



Organization of
American States



INTER-AMERICAN COMMITTEE AGAINST TERRORISM (CICTE)

FOURTEENTH REGULAR SESSION
February 20-21, 2014
Washington, D.C.

OEA/Ser.L/X.2.14
CICTE/INF 9/14
27 February 2014
Original: English

**REMARKS BY GUEST SPEAKER – MR. JOHN SANDAGE,
DIRECTOR OF THE DIVISION OF TREATY AFFAIRS
OF THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE ON DRUGS AND CRIME**

(Delivered at the Third Plenary Session held on February 21, 2014)

REMARKS BY GUEST SPEAKER – MR. JOHN SANDAGE,
DIRECTOR OF THE DIVISION OF TREATY AFFAIRS
OF THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE ON DRUGS AND CRIME

(Delivered at the Third Plenary Session held on February 21, 2014)

Mr. Chairperson, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

I am very pleased to be here today and to be provided with an opportunity to commence this panel's discussions on the topic of "Strengthening Criminal Justice Responses of Acts of Terrorism".

Terrorist activities continue to shake the world, remaining one of the main threats to the security of countries and the safety of their citizens.

Terrorism jeopardizes democracy, tolerance, the rule of law and human rights, thus challenging directly the core values for which the United Nations stands for. More than 12 years after the events of September 11, 2001 and almost seven years after the adoption of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, countering terrorism continues to be a priority on the international agenda.

Weak governance and weak criminal justice systems often go hand in hand with instability, conflict, crime and, at times, terrorism. Effective and accessible criminal justice systems are the pre-requisite for guaranteeing safety and security of the world's citizens. The importance of the development and maintenance of fair and effective criminal justice systems as the foundation of any strategy to prevent and counter terrorism cannot be overemphasized.

The United Nations, in its Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (A/RES/60/288), recognizes the importance for Member States to -and I cite- "...develop and maintain an effective and rule of law-based national criminal justice system...". The Strategy also recognizes that States may require assistance in developing and maintaining such effective and rule of law-based criminal justice system, and encourage them to resort to the technical assistance delivered, inter alia, by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

The Terrorism Prevention Branch of UNODC, which I represent here today, has been engaged in assisting Member States to strengthen their criminal justice responses to acts of terrorism for more than 10 years.

Since 2003 we have worked to promote the ratification of the 18 universal legal instruments against terrorism; assist States with the legislative incorporation of the provisions of those instruments into national legislations and, most importantly; and provide capacity building training to criminal justice officials to implement, in practice, those legal provisions.

As a result of these efforts, since 2003 when the Terrorism Prevention Branch was established, legal technical assistance has been provided to 169 countries, resulting in an estimated 638 new ratifications of the international legal instruments, 113 new or revised pieces of counter terrorism legislation developed by assisted Member States, and over 18,500 national criminal justice officials trained. And in 2013 alone, 83 countries were assisted through national or regional activities, resulting in 37 new ratifications and over 2500 officials trained.

In addition, the increasingly complex nature of terrorism has triggered the need for UNODC/TPB to continue to develop specialized expertise in specific areas of terrorism prevention. We are currently providing technical assistance in the following areas: the use of the internet for terrorist purposes, victims of acts of terrorism, chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear terrorism, transport-related terrorism offenses, human rights while countering terrorism, the financing of terrorism, as well as countering radicalization.

In these different thematic areas, and in order to support the efforts of governments across the globe to strengthen the capacities of their criminal justice practitioners, the Branch has elaborated several specialized technical assistance publications and tools. These include the Counter-Terrorism Legal Training Curriculum which consolidates and systematizes legal concepts and related training material and information, with the aim of maximizing the impact of capacity building assistance provided by the Branch to requesting countries.

The Curriculum consists of several modules, each dealing with specific thematic areas of the legal and criminal justice aspects of countering terrorism. Recently two additional modules have been developed, one on Human Rights and Criminal Justice Responses to Terrorism and, another, on Transport related (civil aviation and maritime) Terrorism Offenses, in close cooperation with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the International Civil Aviation Organization and the International Maritime Organization.

The Branch closely cooperates with several other offices in UNODC that deal with crime prevention, both at Headquarters and in the Field. In particular, since the Terrorism Prevention Branch is in charge of promoting the ratification and full implementation of the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, we work closely with UNODC's Global Programme against Money Laundering, Proceeds of Crime and the Financing of Terrorism (GPML) with regard to the operational aspects of countering the financing of terrorism. Jointly we carry out several capacity building workshops on issues related to Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism.

In order to tailor this assistance to the specific requirements of each region, we can draw on our unique field presence. In the area of terrorism prevention, we currently have field experts located in Latin America, Southeast Asia, Central Asia, the Middle East and East and West Africa. These field offices provide regional expertise, local knowledge and operational capacity to help develop country and regional programmes and implement UNODC's counter-terrorism activities on the ground.

One of our main efforts of our Branch in the last years has focused in enhancing our counter terrorism programme in Latin America and the Caribbean. For this purpose, in 2009, the Terrorism Prevention Branch placed a pool of counter terrorism experts in the UNODC Office in Colombia with whom we developed our regional programme to response to specific countries requests.

Please allow me to highlight some successful experiences of our programme in Latin America and the Caribbean to strengthen criminal justice systems. In particular, our main efforts have been devoted to enhance the regional response to counter terrorism financing.

In this regard, our Office has launched awareness campaigns both to civil society in general, but also to specific vulnerable groups to prevent terrorism financing. Thus, our Branch is strengthening risk management systems on financing of terrorism among specific economic sectors and is fostering a robust Public-Private Partnership.

Our Branch provides legislative technical assistance and enhance public policies and national strategies on countering terrorism and its financing with the purpose of reinforcing the national corpus iuris in aspects such as criminalization of financing of terrorism, as well as freezing of terrorist assets.

However, our most recent development occurred in the area of criminal justice capacity building where specialized tools have been developed to enhance investigation, prosecution and adjudication of terrorist cases. In particular, our Branch is implementing a sophisticated tool - the Mock Criminal Investigation on Financing of Terrorism – that helps States to enhance national capacities in investigating financing of terrorism offences. This tool is complemented by a Case Management Tool for prosecutors and investigators. Two mock trial workshops were successfully completed in Medellin and Bogota (Colombia) in the first half of 2013. Next steps of the Mock Trial will imply the implementation of this tool in Argentina and, again, Colombia, in close coordination with the United Nations Counter-

terrorism Implementation Task Force (UN/CTITF) and its Counter-Terrorism Center (UNCCT).

To ensure public access of criminal justice officials to judicial decisions at all levels, our Branch will soon launch an Observatory of Jurisprudence for the Americas on counter terrorism, its financing and serious related crimes. The first step has been accomplished for Colombia, and we expect to expand the Observatory of Jurisprudence to other interested countries in the region.

Due to the vast technical assistance provided in Latin America and the Caribbean through specialized tools, as well as on the basis of the extensive expertise and good practices of countries in the region, our Branch is fostering south-south cooperation. In particular we work with Colombia, Bolivia and Paraguay to help them to share knowledge and expertise. We do the same with Colombia, Afghanistan and Nigeria.

Of course, we are not working in isolation on all of these issues but are closely coordinating our efforts with the other UN entities and international and regional organizations.

In the Latin American and the Caribbean region we continue working with our closest partner, the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism, with whom we have implemented several activities on legislative assistance and on countering terrorism and its financing on the basis of a complementary approach. In 2012 and 2013 the Branch, together with CICTE, provided legislative assistance to Panama in further drafting and revising the national counter-terrorism legislation as well as organized a Workshop on Combating Terrorism and Its Financing.

Thus, together with some of the most relevant international and regional technical assistance organizations, we have established an informal cooperation mechanism, which is called MECOOR ("mesa de coordinación" as per Spanish name), to provide coordinated technical assistance and avoid duplication of efforts. Through this mechanism our Branch provides

technical assistance to requesting countries jointly with the Inter-American Committee against terrorism (CICTE), the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD), the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) and the Financial Action Task Force for South America (GAFISUD). In 2013, the following activities were implemented under MECOOR: A Specialized National Workshop to follow up on legislative assistance against terrorism and its financing in Asuncion, Paraguay; as well as a Specialized National Workshop against Terrorism and Its Financing in Santa Cruz, Bolivia. We look forward to continuing and even strengthening this successful cooperation with CICTE.

The Branch also enjoys good cooperation with the World Bank. In March and April 2013, we participated in providing legislative assistance to Nicaragua in drafting its counterterrorism financing legislation.

Of course we continue to be very active with CTITF entities, including with CTED. In 2013, UNODC participated in CTED country visits to Guyana and to Suriname and attended several workshops. In addition, with CTED we have several joint projects in the area of Strengthening Criminal Justice Responses to Terrorism. For example CTED and UNODC launched a n important project on Building Effective Central Authorities for International Judicial Cooperation in Terrorism Cases. This global project aims at assisting Member States to establish effective systems of international cooperation in criminal matters, and, thus, strengthen the capacity of criminal justice officials to prosecute and adjudicate terrorism cases. The project envisages regional meetings aimed at promoting the establishment of designated authorities to act as focal points for international cooperation in terrorism cases as well as provide them with the necessary training. The project was launched in Cartagena, Colombia, on 19 February 2013.

Finally, our Branch takes advantage of the presence of UNODC along the region and closely coordinate our counter terrorism programme with our Field Offices in Mexico, Panama, Peru, Bolivia, Brazil and Paraguay.

I would like, once more, to underscore the importance of the work carried out by the Terrorism Prevention Branch, in coordination and sometimes jointly with regional and international partners, to strengthen criminal justices responses to acts of terrorism. Our joint efforts in this field ensure that terrorists find no safe heavens and are brought to justice.

In closing, because all of this work would not be possible without the political and financial support of our Member States, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Member States present here today for their continued support for UNODC's terrorism prevention efforts.

Thank you very much for your attention.