

## CND Thematic Discussion

**Challenge: increasing links between drug trafficking, corruption and other forms of organized crime, including trafficking in persons, trafficking in firearms, cybercrime and money-laundering and, in some cases, terrorism, including money-laundering in connection with the financing of terrorism, are observed;**

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**Remarks by Mr. Masood Karimipour, Chief, Terrorism Prevention Branch, UNODC**

Thank you very much for allowing me to share the perspectives of UNODC's Terrorism Prevention Branch. In our work to support States to put in place legal and criminal justice measures to detect, prevent and counter terrorism, we believe that addressing the linkages between terrorism, drug trafficking, and organized crime is an important priority. In addition, UNODC's broad criminal justice mandate allows us to address these linkages in a holistic way.

As part of our work on this issue, last year, UNODC led the drafting, in cooperation with UNOCT, of a Secretary General Report on *Actions taken by Member States and United Nations Entities to address the issue of linkages between terrorism and organized crime*, which we presented to the Security Council in August 2020. The report noted a number of trends related the links between terrorism and organized crime and highlighted good practices which have been adopted by a number of Member States which can serve as a useful guide for further action on this issue.

In the report, States reported a range of linkages, most often opportunistic and in connection to the financing of terrorism, with terrorist groups benefiting from varied illicit activities, including illicit trafficking in goods, including drugs. However, a few States observed that criminal organizations in their countries are increasingly disinterested in cooperation with terrorist groups, to avoid scrutiny from law enforcement. While others noted difficulties confirming the existence of linkages.

These conclusions match the observations of UN and UNODC research, namely that the linkages manifest differently across different regions, and under different circumstances.

The varied nature of these linkages between organized crime and terrorist groups complicates the development of an effective response. Yet, in the Report, many States highlighted common themes of actions which they have adopted to better respond to these interlinked challenges. These include:

- building inter-agency cooperation at both the policy and operational levels;
- building capacity to counter the financing of terrorism including through cooperation with the private sector,
- supporting informal and formal international cooperation;

- updating national legislation to effectively criminalize these inter-related crimes;
- and conducting further research to be able to better target

Building on this report, UNODC continues to support Member States to put in place many of these good practices.

UNODC is supporting inter-agency cooperation between intelligence, law enforcement, and prosecution agencies—on intelligence-based investigations, including through regional cooperation centres, to identify, intercept, and investigate terrorist activity and its linkages with the illicit movements of goods, firearms, and persons. For example, we are currently working to support the Eastern Africa Police Chiefs' Cooperation Organization to build its capacity to identify threats in the region, including on links between terrorism and forms of organized crime; to provide training to officials in the region to address these challenges; and to promote close cooperation across the region to address these issues in a coordinated way.

UNODC is supporting States to put in place strong counter-terrorism financing measures and address illicit financial flows, bringing together policy-makers, intelligence and criminal justice practitioners, the private sector, and civil society to identify vulnerable sectors and disrupt opportunistic linkages between organized crime and terrorism financing.

UNODC builds border security capacity – of land, air, and sea borders - to identify and seize illicit goods which can support terrorist groups and detect and apprehend persons traveling across borders for terrorism and organized crime purposes. As part of these efforts, we are working with UNOCT and other international partners to support Member States to better identify the transit of terrorism suspects through the establishment of passenger information units to better utilize passenger data through the API/PNR information.

UNODC is working to support informal and formal international cooperation, a key element given the trans-national nature of these crimes. UNODC has supported States to navigate the complex legal and procedural challenges to obtaining electronic evidence across borders, as internet services providers are often based overseas. We have produced a number of resources including a practical guide, a Service Provider Mapping, and an Electronic Evidence Hub (EEH) which is a free-access one-stop-shop which includes relevant national legislation, case law, and model forms and requests.

Finally, UNODC supports Member States in developing and revising national legislative and regulatory frameworks to comply with international legal frameworks, develop national counter-terrorism strategies, and encourage whole-of-society responses. For example, UNODC has been working with Nigeria to update its national counter-terrorism legislation to take into account financing, support, and other preparatory acts, and is working with the Southern Africa Development Community to update its regional counter-terrorism strategy which includes a focus on addressing links with other forms of organized crime.

We are doing this work in close cooperation with other relevant UN agencies and regional partners, including OCT, the Monitoring Team, CTED, and INTERPOL. However, we have been working particularly closely on delivering capacity building on this issue with UNICRI.

As part of these efforts, next month we will begin delivering joint capacity building training courses to countries in the Sahel in order to support them to address the links between organized crime and terrorism.

Thank you very much for allowing me to share our perspectives on this issue. UNODC's Terrorism Prevention Branch, working across UNODC, looks forward to continuing to support Member States to address these efforts.