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

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WORK PLAN 2023-2024

OF THE SECRETARIAT OF THE INTER-AMERICAN COMMITTEE AGAINST TERRORISM

(Approved at the fourth plenary session held on May 18, 2023)

**I. Introduction**

The Secretariat of the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism (CICTE) presents the work plan for the 2023-2024 period. During this period, the CICTE Secretariat will provide the technical support necessary for holding the Committee’s regular session, the meeting of the Working Group on Cooperation and Confidence-Building Measures in Cyberspace, and the discussions on CICTE-related issues held under the umbrella of the OAS political bodies.

The Committee’s programs are focused on providing support to the OAS member states that need it in the following priority areas: cybersecurity; nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction; prevention of violent extremism that could lead to terrorism; air, land, and maritime border security; crowded places security; technical assistance against terrorism financing; critical infrastructure protection against terrorist attacks and other emerging threats.

The Secretariat will also continue to foster the development and strengthening of tools for exchanging information and/or best practices regarding matters in the Committee’s remit. In addition, it will continue to foster interagency coordination with other specialized international organizations to enhance response capacity to current and emerging threats.

All CICTE Secretariat programs are regional in scope and include specific activities that can be implemented in various member states as required, depending on needs and resource availability.

**II. Main programs**

1. ***Cybersecurity***

Purpose:

To support the member states in their efforts to prevent, mitigate, and recover from cyberthreats and/or cyberattacks, through the development of policies and regulatory frameworks, technical capacity building, international cooperation, and dissemination of specialized cybersecurity knowledge.

Proposed activities:

* Technical assistance to develop, update, and/or execute national cybersecurity strategies as needed.
* Courses on international cyberdiplomacy, laws, and regulations, to help build the capacities of government employees in the member states and foster their participation in international discussions on cybersecurity.
* Training for computer security incident response teams (CSIRTs) on managing cybersecurity alerts and automating the flow of information, enabling them to establish protocols for preventing, handling, and recovering from cyber incidents.
* Sessions on information and communications technology security, organized with Spain’s National Cryptologic Center Computer Emergency Response Team (CCN‑CERT) and National Cybersecurity Institute (INCIBE), for the exchange of international practices in the computer incident response field.
* Organization of the Cybersecurity Summer Bootcamp, the specialized international cybersecurity training program for policymakers, security forces and law enforcement agencies, tax authorities, and CSIRT technical specialists.
* Organization of International CyberEx, a competition designed to strengthen cyber incident response capacities and cooperation among the participating countries. This is a joint initiative with INCIBE and Spain’s National Center for Infrastructure Protection and Cybersecurity (CNPIC).
* Organization of the Cybersecurity Symposium, which brings together industry experts and professionals to promote development of national cybersecurity capacities.
* Implementation of initiatives geared towards developing the cybersecurity workforce in the member states, to include the professional development of young people from disadvantaged areas.
* Implementation of activities designed to close the gender gap in the region’s cybersecurity agenda, to include research development, training programs, and cybersecurity mentorship fairs for young women.
* Execution of the Cyberwomen Challenge, a competition whose objective is to promote the role of women in cybersecurity and to inspire more women to join the cybersecurity industry.
* Organization of meetings of the cybersecurity innovation councils where the main leaders in the public and private sectors, civil society, and academia come together to spur innovation, raise citizen awareness, and spread best practices in cybersecurity.
* Organization of the Americas regional meeting of the Global Forum on Cyber Expertise (GFCE).
* Participation in the consultations of the United Nations Ad Hoc Committee to Elaborate a Comprehensive International Convention on Countering the Use of Information and Communications Technologies for Criminal Purposes, and in the United Nations Open-Ended Working Group on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security (UN Cyber OEWG).
* Support for the member states in designing a roadmap for accelerating their cybersecurity maturity according to the Oxford University Cybersecurity Capacity Maturity Model for Nations methodology.

1. ***Strengthening of the systems for nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction, to include implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004)***

Purposes:

To promote a universal, genuine, and nondiscriminatory regime for disarmament and the nonproliferation of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons, as well as their means of delivery, and specifically, to support the member states in effectively implementing United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004), through technical and legislative assistance.

Proposed activities:

* Outreach activities (to spread knowledge on the nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction, threats, international obligations and instruments, etc.).
* Strengthening of the network of points of contact for Resolution 1540 (2004) in the region.
* Training for government officials, lab workers, scientists, and academics on biosafety and biosecurity through two massive open online courses (MOOC) that will be made available to all Spanish-speaking countries in the region.
* Research on the current biosafety and biosecurity situation, addressing specific cases in the region.
* Legislative assistance to strengthen domestic regulatory frameworks in line with Resolution 1540 (2004).
* National training on biosafety and biosecurity for laboratory workers.
* Peer reviews.
* Outreach to raise awareness in the public and private sectors of the threats posed by weapons of mass destruction, especially for foreign trade operators in duty-free zones.
* Raising public and customs sector awareness about safeguards for the safe use, storage, and transport of chemicals and toxic materials in the strategic trade regime.
* Technical and legislative assistance to enhance the effectiveness of measures for the safety and security of chemicals and toxics in the strategic trade regime.
* Technical publications on issues of importance for the region.
* Raising public and private sector awareness about transfer and emerging semiconductor-related technologies in the strategic trade regime.

1. ***Prevention of violent extremism that can lead to terrorism***

Purpose:

To support the member states in their efforts to foster hemispheric dialogue and regional cooperation, and build capacities for preventing violent extremism that can lead to terrorism, as established in the OAS General Assembly and CICTE mandates and in line with relevant international instruments.

Proposed activities:

* Identification of experts and institutions specialized in preventing violent extremism that can contribute to the hemispheric dialogue in connection with CICTE and eventually, form a regional network of experts.
* Organization of fora, seminars, workshops, and other in-person and virtual activities to foster greater understanding of violent extremism and its manifestations, as well as the threat it poses and the need for prevention.
* Participation in specialized meetings and multisector dialogues on current and emerging trends in preventing violent extremism and multilateral efforts to develop and implement frameworks for prevention work.
* Support for the exchange of information and experiences to prevent and respond to the challenges of violent extremism, especially recruitment, propaganda, and radicalization (on and offline).
* Support for developing/building technical capacities in the member states that request it, to prevent and address violent extremism.

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

**Maritime protection**

Purpose:

To support the member states in building capacities for maritime and port security through specialized national and regional activities with a specific methodology, together with the key stakeholders involved in developing port security capacities and in close coordination with other specialized international organizations like the International Maritime Organization.

Proposed activities:

* Support for developing and implementing maritime security strategies, at the national and subregional levels.
* Facilitation of the exchange of information and best practices and of international cooperation among governments, the private sector, and civil society, as well as with other international and regional organizations for maritime and port security.
* Organization of national, subregional, and regional conferences on a broad range of topics in maritime security, to include the development of maritime security committees, national evaluation of maritime risks, and the development of maritime protection strategies.
* Implementation of initiatives to reduce the gender gap in the number of women working in the maritime sector.
* Preparation and dissemination of reports on regional trends and problems in maritime and port security, including the protection of port facilities.

**Aviation security**

Purpose:

To provide support for improving the installed capacity to ensure compliance with the regulations and recommended practices of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO); the Convention on International Civil Aviation, especially Annex 17 (Aviation Security: Safeguarding International Civil Aviation against Acts of Unlawful Interference); and other recommendations for protecting civil aviation from possible acts of terrorism.

Proposed activities:

* Training of staff responsible for operations and key aviation security stakeholders on identifying and mitigating domestic and foreign threats in the civil aviation sector. This includes building capacities to face domestic threats at airports, low- and high-tech threats, man-portable air-defense systems (MANPADS), and national access controls, etc.
* Outreach to raise the awareness of subregional authorities in the aviation security sector of domestic threats to security in this sector, to facilitate the exchange of best practices geared towards mitigating threats and fostering a security culture.
* Training of staff with operational responsibility and key aviation security stakeholders on ICAO standards and best practices, with an emphasis on access control requirements.
* Training of customs authorities, cargo inspectors, and other relevant actors on identifying and mitigating risks in the air cargo supply chain.
* Exchange of best practices and lessons learned in aviation security through a hemispheric workshop for the region’s aviation sector public policymakers.
* Establishment of a network of national aviation security point persons, to foster more effective coordination and the exchange of information and best practices among police authorities and national, regional, and international organizations.
* Strengthening of gender perspective standards in aviation security policies.

**Cargo and container security**

Purpose:

To support the member states in strengthening security mechanisms for cargo and cargo transportation, especially customs, control, and inspection procedures and the inspection and embargo of crossborder cargo and the means of transportation thereof.

Proposed activities:

* Virtual introductory courses on cargo security on land borders.
* Courses on biosafety for customs and border security officers on how to protect themselves against future endemics and pandemics.
* Donation of personal protective equipment.
* Regional and subregional virtual fora on customs and crossborder merchandise security.
* Creation of a regional list of experts who can serve as national and international instructors in support of this program, which will improve their professional profiles and foster regional coordination and cooperation.
* Support for the member states that request it for designing and implementing biosafety protocols that can be applied by customs and other crossborder merchandise control agencies at national land, air, and sea points of access.
* In-situ technical assessment and analysis missions on land, air, and sea borders to identify vulnerabilities and strategies for optimizing cargo and cargo means of transportation inspection and control processes.
* Strengthening of the embargo capacities of customs, law enforcement, and other security agencies operating in key duty-free zones.
* Development of publications on the current status of cargo and container security in the Hemisphere, recent trends, and potential vulnerabilities in the supply chain.
* Awareness-raising initiatives and training courses on gender gaps and challenges, strategies, and tools, to empower the officials at those agencies.

**Supply chain security / authorized economic operator**

Purpose:

Provide support for enhancing security in the supply chain through authorized economic operators who provide greater security for customs officers and facilitate trade for companies, pursuant to the guidelines set forth in the World Customs Organization SAFE Framework.

Proposed activities:

* Development of national assessments and work plans for customs agencies to strengthen interagency cooperation and coordination with other government border control agencies.
* Organization of activities involving the identification of legal vacuums and interagency obstacles, with a special emphasis on commercial operators in free-trade (duty-free) zones.
* Outreach to raise awareness among customs officers, other government agencies, and commercial operators of the threats posed by weapons of mass destruction and chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear terrorism; to strengthen communication among them; and raise their awareness of the specialized benefits for certified commercial operators under the rules of the Authorized Economic Operator program.
* Promote the exchange of best practices in supply chain security and thereby help ensure and optimize the regional and global supply chain.
* Training sessions for the private sector on the authorized economic operator program to identify challenges, potential solutions, opportunities, and benefits in coordination with chambers of commerce, trade facilitation agencies, and subregional and global international organizations.
* Validation exercises on national customs’ administrations’ priorities with regard to economic and/or commercial operators working in duty-free zones.

***E. Security at mass gatherings, including tourist destinations and major events***

Purpose:

To help strengthen existing capacities, interagency coordination, and hemispheric cooperation to protect vulnerable targets and crowded places, including tourist destinations and major events, from potential terrorist threats.

Proposed activities:

* Support for the development of national strategies for tourism security.
* Support for member countries in planning security for major events in the region.
* Documentation of the practices and lessons learned during the process of planning security for major events.
* Maintenance of the networks of national point persons for the major event and tourism security program.
* Updating of the electronic version of the security planning guide for major events.
* Compilation of recommendations and key findings on the gender perspective for tourism and major event security.
* Updating of the public-private partnership handbook for major event security planning.

***F. Technical and legislative assistance to counter terrorism financing***

Purpose:

To provide support for the member states that request it in the fight against terrorism and terrorism financing, through implementation of a legislative framework aligned with their legal obligations, international standards, and effective systems for preventing and detecting money laundering and terrorism financing.

Proposed activities:

* Provision of technical and legislative assistance to member states that need it, for updating their domestic legal framework on money laundering and terrorism financing pursuant to the international instruments on the matter and the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) recommendations.
* Support for developing effective systems for implementing targeted financial sanctions and systems for drawing up domestic lists, pursuant to international legal instruments.
* Capacity building for government employees and national agencies on special investigative techniques, prosecution, and other tools in accordance with the applicable international standards.
* Specialized training of financial intelligence unit analysts, employees of regulatory/supervisory financial institutions, and private-sector representatives to promote cooperation among the various stakeholders involved in the investigation and prosecution of cases of money laundering, terrorism financing, and financing of the proliferation of weapons of destruction at the national and regional levels.
* Virtual fora and workshops for government employees and members of the private sector on emerging threats in terrorism financing, as well as on methods of detection, prevention, and legal investigation, as applicable.
* Publication on the ties between transnational organized crime and terrorism, in collaboration with the Department against Transnational Organized Crime and the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI).

***G. Inter-American Counterterrorism Network***

Purpose:

To facilitate the exchange of timely information to prevent and counter terrorism in the region, and to strengthen cooperative ties among the appointed persons and institutions. The network is based on the voluntary participation of the member states, and uses a secure online platform with a directory of institutional contacts appointed by the member states, available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Proposed activities:

* Organization of virtual quarterly meetings and at least one in-person visit if health conditions allow for it, to facilitate the exchange of information and best practices among the member states in the network.
* Exchange of experiences with other multilateral organizations with similar networks.

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

The CICTE Secretariat will continue to hold regular consultations with the appropriate OAS member state authorities on planning and executing the activities. It will also continue to work closely with the permanent observers to the OAS.

The CICTE Secretariat will continue to strengthen the existing mechanisms for cooperating 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 and private sector organizations and other strategic partners.

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