**INTER-AMERICAN COMMITTEE AGAINST TERRORISM (CICTE)**

TWENTY-FIRST REGULAR SESSION OEA/Ser.L/X.2.21

October 7 and 8, 2021 CICTE/doc.8/21 rev. 1

Washington, D.C. 8 October 2021

Original: Spanish

2021–2022 WORK PLAN OF THE   
SECRETARIAT OF THE INTER-AMERICAN COMMITTEE AGAINST TERRORISM

(Approved at the fourth plenary session held on October 8, 2021)

**I. Introduction**

The novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has impacted all aspects of society both domestically and internationally. Several questions remain unanswered regarding the magnitude and impact of the pandemic on security issues in the short, medium and long terms. At this juncture, the threat of terrorism continues to be present in various forms and in a variety of manifestations.

As noted by United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres during the Second High-Level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies, held in June 2021 in the framework of the Seventh Review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the fight against terrorism has made significant progress but the threat has persisted and diversified.

The persistence and diversification of the terrorist threat is one of the greatest challenges facing international efforts to prevent and combat terrorism. Cooperative efforts to address traditional issues must continue, but it is equally important — if not more so — that we channel efforts toward gaining a greater understanding of how the terrorism phenomenon is evolving, the various manifestations it is adopting, and its ongoing adaptation to different circumstances and emerging trends.

Reflecting on the evolution of the terrorist threat globally and, in particular, at the regional level will enable a timely response to be given to emerging trends and challenges. It is therefore essential to engage in dialogue and to exchange information and experiences on the challenges that violent extremism — given its increasingly transnational nature — can or could present in the region, the structural and circumstantial shortcomings or vulnerabilities that could be exploited by terrorist groups with different operation methods, and other issues that require a comprehensive approach.

The CICTE Secretariat is presenting the proposed work plan for the 2021–2022 term with a pragmatic and sensitive approach to the global situation arising from the pandemic and post-pandemic period. With it, we will be able to continue to support the member states on priority issues and, at the same time, to make progress in strengthening their capacity to respond to a range of emerging issues. The working method will be virtual; hybrid work methods may possibly be used if the health conditions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic so permit.

The regular session of the Committee, the work of the Working Group on Confidence-Building Measures and Cooperation in Cyberspace, and the discussion of CICTE-related topics to take place within the OAS political bodies will receive the Secretariat’s full support.

Over the period covered by this work plan (October 2021 to December 2022), the Secretariat of the Committee will also provide the necessary support to the initiatives that the member states deem relevant to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism in June 2022. The Secretariat will also be available to collaborate with member states in organizing specialized meetings and dialogues to analyze the evolution of the terrorism phenomenon and its characteristics, manifestations, and current and emerging trends, and to identify specific opportunities for exchanges of information and experiences in addressing it.

The Committee’s programs will focus on providing support to the member states that so require in the following priority areas: cybersecurity, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, prevention of violent extremism that could lead to terrorism, security of air, land, and sea borders, security for mass gatherings, technical assistance against the funding of terrorism, protection of critical infrastructure from terrorist attacks, and other emerging threats.

In addition, the Secretariat will continue its efforts to support the development and strengthening of tools for exchanges of information and/or best practices in the Committee’s areas of competence. It will also continue to encourage inter-agency coordination with other specialized international bodies working in this area to strengthen the capacity to respond to current and emerging challenges.

The implementation of the programs, projects, and activities set out in the proposed Work Plan presented by the CICTE Secretariat will largely depend on the reception and/or availability of contributions from specific funds. All of the Committee Secretariat’s programs are regional in scope, with specific activities that can be implemented in various member states, as required, depending on needs and the availability of resources.

**II. Main programs**

1. ***Cybersecurity***

Objective:

Support member states in their efforts to develop public cybersecurity policies, to strengthen institutional capacities for responding to cyber threats and protecting critical infrastructure, including the exchange of information and alerts through the CSIRTamericas.org platform and international and regional cooperation in this area, and to build capacities in the field of cyber diplomacy.

Proposed activities:

* Support for the development and implementation of national cybersecurity strategies and frameworks.
* Design and deployment of cybersecurity awareness campaigns.
* Implementation of capacity-building initiatives aimed at reducing the gender gap among cybersecurity workers.
* Establishment of a discussion forum with the main actors from the public and private sectors, civil society, and academia, in order to promote initiatives that will foster innovation and promote best practices in cybersecurity.
* Organization of technical training courses at the national, subregional, and regional levels for information security technicians, critical infrastructure operators, and law enforcement agencies, covering such topics as critical infrastructure and protecting industrial control systems, basic incident response techniques, advanced digital investigation techniques, and the use of the internet by criminals and terrorists.
* Preparation and publication of reports on regional cybersecurity trends and issues.
* Continued service as the Technical Secretariat of the Working Group on Cooperation and Confidence-Building Measures in Cyberspace.
* Cybersecurity and education activities in conjunction with member states’ governments, private sector partners, and civil society actors for cybersecurity curriculum design and education initiatives.
* Organization of activities for decision-makers and the general public on current cybersecurity challenges for the maintenance and protection of critical infrastructure.
* Implementation of capacity-building initiatives aimed at increasing the cybersecurity workforce in the region and at encouraging young people to strengthen their technical skills and obtain jobs in this industry.

1. ***Strengthening regimes for the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 (2004)***

Objective:

In general, continue to promote a universal, genuine, and non-discriminatory disarmament and non-proliferation regime in the region to help bolster security and confidence among the Hemisphere’s states. In particular, step up efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons and their means of delivery, taking into account the current international situation as regards threats to international peace and security.

Similarly, support the member states in the effective implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. This will be done through technical and legislative assistance for strengthening regulatory frameworks, internal oversight mechanisms, control lists for exports and dual-use materials, and biosafety and biosecurity regulations through the adoption and implementation of effective and appropriate rules in line with international standards.

Proposed activities:

* Information dissemination activities.
* Strengthening the regional network of points of contact for resolution 1540 (2004).
* Biosafety and biosecurity training for government officials, laboratory personnel, scientists, and academics through the massive open online course that will be available to all the region’s countries.
* Research into the current state of biosafety and biosecurity, with a focus on specific cases in the region.
* Legislative assistance for strengthening domestic regulatory frameworks in line with resolution 1540 (2004).
* National training exercises on biosafety, biosecurity, internal oversight mechanisms, and control lists for exports and dual-use materials.
* Peer review exercises.
* Raising public and private sector awareness of the threats posed by weapons of mass destruction, particularly among import/export operators in free trade zones.
* Online activities on nuclear safety and safeguards in coordination with specialized agencies.

1. ***Preventing violent extremism***

Objective:

Support the member states in their efforts to foster hemispheric dialogue, regional cooperation, and capacity-building to prevent the violent extremism that can lead to terrorism, as set forth in the mandates of the OAS General Assembly and CICTE and in line with the applicable international instruments.

Proposed activities:

* Identification of experts and institutions specializing in the prevention of violent extremism that could contribute to the hemispheric dialogue within the framework of CICTE.
* Organization of forums, seminars, workshops, and other activities to facilitate a greater understanding of the phenomenon of violent extremism and its manifestations, together with the threats it poses and the imperative of preventing it.
* Participation at specialized meetings to study current and emerging trends in the prevention of violent extremism.
* Support for sharing information and experiences to prevent and respond to the challenges posed by violent extremism and, in particular, recruitment, propaganda, and radicalization (both online and offline).
* Support for developing and strengthening technical capacities to prevent and tackle violent extremism.

1. ***Border security (air, land, sea)***

**Maritime protection**

Objective:

Support the strengthening of maritime and port security capacities through specialized activities at the national and regional levels, with their own methodologies, in consultation with the key stakeholders involved in the development of port security capacities and in close coordination with other specialized international bodies such as the International Maritime Organization.

Proposed activities:

* Support for the development and implementation of maritime security strategies at the national and subregional levels.
* Facilitation of exchanges of information, best practices, and international cooperation on port and maritime security among governments, the private sector, civil society, and other international and regional organizations.
* Organization of national, subregional, and regional workshops and conferences on a wide range of maritime security topics, including national-level maritime risk assessments.
* Implementation of initiatives aimed at reducing the gender gap among maritime sector workers.
* Preparation and publication of reports on regional maritime and port security trends and issues, including security for port facilities.

**Aviation security**

Objective:

Support the strengthening of installed capacities for compliance with the standards and practices recommended by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the Convention on International Civil Aviation, especially Annex 17, “Security: safeguarding international civil aviation against acts of unlawful interference,” and other recommendations to protect international civil aviation from potential acts of terrorism.

Proposed activities:

* Training of officials with operational responsibility and key aviation security stakeholders in the identification and mitigation of internal and external threats at national airports. This includes strengthening capabilities to deal with internal threats at airports, low- and high-tech threats, man-portable air-defense systems (MANPADS), national access controls, and other issues.
* Establishment of a network of national aviation security focal points to foster more effective coordination and exchanges of information and best practices among law enforcement agencies and national, regional, and international organizations.
* Strengthening gender perspective standards in aviation security policies.

**Cargo and container security**

Objective:

Strengthen mechanisms for the security of cargo and its means of transportation and, in particular, customs procedures and the oversight, inspection, and interception of crossborder cargoes.

Proposed activities:

* Development of online introductory courses on cargo security at land borders.
* Development of a biosecurity course for customs and border security officers on the proper use of equipment in the context of the pandemic.
* Donations of personal protective equipment to five member states.
* Development of subregional and regional online forums on customs and crossborder cargo security.
* Creation of a regional roster of experts to serve as certified national and international trainers to support this program and other initiatives in the region and, in addition, to strengthen the officers’ professional profiles and foster regional coordination and cooperation and the exchange of best practices and lessons learned.
* Support for member states, upon request, in the design and implementation of biosecurity protocols to be applied by customs and other agencies that oversee crossborder goods at national land, air, and maritime entry points.
* On-site technical analysis and assessment missions at land, air, and maritime borders to identify vulnerabilities and strategies to optimize the inspection and oversight of cargoes and their means of transport.
* Strengthening the interdiction capabilities of customs, law enforcement, and other security agencies operating in key free trade zones.

**Supply chain security / authorized economic operators**

Objective:

Support strengthened security in supply chains through authorized economic operator schemes, generating certainty for customs officials and facilitating trade for companies in accordance with the guidelines set out in the World Customs Organization’s SAFE framework.

Proposed activities:

* Promotion and awareness-raising activities for the private sector on the usefulness of the authorized economic operator program.
* Organization of information- and experience-sharing sessions on the regulatory framework for authorized economic operator schemes and their practical operation.
* Technical assistance for customs services, upon request, to strengthen interinstitutional cooperation and coordination with other government border control agencies.
* Inter-agency cooperation and coordination to facilitate exchanges of information between authorized economic operator schemes to serve as input for mutual recognition agreements (MRAs).
* Promotion of authorized economic operator certifications among commercial operators in free trade zones.

1. ***Security of mass gatherings, including tourist destinations and major events***

Objective:

Contribute to strengthening existing capabilities, interagency coordination, and hemispheric cooperation for the protection of vulnerable targets and crowded spaces — including tourist destinations and major events — from potential terrorist threats.

Proposed activities:

* Support for the development of national strategies for the security of tourism sites and major events.
* Specialized training for the implementation of tourism and major event security protocols, and for the standardization of biosecurity protocols.
* Consolidation of the network of national focal points for the Major Events and Maritime Security Program.
* Redesign of the IPO Americas knowledge management system, a regional initiative launched in 2007 by the OAS and the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute to strengthen major event security cooperation among OAS member states.
* Update of the Security Planning Model for Major Events – IPO Manual and the Public-Private Partnership Model for Major Event Security Planning.
* Compilation of recommendations and key findings on gender perspectives for the security of tourism and major events.

1. ***Technical and legislative assistance against the funding of terrorism***

Objective:

Support those member states that so require in the fight against terrorism and its financing by implementing a legislative framework in keeping with their legal obligations, international standards, and effective systems for the prevention and detection of money laundering and terrorism financing.

Proposed activities:

* Provision of technical and legislative assistance to member states that so require to update their domestic legal frameworks on money laundering and the funding of terrorism in accordance with the applicable international instruments and the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).
* Assistance for OAS member countries in developing effective systems for the implementation of targeted financial sanctions and domestic listing systems in accordance with international legal instruments.
* Support for capacity-building of national officials and institutions in special investigative techniques, prosecutions, and other tools in line with the applicable international standards.
* Specialized training for financial intelligence unit analysts, financial regulatory/supervisory institution officers, and representatives of the private sector to promote cooperation between the different stakeholders involved in the investigation and prosecution of money laundering and terrorism funding at the national and regional levels.
* Facilitating exchanges of information, best practices, and international cooperation among member states as an essential element in combating the financing of terrorism.
* Organization of workshops and online forums for government officials and representatives of the private sector on emerging terrorism funding threats and, as appropriate, on methods of detection, prevention, and judicial investigation.

1. ***Inter-American Counterterrorism Network***

Objective:

Facilitate the exchange of timely information to prevent and counteract terrorism in the region, as well as to strengthen cooperative ties between designated individuals and institutions. The Network entails the (voluntary) participation of the OAS member states and has a secured-access directory of institutional contacts, designated by the member states, which is available 24/7.

Proposed activities:

* Voluntary participation in the Inter-American Counterterrorism Network by most of the OAS member states.
* Designation of a focal point by each member state, to be included in the secured-access directory.
* Organization of quarterly online meetings, and at least one face-to-face meeting if health conditions permit, to facilitate the exchange of information and good practices among the member states.

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* Exchanges of experiences with other multilateral agencies with similar networks.

**III. Outreach: communications, consultations, cooperation**

The CICTE Secretariat will continue to consult regularly with the relevant authorities of the OAS member states for the programming and execution of its activities. It will also continue to work closely with the OAS Permanent Observers.

The CICTE Secretariat will continue to strengthen the cooperation mechanisms that exist with the United Nations system and its specialized agencies, as well as with other international and regional organizations. It will also maintain its cooperative ties with civil society organizations, the private sector, and other strategic partners.

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