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REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE INTER-AMERICAN COMMITTEE AGAINST TERRORISM 2013-2014, HIS EXCELLENCY AMBASSADOR ANDRES GONZALEZ DIAZ, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF COLOMBIA TO THE OAS

(Presented at the first plenary session, on February 20, 2014)

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Distinguished Ambassadors, Heads of Delegation, delegates and colleagues, Secretariat members, ladies and gentlemen:

I have the pleasure to report that under the chairmanship of Colombia and in accordance with the policy directives and mandates you have established, the Executive Secretariat of the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism (CICTE) has continued to provide support to member states in their national and collective efforts to prevent, combat, punish, and eliminate terrorism in the Americas. From January to December 2013, the Executive Secretariat implemented capacity-building and training programs in all member states through 113 events that contributed to the strengthening and professionalization of some 4,181 officials in the region.

These programs are wide-ranging in scope: securing borders; protecting airports and maritime installations; preparedness against emerging threats; providing tourist security; fraudulent document detection; halting the proliferation of nuclear, biological, chemical, and radiological (NBQR) materials; protecting cyber networks; providing security at major public events; and drafting adequate legislation to prevent terrorism financing. Through such programs, the CICTE Executive Secretariat has continued to contribute to strengthening security in our member states.

Later today, at this afternoon's session, the CICTE Secretariat will submit a report on its activities, describing the results of these activities carried out under the CICTE Work Plan for 2013.

Cybersecurity

Since the adoption of the Comprehensive Inter-American Cybersecurity Strategy, in 2004, the cybersecurity program has promoted the creation of Computer Security Incident Response Teams (CSIRTs), whose numbers have risen from six (6) to eighteen (18) in the last decade. In parallel, countries such as Colombia, Panama, and Trinidad and Tobago have established national cybersecurity policies and strategies, while with support from the Department of Information and Technology Services (DOITS), the Executive Secretariat has developed a mobile laboratory for conducting cybersecurity crisis management exercises, which has been used for training activities in six (6) countries. These three developments have consolidated capacities for response, both national and regional, to this type of threat.

Important partnerships have also been forged and cooperation agreements concluded with the private sector and civil society. For example, the Secretary General signed a cooperation agreement with the global awareness campaign "Stop. Think. Connect," which seeks to raise Internet user awareness of cybersecurity risks. The OAS General Secretariat also signed the World Economic Forum's Cyber Resilience Principles, which assist institutions in adapting appropriate cybersecurity principles.

Tourist security

In the last five years, some twenty (20) tourist security courses have been imparted to strengthen national capacities and create partnerships for cooperation between the public and private sectors in countries and tourist destinations of the Caribbean, Central America, South America, and Mexico. This has led to the creation of a network of tourist security liaisons for the exchange of experiences and best practices. In that connection, the program has enabled tourism police and private sector security chiefs in each locale to work in a harmonized manner with the other providers of tourism services, taking advantage of the social network technological platform.

Additionally, with support from the OAS Department of Tourism, work has been done with the World Tourism Organization and the ministries of tourism of the Hemisphere to organize the Tourism Security in the Americas Conferences (Dominican Republic, 2011, Panama, 2013; and for the upcoming conference in Ecuador, 2014).

Maritime security

In the last decade, through the Maritime Security Program, training has been provided for 16,244 officials of 31 member states, and technical assistance provided to over sixty-nine (69) ports, for compliance with the International Maritime Organization standards, and other international port security norms. The main objective has been to strengthen anti-terrorist activities and law enforcement capacities at port installations and to improve coordination among governmental authorities involved in maritime security.

The program now makes available diversified training to the member states in the following areas: container security; maritime domain awareness; port state control, supply chain security; risk assessment and management, drills and exercises; and information security systems, among others.

Legislative assistance and combating terrorism financing

Since 2002, the CICTE Executive Secretariat has provided training and technical assistance to member states in this area, to enhance their justice system development. This has led to greater fulfillment of commitments assumed under the international instruments on combating terrorism and its financing through their implementation in national legislation.

In that regard, 25 member states have now ratified the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism; and there are now 60 ratifications of the universal treaties against terrorism. Nine national laws have been enacted on terrorism financing; and another eight bills are under discussion in their respective Congresses.

Program for the implementation of resolution 1540

Under this program, the aim of which is to identify any specific needs and challenges that beneficiary countries may have in the area of the protection and control of nuclear, biological, chemical, and radiological (NBQR) materials, efforts have been made to design specialized training activities to build these capacities so as to strengthen the prevention framework against the use of NBQR materials by non-state actors.

Since 2006, CICTE has provided, in conjunction with its international partners from the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs and the Expert Group of the 1540 Committee, capacity building and technical assistance activities for member states to combat terrorism arising from the use of weapons of mass destruction by terrorists and non-state actors. To provide technical assistance and strengthen border control capacities, through a pilot project (now in execution in Mexico, and shortly to be launched in Colombia and to include Panama), efforts are being made to carry out activities accorded priority by the countries in their respective national plans.

Document security

Since its launch in 2006, the Document Security and Fraud Prevention Program has enhanced security in the issuance and control of travel and identity documents in the member states. The Secretariat has implemented different activities and training courses in the region, notable among them advanced training on the detection of fraudulent documents and impostors, and subregional workshops on best practices in travel document security and identification management. Through these efforts, training has been provided to 1,628 officials of all OAS member states, constituting a contribution to terrorism prevention.

Additionally, in collaboration with INTERPOL, national workshops have been held in the area of integrated border management and database promotion. This partnership is expected to be strengthened in the future for the execution of a project enabling the countries to share and consult information through a national alert system on the latest trends in travel and identity document falsification and alteration. In parallel, activities on this front have promoted participation by civil registries, which has led to greater and better interagency cooperation at the national and regional levels, and to raised awareness of the importance of the travel document issuance process.

Aviation security

Initially, the Aviation Security program focused the training it offered on passenger security and airport crisis management, based on standards that arose following the September 11 attacks. Ten years later, the program had evolved in tandem with the new International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) standards on security following attacks frustrated in 2010. Therefore, CICTE has imparted training on these new standards in 29 American member states on mitigation of risks and threats to the air freight supply chain and on designing freight security plans, ensuring efficient and safe trade flows.

Training has also been provided for 26 states of the region on the identification and interdiction of passengers seeking to traffic in illicit items. These techniques entail no

implementation costs beyond personnel skills. Therefore, several countries have established behavior analysis units at their airports. Additionally, in the last 10 years, 260 scholarships were provided to enable personnel of member states to participate in ICAO training programs, through which training has been provided for 3,370 aviation security officials from 68 airports of 31 member states.

Migration and customs

Initially, this program sought to raise awareness among border officials of risk management and to strengthen institutional relations among border control authorities. Based on this approach, workshops were held in 15 countries of Central America and the Caribbean, working in coordination with the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) and the Department of Public Security (DPS). Thereafter, in response to the priorities indicated by the member states, the approach was modified to address the issue of container and cargo ship security so as to ensure the safety and efficiency of the flow of trade in the region.

Biosecurity

As regards Strengthening Strategies on Emerging Terrorist Threats, it should be noted that the central element is conducting drills that bring together the high-level authorities with responsibility for responding to a bioterrorist attack or incident (public security, public health, and crisis management agencies, among others) and, thereafter, identifying security breaches that may arise in the crisis response and management process. This has been supplemented by legislative assistance activities for the preparation of national bioterrorism incident response plans, the cases of Mexico, Panama, and Trinidad and Tobago warranting special mention.

Security at major events

Since its creation, in 2006, the National Focal Point Network program has provided a forum for sharing experiences and knowledge of planning and security for major events, and now has 28 designated national focal points. In 2012, a permanent information exchange mechanism, accessible to all national focal points, was launched, a tool that provides support to countries hosting major events for security planning and enhanced cooperation among public institutions and between the public and private sectors.

Another aim of the program is to promote the building of national and regional prevention capacities through direct assistance to the member states, as was evident in the preparations for the 2010 Pan-American Games (Mexico) and 2013 Central American Games (Costa Rica).

Conclusion

Through the efforts of the CICTE programs, only possible through voluntary cooperation, we are now proud to have states with strengthened national anti-terrorism capacities. As evident from the above, member states have worked decisively to develop capacities, knowledge, best practices,

and technical skills. Each of these initiatives has helped reduce our individual and collective vulnerabilities.

Now, however, we are at a crossroads. All these achievements can only be made with member state contributions and, unfortunately, owing to the financial difficulties facing us all, the Executive Secretariat has not received the level of financial support required to carry out all its programs. As ever, that support is needed if we are to continue to protect our region against terrorist attacks and to participate decisively in the global fight against terrorism.

Thank you very much.