, Concept note.

## 1.6. Regional CT/PVE strategies for Central, Eastern and Southern Africa

For decades, the Eastern Africa region has been plagued by endemic inter- and intra-State conflicts and domestic transnational threats, such as civil wars, conflicts, and insurgencies, that have created a fertile ground for the emergence of various terrorist groups such as Al-Shabaab. With the support of UNDP, the region has taken great strides in progressing towards countering terrorism through the development of the Regional Strategy for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism in Eastern Africa that was led by the IGAD Secretariat. The Strategy was validated in Djibouti on 1 February 2017.

In adopting the Regional Strategy, IGAD aimed to harness national and regional capacities by drawing on the collective experiences, comparative cases and good practices from both within and outside the region. The Strategy provides for a comprehensive mechanism to help coordinate the various regional and international instruments to tackle the phenomena of terrorism and violent extremism, including money laundering, trafficking of drugs, humans, illicit arms and light weapons.

The Regional Counter-terrorism Strategy for Southern Africa was adopted at the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Heads of State Summit, held in Gaborone on 18 August 2015, following an extensive regionally owned development process that was supported by UNCCT. The overarching aim of the Strategy and Plan of Action is to establish a comprehensive framework for action that will prevent the spread of terrorism and related threats to Southern Africa. The Strategy is modeled upon the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and aligned with the Bogota Guiding Principles for Counter-terrorism Strategies.

In June 2021, in a clear demonstration of regional collaborative efforts to combat terrorism and violent extremism, SADC Heads of State deployed a SADC standby regional multinational force to Mozambique, to help fight the ISIL-linked Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a terrorist group in the Northern Cabo Delgado Province. The force of some 3,000 troops, which is already operational, is composed of soldiers from Angola, Botswana, Rwanda, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania and Zimbabwe.

The Central African countries have developed, with support from UNOCT/UNCCT, the Regional Strategy and Plan of Action for Combating Terrorism and the Trafficking in Small Arms and Light Weapons in Central Africa to facilitate the building of coherent, strategic and sustained systems to prevent terrorist activities in Central Africa. The Strategy, which was adopted at a workshop held in Libreville on 1 October 2015, is based on a comprehensive integrated strategy on counter-terrorism and non-proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

### Box 8

#### Regional frameworks for CT/PVE: Central, Eastern and Southern Africa

- 1999 Organization of African Unity Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism
- 2001 Dakar Declaration against Terrorism
- 2002 African Union Plan of Action for Preventing and Combating Terrorism
- 2015 Southern Africa Regional Counter-Terrorism Strategy
- 2015 Regional Strategy to Combat Terrorism and the Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons in Central Africa
- 2017 IGAD Regional Strategy for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism

## 2. CT/PVE initiatives in Asia

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Asian countries are developing various initiatives with the support of international organizations, such as the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) and UNOCT/UNCCT, within the framework of regional organizations or as stand-alone initiatives to counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), for instance, has developed a robust CT/PVE framework with various countries and regions that allows for increased cooperation in the field. Operation Sunbird is an example of a triangular cooperation arrangement supported by an international organization – INTERPOL – and funded by a developed partner country – Canada.

### 2.1. China: Strong supporter of South-South cooperation

China is an enthusiastic advocate of South-South cooperation. At the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit, held in New York in 2015, President Xi Jinping announced the establishment of the South-South Cooperation Assistance Fund, with an initial contribution of USD 2 billion. Since then, the Fund has financed several cooperation projects in 166 partner countries.

China's engagement in SSC goes beyond the Fund. It also involves trade, investment and infrastructure endeavors, including the Belt and Road Initiative, a central strategy of Chinese development cooperation that includes investment in infrastructure corridors spanning more than fifty countries. China's Position paper on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development also refers to the need to tackle terrorism, and underscores the need to improve national governance and safeguard equity and justice as two focus areas. China supports the UNCCT SSC through the United Nations Peace and Development Trust Fund, thereby encouraging increased SSC awareness and practices in relation to CT/PVE.

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**“As a useful complement to North-South Cooperation, South-South Cooperation does also have an active role to play. But instead of replicating the principles and criteria of North-South Cooperation, it should be grounded in reality and pushed ahead in an independent and flexible manner.”<sup>15</sup>**

*Hu Chunhua,  
Vice Premier of China (2019)*

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China's cooperation with regard to counter-terrorism is first extended to countries in the region, then beyond. In South Asia, China has shared expertise with Thailand and Indonesia, such as carrying out exercises involving Indonesia's air force and marine corps. In the Middle East, China has engaged with Saudi Arabia, which has supported China's deradicalization efforts. In Africa, it has engaged closely with Djibouti, and has offer to cooperate in areas such as peacekeeping, counter-terrorism and counter-piracy; and it has offered to cooperate with Nigeria in the fight against Boko Haram, through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding. China also has various cooperation arrangements with Angola, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Rwanda, South Africa, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zimbabwe.

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<sup>15</sup> Statement by China at the Second High-Level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation, Buenos Aires, March 2019. Available at <https://www.unsouthsouth.org/bapa40/statements/>

In the Asia region, China created the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which is made up of the leaders of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, and has introduced a strategic partnership with ASEAN. It hosts the ASEAN-China Summit, and in 2004, it participated in the Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime of ASEAN Plus Three (i.e., China, Japan and the Republic of Korea).<sup>16</sup> In 2018, China, as well as other Dialogue Partners such as India and the Republic of Korea, participated in the 5th ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus.<sup>17</sup>

Extra-regionally, China has placed emphasis on Africa: it has contributed military assistance to the African Union's Standby Force (including in Somalia) and its logistics base in Cameroon, and offered funding to the China-Africa Peace Fund. Many of its engagements are carried out through the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation Beijing Action Plan (2019–2021).<sup>18</sup> The Forum on China-Africa Cooperation also spawned the creation of the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum, which has the potential to enhance China's defence relations with the Arab States.<sup>19</sup> China has also engaged in counter-terrorism efforts through the Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa (BRICS) grouping.

## 2.2. Indonesia: A better partnership for prosperity

Indonesia has been a strong supporter of SSC since the Bandung Conference in 1955, at which the concept of SSC originated. Indonesia views SSC as a "better partnership for prosperity" and believes that South-South and triangular cooperation (SSTC) can contribute to peace and development for the following reasons: (1) SSTC serves as a model for genuine global partnership for development; (2) SSTC can bring about more transparency and accountability; and (3) SSTC can be precisely tailored to the needs of each developing country. Based on the principles of equality, mutual respect, mutual benefits and opportunities, it is a knowledge-sharing partnership, implemented within a win-win framework among cooperating parties.<sup>20</sup> Further, Indonesia's SSTC mobilizes line Ministries to engage with partner countries in knowledge-sharing in the areas of agriculture, education and cultural affairs, among others.

Indonesia's counter-terrorism strategies have always been based on comprehensive and balanced efforts between hard and soft approaches. Consequently, Indonesia not only continues to focus on strengthening its legal and judicial systems, but also builds robust preventive, as well as rehabilitation, programmes focused on deradicalization, reintegration and rehabilitation as an integral part of prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration (PRR) strategies. In this regard, in 2021, Indonesia passed Presidential Regulation No. 7 on the National Action Plan on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism that Leads to Terrorism.

The National Action Plan comprises several pillars, including prevention; law enforcement and strengthening legislative frameworks; deradicalization; witness and victim protection; partnership and international cooperation. It provides the means for a "whole-of-government-and-society" approach for implementing specific action lines in a coordinated and comprehensive manner.

The National Action Plan is aimed at mitigating violent extremism by upholding the principles of human rights, youth empowerment, community resilience, women's empowerment and gender mainstreaming,

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<sup>16</sup> See [https://asean.org/?static\\_post=asean-s-contribution-to-regional-efforts-in-counter-terrorism](https://asean.org/?static_post=asean-s-contribution-to-regional-efforts-in-counter-terrorism).

<sup>17</sup> See [www.straitstimes.com/singapore/us-china-and-russia-join-asean-in-pledge-to-fight-terror](http://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/us-china-and-russia-join-asean-in-pledge-to-fight-terror).

<sup>18</sup> See [http://subsites.chinadaily.com.cn/cidca/2018-09/05/c\\_269593.htm](http://subsites.chinadaily.com.cn/cidca/2018-09/05/c_269593.htm).

<sup>19</sup> See [www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2018/07/06/china-africa-military-ties-have-deepened-here-are-4-things-to-know/?utm\\_term=.c5f70836c33a](http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2018/07/06/china-africa-military-ties-have-deepened-here-are-4-things-to-know/?utm_term=.c5f70836c33a).

<sup>20</sup> Indonesia, Ministry of National Development Planning/National Development Planning Agency, Indonesia South-South and triangular cooperation. Available at [www.cbd.int/financial/southsouth/Indonesia-south.pdf](http://www.cbd.int/financial/southsouth/Indonesia-south.pdf)

good governance, rule of law, among others. In this regard, Indonesia's National Counter-Terrorism Agency initiated several programmes:

- A peace media centre and a national counter-terrorism agency, as a means of strengthening national counter-narrative and counter-propaganda campaign against terrorist narratives through the dissemination of peaceful and positive messages via online and offline platforms;
- Youth peace ambassadors, promoting youth resilience against terrorist propaganda;
- A task force for religious leaders, disseminating peaceful messages about religious moderation;
- A terrorism prevention coordination forum at the provincial level, aimed at preventing terrorism in society by involving various regional leaders, religious leaders, academics, women leaders, civil society organizations (CSOs) and local governments;
- A deradicalization centre in Sentul, Bogor, aimed at become a deradicalization programme centre of excellence;
- Customized deradicalization programmes in prison settings and within society;
- The Indonesian Knowledge Hub on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (I-Khub), a web-based application to improve coordination, collaboration and cooperation in the field of countering terrorism/violent extremism between the Government, civil society organizations and development partners.

#### **Box 9**

#### **Jakarta Centre for Law Enforcement Cooperation (JCLEC)**

In 2004, Indonesia and Australia established the Jakarta Centre for Law Enforcement (JCLEC) as a bilateral cooperation agreement. Based in Semarang, JCLEC has become a centre of excellence for strengthening law enforcement capacities. It is supported by partner governments and international law enforcement agencies, namely INTERPOL and ASEANAPOL, among other institutions. The Centre, inter alia:

- Hosts training for over 1,000 officers each year, with an emphasis on knowledge and skills related to countering terrorism and transnational crime;
- Offers a range of advanced and vital training to combat terrorism and other transnational forms of crime, in Indonesia, the Asia Pacific region and other enforcement agencies worldwide, thereby contributing to global stability;
- Fosters an enabling environment for sustained dialogue and cooperation among participating officers from different countries in the region.

### **2.3. Central Asia's experience with prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration**

To enhance national and regional attempts to counter terrorism, in 2020, UNOCT/UNCCT and UNICEF coordinated the efforts of more than 15 United Nations entities to develop a Global Framework to address the urgent needs of Member States in assisting their nationals who have returned from or remain in camps in north-eastern Syrian Arab Republic and Iraq, and who may have suspected or actual links or family ties to designated terrorist groups. The Framework is based on the United Nations Key Principles for the protection, repatriation, prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration of women and children with links to United Nations-listed terrorist groups, in accordance with relevant Security Council resolutions and the Guiding principles on foreign terrorist fighters.

Three Central Asian-Global South countries – Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan – were among the first countries to repatriate their nationals, thus fulfilling their international obligations and generating valuable lessons that may be useful to other Member States that have repatriated their citizens or to address the situation of individuals who have returned on their own.

## 2.4. Philippines: Developing a national action plan on preventing and countering violent extremism

In 2019, the Government of the Philippines successfully crafted and adopted a National Action Plan on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (NAP/P/CVE). This comprehensive, harmonized and synchronized national strategy focuses on addressing the political, economic, cultural, psychosocial and religious factors of radicalization, including strategies for aftercare.

The National Action Plan focuses on six sectors identified as being vulnerable to violent extremism: the community; persons deprived of their liberty pending terrorism-related cases in jails, and violent extremism offenders in prisons; religious leaders; learning institutions; social media users; and overseas Filipino workers and religious scholars. The strategy follows a “whole-of-nation” approach through the convergence of relevant stakeholders from Government and the private sector.

To ensure that the National Action Plan would be inclusive and participatory, it underwent a series of intensive research studies, workshops and consultations with local and global experts, concerned government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academia, and religious and traditional leaders, at the national and regional levels.

In addition, a multi-stakeholder technical working group was created to ensure that the proposed National Action Plan was comprehensive, all-encompassing, gender-sensitive and closely guided by international standards and conventions, in particular the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (2006), the Secretary-General’s Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism,<sup>21</sup> the Manila Declaration to counter the rise of radicalization and violent extremism at the national and regional levels, adopted by ASEAN in 2017; the National Security Policy (2017–2022) and the National Security Strategy of 2018, both of which highlight the need to address the process of radicalization and prevent recruitment through an effective whole-of-government approach.

To remain resilient against this threat, the Government, through the National Security Council Secretariat, and with the support of UNDP-Philippines, has embarked on an evidence-based undertaking in the form of a research study to map the evolving security context of violent extremism in the Philippines under the global COVID-19 pandemic. This is intended to produce policy insights that may serve as bases in fine-tuning the prioritization and direction of specific programmes, projects and activities in the National Action Plan.

## 2.5. Singapore: Engaging youth in a “whole-of-society” approach

At BAPA+40, held in Buenos Aires in March 2019, the Minister of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Social and Family Development of Singapore, expressed Singapore’s vision of SSC and emphasized that his country benefitted from that cooperation as a young and developing nation in 1965. The diversity of development and cooperation enabled the country to follow its own development path. Singapore is now ready to share its experience with partner countries. Despite Singapore’s high GDP per capita, it is featured in this Handbook because it has been very active in SSC and can be a partner in triangular cooperation.

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<sup>21</sup> A/70/674.

<sup>22</sup> Statement by Singapore during the interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism during the forty-sixth session of the Human Rights Council, 4 March 2021. Available at <https://www.mfa.gov.sg/Overseas-Mission/Geneva/Speeches-and-Statements-Permanent-Mission-to-the-UN/2021/03/Statement-SR-on-Promotion-and-Protection-of-HR-4-March-2021>.



Photo: MFA.SG

The 2019 Global Terrorism Index (GTI) ranked Singapore as one of the countries that is least impacted by terrorism. However, terrorism remains a threat to the country. In this context, and considering that a cohesive society can contribute to CT/PVE, the Government of Singapore has taken a comprehensive and holistic approach to counter terrorism that includes engaging with non-governmental stakeholders at different levels, working with community leaders and religious organizations on preventing and responding to terror attacks, and identifying early signs of radicalization.

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**“As we refine and adapt our approach to counter terrorism, taking into account the changing global context, Singapore will continue to share our own experiences and learn from others.”<sup>22</sup>”**

**Sam Tan,  
Minister of State, Singapore (2021)**

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Singapore has adopted a holistic, multilayered and nationwide counter-terrorism strategy built on three pillars: (1) prevention; (2) protection and preparedness; and (3) response and recovery. Supporting all three pillars is the country’s community response, through the SGSecure initiative that seeks to empower the community to “stay alert, stay united and stay strong” in the face of terrorist threats. More than a public awareness campaign, SGSecure calls on all Singaporeans to be vigilant against any terrorist attack and to be prepared to respond appropriately to potential threats. SGSecure also enables the authorities to act on early warnings in order to mitigate radicalization and prevent terrorist attacks. The Prevention pillar, which focuses on countering violent extremist ideology and the root causes of terrorism, can be a potential area for mutual learning with countries facing similar challenges. Singapore’s counter-terrorism strategy is also underpinned by the enactment of legislation, including the Terrorism Act, and by its counter-terrorism ideology, rehabilitation and community engagement.

Singapore considers that the ties between communities and families are important factors for fostering an environment that is resilient to the spread of extremist ideology, and that NGOs can play a significant role. In that regard, the Religious Rehabilitation Group (RRG), a Singapore-based NGO founded in 2003, is a group of volunteer Islamic scholars and teachers that has played an important role in countering extremist ideology in local communities.

In September 2019, the Group started its third Awareness Programme for Youth (APY), which provides guidance in religious knowledge through the contextualization of Islamic thought and practices, and is adapted to a multi-racial and multi-religious society. The Programme focuses on youth as they tend to be especially vulnerable to extremist messages and radical ideology, even more so during the COVID-19 pandemic, given the increased time spent online. Other community organizations and schools have also come forward to counter terrorist and radicalization threats. The Islamic Religious Council of Singapore organized a forum in September 2019 to raise awareness about the role of youth in fostering social resilience.

#### **Box 10**

##### **International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR)**

The International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR) is a specialized centre within the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) at Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. The Centre relies on academic specialists and religious scholars from Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Europe and North America. Its objective is to integrate academic research with practical knowledge to better understand the threats linked to politically motivated violence and terrorism.

## **2.6. Pakistan: Rehabilitation and reintegration in the Swat Valley**

In 2009, the Government of Pakistan, in partnership with the Hum Pakistani Foundation and UNICEF, founded the Sabawoon Rehabilitation Centre. The Centre, which is located in the Swat Valley, is dedicated to deradicalizing juvenile violent extremists and encouraging new starts for children and teenagers under the age of 17 who had been recruited by Tehrik-i-Taliban for front-line terrorist activities such as suicide bombings. The Centre provides children and teenagers with psychological treatment, education and vocational training.

The Centre also focuses on rehabilitation and reintegration. Each victim is treated with an individualized approach to rehabilitation, so as to give him or her the chance to find productive roles in their communities. The programme can range from 6 months to 2 years in duration.



Photo: Associated Press





## 2.7. Operation Sunbird: Strengthening the capacity of ASEAN countries' police forces to combat terrorism and organized crime

The ASEAN Declaration on Transnational Crime, adopted in 1997, was the first instrument to underscore the need for cooperation in countering terrorism in the region; it was followed by other declarations. The Declaration constitutes a significant framework for intra- and extra-regional cooperation. Developed by INTERPOL and implemented from 2017 to 2021, Project Sunbird was aimed at boosting the skills of police officers in ASEAN countries – Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam –, and improving cooperation between law enforcement agencies in the field. The Project has strengthened the capacity of front-line officers to respond to the changing threats linked to terrorism, and to share information to better identify and intercept the travel of suspected foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs), by conducting real-time effective screenings of passenger travel documents.

The Project built upon previous Canada-INTERPOL partnerships and focused on capacity-building, training, intelligence gathering and criminal analysis in South-East Asia.

## 2.8. Central Asia's counter-terrorism strategy – the Joint Plan of Action

Central Asia faces several security challenges and threats emanating from terrorism and violent extremism, as well as the phenomenon of FTFs returning or relocating to third countries, political and economic instability, ongoing conflicts in neighbouring States, trafficking of illicit weapons, and illicit financial flows linked to large-scale labour migration. As a result, the prevention of terrorism in Central Asia has become critical to protecting the well-being and security of the populations, while ensuring national and regional stability.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> See <https://unrcca.unmissions.org/joint-plan-action>.

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**“We, the Central Asian Member States of the United Nations, ...Reaffirming our determination to condemn terrorism, committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purposes, and to take necessary action to prevent and combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations; ...Adopt the present Joint Action Plan as a comprehensive, integrated and operational framework for our efforts towards countering terrorism and for enhanced cooperation and coordination with regional and international organizations and donors in Central Asia.”<sup>23</sup>”**

*Joint Plan of Action for the Implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia, November 2011*

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The Joint Plan of Action for the Implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia, supported by international partnership, is the first regional strategy designed to address the threat of terrorism through a common regional approach based on the Global Strategy. The Joint Plan of Action reflects the four pillars of the Global Strategy, taking into consideration regional challenges and trends. It was adopted by Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in Ashgabat in November 2011.

Countries of the region are collaborating in a holistic manner, through the Ashgabat process and with the support of the United Nations, to implement Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the Joint Plan of Action within the new phase of the regionally owned initiative. The Joint Plan of Action represents a unique opportunity to coordinate their efforts and implement various initiatives of national, regional and international bodies engaged in counter-terrorism.

While the primary responsibility in implementing the Global Strategy and the Joint Plan of Action remains with the Central Asian States, bilateral partners will continue to provide their support. Since 2010, UNOCT and the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA), through the project, “Towards a comprehensive implementation of United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia”, have supported Central Asian countries in the elaboration, adoption and implementation of the Global Strategy and the Joint Plan of Action. The United Nations has organized round tables, workshops, training and platforms for dialogue, involving government officials, NGOs and the private sector, to identify needs and help Central Asian countries apply universal standards in their counter-terrorism initiatives, directly or through promoting cooperation networks.

Some of the most relevant issues are border security and management, countering the financing of terrorism, use of the Internet for terrorist purposes, protection of human rights and respect for the rule of law. Further assistance has been provided for the development of national strategies and action plans to counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism, and in tackling emerging issues related to the rehabilitation and reintegration of FTFs in Central Asia.

Since the adoption of the Joint Plan of Action, there has been growing awareness that measures to counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism must be taken in a coordinated manner, while upholding and protecting the rights and freedoms of citizens. Central Asian governments, together with their international and regional partners, have resolved to ensure that their counter-terrorism measures comply with their obligations under international human rights law and standards; those solutions require understanding the international legal, human rights and technical dimensions of each issue.

Overall, given the need for fostering an integrated and strategic regional approach to effectively prevent conflicts and counter terrorism in the region, the Joint Plan of Action has, since its adoption, become the overarching document shaping the strategic thinking and planning of regional organizations working in Central

Asia. In view of its success, Member States have expressed their willingness to update the document, taking into consideration new international, regional and national challenges and trends, as well as lessons learned.

#### **Box 11**

##### **Regional framework for CT/PVE in Asia**

- 1997 ASEAN Declaration on Transnational Crime
- 2001 ASEAN Declaration on Joint Action to Counter Terrorism
- 2002 Declaration on Terrorism adopted by the eighth ASEAN Summit
- 2003 Joint Declaration on Cooperation to Combat Terrorism adopted by the fourteenth ASEAN-European Union Ministerial Meeting
- 2011 Joint Plan of Action for the Implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia

## **3. CT/PVE initiatives in Latin America and the Caribbean**

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The Latin America and the Caribbean region is seen as the region with the lowest impact of terrorism. However, there has been a progressive increase in the number of terrorist activities in the region. Trinidad and Tobago, for instance, has become the object of attention owing to the preoccupying recruitment rate of youths into the ranks of ISIL.<sup>24</sup> In addition, countries in the region have suffered from other forms of violence and organized crime, leading to growing concerns about the crime–terror nexus.

While there may be no evidence of Islamist terrorist operational cells in the region, there are concerns that localized groups of ideological supporters may lend logistical and financial support to terrorist groups in other regions. For instance, Hezbollah is suspected to have maintained a long-standing presence in the tri-border areas between Brazil, Argentina and Paraguay. The relatively robust framework for SSC in the region could boost cooperation in CT/PVE. Furthermore, countries in the region have taken the lead in fostering a stronger commitment to international agreements and cooperation to combat terrorism.

### **3.1. Argentina: Fostering regional commitment to combat money laundering and terrorism financing**

Argentina has always been an ardent supporter of SSC. It hosted two high-level United Nations conferences on South-South cooperation: in 1978 – which resulted in the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (BAPA); and in 2019. The 2019 conference (known as BAPA+40) confirmed the broader understanding of SSTC within the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

On 19 July 2019, Argentina hosted the second Hemispheric Ministerial Conference on the Fight Against Terrorism, as a follow-up to the Hemispheric Ministerial Conference that was held in Washington D.C. in December 2018. The conference marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of the attack against the Argentine Israelite Mutual Association (AMIA) and resulted in a joint communiqué, in which the participating countries

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<sup>24</sup> Global Terrorism Index 2020. Available at <https://www.visionofhumanity.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/GTI-2020-web-1.pdf>

recognized the need to increase international cooperation in the fight against terrorism and its financing.<sup>25</sup> The participants emphasized, inter alia, that “bilateral, regional and international cooperation is essential to prevent the Hemisphere from being exploited for operational, logistical, and fundraising activities to support terrorism and other related crimes.”<sup>26</sup>

Argentina considers that cooperation within the framework of multilateral forums is critical in the fight against terrorism. The Regional Security Mechanism between Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and the United States was created at the above-mentioned conference to foster diplomatic and political coordination among their agencies’ efforts to address security issues, including terrorism, drug trafficking and other forms of transnational organized crime.

In addition to being part of the general Financial Action Task Force (FATF), Argentina is a founding member of the Financial Action Task Force of Latin America (GAFILAT) (former Financial Action Group of South America (GAFISUD)), which groups 17 countries in the region, with observer States and organizations in North America, Europe and Asia. GAFILAT aims to develop and promote policies at the national and international levels to combat money laundering and the financing of terrorism.

Argentina’s leading role in CT/PVE goes well beyond organizing and hosting international conferences. As President of the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism (CICTE) of the Organization of American States (OAS) in 2018–2019, Argentina encouraged the ratification of the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism by countries that had not yet done so. Argentina also participated in the Specialized Forum on Terrorism in the framework of the Meeting of Ministers of the Interior and Security of MERCOSUR, the South American Common Market, and assumed the presidency of the Egmont Group<sup>27</sup> to exchange information, knowledge and technology to combat money laundering and terrorism financing.

### 3.2. Brazil: Hosting safe sporting events

Brazil has not experienced any major terrorist attacks, although it has frequently hosted large-scale international events. The Brazilian Federal Police, under the Ministry of Justice, together with the Brazilian Intelligence Agency, as Brazil’s lead counter-terrorism agencies, engaged in international cooperation as part of the security plan for the realization of the FIFA World Cup in 2014, and the Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2016.

In 2016, Brazil adopted specific counter-terrorism legislation, which was the basis for the launch of “Operation Hashtag” to dismantle an alleged ISIL cell, ahead of the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro. The operation benefitted from the close cooperation between national security forces and international information agencies. Brazil participates in regional counter-terrorism forums, including the OAS Inter-American Committee against Terrorism, the BRICS Joint Working Group on Counter-terrorism, and MERCOSUR’s working groups on terrorism and financial flows.

As part of the security planning for the 2016 Olympic Games, the Ministry of Justice coordinated a series of activities that included international cooperation with police forces in different countries, as well as courses and programmes to dispatch observers from public security forces to major sporting events ahead of the Games. In that context, the International Police Cooperation Centre (CCPI) and the Integrated Anti-Terrorism Centre (CIANT) collaborated with police officers in neighbouring countries.

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<sup>25</sup> Argentina, Bahamas, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and the United States of America participated in the Conference. Mexico, Uruguay and the Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism (CICTE) of the Organization of American States (OAS) attended as observers.

<sup>26</sup> See <https://2017-2021.state.gov/joint-communique-second-hemispheric-ministerial-conference-on-the-fight-against-terrorism/index.html>.

<sup>27</sup> The Egmont Group is an international network of Financial Intelligence Units.



### **3.3. Colombia: Sharing experiences in combating transnational crime and cyber terrorism**

Colombia is currently one of the countries most engaged in SSC in the region, after Brazil, Mexico and Argentina. The Government of Colombia has positioned itself as a model provider of good practices in various fields, including public security.

In 2012, the Government of Colombia, through the Ministry of National Defence and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and in partnership with the National Police, launched the Strategy for International Cooperation in Comprehensive Security to maximize effectiveness in the fight against transnational organized crime, in response to requests for security cooperation from partner countries in Central America and the Caribbean, as well as from countries in Africa and Asia.

In 2018, high-level officials from Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mauritius, Morocco and Seychelles attended the fifth International Seminar on Colombia-Africa Security Cooperation, in Bogotá. The seminar included thematic workshops aimed at assessing common areas of interest, especially in the field of cybercrime. Delegates showed interest in Colombia's C4 Centre (Command, Control, Communications and Computing) that has become a regional reference in Latin America for combating cybercrimes, including crimes related to terrorist propaganda and recruitment.

### **3.4. CARICOM Counter-Terrorism Strategy: Developing innovative regional solutions**

There is growing concern among CARICOM States about terrorism and violent extremism, including foreign terrorist fighter (FTFs) returnees, radicalized terrorist sympathizers and the increase in online terrorist propaganda. The region faces the additional challenge posed by the evolving relationship between organized crime and violent gangs, on the one hand, and terrorist groups and radicalized individuals, on the other. To

collectively address these issues, CARICOM Heads of Government convened in Port-au-Prince in February 2018 at the twenty-ninth Inter-sessional Meeting of the Community to finalize, with the support of UNOCT, and adopt the regional Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The purpose of the Strategy is to reduce the risk of terrorism and violent extremism, as well as build resilience to extremist ideology, so as to ensure a safe and free Caribbean Community.

According to the Strategy, member States are expected to develop legislation on the Advance Cargo Information System (ACIS) and Advanced Passenger Information System (APIS), to support counter-terrorism efforts and to share information among member States in a more consistent and systematized manner.

The CARICOM Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS) was established in 2006, in Bird Rock, St Kitts and Nevis, as the implementation arm of the regional architecture to manage CARICOM's action agenda on crime and security. Under the Counter-Terrorism Strategy, IMPACS leads the creation of an intraregional task force of experts to foster knowledge-sharing and policy dialogue to develop innovative regional solutions.

#### Box 12

##### Regional framework for CT/PVE in Latin America and the Caribbean

- 2002 Inter-American Convention against Terrorism
- 2018 CARICOM Counter-Terrorism Strategy
- Organization of American States Inter-American Committee against Terrorism (CICTE)
- Financial Action Task Force of Latin America (GAFILAT)
- Caribbean Financial Action Task Force (CFATF)
- MERCOSUR Specialized Forum on Terrorism
- Central American Integration System (SICA)
- 3+1 Group on Tri-Border Area Security
- Contadora Group

## 4. CT/PVE initiatives in the Middle East and North Africa

Countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) have been heavily impacted by terrorism and violent extremism, particularly in the wake of the terrorist attacks in the United States on 11 September 2001. In that regard, locally rooted understandings of the threats and challenges in the region are key to managing CT/PVE measures in a sustained and efficient manner.

In reaction to the spread of terrorism and violent extremism, Member States in the region have devised innovative ways, including the adoption of various instruments, to tackle terrorism and violent extremism that they believe could encourage similar initiatives. One notable example is the Arab Strategy to Combat Terrorism approved by the Council of Arab Interior Ministers, in January 1997. The strategy includes a commitment to increase intelligence-sharing, tighten border control and restrict fundraising that could go to terrorist groups.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>28</sup> "Arab terror efforts: Assessing Arab League initiative", The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 13 January 1998. Available at [www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/arab-anti-terror-efforts-assessing-arab-league-initiative](http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/arab-anti-terror-efforts-assessing-arab-league-initiative).

The determined efforts by MENA countries to tackle terrorism may be yielding results since, as of 2016, deaths from terrorism in the region are said to have fallen by 87 per cent.<sup>29</sup>

#### 4.1. Jordan: The Aqaba Process and the Amman Message for diversity

Jordan has consistently resorted to international cooperation, either with donor countries or through SSC among countries in the region, to deal with CT/PVE issues.

Jordan has developed innovative ways to promote SSC for combating terrorism and preventing violent extremism. One key innovation is the Aqaba Process initiative, a series of international meetings, launched by His Majesty King Abdullah II in 2015, to strengthen security and military cooperation, coordination and the exchange of expertise among regional and international partners to fight terrorism and violent extremism in a holistic approach. Owing to the international nature of the Process, meetings have been held in Albania, Kenya, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Singapore and the United States. The personal engagement of King Abdullah allows the Aqaba Process to bring key stakeholders together to discuss strategic issues and to strengthen international collaboration.

A significant development in this process is the Amman Message, which started as a detailed statement released in November 2004 by King Abdullah. The statement is based on three questions: (1) Who is a Muslim? (2) Is it permissible to declare someone an apostate (takfir)? and (3) Who has the right to undertake issues relating to fatwas? The Message seeks to convey the Islamist values of tolerance, moderation and dialogue, by presenting a religious and political discourse that favours peaceful dialogue and religious tolerance.<sup>30</sup> In 2005, two hundred of the world's leading Islamic scholars from 50 countries gathered at an international Islamic conference in Amman to ponder on what has become known as the "Three Points of the Amman Message".<sup>31</sup> The Amman Message initiative has become a reference point for other leaders in the region.

#### 4.2. Morocco: Centrality of South-South cooperation as part of foreign policy

The Kingdom of Morocco has collaborated with countries in both the North and the South to counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism. Since the late 1990s, Morocco has promoted moderate Islam to repel radicalism at home and abroad. The country has invested in SSC initiatives to combat extremist narratives, while providing training to religious leaders, especially women, from various countries at the Mohammed VI Institute for the Training of Imams, Morchidines and Morchidates. The Institute, which is located in Rabat, is committed to combating extremist narratives. Its pre-emptive strategy has been successful in reducing terrorism and violent extremism, as well as dismantling terrorist cells as early as possible.

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<sup>29</sup> Global Terrorism Index 2020.

<sup>30</sup> "The Amman Message: how Jordan understands Islam", text of remarks by King Abdullah II, November 2004, Camel's Nose. Available at <https://camelsnose.wordpress.com/2004/01/26/the-amman-message-how-jordan-understands-islam-text-of-remarks-by-king-abdullah-ii-november-2004/>.

<sup>31</sup> "The Three Points of the Amman Message v.1". Available at <https://ammanmessage.com/the-three-points-of-the-amman-message-v-1/>.

### Box 13

#### **South-South cooperation in Morocco: The role of the Moroccan Agency for International Cooperation (AMCI)**

The Moroccan Agency for International Cooperation (AMCI), established in 1986, is the main coordinating body, with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, to strengthen international cooperation in Morocco. It is the main implementer of Morocco's SSC policy, by making use of its know-how and expertise in several fields to support developing countries, mainly in Africa.

In 2003, Morocco hosted a high-level conference on South-South cooperation, in Marrakech, in which participating countries reiterated the "desire and potential to move South-South cooperation within and beyond regional and subregional boundaries".

Becoming an Imam (religious leader) requires different skills than in the past. With increased access to information, the level of awareness and education has generally risen, and an Imam is faced with complex questions and uncertainties, in both urban areas and rural settings. In the wake of the terrorist attacks in Casablanca on 16 May 2003, Morocco issued Law No. 03.03, a comprehensive counter-terrorism and counter-violent extremism strategy aimed at strengthening the existing Penal and Criminal Codes. The law ushered in a new era of religious reform based on moderate Islam to protect Moroccans from terrorism and extreme violence.<sup>32</sup>

In that regard, His Majesty King Mohammed VI reorganized the Supreme Ulema Council, which, in 2004, launched an educational programme to train Imams and other religious leaders.

The Mohammed VI Institute has welcomed male and female students from Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Guinea, Mali, the Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Thailand and the United Republic of Tanzania. In addition to promoting moderate Islam, Morocco has also undertaken several initiatives, including the decision of King Mohammed VI, in 2005, to launch the National Initiative for Human Development to protect women's rights and alleviate poverty, as these societal issues are seen as contributing to destabilization, radicalization and violent extremism.

These initiatives have resulted in considerably preventing terrorist attacks, with the country becoming one of the models of political stability in the region.

### Box 14

#### **The Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO): Disseminating values of moderation, dialogue and coexistence for peace and prosperity**

Established in 1979 by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO) is headquartered in Rabat, and comprises 54 member States. The Organization aims especially to promote the role of culture as a fundamental building block for sustainable development. In that regard, it invests in programmes and projects aimed at countering extremist thought, violence and terrorism; developing innovative models of cultural governance; adopting adequate cultural approaches to address the repercussions of crises induced by migration and refugee outflows from zones of conflict, war and poverty.

ICESCO has partnered with the Mohammadia League of Scholars, a Morocco-based organization, to develop the Encyclopedia for Deconstructing Extremist Discourse to provide guidance for religious leaders across member States.

<sup>32</sup> Benjamin Aziza, "Morocco's unique approach to countering violent extremism and terrorism", Small Wars Journal, 21 December 2018. Available at <https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/moroccos-unique-approach-countering-violent-extremism-and-terrorism>.



### 4.3. Egypt: Strengthening the capacities of African countries for post-conflict reconstruction and development

Under the auspices of the African Union, Egypt has become a regional champion in capacity-building for peace and development. The Cairo International Centre for Conflict Resolution, Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding (CCCCPA) is a demonstration of that effort. Founded in 1994 by the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Centre is a national public agency specialized in training, capacity-building and research in peace and security in Africa and the Middle East. Aimed at building capacities and improving community-level resilience to peace and security challenges, it is an African Union Centre of Excellence.

The Centre also hosts the Executive Secretariat of the Aswan Forum for Sustainable Peace and Development, an initiative led by African countries and supported by international and regional partners to promote a broad and ambitious agenda for addressing peace, security, and development challenges on the African continent. The Centre's innovative programme, Preventing Radicalization and Extremism Leading to Terrorism (PRELT), seeks to empower local religious and community leaders to contribute to improving "community" resilience to radicalization and extremism leading to terrorism, and to raising "individual" barriers for entry into terrorist organizations. The course provides trainees with knowledge and skills to promote inclusive peace narratives based on Sharia and Islamic teachings.

### 4.4. Saudi Arabia: host of Centres of Excellence to further research for peace and security in Arab countries

#### *Combating extremist ideology with technology and innovation (Etidal)*

The Global Centre for Combating Extremist Ideology (Etidal) was established at the 2017 Riyadh Summit, further to an agreement between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United States of America. The Centre, which is based in Riyadh, relies on a team of multidisciplinary researchers that have data analytical tools as well as the geopolitical, social and historical expertise necessary to provide in-depth analyses and actionable insights on different extremist groups. The Centre's Department of Public Relations is responsible for receiving local and international delegations interested in learning from the Centre's programmes and tools to follow-up, analyse and monitor extremist content on social media platforms, as well as in raising public awareness and offering alternative narratives.

On 1 April 2021, the Under-Secretary-General of UNOCT and the Secretary-General of Etidal, within the context of UNCCT's endeavour to foster international cooperation between and among centres of excellence working on preventing and countering violent extremism, signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to strengthen cooperation in preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism, as and when conducive to terrorism. The MoU was seen as a demonstration of the willingness of UNCCT and Etidal to join forces to support the efforts of the international community in addressing the scourge of terrorism and prevent the spread of extremist ideologies.<sup>33</sup>

#### *Naif Arab University for Security Sciences (NAUSS)*

In 1978, a ministerial-level conference resulted in the establishment of an Arab centre for security studies and training, dedicated to undertaking studies and research on societal defence against crime and providing training for governmental and non-governmental stakeholders. NAUSS operates under the aegis of the Council of Arab Interior Ministers

<sup>33</sup> "UNCCT and Etidal to increase collaboration", press release, 2 April 2021. Available at [www.un.org/counterterrorism/sites/www.un.org.counterterrorism/files/20210401\\_uncct\\_etidal\\_press\\_release\\_final\\_2april.pdf](http://www.un.org/counterterrorism/sites/www.un.org.counterterrorism/files/20210401_uncct_etidal_press_release_final_2april.pdf).

With the support of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, NAUSS' campus was established in Riyadh in 1985. It has since cooperated with researchers, academics and experts from various Arab countries and beyond to achieve strategic goals. Studies are presented to the Council of Arab Interior Ministers on the topics of drugs, terrorism, environmental security and cybersecurity to provide valuable input for cooperation among Arab countries. On 1 October 2021, the Under-Secretary-General of UNOCT and the President of NAUSS signed an MoU to strengthen cooperation in several key areas related to CT/PVE.<sup>34</sup>

#### Box 15

##### The reverse linkage of the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB): Innovative triangular arrangements

- With 56 member countries across Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Middle East, the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) holds a unique position for promoting SSC;
- The Bank's view on a triangular cooperation approach, known as "reverse linkage" (RL), stems from a long experience of implementing technical cooperation programmes among member countries that started in the early 1980s;
- The RL mechanism is defined as a technical cooperation mechanism enabled by the Bank, whereby member countries and Muslim communities in non-member countries exchange their knowledge, expertise, technology and resources to develop capacities and devise solutions for autonomous development. The RL mechanism has been piloted since 2012 and has shown promising results in terms of country ownership through a peer-to-peer approach.

## 4.5. Arab Intellectual Security Strategy

In the past two decades, and especially in the wake of the terrorist attacks in the United States on 11 September 2001, Arab States have witnessed increasing threats of terrorism and violent extremism. Through collaboration with the United Nations, the League of Arab States has become an important partner in the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy to combat these threats.

At the meeting of the League's Council of Arab Interior Ministers, held in Tunis in 2013, with the aim of combating terrorism, the Ministers adopted the Arab Intellectual Security Strategy, which has evolved into the amended Arab Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The Strategy is premised, inter alia, on several values, including promoting cooperation between States on the basis of the principles of international law, and international charters and treaties; combating terrorism and eradicating the causes thereof; maintaining security and stability in the Arab nations and protecting them from terrorists; showing the true picture of Islam and Arabism; promoting and developing cooperation between Arab States in relation to counter-terrorism; and strengthening cooperation with other States and international organizations to combat terrorism.

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***“The Arab Region and its people have made enormous sacrifices to fight terrorism and have paid the highest price for this. The United Nations is stepping up support for the efforts of the Arab States in this struggle, including through an agreement to develop an Arab Regional Counter-Terrorism Strategy in line with the United Nations.”***<sup>35</sup>

**António Guterres,  
United Nations Secretary-General (2019)**

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<sup>34</sup> "UNCCT and NAUSS to increase collaboration on counter-terrorism capacity-building", press release, 1 October 2021. Available from <https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/press-releases>.

<sup>35</sup> Remarks delivered by Secretary-General António Guterres at the Summit of the League of Arab States, Tunis, 31 March 2019. See <https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/03/1035821> for more information.

Member States of the League pledged to formulate appropriate national policies; foster cooperation in the Arab world and at the international level; improve social conditions; impress on religious institutions the need to present the true picture of Islam; take measures to suppress and counter terrorism, including updating legislation.

The Strategy also stresses, inter alia, cooperation and coordination at all levels, including for the exchange of information on the activities of terrorist groups and their leaders, their staging areas and sources of financing; inter-Arab cooperation and cooperation between Arab States and other countries worldwide, in particular United Nations-led international counter-terrorism efforts, by implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy; effective Arab participation in international counter-terrorism conferences and forums; and participation in the elaboration of an international code of conduct on counter-terrorism.

#### **Box 16**

##### **Regional framework for CT/PVE in the Middle East and North Africa**

- 1997 Arab Strategy to Combat Terrorism
- 1998 Arab Convention for the Suppression of Terrorism
- 1999 Convention of the Organization of the Islamic Conference on Combating International Terrorism
- 2013 Arab Intellectual Security Strategy

#### **Box 17**

##### **Hedayah: Strengthening the roles of families in preventing radicalization and recruitment**

- Hedayah is a neutral, apolitical, non-ideological international Centre of Excellence aimed at countering violent extremism, based in Abu Dhabi. UNOCT and Hedayah signed an MoU to strengthen cooperation in December 2019;
- Families play a critical role in supporting disengagement, rehabilitation and reintegration of those who were radicalized and/or recruited into violent extremism. Hedayah, in collaboration with the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum (GCTF), organized an international programme to identify lessons learned and good practices with regard to the roles of families in recognizing, preventing and intervening in violent extremist radicalization and recruitment;
- A workshop aimed at identifying and systematizing programmatic approaches to empowering family members and creating practitioner resources was held in 2016. The related programme has been implemented in Indonesia, with the support of the Government of Japan, and in Nigeria, with the support of the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

#### **Box 18**

##### **Silatech: A non-governmental organization focusing on youth in the Arab world**

Based in Doha, Silatech was launched at the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations Forum in January 2008. It aims to combat youth unemployment in countries such as Bahrain, Morocco, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia and Yemen, with support from the private sector, thereby addressing one of the underlying drivers of radicalization.



## IV. Conclusion

This *Handbook of Global South initiatives to counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism* represents a groundbreaking effort to document and enable the scaling up of southern CT/PVE-related activities and exchanges that can be shared, replicated and adapted to similar local contexts, given the scarcity of information and the dispersion of data. The initiatives featured are not exhaustive; but they are an example of the substantial potential of the Global South to offer innovative solutions and leadership in the field of CT/PVE, as well as the cooperation and partnerships that can be engendered.

It is encouraging that some countries have become very proactive in deploying pre-emptive strategies to disrupt and dismantle terrorist cells before they gain traction, while also addressing underlying issues such as religious indoctrination, extreme poverty, lack of education and unemployment that create a conducive environment for the recruitment of youths into terrorist and extremist groups.

Looking ahead, and to encourage recognition and integration of southern solutions and perspectives in complement to the North-South approach, the Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) will continue to promote South-South and triangular cooperation in countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism.

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