



General Assembly

Distr.: General
12 June 2020

Original: English

Seventy-fifth session

Item 114 of the preliminary list*

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Technical assistance provided by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime related to counter-terrorism

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution [74/175](#), the present report reviews the progress made from 1 June 2019 to 31 May 2020 by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in supporting Member States in becoming party to and implementing the international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism, as well as in implementing relevant United Nations resolutions. The report also highlights key achievements of the Office in delivering technical assistance on the crime prevention and criminal justice aspects of countering terrorism while responding to emerging challenges and evolving needs of Member States, including how the Office adapted its technical assistance delivery to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) health crisis. The report concludes with a set of conclusions for consideration by the General Assembly.

* [A/75/50](#).



I. Introduction

1. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is mandated to provide to countries, upon request, technical assistance in normative, policy, strategic, institutional and operational aspects of preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism. The General Assembly has reiterated and elaborated this mandate in a number of its recent resolutions, including resolution [74/175](#), on technical assistance provided by UNODC related to counter-terrorism; resolution [73/305](#), on the enhancement of international cooperation to assist victims of terrorism; resolution [73/186](#), on strengthening the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme, in particular its technical cooperation capacity; resolution [73/211](#), on measures to eliminate international terrorism; resolution [72/284](#), on the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy review; and resolution [72/196](#), on strengthening the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme, in particular its technical cooperation capacity.

2. In its resolution [74/175](#), the General Assembly requested UNODC to continue providing to Member States assistance related to the international legal instruments against terrorism; international legal and judicial cooperation pertaining to countering terrorism; criminal matters related to foreign terrorist fighters; international cooperation in criminal matters; collecting, analysing, preserving, storing, using and sharing forensic and electronic evidence for the investigation and prosecution of terrorism and terrorism-related offences; mutual legal assistance; counter-terrorist financing measures; links between transnational organized crime and terrorism; and criminal justice responses; as well as to strategies for reducing the risk of terrorist attacks on critical infrastructure; chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear terrorism; programmes for victims of terrorism; preventing the involvement of children in armed and terrorist groups; ensuring rehabilitation and reintegration of children associated with those groups; and mainstreaming gender perspectives into criminal justice responses to terrorism.

3. Terrorism hinders sustainable development and leads to regional instability and insecurity. Preventing terrorism and addressing conditions conducive to terrorism are crucial for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The work of UNODC in the area of terrorism prevention directly contributes to the implementation of several Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls) and Goal 16 (Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels).

4. UNODC is a member of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact, launched by the Secretary-General to strengthen coherence and coordination in the counter-terrorism work of the United Nations system. UNODC is one of the principal contributors to the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. During the reporting period, the Office further strengthened its field presence in Algeria, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Maldives, Mauritania, Mozambique, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, Senegal, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Tunisia. The UNODC office in Maiduguri in north-eastern Nigeria became operational in 2019.

5. The present report covers major activities undertaken by UNODC from 1 June 2019 to 31 May 2020. During the reporting period, UNODC assisted Member States and regional organizations in their efforts to prevent and combat terrorism, in line with the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The Office's support focused on helping Member States adhere to and implement the 19 international legal instruments to prevent and combat terrorism, and develop efficient crime prevention and criminal justice responses that meet human rights and rule of law standards. Following the consequences of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) health crisis, the Office quickly adapted its assistance to Member States in response to their changing needs and restricted access.

II. Delivery of technical assistance

A. Criminal justice responses to terrorism

6. Since 2003, UNODC has provided Member States, at their request, with assistance in their criminal justice responses to terrorism, building the capacity of more than 30,000 individuals. The assistance covers all aspects of the criminal justice response, including adherence to international legal instruments and developing conforming legislation at the national level; the development of national strategy, policy and action plans for terrorism prevention; strengthening the capacity of authorities responsible for the enforcement of laws aimed at preventing and countering terrorism, including to facilitate inter-agency cooperation at the national and international levels; strengthening capacity to prevent the illegal acquisition and trafficking of firearms by terrorists; enhancing the capacity of prosecutors to build and prosecute terrorism cases; facilitating mutual legal assistance between prosecutors and central authorities; building the capacity of judges responsible for adjudicating terrorism cases; and supporting initiatives on prison reform, alternatives to imprisonment, prevention of radicalization to violence, and the rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders. Assistance is delivered at the request of Member States and responds to, *inter alia*, priority needs identified through Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) country assessment visits, to which UNODC contributes actively. The Office's terrorism prevention programme is implemented by its Terrorism Prevention Branch, as well as by programme and other staff based at its headquarters and across its extensive field network.

1. Legislative assistance

7. During the reporting period, the following Member States became party to one or more international legal instruments related to terrorism: Belgium, Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Cyprus, Gabon, Ghana, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Malaysia, Montenegro, Nigeria, Paraguay, Portugal, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Sierra Leone, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uruguay. Kazakhstan and Turkey became, respectively, the third and fourth countries in the world to become party to all 19 international legal instruments against terrorism. With the ratification by Nigeria of the Protocol to amend the Convention on Offences and Certain Other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft of 2014, the Protocol has been ratified by 22 States parties, the number required for it to enter into force.

8. In 2019, UNODC launched a three-year joint project with the European Union and the Office of Counter-Terrorism on promoting the universalization and effective implementation of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. UNODC developed an eLearning tool on the international legal framework against chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear terrorism, available in Arabic, English, French, Russian and Spanish, and another one on the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, available in all six official languages of the United Nations. UNODC held three expert group meetings to develop a mock trial featuring the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.

9. UNODC maintains databases on legislation, treaties, strategies and case law, as well as a bibliography, relating to counter-terrorism. Hosted on the UNODC knowledge management portal known as Sharing Electronic Resources and Laws on Crime (SHERLOC), the databases are publicly accessible and contain information related to national, regional and international efforts to counter terrorism and related crimes. They serve as a technical assistance and information tool for policymakers, law enforcement and judicial practitioners, academia and the media. Updated continuously, the counter-terrorism legislation database contains more than 2,000 pieces of legislation from more than 140 countries.

2. Policy and strategy development

10. The Office advanced efforts to mainstream gender in terrorism prevention, publishing the *Handbook on Gender Dimensions of Criminal Justice Responses to Terrorism* in May 2019, the first publication produced by the United Nations on the topic. Integrating a human rights perspective, the handbook supports the work of policymakers, judicial officials, prosecutors, law enforcement and corrections officers, and lawyers assisting suspects or victims in terrorism matters.

11. In June 2019, UNODC launched its “Roadmap on the treatment of children associated with terrorist and violent extremist groups”. The Roadmap outlines that child recruitment is a serious form of violence against children, that children recruited and exploited by terrorist and violent extremist groups should be considered primarily as victims, and that rehabilitation and reintegration must be the primary objective of any interventions concerning such children.

12. In 2019, UNODC, jointly with CTED and the Office of Counter-Terrorism, launched a new global initiative to improve knowledge-sharing and provide assistance to Member States regarding the development and implementation of comprehensive and tailored strategies for the prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration of persons associated with terrorist groups, in line with Security Council resolutions [2178 \(2014\)](#) and [2396 \(2017\)](#). In October 2019, UNODC and CTED organized an expert group meeting on strategies for the prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration of persons allegedly associated with terrorist groups. In that connection, UNODC and CTED are preparing a publication on such strategies. In 2020, UNODC participated in the development, led by the Office of Counter-Terrorism, of a global framework for United Nations system-wide support to Member States in relation to individuals returned from the Syrian Arab Republic and Iraq.

13. The Office contributed to policy and technical working groups on combating the financing of terrorism at meetings of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and regional FATF-style review bodies. Mutual evaluations by FATF and FATF-style review bodies have indicated that greater attention needs to be placed on further integrating countering the financing of terrorism into counter-terrorism efforts. UNODC continued to support work related to terrorist financing and correspondent banking. UNODC has enhanced its policy consultations with private sector financial institutions and criminal justice agencies on public-private partnerships, in support of the implementation of the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and relevant Security Council resolutions.

14. In the Niger, UNODC supported national authorities in the adoption of a national plan of action that identified priority objectives of criminal justice responses to terrorism. In Senegal, UNODC supported authorities in the development of the country’s national strategy on countering money-laundering and the financing of terrorism. In addition, UNODC contributed to the development of an action plan for countering the financing of terrorism in West Africa.

15. In September 2019, the Government of Mozambique and UNODC developed a road map of comprehensive assistance to strengthen the country’s response to terrorism. The road map focuses on policy and technical assistance responding to national priorities of the Government. At the Government’s request, UNODC is supporting law enforcement and criminal justice officials in efforts to cooperate in the sharing of intelligence and in collecting, preserving and handling evidence, including evidence collected by the military.

3. Capacity-building on criminal justice responses to terrorism

16. UNODC continued to support Member States in their criminal justice responses to prevent and counter terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism. During the reporting period, the Office delivered more than 150 training activities and trained more than 3,000 law enforcement and criminal justice officials.

Middle East

17. The Office implemented a project on promoting the role of women officials in counter-terrorism in Iraq. The Office's activities contributed to mainstreaming a gender perspective in the investigation and prosecution of terrorist offences at the policy and operational levels, empowering female officers in the criminal justice responses of Iraq to terrorism in the country.

18. Monitoring and evaluation exercises conducted in 2019 revealed that authorities in Iraq had reported an increase in the number of cases involving Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) (Da'esh) brought to the judiciary, as well as in the number of cases that had been successfully prosecuted. UNODC provided training on open-source intelligence and investigations in Iraq in 2017 and 2018. As a result, law enforcement trainees from different provinces reported in 2019 that more than 100 investigations had been conducted using human rights-compliant special investigative techniques after having received assistance from UNODC. In addition, prosecutors and judges reported more than 50 cases that were being prosecuted and adjudicated as a result of the digital evidence collected through special investigative techniques learned in UNODC training programmes.

19. Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon have registered an increase in the number of human rights-compliant investigations using special investigation techniques undertaken by law enforcement officials trained by UNODC. Monitoring and evaluation exercises conducted in 2019 revealed that, as at the end of 2017, 10 investigations had been conducted using special investigation techniques. After the second phase, as at the end of 2018, an additional 16 investigations had been conducted using such techniques, mainly open source intelligence collection techniques. Law enforcement officials in Iraq trained by UNODC used open source intelligence collection techniques to locate and arrest individuals who were allegedly planning terrorist activities. The officials applied the knowledge they had acquired in UNODC training on software to locate transports of illicit chemicals used in improvised explosive devices and disrupted the delivery of those chemicals, arresting the individuals involved.

20. In Lebanon, the Office implemented a project to enhance investigation techniques employed by law enforcement and criminal justice officials in order to safeguard camps housing refugees and displaced persons from infiltration by terrorists. The project was also focused on strengthening the sharing of intelligence relating to terrorist threats posed to refugee communities.

Africa

21. In Nigeria, the Office continued to support the deployment of prosecutors from Abuja specialized in terrorism cases to provide legal guidance and expertise to the Joint Investigation Centre in Maiduguri in conducting evidence-based investigations of terrorism cases. UNODC support contributed to the conviction of 366 terrorism suspects and the discharge of 882 such suspects. Since 2018, the Office has supported deployments of federal prosecutors to Borno State in north-east Nigeria, the region most affected by Boko Haram terrorist activity. The capacity of prosecutors was strengthened, enabling them to provide legal guidance and work with the investigation unit to review terrorism case files and build cases for prosecution while respecting human rights, resulting in the review of 1,500 cases, including the preparation of nearly 1,000 improved case files for prosecution and hundreds of cases recommended for dismissal.

22. In January 2020, UNODC conducted a scoping mission to Nigeria to support the protection of children from violence committed by terrorist groups. In addition, UNODC delivered training activities to representatives from the security sector and justice and child protection systems on the treatment of children associated with terrorist groups.

23. One of the main counter-terrorism investigation agencies in Nigeria, the Department of State Services, established a gender desk as a result of UNODC programming. Moreover, the Department ensured enhanced application of witness protection measures. An increase in both the number of female investigators recruited and in the attention given to the role of women in terrorist groups resulted in investigative successes in a high-profile case. Two customized training modules developed for Nigeria were launched in 2019, one on counter-terrorism investigations and the other on the gender dimensions of criminal justice responses to terrorism.

24. The Office continued to collaborate with Member States in the Sahel region, both by supporting the Group of Five for the Sahel (G5 Sahel) and by providing assistance at the national level. UNODC supported operationalizing the police component of the G5 Sahel joint force, enabling judicial responses subsequent to counter-terrorist operations in the battlefield. The Office also contributed to developing a G5 Sahel action plan to increase the number of uniformed women.

25. The Office further supported judicial and investigative units specializing in counter-terrorism in Burkina Faso, Mali and the Niger. UNODC assistance involved an enhanced focus on investigating and prosecuting terrorism-related cases, emphasizing the use of special investigative techniques and the protection of witnesses and victims. UNODC worked with the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali to build the capacity of gendarmes from the most affected regions and members of the national police in the investigation of terrorism cases focused on crime-scene management. Additionally, training on trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants was integrated into United Nations police officer training, in recognition of the links between those crimes and terrorist groups. The Office's assistance in counter-terrorism efforts is an integral part of the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel.

26. UNODC supported authorities of the Niger in strengthening their investigations, prosecutions and incarcerations of active and former Boko Haram members. Investigators, judges and lawyers were trained on human rights norms and standards in terrorism cases, interrogation techniques, legal aid and defence and international cooperation. UNODC organized awareness-raising sessions in prisons on the topics of presumption of innocence and provisional release. UNODC conducted 154 prison visits to the Niamey, Kollo and Koutoukalé prisons, met with 350 detainees, including children and women, and ensured follow-up of their cases. Support provided by UNODC contributed to the conviction of 86 detainees and the acquittal of 258 detainees in 2019. In early 2020, 17 detainees were convicted and 14 acquitted. In addition, UNODC delivered information technology equipment for a database at the specialized judicial unit to improve the follow-up of cases.

27. UNODC provided assistance to Chad resulting in the screening and adjudication of hundreds of cases involving persons detained on suspicion of terrorism offences, advancing some of the cases to trial while releasing some detainees. UNODC provided specialized training to and supported the specialized counter-terrorism judicial unit in conducting reviews at the Koro Toro detention facility.

28. UNODC supported the development and implementation of institutional integrity strategies for the police, the gendarmerie and the customs authority in Burkina Faso. The action was informed by consultations conducted by UNODC with representatives of Member States in the Sahel region, which highlighted how corruption undermined the State response to terrorism, facilitated terrorist operations and could be a motivating factor for joining extremist groups. In Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania, UNODC supported efforts to prevent violent extremism conducive to terrorism by building trust between communities, the media and the police, establishing mechanisms to report corruption and police misconduct.

29. In Burkina Faso, UNODC collaborated with the United Nations Children's Fund to deliver a national workshop on violence against children recruited and exploited by armed groups, including those designated as terrorist groups. The workshop was held in December 2019 and strengthened the capacity of national criminal justice,

security, juvenile justice and child protection actors on the treatment of such children. An action plan was developed to provide an integrated response to the phenomenon of children associated with armed groups, including terrorist groups.

30. In August 2019, UNODC cooperated with the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the International Organization for Migration in delivering a regional workshop to strengthen border security in the context of counter-terrorism in the region of Liptako-Gourma between Burkina Faso, Mali and the Niger. UNODC shared its experience supporting cross-border and inter-agency cooperation, notably through joint operations.

31. Member States have identified difficulties in collecting adequate evidence in conflict and high-risk zones. The Office has developed a global capacity-building initiative to assist States in the use and admissibility as evidence of information and material collected by the military from conflict and high-risk zones. Having delivered training on the topic to the military in north-eastern Nigeria, UNODC is now delivering similar assistance to authorities of the Niger.

32. The Office delivered assistance to countries in Eastern Africa, including bilateral assistance to Kenya, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania, as well as regional and subregional scenario-based training to support the conducting of intelligence-led investigations of terrorism cases. Assistance activities also included the strengthening of regional law enforcement cooperation. UNODC worked closely with the Eastern African Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization to support the development of its Regional Counter-Terrorism Centre of Excellence. In addition, UNODC delivered technical assistance on border security, as well as financial and cyber investigations, disruptions and sanctions in the context of countering the financing of terrorism. UNODC also provided resource material to 13 Member States, and specialized equipment and software to Kenya.

33. In Somalia, through the Indian Ocean Forum on Maritime Crime, UNODC worked closely with the Panel of Experts on Somalia to map and identify illicit goods transported by sea that are trafficked using Somalia as a trans-shipment hub and that benefit Al-Shabaab through taxation or direct involvement in their commerce. UNODC supports Somalia in acquiring the capacity to secure its maritime space and borders from illicit trafficking that furthers Al-Shabaab operations, such as the arms trafficking across the border between Puntland and Yemen. This is done through a long-standing capacity-building programme at the main ports of Somalia.

34. UNODC supported countries of the Southern African Development Community in strengthening rule of law-based criminal justice responses to prevent and counter terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism. As part of that initiative, UNODC carried out its first terrorism prevention capacity-building activities in Mozambique in 2019 and 2020.

35. The Office conducted three visits, to Angola, Togo and Uganda, to promote the universalization and effective implementation of the international legal instruments against nuclear terrorism. UNODC delivered a workshop on nuclear security and protection against nuclear terrorism for Libya, hosted in Morocco by the Moroccan Agency for Nuclear and Radiological Safety and Security.

Asia

36. The Office continued to support the Government of Afghanistan in countering the financing of terrorism. The assistance was focused on enhancing inter-agency coordination, as well as on policy related to investigating and disrupting the financial networks of terrorist groups, combating illicit flows of funds out of and into Afghanistan, the misuse of money value transfer services and cash, and improving the implementation of sanctions. UNODC convened an expert group meeting aimed at supporting the legislative framework on supporting victims of acts of terrorism during criminal proceedings in Afghanistan.

37. Border law enforcement units in Afghanistan trained by the Office seized 179 firearms, including AK-47s and rocket-propelled grenade launchers; thousands of kilograms of explosives, explosive precursors and detonators; roughly 20,000 mobile phones, drones and other dual-use equipment; two armoured vehicles; and thousands of dollars in cash and cultural property items with possible links to terrorist financing.

38. In Pakistan, the Office, in close collaboration with the National Counter-Terrorism Authority, delivered technical assistance to 600 criminal justice practitioners through 30 specialized workshops aimed at strengthening the investigation, prosecution and adjudication of terrorism-related cases. Legal tools on witness protection in terrorism cases were reviewed by UNODC. Together with the International Criminal Court and the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation, UNODC provided legislative assistance to lawmakers. Draft legislation on witness protection was submitted to the Parliament of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province.

39. Moreover, the Prosecution Department of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province digitized 550 cases as a result of support provided by the Office to establish a case management and monitoring system. The digitization of case files has improved efficiency, oversight, transparency and accountability in terrorism-related cases.

40. The Government of Pakistan and UNODC developed a four-year project entitled “Pakistan’s terrorism prevention programme 2020–2023”. The project extends the thematic and geographic scope of the Office’s support to Pakistan in the area of terrorism prevention. Technical assistance will be provided in support of terrorism-related investigations, prosecutions and adjudication; supporting victims of terrorist attacks; youth and community engagement; countering the financing of terrorism; and international cooperation.

41. In Bangladesh, the Office launched an initiative to enhance the capacity of the authorities at Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka to identify and interdict explosives, explosive precursors and components of improvised explosive devices in air cargo.

42. In 2019, the Office implemented a technical assistance initiative in South and South-East Asia to support authorities in countering the financing of terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction by non-State actors. In February 2020, the Office conducted a visit to the Philippines to promote adherence to the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.

43. The Office provided assistance related to preventing and responding to violence against children recruited and exploited by armed groups, including terrorist and violent extremist groups. In March 2020, the Office convened a high-level event in Indonesia, with representation from Indonesia, Malaysia, Maldives and the Philippines, focused on the identification of initiatives to translate the UNODC “Roadmap on the treatment of children associated with terrorist and violent extremist groups” into practice. As a result of the event, Indonesia launched the Bali Call for Action, a high-level political declaration which endorses the Roadmap and commits to better serving and protecting children affected by terrorism.

44. In 2020, the Office began providing support for the establishment of a forum for judges from Maldives and Sri Lanka to exchange good practices and tailor internationally recognized practices to fit their own national contexts. The support includes integrating the *South Asia Regional Toolkit for Judges*, developed by CTED, into the curricula of their respective national judicial training centres.

45. In South-East Asia, the Office established platforms in the Philippines and Thailand to facilitate inter-agency collaboration for the prevention of terrorism and its financing. It also provided assistance on gender mainstreaming in criminal justice responses to terrorism and countering the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes. UNODC further contributed to the implementation of cybersecurity and new technologies projects of the Office of Counter-Terrorism. UNODC contributed to two regional workshops organized by the Office of Counter-Terrorism on the protection of critical infrastructure from terrorist cyberattacks. UNODC also contributed to an

Office of Counter-Terrorism project to enhance the skills of officials from Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines to use social media and other Internet-based resources to investigate, track, gather evidence against and prosecute suspected terrorists in full compliance with human rights standards and the rule of law.

46. In 2019, UNODC supported the revision and reissue of a manual on forensic psycholinguistic and religious expertise in Kyrgyzstan as part of its project aimed at reducing the vulnerability to violent extremism conducive to terrorism. The manual is to be used in terrorism-related cases to produce improved evidence gathered in accordance with standard operating procedures, contributing to better adherence to fair trial standards.

Latin America and the Caribbean

47. In 2019 and 2020, UNODC strengthened the coordination among national authorities of Colombia in charge of preventing and fighting terrorism, supporting eight sessions of the Inter-institutional Committee to Prevent and Fight against Terrorism, its Financing and Serious Related Crimes.

48. In June 2019 and February 2020, in Panama and in Barbados, respectively, UNODC conducted regional workshops to promote the universalization and effective implementation of three international legal instruments against nuclear terrorism: the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and Nuclear Facilities and its Amendment.

South-Eastern Europe

49. In 2019, the Office updated the training tool entitled *Foreign Terrorist Fighters: Manual for Judicial Training Institutes, South-Eastern Europe*, which had originally been published in 2017. The update took into account new developments in relation to foreign terrorist fighters and social media, as well as changes in the international and regional legal framework applicable to foreign terrorist fighters. The updated version has been translated into a number of national languages and will be incorporated into the curricula of judicial training institutes. The Office organized capacity-building activities in both Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina focused on detecting and intercepting returning foreign terrorist fighters at borders in compliance with international human rights standards.

Cross-regional capacity-building activities

50. Through an initiative focused on Algeria, Jordan, Lebanon and Tunisia, funded by the European Union, UNODC supported Member States in strengthening the legal regime against foreign terrorist fighters and building the capacity of criminal justice and law enforcement officials to deal with specific legal aspects of countering the threat of foreign terrorist fighters at the national and regional levels. In addition, through a project in support of the implementation by Member States of Security Council resolution [2396 \(2017\)](#), UNODC supported Member States in strengthening criminal justice responses to terrorism and foreign terrorist fighters. In 2019 and 2020, UNODC delivered assistance on advance passenger information and passenger name record data, biometrics and other data, as well the use of investigative tools and techniques to detect threats relating to foreign terrorist fighters in Algeria, Bangladesh, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Morocco, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. UNODC translated the publication entitled *United Nations Compendium of Recommended Practices for the Responsible Use and Sharing of Biometrics in Counter-Terrorism* into Russian and disseminated it to partners.

51. Under the United Nations Peace and Development Trust Fund, UNODC supported nine African countries from the Sahel and North Africa regions, comprising, respectively, Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, the Niger and Senegal, and Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, to counter the use of the Internet for terrorism purposes. The initiative was focused on the collection, storage and use of

digital evidence, as well as judicial cooperation among national authorities, and with the private sector.

52. In 2019, in the framework of the joint UNODC/International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL)/World Customs Organization (WCO) Airport Communication Project, UNODC, together with the Office of Counter-Terrorism, which also provided co-funding, delivered training in Eastern Africa, the Caribbean and the Sahel to strengthen the capacity of front-line officers at airports to counter the threat of foreign terrorist fighters.

53. The UNODC Global Maritime Crime Programme has established two training facilities in the Indian Ocean region (Seychelles and Sri Lanka) and is preparing the opening of a third facility in Maldives. The training centres hold vessels used by illicit trafficking groups, including those involved in supplying weapons to terrorist groups in the Gulf of Aden and heroin trafficking associated with funding of the Taliban.

Global capacity-building activities

54. UNODC is one of the partners in the Countering Terrorist Travel Programme, an “all-of-United Nations” effort led by the Office of Counter-Terrorism, together with CTED, the International Civil Aviation Organization, the Office of Information and Communications Technology, and INTERPOL. The objective of the programme is to assist Member States in building their capacities to prevent, detect, investigate and prosecute terrorist offences and other serious crimes, including related travel, by analysing passenger data collected through advance passenger information and passenger name record systems, in accordance with Security Council resolutions [2178 \(2014\)](#), [2396 \(2016\)](#) and [2482 \(2019\)](#). As part of the programme, UNODC has provided legislative assistance to Azerbaijan, Ghana, Togo and the Sudan in support of legislation that is in compliance with international standards and international law, including international human rights law.

55. The Office, in cooperation with WCO, delivered training to customs, police, and other law enforcement officials on strategic trade and export control by means of identifying and interdicting strategic trade and dual-use goods through the Office’s Container Control Programme. Such assistance plays an important role in preventing terrorist groups from acquiring, trafficking in, and financing chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear materials, as well as conventional weapons and explosives. In 2019, law enforcement authorities supported by the Office seized more than 40 strategic trade and dual-use shipments, including firearms, explosives, explosive precursors, drones and armoured vehicles.

56. UNODC continued to develop its Counter-Terrorism Learning Platform, an interactive online capacity-building tool that has been utilized extensively for technical assistance and had counted 2,641 users from more than 135 countries at the time of writing. Since 2008, UNODC has trained 1,790 practitioners worldwide through the platform and has delivered 31 online training courses, involving the participation of 687 criminal justice and law enforcement officials. In addition, 125 webinars on various issues related to counter-terrorism have been carried out to date. In 2019, UNODC upgraded the platform interface by providing new features and more user-friendly tools. In addition, UNODC developed a new interactive eLearning course on preserving and requesting digital evidence across borders. UNODC also delivered eight webinars on the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.

57. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 health crisis, the Office has significantly scaled up the use of its Counter-Terrorism Learning Platform, ensuring that it can continue to provide technical assistance to Member States remotely. In April 2020, UNODC held an expert group meeting on digital evidence to develop a training module with partners from international organizations and training academies worldwide. At the time of writing, the Office had planned a further 35 technical assistance activities to be delivered through the platform between May and October 2020.

58. In line with Security Council resolution 2370 (2017), UNODC works with Member States on the physical security and management of stockpiles of small arms and light weapons, recognized as important means for contributing to the elimination of the supply of weapons to terrorists. In 2019, UNODC and the Office of Counter-Terrorism initiated a joint project focused on addressing the terrorism-arms-crime nexus: preventing and combating the illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons and their illicit supply to terrorists in Central Asia. The project will be supported by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs and CTED, with the participation of INTERPOL and WCO.

59. In the framework of the Global Programme for the Implementation of the Doha Declaration, the Education for Justice (E4J) initiative developed educational tools and resources on rule of law issues aimed at secondary-level students. Those included videos, teaching guides and board games aimed at promoting tolerance, respect for diversity and other skills and values that support the prevention of violent extremism conducive to terrorism. At the university level, E4J developed a series of 15 university teaching modules on counter-terrorism, including one exploring the linkages between terrorism and organized crime.

60. During the COVID-19 health crisis, E4J upscaled its efforts to reach out to educators, academics, teachers, youth and other relevant stakeholders to encourage them to speak about issues exacerbated by the confinement period precipitated by the health crisis. A dialogue with young people was held through a webinar to brief them on the key elements in the fight against terrorism and some of the driving factors.

61. In the context of the Youth Crime Prevention through Sport component of the Global Programme for the Implementation of the Doha Declaration, a guide on the prevention of violent extremism through sports is under development. A draft of the guide was presented and discussed during an expert group meeting held in Vienna in November 2019. The guide provides guidance on how sport and sport-based learning can be used to address the risk and protective factors of violent extremism among young people and is aimed at strengthening their resilience.

4. International cooperation and mutual legal assistance

62. UNODC supports several international networks of focal points that facilitate expeditious cooperation in cases related to terrorism, such as the Multi-Agency Task Force for the Middle East and North Africa Region, the Network of Prosecutors and Central Authorities from Source, Transit and Destination Countries in response to Transnational Organized Crime in Central Asia and Southern Caucasus, the Sahel Security Cooperation Platform of the Group of Five for the Sahel, the Regional Judicial Platform of the Sahel countries and the Network of West African Central Authorities and Prosecutors against Organized Crime (WACAP). Through these networks, the Office facilitated cooperation on 48 requests for assistance between central authorities. The Office established a new informal judicial cooperation network for countries of the South-East Asian region.

63. The publication entitled *Practical Guide for Requesting Electronic Evidence Across Borders*, developed by UNODC jointly with CTED and the International Association of Prosecutors, was made available online in 2019 through the UNODC SHERLOC portal, which has led to a significant increase in users of the portal. The guide contains information to help identify the steps required to gather, preserve and share electronic evidence, with the overall aim of ensuring efficiency in mutual legal assistance practices.

64. The Office has been working with the Regional Judicial Platform of the Sahel and the Sahel Security Cooperation Platform of the Group of Five for the Sahel to establish cooperation between the two entities. In Mali, UNODC mentoring for the specialized judicial unit strengthened the capacities of prosecutors and investigative judges to enter into international judicial cooperation with other Sahel countries and non-African countries. As a result, the number of requests for mutual legal assistance processed, as well as the number of cases sent for adjudication, increased.

65. The Office provided support to WACAP to facilitate international judicial cooperation in the region, including on terrorism cases. Following the Dakar Call for Action on criminal justice and civil society responses to violent extremism conducive to terrorism, adopted in 2018 by WACAP, a first session dedicated to dialogue on the topic was held in Bamako in March 2020.

66. The Office supported the Central Asian Network for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and implemented activities to enhance the capacity of government authorities and civil society actors in the region. The assistance was focused on the prevention of violent extremism conducive to terrorism, and on coordinated prosecutorial and rehabilitative responses to returning foreign terrorist fighters and their families.

67. The Office continued to use the Mutual Legal Assistance Request Writer Tool in technical assistance activities. The tool provides guidance to criminal justice practitioners in drafting requests for mutual legal assistance. UNODC developed a specialized tool on communications from central authorities regarding working modalities and emergency measures resulting from the COVID-19 health crisis.

5. Prison reform, rehabilitation and reintegration

68. UNODC, the Office of Counter-Terrorism and CTED advanced their joint initiative relating to violent extremist offenders and the prevention of radicalization to violence in prisons. The project is aimed at strengthening the capacity of prison services to more effectively manage violent extremist prisoners and respond to the potential radicalization to violence in prisons. Implementation is under way in Kazakhstan, Tunisia and Uganda.

69. In Kyrgyzstan, the Office is implementing a joint project with the United Nations Development Programme under the Peacebuilding Fund on prevention of radicalization to violence in prisons and probation settings. The project supports preventing radicalization to violence in prisons, improving the governance of the penitentiary system and probation services, implementing community policing and engagement strategies to prevent further progression to violent extremism, and strengthening forensic services.

70. The Office launched a project to strengthen detention programmes for returning foreign terrorist fighters in Iraq, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. The project is aimed at enhancing the capacity of authorities to manage threats posed by foreign terrorist fighters through the delivery of assistance to law enforcement, corrections and justice sector authorities, incentivizing cooperation among partners in repatriating their foreign terrorist fighter nationals in custody in other countries.

71. In South-East Asia, the Office supported the management of high-risk offenders in prison settings. As part of that effort, in October 2019, UNODC conducted a regional workshop on preventing violent extremism conducive to terrorism in prisons in Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

72. The Office provided support to high-security prisons in Kenya and Somalia to prevent radicalization to violence, as well as to authorities managing violent extremist prisoners. In February 2019, with the support of UNODC, the Mogadishu Prison and Court Complex was inaugurated, providing Somalia with high-security and safe court and detention facilities for the adjudication and incarceration of individuals suspected or convicted of serious crimes, including terrorism. The court complex provides accommodation for judges, prosecutors and lawyers, thereby minimizing the risk of assassination during trial. The provision of additional secure infrastructure at the prison and court complex is ongoing, and an increase in prison capacity for high-risk prisoners is projected to bring the total capacity to 664 spaces for high-risk prisoners by the end of 2020. Vocational training activities for prisoners are ongoing.

73. In 2019, UNODC also provided training to prison staff and vocational opportunities to prisoners in Mogadishu, Garowe and Hargeisa, Somalia. UNODC maintains an active programme to prevent violent extremism in three high-risk

facilities in Somalia. At Garowe prison, a programme on preventing radicalization and promoting rehabilitation and reintegration approaches is ongoing. The programme targets the most vulnerable prisoners in the prison and is delivered in collaboration with the Swedish Prison and Probation Service. In the same context, UNODC launched a baseline study to develop rehabilitation and reintegration approaches at Hargeisa Central Prison.

74. In Kenya, in addition to providing dynamic security training for officers and vocational training for prisoners, UNODC developed and introduced a risk and needs assessment tool for violent extremist prisoners. The initiative enables prisoners to be classified as high-, medium- or low-risk and then accommodated in the appropriate cell block depending on risk factors. The tool was developed and implemented in Shimo La Tewa Maximum Security Prison in Mombasa and subsequently in the Kamiti Maximum Security Prison in Nairobi. UNODC also supported the prison administrations in the implementation of a risk assessment and classification tool in Burkina Faso and Mali.

75. In 2020, UNODC conducted assessments in Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea and Togo to improve the existing knowledge about violent extremism conducive to terrorism in prisons. The Office worked to enhance cooperation and the sharing of experiences between prison administrations and to promote a West African network of corrections professionals, and cooperation between prison administrations and civil society organizations.

76. UNODC supported the Niger by providing recommendations on legal and policy frameworks related to the treatment of children in contact with the justice system. In September 2019, UNODC provided an advisory opinion for an amendment to a decree aimed at enabling a multidisciplinary approach to the reintegration programme. Two working agreements between the Ministry of Justice and the ministries and institutions relating to child protection and professional and vocational training are being developed.

77. In December 2019, UNODC provided training to civil society organizations from Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic with regard to children recruited and exploited by terrorist groups, strengthening the capacity for measures to promote the rehabilitation and reintegration of affected children.

B. Partnerships

78. UNODC continued to contribute to efforts to implement the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, in line with its four pillars, and remains engaged in building the capacity of Member States through technical assistance relating to the criminal justice aspects of terrorism prevention. UNODC is an active member of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact and participates in the eight inter-agency working groups established under the Counter-Terrorism Compact Coordination Committee.

79. UNODC works with the Office of Counter-Terrorism to implement a joint project to assist Member States in adopting a human rights-based approach to the treatment of children affected by the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters.

80. UNODC operates in close cooperation with the relevant subsidiary bodies of the Security Council, including the Counter-Terrorism Committee and its Executive Directorate; the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions [1267 \(1999\)](#), [1989 \(2011\)](#) and [2253 \(2015\)](#) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities, and its Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team; and the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution [1540 \(2004\)](#) and its Expert Group.

81. UNODC continued to strengthen its partnerships with parliaments and parliamentary associations. In May 2019, UNODC, the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) signed a memorandum of understanding to

cement their cooperation in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism. In 2019, UNODC, IPU and the Office of Counter-Terrorism jointly organized two regional conferences, one in Egypt for countries in the Middle East and North Africa on the role of parliamentarians in addressing the threat of foreign terrorist fighters and associated challenges, and one in Malaysia, in October, on the role of the parliamentarians in preventing and countering terrorism and addressing the conditions conducive to terrorism in the Asia-Pacific region.

82. In relation to preventing chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear terrorism, the Office cooperated regularly with the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) and its Expert Group, the Office of Counter-Terrorism, the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, the Nuclear Security Contact Group, the Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction, and the Nuclear Threat Initiative, among others.

83. UNODC has increased its cooperation with the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum, in particular in supporting the implementation of the agenda of the Working Group on Capacity-Building in West Africa for the period 2020–2021, in close coordination with co-chairs Germany and Algeria.

84. The Office supported the development of the United Nations counter-terrorism strategy for Sri Lanka, in collaboration with other United Nations entities.

85. As a result of the deployment of a senior UNODC staff member to Iraq, the Office is fully engaged in the ongoing development of a new United Nations strategic framework for cooperation with Iraq. The deployment has enabled concrete steps towards facilitating joint programming, such as the cooperation with the International Organization for Migration regarding the border between Iraq and Jordan, and with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) on effective criminal justice responses.

C. Monitoring and evaluation

86. The Office supports efforts undertaken through the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact to measure the impact of United Nations capacity-building support to Member States to advance the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The Office shares the technical expertise of its Independent Evaluation Section, which has conducted more than 130 complex evaluations related to various types of serious crime, including terrorism. These independent evaluations place emphasis on the coherence of the Office's efforts undertaken in collaboration with other United Nations entities in implementing its assistance and on ensuring that the increased emphasis of United Nations reform efforts on evaluation is adhered to.

87. A meta-synthesis of all UNODC evaluation reports for the period 2017–2018 highlighted that Sustainable Development Goal 16 had been fully mainstreamed in the design of various training activities, thereby constituting a best practice in the Office. Moreover, UNODC launched a web-based evaluation application, Unite Evaluations, to manage all independent evaluation processes in UNODC and track the implementation of recommendations, including those pertaining to preventing and countering terrorism. On the basis of its experience in conducting strategic evaluations related to preventing and countering terrorism, UNODC offered its expertise to the Working Group on Resource Mobilization and Monitoring and Evaluation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact for conducting a meta-synthesis of evaluation results under the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

III. Conclusions

88. The terrorism landscape has been evolving rapidly and has become more complex. While Member States have achieved significant successes and progress in preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism, more efforts are required at the national and international levels. Full adherence to, and implementation of the international legal framework against terrorism is far from being achieved.

89. Limited criminal justice capacity remains a significant challenge. Outdated legislation, policies, strategies, action plans, institutional frameworks, and inter-agency and international cooperation arrangements also limit the ability of Member States to effectively investigate, prevent and prosecute acts of terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism.

90. Strong policy, legal and strategic frameworks and institutional capacities against terrorism, as well as international cooperation, are essential for preventing terrorism and ensuring justice. They are core elements of all United Nations resolutions related to terrorism. The primary responsibility for preventing and countering terrorism lies with Member States. UNODC stands ready to continue supporting Member States, at their request and in line with the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact.
