



UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime



Regional Programme for the Arab States (2016-2021)

**To Prevent and Combat Crime, Terrorism
and Health Threats and Strengthen
Criminal Justice Systems in Line with
International Human Rights Standards**

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ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|------------|--|
| AIRCOP | Airport Communication Project |
| CCP | Container Control Programme |
| CCPCJ | Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice |
| CEDAW | Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women |
| CND | Commission on Narcotic Drugs |
| CSO | Civil Society Organization |
| FTF | Foreign Terrorist Fighters |
| GCC | Gulf Cooperation Council |
| ICE | International Collaborative Exercises (ICE) |
| INTERPOL | International Criminal Police Organization |
| ISIL/Daesh | Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant |
| LAS | League of Arab States |
| MENAHRA | MENA Harm Reduction Association |
| MENANPUD | MENA Network for People Who Use Drugs |
| NPS | New Psychoactive Substances |
| PICS | Precursor Incident Communication System |
| RANAA | Regional Arab Network Against AIDS |
| ROMENA | Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa (UNODC) |
| SDG | Sustainable Development Goal |
| StAR | Stolen Asset Recovery Initiative |
| UNAIDS | Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS |
| UNCAC | United Nations Convention Against Corruption |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNDAF | United Nations Development Assistance Framework |
| UNDSS | United Nations Department of Security and Safety |
| UNESCO | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization |
| UNODC | United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime |
| UNTOC | United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime |
| VAW | Violence against Women |
| WCO | World Customs Organization |
| WHO | World Health Organization |

I. INTRODUCTION

The Regional Programme for the Arab States to Prevent and Combat Crime, Terrorism and Health Threats and Strengthen Criminal Justice Systems in Line with International Human Rights Standards (2016-2021) (hereafter Regional Programme) is the second Regional Programme of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in the Middle East and North Africa region. It functions as the overarching framework for cooperation between the League of Arab States (LAS), the 18 participating States¹ and UNODC. Upon request of Member States in the region, UNODC will continue the work of its first Regional Programme on Combating Drugs, Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Reform for the Arab States (2011-2015) (hereinafter referred to as the first Regional Programme), and will include initiatives responding to new and evolving challenges.

The overall objective of the Regional Programme is to support Arab States' efforts to bring peace and stability to the region by enabling governments to more effectively and efficiently combat organized crime, terrorism and corruption, in compliance with the rule of law and human rights standards. Under the Regional Programme's framework, challenges posed by illicit trafficking, terrorism and corruption will continue to be addressed. The strengthening of criminal justice systems and crime prevention as building blocks for security, human rights and peace, will play a prominent role and UNODC will continue to work with national governments to find effective ways to reduce the prevalence of HIV/AIDS.

The Regional Programme is the strategic umbrella for a coherent and integrated approach to the challenges observed in the region and the needs identified through ongoing projects in the region, the in-depth independent evaluation of the first Regional Programme and the recommendations of the 2014 (first Regional Programme) Steering and Follow-Up Committee.

Structure

UNODC assistance in the region under the framework of the Regional Programme is structured around the following five subprogrammes, outlined in more detail below:

- Combating Organized Crime;
- Countering Terrorism;
- Combating Corruption and Financial Crimes;
- Strengthening Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice; and
- Prevention of Drug Use, Treatment and Care of Drug Use Disorders and HIV/AIDS Prevention and Care.

Cross-cutting themes to all UNODC initiatives under the five subprogrammes will include:

- Strengthening of data collection and research;
- Promotion of regional and international cooperation;
- Fostering of partnerships with civil society; and
- Mainstreaming human rights and gender perspectives.

¹ The Regional Programme covers 18 Member States in the region: Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen. Syria will only benefit from the Regional Programme when the suspension of its activities in LAS is lifted.

II. GOVERNING BODIES, MANDATES AND CONVENTIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE ON DRUGS AND CRIME

The UNODC Regional Programme is designed to prevent and combat crime, terrorism and health threats and strengthen criminal justice systems in line with international human rights standards. It is also consistent with UNODC's strategic framework for 2016-2017, the resolutions adopted by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ)², which guide UNODC work at the global level. It is also consistent with the Doha Declaration³ on integrating crime prevention and criminal justice into the wider United Nations agenda to address social and economic challenges and to promote the rule of law at the national and international levels as well as public participation.

UNODC mandates are grounded in the:

- International drug control conventions⁴
- United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and the Protocols thereto⁵
- United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC)⁶
- International instruments related to the Prevention and Suppression of International Terrorism⁷
- United Nations standards and norms in Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice⁸
- Relevant United Nations General Assembly and Security Council Resolutions

As the United Nations specialized entity in criminal justice reform and countering organized crime and terrorism, UNODC possesses the technical expertise to address those challenges in a comprehensive and integrated manner. UNODC offers support in the adoption and implementation of international conventions and instruments on drugs, crime and terrorism and direct technical assistance for law enforcement and justice authorities and professionals. As the guardian of the United Nations drugs and crime conventions, UNODC focuses on strengthening its partners' capacities to act in a more effective, efficient, and fair manner, in accordance with international law, standards and norms.

Sustainable Development Goals and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

On 25 September 2015, United Nations Member States formally adopted “*Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*,” with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and targets. The Agenda is intended as “*a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity that seeks to strengthen universal peace in larger freedom*.” In particular, the 2030 Agenda affirms explicitly that “*there can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development*”. The Agenda draws together the strands of peace, rule of law, human rights, development and equality into a comprehensive and forward-looking framework. Reducing conflict, crime, violence, discrimination, and ensuring inclusion and good governance are key elements of people's well-being and essential for

² UNODC reports to and receives its mandates from its governing bodies; CND and CCPCJ. CND is the central policy-making body for drug-related matters within the United Nations system, providing Member States with a forum to exchange expertise, experience and information on drug-related matters and to develop a coordinated response. CCPCJ is the central body within the United Nations system covering crime prevention and criminal justice policy, including the rule of law, aspects of counter-terrorism and other non-drug transnational organized crime challenges.

³https://www.unodc.org/documents/congress/Declaration/V1504151_English.pdf

⁴<https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/CND/conventions.html>

⁵https://www.unodc.org/documents/middleeastandnorthafrica/organised-crime/UNITED_NATIONS_CONVENTION_AGAINST_TRANSNATIONAL_ORGANIZED_CRIME_AND_THE_PROTOCOLS_THERETO.pdf

⁶http://www.unodc.org/documents/treaties/UNCAC/Publications/Convention/08-50026_E.pdf

⁷https://www.unodc.org/documents/terrorism/Publications/Int_Instruments_Prevention_and_Suppression_Int_Terrorism/Publication_-_English_-_08-25503_text.pdf

⁸https://www.unodc.org/pdf/criminal_justice/Compendium_UN_Standards_and_Norms_CP_and_CJ_English.pdf

securing sustainable development. This is a universal agenda that requires profound transformations and a new global partnership.

The aim of any development programme is to ensure that security and rule of law are key to empowering individuals as right holders. Through the post-2015 development agenda, the international community has a unique opportunity to prioritize the rule of law, security, and the fight against organized crime and illicit trade. Understanding the nature and extent of illicit cross-border trafficking, as well as the size of markets, flows of goods, and the involvement of organized criminal groups is essential to designing effective responses. International efforts to address issues hampering development, including illicit cross-border trade and movement, must not be limited to hard measures such as strengthening borders and law enforcement capacities. Instead, they require multidisciplinary responses that integrate rule of law, development, human rights, social and security approaches, involving all sectors of government and society at the national, regional and international levels.

The Regional Programme will contribute to achieving the relevant SDGs⁹ set forth in the 2030 Agenda. All UNODC mandates reflect universal aspirations embedded within the SDGs, and UNODC has the technical expertise and experience in capacity building in the region to support Member States in reaching particular goals, namely:

- **Goal 3:** Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages.
- **Goal 5:** Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.
- **Goal 10:** Reduce inequality within and among countries.
- **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.
- **Goal 17:** Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

Goal 16 is of particular importance to UNODC as it ensures that the rule of law, peace and security are included in the new global agenda. UNODC will contribute to ensure that all global treaties, norms and standards (i.e. UNTOC, UNCAC, drug conventions, UN standards and norms on criminal justice and crime prevention, as well as the legal instruments against terrorism) are effectively inserted in national and regional agendas, as this is a key post-2015 challenge.

Equally, UNODC's work on drugs and health is inextricably linked to multiple Targets of Goal 3. The Office has an existing mandate on a number of fronts, including supporting a balanced public health-oriented approach to the drug problem, by working to end discrimination against, and promote interventions for, people who use drugs, and strengthening the access to comprehensive, evidence-based, and gender-responsive services for prevention of drug use and treatment of substance use disorders, including as an alternative to imprisonment. UNODC is also mandated to provide HIV prevention, treatment and care among people who use drugs and in prisons.

Consequently, in the context of SDGs, the Regional Programme will mainstream crime and drug control in the development agenda, strengthen the policy dialogue with national and regional stakeholders in promoting the rule of law to combat transnational organized crime and terrorism, improve the dialogue and cooperation with civil society, and support "knowledge networks" across the region.

Further, in line with SDGs, major topics under the Regional Programme will also include: the tackling of corruption and money laundering at all levels, as these hinder economic development and facilitate the financing of terrorism; the improvement of prison management and respect for human rights therein to prevent prisons from becoming grounds for radicalization and extremism; and the fight against trafficking in human beings, drugs, arms and cultural property. Additional focus will be on eliminating all forms of violence against all women and girls, including trafficking, sexual and other types of exploitation.

⁹ For more information on and a complete list of the new SDGs see: <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in the Middle East and North Africa Region

UNODC has been supporting Member States in the region since 1992 with programmes and activities to strengthen the response to national, regional and transnational threats related to drugs, organized crime, terrorism and corruption and to build effective and humane criminal justice systems.

UNODC has a Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa (ROMENA) in Egypt and Programme Offices in Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Tunisia, and the United Arab Emirates.

In partnership with the LAS, UNODC developed and implemented its first Regional Programme over the period 2011-2015. Despite the fundamental political transformations that occurred in the region starting in 2010, thus deeply changing the geopolitical and security framework in many countries, UNODC succeeded in providing significant contributions in areas such as criminal justice reform, combating transnational crimes, human trafficking, corruption, drug abuse, and strengthening border control.

Upon request of, and in consultation with, Member States in the region, UNODC has developed this second Regional Programme for the period 2016-2021 taking into account experiences and lessons learnt and the findings of the in-depth independent evaluation¹⁰ of the first Regional Programme, as well as the challenges and needs identified in the region through ongoing projects and during consultations with Member States.

III. REGIONAL CONTEXT

3.1 POLITICAL CONTEXT

Since 2010, the Arab region has been undergoing profound political and social transformations and changes that inspired widespread hopes for electoral, policy and institutional reforms. Demands voiced by millions of protesters taking to the streets had common elements across the countries in the region: improved governance and human rights, an end to corruption, and inclusive economic opportunities.

The impact and effect of these political changes varied across the region as a result of diverse responses to the challenges by individual countries. . In some countries, long-standing autocratic rule was removed while in others, possibilities for more pluralistic or democratic developments opened up. In countries such as Iraq, Libya, and Yemen, violent conflicts continue. In Syria, a full-fledged war has been on-going for more than four years and has caused one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world with millions of internally displaced persons and refugees impacting the security and social cohesion of bordering countries, the region and beyond. Jordan and Lebanon are most notably impacted, with Lebanon experiencing a particularly volatile security situation.

Militant extremist organizations, in particular the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) and other violent non-State actors are gaining strength in the region. Power vacuums in some States, and States that no longer able to control their borders, provide fertile grounds for transnational organized criminal and terrorist organizations. Five years after the political changes began, many of the countries in the region find themselves in an unstable and turbulent environment, and citizen focus has shifted from hopes for political reform to conflict management and seeking peace and stability as a priority.

¹⁰ For more detailed information on the first Regional Programme, on its achievements and activities undertaken, please refer to the in-depth evaluation of the first Regional Programme for the Arab States: https://www.unodc.org/documents/evaluation/indepth-evaluations/2015/RP_Arab_States_Final_Evaluation_July_2015.pdf

An aggravating element is the fact that most of the Arab countries suffer from serious economic and socio-political problems resulting in high levels of unemployment and poverty. Perceived lack of security has negatively impacted tourism and foreign direct investment, two major economic pillars for several Member States in the region. Weak social infrastructure, such as education, health care and social security systems, is a common problem in many of the countries in the region, further undermining stability.

At present, the region is facing several challenges in the political, economic, social, religious and energy sectors which are key to its future and the future of wider regional and international security. Security challenges and the spread of terrorism appear to be the most imminent threats to many Member States. A comprehensive and well-integrated programme, at both national and regional levels, to improve security, justice and human rights as well as human security is the most promising approach for sustainable security, stability, peace and development in the region.

3.2 SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

The following section provides a brief overview of the main drugs, organized crime and terrorism related threats and challenges facing the region. The focus of the profile is on areas relevant to UNODC mandates under the five subprogrammes of the Regional Programme, namely, a) Combating Organized Crime; b) Countering Terrorism; c) Combating Corruption and Financial Crimes; d) Strengthening Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice; and e) Prevention of Drug Use, Treatment and Care of Drug Use Disorders and HIV/AIDS Prevention and Care.

3.2.1 *Organized Crime*

At present, headlines about the Middle East and North African region are focused on the security threat posed by extremist militant organizations. However, the growth of transnational organized crime networks in the region is also significantly threatening national and regional security. The current political instability across the region caused by armed conflict in several countries has led to a deterioration of the capacity of several Arab States to exert effective control over their borders. These circumstances, combined with weak economies with reduced employment opportunities and youth often traumatized by conflict, as well as the geographic proximity to lucrative European black markets, provide fertile ground for criminal groups and networks to prosper. Of major concern to the region is that some organized criminal groups have changed their modus operandi in relation to extremist militant organizations with apparent symbiotic or outright cooperative dynamics between them resulting in significant amounts of funding for terrorist groups who benefit from illicit trafficking by acting as protectors or facilitators.¹¹

3.2.2 *Drug Trafficking*¹²

Illicit cultivation of cannabis continues in most North African countries. While Morocco still faces challenges of cannabis resin production, Lebanese cannabis has increasingly been seized over the past years. In addition, Afghan cannabis is trafficked to the Gulf States and to the Middle East. Heroin originating from Afghanistan has been typically trafficked to the Middle East through Iraq and Turkey. As border controls have become more efficient between Turkey and Iran, a southern route has emerged in recent years, starting from Afghanistan through Pakistan and southern Iran, transiting through the Middle East and the Gulf States, and continuing along the coastlines of East and West Africa as well as through South-East Asia en route to final destinations in Asia and Europe. A significant increase in heroin seizures was recorded in several countries in the region over the past years. In 2014, for example, heroin seizures in Egypt almost tripled compared to the year before. The same trend can be observed with

¹¹ Organizations would either allow safe passage for illicit trafficking through territory they control, or take over the logistics for the transit of goods and people through these area(s). For more information on the nexus between organized crime and terrorism, see the "Report of the Secretary-General on the Threat of Terrorists benefiting from Transnational Organized Crime", 21 May 2015.

¹² Data and information in this section are taken from the 2013 and 2014 World Drug Reports, 2013 and 2014 INCB reports and internal UNODC reports.

cocaine. Major maritime seizures in 2014 seemingly destined for Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, account for more than what was intercepted in the entire region during the period 2010-2013. Whether traffickers are trying to find new routes into Europe or whether there are other reasons behind this new trend, such as uncollected shipments, is still unclear. Furthermore, cocaine seizures indicate transit from the North African region to West Africa, which points to a shift in trafficking routes as North Africa used to function as transit for cocaine going through West Africa *en route* from South America to Europe.

Saudi Arabia is perceived as a prime destination and the largest market for amphetamine sold as counterfeit Captagon tablets, which are smuggled into the country through Jordan and Syria. The use of containers via maritime routes to smuggle the drug has been repeatedly reported over recent years. The abuse of Tramadol, a synthetic opioid not under international control or regulation, has become an increasingly alarming problem in a number of Arab States and much of the African continent.¹³ It is trafficked mainly from China and India by sea to Egypt, Libya and the United Arab Emirates. On a smaller scale, increasing seizures of new psychoactive substances (NPS) have been recorded in the region over the past years.

3.2.3 Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants

Trafficking in persons and migrant smuggling are of concern to all countries in the region, either as countries of origin, transit or destination. The volatile political transition in the Arab countries, in particular the conflicts in Iraq, Libya, Syria and Yemen, have generated flows of refugees and population displacements not witnessed since the end of World War II. More than 53 per cent of the world's refugees are in the Arab region, which hosts only 5 per cent of the global population.¹⁴ In 2015 alone, 1,014,836 asylum seekers and irregular migrants arrived in Europe by sea, while 3,772 are believed to have perished at sea.¹⁵ Migrants from the Horn of Africa move northwards through North African countries to reach Europe. Despite the worsening situation in Yemen and Libya, there is noticeable migrant smuggling activity across the Gulf of Aden to Yemen and on the Central Mediterranean route, and Egypt has emerged as one of the main transit points. Egyptian security forces report arresting more than 6,000 persons attempting to illegally enter or leave the country between October 2014 and April 2015.¹⁶

The main routes used for trafficking in persons recorded in the region include: domestic trafficking between rural areas and the main cities in all countries of the region; regional trafficking from less affluent countries in North Africa to more affluent countries in the Gulf region; international trafficking to all Arab countries and especially to the Gulf States from South and South-East Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia; and international trafficking from North Africa and the Middle East to Europe, the United States, and Canada.¹⁷ Regional instability has allowed criminal and terrorist organizations to move persons across borders more freely. Trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants across or through the region indicates the presence of sophisticated and well-entrenched organized criminal networks within the region, likely in collaboration with criminal networks in other regions.

3.2.4 Firearms

Given that the region is currently one of the most unstable in the world, the threat posed by illicit trafficking in arms is heightened, especially given the rise of terrorist organizations such as ISIL/Daesh and other violent non-state actors. Arms trafficking occurs in or through almost all countries,

¹³Report of the 25th meeting of Heads of National Drug and Law Enforcement Agencies/Africa, 14-18 September 2015, in Algiers.

¹⁴Carnegie Endowment for International Peace: 'Syria in Crisis; The Middle East 2015: What to Watch'; December 2014.

¹⁵International Organization of Migration: "Missing Migrant Project", (<http://missingmigrants.iom.int/>).

¹⁶Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat: 'Regional Mixed Migration 2nd Quarter Trend Analysis 2015'; August 2015.

¹⁷The Arab Initiative to Build National Capacities to Combat Human Trafficking in the Arab Countries: 'Understanding Trafficking in Persons in the MENA Region', 2013.

strengthening the military capacity of terrorist organizations operating in different parts of the region. In 2014, the Small Arms Survey recorded 24 new groups in possession of either man-portable air defence systems or anti-tank guided weapons in the region.¹⁸ The current abundance of firearms following the collapse of the Qaddafi regime in Libya and the violent conflicts within the region are seen as key drivers to the flourishing of illicit trade in weapons.

3.2.5 Trafficking in Cultural Property

Available data on trafficking in cultural property is very limited. In a 2011 publication,¹⁹ UNODC estimated that the proceeds of transnational crime related to art and cultural property amounted to about 0.8 per cent of all illicit financial flows - between US\$ 3.4 and 6.3 billion. Political instability, security challenges, corruption and a lack of resources to control borders and secure archaeological sites or museums, leave many countries vulnerable to the loss of their cultural property. Of great concern is also the fact that much of the looting is related to protected antiquities being excavated for which no established records exist, meaning that current monitoring systems (red lists, inventories of stolen artefacts, etc.) are largely irrelevant. At present, terrorist organizations have effective control over territory that harbours invaluable cultural heritage. Egypt, Iraq, Libya and Syria have also suffered from widespread looting of antiquities over the past few years.

3.2.6 Counterfeit Products and Goods and Fraudulent²⁰ Medicine

The flow of counterfeit goods and fraudulent medicine across the world has increased dramatically over recent years, and the Arab region is no exception. Media reports indicate that up to 56 per cent²¹ of goods traded in the Arab markets may not be genuine. Most of the world's counterfeit products can be traced back to East Asia in general, and China in particular. Counterfeit goods often pass through free trade zones in the United Arab Emirates on their way to Europe. Saudi Arabia seized 125 million counterfeit units in 2013, an increase of 127 per cent compared to 2012.²² The Moroccan National Committee for Industrial Property and Anti-Counterfeiting²³ reported seizing more than 3.3 million counterfeit items in 2013, triple the amount of counterfeit goods seized in 2012.²⁴

Of particular concern are fraudulent medicines and the illegal re-importation (parallel trade) of medicines as they can have serious or fatal public health consequences. Falsified medicines may contain no active pharmaceutical ingredient, inaccurate dosage or the wrong active pharmaceutical ingredient, and can thus lead to serious health damages. Laboratories have confirmed the presence of various groups of chemicals such as pesticides, rat poison, brick dust, leaded paint, cartridge ink and floor polish in counterfeit medicines.

Estimates by the World Health Organization (WHO) suggest that as much as 35 per cent of the entire pharmaceutical market in the Middle East may be illicit, and reaches all levels of the industry, from common antibiotics and painkillers to medicines for the treatment of schizophrenia and cancer. In particular, Iraq's healthcare system is struggling with unregulated pharmaceuticals as unsecured borders and the collapse of the existing regulatory regime have meant that such counterfeits are regularly smuggled into the country and are pervasive in the domestic supply.²⁵ A number of organized criminal networks specialized in fraudulent medicines have been dismantled in the past few years. However, the phenomenon is still widespread given the volatile security situation and the lack of access to medicines.

¹⁸ Small Arms Survey, 'Armed Groups and Guided Light Weapons 2014 Update with MENA focus, 2014.

¹⁹UNODC: 'Estimating illicit financial flows resulting from drug trafficking and other transnational organized crimes'; 2011.

²⁰ The term "fraudulent" medicine may encompass the concept of "counterfeit". See also CCPCJ Resolution 20/6 (2011) on Countering fraudulent medicines, in particular their trafficking.

²¹ For example, <http://www.emirates247.com/eb247/economy/uae-economy/counterfeit-goods-cost-uae-and-other-gulf-countries-18bn-2009-12-14-1.22570> and <http://www.alquds.co.uk/?p=419951>

²²Saudi Customs Report 2013.

²³<http://www.stopcontrefacon.ma/saisie-aux-frontieres>

²⁴<http://www.stopcontrefacon.ma/sites/default/files/synthese-etude-contrefacon.pdf>

²⁵ Dunia Frontier Consultants: 'Counterfeits, Parallel Trade Disrupt MENA Pharma', 2015.

3.2.7 Terrorism

Terrorism is currently perceived as the biggest threat to national security to countries both inside and outside the region. Power vacuums in some States in the region, porous borders and an expansion of non- or under-governed territories due to the political changes have created fertile grounds for extremist organizations and other violent non-State actors: ISIL/Daesh, al-Qaeda, Ansar al-Sharia or Jabhat al-Nusra, to name a few. The civil war in Syria is leading to a strengthening of violent extremism²⁶ that leads to terrorism. The sudden expansion of ISIL/Daesh since June 2014 and its control over various zones in Syria and Iraq, its capability to take over important cities such as Mosul, as well as the recent attacks in Northern Sinai (Egypt), pose a great threat to international peace and stability.

A further threat of terrorism comes from foreign terrorist fighters (FTF) returning to their home Arab countries, a phenomenon known from the pre-9/11 Afghanistan conflict. It is estimated that over 30,000 fighters from outside Iraq and Syria have joined the fighting there,²⁷ supporting a range of militant organizations, including ISIL/Daesh. Around 3,000²⁸ of these fighters are from Europe, the rest coming from the other countries of the world.²⁹ Returning terrorists present an acute risk to their home nations. As they have learned certain skills such as bomb making, sharpshooting and clandestine communication, they can contribute to further radicalization of existing groups in the countries. There is also a risk that they have connected with a broad set of networks to call upon for future potential attacks in their home country.

3.2.8 Money Laundering

Money laundering is closely linked to corruption, organized crime and the financing of terrorism – issues that are all of great concern to the security and stability of the region at present. Due to current levels of corruption in the region, money laundering activities have reportedly increased in the past several years. This trend is partly explained by the large sums of illegally earned money that are transferred abroad. Fighting money laundering is a challenging task in the region, as some anti-money laundering efforts may be perceived as conflicting with established tradition, such as money or value transfer services (remittance), gifts or deference to clients. The delay in enacting and enforcing the necessary laws and regulations are impediments to a comprehensive fight against money laundering in the region. Also, the prevalence of informal, cash-based commercial dealings in the region makes Arab countries vulnerable to undetected money laundering activities.

The emergence of new forms and dimensions of transnational organized crime in the region following the recent events in the Arab region, in particular the potential links between terrorist organizations and organized crime that can lead to funds being used for terrorist attacks or other politically motivated violence, make anti-money laundering efforts ever more needed for Arab countries. An effective and robust national system to detect and prevent money laundering is a highly effective means to identify criminals and terrorists, as well as uncovering the predicate offences from which money is derived.

3.2.9 Corruption

Corruption hinders economic development and inclusive growth, and frustrates economic aspirations and security of millions of people across the region. One of the main catalysts of the recent events in the Arab region was widespread discontent with the level of corruption, along with other grievances, such as entrenched inequality, high unemployment, weakened rule of law and political repression. Peoples of

²⁶ According to the UN Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism (PVE), presented to the General Assembly in January 2016 (A/70/674), each Member State makes its own definition of the phenomena and builds its own CVE and PVE. Moreover, it states that more work should be done by Member States to counter and prevent violent extremism as mentioned by Pillar I of the UN Global Counter Terrorism Strategy.

²⁷ UN CTED third report on the Implementation of Security Council resolution 2178 (2014) by States affected by foreign terrorist fighters.

²⁸ According to EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator, Mr. Gilles de Kerchove, in an interview with the Financial Times in June 2014, see <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/34832ce6-ec13-11e3-ab1b-00144feabdc0.html#axzz41k0gxpfg>

²⁹ See report "Analysis and recommendations with regard to the global threat from foreign terrorist fighters" S/2015/358.

several countries in the region expressed discontent with corruption in the public sector, and the lack of governmental response to it. Although several former leaders and high-level officials were charged with corruption and money laundering, corruption is still prevalent at all levels and in all sectors in the region, particularly in the public sector. Corruption in this sector could be attributed to the relatively weak formal systems of checks and balances as well as limited disclosure and access to public information. There is also a widely held belief among the public that a large part of national wealth has been stolen and moved abroad, and that governments need to do more to locate, seize and return stolen assets.

The public in the Arab world, in the wake of these recent developments, is more aware than ever of the concept of corruption, and is looking to governments for greater accountability, transparency and reform. The development and effective implementation of national strategies and action plans to fight corruption, in which the public is enlisted as an ally, are critical elements in this equation.

3.2.10 Weak Rule of Law and Criminal Justice Systems

One of the root causes of the uprisings that started in 2011 was a deep frustration with governments perceived to be undemocratic, repressive and corrupt. Five years later, the calls for democratic reform are heard less while the attention is directed towards security-related issues. But, to heed the lessons of recent history, good governance measures would mitigate political change and instability. A number of Arab States are in urgent need of initiating fundamental legislative and institutional reforms in order to improve compliance with the rule of law and meet the demands of their citizens for transparency, accountability and legitimacy. Addressing deficiencies in the security and criminal justice sectors is an important challenge as it is a highly political process coupled with technical, organizational and administrative considerations. For the region, two objectives will be critical in the coming years in order to build legitimate, effective and inclusive governance that can respond to these deficits: first, the establishment of effective governance, oversight and accountability in the security and criminal justice sectors; and second, the improvement of security and justice service delivery.

3.2.11 Poor Prison Conditions

Due to human rights violations and absence of decent treatment of prisoners, some prisons in the region are becoming breeding grounds for radicalization and extremism. For instance, according to the Iraqi Ministry of Interior, 60 per cent of terrorists in Iraq³⁰ are former prisoners. Prisons, particularly when overcrowded and ill-managed, are places where personal vulnerabilities, such as lack of education, traumatic family backgrounds, poverty and deprivation, are exploited for radicalization. Overall, conditions of confinement are harsh in prisons across the region. As a result, prisons can easily become 'schools of crime' and radicalization can take place. Rehabilitation and reintegration programmes inside and outside of prisons are critical to prevent this radicalization. In general, imprisonment is used broadly and effective social reintegration programmes are not common across the region, and are thus urgently needed in order to prevent recidivism, increase public security, and to turn former prisoners into members of society who positively contribute to national security and socioeconomic development.

3.2.12 Violence and Discrimination against Women

Violence against women (VAW) is one of the most widespread violations of human rights globally. It can include physical, sexual, psychological and economic abuse and violation, and it cuts across boundaries of age, race, culture, wealth and geography. VAW has far-reaching consequences, harming families and communities as gender-based violence not only violates human rights but also hinders productivity, reduces human capital and undermines economic growth. Discrimination, violence and harassment continue to deprive women and girls in the region of equal social, educational and economic opportunities. These are highly sensitive matters, with social stigma, perceived indifference and fear of

³⁰ Presentation of the representative of the Iraqi Ministry of Interior at a UNODC workshop for Iraq on 'Countering violent extremism and a criminal justice preventive strategy against terrorism', Aqaba, Jordan; 14-17 April 2015.

negative consequences for the victims leading to serious underreporting of VAW. Across the region, there is a general lack of adequate victim-oriented support from national governmental and non-governmental institutions.

3.2.13 Violence against Children

Violence against children is a widespread phenomenon affecting many children in the region. Whether it takes place within the family, in schools, at the work place or within the community, violence against children is often socially condoned and not legally sanctioned. Violence is also perpetrated against children who are in contact with the justice system (i.e. child victims and witnesses of crime as well as alleged juvenile offenders), which can have detrimental consequences for children's development and growth into adulthood.

Across the region, and despite all the efforts that were undertaken to protect and promote the rights of children and prevent violence against them within the criminal justice system, children's rights are still violated to varying degrees as the capacities of key institutions and actors are not adequate. Many Member States face similar challenges when dealing with children in contact with the law. For example, statistics and scientific standards in the field of justice for children are often either non-existent or not shared among concerned practitioners. Legislative and institutional approaches to dealing with children in contact with the law and child victims and witnesses of crime are not clearly defined and are in need of improvement, including ensuring protective environments at all levels of judicial proceedings. Alternatives to imprisonment and restorative justice in order to reduce prison overcrowding, and the expansion and strengthening of rehabilitation and reintegration programmes, are scarce in most of the Member States. Another phenomenon that has surfaced in several of the Member States in the past few years is the detention of children for political reasons which needs to be urgently addressed.

3.2.14 Drug Consumption and HIV Prevalence

Data on drug consumption in the region is scarce in general, and in particular drug injection amongst women (due to the stigma attached to drug use). It is estimated that there are 626,000³¹ people who inject drugs (PWIDs) in the region. Available information suggests that drug consumption has been increasing since 2012. Egypt records the highest demand for cannabis. Data from Algeria indicate an increase in the use of cocaine, cannabis, tranquilizers and sedatives, while Morocco shows an increase in the consumption of cocaine and opiates. Another trend in the region is the growing use of synthetic drugs, in particular Captagon, which is prevalent in Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Also, Tramadol (a prescription opioid) raises major concerns in North African countries, notably Egypt and Libya. In addition, NPS, such as the synthetic cannabinoid known as 'Voodoo' or 'Spice' on the market, and psychoactive medication and medications used for opioid substitution therapy, such as Subutex, are reportedly increasing in North African countries.³²

In 2014, there were an estimated 240,000 (150,000 – 320,000) adults and children living with HIV in the region. In the same year, there were an estimated 12,000 AIDS-related deaths, i.e. triple the number of deaths related to AIDS that were reported in 2000, and an estimated 22,000 new HIV infections³³. In 2014, more than 60% of all new adult infections were among key populations: 57% among people who inject drugs and 16% among female sex workers³⁴. In addition, data show a prevalence of the Hepatitis C Virus of 36% to 48% among people who inject drugs in the region³⁵.

³¹ MENAHRA Drug Use Assessment report, 2012.

³² UNODC 2013 World Drug Report and International Drug Policy Consortium Drug 2014 Situation of the Middle East and North Africa Region.

³³ UNAIDS report on HIV in the Middle East and North Africa 2013–2015.

³⁴ UNAIDS report on HIV in the Middle East and North Africa 2013–2015.

³⁵ MENAHRA Drug Use Assessment report, 2012.

IV. UNODC RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES IN THE REGION

4.1 CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

4.1.1 *Data Collection and Research*

Improved knowledge is the first and foundational step to designing effective prevention mechanisms, developing appropriate, evidence-based responses, and implementing successful strategies and policies to counter the threats stemming from illicit trafficking and other serious and organized crime. In addition, improved data collection and analysis can help in international fora, notably when peer review mechanisms are involved.

In general, data on drugs, drug use, HIV, people living in closed settings, crime, corruption and terrorism in the region are scarce. Analytical studies on the profile of organized criminal groups involved in illicit trafficking, their modus operandi and the routes used are very limited, as is information on the relationship between organized crime and terrorism. This can be the result of a lack of capacity and/or infrastructure to generate, manage, analyse and report data, or the lack of or poor coordination amongst the relevant institutions. The scarcity of information on drugs and crime related issues has become even more evident in the countries that have experienced revolutions, regime change and political instability leading to changes in government staff responsible for the collection and analysis of such data.

Given the region's vulnerability to transnational organized crime, illicit trafficking and terrorism, emerging trends of HIV and drug use, UNODC will assist Member States in improving their capacity to generate, obtain and manage information and to produce thorough analytical reports to facilitate evidence-based policy design at the national and regional levels. UNODC will also work with the Member States to increase information sharing between relevant institutions nationally. Countries are encouraged to increase and strengthen information sharing in order to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of law enforcement agencies dealing with drugs and other organized crime-related issues.

4.1.2 *Regional and International Cooperation*

Active promotion of regional and international cooperation, and the exchange of good practices, lies at the heart of UNODC work in the region; this was highlighted in the previous Regional Programme's in-depth independent evaluation as one of the Office's major comparative advantage. To facilitate the effective implementation of international treaties on crime and drug control, UNODC has developed a variety of legal tools that provide States and criminal justice practitioners with useful practical assistance and information. In accordance with its mandates, UNODC works with Member States to implement international treaties and resolutions, advises States on the drafting and adoption of crime prevention and drug control legislation, and assists governments in becoming parties to international crime prevention and drug control conventions as well as in implementing the United Nations standards and norms in crime prevention and criminal justice.

In order to develop a comprehensive and coordinated response to all forms of transnational organized crime, including drug trafficking, human trafficking and trafficking in other illicit goods as well as preventing terrorism and HIV and drug use, the establishment of well-functioning mechanisms and networks to facilitate information exchange and the sharing of best practices is essential. UNODC will continue to assist Member States to strengthen their regional and international cooperation efforts between law enforcement, judicial practitioners and other relevant actors, as well as to develop their domestic legal frameworks. This will assist Member States to better investigate criminal offences while improving the sharing of information and best practices.

UNODC will continue to support already existing mechanisms and networks, such as the *Gulf Cooperation Council* (GCC), under which operational and judicial frameworks for regional and

interregional cooperation to combat illicit trafficking and transnational organized crime are already in place, and the *GCC Criminal Information Centre to Combat Drugs*, which acts as a force multiplier in combating illicit trafficking. UNODC will be supporting the Centre's efforts in building closer cooperation with other regional and international law enforcement entities/organizations under the framework of UNODC "Networking the Networks" initiative targeting organized crime. In addition, as a follow-up to the February 2014 meeting at LAS on international cooperation, where the decision was taken to establish a network of organized crime and terrorism authorities, UNODC will further its work with LAS in order to operationalize this network.

In the context of the UNODC Container Control Programme (CCP), AIRCOP and the land border control programme, UNODC will place a strong emphasis on strengthening regional and international law enforcement cooperation. UNODC will also continue to work under the *Arab Initiative to Build National Capacities to Combat Human Trafficking in the Arab Countries*, which is the main framework for UNODC assistance in the field of combating trafficking in persons, and has the objective to strengthen regional cooperation and enhance LAS Anti-Human Trafficking Coordination Unit capacities. UNODC will also ensure operational cooperation with other regions in the framework of existing initiatives, such as the Khartoum Process, which covers mixed migration flows from the Horn of Africa towards North Africa, to increase synergies with other international and national actors.

In the interventions proposed below, UNODC will also support national authorities to improve international cooperation in criminal matters. This will translate to raising awareness on existing judicial procedures and mechanisms for mutual legal assistance, extradition, rogatory commissions, etc. In this regard, instruments such as the UNODC Mutual Legal Assistance Request Writer tool and the application of relevant UNTOC and UNCAC provisions will be promoted.

Furthermore, regional and international cooperation is critical to promote a positive response in the fight against HIV and drug use in the region. UNODC will continue to support already existing mechanisms and networks, such as the LAS Arab AIDS Strategy, exchange visits to countries with the best successful experiences, and regional networks such as the Middle East and North Africa Harm Reduction Association (MENAHRRA), the Middle East and North Africa Network of/for People who use Drugs (MENANPUD) and the Regional Arab Network against AIDS (RANAA).

Regional and international cooperation is also crucial to promote good governance, the fight against corruption and asset recovery efforts. UNODC will thus continue to assist Member States in their active participation in as well as follow-up through the UNCAC Implementation Review Mechanism, and will continue its support to the Arab Forum on Asset Recovery (AFAR).

4.1.3 Partnership with Civil Society

The presence of a knowledgeable and capable civil society plays an important role in building societies based on promoting the rule of law and acting as effective support to health, economic and security policies. This is of particular importance for countries in transition. Civil society can help former inmates and reformed drug addicts harmoniously reintegrate into society; they can act as relays to health services to conduct outreach and awareness-raising; they can support anti-corruption efforts by acting as whistle-blowers; they can help mediate local conflicts and counter the narrative of terrorist organizations. Awarding the Nobel Peace Prize for 2015 to the National Dialogue Quartet, a union of four key Tunisian civil society organisations (CSOs), is a testament of the important role these organizations can play in supporting peace, security and development in the region.

In dealing with complex and sensitive issues, such as drug use and HIV, crime and criminal justice reform, there is a strong need to promote solid partnerships with civil society across the region. Where appropriate, UNODC will promote the involvement of CSOs in its programmes and projects in the Arab

States, in accordance with the legal systems and national legislation in each State, in particular in the fields of drug and HIV prevention and treatment, child justice reform and anti-corruption, notably in relation to the second cycle of the UNCAC review mechanism. These efforts are in line with the 2015 Doha Declaration and will be achieved mostly through capacity-building, awareness-raising and the provision of grants (in line with UNODC and national rules and regulations) in order to further combat drugs, crime and health threats faced by Member States.

Where applicable, UNODC will map CSOs and networks in the region working on the thematic areas outlined in this Regional Programme, carry out targeted advocacy campaigns with CSOs to raise awareness at the local level, and create and reinforce existing communication channels with Member States, international organizations, and experts.

4.1.4 Human Rights

Human rights are at the core of all work of the United Nations system and – together with peace, security and development – represent one of the three, interlinked and mutually-reinforcing, pillars of the United Nations as enshrined in its Charter.

UNODC is in a unique position to work across all three pillars in its efforts against crime, drugs and terrorism and in supporting Member States to establish a safe society founded on the rule of law. In this regard, CND *Resolution 51/12* reaffirmed the importance of countering the world drug problem in a multilateral setting with full respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

UNODC assistance is based on the United Nations standards and norms in crime prevention and criminal justice, and preventing HIV and drug use which provide a collective vision of how criminal justice systems should be structured and help to significantly promote more effective and fair criminal justice structures. The standards include the following:

- Standards and norms related primarily to persons in custody, non-custodial sanctions, child justice and restorative justice.
- Standards and norms related primarily to legal, institutional and practical arrangements for international cooperation.
- Standards and norms related primarily to crime prevention and victim issues.
- Standards and norms related primarily to good governance, the independence of the judiciary and the integrity of criminal justice personnel.

With its expertise in the areas of the rule of law, crime prevention, criminal justice and security sector reform, as well as HIV and drug prevention, treatment and care, UNODC has the potential to significantly contribute to mitigating challenging human rights situations.

To ensure that human rights are taken into due consideration, particular attention will be given to the United Nations system-wide policy “*Human rights due diligence policy on United Nations support to non-United Nations security forces*”. The policy provides, inter alia, that prior to supporting such forces, an assessment of risks involved in providing or not providing support should be made, in particular the risk of the recipient entity committing grave violations of international humanitarian, human rights or refugee law. Where questions are raised, United Nations agencies are required to address these as appropriate within the regional and thematic context of their mandates.

4.1.5 Gender Mainstreaming

Gender inequalities remain deeply entrenched in every society and in many areas. To date, 188 countries, including most recently the State of Palestine in April 2014, have ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, signalling their commitment to implement a

human rights-based response to the benefit of women and girls. Yet all too often, women are denied control over their bodies, denied a voice in decision-making, and denied protection from violence. The United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security acknowledges the disproportionate and unique impact of armed conflict on women and girls. It calls for the adoption of a gender perspective to consider the special needs of women and girls during conflict, repatriation and resettlement, rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction.

UNODC will apply a culturally-sensitive and context-based approach to introduce gender mainstreaming into its activities. Projects on themes such as VAW, support to women drug users, HIV and drug use related interventions for women living in closed settings, women in prison settings and capacity-building on protection of and assistance to victims of trafficking in persons, will be rooted in a gender mainstreaming framework. Partnerships with civil society will be developed and strengthened (in line with UNODC and national rules and regulations) so as to raise awareness of these issues. In addition, UNODC will strive to not only consider gender mainstreaming in the context of obtaining an equal number of male and female participants for training activities, but to also counter persistent stereotypes and to ensure the application of international best practices by national institutions. Further considerations will also be given to the removal of obstacles to secure equal access of men and women to UNODC activities.

UNODC assistance will be based on relevant international standards and norms, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the updated Model Strategies and Practical Measures on the Elimination of Violence against Women in the Field of Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules), and relevant Crime Commission resolutions, as well as the Guidance Note for UNODC Staff on Gender mainstreaming in the work of UNODC³⁶.

4.2. SUBPROGRAMME I: COMBATING ORGANIZED CRIME

Subprogramme I of the Regional Programme will consist of four outcomes focusing on strengthening the responses of Member States to organized crime, by bolstering their capacities to control their borders and counter trafficking of illicit goods and persons as well as migrant smuggling. Furthermore, assistance to enhance technical and specialised policing capacities to combat organized crime will be provided under this subprogramme.

All UNODC interventions will be based on and aligned with UNTOC and its three supplementing Protocols, which target specific areas and manifestations of organized crime: (a) the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children; (b) the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air; and (c) the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition. UNTOC is the main international instrument in the fight against transnational organized crime and all Arab countries have signed, ratified or accepted the Convention.

Outcome 1: National authorities strengthen their effective control of borders

UNODC approach to land border control

The current instability across the entire region, coupled with the sheer size of the countries, poses major challenges to border control. With a total of 41,177 km of land borders, the 18 countries covered by the Regional Programme are experiencing difficulties in addressing the porosity of their borders. In addition,

³⁶<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/directory/docs/UNODC-GuidanceNote-GenderMainstreaming.pdf>

several of these borders are located in remote desert areas where patrolling requires not only heavy logistical capacity but also special training and capabilities in order to confront potential criminal and terrorist activities. Traditional methods to secure borders, such as securing official border crossing points and regular patrols, are neither sufficient nor fully effective given that most illicit trafficking does not pass through official land crossing points and that the sheer length of the borders makes it impossible to effectively secure the borders by patrolling.

The institutional challenge of combating illicit trafficking in the region largely relates to human, organizational and financial capacities of the national counterparts to respond to these forms of crime. There is no technological quick fix to address illicit trafficking. As a result, UNODC assistance to Member States will comprise a holistic approach to strengthening border control capacities. UNODC will provide assistance to (a) improve skills, equipment and techniques used by law enforcement agencies operating at official border crossings; (b) improve criminal information collection, analysis and sharing at key hub cities along smuggling and trafficking routes; and (c) support frontline officers to collect as much information as possible from seizures and arrests, as well as illicit movements, and share it with central authorities in charge of in-depth investigations on organized crime and terrorist organizations.

In addition, UNODC will focus on promoting national and regional cooperation to respond to organized crime and illicit trafficking. This will mainly be through the creation of common Police Offices (Border Liaison Offices) to support regional counter illicit trafficking investigations. These Offices will include officers from all relevant operational units (for example, police and customs) of the concerned countries. Their function will be to collect, analyse and share information received at the borders and communicate it to the local authorities. Officials in these Offices will serve as focal points catering to subregional and local illicit trafficking inquiries and they will result in a more professional and improved response time. Currently, UNODC is providing assistance to improve counter trafficking work in Egypt, Libya, Sudan and Tunisia through training on profiling, the delivery of equipment, joint training sessions among neighbouring countries, and support to inter-agency collaboration. The Regional Programme is to extend those activities to other countries.

UNODC approach to sea container and cargo control

According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development's³⁷ estimates, about 90 per cent of all trade is conducted via maritime containers of which more than 750 million are shipped yearly in the global supply chain, and of this amount, less than 2 per cent are inspected. The overwhelming volume of containers travelling the seas from country to country and continent to continent make them important targets for actors in the illicit drug trade as well as for those involved in producing and delivering counterfeit goods and merchandise and trafficking of arms and strategic goods for terrorism purposes. The global dependency on maritime trade, combined with sophisticated concealment methods employed by narcotraffickers, counterfeiters and smugglers, and diverse trafficking routes, make successful interdiction and intervention difficult. The situation, therefore, poses a serious threat to the international supply chain as well as to sustainable development.

In this context, UNODC and the World Customs Organization (WCO) have come together to elaborate CCP. The Programme has global reach and aims to fortify the structures and processes which allow for the application of laws for States and selected ports, so as to minimize the exploitation of maritime containers for e.g. the illicit trafficking of firearms, drugs, drug precursors, counterfeit products, chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosives agents, weapons of mass destruction, dual use goods, cultural property, wildlife and other criminally-driven profit commodities and contraband. For greater efficiency, while facilitating cooperation in the prevention of crime amongst States and international agencies involved in the regulation of container and cargo traffic, CCP maintains strategic alliances with various security entities within States with operational ports. These entities include customs, the police,

³⁷ United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (2011), Review of Maritime Transport, UNCTAD/RMT/2011.

maritime institutions and the private sector amongst others. It is also designed to strengthen and promote the alliances between the customs, trade and enforcement communities in an effort to prevent the abuse of legitimate commercial trade for illicit activities while simultaneously making an effort to eradicate the inter-institutional mistrust and corruption that can hamper effective CCP execution. UNODC is currently involving Member States in the region in CCP.

Under CCP, UNODC will assist Governments of participating countries to (a) establish and maintain effective container and cargo controls that will serve not only to prevent drug trafficking and other illicit activity, but also to facilitate legitimate trade and protect border revenue; (b) establish and maintain Port Control Units, comprising customs and other law enforcement officers, trained and equipped to identify and inspect high-risk freight containers with minimum disruption to legitimate trade and business; (c) ensure that all Port Control Units have regular access to expert/mentor services and are encouraged to forge partnerships and links with the trade and business community; (d) promote closer cooperation and encourage the development of effective information-sharing mechanisms between countries participating in the Programme and with the wider customs and border policing community; and (e) ensure that UNODC and WCO, in cooperation with relevant partners, enhance mechanisms for the collection, analysis and dissemination of container and cargo intelligence and risk assessment.

UNODC approach to airport control

In resolution 2178 (2014), the Security Council expressed “grave concern over the acute and growing threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters” and imposed obligations on Member States to respond to this threat, including combating FTF travel by air. On 19 May 2015, the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team of the Security Council’s Committee concerning Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities released a report on FTF.³⁸ The report found that more than 25,000 FTF are currently active throughout the world, but that the flow was mainly focused on entering Iraq, Libya and Syria.

To join terrorist organizations, FTF mostly travel by plane. Although travel used to be direct, enforcement measures recently led to the use of more complex schemes of travel, some of them mixing air travel with land transport; today, most FTF still use air transport, with Turkey being used in 2015 as a major transit point (Istanbul airport). The continuous flow of FTF to/within/from the region is made possible by the variety of the profiles of the individuals travelling (some of them travelling as couples), the complex routing used, the fact that many of those people are not known to law enforcement or intelligence agencies, and the legal difficulties involved in proving criminal intent in judicial proceedings.

In addition to the travel of FTF, airports can be used for illicit trafficking. Information from seizures made in Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and Europe indicate that Arab airports are being used as rebound airports for illicit trafficking. Air cargo volumes are growing annually. Business and consumer demand for the expeditious, efficient shipment of goods has fuelled the rapid growth of the air cargo industry over recent years. Though more costly than sea or land freight alternatives, the air cargo environment allows for shorter shipping times for high value and perishable goods. In this transport medium, the airfreight industry and the air passenger industry are uniquely linked. Both goods and people are frequently carried on the same aircraft, making this environment more vulnerable to security threats than other modes. The increased volume of air cargo, along with sophisticated and often ingenious concealment methods and diverse routings adopted by illicit traffickers and terrorists, makes successful interdiction by law enforcement agencies difficult. In addition, border control agencies must be mindful of trade facilitation measures and the economic losses that might result from unnecessary delay and/or damage as a result of inspection/control. There is consequently a need to encourage a more integrated and cooperative approach between agencies to channel their specialist expertise, intelligence sources and agency resources to identify air cargoes of interest for both trade integrity and transport security.

³⁸ See report “Analysis and recommendations with regard to the global threat from foreign terrorist fighters” S/2015/358.

In addition to CCP, which can operate in airport settings, the AIRportCOmmunication Project (AIRCOP) is implemented by UNODC together with the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) and WCO. The project, launched in 2009 in West Africa, aims to strengthen airport controls through the establishment of Joint Airport Task Forces, composed of all relevant law enforcement agencies operating at a given airport platform or through the empowerment of existing units/security schemes. Each Task Force receives expert training and mentoring on the best profiling and search techniques. Once established, the Task Forces are given access to INTERPOL databases and to WCO real-time, secured communication system enabling direct airport-to-airport communication. In addition, every year AIRCOP organizes joint operations where all participating countries, under the overall coordination of WCO and INTERPOL, increase their controls, test interdiction methodologies and build operational relationships with other airports. The Regional Programme intends to expand AIRCOP to the region and to cover all main international airports, focusing on both the travel of FTF and illicit trafficking.

Outcome 2: National authorities more effectively counter trafficking in drugs, arms and illicit goods

UNODC approach to drug trafficking

Available data on seizures in the region suggest a noticeable increase in drug trafficking through the region since 2011. Traditionally, Arab countries intercept around 30 per cent of the global cannabis resin, most of it in North African countries, which have seen an increase in the past years. Cocaine seizures are low compared to other regions; however, a dramatic increase took place in 2014, when three major shipments containing cocaine were interdicted in Jordan, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, accounting for more cocaine seized in the region than during the preceding four years. A similar trend can be observed with regard to heroin. The region accounts for less than 1 per cent of global seizures, with trafficking occurring mostly through Jordan and the United Arab Emirates and Egypt being one of the main destinations. In 2014, heroin interception in Egypt almost tripled compared to the previous years. The UNODC early warning advisory reported more than 540 NPS globally by the end of 2014, and an increased number of Middle East and North African countries reported expanding NPS trafficking, in particular synthetic cannabinoids. Forensic capacities of drug laboratories to identify drugs in general and NPS in particular vary significantly across the region.

The increase of drug trafficking through the region and also the apparent emergence of new trafficking routes are the result of the unstable security situation and ongoing armed conflicts in the region, as well as drug traffickers exploiting the consequently weaker border controls. In order to counter this trend, UNODC will continue to support Member States improving data and information analysis for more informed and evidence-based policy-making and increased regional cooperation, which is a key driver to curbing transnational illicit trafficking. UNODC will continue to support regional bodies mandated with countering drug trafficking to facilitate the development of a platform for exchange of criminal intelligence and information on drug and precursor production and trafficking.

UNODC will also continue to provide assistance to advance the knowledge and skills of law enforcement officers to effectively investigate and prosecute drug trafficking cases and strengthen Member States' drug and precursor identification and profiling capacities, thereby increasing interdiction rates. UNODC will support the improvement of the laboratory infrastructure and help create a network between drug laboratories across the region, in particular to strengthen the response to the challenges posed by NPS and precursor diversion. Member States will be encouraged to use the relevant UNODC platforms, such as the Precursor Incident Communication System (PICS), the Early Warning Advisory, and the International Collaborative Exercises (ICE) Programme.

Furthermore, UNODC can provide support to alternative development and alternative livelihood initiatives within the region, upon request from Member States. Eradication efforts are ongoing in many countries of the region. However, without alternative development options, this will not lead to

sustainable results in curbing illicit drug cultivation as it mainly occurs in poor areas. National alternative development projects were implemented in Lebanon and Morocco in the early 1990s and in Morocco and Egypt between 2010 and 2013. Using expertise and experience gathered in Latin America and South-East Asia, UNODC interventions would look at the key reasons why communities grow drugs, analyse local markets for agricultural goods, identify possible replacement cultures, support access to markets by solving logistical and/or financial obstacles, and closely monitor implementation and the size of surfaces used to grow drugs.

UNODC approach to arms trafficking

The smuggling and diversion of weaponry constitute a tremendous threat to the Member States given the present volatility and ongoing violence and conflicts in the region. It allows criminal organizations, terrorist groups and other violent non-state actors to exponentially bolster their power and can thus wreak havoc on a massive scale. Arms and ammunition are smuggled throughout the region. At present, international and regional attention is focused on weapons smuggled from Libya and concerns over the consequent arming of insurgent movements across the region. In the past two years, there have been, amongst others, significant arms seizures in the Gulf originating from Iraq and seizures of pistols and ammunition in Yemen and Oman originating from Turkey. Some border areas in a number of countries represent a risk in terms of arms trafficking.

In order to strengthen the response of Arab countries to illicit firearms manufacturing, trafficking and firearms-related criminality, UNODC will support Member States through the provision of legislative and technical assistance in this field, including updating legislation in Member States in order to comply with the UNTOC Firearms Protocol, and developing marking strategies and operational support, which are appropriate to the institutional, technical and budgetary country-specific setting. UNODC will also provide support to approaches on increased security and effective record keeping for firearms, in particular for seized arms, and to the development of comprehensive national collection and destruction activities. Furthermore, UNODC will focus on strengthening national law enforcement capacities through specialized trainings on the effective investigation and prosecution of complex and transnational cases of firearms trafficking and their links to organized crime and terrorist activities, and promote regional and international cooperation and information exchange on data relating to the illicit trafficking of firearms.

UNODC approach to trafficking in cultural property

Political instability, corruption and a lack of resources to control borders and provide security at archaeological sites or museums leave many countries vulnerable to the loss of their cultural property. Examples of widespread looting may be found in recent years in Egypt, Iraq, Libya and Syria.

Several resolutions have been adopted by the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, with a view to strengthening the crime prevention and criminal justice responses to the protection of cultural property and to address its illicit trafficking, which has become a considerable source of profit for criminal organizations in the region. Security Council Resolution 2199 of 2015 also recognizes the close link between illicit trafficking in cultural property and the financing of the terrorist activities of ISIL/Daesh, active in Syria and Iraq, and calls upon international organizations to assist Member States take appropriate steps to prevent the trade in Iraqi and Syrian cultural property.

The trafficking in cultural property from Syrian and Iraqi territories, but also from other countries, such as Egypt, Libya, Palestine and Yemen, needs to be addressed on a global scale. A comprehensive response needs to address weaknesses in legislative frameworks, lack of awareness by law enforcement, including customs and judicial authorities, as well as financial circuits, including the work of private entities, such as auction houses. Measures need to be put in place to both stop looted cultural property from being exported from the affected countries and to prevent it from being sold either through auctions or directly to private collectors.

UNODC will provide assistance in this regard by (a) increasing research and evidence-gathering on the trafficking of cultural property, as there is little information in this regard, and promoting a quick exchange of information; and (b) providing technical assistance jointly with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to strengthen the legal frameworks in the countries and build capacities of law enforcement and judicial authorities to better deal with this criminal phenomenon. UNODC will support emergency border control efforts, enabling the detection of illicitly excavated or stolen cultural property and strengthen the integrity of customs and border police to prevent criminal networks from exporting looted cultural property. A regional initiative could be designed and implemented with LAS.

The International Guidelines for Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice with Respect to Trafficking in Cultural Property and Other Related Offences developed by UNODC and adopted by the General Assembly in December 2014 can provide a framework for UNODC to assist Member States in the development and strengthening of their policies, strategies, legislation and mechanisms in the area of protection against trafficking in cultural property and related offences. UNODC will also take advantage of its Practical Assistance tool, which is currently being finalized, to assist Member States in the implementation of the International Guidelines.

Outcome 3: National authorities more effectively counter migrant smuggling and human trafficking

UNODC approach to migrant smuggling

Conflicts and instability in Iraq, Syria, Libya and Palestine as well as in East Africa, are driving an increasing number of asylum seekers to leave their countries and seek international protection in Europe, using North African countries as embarkation points, alongside migrants on the move for economic motives from West, Central and East Africa. The activity of organized crime networks involved in smuggling operations along the routes leading to the shores of the Mediterranean and onwards has resulted in an unprecedented number of deaths. In Libya and Syria, the lack of law enforcement capacity allows smuggling networks to operate freely, including in areas controlled by local militia or terrorist organizations.

The mandate of UNODC has been reiterated in Resolutions 6/3 and 5/3 of the Conference of the Parties to UNTOC as well as in the Economic and Social Council Resolution 2014/23 on "Strengthening international cooperation in addressing the smuggling of migrants", which encourages States and UNODC to undertake further technical assistance to enhance the capacity of Member States to criminalize, investigate and prosecute the smuggling of migrants. Regional cooperation frameworks on migration and mobility, *inter alia*, the Rabat Process and the Khartoum Process, also call for concrete actions to prevent and tackle the challenges of smuggling of migrants, and the related protection issues.

To date, the majority of States addressed by the Regional Programme are parties to the Smuggling of Migrants Protocol; however, progress towards transposing its provisions into domestic legislation remains slow. A common framework between countries affected by the same smuggling route is an essential feature of effective action against this crime. In addition, the need remains to strengthen the capacity of criminal justice practitioners in the region to investigate, prosecute and adjudicate cases of migrant smuggling, as well as to enhance judicial and prosecutorial cooperation at the regional level.

Under the Regional Programme, and in line with the priority interventions highlighted in the 2015 UNODC *"Contribution to International Efforts to Address the Smuggling of Migrants across the Mediterranean - Strategy for the Building of Capacity of North African Countries through an Integrated Response"*, UNODC will aim to support countries in the region in their efforts to dismantle transnational smuggling networks while protecting the human rights of smuggled migrants. Along with supporting the development of countries' legal and institutional frameworks against migrant smuggling and aligning

them with the Smuggling of Migrants Protocol, particular emphasis will be placed on strengthening States' criminal justice institutional and operational capacities. This will be done while establishing channels for regular police and judicial cooperation and intelligence sharing amongst agencies at national, regional and international levels.

Building on the successful participation of civil society in promoting UNCAC and in the implementation of its Review Mechanism, CSOs could serve as key partners in implementing the Smuggling of Migrants Protocol. This could particularly be the case for activities related to prevention and assistance in particular.

UNODC approach to trafficking in persons

According to the UNODC 2014 Global Report on Trafficking in Persons, most of the victims detected in the Middle East are from South-East and Central Asia. Victims from Sub-Saharan Africa (mainly East Africa) account for about 10% of total victims detected, whereas around 31% of the victims are trafficked within the region. Victims from North Africa were detected both in the Middle East as well as in Europe. The criminal networks making profit from the increased irregular migration flows resulting from the instability in the region often expose smuggled migrants to abuse and exploitation, with children and women particularly vulnerable to becoming victims of trafficking in persons. The 2014 UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Persons found that during the period 2011-2013, eight countries reported Syrian victims of trafficking. Victims from Syria were very rarely detected before the beginning of the Syrian crisis.

Recent policy and legal reforms indicate that there are increased efforts in the region to ensure commitment to combating trafficking in persons.³⁹ Significant improvements have also been made in the development of domestic legal frameworks, with the majority of countries⁴⁰ having enacted⁴¹ anti-trafficking in persons legislation. Implementation of the legislation is, however, still challenging, with few prosecutions and convictions reported in the region, and with limited identifications of trafficking victims and assistance provided to them.

UNODC aims to continue supporting Member States to dismantle trafficking in persons networks under the new Regional Programme, building on the achievements of the Arab Initiative to Build National Capacities to Combat Human Trafficking in the Arab Countries, which has been supporting recent policy and legal reforms and strengthening criminal justice responses. Continuation and expansion of such regional interventions are envisaged to consolidate the fruitful collaboration established with the LAS Anti-Human Trafficking Coordination Unit and to further respond to the needs identified by the Member States. Priorities of such expansion will focus on promoting regional law enforcement and judicial cooperation, strengthening institutional frameworks to promote implementation of anti-human trafficking legislation, and ensuring sustainability of capacity-building provided to criminal justice practitioners for adequate identification, investigation and prosecution of cases.

Outcome 4: National authorities are better able to develop threat assessments and improve their technical and specialized policing capacity

Given the new trends in security threats emerging in the region, there is a constant need to enhance the capacity of law enforcement authorities to enable them to identify and respond effectively to these challenges. Focus areas under this outcome include: research, criminal information analysis, forensics, and cybercrime.

³⁹ With Sudan's accession to the Trafficking in Persons Protocol in December 2014, Yemen is the only remaining country covered by the Regional Programme that is not yet party to the Trafficking in Persons Protocol.

⁴⁰ Morocco and Tunisia are in the process of adopting national laws against human trafficking.

⁴¹ Libya and Yemen are yet to adopt dedicated national laws against trafficking in persons in line with the Protocol.

Threat assessment capacity

UNODC attaches great importance to research and data analysis as the basis of all its interventions. Only through a profound knowledge of the various challenges and needs and well-established baselines, can informed policy-making come about and useful and effective interventions be designed. In addition to promoting research and data analysis throughout all subprogrammes and outcomes, UNODC will support Member States in strengthening their capacities to conduct threat assessments.

In general, data on drugs, crime, corruption and terrorism in the region are scattered at best. Data on drugs and crime for the region, generated from the UNODC Annual Report Questionnaire and Crime Trends Survey, as mandated by international treaties, are often incomplete. National reports, when and if publicly available, are often narratives of achievements instead of thorough analyses. Authorities in the region often lack the capacity and/or infrastructure to generate, manage, analyse and report data. They often lack a culture of analysis and reporting in line with international standards, and thus threats are often addressed without systemic knowledge of its patterns and modalities. Lack of transparency hinders large scale information sharing at the national and regional levels. Regional bodies acting as information sharing platforms do exist, but the added value of sharing information needs to be emphasized. Research and thorough analyses of security threats in the region are becoming ever more important for Member States as a means to respond effectively to the surge in terrorist, organized crime and illicit trafficking activities accompanying ongoing conflicts and profound transformations in the region.

Upon specific request from Member States, UNODC will provide support to strengthen their capacities to create the knowledge base needed to assess threats and develop response strategies to serious and organized crime. In this regard, emphasis will be put on the capacity to analyse criminal data in accordance with internationally-accepted standards, best practices and methodologies in criminal information collection, analysis, use and exchange.

UNODC will provide access to best-practice manuals and other tools, e.g. the International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes, endorsed by the United Nations Statistical Commission and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in 2015, which will be translated to Arabic and will be available in 2016. Through this support, Member States will have enhanced capacities for proper information generation and management. Relevant authorities will be able to conduct thorough assessments and study the impact of policies and operational strategies in order to facilitate evidence-based policy design at the national and regional levels. Baselines on drugs and crime trends in the Member States will be established and continuously monitored. UNODC will also work with Member States to increase regional information-sharing through supporting existing regional platforms and establishing regional mechanisms if needed.

Criminal information analysis

Criminal information analysis provides techniques that structure the natural deductive capacities and thought processes of investigators. It provides tools to help understand the information collected, and to communicate that understanding to others. Criminal information analysis allows law enforcement authorities establish a proactive response to crime. It enables them to identify and understand criminal groups operating in their areas. Once criminal organizations are identified and their habits known, law enforcement authorities may begin assessing current trends in crime in order to forecast and hamper the development of perceived future criminal activities. Information, therefore, provides knowledge upon which to base decisions and select appropriate targets for investigations. In addition to the use of criminal information analysis to support investigations, surveillance operations and the prosecution of cases, it also provides law enforcement agencies with the ability to effectively manage resources, budget and meet their responsibilities for crime prevention.

Over the years, criminal information analysis has gained recognition as an essential and efficient concept to support the investigation, adjudication and prevention of crime. In many countries across the world, criminal analysis techniques have been mainstreamed and are now integrated in the organizational framework of police services as core capacities. However, across the region, the use of criminal analysis remains limited. Faced with the increasingly complex nature of organized crime and terrorism networks, and the frequent use of information and communication technology for the commission of crimes or attacks, law enforcement services across the region need to adopt modern and efficient techniques to prevent and counter such activities.

UNODC will assist Member States to enhance their capacities to analyse criminal data in accordance with internationally-accepted standards, best practices and methodologies in criminal information collection, analysis, use and exchange. UNODC will (a) provide access to best-practice manuals and other tools; (b) support the establishment of adequate legal frameworks; (c) strengthen the ability of governments to manage and oversee crime data collection and analysis; and (d) promote regional and subregional networking among specialized units. Furthermore, UNODC can provide support to law enforcement and criminal justice services in the following areas: assessment and gap analysis; development and update of national legislation on information collection, classification and sharing; institutional integration of crime analysis capacities; and criminal information analysis capacity-building for law enforcement agencies.

Forensics

UNODC regards forensic services as an integral element of criminal justice reform and the rule of law. Forensic service capacity across the region is in need of enhancement to ensure that reliable, probative and scientifically-based evidence is available to support criminal investigations. In several Member States there is limited capacity for collecting, preserving and analysing forensic evidence. This restraint on capacity applies to (a) first responders, including police and investigators, to process crime scenes; (b) forensic examiners, including police specialists, to perform basic examinations; (c) laboratories and medical facilities, both governmental and external, to perform routine and non-routine forensic services; and (d) the judiciary, with respect to a proper understanding of the nature and added value of forensic evidence in criminal proceedings. Furthermore, sexual and gender-based violence victims need high quality, healthcare-oriented and timely forensic medical response. Clinical forensic medicine services in a number of Member States do not meet these needs.

UNODC aims to enhance the capacity of Member States to better deliver forensic services in accordance with internationally-accepted standards, and will concentrate on the promotion of internationally-accepted best practices and quality standards in forensic service delivery. This will be achieved through (a) enhancing access to best practice manuals and other tools; (b) improving forensic medical and scientific laboratory facilities; (c) strengthening the ability of governments to manage and oversee service delivery; and (d) promoting regional and subregional networking among forensic institutes.

UNODC will build on its ongoing technical assistance programmes to further support Member States in developing sustainable forensic services. These technical assistance programmes include the development of forensic capacity and infrastructure from the ‘crime scene to the court room’ through the development and broad availability of best practice guidelines and standards, strengthening of forensic institutions, legislative support for governing authorities, awareness-raising for stakeholders and the provision of equipment, tools and materials.

Improved forensic services contribute to more transparent, equal and fair justice systems, which will benefit the wider community and support the fundamental right to a fair trial.

Cybercrime

Cybercrime can include a wide range of offenses, such as corporate espionage, identity-related crimes, fraudulent transactions, and malevolent use of personal information. Acts against the confidentiality,

integrity and availability of computer data or systems generate significant profits for criminals each year, with far-reaching impact not only on economies and online commerce, but also on ill-informed individuals who fall victim to them. Therefore, a safe cyber environment must be created to prevent crimes committed through the internet and social media.

The United Nations General Assembly resolution 64/179 drew attention to cybercrime as an emerging policy issue with particular reference to the technical cooperation activities of UNODC, and invited UNODC to explore, within its mandate, ways and means of addressing this issue. In addition, the General Assembly Resolution 65/230 requested UNODC, in the development and implementation of its technical assistance programmes, to aim for sustainable and long-lasting results in the prevention, prosecution and punishment of crime including organized crime and cybercrime.

Specifically, UNODC is able to assist Member States to build capacities to prevent, counter and raise awareness on cybercrime. UNODC will help establish strong legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks in the Member States to facilitate the investigation, prosecution and adjudication of cases of cybercrime, taking into account relevant international standards and recognized best practices. Furthermore, enhancing cooperation, communication and information exchange mechanisms on cybercrime between relevant national and international stakeholders is an important aspect to successfully counter cybercrime.

4.3. SUBPROGRAMME II: COUNTERING TERRORISM

All UNODC interventions in the area of countering terrorism will be rooted in the promotion of the ratification and application of the 19 universal legal instruments against terrorism and relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions.

Outcome 1: National authorities more effectively respond to terrorism using criminal justice measures

Establishing effective criminal justice system responses against terrorism is an important step in building a global culture against terrorism. In this regard, UNODC has been consistently working to ensure that Member States' legislation and criminal justice systems are prepared to effectively respond to the challenges of terrorism and its emerging trends.

UNODC supports Member States (a) to promote the ratification of the 19 universal legal instruments against terrorism; (b) by providing legal assistance with the review of national counterterrorism legislation to harmonize it with the requirements of the universal legal instruments; (c) to build the capacity of national criminal justice officials to implement standards set forth in these instruments through various training activities, and (d) by facilitating regional and international cooperation in criminal matters to facilitate mutual legal assistance and extradition.

In order to respond to the increasingly complex nature of terrorism in the region, UNODC has developed specialized expertise and provides training on a range of thematic areas that include, but are not limited to, the use of the internet for terrorist purposes, suppressing the financing of terrorism, addressing transport-related (civil aviation and maritime) terrorism offences, promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, as well as emerging terrorist challenges, such as FTF, violent extremism that leads to terrorism, radicalization, and the growing link between terrorism and organized crime.

Legal Frameworks

Several recent United Nations Security Council resolutions e.g. S/RES/2170 (2014), 2178 (2014), 2199 (2015), and 2253 (2015) require Member States to undertake a set of measures to combat terrorism and confront FTF. In this regard, UNODC developed new activities aimed at identifying the gaps in existing legislation in relation to the new international requirements and at establishing a criminal justice preventive strategy criminalizing terrorism-related offences (incitement, glorification, recruitment, training and financing of terrorism). The first country to benefit from an in-depth training on the requirements of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2178 of 2014 on FTF was Iraq.

UNODC will provide legislative assistance tackling a wide range of issues that need to be incorporated in counter-terrorist laws, with a focus on each legal element relating to criminal procedure and international cooperation in criminal matters, such as regulations on the use of special investigative techniques (undercover operations, communications interceptions, etc.) and provisions related to supporting victims of terrorism. In addition, UNODC will continue to develop its legislative assistance material for policy-makers and relevant officials during training activities, in addition to providing comparative legislation analysis, and promoting the counter-terrorism model law (in line with international requirements) and tailor-made legal advice and recommendations on legislative provisions.

Investigations and Adjudication

Investigating and prosecuting terrorism cases present a number of challenges for criminal justice systems. For example, evidence may be classified, witnesses and juries may require special security measures, and attorneys' ability to interact with their clients may be limited. There may also be a risk of infringing on human rights and fundamental freedoms during the investigation and prosecution of suspects.

At the national level, UNODC will support the capacity of criminal justice and law enforcement officials in Member States to effectively investigate, prosecute and adjudicate terrorism cases. At the regional level, UNODC will promote effective cooperation among prosecutors and law enforcement officials and facilitate the sharing of good practices. Throughout the process, Member States will be required to comply with relevant Security Council resolutions and international legal instruments. The response to terrorism should be grounded in the rule of law and fully respect human rights.

UNODC will continue to develop specialized training and tools, from which Arab countries already benefit, including (a) training on countering the use of the internet for terrorist purposes; (b) assistance in the development of effective national preventive strategies to counter the appeal of terrorism by specifically criminalizing preparatory acts and facilitating prosecutorial intervention before the commission of terrorist acts; (c) a specialized tool that provides guidelines, good practices related to national legislation and the response of criminal justice system to support victims of acts of terrorism; (d) best practices and guidelines for special investigative techniques as essential tools for successfully investigating and prosecuting terrorist cases without infringing in human rights and fundamental freedoms, such as the right to privacy; (e) training on investigation and prosecution of financing acts, focusing on new trends in moving and transferring funds, illicit transboundary movements of cash and the use of innovative technology, including new payment methods; (f) training on the efficient examination of a terrorist crime scene in order to improve evidence collection and address specific challenges and precautions to be taken when managing such cases; (g) best practices on the establishment of specialized counter-terrorism units within law enforcement authorities; and (h) training on the prevention of the dual-use of chemical materials, which represents one of the most common means used to commit terrorist attacks in countries in the region.

In addition to the support provided under AIRCOP and other border control initiatives in relation to FTF, UNODC will convey expertise from countries that have already adopted efficient measures to investigate and prosecute FTF cases and share it with Member States to support the development of tailor-made, rule of law compliant strategies, combined with their own experiences and best practices.

Preventing the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes

The internet has become a powerful tool for financing, recruitment, training and even preparation of terrorist acts. UNODC will pay particular attention to this issue and provide capacity building to Member States to prevent the misuse of the internet by terrorist organizations focusing on investigation and prosecution of terrorist cases involving the use of internet, including the exchange of national experiences and good practices. Training on the Use of Special Investigation Techniques of Digital Communication Channels will be expanded into the region and adapted to include tailor-made mock investigation scenarios. In 2016, a five-week online training course on the Use of Special Investigation Techniques is envisaged. This course builds on a previously held in-person training conducted in Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Morocco and Tunisia, and will further strengthen the capacities of investigators.

Countering the financing of terrorism

Terrorists require financing to recruit and support persons, maintain logistics hubs, and conduct operations. Thus, preventing terrorists from accessing financial resources is crucial to successfully countering the threat of terrorism. However, many Member States in the region lack the legal and operational frameworks and technical expertise needed to detect, investigate and prosecute terrorist financing cases.

UNODC works on the legal aspects of countering the financing of terrorism, including promoting the ratification of the relevant universal legal instruments, in particular the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism (1999), and the implementation of these international standards. This entails reviews of domestic legislation to ensure proper criminalization of offences related to the financing of terrorism and legislative drafting, developing the capacity of criminal justice and law enforcement officials to investigate, prosecute and adjudicate terrorist financing through the provision of specialized training on issues related to special investigation techniques, freezing, seizing and confiscating terrorist assets, and strengthening regional and international cooperation against the financing of terrorism.

UNODC highlighted the Member States obligations under S/RES/2199 (2015) pertaining to cut off ISIL/Daesh ~~Daesh~~ funding sources (oil revenues and cultural heritage sales) in many of its specialized activities, i.e.; Sharm El-Sheikh regional workshop on strengthening international cooperation in Combating the Financing of Terrorism (May 2015), Cairo national workshop on countering the financing of foreign terrorist fighters (November 2015), and Beirut workshop on countering financing of foreign terrorist fighters (December 2015). Many specialized activities in countering the financing of terrorism and foreign terrorist fighters are planned for countries in the region under the UNODC programmes.

In 2012, UNODC pioneered the development of two innovative training tools: a "Mock Criminal Investigation" and a "Mock Trial" on terrorism, terrorist financing and linkages to serious related crimes, providing practitioners with an opportunity to simulate trials and criminal investigations based on real-life scenarios.

In 2015, UNODC started implementing the programme for selected Member States on countering terrorist financing for FTF in order to suppress evolving FTF threats in the region.

Countering Foreign Terrorist Fighters

Member States in the region also face numerous challenges posed by new terrorist threats, such as FTF, kidnapping for ransom and the destruction of cultural heritage by terrorists. Following requests from the Member States and in line with the relevant General Assembly and Security Council Resolutions, UNODC launched a five-year initiative on the criminal justice response to FTF in the region (Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia and Yemen) and Balkan countries in March 2015.

In implementing the new initiative, UNODC closely partners with the European Union, the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force. The initiative envisages work on harmonization of national legislation related to FTF in compliance with Security Council Resolution 2178 (2014), as well as training the criminal justice officials to deal with specific criminal justice aspects related to FTF and to enhance international, regional and subregional cooperation in this respect. The capacity building addresses such aspects as investigation, prosecution and adjudication of FTF cases, explores the possibility of using intelligence information in FTF cases as admissible evidence, the use of special investigation techniques to counter terrorist activities on the Internet, preventing and countering the financing of terrorism in the context of FTF and strengthening regional and international cooperation.

4.4 SUBPROGRAMME III: COMBATING CORRUPTION AND FINANCIAL CRIMES

Subprogramme III will focus on assisting Member States to curb corruption in the region. In this respect, UNODC will assist Member States with the full implementation of UNCAC as well as in the upcoming UNCAC Review Cycle for the Convention's Chapters II (Preventive Measures) and V (Asset Recovery).

Outcome 1: National authorities more effectively combat corruption and promote integrity

An important element to counter the prevalence of corruption is to minimize the possibility of it occurring by detecting and eliminating its causes and enabling environment. This will be done mainly through the development and implementation of appropriate measures deterring involvement in corrupt practices, and developing codes of conduct as well as enhancing accountability and transparency in the public sector.

UNCAC, complemented by the Arab Convention against Corruption and other regional conventions, sets forth a number of measures to improve integrity and transparency standards as well as preventive measures which governments are either required or encouraged to adopt, from designating preventive bodies and adopting effective policies to cooperation mechanisms with the private and civil society sectors. Some of these preventive measures have already been initiated in the region. The effective adoption and implementation of anti-corruption strategies, national systems of asset disclosure and conflict of interest for public officials, access to public information, public procurement systems, judicial integrity, measures to prevent corruption in the private sector, involvement of the civil society sector and protection of reporting persons, are all important elements in the prevention of corruption. Among the countries in the region, the level of implementation of such provisions varies greatly, given the different social and economic environments and the varying levels of institutional and law enforcement capacities. UNODC will thus support various forms of integrity oversight institutions in the Arab States. UNODC will also assist Member States with the establishment and/or strengthening of these critical preventive measures required by UNCAC through the provision of expertise and training, as well as through the enhancement of national integrity institutional structures required to combat corruption, such as the creation of databases and data management systems. UNODC will also aim to support further efforts with a particular focus on the implementation of the relevant provisions of UNCAC on police integrity and oversight. The possible role of CSOs in raising awareness and supporting national campaigns will also be promoted.

In addition to supporting preventative measures, UNODC will provide assistance to strengthen capacities of Member States in the region to effectively detect, investigate, prosecute and adjudicate corruption offences. UNCAC requires States parties to criminalize offences as outlined in Chapter III (Articles 15 to 25). Furthermore, legal and other additional measures to facilitate law enforcement action against acts of corruption need to be adopted, including whistle-blower and witness protection, as well as special investigative techniques, amongst others.

Under the current cycle of the UNCAC Review Mechanism, many priorities and needs have already been identified under Chapters III and IV to bring the States parties in line with the above requirements. Accordingly, UNODC will support countries to develop stronger criminal justice responses to corruption by (a) supporting the development of relevant legislative frameworks; (b) supporting the establishment of anti-corruption institutions, including the development and effective implementation of anti-corruption strategies and action plans, and enhancing integrity throughout the public sector; (c) supporting the capacity of judges and prosecutors to develop and address corruption cases; and (d) assisting States parties to benefit from the Implementation Review Mechanism within the framework established by the Conference of the States parties to UNCAC.

Outcome 2: National criminal asset recovery and management systems more effectively support judicial proceedings

Recovering and returning stolen assets denies corrupt actors the ability to enjoy the proceeds of their crimes and can provide governments with much-needed funds to support the welfare of citizens.

In past years, Middle East and North African countries have responded to UNCAC requirements with regard to putting in place appropriate measures to seize, confiscate and return proceeds of corruption by building their relevant judicial and law enforcement capacities and fostering international cooperation in criminal matters.

One aspect of asset recovery, however, remains less developed across the region: the management, use and disposal of criminally-derived (not just from corruption) and stolen assets, at the legislative, institutional and operational levels. A functioning and effective system takes into account the management, use and disposal of assets at the domestic level and the management, use and repatriation or sharing of assets where more than one jurisdiction is involved and requires international cooperation. In addition, depending on the circumstances and their nature, seized assets need different maintenance and treatment from the moment they are seized until they are confiscated and, if the case may be, returned - which can take several months, if not years. One essential prerequisite to be able to act effectively on requests from foreign jurisdictions and assist in the tracing, seizing and forfeiture of criminally-derived and stolen assets, is a robust legal, operational and administrative regime including well defined and transparent asset management protocols at the national level.

According to international standards and best practices, an effective asset management system includes a centralized body in charge of these actions. Such a body can either be independent or placed within existing departmental frameworks. Furthermore, adequate legislation defining the jurisdictions and mandates of the body are necessary, as well as the identification and description of responsibilities and duties of asset managers (e.g. fiduciary duty to maintain, preserve and adequately dispose of seized and confiscated assets). Asset managers also need to have the proper authority to take all necessary steps and actions/measures to properly manage confiscated assets, including the ability to recruit experts and contractors, lease facilities and/or invest. Most countries in the region are yet to achieve these standards.

On this basis, UNODC will provide assistance to the Member States using expertise and best practice examples on how to build up effective criminal asset management systems and to enhance their institutional and legal capacity. Assistance will also include training for designated bodies and their staff to strengthen inter-agency and international cooperation.

Outcome 3: National authorities more effectively counter money laundering and conduct effective financial investigations

Illegally-obtained funds from numerous criminal activities tend to remain hidden. They are laundered and moved around the globe, using various means including shell companies, intermediaries and money transmitters. Preventing and combating money laundering has therefore drawn significant international attention in the past decades, and has become part of important international treaties, such as the Vienna Convention of 1988 and UNTOC of 2000, which demand the classification of money laundering as a criminal offence. Most notably, UNCAC adoption in 2003 established the comprehensive, legally-binding obligation for countries to criminalize the laundering of corruption related proceeds and to seek to apply money laundering offences to the widest possible range of predicate offences.

In order to effectively fight organized crime and to dismantle related groups, one essential means is to cut the flows of financial resources that keep them functioning. In addition, tracing, identifying and confiscating illicit funds and proceeds of crime contributes to tackling other forms of serious crimes, such as trafficking in persons, arms and drugs.

Strong and effective financial investigation capacities have proven to be amongst the most effective tools to respond to gaps in financial transparency and to counter money laundering activities, thereby reducing both opportunities for corruption as well as the financing of terrorism. Various methods and tools, such as bank information, databases and registries, disclosure forms, open source information, etc. need to be processed and analysed correctly in order to produce valid evidence and intelligence. Member States in the region have all taken significant steps to strengthen their legal and institutional capacities to trace illegal financial transactions. However, given the complexity of this field, the myriad of laws and regulations surrounding it, many challenges remain for Member States to establish firm and effective financial investigation systems.

UNODC will support Member States in strengthening both their institutional and human resources capacities to respond to the challenges of tracing, identifying, freezing, seizing and confiscating proceeds of crime. UNODC will also provide necessary legislative assistance, notably revising criminal laws and procedures, and focus on establishing effective inter-agency and international cooperation and enhancing the capacities of financial control authorities.

The Regional Programme will also continue to support Member States in their efforts to combat the laundering of money derived from illicit drug trafficking, transnational organized crime, terrorism, and other serious crimes, to continue to foster international cooperation by implementing the provisions against money-laundering contained in all relevant international instruments, such as the 1988 Vienna Convention, UNTOC and the Protocols thereto and UNCAC, and, in accordance with national legislation, the Forty Recommendations on Money Laundering of the Financial Action Task Force and its standards, within its mandate.

4.5. SUBPROGRAMME IV: CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND CRIME PREVENTION

Given the recent changes in the Arab region, particular attention should be paid to improving criminal justice systems. UNODC interventions under subprogramme IV will thus focus on improving these areas in order to strengthen the rule of law, good governance and equal and just criminal justice responses, in particular with regards to women and children.

Outcome 1: Member States develop and implement crime prevention strategies

World statistics on safety and security show that the region has relatively low crime and homicide rates compared to other regions.⁴² However, the region is affected by several underlying risk factors, such as

⁴²http://www.academia.edu/3555277/Planning_and_Designing_Urban_Space_Community_and_Crime_Prevention_The_Case_of_ArabCountries

high unemployment particularly among the youth, and the conflicts that are prevailing in several countries across the region. In addition, some countries are currently challenged by a large influx of refugees from neighbouring countries, such as Syria, and some countries in Eastern Africa like Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia, among others, which can have a destabilizing effect. Refugees are often traumatized; having lost ties with families and community structures, they find themselves in an alien, unstructured situation, deprived of social and economic opportunities. Many men are unable to work, which has the potential to breed violence within homes and outside. Due to competition over scarce resources in the host countries, including jobs, tensions can evolve between refugees and the resident population.

Integrated national crime prevention strategies, including community policing

Crime prevention strategies are designed to reduce the occurrence of crime and its potential harmful effects on individuals and society. There is clear evidence that well-planned crime prevention strategies not only prevent crime and victimization, but also promote community safety and contribute to sustainable development. Effective and comprehensive crime prevention strategies enhance the quality of life of all citizens and have long-term benefits in terms of reducing the costs associated with the formal criminal justice system, as well as other social costs that result from crime.⁴³

Upon request, UNODC will also support Member States in the region to develop and implement integrated national crime prevention strategies in order to provide effective policy frameworks for the implementation of crime prevention plans, programmes and activities. In this context, UNODC will assist Member States in identifying priority crime problems and their root causes as well as areas for action, including social crime prevention, situational crime prevention and the prevention of recidivism (re-offending), as well as the protection of victims.

UNODC also has the expertise to assist Member States in the development of community policing action plans, according to the specificity of each state. Community policing is considered one of the most effective ways to address disorder and prevent crime. It ensures local ownership of safety, security and justice by making the community a partner in the delivery of these services, which is considered particularly important in mixed communities. Furthermore, it can serve as an efficient information-gathering tool for better intelligence-led policing and thereby facilitate criminal investigations, provided that well-functioning oversight mechanisms are in place. Upon request, UNODC can support Member States' efforts to implement relevant provisions of the United Nations Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Professionals and the Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms and other relevant crime prevention standards⁴⁴.

Local crime prevention initiatives focusing on youth

Starting in Palestine, UNODC will provide assistance in educational settings to reduce risk factors for violent behaviour that can lead to crime, and will promote life skills development and healthy life styles among youth.

Crime prevention in educational settings will focus on enhancing skills of teachers, school counsellors and families, to identify and deal with students in early risk situations, and sponsor activities, including sports-related activities, in order to build resilience against risk factors of crime, drugs and gang-involvement. School staff will be trained on means to identify and respond to situations where youth may become involved in crime and violence, and schools and universities will be assisted in developing and enforcing policies that reduce the risk of spill-over effects of drugs, crime and violence from the street into schools in order to provide a safe learning environment.

⁴³Guidelines for Crime Prevention; ECOSOC Resolution 2002/13.

⁴⁴ 2002 Guidelines for the Prevention of Crime, 1990 United Nations Guidelines for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency (Riyadh Guidelines), and 1995 Guidelines for the prevention of urban crime.

In addition, strategic advice on crime prevention will be provided, including assistance with surveys on safety and victimization. CSOs engaged in crime prevention will be supported in order to increase the general knowledge of what can be done in this field, to bring together all efforts, to avoid duplication and to build on lessons learnt. Awareness-raising activities and media campaigns will also play an important role in this endeavour, as will the promotion of inter-ministerial coordination in developing and implementing crime prevention strategies.

Community safety in communities affected by the Syrian refugee crisis

Within refugee camps, frustration over living conditions often spins out of control and theft and violence are common and often go unpunished. Infiltration of the camps by unregistered persons or even criminal groups is also of major concern. Displacement exacerbates risks of trafficking in persons and forced engagement in sex work and sexual exploitation, to which young women and children, both boys and girls, are particularly exposed. Child labour, sexual and gender-based violence, such as forced and early marriage, domestic violence and survival sex, have also been observed both in camp and non-camp settings amongst the refugee population.

Many of these incidents are not reported to the police but dealt with through mediation by the community itself. If reports are made, police often lack the capacity to provide adequate assistance and safe and secure living conditions for the victims and those at risk. Limited police presence and lack of capacity amongst police officers to build trust with the refugee population, mean that problem-oriented and community-based approaches to policing, and adequate responses to VAW and children are urgently needed. As noted earlier, community policing is considered an effective way to address disorder and to prevent crime rather than traditional, reactive approaches. It also ensures safety, security and justice by making the community a partner in the delivery of these services, which is especially key in mixed communities. Activities in this area could be linked to Outcome 5 of this Subprogramme with regard to information collection, as community policing can be an information gathering tool for better intelligence-led policing and more effective criminal investigations.

Building on its previous assistance to police units operating in the Za'atari camp in Jordan, as well as on other long-term police reform initiatives such as in the area of justice for children and promoting effective police responses to VAW, UNODC will assist concerned countries in enhancing community safety and adapting their policing practices in and around refugee camps, as well as in selected host communities, starting in Jordan (in Amman, Irbid and Mafraq) and Lebanon (north of the country and Beqaa). Special attention will be given to problem-oriented policing, the protection of women and children and the prevention of sexual and gender based violence, as well as trafficking in persons. In addition, UNODC will support current policing capacities and partnerships between governmental and non-governmental bodies, including law enforcement, public service providers and community representatives, to ensure effective prevention of violence and crime, as well as adequate assistance to and protection of victims.

Outcome 2: Strengthened capacities of criminal justice systems enable them to provide better access to justice for children and to prevent and respond to violence against children

Outcome 2 will focus on strengthening legislative, institutional and human resource capacities of criminal justice institutions to deal fairly and humanely with children in contact with the justice system (i.e., child victims and witnesses of crime as well as alleged child offenders) and to promote effective measures to prevent and respond to violence against children.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child and other legal instruments urge countries to have a specialized child-sensitive children justice system that places respect for the dignity and the best interest of the child at the centre of legislation, policy and practices, while promoting a sense of worth for the children, their rehabilitation and their reintegration into society. Following the ratification of the Convention by all the countries in the region, most have enacted or proposed to enact laws to protect children from violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation. A number of countries have put in place

comprehensive child laws bringing together legal provisions for the protection of children and juveniles. There is, however, a wide governance gap between these international standards and their implementation. Often, children across the region continue to see their rights neglected by laws and institutions and have to endure harsh and retributive punishments that further stigmatize and marginalize them. In particular, children from economically-disadvantaged backgrounds, who have fled home as a result of violence, and those who suffer from mental health problems or substance abuse, find themselves at special risk.

With the recent adoption of a new international normative instrument, the *United Nations Model Strategies and Practical Measures on the Elimination of Violence against Children in the Field of Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice*, the international community has recognized the key role played by the criminal justice system in preventing and responding to violence against children and has mandated UNODC to assist countries in the implementation of this new set of international standards and norms aimed to promote justice for children.⁴⁵

UNODC assistance to the Member States in the field of justice for children will include national and regional components. Despite the similarities of the challenges in the region, each country has its particularities stemming from its culture and thus, national action plans on justice for children have to be tailored to, and by, each country. UNODC will assist countries in the region to (a) set up or strengthen legal and policy reform; (b) strengthen the capacity of institutions, particularly child justice institutions; (c) provide capacity-building, training and awareness-raising, including awareness-raising on the rights of child victims and witnesses; and (d) strengthen coordination mechanisms between law enforcement, justice, the social sector, government and non-government actors. A particular focus will be placed on developing alternatives to imprisonment and implementing restorative justice programmes for children in conflict with the law.

UNODC has the expertise to provide capacity building ranging from the development of, and strategic planning for, violence prevention and child justice policies, to the investigation, control and punishment of violence against children in full respect of rule of law principles and child rights standards, the evaluation and strengthening of institutions, public service management, etc. UNODC is also able to develop training curricula, training manuals, provide training of trainers and design cost-effective methods and tools for requested training activities.

UNODC assistance to Member States in the field of justice for children will also include the *provision of legal and other advisory services* in order to align the national legal, regulatory and policy frameworks with the “*United Nations Model Strategies and Practical Measures on the Elimination of Violence Against Children in the Field of Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice*”.

At the regional level, UNODC will assist Member States to (a) share and profit from best practices; (b) benefit from regional expertise and create a pool of regional experts; (c) share tools and manuals; (d) create a platform for dialogue among the various practitioners in the region; and (e) establish regional approaches supporting the implementation of child-sensitive justice systems.

Outcome 3: Gender-sensitive criminal justice systems are in place and a strengthened criminal justice response is provided to combat violence against women

Outcome 3 will focus on enhancing the gender sensitivity of the criminal justice system by strengthening legislative, institutional and human resource capacities of Member States to deal efficiently and humanely with the VAW phenomenon, and prioritizing the use of non-custodial measures for women offenders and improving the treatment of women prisoners. *The Updated Model Strategies and Practical Measures on*

⁴⁵General Assembly Resolution A/RES/69/194, Annex, of 18 December 2014.

*the Elimination of Violence against Women*⁴⁶ and the *United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-Custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules)*⁴⁷ will serve as the normative basis for UNODC assistance.

VAW continues to pose a significant challenge in the region. Following the recent changes in the region, some Arab States have paid increased attention to specific VAW forms, and related legislative and procedural developments have occurred in this area. Nonetheless, obstacles remain. The various actors in the criminal justice system – police, judiciary and courts – are still failing women subjected to violence. Negative attitudes from officials dealing with such cases and underdeveloped services result in underreporting of VAW cases and therefore go unpunished. There is a profound lack of confidence and trust in the criminal justice institutions as well as a high percentage of victims whose needs for assistance, protection and redress are neither recognized nor met.

At present, 160 countries worldwide have laws to address VAW. Yet the advancement towards a comprehensive legal framework for protection against gender-based violence is most limited in the region. All too often, women subjected to violence are violated twice: firstly when they are victims of violence, and secondly when they seek, and do not find, the justice and services they are entitled to. All too often⁴⁸ the rate of trials and sanctions for VAW acts is low, and when perpetrators are held accountable, they are punished for lesser crimes and given shorter and lighter sentences.

UNODC will assist Member States in their efforts and initiatives to prevent and respond to VAW, in particular by strengthening criminal justice systems and responses. UNODC will provide legislative assistance and legal advice with the objective of strengthening legal regimes in order to prevent and eliminate VAW and to combat impunity for perpetrators of VAW crimes, as well as support the improvement of access to justice and legal aid for victims. Furthermore, the collection and analysis of relevant data, including the implementation of surveys, in particular victimization and VAW surveys, will be supported. UNODC will also focus on strengthening national measures to assist and protect victims and witnesses of VAW crimes, and train relevant criminal justice officials on effective responses, including on the proper treatment of victims. CSOs can play a key role in this regard, given the experience they have on the ground in providing assistance to victims. In addition, existing national crime prevention policies and strategies in the area of VAW will be revised and amended, as required.

UNODC will also provide assistance to address the gender-specific needs of women prisoners that are often not met in criminal justice systems and prisons built for men⁴⁹. In this regard, UNODC will provide legislative assistance and policy advice to bring national legislation and practices in line with the Bangkok Rules. UNODC will also support coordination and the development of specialized capacities and skills among prison administrations and criminal justice professionals to enable them to understand the situation of women offenders and prisoners and meet their specific needs. Furthermore, UNODC will assist the Member States in preventing and responding to VAW during women's imprisonment and after their release. Research in various countries of the region has shown that every second woman in prison has experienced violence, which is a high percentage in comparison to women outside of prisons.⁵⁰

Outcome 4: National authorities enhance access to legal aid

⁴⁶ General Assembly resolution 65/228, Annex. - 21 Dec. 2010 - Strengthening crime prevention and criminal justice responses to violence against women.

⁴⁷ General Assembly resolution 65/229, Annex. - 21 Dec. 2010 - United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules)

⁴⁸ <http://www.oecd.org/mena/governance/women-in-public-life-mena-brochure.pdf>

⁴⁹ See UNODC, Handbook on Women and Imprisonment, 2nd edition, 2014.

⁵⁰ Penal Reform International: 'Who are women prisoners?' Survey results from Jordan and Tunisia, 2014.

Outcome 4 will focus on enhancing access to legal aid⁵¹ by strengthening the legislative and institutional capacities of criminal justice systems to provide an accessible and equitable legal aid system, particularly for vulnerable populations.

Access to legal aid is an essential element of a fair, humane and efficient criminal justice system that is based on the rule of law. Access to legal aid provides a foundation for other fundamental rights, including the right to a fair trial, and is an important safeguard that ensures fundamental fairness and public trust in the criminal justice process. International legal frameworks recognize the right to criminal legal aid. In particular, article 14 of the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*⁵² states that anyone charged with a criminal offence shall be entitled to defend himself or herself through legal assistance. The recently adopted *United Nations Principles and Guidelines on Access to Legal Aid in Criminal Justice Systems*⁵³ reflects the importance of a wider access to legal aid around the world and encourages Member States to undertake national efforts and measures to strengthen access to legal aid in criminal justice systems.

In this regard, UNODC will assist Member States strengthen and promote access to legal aid in their criminal justice system. In particular, UNODC will assist Member States in reviewing their existing legislation, policies and/or national strategies concerning access to legal aid, including by conducting assessments of the legal aid system with the aim of identifying priorities for reform and capacity-building needs. UNODC will provide assistance to legislators and policymakers to develop or amend legal aid legislation and policies in line with relevant international norms and standards, including the *United Nations Principles and Guidelines on Access to Legal Aid in Criminal Justice Systems*. UNODC will also assist in the development and delivery of training and capacity-building activities for relevant criminal justice actors, particularly the legal aid providers,⁵⁴ judges, prosecutors and law enforcement officers. Moreover, UNODC will assist the authorities responsible for delivery of legal aid raise knowledge and awareness of rights among the population, with a particular focus on the awareness of the right to legal aid.

Outcome 5: Justice and law enforcement authorities cooperate more effectively

Each Arab country has its own criminal justice system and procedure. However, two types of systems can be identified in the region: (a) countries where the prosecution or a law enforcement agency has investigative powers to build a case that will then be submitted to a judge during the trial phase in court; and (b) countries where an investigative judge leads an investigation that is conducted by a law enforcement agency and where the prosecution may have the power to request the collection of additional evidence before the case is brought to trial. Irrespective of the justice system adopted by each Arab country, a common challenge faced is the implementation of an effective cooperation between law enforcement and justice actors.

As countries aim to dismantle organized criminal or terrorist groups, and thus go beyond the seizure of illicit goods and the arrest of low-level operatives, effective, in-depth investigations will be required. Yet there can be no successful in-depth investigations without effective inter-institutional collaboration between law enforcement agencies and the prosecution (and/or investigative judges).

Building on the interventions in the areas of border control, counter-trafficking, counter-terrorism, anti-corruption, anti-money laundering and terrorism financing, UNODC will use its expertise in investigation

⁵¹ “Legal aid” means provision of legal advice, assistance and representation at the expense of the State for persons detained, arrested, imprisoned, suspected, accused of, or charged with a criminal offence and for victims and witnesses in the criminal justice process. Legal aid includes legal education, access to legal information and other services including alternative dispute resolution mechanisms and restorative justice processes.

⁵² See General Assembly resolution 2200A (XXI) of 16 December 1966.

⁵³ See General Assembly resolution 67/187 of 20 December 2012.

⁵⁴ Including public defenders, legal practitioners and their apprentices, organizations such as non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations and faith-based organizations, law clinics and paralegals.

to identify bottlenecks and obstacles to effective police-justice cooperation. This may require: (a) the assessment of current criminal procedures, notably with the aim to clarify roles and responsibilities; (b) systematic joint attendance (police and justice officials) during training events; (c) the sharing of best practices that have been observed within the region and beyond; (d) conducting large scale- training where law enforcement officers (traditionally in greater number than justice officials) would be sensitized to the best ways to conduct an in-depth investigation and contribute to changing prejudices and institutional rivalries; (e) support for justice-police networking, communication and information exchange mechanisms.

Outcome 6: Prison systems operate in line with relevant United Nations standards and norms, and effectively contribute to reducing recidivism and addressing violent extremism in prisons

The size of the prison population is growing, both worldwide and in the region, where the average rate of occupancy lies at 140 per cent.⁵⁵ The management of the majority of prisons in the region focuses on security, safety and order, paying little attention to rehabilitation programmes, despite the considerable benefit they can bring to the prison environment and the social reintegration prospects of prisoners. Prison overcrowding is a challenge in the region and jeopardizes the already-weak infrastructure, sanitation, nutrition, health services and care, in particular for vulnerable members of society, as well as prisoner activities and programmes. Furthermore, overcrowding is in itself a source of human rights violations.

Many national prison systems in the region are affected by serious overcrowding, which has a very serious impact on prison security and safety, prison conditions as well as the physical and mental health of prisoners, including the spread of contagious diseases. In situations of overcrowding, prison administrations further tend to heavily shift their focus towards ensuring order and security to the detriment of implementing a rehabilitative approach to prison management. Prison overcrowding constitutes one of the most fundamental obstacles in applying the provisions of the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners and their core requirement of treating prisoners in line with their inherent dignity and value as human beings. Furthermore, national prison systems in the region tend to lack accurate prisoner file management systems, a deficiency which (i) significantly undermines the proper follow-up of individual cases, in particular for pretrial detainees; (ii) renders difficult the consistent implementation of individual sentence plans; and, therefore (iii) has the potential to negatively affect rates of prison overcrowding and recidivism. A related important management challenge in prisons consists of insufficient assessment and classification procedures, including medical examinations upon admission, which would ensure that prisoners would be allocated a prison regime in line with individually assessed risks and needs, including tailored rehabilitation programmes which would prepare them for their eventual reintegration into society.

Another factor leading to overcrowding, but further presenting a problem in itself, is the long periods of pretrial detention, common across the region with a regional average of 50 per cent pretrial detainees, up to 70 per cent in some countries. Part of the problem may be attributed to judicial bureaucracy, together with the difficult access to legal assistance and non-custodial sanctions. Further, in the past ten years, the trend has moved towards more punitive and longer sentences for even minor non-violent offences instead of , relying on diversion or by utilising non-custodial community-based sanctions, such as cautions, fines, suspended sentences, community service or restorative justice measures, especially for those who are often relatively new to the justice system.

A relatively new challenge for the region is the increasing number of prisoners convicted of serious offences, such as organized crime or related to violent extremism that leads to terrorism. As this phenomenon is relatively new, empirical data research available to support trend analysis or policy

⁵⁵International Centre for Prison studies: <http://www.prisonstudies.org/world-prison-brief>

making is limited.. In any case, it has a significant impact on prison systems, which, for example, increasingly count arrested or convicted FTF amongst their prison population.

UNODC will assist the countries with the above noted challenges by promoting interventions that ensure the incorporation of international standards and human rights within criminal justice systems. Building on these, UNODC can provide technical assistance to policy-makers, prison administrators and staff as they develop their own prison management procedures, such as classification systems, prisoner data management systems, risk assessment, rehabilitation and reintegration programmes, security affairs management procedures, staff training etc. while ensuring that these interventions are developed using internationally and regional recognised best practices in order to obtain better results.

Interventions may include (a) improving prisoner data management systems and monitoring; (b) strengthening classification systems, including early warning of radicalization; (c) enhancing infrastructures in prisons, including through renovation and refurbishment; (d) strengthening existing monitoring mechanisms and developing independent prison inspection mechanisms; (e) providing support for the expansion and/or development of rehabilitation and reintegration programmes, including income-generating activities and access to markets, as well as legislative support and supporting the implementation of alternatives to imprisonment; and (f) supporting the coordination between criminal justice agencies and civil society. In addition, UNODC will provide capacity-building and training on various topics related to prison reform, including alternatives to imprisonment and restorative justice to relevant institutions and their staff to address the over-reliance on imprisonment.

4.6 SUBPROGRAMME V: PREVENTION OF DRUG USE, TREATMENT AND CARE OF DRUG USE DISORDERS AND HIV/AIDS PREVENTION AND CARE

Under subprogramme V, UNODC will focus on strengthening prevention of drug use as well as comprehensive treatment of drug use disorders and evidence-based HIV prevention, treatment and care among people who use drugs and people in prisons. Access to quality treatment services should be ensured equally to people in prison settings and people living with HIV. In general, health services offered in prisons should be equivalent to those available in the community. The drug demand reduction response in the region has moved forward over the last decade (including the period covered by the first Regional Programme) due to the adoption of several well-balanced drug demand reduction strategies. However, several countries in the region still lack such a strategy and other countries face obstacles in translating such strategic documents into evidence-based and (cost-) effective national action plans on drug prevention and comprehensive drug treatment.

The political unrest in the region has further exacerbated the flow of illicit substances into local markets. These, in times of difficult political and social circumstances, coupled with challenging economic conditions, can lead to an increase in drug abuse among already vulnerable members of society. As the focus in the region at present lies primarily on security issues, the already frail evidence-based responses, such as substance use prevention and treatment, do not receive the needed support. For instance, the growing numbers of refugees and internally-displaced and traumatized persons in the region are already vulnerable, including to drug use. Even more vulnerable are youth and children who are exposed to war or highly-insecure environments. Services capable of addressing such issues are scarce, in particular services for refugees and displaced persons.

Nevertheless, best practices, tools and international standards, such as the International Standards on Drug Use Prevention and the Quality Standards for Drug Dependence Treatment, and the International Standards on Drug Treatment, can be of service to the Member States.

Accordingly, UNODC will continue to support vulnerable populations, including people in prisons and people who inject drugs, in accessing comprehensive evidence-based drug prevention and treatment response packages, and providing a comprehensive package of HIV prevention, treatment and care services. UNODC will also support Member States in reducing demand for illicit drugs through advocacy, policy change and technical support.

Outcome 1: Adapted evidence-based prevention is conducted in line with International Standards on Drug Use Prevention

UNODC is supporting Member States to enable them to provide evidence-based drug prevention packages. The above-mentioned International Standards have been availed to policy makers globally, including from the region, to re-orient national responses towards evidence-based programmes focusing on the vulnerabilities associated with substance use at different developmental age of growth and in different social settings. The International Standards on Drug Use Prevention provide core characteristics of the prevention programmes that are associated with effective impact, as well as those highlighted in science that are actually associated with no or negative results in different developmental ages and across different social settings.

UNODC will continue to engage with policy makers and service providers, capitalizing on the established infrastructure to further improve and evaluate existing responses and support evidence-based drug prevention responses, including to stimulants and NPS by (a) focusing on the most influential social institutions (schools, the family, the workplace and the community); and (b) targeting the different vulnerabilities of youth at various stages of development to tailor interventions to the risk level of these individuals (universal, selective and indicated). All interventions and assistance will be guided and will be in line with the UNODC International Standards on Drug Use Prevention. These evidence-based prevention services will also cater for the increasing number of refugees in the region who require a response tailored to their own needs and characteristics.

Outcome 2: Capacity is strengthened to provide evidence-based drug dependence prevention, treatment and care/rehabilitation and HIV prevention, treatment and care services, among people who use drugs, in community centres and in closed settings while supporting efforts on alternatives to incarceration

According to 2012 global estimates, around 243 million people aged 15-64 have used an illicit drug. Around 27 million people are problematic drug users, i.e. they use drugs regularly and suffer from drug use disorders or dependence. Only one out of six of these problem users has access to drug treatment services⁵⁶.

Injecting drug use continues to drive the HIV epidemic in many countries around the world. There are an estimated 12.7 million people who inject drugs globally; 13% of these are living with HIV, 52% with hepatitis C, and 6.7% with hepatitis B⁵⁷. In 2014, there were an estimated 240,000 (150 000 – 320 000) adults and children living with HIV in the region. In the same year, there were an estimated 12,000 AIDS-related deaths, i.e. triple the number of deaths related to AIDS that were reported in 2000, and an estimated 22,000 new HIV infections.⁵⁸

UNODC has been involved globally, regionally and nationally to assist Arab States, in line with their national policies, in applying comprehensive and integrated health responses. UNODC has been implementing activities in the region to promote best practices and networking to reduce demand for and

⁵⁶ World Drug Report 2014.

⁵⁷ World Drug Report 2014.

⁵⁸ UNAIDS report on HIV in the Middle East and North Africa 2013 – 2015.

harm from drugs over the past years. This included providing assistance at: 1) the normative level, to orient their drug control strategies and drug dependence treatment policies in line with internationally recognized, effective and cost-effective measures, 2) the system level, to ensure an integrated level of services and care and 3) human resource level, to ensure well trained staff.

UNODC has been engaging with countries from the region to develop the institutional and professional capacity to deliver evidence-based treatment interventions through the training of service providers and master trainers, using the Treatnet modules⁵⁹. UNODC has also supported national treatment centres through the UNODC-WHO Global Programme for drug treatment under the first Regional Programme for the Arab States (2011-2015). Moreover, UNODC has published its Treatnet Quality Standards and presented these in several countries in the region, and finalized the International Standards for Drug Treatment, a tool that will allow the enhancement of drug treatment systems during the 59th CND.

Given the aforementioned growing needs in the region, UNODC will strengthen available infrastructures and service providers, and further build capacities for a drug treatment response that provides a comprehensive, multifaceted set of evidence-based interventions relying on the UNODC-WHO Global Programme on drug treatment and care, other guidelines and standards. The response aims to cover all vulnerable members of society (including women, youth and children). UNODC will also support the Arab States in improving access for people using stimulant drugs and NPS to evidence-based drug treatment and HIV prevention, treatment and care services.

As HIV and drug use are still on the rise in the region, UNODC will support the development of laws, policies, strategies, guidelines and practices related to HIV and people who inject drugs in order to reduce obstacles to accessing evidence-based and human rights-based HIV prevention, treatment and care services and to reduce violence experienced by people who inject drugs. Furthermore, assistance will be offered in the region to adopt and promote access for people who use drugs to the comprehensive HIV prevention, treatment and care services with particular focus to the WHO/UNODC/UNAIDS comprehensive package.

Outcome 3: National authorities broaden and improve access to health services in prisons and closed settings

Every year, 30 million people spend time in prisons or closed settings, and at any given point in time, 10 million are incarcerated and most will return to their communities, many within a few months to a year⁶⁰. In addition to the challenges and problems stemming from overcrowding in prisons discussed under subprogramme IV, prisons are often overcrowded due to inappropriate, ineffective or excessive criminal laws. Overcrowding increases vulnerability to infections such as HIV, tuberculosis and hepatitis. In some contexts, the HIV prevalence among prisoners may be up to 50 times higher than in the general population⁶¹.

In the Middle East and North African region, 400,263 prisoners were imprisoned in 2013⁶². Drug use and injecting drug use are common in prisons in the region. A 20 per cent prevalence of drug use was reported in prisons in some countries. Sharing injecting equipment among people who inject drugs was also reported. Despite evidence of high HIV- risk behaviours in prisons, the overall response to this problem in the region remains weak.

⁵⁹The Treatnet Training Package was developed by an international consortium of clinical experts, researchers, and trainers from an international Capacity Building Consortium, led by the University of California Los Angeles / Integrated Substance Abuse Program (UCLA/ISAP). It is a central component to the effort by the UNODC Treatnet initiative to increase the level of knowledge and skills on substance abuse around the world. <https://www.unodc.org/treatment/en/training-package.html>

⁶⁰UNAIDS_Gap_report_2014.

⁶¹UNAIDS_Gap_report_2014.

⁶²International Centre for Prison Studies website www.prisonstudies.org.

As health in prisons and other closed settings is intimately connected to the health of wider society, UNODC as the leading agency responsible for assisting Member States in policy development and the coordination of strategies for HIV prevention and care among those living in closed settings will adopt, promote and support development of normative guidance, evidence-based HIV policies and programmes on HIV prevention, treatment, care and support in prisons in the region.

Under the Regional Programme, UNODC will advocate with the Member States and CSOs for increasing access of those living in closed settings to health services including drug dependence treatment at least equivalent to that provided in the wider community, and promote the comprehensive package of HIV prevention, treatment and care in prisons as outlined in the UNODC/ILO/UNDP/WHO and UNAIDS policy brief⁶³.

Outcome 4: National authorities address the disparity of access to controlled medicines

As stated in the 2009 Annual Report of the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), “One of the fundamental objectives of the international drug control treaties is to ensure the availability of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances for medical and scientific purposes and to promote the rational use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances”.⁶⁴ While opioids are essential in the management of pain experienced by millions of people who might be suffering from late-stage cancers, AIDS, surgical procedures and other debilitating diseases and conditions, they are also susceptible to abuse. This means that countries face the challenging task of balancing two public health needs: ensuring the availability of these controlled substances for medical purposes and preventing their misuse and diversion.⁶⁵

UNODC will work with relevant partners in the region in reviewing and revising national legislation, regulation and policies to guarantee access to controlled drugs for medical purposes in accordance with the UNODC, WHO and the Union for International Cancer Control's Joint Global Programme, which aims to ensure access to controlled drugs for medical purposes for patients in need, while preventing the misuse, abuse and diversion of such drugs. The Joint Global Programme responds to requests by Member States as presented in CND Resolution 53/4 on availability of internationally controlled licit drugs for medical and scientific purposes, and Resolution 54/6 on availability of internationally-controlled narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances for medical and scientific purposes, and World Health Assembly Resolution 67.19 on palliative care. It is also in line with the Discussion Paper prepared by UNODC for the 54th CND Session, the 2010 INCB Report on ‘Availability of internationally controlled drugs: ensuring adequate access for medical and scientific purposes’⁶⁶, and the revised 2012 WHO Guidelines ‘Ensuring balance in national policies on controlled substances: guidance for availability and accessibility of controlled medicines’⁶⁷.

In line with this global perspective, this outcome will help countries in the region to (a) build the capacity of healthcare professionals related to utilizing controlled drugs as an aspect of pain management and palliative care; and (b) review, analyse and revise existing legislation and policy related to access and availability of controlled drugs for medical purposes.

⁶³ https://www.unodc.org/documents/hiv-aids/HIV_comprehensive_package_prison_2013_eBook.pdf

⁶⁴ <https://www.incb.org/incb/en/publications/annual-reports/annual-report-2009.html>.

⁶⁵ World Drug Report 2014.

⁶⁶ https://www.unodc.org/documents/lpo-brazil/noticias/2011/03marco/Jife/Report_of_the_Board_on_the_availability_of_controlled_substances.pdf

⁶⁷ <http://apps.who.int/medicinedocs/documents/s18050en/s18050en.pdf>

V. PROGRAMME GOVERNANCE AND IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

5.1 STEERING AND FOLLOW-UP COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONAL PROGRAMME

The Regional Programme's Steering Committee shall oversee the implementation of the UNODC Regional Programme 2016-2021 in accordance with regional priorities, and facilitate effective cooperation between UNODC, the League of Arab States, including the various specialized councils and departments of the LAS and the Member States. It will ensure that there is no duplication of effort in the areas of drug control, crime prevention and criminal justice reform in the region and assist in mobilizing resources for initiatives under the RP⁶⁸.

5.2 UNODC ROMENA

The UNODC Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa (ROMENA) covers all the Member States that are part of the Regional Programme: Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen. In addition to the Regional Office, there is the Subregional Programme Office in Tripoli (Libya) but, due to the current situation, activities concerning the Maghreb are currently managed remotely by the Programme Coordinator from Cairo; the Office for the Gulf Cooperation Council Region in Abu Dhabi (UAE); and to Programme Offices in Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Tunisia and Yemen. Together these offices have more than 75 staff members in total. Efforts will be undertaken to expand the UNODC presence in the region, and open new Programme Offices as the portfolio and resources allow.

ROMENA will manage the RP, under the direct oversight of the UNODC Regional Representative, and with support from the Regional Section for Africa and the Middle East and the Integrated Programme and Oversight Branch in the Division of Operations at UNODC HQ in Vienna. In addition to project implementation, ROMENA's main role, in terms of the RP, will be to engage with counterparts to obtain Member States political 'engagement'; raise the visibility of the Regional Programme and UNODC amongst counterparts, donors and recipients as well as coordinate with UNODC HQ on all relevant matters, in particular with regard to fund raising.

Programme Coordination and Analysis Unit (PCAU)

PCAU is an integral part of ROMENA and charged with overseeing the RP implementation, challenges and status, helping reinforce the regional aspect of the Regional Programme by supporting ROMENA's role as the nexus of all activities being designed and carried out under the RP. Under the direct supervision of the PCAU Head, this Unit is responsible for:

- Facilitating the coordination and the provision of substantive and technical advice and support for regional programme development and implementation
- Closely monitoring programme implementation and ROMENA's contribution to the objectives of the RP
- Providing support to and liaising with the various Programme Offices in the region
- Overseeing internal progress reports and donor reports
- Overseeing all administrative and financial obligations
- Identifying programming and funding opportunities

⁶⁸ For Steering Committee ToRs, see Annex IV

The Programme Offices in the various countries across the region are responsible for moving forward with the development and implementation of subregional and national activities and for maintaining close working relationships with national authorities, other actors at national level, and the broader United Nations Country Teams.

VI. PARTNERSHIPS

6.1 NATIONAL AND REGIONAL PARTNERS

National ownership, mutual responsibility and strategic partnership are crucial for the successful implementation of the Regional Programme. A key strategic partnership is already in place with LAS which plays a critical role in galvanizing Member States' political buy-in. UNODC works closely with LAS and GCC in the areas of terrorism prevention, trafficking in persons and anti-corruption.

The Engagement with the Steering and Follow-Up Committee of the Regional Programme and regular contacts with governments in the region have led to the development of common priorities under the Regional Programme. Project development in the region always takes place through extensive consultations with the national authorities concerned before any initiative is implemented.

UNODC is closely engaged with national counterparts working on the relevant mandate areas, including the ministries of interior, justice and health, law enforcement, the judiciary and anti-corruption agencies, as well as social welfare agencies concerned with supporting victims of crime, addressing drug use and tackling the HIV epidemic among people who use drugs and in prison settings.

Moreover, the Regional Programme's objectives are designed to be aligned with other ongoing regional initiatives, such as the Arab Initiative to Build National Capacities to Combat Human Trafficking in the Arab Countries and the Arab AIDS Strategy.

6.2 INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

UNODC partners and actively engages with all relevant United Nations agencies and international organizations in the region to ensure programmatic cooperation, complementarities and synergies. This includes participating in the United Nations Development Group's regional meetings, in the United Nations Country Teams in the Arab States where UNODC has presence, and providing input for the development and implementation of the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs).

UNODC will work closely with UNAIDS with regards to supporting people who inject drugs and those living in prison settings, with UNWOMEN and UN-Habitat under the framework of the 'Safer Cities Programme', and with the World Bank with regards to the Stolen Asset Recovery (StAR) Initiative.

Under its counter trafficking activities, UNODC will work with WCO, INTERPOL, the WCO Regional Intelligence Liaison Office (RILO) network, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the World Wildlife Fund, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Civil Aviation Organization, the International Air Transport Association, and other international bodies to ensure capacity building in specialized areas including the trafficking in endangered species, drugs, arms, counterfeit goods, hazardous or nuclear material, etc. UNODC also closely partners with the European Union, United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1267/1989 Al-Qaida Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team, Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, and Hedayah Centre of Excellence in the area of terrorism prevention and to counter violent extremism that leads to terrorism. Other cooperation partners include

UNICEF, the International Organization for Migration, United Nations Office for Project Services, and International Labour Organization, amongst others.

The office is thereby following best practices from the first Regional Programme and the recommendations laid down in the Quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (A/67/93-E/2012/79). It is taking into consideration the post-2015 development agenda and the Civilian Capacity review process to build on the momentum provided by the United Nations Secretary-General's Five Year Plan of Action in which he noted the "heightened threat of organized crime, piracy and drug trafficking" and the type of integrated responses required to respond to these threats.

6.3 DONORS

Given UNODC's significant dependence on donor funding to implement its programmes in support to Member States, multilateral and bilateral donors are crucial partners. Some countries in the region, such as the United Arab Emirates and Qatar, are both donor and recipient of UNODC activities. An analysis of donor interests and coordinated fundraising for the region are to be conducted to maximize ROMENA networks, outreach capabilities and local expertise. UNODC fully respects donors' communication and visibility requirements and informs them of upcoming events with sufficient advance timing in order to enable/ensure their presence if needed.

Donor relations and fund-raising initiatives will be coordinated within UNODC in close consultation with the Co-Financing and Partnership Section as well as the Regional Section for Africa and the Middle East (RSAME) and relevant Thematic Sections to ensure synergy, complementarity and to avoid overlaps.

VII. LESSONS LEARNED

Through the implementation of the first Regional Programme (2011-2015), there are a number of best practices and lessons learned for the region, which have also been captured in the findings of the in-depth evaluation of the first Regional Programme conducted at the end of 2014 and into 2015. The main lessons learned, that have been taken into account in the development of the present Regional Programme, include:

- **Nature of the Regional Programme:** The new Regional Programme shall function as a strategic framework reflecting priorities for the region within UNODC mandates instead of taking the form of an operational document.
- **Visibility:** The need to increase the visibility of the Regional Programme and its objectives and to highlight for UNODC's comparative advantage as a specialized agency with expert knowledge in sensitive areas and its ability to support normative work, develop knowledge products, to promote cross-border collaboration, and its ability to advocate on key issues at the highest level.
- **Fundraising:** The importance of having a coordinated fundraising strategy in place and to advocate for soft earmarking of funding to allow ROMENA to be more flexible and responsive to unforeseen developments and to urgent requests for support. During the first Regional Programme soft earmarked funding played a crucial role in programme development and led to the funding and design of several new projects in important areas, such as combating VAW and border control.
- **Staffing:** The fundamental importance of recruiting and keeping high calibre staff (professional, administrative and short-term experts) in order to deliver quality services.

- **Sustainability:** The importance of integrating Train-the-Trainer and Mentoring programmes as much as possible to generate enduring learning curves and embed institutional memory within organizations.
- **Presence on the ground:** The importance of having in-country presence/offices in order to develop new and strengthen existing relationships with local counterparts as well as to raise awareness of UNODC programming and fundraising.
- **Partnership with LAS:** The partnership with LAS on the Regional Programme has proven to be indispensable. It has helped to mobilize the required political support from the Member States and has actively supported and facilitated the implementation of the first Regional Programme, in particular regional activities, such as those on trafficking in persons and the establishment of judicial network.

VIII. RISK MANAGEMENT

Implementing programmes in a region undergoing profound political transition entails a series of risks and challenges related to the stability of the environment and the strength of government institutions over which UNODC has little or no control. Unpredictable events, such as outbreaks of violence and/or sudden changes in governments can rapidly change circumstances on the ground, and thus the conditions for implementation of UNODC technical assistance. Outlined below are the major risks and challenges, both external and internal, which UNODC at this time considers possible to encounter during the period of the Regional Programme, and their mitigation measures.

| RISKS | MITIGATION MEASURES |
|--|--|
| EXTERNAL RISKS | |
| <p>Outbreak of conflicts and/or political instability hampers the implementation of technical assistance under the Regional Programme.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In case of an outbreak of violence, UNODC will follow the advice provided by the United Nations Department of Security and Safety (UNDSS) and either suspend or relocate activities in the affected country. ▪ In case of an outbreak of violence and a required (temporary) suspension of implementation in one of the countries in the region, UNODC can send officials to another country in order to provide assistance. ▪ Some interventions under the Regional Programme have regional coverage while being implemented through national activities. In case violence erupts in a given country, UNODC will be able to focus on countries not affected by violence or instability and continue overall implementation until it can restart activities in the affected countries. |
| <p>The security situation in parts of the countries where UNODC implements activities under the Regional Programme does not allow any UNODC physical presence.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ UNODC will follow the advice provided by UNDSS and the national authorities. ▪ UNODC will relocate its activities to safer regions within the same country where possible. |
| <p>Given the transitional nature</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ UNODC will ensure the coherence of its work with national and |

| RISKS | MITIGATION MEASURES |
|---|--|
| EXTERNAL RISKS | |
| <p>of several countries in the region, which are facing certain security challenges combined with the sensitive mandates UNODC is working on, Member States may not consider collaborating with UNODC on certain issues a matter of priority.</p> | <p>regional priorities through ongoing mapping/assessment of priorities. This will mainly be done through the annual Steering and Follow-Up Committee meetings where immediate priorities are updated annually.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ UNODC will continue to implement a clear communication strategy, which provides Member States and regional bodies with clear and compelling information on why and how UNODC can contribute to addressing national and regional drug and crime challenges. ▪ UNODC will deliver relevant and effective services, which convince Member States and relevant regional bodies of its value as a strategic partner in addressing regional crime, terrorist, and illicit trafficking challenges. |
| <p>High turnover in Member States' institutions reduces continuity of implementation and/or affects sustainability (e.g. with regard to training of trainers).</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ UNODC will do its utmost to secure agreements from the Ministries concerned to ensure that staff trained under the Regional Programme stay in place for an adequate period and perform the tasks they were trained for. ▪ UNODC will advocate for the establishment of appropriate handover procedures and overlapping time between departing and arriving staff. |

| RISKS | MITIGATION MEASURES |
|---|---|
| INTERNAL RISKS | |
| <p>Adequate financing is not forthcoming from the international community</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A donor mapping is currently being developed and will be available in 2016 in order to determine and appropriately align fundraising efforts with donor priorities. This will be coupled with continued active engagement and advocacy based on a clear communication and influencing strategy. ▪ UNODC will work to deliver effective services which convince donors of UNODC's value as a strategic partner in the implementation of their human security priorities for the region. |
| <p>Flexible implementation of initiatives in line with evolving needs might be affected by some UNODC administrative processes.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ongoing reform and improvements to UNODC management and administrative systems and processes are ongoing, including financing mechanisms for regional programmes and human resources management. In November 2015, UNODC changed its enterprise resource planning system to Umoja in order to apply the latest management best practices currently rolled out across the United Nations Secretariat. |

IX. ACCOUNTABILITY

As accountability lies at the core of the work of the United Nations, this document also ensures that UNODC contribution to reaching the stated objectives in this document will be measured and analysed. Therefore, provisions will be made that:

- Annual reporting is made to the Regional Programme's Steering Committee;
- Independent evaluations of every project in the region will be conducted in line with UNODC Evaluation Policy;
- A meta-evaluation/analysis of UNODC's contribution towards reaching the stated objectives, based on independent evaluations, will be planned, budgeted-for and conducted one year before the end of the Regional Programme (currently 2020) in collaboration with the UNODC Independent Evaluation Unit;
- Evaluation capacity-building will be built in UNODC, as well as in Member States, in order to foster accountability at all levels.