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CICTE Informe #29

Counter-terrorism activities

U.S. Ratifies the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism

- The United States ratified the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism on November 16th. John Maisto, the U.S. Ambassador to the OAS, pointed to CICTE as “*an outstanding—perhaps the best—example of a region pulling together to defend itself, to defend its democratic way of life, and to defend its freedom to live and to prosper peacefully—all shared values among OAS member states.*” Maisto also stressed the efforts undertaken by the Member States in helping CICTE to emerge “*as a premier instrument for improving our states’ capabilities to address the terrorist threat.*” The Bush Administration says the ratification of the Convention reaffirms the high priority the United States places on fighting terrorism in the Western Hemisphere.

For more information:

<http://www.oas.org/main/main.asp?sLang=E&sLink=/OAHomePage/eng/latestnews/latestnews.asp>

Trinidad and Tobago Ratifies the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism

- Trinidad and Tobago became the 16th. OAS Member State to ratify the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism. The country is currently chairing the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism (CICTE) and has passed an anti-terrorism bill last October; hosted a recent seminar for security practitioners in the region; and pursued an initiative for an Inter-American Tourism and Recreational Facility Security Program throughout OAS member’s states. Mackisack Logy, the Alternate Representative of Trinidad and Tobago to the OAS, stated that terrorism is a key concern for the hemisphere since nobody is immune to its effects, and he also urged those member states that have not yet ratified the OAS treaty to do so as soon as possible.

For more information: <http://www.caribbeannetnews.com/2005/12/05/ratifies.shtml>

Argentina Begins Scanning U.S.-Bound Containers

- Argentina has begun to scan containers shipped to the United States, according to an article published by the Argentine newspaper *La Nación*. This is part of the Container Security Initiative led by the United States after the attacks of 9/11, and to which Argentina subscribed in 2003. Both Argentina and the United States signed the agreement on the first phase of the program that will include exchange of personnel and information between the two countries. The first installed scanner, checks a truck every five minutes and unlike other countries, Argentine exporters will not have to pay for this service. The final cost of installing more equipment in ports has been estimated at \$150 million.

For more information:

http://www.lanacion.com.ar/edicionimpresa/suplementos/comercioexterior/nota.asp?nota_id=757831

Barcelona Summits Aproves Code of Conduct on Countering Terrorism

- Member States of the Euromediterranean Partnership (including Israel, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, and Egypt, entre otros) approved the Code of Conduct on Countering Terrorism during the Barcelona Summit, held on 27-28 November. The final document highlights that ‘the threat that terrorism poses to the lives of our citizens remains serious and terrorist attacks seriously impair the enjoyment of human rights. States agreed to strengthen cooperation and coordination to combat terrorism. A 5-year Plan of Action was also approved during the Summit. It encompasses four main areas: Peace, Security, Stability, Good Government, and Democracy; Sustainable Economic Development and Reform; Education and Cultural Exchange; and Justice, Security, Migration, and Social Integration

For more information: <http://www.euromedbarcelona.org/EN/CumbreBarcelona2005/>

U.N. Security Council Condemns Attacks in Jordan

- In response to the terrorist attacks in Amman, Jordan, the U.N. Security Council condemned the bombings in the strongest terms, and expressed its deepest sympathy and condolences to the victims and their families, and to the people and Government of Jordan. The Council urged all States, in accordance with their obligations under resolutions 1373 (2001) and 1624 (2005) to cooperate with the Jordanian government. The Security Council also reaffirmed the ‘*need to combat by all means, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts*’.

For more information: <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2005/sc8553.doc.htm>

AMIA Bomber Identified

- The Argentine Intelligence services and the FBI have identified the suicide bomber that blew up a Jewish institution in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in July 1994. The name of the bomber is *Ibrahim Hussein Berro* of Lebanon, who was 21 at the moment of the bombing. His two brothers, who live in the United States, helped in the identification process, according to prosecutor Alberto Nisman. The bombing of the Jewish Argentine Mutual Association (AMIA) that killed 86 people was the second terrorist attack on Jewish targets in Argentina; the 1992 bombing of the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires was the first and also remains unsolved.

For more information: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/4423612.stm>

Jamaica Calls to Fight Money-Laundering and Terrorism

- Jamaican Minister of Finance and Planning, Omar Davies, called for the implementation of comprehensive measures against money laundering and the financing of terrorism in the Caribbean basin during the opening ceremony of the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force (CFATF) Ministerial Meeting held in Montego Bay on November 4th. Davies pointed out that '*rather than declining, money laundering and the threat of money laundering have increased and have become even more menacing*'. Since its creation in 1992, the CFATF members have agreed to implement common counter measures against money laundering and the financing of terrorism.

For more information: <http://www.caribbeannetnews.com/2005/11/09/entire.shtml>

Australia Introduces Amendments to its Anti-terrorist Bill

- Concerned about a potential terrorist threat, Australian Prime Minister John Howard sent a new bill to the Senate that will strengthen the capacity of law enforcement agencies to respond to terrorist threats. Among the new measures, the bill alters the description of a terrorist act "*to make it easier for police to deal with potential terrorists*". The bill also allows security forces to hold terror suspects without charge for up to 14 days and to track people suspected of involvement with terrorist groups for up to a year.

For more information: [Counter-Terrorism News Bulletin, 3 November 2005](#)

Recent Events

- 13-14 November 2005: Day on Security and Terrorism, AMIA (Buenos Aires, Argentina)
- 16 November 2005: "*The Mar del Plata Summit: results and challenges ahead*", George Washington University (Washington, DC)

- 17 November, 2005: UNCTC presentation by CICTE Executive Secretary (New York)
- 17 November 2005: “*Seminar Argentina-U.S. cooperation on international terrorism*”. Woodrow Wilson Center-Universidad de Bologna (Buenos Aires, Argentina)
- 25 November 2005: “*Seminar International Terrorism: Global threat and its impact in the Southern Cone*”. Grupo Patagónico. (Buenos Aires, Argentina)
- 28-30 November, 2005: ICAO Hold Baggage Screening (HBS) Seminar for the NAM/CAR/SAM Regions (Monterrey, Mexico)
- 29 November-2 December 2005: “Workshop on Prevention and Fight against Terrorism and Financing of terrorism”. Joint Program CICTE/UNDOC (Buenos Aires, Argentina)
- 5 December 2005: “*Seminar International Legislation in the fight against terrorist acts and the financing of terrorism*”. Universidad Católica (Buenos Aires, Argentina)

Latest News

- **With 10-15 million stolen passports circulating around the globe**, Interpol intends to create awareness amongst States. Three years ago, a computer database containing stolen passports was created, with only 12 States affiliated. Nowadays, a greater sum, 87 are utilizing Interpol's services. Nevertheless, 100 countries are yet to decide whether their adherence will contribute to the fight against forged documents that in fact, can lead to terrorism and organized crime. Interpol's database counts on more than 8 million entries, a substantial improvement from the 3,000 entries at the time of its creation.
For more information: <http://au.news.yahoo.com/051103/19/p/wn9v.html>
- **Jose Padilla, a U.S citizen suspected of plotting a dirty bomb attack in American soil**, was indicted by a federal grand Jury in Miami. Padilla had been held as an "enemy combatant" in Defense Department custody for more than three years, after he was arrested in 2002. According to Associated Press Padilla, a former Chicago gang member sought to blow up hotels and apartment buildings in the United States and planned an attack with a dirty bomb radiological device. Other four people were also indicted: Adham Amin Hassoun, Mohammed Hesham Youssef, Kifah Wael Jayyousi, and Kassem Daher.
For more information: [Counter-Terrorism News Bulletin, 22 November 2005](#)
- A new bill introduced in the Argentine Congress proposes not only to **typify terrorism as a crime but also to declare the imprescriptibility of penal actions for that crime**, in accordance with international treaties on counter-terrorism signed by Argentina. Representative Hugo Franco, author of the bill, said that with this legislation, Argentina joins the world fight against terrorism. He also remarked that the ‘imprescriptibility’ of a terrorist crime is a step forward to punish a crime against humanity.
For more information: http://www.lanacion.com.ar/politica/nota.asp?nota_id=758156

- An **Arab-American citizen**, Ahmed Omar Abu Ali, was convicted by a federal jury of Virginia on charges of ‘conspiracy to commit acts of terrorism’. According to the Justice Department, Abu Ali **had plotted to assassinate President Bush** and hijack planes. Abu Ali was arrested at a University in Medina (Saudi Arabia) in June 2003, where he had gone to pursue religious studies. Defense lawyers, on the other hand, claimed that Ali was falsely charged and possibly tortured.

For more information: <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/11/23/national/nationalspecial3/23convict.html>

- As reported by Associated Press, **the governments of Spain and the Philippines are working on a common counter-terrorism agreement** that would include military cooperation and intelligence sharing. Spanish Defense Minister Jose Bono said "We agreed with the government of the Philippines that no terrorism can ever be justified and that the only hope for civilized people is in terrorists losing all hope of ever achieving their aims through violent means". No date has yet been set for the signature of the agreement.

For more information: Counter-Terrorism News Bulletin, 21 November 2005

- **Russia signed the European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism** during the 115th session of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg. Foreign Minister Alexander Glushko said the Convention ‘has opened an important front of international anti-terrorist cooperation, joint efforts and initiatives for states to counter terrorist ideology and propaganda’.

For more information: Counter-Terrorism News Bulletin, 18 November 2005

- **A two-day anti-terrorist exercise** involving the 16 members of the Pacific Islands Forum was held in the Fijian capital Suva. Officials from Australia, New Zealand, and 14 island countries gathered to test the region’s ability to plan and respond to a terrorist attack or terrorist threat. New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark expressed that ‘*while the risk of an attack in the Pacific is low, it is important that the region is not a weak link in the counter-terrorism chain*’.

For more information: Counter-Terrorism News Bulletin, 8 November 2005

New Documents on OLAT

- Jamaican Terrorism Prevention Act, 2005.
- Public Opinion and Terrorism: The Argentine case; by G. Schulmeister, Fundación Fundar.
- Legal Cooperation on criminal matter. Uruguay, 2005.
- Euro-Mediterranean Code of Conduct on Countering Terrorism
- Euro-Mediterranean Partnership 5-year work program