

RESHAPING UNITED NATIONS COUNTERTERRORISM EFFORTS



Blue-Sky Thinking for
Global Counterterrorism Cooperation
10 Years After 9/11

JAMES COCKAYNE, ALISTAIR MILLAR, DAVID CORTRIGHT AND PETER ROMANIUK



Center on Global
Counterterrorism
Cooperation

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Blue-Sky Thinking for Global Counterterrorism Cooperation 10 Years After 9/11
by James Cockayne, Alistair Millar, David Cortright and Peter Romaniuk
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Front cover: The United Nations flag flies against a blue sky on the
opening day of the general debate of the sixty-fifth General Assembly,
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Preface

As this report goes to press, the United Nations secretariat and membership are considering a significant change to the UN's counterterrorism architecture: the creation of a position of a single UN counterterrorism coordinator.

Discussion of this position, we have been told, has been significantly informed by earlier drafts of this report, through a number of informal consultations we organized. As our report suggests, the creation of such a position may allow the UN better to leverage its comparative advantages as a convener, a norm-builder, a global monitor – and above all, as a strategic leader.

As inevitably occurs at the UN, the focus of these discussions has quickly been drawn to a number of intricate institutional, budgetary, and human resources questions – each loaded with significant political implications. Will the new position be at the level of an Assistant Secretary-General (ASG) or an Under Secretary-General (USG), and how much authority will it consequently carry? Will the Coordinator speak directly to the Secretary-General, or have to go through another Departmental head? How will these changes impact on the careful balance struck between the Security Council and the General Assembly in recent years on counterterrorism issues? For example, will the Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate retain its independence and a senior leader (for example, an ASG position) – or will its day-to-day management responsibilities fall to a more junior officer, leaving it on a more even footing with the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force Office? How will each relate to the Coordinator? What will his or her role be in relation to the new UN Counter-Terrorism Center backed by significant volumes of Saudi money? How could the changes necessitated by the creation of this new center of gravity in the UN's counterterrorism constellation be made without significantly upsetting existing mandates? And how will any new positions be financed?

Our report offers thoughts on some of these questions. We lay out three options for 'architectural adjustments' that the UN might consider – over the next decade – to make more of its comparative advantages in this area. Centrally, we argue that any such adjustments should be guided by a robust analysis of where the UN's comparative advantages lie, and how different architectural adjustments would impact upon them. Form should follow function. Otherwise, the creation of a new position of coordinator is unlikely to succeed in bringing more order and coherence to the UN Counterterrorism program.

The creation of a new coordinator position will be an important development, if, indeed, these complex procedural and political questions can in fact be solved. But we should not lose sight, all the same, of the bigger picture. Bigger thinking – blue-sky thinking – is crucial, to ensure that major changes respond not to momentary preoccupations, but to larger strategic trends.

Whether or not they march to a single piper's tune, UN bodies have important and diverse roles to play in advancing the global fight against terrorism – whether monitoring the emergence of terrorism in the field; supporting victims to play a leadership role in mobilizing social resistance to terrorism; helping states ensure that their counterterrorism efforts reinforce, rather than undermine, human rights; or resolving the conflicts that create conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism. We hope that this report will offer some guidance, in the years ahead, to UN officials, Member States, civil society, and other stakeholders seeking to make the most of the UN's comparative advantages in these areas.

JAMES COCKAYNE, ALISTAIR MILLAR
CO-DIRECTORS
3 APRIL 2012

Executive Summary

Introduction

Multilateral counterterrorism efforts are not what they were a decade ago. The threats posed by terrorism, the awareness of those threats, and the norms and institutions in place to tackle them around the world have all changed significantly over the last 10 years, in no small part due to the unprecedented and wide-reaching efforts undertaken through the United Nations. Yet even as the power of al-Qaida as a unitary organization wanes, the use of terrorist tactics has dispersed around the world, suggesting a need to move away from responsive, military- and law enforcement–based approaches to counterterrorism and toward a more long-term, preventive approach to terrorism based on social, political, and economic efforts.

It is time to take a fresh look at the role of the United Nations in countering terrorism. Some long-term strategic thinking—some blue-sky thinking—is needed to ensure that the United Nations is positioning itself to exploit the comparative advantages it enjoys in this area.

In this project, the Center on Global Counterterrorism Cooperation, with the generous support of the Governments of Switzerland and Norway, attempts to provide independent, fresh, long-term thinking about how to reshape and maximize the value of UN counterterrorism efforts. Our analysis is based on five years of close partnership with and independent critique of UN counterterrorism bodies, supplemented by extensive consultations and desk research during 2011.

1. The United Nations' Comparative Advantages in Counterterrorism Efforts

We identify four areas of potential comparative advantage for the United Nations in global counterterrorism efforts: (1) as a strategic leader, including a norm-setting role; (2) as a convener; (3) as a capacity builder and facilitator of others' capacity-building efforts; and (4) as a monitor. Based on these comparative advantages, we present recommendations for reshaping UN counterterrorism efforts in four main ways:

- by creating a broader movement against terrorism, involving not only states but also a range of other actors;
- by strengthening engagement in the field and at UN headquarters with human rights experts and civil society;
- by placing greater emphasis on measuring UN counterterrorism efforts' performance; and
- by enacting one of three options for architectural adjustments to streamline UN counterterrorism efforts and improve monitoring, political analysis, and capacity building (a UN Counter-Terrorism Coordinator; a Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism [SRSG CT], or an Under Secretary-General for Transnational Threats [USG TNT]).

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

The United Nations' global membership, founding values, legal authority, and contributions to nonviolent dispute resolution give it a unique legitimacy and authority to deal with threats to international peace and security. We believe that, if anything, there is going to be **a greater need for UN leadership** on terrorism and transnational threats in the future. The shift toward “prevention” over the last five years prioritizes soft power rather than hard power and civilian rather than military efforts, which makes the UN role in generating and leveraging political legitimacy all the more relevant and appropriate. Individual

member states cannot tackle the threats posed by transnational terrorist and criminal networks and lone-wolf violent extremists on their own. They need a global framework of norms, cooperation, and assistance in order to do so. The question of UN leadership and the need for a coherent UN message and voice will only become more acute. Yet as the United Nations takes the lead on counterterrorism efforts, it faces challenges in three areas.

On **human rights**, the UN Security Council, General Assembly, and Human Rights Council have all taken significant steps to emphasize the centrality of human rights protection to effective counterterrorism efforts. Increasingly, the UN approach to counterterrorism promotes a nonmilitary, rule of law–based model. The United Nations has played an important role in galvanizing states around this approach, even as the United Nations’ room to provide leadership is limited by the states’ own positions. The steps by the Security Council to improve its listing and delisting procedures are particularly important. Yet, concern remains that even now there are weaknesses in the United Nations’ integration of human rights and counterterrorism activities and in the efforts by states to implement their UN-backed counterterrorism obligations. Ongoing concerns that listing and delisting arrangements may still not measure up to judicial scrutiny and that the Security Council and General Assembly may still not be paying adequate attention to the human rights impact of national-level implementation of UN counterterrorism norms continue to undermine UN legitimacy as a leader on global counterterrorism efforts. We propose a number of concrete steps to address these concerns, including increased interaction between the Security Council and United Nations and other sources of human rights expertise and other human rights–promoting changes to the Security Council’s approach to counterterrorism.

The United Nations’ strategic leadership role is also undermined by duplication and lack of normative integration on issues closely related to counterterrorism, including **transnational threats** (fighting drug trafficking and organized crime and technical assistance on rule of law issues). We argue for increased attention to the linkages between these issues and propose some architectural reforms that might foster this, such as, in the most ambitious form, consideration of the future creation of a position of Under Secretary-General for Transnational Threats.

We also argue that, in the last five years, the UN Secretary-General has left the “**bully pulpit**” largely empty on the issue of counterterrorism. The Executive Office of the Secretary-General has made some important contributions to UN counterterrorism work, notably the increased profile of victims of terrorism, the creation of the UN Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF), and the recent establishment of a new UN Centre for Counter-Terrorism (UNCCT). The task force itself has recorded several achievements including important normative contributions at the operational level, such as the guidance developed by the CTITF Working Group on Protecting Human Rights While Countering Terrorism. Yet, the CTITF can hardly be said to have provided normative leadership at the broader strategic level. UN entities and bodies remain deeply divided over what their different roles in implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy should be, especially when it comes to those “social, educational, economic, and political tools” that the Secretary-General recently chose to highlight as central to future counterterrorism efforts. Increased engagement and leadership from the highest ranks of the UN leadership is needed, both to drive forward integration among different agencies’ counterterrorism-related efforts at the operational level and to create the political momentum that will make that integration self-sustaining within the UN bureaucracy.

CONVENING

The United Nations has a unique comparative advantage as a convener; a forum for discussion, norm development, and dispute resolution; and a space for generating mutual understanding and even learning. Our research suggests that the United Nations is seen as having some success in exploiting this comparative advantage over the last 10 years in the realm of counterterrorism, but it needs to address a number of matters.

To begin, it needs to clarify guidance to UN bodies on **engaging terrorists**. There is an inherent tension between the strategic leadership role of the United Nations in identifying, denouncing, and taking action against unlawful terrorist activity and its development, human rights promotion, conflict prevention, mediation, and humanitarian assistance goals. Yet, UN officials at headquarters seem only minimally aware of the constraints that UN field representatives impose on themselves when dealing with nonstate groups that powerful states or even the Security Council have labeled as terrorists. There is a danger that the United Nations' inclusive approach to conflict prevention, humanitarian assistance, and development will continue to be adversely affected by the exclusionary logic of the existing counterterrorism regime, including the universally applicable regime under Security Council Resolution 1373. Increased attention from senior levels, including the Secretary-General's Policy Committee, to these issues and the provision of guidance to operational levels is sorely needed.

Much more needs to be done to exploit the United Nations' capacity to engage **civil society**. Civil society organizations can play a significant multiplier role in advancing global counterterrorism objectives. The continuing unwillingness of some states to see UN entities engage civil society organizations, however, greatly hampers the United Nations' ability to exploit its natural comparative advantage as a convener. The United Nations has a long history of engaging civil society actors around the world on complex and sensitive security and social issues, ranging from nonproliferation to human rights to disease prevention. Excluding civil society from the global effort to implement the Strategy hamstringing the United Nations, particularly on issues of terrorism prevention. One option to promote more regular interaction between the United Nations and civil society would be for the CTITF or UNCCT to create a **Civil Society Advisory Committee** with a mandate to provide informal research and policy inputs to the work of the CTITF and the United Nations generally. Another option, which could be taken as an interim measure, would be to hold a periodic **International Meeting on Counter-Terrorism**, bringing together states and civil society, for example, every two years at the time of the Strategy review or every five years following the model of the review conferences of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

Finally, our research suggests that more could be done in the area of **building shared operational knowledge**. There are significant concerns in different parts of the UN membership about each of two new bodies: the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum (GCTF) and the UNCCT. We explore those concerns and call for member states to work to address the concerns on each side, particularly relating to the role of the UNCCT and the relationship between the United Nations and the GCTF. The forthcoming February 2012 Swiss-sponsored meeting to discuss UN-GCTF interactions provides a key moment for clarifying this relationship on technical and political levels. GCTF and UN leaders should also work toward a shared strategy for clarifying, through the 2012 Strategy review process, how the two organizations will work together in the future.

CAPACITY BUILDING

The United Nations has had clear successes on counterterrorism capacity building in the last decade, particularly in areas where the UN family can facilitate member states' access to niche expertise, such as civil aviation (the International Civil Aviation Organization) and border controls. The major success of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) in the last five years has been precisely to move from being perceived as solely focused on coercive compliance to being perceived as a partner for states in identifying and facilitating capacity building from other donors tailored to meet state needs. The UN Office on Drugs and Crime's (UNODC) Terrorism Prevention Branch (TPB) too is frequently singled out for praise for its capacity-building work. Yet, much more could be done.

We see particular potential for the United Nations to make more of its **field presence** in coming years. Both CTED and the CTITF continue to operate on a fly-in, fly-out basis in their capacity-building facilitation work; and the conception, design, and execution of their programming in this area is only weakly guided by UN actors on the ground in the places where they operate. This is not to blame CTED and CTITF staff; donor demands, resource constraints, poor information

circulation, and an absence of effective field-headquarters coordination mechanisms within the UN system all make very significant contributions to this state of affairs. The system as a whole does not, as we heard from numerous interlocutors, place a premium on field presence and expertise.

As a result, opportunities are being lost. A recent review by the Center of how UN political missions currently approach these issues suggests an alarming absence of knowledge and understanding within field missions on existing UN approaches to transnational threats.¹ Furthermore, it is unclear how those field missions' experiences and insights into local political and conflict dynamics influence the work of the general counterterrorism policymaking machinery, whether within the CTITF or the Security Council itself. The current arrangements clearly place too much reliance on personal initiative to bridge the gap between the field and headquarters. A clearer **policy decision and systemic guidance** may be needed to help reduce this disconnect and to ensure effective integration between terrorism prevention efforts in the field and at headquarters. We offer a series of suggestions about how the United Nations could better connect its headquarters decision-making to its field presence, including the use of counterterrorism officers or transnational threat analysts in field missions, the involvement of UNODC in mission planning and analytical work for the Security Council, and training and guidance for senior decision-makers.

We also heard recurring concerns about an **inadequate differentiation of the political (convening, planning, and execution), monitoring, and capacity-building** aspects of the United Nations' work. Practical and policy concerns were expressed regarding the blurring of the monitoring and capacity-building facilitation roles of CTED and the 1267 Monitoring Team. In the final section of this paper, we offer some ideas for streamlining these roles through cost-effective adjustments of the UN counterterrorism architecture.

MONITORING

The United Nations, with its universal membership, its commitment to peaceful dispute resolution, the legal authority of the Security Council, and its extensive presence, is uniquely positioned to play a global monitoring role in counterterrorism issues as in other areas of international peace and security. Over time, the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) and its subsidiary body, CTED, have developed more consensual modalities for monitoring compliance than were initially used and have consequently enjoyed much more success. Connecting compliance monitoring to the facilitation of capacity building has been a key part of this process; states are much more willing to discuss their incapacities if the discussion seems to hold out the prospect of those incapacities being addressed through partnership and support. Our research suggested, however, that three issues require particular attention to improve the United Nations' monitoring role in the future: (1) rationalizing reporting; (2) making better use of monitoring by separating monitoring and capacity-building roles within the United Nations; and (3) expanding monitoring to address the implementation of other UN counterterrorism norms.

Although the matter has received repeated attention over the last decade, the continued existence of multiple Security Council counterterrorism bodies expecting reporting continues to irk some states. Member states tend to experience UN outreach and reporting obligations as duplicative, demanding, and unrewarding. We believe it is high time that the Security Council considered creating one **consolidated reporting mechanism** to service each of the four or five committees that focus on counterterrorism issues related to al-Qaida, the Taliban, Resolution 1373, Resolution 1540, and Somalia/Eritrea. The new preliminary implementation assessment (PIA) format being developed by CTED shows such consolidated reporting is within reach.

1. James Cockayne and Camino Kavanagh, "Flying Blind? Political Mission Responses to Transnational Threats," in *Review of Political Missions*, Center on International Cooperation, 2011, pp. 19–30, http://www.cic.nyu.edu/politicalmissions/docs_missions_11/essays/thematic_kavanagh_cockayne.pdf.

More broadly, monitoring arrangements need to shift from universal, broad, country-based assessments of progress in implementation toward a more strategic, tailored identification of entry points for strategic interventions by the international community in countries of recurring concern. This would require more nuanced **political analysis** of country reporting on counterterrorism activities, both by the Security Council's committees and the expert groups serving them. It would require CTED in particular to work more closely with the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) to identify where and when obstacles are emerging to implementation and reform. It would also require a movement away from the increasingly rote, cataloguing nature of country assessments in the CTC. We argue for the CTC to take a more forward-leaning role as a source of political advice to the full Security Council, which would then be better positioned to mandate political (or other) mission engagement with countries that appear vulnerable to terrorism. This may require a refocusing of CTED's role and a shifting of some of its functions, especially technical assistance facilitation, to other parts of the UN counterterrorism system. Indeed, something similar to such a role may be envisaged by the Security Council's recent resolution on Libya (Resolution 2017).

Finally, many of those we interviewed called for the expansion of monitoring arrangements beyond the Security Council to somehow encompass progress assessments in the implementation of other UN counterterrorism norms, including the Strategy. The reviews of the Strategy every two years are seen as having achieved little of substance. At present, states use the review as an opportunity to report how well they are implementing the Strategy. Unsurprisingly, their reviews of their own performance often tend to be glowing. If member states are indeed serious about implementing the Strategy and other UN counterterrorism norms outside the Security Council, they could do nothing more significant than institute some kind of **Strategy implementation review mechanism** in future review processes. There are numerous precedents for such an approach within the UN system, notably the human rights treaty bodies and the Universal Periodic Review system in the Human Rights Council. Even if member states cannot agree on a system of collective or peer analysis of country reports, the delineation of a self-reporting template or self-reporting criteria identifying existing UN-backed indicators against which states should report progress would be very helpful. In time, it might allow the development of a periodic report on the state of Strategy implementation and more evidence-based allocation of counterterrorism assistance by the United Nations and cash-strapped member states.

2. Adjusting UN Counterterrorism Efforts to Better Exploit Its Comparative Advantages

Through interviews and research, we identified three primary means through which the United Nations could adjust its current approach to counterterrorism to better exploit its comparative advantages: (1) through a greater focus on performance measurement; (2) by fostering a broader global movement against terrorism; and (3) through internal architectural adjustments to provide clearer leadership, guidance, analysis, and integration of UN operational efforts.

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

To better exploit its comparative advantages, the United Nations must take a more deliberate approach to measuring its own performance. There has been **no system-wide effort** to assess the effectiveness of the UN counterterrorism program. UN bodies involved in counterterrorism efforts have not systematically sought to measure their own impacts and performance and are thus unable to reliably identify their comparative advantages in the international counterterrorism arena. The United Nations' lack of attention to performance measurement in its counterterrorism programming hampers efforts by strategic decision-makers to deploy UN political, financial, and human resources in a cost-effective manner. To put the point most provocatively, it is difficult to argue, on the basis of current evidence as opposed to anecdote and supposition, that we know whether the United Nations is an effective counterterrorism actor.

In the counterterrorism field, the measurement of outcomes and impacts is inherently difficult. Furthermore, the limited funds devoted to multilateral counterterrorism efforts have left little room for the United Nations to provide leadership in this field. Nonetheless, in this fiscal climate, it is timely to ask whether the United Nations can do more to ensure that is adding maximum value given its unique role in the global effort to suppress terrorism. We briefly review the efforts undertaken by CTED, the CTITF, and TPB to measure their own performance and conclude that although there is no “off-the-shelf” model for counterterrorism measurement that the United Nations can adopt, **experimentation** in this field would have quick payoffs. Policymakers should give more attention to questions of performance measurement. In the preparation of work plans and budget documents, performance measurement should be accorded a higher priority.

This would serve the United Nations well. As member states’ priorities wax and wane, it may become more important to demonstrate such a commitment to assessing counterterrorism activity effectiveness, particularly as alternative forums such as the GCTF come online. There is already much with which to work, as 12 CTITF members are already members of the UN Evaluation Group, which could provide a forum for developing counterterrorism-oriented performance measurement. That group already explores evaluation in nearby fields, such as security sector reform and norm implementation, that may provide useful insights.

A GLOBAL MOVEMENT AGAINST TERRORISM

Our research and interviews led us to conclude that the United Nations could be doing better at combining its comparative advantages, especially as a strategic leader and convener, to foster a global movement against terrorism. In order to do so, however, it needs to broaden its outreach and engagement efforts beyond member states, encouraging them to work in partnership with the private sector and **civil society**. There are two main avenues for achieving this.

First, the United Nations could do much more to **leverage its presence in the field to counter and prevent terrorism through a variety of political, social, and economic tools**. This increased presence will require leadership not only from the highest ranks of the UN Secretariat but also from the top of a variety of UN programs, funds, and agencies to encourage UN actors in the field to engage local partners on these issues. Education, development, human rights, and humanitarian actors all potentially have important roles to play in encouraging states and societies to work to prevent terrorism through fostering a culture of dialogue, tolerance, and nonviolent dispute resolution. The United Nations has undertaken a number of important steps in the last decade to create global forums for fostering dialogue, such as its support to the Alliance of Civilizations, and the Security Council is paying increasing attention to CTED efforts to support states in combating incitement to terrorism under Resolution 1624. Yet, these thematic efforts are not well integrated into the United Nations’ work in the field. A greater focus on such efforts in the field could help to foster a broader global movement against terrorism, preventing it before it arises. We offer some ideas for how this might be achieved.

Second, the United Nations could provide a centerpiece conference to mobilize disparate actors around the world on these issues. Most straightforwardly, the General Assembly could turn the Strategy reviews held every two years into a biennial **International Meeting on Counter-Terrorism** using the United Nations’ convening power to create a broader movement against terrorism. This conference should not be limited to member state participation but should instead embrace active participation by civil society, using as models the periodic NPT review conferences or the recent events surrounding the 10th anniversary of Security Council Resolution 1325.

ARCHITECTURAL ADJUSTMENTS

The underlying theme that emerged in our research was the need for **rationalization** of the capacity-building, convening, and compliance-monitoring activities of the UN system, particularly through clarification of leadership roles. Ten years of organic growth may require a little pruning.

That sentiment seems to be gaining traction around the United Nations. On 18 January 2012, we released a draft consultation version of this report, which included three options for architectural adjustments described below, to a small group of UN counterterrorism officials and select UN member states in New York. On 25 January 2012, the UN Secretary-General presented to the General Assembly his Five-Year Action Agenda, titled “The Future We Want.” In his oral remarks, the Secretary-General proposed “creating a single UN Counter-Terrorism Coordinator, by combining some of the existing functions” of various UN counterterrorism bodies. The published account of the Secretary-General’s Five-Year Action Agenda, called for “*consideration* by relevant intergovernmental bodies of creating a single UN counter-terrorism coordinator.”²

To inform that consideration, in the final section of this report, we suggest how this creation might occur, offering three options for architectural adjustments that would allow the United Nations to exploit its comparative advantages better through the creation of a single coordinator position, taking one of three different forms: a narrow Coordinator position, a broader position of SRSG CT, or, broader still, a position of USG TNT.

- **Option 1: Graft a new position of UN Counter-Terrorism Coordinator** onto the existing structure. This person would serve as a full-time chair, coordinator, and spokesperson for the entire CTITF, providing clearer strategic leadership for the UN system on counterterrorism issue integration and making more of its convening power. It would be the key interlocutor for other international counterterrorism players, such as the GCTF. The Coordinator would have the status of an Assistant Secretary-General, based in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General. He or she would be supported by a P-4 Special Assistant and a support staff officer. These posts would be brought over to this office from CTED. This would entail eliminating the position of Assistant Secretary-General for CTED, as well as a P-4 and support staff position within CTED, and having CTED led by the person in the existing D-2 position, leaving the Coordinator at the Assistant Secretary-General level as *primus inter pares*. We would also propose eliminating the D-2 position in the CTITF Office, which has gone unfilled for more than 10 months and seems increasingly unnecessary to the effective functioning of that office. **Net cost: a saving of \$317,500**, based on the reorganization of positions we outline in this paper.
- **Option 2: Turn the CTITF Office into a new Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Counter-Terrorism.** The new SRSG CT would have a similar role to that for the Coordinator described above but would also improve UN efforts in monitoring and capacity building. The SRSG CT would serve as Executive Director of the UNCCT. This would allow the UNCCT to become the go-to resource center for technical assistance facilitation and counterterrorism policy development within the CTITF. Using resources transferred from the CTITF Office and CTED, the Office of the SRSG CT would
 - assume the functions of the CTITF Office;
 - assume the technical assistance functions of CTED, leaving it to serve, with fewer staff, as a monitor of state compliance (through consolidated reporting) and as a group of expert advisers to the Security Council on terrorism prevention issues in specific country and mission cases; and
 - improve integration among CTITF members’ technical assistance efforts.

2. Executive Office of the Secretary-General, “Secretary-General’s Five-Year Action Agenda,” 25 January 2012, http://www.un.org/sg/priorities/sg_agenda_2012.pdf (emphasis added).

Thus structured, the Office of the SRSG CT could take on a number of new and innovative projects to bolster the United Nations' internal integration and external communication on counterterrorism issues. It could, for example,

- oversee structured reporting by UN and member state entities on Strategy implementation, compiling a periodic report (every two years) on worldwide progress in Strategy implementation and the fight against terrorism;
- serve as the focal point for UN engagement with other international counterterrorism actors such as the GCTF;
- serve as the focal point for UN engagement with civil society, including through the organization of a biennial International Meeting on Counter-Terrorism (see above);
- draw on the expertise within civil society on a continuous basis through a Civil Society Advisory Committee; and
- convene CTITF member entities in rapid-response task forces to provide expert analysis and advice to UN bodies on the application of the Strategy to specific cases.

Commensurate with this broader role, the SRSG CT would have the status of an Under Secretary-General; his or her office would be attached to the DPA, as is the Office of the High Representative for Disarmament. That office could also provide a model for the selection of the Advisory Board (by the Secretary-General, from around the world) for the UNCCT, on which the SRSG CT would serve *ex officio* as Executive Director of the UNCCT.

Net cost: a saving of \$21,900. This would be achieved by funding the new Under Secretary-General-level SRSG CT position (\$411,100) through the elimination of two P-4 positions—one in CTED, one in the CTITF Office (saving \$216,500 on each post). All other positions within the Office of the SRSG CT would be funded by moving existing positions within the CTITF Office and CTED into this new office.

- **Option 3:** Consider the future creation of a position of **Under Secretary-General for Transnational Threats** to play a similar role to the SRSG CT but also encompass other transnational threats such as drug trafficking and organized crime. This is a longer-term blue-sky option to address the threats of the next 10 years, not the last 10 years. It would likely require new resources to create a larger office able to (1) service both the CTITF and the new Task Force on Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime; (2) mainstream analysis of transnational threats into integrated mission planning processes and conflict reporting to the Security Council, pursuant to its request in Presidential Statement 2010/4 of 24 February 2010; and (3) drive forward integration of transnational threat analysis into UN operations in the field. This would require substantial new resources or the pooling of existing resources from UNODC, the DPA, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, and UN counterterrorism bodies. **Net cost: not estimated.**

In part 3 of this report, we summarize our recommendations to a variety of UN entities, highlighting the key recommendation for each.

Introduction

1. **M**ULTILATERAL COUNTERTERRORISM EFFORTS are not what they were a decade ago. The threats posed by terrorism, the awareness of those threats, and the norms and institutions in place to tackle them around the world have all changed significantly over the last 10 years, in no small part due to the unprecedented and wide-reaching efforts undertaken through the United Nations. Yet although terrorism seems set to remain a global threat for the next 10 years, the nature of that threat and the necessary responses to it may evolve further in the next decade.

2. Even as the power of al-Qaida as a unitary organization wanes, the use of terrorist tactics has dispersed around the world, suggesting a need to move away from responsive, military- and law enforcement-based approaches to counterterrorism and toward a more long-term, preventive approach to terrorism based on social, political, and economic efforts. With the rise of “home-grown” and “lone wolf” terrorists such as Anders Behring Breivik; the emergence of regional al-Qaida franchises and copycat groups such as al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula, al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb, Boko Haram, and the Jund al-Khilafah; and the demise of al-Qaida leaders such as Osama bin Laden, terrorism is increasingly seen as a diffuse and widely distributed threat rather than a threat emanating from one or two “global” terrorist organizations. The emphasis of multilateral counterterrorism efforts is shifting steadily, expanding from a focus on interdiction, the investigation and prosecution of terrorists, and protection of communities and infrastructure toward a more evenly distributed preventive and response capacity, with an increasing emphasis on resilience. The global movement against terrorism continues to require careful coordination

among states, but increasingly it also requires partnership with societies to address conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism.

3. It is time to take a fresh look at the role of the world organization—the United Nations—in countering terrorism. With its sky-blue flags outside the UN General Assembly and Security Council in New York and the Human Rights Council in Geneva, the United Nations continues to have a key role to play as convener and norm developer. With the sky-blue berets and lapel pins of its police and diplomats in the field, the United Nations potentially has a key role to play in building the counterterrorism capacity of those states most vulnerable to violent extremism and terrorism and in monitoring their efforts to implement agreed counterterrorism norms and strategies. Yet, some long-term strategic thinking—some blue-sky thinking—is needed to make sure that the United Nations is positioning itself to exploit these and other comparative advantages it enjoys in this area.

4. The UN response to terrorism has evolved dramatically in the last 10 years as this shift has occurred. Interventions at the recent Secretary-General’s High-Level Symposium on International Counter-Terrorism Cooperation (19 September 2011) and the meeting of the Security Council’s Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) to mark the 10th anniversary of the adoption of Resolution 1373 (28 September 2011) emphasized the breadth and depth of often-unprecedented steps taken by the UN family to address terrorism over the last decade. From the sanctioning of individuals suspected of association with terrorist groups to the development of norms on incitement to terrorism, from engagement with

victims of terrorism to convening discussions with regional organizations on their counterterrorism efforts, and from the thousands of reports to the Security Council's counterterrorism bodies to the detailed work of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) working groups, the last decade has seen a remarkable diversity of effort and thought by UN bodies on these issues. In the midst of all this activity and notwithstanding the high emotions that these issues have often provoked within the membership, the UN family has converged around a remarkably detailed and substantive vision of a holistic, rule-of-law-based approach to counterterrorism by its own institutions and its member states. The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy remains the touchstone of this approach.

5. The unanimous adoption of the Strategy in 2006 was a remarkable achievement. In the aftermath of 9/11, many states focused their efforts to address the threat of terrorism on kinetic measures and the adoption of special laws that raised concerns about civil liberties. Yet, the Strategy reflected

broad support for a more holistic approach to countering terrorism, focusing on nonmilitary tools, emphasizing elements such as capacity building and law enforcement cooperation, and dealing with the underlying societal and political conditions that are conducive to the spread of terrorism. It not only reaffirms that counterterrorism efforts must respect human rights and the rule of law but declares that the promotion of those principles in their own right is a critical element in effectively addressing terrorism.

6. Challenges remain in the implementation of the Strategy and other norms fostered in and developed through the UN system, such as Security Council Resolution 1373 and Resolution 1624.³ Civil society organizations continue to raise concerns that the practices of UN bodies and member states fail to live up to the lofty rhetoric of the Strategy and Security Council resolutions despite the unprecedented efforts by the council to promote respect for human rights, which we explore further below.⁴ Notwithstanding the development in the last five years of a central UN policy and implementation coordination mechanism—the CTITF and its small office within the Department of Political Affairs (DPA)—UN capacity-building efforts remain fragmented, at times duplicative and sporadic and frequently lacking strategic direction and coordination. Very little is known about their impact on the ground.

7. Our interviews for this study, discussed at length below, suggest that the United Nations lacks a clear internal vision of how it will operationalize the Strategy. States made clear at the recent high-level symposium that they strongly support the United Nations playing a leadership role in the development of a multilateral approach to counterterrorism based on the use of political, social, and economic tools to prevent terrorism, rather than a reactive, military- and law enforcement-based approach. How the United Nations will meet that demand, despite all its innovation of the last decade, is unclear.



Secretary-General Annan and U.S. President George W. Bush Visit Ground Zero, 11 November 2001.

UN PHOTO BY ESKINDER DEBEBE

3. James Cockayne, Alistair Millar, and Jason Ipe, "An Opportunity for Renewal: Revitalizing the United Nations Counterterrorism Program," Center on Global Counterterrorism Cooperation, September 2010, http://www.globalct.org/images/content/pdf/reports/Opportunity_for_Renewal_Final.pdf.

4. These concerns were highlighted over the course of the "Civil Society Side Event" held to mark the 10th anniversary of the adoption of Security Council Resolution 1373 and the establishment of the Counter-Terrorism Committee on 28 September 2011. See <http://www.unmultimedia.org/tv/webcast/2011/09/counter-terrorism-committee-civil-society-side-event.html>.

8. The UN counterterrorism system has evolved significantly over the last decade, although largely through the spur-of-the-moment reactions of the Security Council to major terrorist attacks. Those responses have frequently involved the creation of a new committee, working group, or staff support mechanism tasked to deal with a newly perceived aspect of the threat of terrorism. This organic growth has created somewhat haphazard overlaps and gaps in the system as a whole and may inevitably require some pruning. As one official interviewed for this study commented, “[A]fter years of ‘ad hoc-ery,’ there is a need for a strategic order of operations that provides a clearer sense of how the [United Nations] enhances bilateral efforts.”⁵ “Ad hoc-ery” is, we discovered, frequently mistaken for flexibility and strategic response. The result is a remarkably large, duplicative, and possibly inefficient counterterrorism bureaucracy within the UN system—possibly inefficient because, again, very little is actually known about the impact of the UN counterterrorism bodies because their political and financial masters have not expected them to practice any kind of serious performance measurement. This is all the more surprising and unsustainable given the increasing mood of fiscal austerity in Turtle Bay and donor capitals. Accordingly, rationalization may be the order of the day.

9. Rationalization may also be required to resize the scope and ambition of UN efforts to what the diplomatic market will currently bear. One senior UN official consulted for this study spoke of the “natural attenuation of global interest” in counterterrorism efforts,⁶ a trend accelerated by emptying coffers and the perception of possibly diminished danger in the wake of the death of bin Laden. A former UN ambassador spoke of inertia and a “trend toward muddle” in the UN discussion on counterterrorism issues.⁷

10. These and other concerns that the United Nations may not be efficiently exploiting its comparative advantages in the counterterrorism realm have led to three major but uncoordinated institutional developments in the last months:

the creation of the UN Centre for Counter-Terrorism (UNCCT), supported by funds pledged by Saudi Arabia in an agreement with the United Nations, although as of 30 January 2012 the money had not been transferred to the United Nations); the creation of the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum (GCTF) outside the United Nations and championed by the United States and Turkey; and, most recently, the call by the United States for the creation of a UN Counter-Terrorism Coordinator, whose location and status remain unclear at the time of writing.⁸ With the emergence of these new bodies, the “trend toward muddle” risks becoming even more pronounced, absent effective leadership from the highest ranks of the UN Secretariat.

11. Against this background, this study is intended to offer some innovative, blue-sky thinking about the future of UN counterterrorism efforts. In this project, the Center on Global Counterterrorism Cooperation, with the generous support of the governments of Switzerland and Norway, attempts to provide independent, fresh, long-term thinking about how to maximize the value of UN counterterrorism efforts. Our analysis is based on five years of close partnership with and independent critique of UN counterterrorism bodies, supplemented by extensive consultations and desk research throughout 2011.

12. The key research question of this project is simply, Ten years after 9/11, are the United Nations and related multi-lateral counterterrorism arrangements fit for purpose? We have broken this down into three subquestions:

1. What are the United Nations’ comparative advantages in counterterrorism efforts, given the nature of today’s terrorism threats and their likely evolution over the next decade?
2. What tools are available to UN decision-makers and practitioners to help them measure whether their counterterrorism efforts are fit for purpose and successfully exploiting these comparative advantages?

5. Foreign ministry official, interview with authors, May 2011.

6. UN official, interview with authors, May 2011.

7. Former UN Security Council member state official, interview with authors, June 2011.

8. In late December 2011, the DPA posted a job announcement for a D-2 level position for a Director of the Office of Counter-Terrorism Implementation. Many of the core functions of this position, including chairing the CTITF, will be short-lived if the U.S.-proposed position of a UN Counter-Terrorism Coordinator comes to fruition in the near term.

3. What adjustments are desirable and feasible to the current approach and institutional architecture to exploit these comparative advantages better?

13. During 2011, we developed answers to these questions through close to 100 interviews in New York, with stakeholders in capitals, and with practitioners in the field. We supplemented that analysis with extensive desk research. Using this material, we developed a Non-Paper that we circulated to selected state and UN representatives in October 2011 and then discussed in detail at an off-the-record meeting in New York on 13 October 2011. Their feedback has helped reshape that Non-Paper into this final report.

14. In part 1, we summarize what we have identified as the United Nations' comparative advantages in counterterrorism efforts and explore what we learned about how the United Nations is perceived to have succeeded and failed in exploiting each of these four comparative advantages: (1) strategic leadership, including norm development; (2) convening; (3) capacity building; and (4) monitoring. In part 2, we offer a series of ideas for how the United Nations could exploit these comparative advantages better, covering improved performance measurement, the fostering of a global movement against terrorism, and architectural adjustments within the UN system. We close with a summary of the recommendations contained within the body of this report.

Part One: The United Nations' Comparative Advantages in Counterterrorism Efforts

15. **I**N THIS PART, WE BRIEFLY SUMMARIZE WHAT WE have heard about the United Nations' comparative advantages in counterterrorism efforts in the close to 100 interviews we have undertaken over the last six months. These interviews were conducted on the basis of anonymity with current and former officials and practitioners drawn from UN headquarters, member state missions to the United Nations, capitals, and UN bodies in the field. We identify four areas of potential comparative advantage for the United Nations in global counterterrorism efforts: (1) as a strategic leader, including a norm-setting role; (2) as a convener; (3) as a capacity builder; and (4) as a monitor. In each case, we also discuss the aspects of the United Nations' arrangements and approach that seem to be hampering its capitalization on these potential comparative advantages.

A. The United Nations as Strategic Leader

16. If the role of the United Nations in shaping the global effort to combat terrorism over the last decade were measured in terms of resources expended, then it would seem to be very insignificant. As we were reminded on numerous occasions, all the conferences, meetings, monitoring visits, consultations, trainings, and technical assistance programs relating to counterterrorism delivered through the United Nations represent a mere “drop in the ocean” of global counterterrorism efforts of the last decade, most of which have been undertaken through bilateral and frequently military and policing channels.

17. Yet, the UN role in counterterrorism efforts nonetheless turns out to have been crucial. The United Nations' global membership, founding values, legal authority, and contributions to nonviolent dispute resolution give it a unique legitimacy and authority to shape the terms of debate and even develop comprehensive strategies for dealing with threats to international peace and security. All of our interlocutors recognize that the United Nations has made enormous contributions in this regard in relation to counterterrorism activities over the last decade. As early as 2002, a policy working group established by the Secretary-General identified

roles for the United Nations in dissuading disaffected groups from embracing terrorism, in assisting states to implement relevant international legal instruments, in the protection and promotion of human rights to prevent terrorism, and in the elaboration and dissemination of nonlegal norms.⁹ The Security Council's numerous counterterrorism resolutions of the past decade, the Strategy, and the interventions of the Human Rights Council and its Special Rapporteurs have reshaped the way that terrorism and counterterrorism are understood around the world, placing increasing emphasis on respect for the rule of law and human rights, the need to address conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, and the disassociation of the terrorism label from any single religion. These achievements were not merely rhetorical but also legal, through the creation of a secure and shared legal framework for international responses to terrorism. Given the political sensitivities on these issues over the last decade, that is truly a remarkable achievement. As one interlocutor observed, "[T]he strength and value of the [United Nations] is in the normative realm. This is where the [United Nations] has power, in providing political legitimacy and establishing norms for coordinated international action."¹⁰ Yet, there are at least three reasons to believe that the United Nations may not be fully exploiting its comparative advantage in this area.

I. THE CONTINUING PROBLEM OF HUMAN RIGHTS

18. Over the last decade, the Security Council, General Assembly, and Human Rights Council have all taken significant steps to emphasize the centrality of human rights protection to effective counterterrorism efforts. Increasingly, the UN approach to counterterrorism promotes a nonmilitary, rule of law–based model. The United Nations has played an important role in galvanizing states' support for this approach, even as the United Nations' room to provide leadership has been significantly limited by member states' own positions on these issues. Given the extraordinary

political controversy that surrounded some aspects of the "Global War on Terror," such as the use of military commissions and extraordinary renditions, some of those we interviewed argued that the United Nations has done remarkably well to strengthen rhetorical support at the international level for the centrality of human rights protection to effective counterterrorism actions. The steps by the Security Council to improve its listing and delisting procedures have proven particularly important and are all the more significant, given that body's traditional reluctance to reference human rights. With the creation of an Ombudsperson to facilitate the handling of delisting requests, the Security Council has gone further than ever to integrate human rights concerns and independent, nonpolitical analysis into its decision-making. Such a major achievement is too frequently glossed over by external commentators.

19. Support for human rights principles is essential for sustaining global political support for the fight against global terrorism, as the Security Council seems to acknowledge in its increasingly frequent and robust calls for respect for human rights while countering terrorism. Nothing erodes support for counterterrorism measures more than the perception that such programs are eroding basic individual freedoms. Disregard for the rule of law and an overreliance on repressive measures alienates many of the social groups and political constituencies whose cooperation is needed in the collective struggle against terrorism. As Norwegian Foreign Minister Jonas Gahr Støre recently noted, "[H]uman rights and the rule of law are necessary tools in our joint struggle against terrorism, and our efforts to combat terrorism will all be in vain if they are not."¹¹

20. Yet, that is unfortunately exactly how some UN counterterrorism efforts continue to be seen in some quarters. In some parts of civil society and some judicial chambers, the Security Council's Al-Qaida and Taliban sanctions regimes are seen as providing an ongoing threat to due process and

9. UN General Assembly and UN Security Council, *Identical Letters Dated 1 August 2002 From the Secretary-General Addressed to the President of the General Assembly and President of the Security Council, A/57/273 – S/2002/875*, 6 August 2002, p. 6 (annex containing *Report of the Policy Working Group on the United Nations and Terrorism*) (hereinafter Policy Working Group report on the United Nations and terrorism).

10. UN member state official, interview with authors, June 2011.

11. Jonas Gahr Støre, comments at the Secretary-General's High-Level Symposium on International Counter-Terrorism Cooperation, 19 September 2011.

human rights, notwithstanding recent efforts by the council to provide increased transparency and other safeguards, especially the creation of the position of Ombudsperson.¹² The 1267 Committee's procedures have been particularly singled out for criticism; the Eminent Jurists Panel of the International Commission of Jurists reported receiving "virtually uniform criticism" of procedures that have been deemed "arbitrary" and discriminatory by numerous nations and international agencies.¹³ In response to initiatives of a group of like-minded states, the Security Council has taken a number of significant steps in recent years to improve its listing and delisting procedures, but concern remains that these adaptations will soon be adjudged by a European regional court to fall short of offering effective safeguards for human rights.

21. Some commentators also continue to fault the Security Council for failing to pay adequate attention to the human rights impact of national-level implementation of Resolution 1373 and Resolution 1624.¹⁴ As one representative of a developing state observed to us, the United Nations "is important because it provides international legitimacy. It gives states political cover for their counterterrorism policies. It establishes the legal framework for national and international action."¹⁵ Without the United Nations, it would not have been possible for many states to cooperate with others in responding to the global terrorist threat. All the more important, then, that the "cover" provided by the United Nations ensures state respect for human rights. Some states have committed systematic human rights violations and cited UN-imposed counterterrorism obligations as justification and political cover, as extensively documented by the Eminent Jurists Panel.¹⁶ The Security Council was

also not well served by U.S. and UK efforts to build a case for war against Iraq in 2003, because they served to associate the United Nations in some parts of the global public with a highly militaristic counterterrorism strategy, a legacy from which it has not yet disassociated itself in the eyes of some observers.

22. This suggests that the United Nations' normative advantage, its potential to build a global movement against terrorism based on dialogue, tolerance, and nonviolent dispute resolution, will continue to be weakened by the perception that it is not serious in ensuring states' respect for human rights while countering terrorism. Our interlocutors and desk research suggest that a number of steps might be taken to alter this perception, including further strengthening independent review of listing and delisting decisions in the Security Council's 1267 Committee, beyond the positive steps already taken. Other steps that might be considered include

- giving the Ombudsperson's recommendations to the council greater authority through the creation of a presumption that the council will follow her recommendation unless it takes a vote to the contrary;
- adding a "sunset" clause to decisions to include persons on a sanctions list;
- clarifying that appeals to the council from its counterterrorism committees should be exceptional; and
- expanding the Ombudsperson's mandate to other relevant UN sanctions lists.

23. The council could also consider strengthening its approach to reviewing member states' respect for human rights while implementing Security Council resolutions, for

12. Security Council Resolution 1822 requests member states to provide "publicly releasable" statements of case when proposing additional individuals and entities to the Consolidated List, directs the 1267 Committee to publish narrative summaries of reasons for listing, and directs the 1267 Committee to conduct an annual review of all names, including a review of entries that have not been reviewed in three or more years. UN Security Council, S/RES/1822, 30 June 2008.

13. International Commission of Jurists (ICJ), "Assessing Damage, Urging Action: Report of the Eminent Jurists Panel on Terrorism, Counter-Terrorism and Human Rights," 2009, pp. 116–117, <http://ejp.icj.org/IMG/EJP-Report.pdf>.

14. For example, see UN General Assembly, *Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms While Countering Terrorism: Note by the Secretary-General, A/65/258*, 6 August 2010 (containing *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms While Countering Terrorism*). In the context of member state implementation, see George Kegoro, "The Effects of Counter-Terrorism Measures on Human Rights: The Experiences of East African Countries," *Understanding Terrorism in Africa: In Search for an African Voice*, ed. Wafula Okuma and Anneli Botha (Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 2007), pp. 51–57.

15. UN member state official, interview with authors, May 2011.

16. ICJ, "Assessing Damage, Urging Action."

example through increased access to human rights expertise, closer collaboration with the Human Rights Council's Special Rapporteur during country visits and assessments by the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), increased attention to counterterrorism issues during the Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review process, and increased consultation with civil society during country review processes. The recent addition of a second human rights officer to CTED's ranks may facilitate this. An alternative approach for member states would be to have the Human Rights Council empower the Special Rapporteur to work more closely with CTED, especially during the country visit and assessment processes.

II. FROM PROLIFERATION TO INCOHERENCE?

24. The United Nations' strategic leadership role is also undermined by duplication and lack of normative integration on issues closely related to counterterrorism, including transnational threats such as fighting drug trafficking and organized crime and technical assistance on rule of law issues, let alone other system goals such as development and conflict resolution. The militaristic approach to counterterrorism efforts championed by some Western states over the last decade, including at times through the United Nations, has served to make the "counterterrorism" label highly controversial, limiting the possibilities for normative integration among the United Nations' approaches to counterterrorism activities, tackling organized crime, conflict prevention, and building the rule of law. The result is a proliferation of entities within the UN system, many of which are seeking to develop similar programming in similar places on the ground yet with weak operational coordination and very little strategic coordination among these varied efforts.

25. In fact, the UN system currently has three different entities trying to coordinate UN entities' activities in the realms of counterterrorism (CTITF), organized crime and drugs (the new Task Force on Drug Trafficking and Organized

Crime), and rule of law (the Rule of Law Coordination and Resources Group). There is significant overlap in membership of these three groups, and all three are seeking to coordinate and provide strategic direction for UN activities aiming to build rule of law-oriented institutions in UN member states. The inevitable result is normative fragmentation, operational duplication, and strategic incoherence.¹⁷ Even on counterterrorism narrowly understood, no single UN office or staff body is tasked with directing or even monitoring Strategy implementation as a whole¹⁸ nor even with setting the terms of UN strategy on counterterrorism issues in a particular country or region.

26. Neither UN member states nor UN system bodies can be blamed for the emergence of entirely distinct communities working on counterterrorism, organized crime, rule of law, and conflict prevention issues. The approach to these issues, however, within UN-based discussions and UN programming has possibly reinforced the walls between these silos or at least not weakened them. We anticipate some efforts to integrate these programs in coming months and years, for example an increased focus by the Security Council on integrating terrorism prevention and conflict prevention, operationalizing its 2010 strategic guidance to the UN Secretariat that encouraged the secretariat to address transnational threats in the context of its conflict management activities.¹⁹ Similarly, the council has recently mandated CTED to work with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and other UN system bodies to develop responses to arms proliferation from Libya to prevent terrorism in the region,²⁰ where it is intimately related to drug trafficking. We can anticipate similar operational responses to develop ad hoc to other crises where terrorism is intertwined with other transnational threats (e.g., Afghanistan, the Sahel, Somalia, Yemen). Absent strategic guidance from either the council or the secretariat and without specialist expertise on the ground, agencies in the field may struggle to cope with these new demands and integrate their efforts.

17. For more, see Camino Kavanagh and Bruce Jones, "Shaky Foundations: An Assessment of the UN's Rule of Law Support Agenda," Center on International Cooperation, November 2011, www.reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/kavanagh_rol.pdf.

18. See Peter Romaniuk, *Multilateral Counter-Terrorism: The Global Politics of Cooperation and Contestation* (New York: Routledge, 2010), pp. 90–91.

19. See UN Security Council, S/PRST/2010/4, 24 February 2010.

20. See UN Security Council, S/RES/2017, 31 October 2011.

27. Looking ahead, we see a need to accelerate efforts within the United Nations to integrate analysis and response to these transnational threats. There are strong indications of increasing multifunctionality within the transnational armed networks operating in areas such as the Sahel and North Africa, the Horn of Africa and Yemen, and Afghanistan/Pakistan. Sometimes these networks participate in transnational trafficking and organized crime; sometimes they spawn or support terrorist cells; and frequently they weaken governance. Unintegrated normative, strategic, and operational responses to each of these phenomena, based not on how these groups operate on the ground but on artificial discursive lenses produced by international politics, seem likely to us to be seen as increasingly wasteful and counterproductive. UNODC has taken the lead in developing more integrated thinking within the UN system on these issues, but its heavy reliance on voluntary funding and its location in Vienna rather than New York make it a poor fit for the kind of strategic leadership that will be needed across the UN system to make progress on these issues. In part 2 of this paper, we set out some concrete ideas for improving integration in the UN responses to these closely related transnational threats, including through the consideration of the creation in the long term of a position of Under Secretary-General for Transnational Threats (USG TNT).

III. THE EMPTY “BULLY PULPIT” AND THE ABSENT “COUNTERNARRATIVE”

28. The fragmentation of the United Nations’ normative response to terrorism, let alone other transnational threats, is closely related to another problem that seems to lie deeper or perhaps higher within the UN system: the empty “bully pulpit.”

29. The term “bully pulpit” was coined by U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt to connote the power of the Presidency to reshape the terms of any debate simply by intervening. It has now come to refer to any public office of sufficiently high rank that provides the holder with an opportunity to speak out and be heard on any matter. The Secretary-General

and his senior management team have a unique ability in world politics to shape the terms of global discussion—in counterterrorism jargon, to generate and deliver a narrative—including potentially a hopeful narrative of peaceful dispute resolution that could counter calls to violence by violent extremists.

30. Secretaries-General have always enjoyed a singular normative advantage in world affairs: a uniquely global bully pulpit from which the Secretary-General can shape perceptions of global problems and mobilize public opinion in support of nonviolent or, where necessary, military responses.²¹ The current Secretary-General has proven remarkably adept in this regard, using the bully pulpit to advocate for accelerated response to climate change, for the doctrine of Responsibility to Protect, and for such important issues as the fight against chronic disease.

31. Yet on counterterrorism issues, he and his team have been largely absent. The upper ranks of the UN leadership, we were told time and again, has failed to use the normative advantage of the bully pulpit to mobilize states and broader global public opinion behind a “movement” committed to nonviolent resolution of the grievances that fuel young people’s turn to violent extremism and, in some tragic cases, terrorism. They have not played the role they might in “building a counternarrative.” “We have not felt the real weight of the Secretary General,” said a former member state ambassador. “It is needed.”²²

32. In fairness, the Executive Office of the Secretary-General has made some important, perhaps even crucial contributions to UN counterterrorism work over the last decade. Although it is only one of many portfolios he carries, the Assistant Secretary-General for Strategic Planning and Policy Coordination has played a crucial role in building the CTITF, chairing it, and using the Secretary-General’s bully pulpit to bring victims into the UN discussion on terrorism, in particular through convening a significant victims symposium in 2008. The creation of the CTITF helped to ensure, at a critical moment, that counterterrorism efforts were seen

21. See generally Simon Chesterman, ed., *Secretary or General?: The UN Secretary-General in World Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

22. Former UN Security Council member state official, interview with authors, June 2011.



UN launches Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, 19 September 2006.
UN PHOTO BY PAULO FILGUEIRAS

not solely as an emanation of the Security Council, but as an aspect of the effort by the broader UN system to realize the vision of the UN Charter. Together with the adoption of the Strategy, in which the Executive Office of the Secretary-General also played a key role, the creation of the CTITF allowed a more holistic and more inclusive approach to countering terrorism than had emerged out of the Security Council to that point, involving a wider array of actors. Further, the creation of working groups within the CTITF provided a unique if informal bridge between the council, the UN Secretariat, other UN entities, and the General Assembly by allowing CTITF member entities that responded to both the council and the assembly to work together on projects without being hampered by the limitations of their

own mandates and governance. This was highly innovative and produced some important positive results. As the foreign ministry counterterrorism coordinator of one member state told us, “[L]inking up the Security Council and the General Assembly cultures on a quite controversial security issue is a major feat, and the CTITF, particularly through its working groups, has helped to create a zone of comfort, an atmosphere of common purpose, and helped to maintain a balance between the two houses” in the United Nations.²³

33. These successes also reveal, however, the limits of the Executive Office of the Secretary-General’s engagement with these issues. Opening the recent High-Level Symposium on International Counter-Terrorism Cooperation, the

23. UN member state official, interview with authors, June 2011.

Secretary-General boldly stated that “[e]ffective counterterrorism requires a combination of social, educational, economic, and political tools that target those factors that make the terrorist option appear attractive.”²⁴ The CTITF Chairman and its Office, perhaps hampered by staff movements and prolonged vacancies, have not so far managed to induce the CTITF itself, with its more than 30 UN member entities, to flesh out how the myriad tools available to the United Nations in these fields could and should be used to achieve the objectives set out in the Strategy. UN officials we consulted recognized that the CTITF has not addressed the “critical need . . . for greater integration of UN strategies and programs.”²⁵ The job of head of the CTITF Office (a D-2 position) has been advertised twice—last posted on 23 December 2011 with a closing date of 21 February 2012—yet at the date of writing, the position had remained unfilled for more than a year.

34. A monumental mismatch exists between the expectations and intentions of what the CTITF is supposed to achieve and what it can actually deliver. This is widely seen to stem from a number of sources: a lack of resources, which may now have been addressed through the generosity of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia—a matter we address further below; a director-level leadership post unfilled in the CTITF Office within the UN system; and pressure to take on overly ambitious tasks of limited utility without conducting adequate needs assessments or consultations with intended beneficiaries or creating enduring relationships with partners on the ground.

35. We explore these themes at more length below. Behind them all lies the absence of effective strategic leadership within the UN system on counterterrorism issues. The Executive Office of the Secretary-General has not effectively mainstreamed counterterrorism objectives into the work of the UN family, especially bodies in the field, and has not created the broader political will and social support that might be needed to push such an effort forward. There is a need for more hands-on leadership from the Executive

Office of the Secretary-General to drive integration at the operational level and ensure that the United Nations is exploiting its comparative advantages. That may need to come through a more dynamic and overt championing of member state support for the United Nations’ vision of operational, preventive counterterrorism, well integrated with the United Nations’ human rights, development, conflict prevention, and humanitarian assistance goals.

36. Whenever the question of the Secretary-General’s absence on counterterrorism issues was raised in discussions for this report, interlocutors seeking to defend the United Nations’ record pointed to the key role of the CTITF Chairman in building and driving the CTITF forward. Yet for all it has achieved, including important normative contributions at the operational level, such as the guidance developed by the CTITF Working Group on Protecting Human Rights While Countering Terrorism, the CTITF has struggled to provide strategic leadership. Indeed, many would argue that it is not tasked to do so, which bring us back to the point that absent the highest ranks of the UN Secretariat, there is no strategic leader within the UN system driving integration on these issues forward and creating a strategic vision for Strategy implementation. As a result, UN entities and bodies remain deeply divided over what their different roles in implementing the Strategy should be, especially when it comes to those social, educational, economic, and political tools that the Secretary-General chose to highlight in his recent remarks.

37. In part, the problem appears to be structural. The two key decision-making figures at the operational level within the UN system on counterterrorism issues, who translate broader strategic guidance into daily activity and translate the system’s capabilities into advice for strategic decision-makers—those two key figures within CTED and the CTITF—are Assistant Secretaries-General. Both incumbents are deeply respected within the system and by member states, but one works on these issues only for a small percentage of his time. In a bureaucratic system where hier-

24. UN Department of Public Information, “Secretary-General Hails Symposium on International Counter-Terrorism Cooperation as Recognition That States ‘Are All in This Fight Together,’” SG/SM/13807, 19 September 2011, <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2011/sgsm13807.doc.htm>; J.P. Nguyen, “UN’s Ban: Counterterrorism Needs Focus on Economic, Social Issues,” Deutsche Presse-Agentur, 19 September 2011.

25. UN official, interview with authors, May 2011.

archical position and status account for a great deal, Assistant Secretaries-General, especially those who are part-time, will inevitably have limited influence over a group of entities led by more senior officials (e.g., Under Secretaries-General). The current U.S. government suggestion of creating a UN Counter-Terrorism Coordinator and the UN Secretary-General's proposal for consideration among intergovernmental bodies to create such a position would still only address these concerns if the new Coordinator were given adequate standing within the system. In a system where there are more than 50 Under Secretaries-General, for issues including the role of sport in peace and development, it seems inadequate that there is no equivalent champion for counterterrorism and related transnational threats, although that might be addressed if a new coordinator position were created at the Under Secretary-General level. In part 2, we set out some ideas for how this gap in the UN senior leadership, as well as the noticeable emptiness of the bully pulpit on this issue, might be filled.

38. In concluding this discussion of the role of the United Nations as a strategic leader, it is worth reflecting on how this role is likely to change over the next 10 years, as counterterrorism efforts themselves evolve. We believe that, if anything, there is going to be a greater need for UN leadership. As one official explained to us, “[T]he pendulum” of counterterrorism efforts at the national and international level “is shifting away from hard security measures toward a greater emphasis on prevention, on trying to understand why people are motivated to join and support terrorist movements.”²⁶ This shift in emphasis gives greater importance to the broader conflict prevention framework outlined in the Strategy and the very social, educational, economic, and political tools that the Secretary-General recently highlighted. It prioritizes soft power rather than hard power and civilian rather than military efforts, which makes the UN role in generating political legitimacy even more relevant and appropriate. Individual member states cannot tackle the threats posed by transnational terrorist and criminal networks and lone wolf violent extremists on their own. They need a global framework of norms, cooperation, and assistance in

order to do so. The question of UN leadership and the need for a coherent UN message and voice will only become more acute.

B. The United Nations as Convener

39. The background of the UN flag is the blue of the sky under which all humanity lives. It is a symbol of the universality of the United Nations, of its unprecedented role as the “Parliament of Man.”²⁷ The United Nations has a unique comparative advantage as a convener; a forum for discussion, norm development, and dispute resolution; and a space for generating mutual understanding and even learning. Our research suggests that the United Nations is seen as having mixed success in exploiting this comparative advantage over the last 10 years in the realm of counterterrorism. It gets comparatively high marks for providing a forum in which states have been able to crystallize an important array of legal regimes governing terrorism and counterterrorism, as well as policy documents such as the Strategy. It is also seen as having helped to mobilize discussion of counterterrorism issues by regional organizations around the world. Yet, its record in this area continues to be marred by states’ use of the United Nations for political theater and grandstanding. The failure of the UN system as a whole to resolve states’ differences over the definition of terrorism and thus to bring to a conclusion the negotiation of a Comprehensive Convention against Terrorism, remains central to this dynamic.

40. We heard three specific concerns about areas in which the United Nations could be doing more to exploit its comparative advantage as a convener: on issues of engagement with terrorists; engaging with civil society; and building operational knowledge through sharing best practices and mutual learning.

26. UN member state official, interview with authors, May 2011.

27. Paul Kennedy, *The Parliament of Man: The Past, Present, and Future of the United Nations* (New York: Random House, 2006).

I. DENOUNCING TERRORISM, ENGAGING TERRORISTS

41. The deeper and only rarely acknowledged problem for the United Nations arising from disagreement over the definition of terrorism is that it limits the United Nations' ability to exploit its comparative advantage as a convener. Simply stated, member states' disagreement over which groups should be treated as terrorists continues to hamper the United Nations' use of its good offices to resolve disputes involving nonstate groups regarded by some states as terrorists.

42. There is an inherent tension between the strategic leadership role of the United Nations in identifying, denouncing, and taking action against unlawful terrorist activity and its development, human rights promotion, conflict prevention, mediation, and humanitarian assistance goals. One notable effort, however, to facilitate reconciliation with a nonstate group by removing its terrorist label has recently been made by the Security Council. In June 2011, the Security Council unanimously agreed to split the sanctions list for al-Qaida and the Taliban into two in order to create increased space for the United Nations, its member states, and other actors to engage with the Taliban.²⁸ This was widely seen as a precursor to using delisting as a potential carrot in political negotiations with the Taliban.

43. Yet, officials in UN headquarters seem only minimally aware of the constraints that UN field representatives continue to impose on themselves when dealing with non-state groups that powerful states or even the Security Council have labeled as terrorists. There is a danger that the United Nations' inclusive approach to conflict prevention, humanitarian assistance, and development will continue to be adversely affected by the exclusionary logic of the existing counterterrorism regime, including the universally applicable Resolution 1373 regime. A discussion of these issues in the Secretary-General's Policy Committee in 2010 made little progress. For now, then, the default position seems to be one of "don't ask, don't tell": UN headquarters acquiesces tacitly in field representatives' quiet engagement with "terrorist" actors without providing formal policy coverage.

44. Relying on the informal traditions of inclusiveness and confidentiality that surround the United Nations' role as premier global convener, UN bodies engage with groups that they recognize some states may consider terrorists even without formal guidance from the UN system clarifying that this is UN policy. In the meantime, other humanitarian and political actors that do not enjoy traditional and legal UN immunities are subjected to pressure by powerful states to disengage with "terrorist" groups; and the United Nations does not intervene, notwithstanding the impact this has on the humanitarian space and peace building. This is most obvious in the recent crisis in Somalia, where the United Nations has done little to address the restrictions on provision of humanitarian assistance in southern Somalia resulting from some states' framing of such assistance as possibly constituting "material support" to al-Shabaab. Increased attention from senior levels to these issues and the provision of guidance and support to UN actors in the field is sorely needed.

II. ENGAGING CIVIL SOCIETY

45. Civil society is a crucial partner for states in countering terrorism. As the threat of terrorism becomes more diffuse and networked, so will responses need to be. States will not be able to prevent terrorism until societies do. Over the last decade, officials and experts have become increasingly aware that civil society organizations, including nongovernmental organizations, academia and independent research centers, religious organizations, and other social networks can play a significant role in advancing global counterterrorism objectives even without adding a "counterterrorism" label to their work. Yet, the United Nations has not capitalized on its natural comparative advantage as a convener and facilitator of state-society partnerships on counterterrorism efforts.

46. The report of the Secretary-General that led to the drafting and adoption of the Strategy suggested that "our strategy against terrorism must be comprehensive.... I urge Member States and civil society organizations everywhere to join in that strategy."²⁹ In the General Assembly, the

28. See UN Security Council, S/RES/1988, 17 June 2011; UN Security Council, S/RES/1989, 17 June 2011.

29. UN General Assembly, *In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All: Report of the Secretary-General*, A/59/2005, 21 March 2005, p. 26, http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/gaA.59.2005_En.pdf.

Strategy prescribes a role “as appropriate” for civil society. Similarly, Security Council Resolution 1963 encourages greater interaction between the council and civil society. Recently, there have been other signs of an increased appreciation by some members of the CTC of the potential value-added of civil society; the CTC Special Meeting in Strasbourg in April 2011 and a side event for civil society on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1373 both highlighted the important role that competent nongovernmental actors can play in UN efforts to prevent terrorism and promote human rights.

47. Unfortunately, however, holdouts on the Security Council continue to resist engagement with civil society and have used their procedural blocking powers to curtail civil society participation in UN counterterrorism activities. The continuing unwillingness of some states to mandate UN entities to engage civil society organizations greatly hampers the United Nations’ ability to exploit its natural comparative advantage as a convener. The United Nations has a long history of engaging civil society actors around the world on complex and sensitive security and social issues, ranging from nonproliferation to human rights to disease prevention. Excluding civil society from the global effort to implement the Strategy hamstringing the United Nations, particularly on issues of terrorism prevention. There has been a failure by the United Nations to leverage the potential of civil society as a multiplier in Strategy implementation and in mobilizing support for rule of law–based counterterrorism efforts more generally. No formalized, regular mechanism exists for engagement between UN counterterrorism bodies and civil society. This is especially relevant in light of the Strategy’s emphasis on conflict prevention, the protection of human rights, and the amelioration of conditions conducive to violent extremism—the very social, educational, economic, and political tools to which the Secretary-General referred. As one official of a Security Council permanent member recently said to the CTC, the CTC risks being seen as irrelevant if it cannot allow itself to more openly engage with civil society.³⁰

48. Think tanks, academic institutions, and field-based research organizations have a valuable role to play in enriching and at times refuting the body of counterterrorism-relevant knowledge generated by states. Yet, the extent to which UN bodies such as CTED engage with civil society is still in large part a function of the willingness of leadership and individual staff members rather than any institutional requirements. Security Council Resolution 1963 “[e]ncourages CTED to interact, as appropriate and in consultation with the CTC and relevant member States, with civil society and other relevant non-government actors.” The inclusion of “as appropriate” and “in consultation with” the CTC and relevant member states reflects the ambiguity among some council members toward the role of civil society and forces CTED to take a relatively cautious approach toward its engagement with nongovernmental actors.

49. CTED has begun to involve civil society in the design and implementation of some of its assistance packages and to consult with civil society and other nongovernmental actors on an ad hoc basis as part of its dialogue with states. Without a more explicit mandate, however, requiring CTED to engage civil society as part of country visits and in its broader dialogue with states, there is no guarantee those ad hoc efforts will continue. In addition to strengthening the analytical basis for CTED/CTC assessments, such efforts would help address lingering criticisms of the Security Council over lack of transparency in CTC work.

50. CTED has been similarly restricted in its use of nongovernmental information when conducting its preliminary implementation assessments (PIAs) of Security Council Resolution 1373 and Resolution 1624. Recent improvements to the PIAs will allow for human rights to be mainstreamed into those assessments instead of having a separate human rights section at the end of the PIA, which was sometimes treated as an afterthought. Allowing freer and more open use of nongovernment sources in the new PIAs would make the assessment exercise more rigorous.

51. One option to promote more regular interaction between the United Nations and civil society would be for the

30. UN member state official, interview with authors, May 2011.



Naomi Monchari Kerongo, a victim of terrorism in Kenya, participates in a UN symposium on Supporting Victims of Terrorism, 9 September 2008.
UN PHOTO BY PAULO FILGUEIRAS

CTITF to create a Civil Society Advisory Committee with a mandate to provide informal research and policy inputs to the work of the CTITF and the United Nations generally. The Civil Society Advisory Committee could provide guidance to the CTITF and its working groups, as well as the new UNCCT, following the model of analogous bodies that provide input for other UN programs, such as the United Nations' work on women in armed conflict (including a Security Council committee that deals with that issue). The proposed Civil Society Advisory Committee could serve as a sounding board on key policy and programming issues and as a source of expertise for policy development and

analysis, and its representatives could be invited to propose mechanisms for increased engagement with civil society on Strategy implementation.

52. Another option, which could be taken as an interim measure, would be to hold a periodic International Meeting on Counter-Terrorism, bringing together states and civil society perhaps every two years at the time of the Strategy review. This could be modeled on the periodic review conferences of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) or the events surrounding the recent 10th anniversary of Security Council Resolution 1325. As we

explore further in part 2, this conference could allow states to discuss best practices while also involving civil society organizations to provide input on the successes and challenges they face in helping to prevent terrorism, especially where such challenges result from counterterrorism measures imposed by states, including those in apparent pursuit of the implementation of UN counterterrorism norms.

53. The United Nations could also do more to ensure that states have more information about the important ways in which civil society organizations contribute to advancing shared counterterrorism objectives. States need to hear more from each other and from the United Nations regarding the ways in which civil society organizations help to give voice to marginalized and vulnerable peoples, including victims of terrorism, and to provide a constructive outlet for the redress of grievances. They have important roles to play in activism, education, research, and oversight and even as assistance and service providers in areas related to counterterrorism efforts. They can also play a critical role in monitoring human rights abuses that can stimulate grievances and stoke terrorist recruitment. The aforementioned conference would help to enhance the UN and member states' efforts to educate the wider membership about the help that civil society organizations can provide and the harm that restricting civil society in the name of counterterrorism can do to the international community's counterterrorism efforts.

III. BUILDING SHARED OPERATIONAL KNOWLEDGE

54. Finally, our research also suggests concern among some observers that the United Nations is not fully exploiting its comparative advantage as a convener in the realm of building shared operational knowledge, for example through providing opportunities for exchange of best practices among national-level counterterrorism practitioners.

55. Many observers believe that the advent of the GCTF, with its focus on sharing best practices and facilitating capacity building, indicates that the United Nations, like the Group of Eight's (G8) Counter-Terrorism Action Group, which the GCTF has apparently superseded, may have conclusively

missed this opportunity. Championed by the United States and Turkey and now involving 29 states and the European Union, the GCTF was established in September 2011 as an "informal, multilateral [counterterrorism] platform that will focus on identifying critical civilian needs, mobilizing the necessary expertise and resources to address such needs and enhance global cooperation."³¹ The GCTF will maintain a central Coordinating Committee made up of representatives at the national counterterrorism-coordinator level of all GCTF participants and be served by a small administrative unit initially maintained in the United States and perhaps later in Turkey. The crux of the GCTF's work, however, will occur within five working groups on the criminal justice sector and rule of law, countering violent extremism, and capacity building in the Sahel; the (African) Horn Region, including Yemen; and Southeast Asia. The two thematic working groups in particular seem likely to play a major role in years ahead as forums for sharing best practices and building shared knowledge among national counterterrorism practitioners.



U.S. Secretary of State Clinton and Turkish Foreign Minister Davutoglu Co-Host the Official Launch of the Global Counterterrorism Forum, New York, 22 September 2011.

[STATE DEPARTMENT/PUBLIC DOMAIN.]

31. Global Counterterrorism Forum, "Co-Chairs' Fact Sheet," n.d., <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/173155.pdf>.

56. The officials and experts interviewed for this study expressed support and enthusiasm for the GCTF. One member state official described the GCTF as a “very good idea,” a way to provide more direction and coherence for international counterterrorism efforts, particularly through enhancing the sharing of best practices. The GCTF can be considered analogous to specialized multilateral bodies such as the Missile Technology Control Regime and the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). The structure of the GCTF allows it to avoid the challenges faced by the United Nations in seeking to reach a global consensus before action can be taken. It will allow a manageable group of member states from a broader array of regions and income levels than the G8 to exert leadership and develop new ideas while working together to address urgent problems. Another official said the GCTF will be more efficient and useful than current UN bodies. It will include the states “with the most experience and capacity” for preventing terrorism. It will cooperate with other international bodies, perhaps including the Group of 20, and “give impetus to UN programs.”³²

57. The most important question for the United Nations in this regard is the nature of its relationship to the GCTF. Everyone interviewed for this report expressed the hope that the new multilateral body will work in cooperation with rather than separate from the United Nations. It should be “known to” the United Nations “but not of” the United Nations, as one expert phrased it. Yet, many opined that some form of active coordination is needed to prevent a further unraveling of the United Nations’ ability and authority. The danger, as expressed by one official, is that the United Nations “simply becomes a partner implementing the agenda set by the GCTF.” Others suggested that this might not be such a bad thing if GCTF working groups in fact came to operate in a way that allows stakeholders on the ground greater influence over the counterterrorism agenda for their region.

58. Ensuring that the relationship between the United Nations and GCTF is equitable and mutually beneficial may impose new demands on the United Nations to create a more integrated or at least coordinated counterterrorism program with effective leadership. Yet, we see three reasons

to contest the conclusion that the GCTF will supersede the United Nations, either in terms of its convening role or in terms of its role in facilitating capacity building. Each has important ramifications for how we anticipate UN counterterrorism efforts to unfold in coming years.

59. First, we believe that the broader membership of the United Nations and, crucially, its local presence gives the United Nations a convening power that the GCTF does not yet enjoy, although it may in certain regions if GCTF working groups prove capable of engaging government and nongovernment stakeholders on the ground. This is particularly the case on the ground and in the field: the United Nations’ in-country presence allows it to read and influence local dynamics in a manner that seems likely to be beyond the reach of the GCTF, at least as GCTF activities are envisaged.

60. Still, in fairness the United Nations has only rarely and, then, quite poorly leveraged this local presence although neither donors nor host states have pressed it to do so, with the exception of UNODC. As we explore more below, some UN counterterrorism bodies (again, with the important exception of UNODC) tend to swoop into a country or region, hold a workshop or conduct an assessment, and ride away, often with surprisingly little regard to the presence, knowledge, and leverage of local UN actors and sometimes without much regard for how their counterterrorism activities will impact on the perceptions of those local actors. If the United Nations does learn how to better leverage its field presence (for which we offer some ideas below, including through more deliberate outreach to civil society), it could become a key partner for the GCTF, especially in helping it to access local preferences and expertise and in implementing GCTF-backed activities on the ground. This will likewise allow the GCTF to partner more effectively with the United Nations.

61. Second, the United Nations also has access to niche expertise to which GCTF members may not readily have access and from which GCTF members may stand to learn. As multilateral counterterrorism efforts move increasingly into the social, educational, economic, and political areas

32. Various officials, interview with authors, May–July 2011.

flagged by the Secretary-General, the United Nations' unique expertise on programming in some of these areas may come into play. A wide range of bodies within the CTITF, from the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the Alliance of Civilizations (AoC), may have specialist expertise to offer the GCTF.

62. Third, GCTF may not come to “supersede” the United Nations' convening role in this area because the two organizations may end up competing for donor support to convene exercises to share and catalogue states' experiences on specific issues. Important steps are being taken to avoid this, for example through close consultation between the GCTF Coordinating Committee Co-Chairs and key UN figures and through the agreement of Switzerland to convene a meeting in February 2012 to discuss UN-GCTF relations. Yet, the danger remains that, notwithstanding these steps, a competitive dynamic could emerge, especially if the strategic orientation and substantive focus of the GCTF and the United Nations are seen as diverging. Again, strategic leadership is needed.

63. The GCTF is a group of member states that are working together to drive forward faster the achievement of stated UN objectives. It is fully entitled to work with UN agencies on specific projects as and when it sees fit. Yet to the extent that those projects may be seen to be influencing the work of these UN agencies in ways that make them less responsive to counterterrorism discussions and operational priorities set within the United Nations, some member states, we were told in no uncertain terms, will remain concerned about the relationship between the GCTF and the United Nations.

64. How that relationship develops also seems likely to be influenced by the role that the new UNCCT takes on in practice. Officially announced to member states on 14 September 2011 after some six years of stop-start negotiation

between the United Nations and Saudi Arabia and later endorsed by the General Assembly,³³ the UNCCT will be established in the CTITF Office in New York through a three-year, \$10 million contribution by Saudi Arabia.³⁴ This new arrangement is expected to bring some eight new UNCCT posts into the CTITF Office within DPA, presided over by the CTITF Chairman (currently UN Assistant Secretary-General for Planning and Policy Coordination Bob Orr), to assist in “institutionalizing the CTITF” so that it may better serve in “supporting coordination and coherence of the United Nations counter-terrorism and technical assistance delivery activities.”³⁵ UNCCT activities will be approved by an advisory board of up to 20 member states, represented at the Permanent Representative level at the United Nations in New York and chaired by Saudi Arabia for the first three years. At least some UNCCT Advisory Board members will be GCTF members, which could mitigate any risk of competition between them.



Saudi Foreign Minister, Prince Saud Al-Faisal, Speaks at the Secretary-General's Symposium on International Counter-Terrorism Cooperation, 19 September 2011.

UN PHOTO BY RICK BAJORNAS

65. However, few details regarding the specific purpose and program of work of the UNCCT are available, and indeed they do not seem to exist. The General Assembly resolution

33. UN General Assembly, A/RES/66/10, 7 December 2011.

34. UN Department of Public Information, “United Nations, Government of Saudi Arabia Agree to Establish Centre for Counter-Terrorism,” PA/8, 21 September 2011, <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2011/pa8.doc.htm>.

35. Quotations taken from documents circulated at a 14 September 2011 briefing and on file with the Center.

indicates that the UNCCT “will operate under the direction of the Secretary-General and will contribute to promoting the implementation” of the Strategy through the CTITF.³⁶ How it will do so remains unclear. Member states speaking during a briefing held on 14 September 2011 emphasized the potential utility of the UNCCT to respond to member states’ requests for capacity-building support. Beyond Group of 77 (G-77) states’ calls for a greater emphasis on Pillar I programming, however, the subject-matter area of such programming remains unclear.

66. Given the uncertainty as to how this will play out in practice, there are at least two possible views concerning the development of the UNCCT. One view is more optimistic, seeing the UNCCT as a welcome response to calls, including by the Center in its report, *An Opportunity for Renewal*, for a significant increase in resourcing for the CTITF.³⁷ A best-case scenario would be that if it does not become overly politicized, the UNCCT could offer the potential for greater buy-in from states of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and therefore an opportunity for more active engagement by a wider array of member states on Strategy implementation across all four Pillars.

67. Another view is less sanguine. First, it must be borne in mind that the \$10 million announced for the UNCCT over three years makes it one of the largest, if not the largest, extrabudgetary programs within the entire DPA, within which the UNCCT will sit. It may act as something of a magnet for actors within DPA seeking funding, which risks some states seeing the United Nations’ broader political agenda as becoming skewed by the “counterterrorism” label. Second, the fact that the funding will be controlled not by the Under Secretary-General of the DPA, but by an officer in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General or whoever is the CTITF Chairman at any given time may in time create bureaucratic difficulties, especially after the UN senior management reshuffle expected in late 2011. Third and perhaps most importantly, the role of the CTITF Advisory Board in guiding expenditures and the selection of members of that board, apart from Saudi Arabia, remains entirely

unclear. We are aware of no other UN program in which one member state has such an apparent preponderance of decision-making authority. Even the manner of selection of other advisory board members remains unclear.

68. The risk is that the expenditure of these resources and thus the CTITF programming becomes politicized just at the moment when the UN counterterrorism program seemed to have put larger political schisms behind it. The especially vocal nature of the G-77’s support for the initiative at the member state briefing, with one member state describing the UNCCT as an opportunity for Muslim states to finally take the lead on counterterrorism after “being on the receiving end of both terrorism and counterterrorism for 10 years,” suggests a danger to us that the UNCCT may become highly politicized and seen as a counterweight to Western European and Others Group states’ extrabudgetary support for CTED or GCTF activities.

69. Even if such a competitive dynamic does not emerge at the political level, there is a very real danger of duplication of the efforts of CTED, the CTITF/UNCCT, UNODC and its Terrorism Prevention Branch (TPB), and the GCTF. All are currently planning interventions in East Africa, and none of them are yet coordinated with the others beyond attendance at the others’ meetings. The interventions cover overlapping thematic areas and are promoting uncoordinated “regional plans” or “strategies” on different aspects of counterterrorism (and none of them integrating with existing African Union [AU] and Intergovernmental Authority on Development plans and strategies). Moreover, none of these interventions have been requested by local partners. What this points to, we fear, is that the arrival of the UNCCT and GCTF does not herald a more strategic use of the United Nations’ convening power, but rather even greater waste and confusion than is already present.

36. UN General Assembly, A/RES/66/10, 7 December 2011.

37. Cockayne, Millar, and Ipe, “Opportunity for Renewal,” p. 5.

C. The United Nations as Capacity Builder

70. Like the sky-blue flag that serves as a symbol of the United Nations' comparative advantage as a convener, the famous blue helmets of UN peacekeepers (and their recent blue beret-clad UN police cousins and blue lapel pin-wielding civilian expert colleagues) serve as a potent symbol of the United Nations' comparative advantage as a partner for building peace and security in weak, fragile, and conflict-affected states. All of our research suggests that the United Nations has largely failed to capitalize on this potential comparative advantage in the realm of counterterrorism.

71. We recognize that the quantum of capacity-building assistance routed through the United Nations pales in comparison to bilateral counterterrorism capacity-building assistance, especially through military-military cooperation. Yet in a sense that demonstrates our point, as the go-to civilian capacity-building organization on security sector reform, particularly in the self-same weak and conflict-affected states where terrorist threats may be most acute, the United Nations might be expected to take on more of a role here. In the future, it may need to do so. The Global Implementation Surveys conducted by CTED and analysis from other parts of the UN system, such as the Security Council itself and UNODC, seem to suggest that it is in weak and conflict-affected states where the United Nations frequently has a field presence that the most work remains to be done to implement global counterterrorism norms. The Security Council's recent mandate to CTED to work with other UN actors on preventing arms proliferation from Libya signals a recognition that UN counterterrorism bodies are going to have to become increasingly hands-on in the field.

72. Although the UN bodies in New York have taken few steps over the last decade to develop a sustained field capacity, the recognition that the United Nations might have an important role to play here is not new. Already in 2002, the

Policy Working Group on the United Nations and Terrorism identified that the United Nations had a key role to play in building state capacity to create "inhospitable environments" for terrorists.³⁸ The major success of CTED in the last five years has been to move from being perceived as solely focused on coercive compliance to being perceived as a partner for states in identifying and facilitating capacity building from other donors tailored to meet state needs.³⁹ UNODC/TPB too is frequently singled out for praise for its capacity-building work. Yet, our research and interviews suggested that there are a host of reasons to conclude that the United Nations is not yet fully capitalizing on the comparative advantage it enjoys in this area. We set these out below.

I. MAKING MORE OF THE UNITED NATIONS' FIELD PRESENCE AND NICHE EXPERTISE

73. One of the reasons UNODC is singled out for praise is its specialist expertise on criminal justice reform issues. We were told that UN bodies, especially CTED, have served with increasing success to broker matches between states' capacity-building needs and the specialist expertise to address



CTED chief Mike Smith addresses the UN Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee, 19 March 2008.

UN PHOTO BY ESKINDER DEBEBE

38. See Policy Working Group report on the United Nations and terrorism.

39. Cockayne, Millar, and Ipe, "Opportunity for Renewal," p. 18.

them. The development of CTED's country-visit modalities to include participation by other CTITF members with niche expertise has proven particularly successful, encouraging states to be forthcoming and cooperative in dealing with CTED and helping to identify solutions to their problems. This has generated a number of wins for the implementation of UN counterterrorism norms.

74. CTED and other UN bodies have been less quick to leverage, let alone emulate, another aspect of UNODC's approach: its local presence. Another reason that UNODC technical assistance efforts have attracted praise is their ongoing local presence and relationship with the supposed beneficiaries of capacity building. Although that factor is recognized as a basis for UNODC's perceived success, it has not been transposed into the work of the other main UN counterterrorism bodies. As required by their mandate and resourcing arrangements, both CTED and the CTITF Office continue to operate on a fly-in, fly-out basis in their capacity-building facilitation work. The conception, design, and execution of their programming in this area is only weakly guided by UN actors on the ground in the places where they operate, such as UN country teams. "Swooping in and out of a region" without sufficient follow-up "is not the solution," said one member state official, nor is it a good use of resources.⁴⁰

75. CTED and CTITF programming continues to privilege policy workshops and training seminars, with little effort to assess the impacts of those interventions or to create enduring relationships on the ground designed to foster institutional or behavioral change. The lessons learned by the development community regarding how to structure such engagements have not been taken to heart.⁴¹ (After receiving blank looks from the four UN officials when we asked if or how their technical assistance programming conformed with the principles of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness,

we stopped asking the question.)⁴² This is not to blame CTED and CTITF staff; donor demands, resource constraints, poor information circulation, and an absence of effective field-headquarters coordination mechanisms within the UN system all make very significant contributions to this state of affairs. The system as a whole does not place a premium on field presence and expertise, according to numerous interlocutors.

76. These problems could get worse before they get better. It is unclear what if any role, for example, CTED or the CTITF might play in helping to guide the thinking of the DPA or other relevant UN departments in dealing with UN field missions working in countries affected by terrorism, such as Afghanistan, Libya, and Somalia. In fact, a recent Center review of how UN political missions currently approach these issues suggests an alarming absence of knowledge and understanding within field missions on existing UN approaches to transnational threats.⁴³ Also unclear is how those field missions' experiences in turn influence the work of the general counterterrorism policymaking machinery, whether within the CTITF or the Security Council itself.

77. The Security Council has called for the UN Secretariat to include reporting on terrorism in its conflict reporting, but that has not yet become systematic.⁴⁴ In something of a first, in Resolution 2017 the Security Council mandated the Libya Sanctions Committee and its panel of experts to work with CTED, ICAO, and other UN bodies to develop a report on the threat posed by the proliferation of Libyan weapons within the Sahel, including in potentially fueling terrorism or threatening civil aviation. This in turn led the Secretary-General to invite CTED, the CTITF, and UNODC to participate in a joint field mission in December 2011 with other UN bodies, including DPKO, DPA, UNDP, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, and the AU to explore the crisis in the Sahel.

40. UN member state official, interview with authors, May 2011.

41. For example, see Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), "A Development Cooperation Lens on Terrorism Prevention: Key Entry Points for Action," Paris, 2003, <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/17/4/16085708.pdf>.

42. OECD, "The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action," <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/11/41/34428351.pdf>.

43. Cockayne and Kavanagh, "Flying Blind?"

44. Ibid. See UN Security Council, S/PRST/2010/4, 24 February 2010.

78. These interesting developments point to a growing recognition of the need to connect decision-making and expertise at UN headquarters, especially within the Secretariat, CTED, and the Security Council, to the realities on the ground. As Security Council Resolution 2017 showed, this may require mandating CTED to work outside its traditional “patch,” reporting through the CTC. Yet, it may open up important avenues for collaboration between UN counterterrorism-focused bodies and UN bodies with peacekeeping, development, and political expertise on the ground. This could offer important pathways toward an operationalization of the Strategy, for which member states appear to have been calling.

79. At present, these arrangements seem to rely heavily on ad hoc initiatives to bridge the gap between the field and UN headquarters. A clearer policy decision and systemic guidance may be needed to help reduce this disconnect and make more of the existing niche expertise and field presence within the UN system. This could take the form of discussion among Security Council members and key UN bodies or the provision of training to senior mission leadership on UN terrorism norms, such as the Strategy, and what they mean for field missions’ mediation, conflict resolution, peace-building, and strategic communications activities or the development of training packages for field staff on transnational threats. A more immediate step might be for the Security Council to mandate and resource the creation of posts for counterterrorism officers or transnational threat analysts within new UN field missions where appropriate. This has the potential rapidly to improve monitoring and reporting to the council on transnational threats, as well as improve integration of delivery of programming on the ground that has the potential to prevent and counter terrorism. These officers could be mandated to work with local, national, and regional authorities and donors to develop integrated plans based on the Strategy.

80. In the longer term, this may require steps to better integrate UNODC and relevant parts of UNDP, especially UN country teams, into UN political discussions and mission planning processes around terrorism prevention activities. Because of its distinct governance and largely voluntary and earmarked funding arrangements, UNODC counterterrorism activities are almost completely disconnected from discussions

within the Security Council, the Peacebuilding Commission, and the DPA about UN engagement with specific countries or regions that are affected by terrorism. (A similar diagnosis can be made regarding UNDP.) The Security Council’s call for reporting by the UN Secretariat on terrorism is only acted on when an individual mission head is moved to do so. Again, UNODC and UNDP input is a matter of request, not a matter of course.

II. DIFFERENTIATING MONITORING AND CAPACITY-BUILDING ROLES

81. Our research suggests that there is within the United Nations an inadequate differentiation of the technical, political (convening, planning, and execution), and capacity-building roles involved in counterterrorism efforts on the ground. This reduces the United Nations’ ability to exploit its potential comparative advantage in this area.

82. A significant number of those we interviewed for this study expressed concern about a kind of “mission creep” within CTED, the CTITF, and the 1267 Monitoring Team. Regarding the CTITF, the key concern was that an organization that was intended to provide strategic and policy coordination among UN bodies is now being drawn into projects that focus on political convening and the facilitation of institutional capacity building among and within member states. Some suggested that UN specialist capacity-building mechanisms, such as UNODC and UNDP, or the mechanisms being developed through the DPKO and the Department of Field Support’s Civilian Capacity process were better suited to these tasks. The advent of the UNCCT may have addressed some of these concerns by providing the CTITF Office with access to significant new resources, but some observers noted that this may lead in the short term to even greater confusion within CTITF about how to match resources to mission. There is clearly a need for clarification from CTITF leadership of the role that the CTITF and UNCCT expect to play in capacity-building work in the years ahead.

83. A similar concern became apparent with respect to CTED and other Security Council subsidiary bodies. The linkage between CTED’s monitoring mission and its technical assistance facilitation role originally emerged as a

means to encourage member states to accept and cooperate with the rigorous reporting requirements established by the CTC following adoption of Resolution 1373. For some states, the offer of capacity-building assistance was a helpful inducement to reporting. Many of those interviewed recognized that the CTC had found success by coupling CTED's monitoring role with a capacity-building brokerage and facilitation role. Yet, there was also a sense that this had led to unexpected and perhaps unjustified mission creep.

84. Many of those interviewed queried why a body that was set up in New York to monitor implementation of and compliance with Security Council counterterrorism norms should be engaged in political convening work in the field, for example around Resolution 1624. It is unclear, we were told, whether the coupling of a monitoring mission role and a technical assistance facilitation role has had a significant positive impact in counterterrorism cooperation. Likewise, it is unclear whether such a linkage is necessary now as reporting requirements for states have been eased and become more consensual.

85. Some officials argued that the 1267 Monitoring Team was, likewise, increasingly focusing too much time and attention on admittedly helpful CTITF working group efforts intended to advance the implementation of the norms within the Resolution 1267 regime rather than simply monitoring their implementation. This could, one foreign ministry official told us, increasingly undermine the ability of the 1267 Monitoring Team to be seen as an objective monitor of the states with which it was increasingly working on CTITF working group projects.

86. The underlying suggestion seems to be a call for a rationalization of the capacity-building, convening, and compliance-monitoring activities of the UN system. There is clearly unnecessary and perhaps counterproductive duplication and crossover of roles, and the United Nations has failed to develop the coordination mechanisms needed to ensure strategic or operational coherence. Ten years of organic growth may require a little pruning.

87. We have even heard calls that the mission of CTED be refocused to something more like that of a group of experts: identifying for the CTC specific entry points for engagement by UN bodies to work with states of recurring concern on counterterrorism norm implementation. This would allow some CTED staff positions to be shifted to venues, for example within DPA or in a new body, as discussed in part 2, where they might be able to better exploit the United Nations' convening and capacity-building strengths.

III. DIFFERENTIATING THE ROLES OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE GLOBAL COUNTER-TERRORISM FORUM IN CAPACITY BUILDING

88. As we indicated earlier, some have suggested that the advent of the GCTF indicates a vote of almost "no confidence" by some member states in the United Nations' ability to add value to bilateral capacity-building efforts. Yet, others have suggested and we believe there is room for both organizations if they can identify complementary roles facilitating and delivering capacity-building assistance to partners around the world. As then-President Micheline Calmy-Rey of Switzerland noted at the recent High-Level Symposium on International Counter-Terrorism Cooperation, although the United Nations enjoys universal legitimacy, "legitimacy is not necessarily synonymous with effectiveness. It is nonetheless a crucial comparative advantage. The challenge therefore will be to provide political leadership and give member states a clear sense of direction in such a manner as to build capacities and encourage local autonomy. In this context it is essential to strengthen interaction between the United Nations and other organizations and institutions committed to the fight against terrorism,"⁴⁵ such as the GCTF.

89. As we have argued in this section, we believe that the United Nations has certain distinct comparative advantages, such as its convening power, its field presence, and its access to niche expertise, that may allow it to play this complementary role to the GCTF. It is incumbent on the United Nations to articulate and, frankly, to demonstrate these comparative advantages and to show that there is room for a

45. Micheline Calmy-Rey, statement at the Secretary-General's High-Level Symposium on International Counter-Terrorism Cooperation, 19 September 2011, http://www.un.org/en/terrorism/ctitf/pdfs/president_of_the_swiss_confederation_en_fr.pdf.

mutually beneficial relationship between the United Nations and the GCTF. Some UN member states remain nervous about the counterterrorism efforts conducted outside the United Nations. At the aforementioned high-level symposium, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina of Bangladesh and Ambassador Mohammad Khazaei of Iran argued that international capacity-building and technical assistance efforts to counter terrorism should come solely under the auspices of the United Nations.⁴⁶ Foreign Minister Stavros Lambrinidis of Greece urged caution to avoid an unnecessary duplication of efforts.⁴⁷

90. The February 2012 Swiss-sponsored meeting to discuss UN-GCTF interactions provides a key moment for clarifying this relationship not only on a technical level in relation to the thematic and geographic working groups of the GCTF, but also on a more political level. The United Nations will need to prepare itself to speak with one voice or at least one message. Beyond this meeting, GCTF and UN leaders should work toward a shared strategy for clarifying, through the 2012 Strategy review process, how the two organizations will work together in future.



Secretary-General Ban Addresses Counter-Terrorism Committee, 28 September 2011.

UN PHOTO BY LOU ROUSE

D. The United Nations as Global Monitor

91. The UN Security Council was originally conceived as a collective security mechanism through which four (later five) major powers would work with others to monitor international peace and security and, when strictly necessary, enforce the peace.⁴⁸ That conception of its role has obviously evolved significantly over time, but the need for monitoring mechanisms has remained constant. The United Nations with its universal membership, its commitment to peaceful dispute resolution, the legal authority of the Security Council and its shadow of sanctions and even military action as a compliance mechanism, and its extensive presence is uniquely positioned to play this global monitoring role in counterterrorism as in other areas of international peace and security.

92. When the council decided to set up the CTC through Resolution 1373, this monitoring role initially proved controversial, not least because of the unusually intrusive nature of the norms whose implementation the CTC was obliged to assess. As a former senior Security Council official related, states resented “being dragooned by the Security Council for what many of them see as a Western security agenda.”⁴⁹ Over time, the CTC and its subsidiary body, CTED, have developed more consensual modalities for monitoring compliance than were initially used and have consequently enjoyed much more success in soliciting information from member states regarding implementation of Resolution 1373. Connecting compliance monitoring to capacity-building brokerage has been a key part of this process. States are much more willing to discuss their incapacities if the discussion seems to hold out the prospect of those incapacities being addressed through partnership and support.

46. Sheikh Hasina, statement at the Secretary-General's High-Level Symposium on International Counter-Terrorism Cooperation, 19 September 2011, <http://www.un.org/en/terrorism/ctitf/pdfs/bangladesh.pdf>; Mohammad Khazaei, statement at the Secretary-General's High-Level Symposium on International Counter-Terrorism Cooperation, 19 September 2011 (copy on file with the Center).

47. Stavros Lambrinidis, statement at the Secretary-General's High-Level Symposium on International Counter-Terrorism Cooperation, 19 September 2011 (copy on file with the Center).

48. The idea is frequently linked to U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt. See Edward Luck, “A Council for All Seasons: The Creation of the Security Council and Its Relevance Today,” in *The United Nations Security Council and War*, ed. Vaughan Lowe et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 72–81.

49. UN member state official, interview with authors, May 2011.

93. Ten years after the creation of the CTC, however, there may be utility in taking stock of what has been learned from this process and how the United Nations' monitoring role may need to be adjusted in the future. Our research suggests that three issues require particular attention: (1) rationalizing reporting, (2) making better use of monitoring by separating it from capacity building, and (3) expanding monitoring to address the implementation of a broader suite of UN counterterrorism norms.

I. RATIONALIZING REPORTING

94. Although the matter has received repeated attention over the last decade, the continued existence of multiple Security Council counterterrorism bodies expecting reporting from member states continues to irk some states. The sometimes confusing reporting requirements have hampered UN outreach, strategic communications, and capacity-building efforts. CTED and the Al-Qaida/Taliban Sanctions Committee Monitoring Team have sometimes produced similar analyses of issues related to arms embargoes, terrorist financing, and travel bans. CTED and the 1540 Committee have had similar reporting mandates on preventing terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction.⁵⁰

95. We recognize that CTED in particular continues to make progress in making its assessment process more user friendly for states.⁵¹ The new PIA format about to be rolled out by CTED will take this yet a step further by allowing states to answer most questions in a yes/no format.⁵² We also recognize that different sanctions committees and subsidiary bodies tend to engage with different institutions on the ground within a country.⁵³ This is frequently cited by the subsidiary bodies as evidence of the continuing utility of the United Nations having multiple speakers who can engage with the same member state. They offer complementary and potentially reinforcing channels of communication, they argue.

96. We see the force of this argument, but in practice, we see little evidence of strategic coordination among the different UN bodies that seek information from states about their counterterrorism activities. The experience of most UN and member state officials that we consulted does not live up to the idea that different UN speakers are strategically selling complementary but reinforcing messages. Instead, member states tend to experience UN outreach and reporting as duplicative, demanding, and unrewarding.

97. We believe it is high time that the Security Council considered creating one consolidated reporting mechanism to service each of the four or five committees that focus on counterterrorism issues related to al-Qaida, the Taliban, Resolution 1373, Resolution 1540, and Somalia/Eritrea). The new PIA, which combines reporting on implementation of Resolution 1373 and Resolution 1624, shows that consolidated reporting is within reach if the Security Council mandates it. It will likely prove highly cost effective. We believe that consolidated reporting would serve not only to improve those bodies' relations with states, but also to refocus those committees and any experts that serve them on their analytical role, disentangling them from the convening and capacity-building roles that they are increasingly assuming and for which they are ill-suited, as we argued above. In the final sections of this report, we set out some ideas for how such a consolidated reporting arrangement might be fashioned.

II. MAKING BETTER USE OF MONITORING

98. Distinct from the question of how information is shared with the Security Council, some of the interviews we conducted for this study suggested a number of reasons to think that it may be worth revisiting what is done with that information once it has been shared.

50. For example, see Eric Rosand and Alistair Millar, "Strengthening International Law and Global Implementation" in *Uniting Against Terror: Cooperative Nonmilitary Responses to the Global Threat*, ed. David Cortright and George A. Lopez (Cambridge, Mass.: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 2007), pp. 51–82.

51. For example, see UN Security Council, *Letter Dated 25 March 2011 From the Chair of the Security Council Committee Established Pursuant to Resolution 1373 (2001) Concerning Counter-Terrorism Addressed to the President of the Security Council*, S/2011/223, 5 April 2011 (annex containing *Work Programme of the Counter-Terrorism Committee for the Period From 1 January to 31 December 2011*).

52. This raises a number of interesting questions regarding how states' discretion in answering yes/no questions will be guided or standardized across the sample. It also holds out the prospect of improved comparative and even quantitative analysis across states and over time.

53. Cockayne, Millar, and Ipe, "Opportunity for Renewal," pp. 17–18.

99. First, they suggested that we now “know,” 10 years after 9/11, which states are struggling to implement international counterterrorism norms “and why,” whether because of incapacity or unwillingness. Repeated country assessment and analysis by CTED, the 1267 Monitoring Team, and the 1540 Committee Expert Group have made that clear. Monitoring arrangements, these individuals suggested, need to shift from universal, broad country-based assessments of progress in implementation toward a more strategic, tailored focus on identifying entry points for strategic interventions by the international community in countries of recurring concern. In other words, it is time to “stop pretending that the Security Council can do capacity building in the whole world”⁵⁴ and to start treating individual countries affected by terrorism more like other items that come onto the agenda of the Security Council.

100. This would require more-nuanced political analysis of country reporting on counterterrorism activities, both by the Security Council’s committees and the expert groups serving them. It would require CTED in particular to work more closely with the DPA to identify where and when obstacles are emerging to implementation and reform as well as a movement away from the increasingly rote, cataloguing nature of country assessments in the CTC. This might require refocusing CTED activities around this role, shifting some of its technical assistance facilitation activities to other parts of the UN counterterrorism system. We argue for CTED and, through CTED, the CTC itself to take a more forward-leaning role as a source of political advice to the full Security Council, which would then be better positioned to mandate political or other mission engagement with countries that appear vulnerable to terrorism.

101. Second, some suggested the need to revisit the intermixture of convening, capacity-building, and monitoring roles within the expert bodies. CTED, the 1267 Monitoring Team, and to a lesser extent the 1540 Committee Expert Group all now marry capacity-building and political- and policy-convening roles with their traditional monitoring role. Yet, this may limit those groups’ inclination to provide

the kind of frank and fearless advice to the Security Council committees that would allow those committees to develop a politically nuanced terrorism prevention strategy for a specific country or region. It is inevitably difficult for a monitoring body to provide an unvarnished account of the implementation performance of a country on whose cooperation and support it relies to perform capacity-building and technical assistance projects or whose participation it needs for a process of ongoing policy dialogue. Accordingly, some people suggested it may be time to think about separating the monitoring and advisory role of a body such as CTED from the capacity-building and policy-convening work of other parts of the UN system. We explore this idea further in parts two and three of this paper.

III. EXPANDING MONITORING AND EVALUATION TO OTHER UN COUNTERTERRORISM NORMS

102. Finally, many of those interviewed called for the expansion of monitoring arrangements beyond the Security Council to somehow encompass progress assessments in the implementation of other UN counterterrorism norms, including the Strategy. The biennial Strategy reviews are seen as having achieved little of substance. They have not provided an opportunity to develop or refine the Strategy, and most argued that they should not reopen the Strategy text, given the general sense that it was something of a minor miracle that the Strategy was agreed in the first place. Considering recent indications that some states may wish to use these reviews in the future as an opportunity to litigate questions of the definition of terrorism, we tend to agree that the reviews should not provide an opportunity to reopen the Strategy text. Adoption of the Strategy, as one member state official put it, “has helped to develop an international sense of solidarity”⁵⁵ around shared counterterrorism norms and objectives. No one should tinker with that lightly.

103. Nevertheless, much could be done to use the biennial Strategy review process as an opportunity to bring greater operational specificity, programming prioritization, and

54. UN member state official, interview with authors, July 2011.

55. UN member state official, interview with authors, May 2011

civil society engagement and mobilization to the process, as we explore further in part 2. Much also could be done to use the reviews as an opportunity to genuinely review state progress in Strategy implementation. At present, states use the review as an opportunity to report how well they are implementing the Strategy. Unsurprisingly, their reviews of their own performance tend to be glowing. There is no reason to doubt the accuracy of those reviews given that there are no criteria specified against which states are encouraged to report. States can report on those areas in which they have made best progress and not on those in which they have made little, no, or negative process. In fact, states are not obliged to speak at all, and there is no body (beyond the General Assembly in its most nebulous, plenary form) mandated to receive or analyze, let alone critique, such reporting.

104. If member states are indeed serious about implementing the Strategy and other UN counterterrorism norms outside the Security Council, they could do nothing more significant than institute some kind of review mechanism in the next review process. There are numerous precedents for such an approach within the UN system, notably the human rights treaty bodies, and the Universal Periodic Review system in the Human Rights Council. Even if member states cannot agree on a system of collective or peer analysis of country reports, the delineation of a self-reporting template or self-reporting criteria or even just the development of exemplars of programming against which states should report for different paragraphs of the Strategy would go a long way.

105. We believe, however, that member states should consider going even further. A careful reading of the Strategy suggests that the United Nations already has in place a myriad of indicators, norms, and guidelines to which reference could be made in reporting on Strategy implementation by the Secretary-General. For example, in Pillar I there are the full suite of Millennium Development Goals and the UNESCO Global Benchmarks for Adult Literacy that may prove useful. In Pillars II and III, functional organizations such as the FATF, International Maritime Organization (IMO), ICAO, and others have established detailed guidelines and norms. In Pillar IV, there are numerous human rights treaty monitoring mechanisms as well as the state-driven quadrennial Universal Periodic Review process, which could all be refer-

enced in considering progress. Combined with a more politically oriented analysis that might be offered by a retasked CTED, this UN assessment could provide a powerful basis for comparison and contrast to state-generated self-reporting and provide a useful basis for a more accountable, interactive, and ongoing process of dialogue between the membership and states undertaking counterterrorism reforms.

106. The key issue highlighted here is a broader one. Even if we can identify with some consensus where the United Nations' comparative advantages in counterterrorism may lie in the years ahead, how can we safely assess whether those comparative advantages are effectively being exploited? Furthermore, how do we ensure that the United Nations is set up in a manner to do so? It is to those considerations that we now turn.

Part Two: Better Exploiting the United Nations' Comparative Advantages

107. **T**HROUGH INTERVIEWS AND RESEARCH, WE identified three broad avenues through which the United Nations could adjust its current approach to counterterrorism efforts to better exploit its comparative advantages: (1) through a greater focus on performance measurement, (2) by fostering a broader global movement against terrorism, and 3) through internal architectural adjustments to provide clearer leadership, guidance, analysis, and integration of UN operational efforts. In this part, we present some ideas related to each before summarizing our recommendations in part 3.

A. Performance Measurement

108. Performance measurement in the field of counterterrorism is inherently difficult. Although it is often possible to identify and measure counterterrorism activities and outputs, it is more complex to specify the outcomes and impacts of counterterrorism measures. Linking outputs to outcomes is a particular challenge as it requires tracing the causal connection between specific counterterrorism interventions and the prevention, suppression, or disruption of terrorism. Despite the massive investment of resources in the counterterrorism field, few states have elaborated

methodologies to assess the effectiveness of their counterterrorism work. Likewise, the academic literature on counterterrorism effectiveness remains in its infancy, and few scholars have developed robust answers to the question of whether specific counterterrorism interventions work.

109. The challenges in measuring counterterrorism performance are felt especially keenly by the United Nations. The UN counterterrorism program has evolved in response to ad hoc demands, without a consensus strategic vision among stakeholders against which performance can be measured. Among those stakeholders too, the urgency of responding to successive high-profile terrorist attacks has often trumped serious consideration of performance measurement. As a result, in the decade after 9/11, there has been no system-wide effort to assess the effectiveness of the UN counter-terrorism program. As it currently stands, it is difficult to argue on the basis of evidence, as opposed to anecdote and supposition, that we know whether the United Nations is an effective counterterrorism actor.

110. Different actors within the UN counterterrorism program have approached performance measurement differently. In the next section, we briefly survey CTC/CTED, UNODC/TPB, and the CTITF in this regard. Our objective here is to put the issue of performance measurement on the UN

counterterrorism agenda. It is timely to ask whether the United Nations' desired counterterrorism outcomes have been defined in an optimal fashion, whether the outputs being produced contribute to the achievement of those objectives, and whether the tools for measuring performance can be refined to ensure that the United Nations is realizing its comparative advantages in the global effort to suppress terrorism. Our research has led us to conclude that the United Nations' lack of attention to performance measurement in its counterterrorism programming hampers efforts by strategic decision-makers to deploy UN political, financial, and human resources in a cost-effective manner. In our view, it is in the interests of UN counterterrorism actors and stakeholders to demonstrate how the United Nations adds value in this field. Performance measurement tools provide a critical method for doing so. Better exploiting its comparative advantages in the future will require the United Nations to take a more deliberate approach to measuring its own performance.

I. CURRENT EFFORTS TO MEASURE THE UNITED NATIONS' COUNTERTERRORISM PERFORMANCE

111. Among the UN counterterrorism actors, UNODC/TPB represents perhaps the most advanced attempt to evaluate the UN response to terrorism. According to our research, UNODC is the only UN body that has undertaken a formal evaluation of its counterterrorism programming. In 2006 and 2007, UNODC's Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU) produced two reports assessing the Global Project on Strengthening the Legal Regime against Terrorism.⁵⁶ These reports reflect a deeper and more methodologically sound approach to performance measurement than has been

attempted elsewhere. This approach is necessarily resource intensive—indeed, UNODC is unique in devoting resources to performance measurement—but it enables a more fine-grained account of the links between outputs and outcomes as well as systematic reflection on best practices and lessons learned. In short, we know whether TPB has been effective in delivering this aspect of its counterterrorism programming.⁵⁷

112. The results of these evaluations have subsequently informed a new standardized monitoring and reporting approach to assessing technical assistance provision within TPB. Here, a range of data collection tools including participant questionnaires are utilized at different stages in the design and delivery of training programs, and according to TPB's website, impact evaluations are scheduled to be undertaken in several countries.⁵⁸ Moreover, a "full independent evaluation of UNODC's counter-terrorism technical assistance delivery is scheduled for 2012."⁵⁹

113. There is a sense in which TPB's approach to performance measurement reflects its reliance on voluntary contributions, which results in a "higher level of financial and political accountability to ... donors than would otherwise exist for programs funded out of the UN regular budget."⁶⁰ Moreover, there is evidence that donors value the role of the IEU within TPB and that they have taken measures to preserve it.⁶¹ In addition, TPB's relatively precise mandate—a provider of training and technical assistance—means that its products and their impacts are perhaps more measurable than those of other bodies. Nonetheless, TPB's record of performance measurement provides an important point of reference for stakeholders seeking to improve the accountability and efficiency of UN counterterrorism programming.

56. UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU), *Evaluation of the Global Project on Strengthening the Legal Regime Against Terrorism (Selected Countries in Francophone Africa and Latin America)*, GLO/R35, 2007, <http://www.unodc.org/documents/evaluation/2006-terrorism.pdf>; UNODC IEU, *Thematic Evaluation of the Global Project on Strengthening the Legal Regime Against Terrorism*, GLO/R35, February 2008, <http://www.unodc.org/documents/evaluation/2007-terrorism.pdf>.

57. Among other things, the 2008 report found that member states considered the Global Project on Strengthening the Legal Regime against Terrorism "to be a relevant contribution to their efforts to combat terrorism but also felt that more effort should be made to adapt the Global Project's approach to specific national, subregional, and regional circumstances." UNODC IEU, *Thematic Evaluation of the Global Project on Strengthening the Legal Regime Against Terrorism*, pp. 1–2.

58. UNODC, "Results and Impact Assessments," n.d., http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/terrorism/UNODC_Role/Results.html.

59. *Ibid.*

60. Eric Rosand, "The UN Office on Drugs and Crime's Terrorism Prevention Branch: Strengths and Challenges Ahead," *Center on Global Counterterrorism Cooperation Policy Brief*, July 2009, p. 2, http://www.globalct.org/images/content/pdf/policybriefs/rosand_policybrief_093.pdf.

61. "Unclassified Cable From U.S. Mission to the UN Vienna," 09UNVIEVIENNA550, 4 December 2009, <http://wikileaks.org/cable/2009/12/09UNVIEVIENNA550.html>.

114. By contrast, CTED's approach to performance measurement remains mixed. CTED has undertaken a range of activities in pursuing its mandate as set out in Security Council Resolution 1373 and Resolution 1624. For example, CTED has developed and implemented the PIA tool and has produced best practice guides for Resolution 1373 and Resolution 1624, as well as a technical guide to the latter. The results of this activity are reflected in the Global Implementation Survey of Resolution 1373, published most recently in 2011.⁶² CTED's statements and work programs are peppered with a range of performance indicators (e.g., the completion of PIAs, the brokering of technical assistance, attendance at workshops, coordination with other multilateral bodies, participation in the CTITF and other contributions to Strategy implementation, and raising awareness of human rights while countering terrorism).

115. CTED's ability to innovate has no doubt aided the implementation of Resolution 1373 and Resolution 1624 in many states, but significant challenges remain while performance measurement occurs more by default than by design. CTED's status as a special political mission means that information about its performance is set out in budgetary documents for each biennium, allowing comparisons over time.⁶³ Our research indicates that some consideration has been given during these budget review processes to performance measurements. We suggest that there are opportunities for refinement here for three reasons.

116. First, it is noticeable that the performance measurements used in this process have focused disproportionately on outputs rather than outcomes. The performance indicators given are often activities over which CTED itself has almost complete control, such as convening a meeting, undertaking a visit, distributing press kits, and the like. As such, they do not fully capture the results of CTED's interventions. Second,

underscoring the earlier point about duplication among UN counterterrorism actors, some of the indicators of CTED's performance are also used by other counterterrorism bodies within the United Nations to demonstrate their effectiveness. For example, TPB is active in promoting and facilitating the adoption of UN counterterrorism conventions—one of CTED's indicators in its budget review process. Under these circumstances, it is difficult to distinguish CTED's contributions to the achievement of counterterrorism objectives from the impacts of other bodies. Third, although the budget documents reveal an evolution in the kinds of activities undertaken by CTED (e.g., the more frequent use of workshops as a means to promote implementation and build capacity, etc.), there has been little evolution in measurement tools. Most metrics are straightforward and quantifiable, and as such, they do not provide a complete picture of CTED's impacts. For example, counting member state participation in workshops does not capture the effects of that participation as well as other tools might, such as participant surveys and follow-up evaluations.

117. To balance these points, we acknowledge that several of CTED's stated "expected accomplishments" and indicators are entirely appropriate to its mission and attest that CTED has had a meaningful impact on member states' implementation of Security Council Resolution 1373 and Resolution 1624. Notably, it seems that the body to which CTED is ultimately accountable, the CTC, has not required CTED to enhance its ability to measure its performance. Nonetheless, we suggest that links among activities, outputs, and outcomes would benefit from clarification and that performance measurement for CTED should be even more focused around its core mission. Indeed, it seems that performance measurement regarding CTED remains underdeveloped and that efforts to gather and analyze more data would give a more complete understanding of CTED's effectiveness.

62. UN Security Council, *Letter Dated 17 August 2011 From the Chair of the Security Council Committee Established Pursuant to Resolution 1373 (2001) Concerning Counter-Terrorism Addressed to the Secretary-General*, S/2011/463, 1 September 2011 (annex containing *Global Survey of the Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1373 (2001) by Member States*).

63. For 2006–2008, see UN General Assembly, *Estimates in Respect of Special Political Missions, Good Offices and Other Political Initiatives Authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council: Thematic Cluster II. Sanctions Monitoring Teams, Groups and Panels: Report of the Secretary-General*, A/61/525/Add.2, 7 November 2006. For 2008–2010, see UN General Assembly, *Estimates in Respect of Special Political Missions, Good Offices and Other Political Initiatives Authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council: Thematic Cluster II. Sanctions Monitoring Teams, Groups and Panels: Report of the Secretary-General*, A/63/346/Add.2, 11 September 2008. For 2010–2012, see UN General Assembly, *Estimates in Respect of Special Political Missions, Good Offices and Other Political Initiatives Authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council: Thematic Cluster II. Sanctions Monitoring Teams, Groups and Panels: Report of the Secretary-General*, A/65/328/Add.2, 27 August 2010.

Given that CTED, through its trust fund, is now able to avail itself of extrabudgetary resources,⁶⁴ there is incentive for it and member states, especially non-Security Council members, to have better information about its performance.

118. Relative to TPB and CTED, the CTITF has barely considered performance measurement. Its mandate is set out in the Strategy: “to ensure overall coordination and coherence” in the counterterrorism efforts of the UN system.⁶⁵ Beyond the objective of coordination, the CTITF also aims to “catalyze and mobilize” the UN system in implementing the Strategy, although the primary responsibility for that rests with the member states.⁶⁶ The CTITF has developed a series of outputs to fulfill its mandate. These include the production of an online handbook summarizing counterterrorism resources within the United Nations, the development of thematic working groups, and the launch of the Integrated Assistance for Countering Terrorism Initiative.⁶⁷

119. Equally notable, however, is the range of activities that the CTITF has not pursued. For example, the CTITF has not as a whole produced any authoritative guidance for member states on implementing the Strategy, although some of its working groups have produced useful reference documents, and does not monitor and review member state implementation of the Strategy. That task has fallen almost by default to the Secretary-General, who reports only on what UN agencies have done in this regard, not member states, and whose reports tend to summarize inputs and activities rather than outputs, let alone outcomes.⁶⁸ As mentioned in part 1, member states’ self-reporting during the biennial Strategy review sessions is highly selective and not guided by any reporting criteria.

120. Beyond this, there has been no systematic effort to assess CTITF performance. On the one hand, it is perhaps

premature to do so, especially in light of the challenges the CTITF has faced in becoming operational, particularly the problems in adequately staffing the CTITF Office. On the other hand, this gap may yet be viewed as an opportunity to better specify CTITF objectives and to consider how to measure their realization. For example, if the CTITF Office or, as suggested below, a new Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism (SRSG CT) was to play a more prominent role in monitoring Strategy implementation, CTED’s experience in assessing the implementation of Resolution 1373 and Resolution 1624 might provide a touchstone, e.g., by having the CTITF or its UNCCT develop a technical guide for the Strategy, as CTED has done for Resolutions 1373 and 1624.

II. RETHINKING UN COUNTERTERRORISM PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

121. Looking forward, we recognize that resource constraints and, perhaps paradoxically, donor enthusiasm may inhibit the United Nations’ ability to innovate in this area. Still, we advocate a significant scaling up of attention by UN member states, particularly donors, to these questions. Even if perfect metrics are elusive, there should be a stronger effort to link outputs to outcomes. We suggest that, in the preparation of work plans and budget documents, performance measurement should be accorded a higher priority. To fail to do so may undermine perceptions of the accountability and eventually the legitimacy of UN counterterrorism activities. UN counterterrorism bodies should consider dedicating resources to performance measurement, regardless of donor pressure to do so. Over time, as member states’ priorities wax and wane, it may become more important to demonstrate such a commitment to assessing counterterrorism effectiveness, particularly as alternative forums such as the GCTF come online. We offer three specific recommendations for doing so.

64. See UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on the African Union–United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur*, S/2011/22, 5 April 2011, para. 23.

65. UN General Assembly, *The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy*, A/RES/60/288, 20 September 2006, para. III(5).

66. See <http://www.un.org/en/terrorism/ctitf/>.

67. The Integrated Assistance for Countering Terrorism (I-ACT) Initiative is an online tool for sharing information about counterterrorism capacity building. It is currently operational only for three countries: Burkina Faso, Nigeria, and Madagascar. See <https://www.i-act-infosystem.org/>.

68. See UN General Assembly, *United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy: Activities of the United Nations System in Implementing the Strategy: Report of the Secretary-General*, A/62/898, 7 July 2008; UN General Assembly, *United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy: Activities of the United Nations System in Implementing the Strategy: Report of the Secretary-General*, A/64/818, 17 June 2010.

122. First, UN actors should tailor performance assessments to context and comparative advantage. It is important to be pragmatic in specifying indicators and methodologies to measure counterterrorism performance; the measurement of different functions will require different approaches (qualitative and quantitative methods and use of perception surveys, focus groups, objective indicators, and counterfactuals). There will be no “one size fits all” approach to evaluating counterterrorism effectiveness at the multilateral level. As noted above, measuring counterterrorism efforts remains a significant challenge for practitioners and scholars outside of the United Nations. As such, there is no “off the shelf” model for counterterrorism measurement that the United Nations can adopt, and we do not advocate one particular approach over any other. Instead, we support an investment in developing data and experimenting with the tools and techniques that will allow the United Nations to better identify whether it is exploiting its comparative advantage in strategic leadership, convening, capacity building, and monitoring.

123. Second, stakeholders should learn the lessons developed elsewhere in the United Nations. Although there are no off-the-shelf models to deploy, there are opportunities to learn about performance measurement from other actors engaged in similar efforts to measure policy effectiveness, including in closely related fields. The evaluation function is highly developed within the UN system. A professional network of evaluators from across the UN system has been established through the UN Evaluation Group (UNEG).⁶⁹ Among its 46 members, this group elaborates common norms and standards for use in program evaluations. This includes technical advice about how to assess the impact of policies that are difficult to measure, i.e., the concept of “evaluability”; thematic guidance for evaluators, for example on gender issues; and even a preliminary discussion about how to measure the effects of norms. Twelve UN agencies are members both of the UNEG and CTITF (an additional three agencies who are UNEG members are also CTITF observers, while one agency is a CTITF member and UNEG observer). In spite of this overlap, we found little evidence outside of TPB’s IEU that UN evaluation professionals have given

consideration to measuring multilateral counterterrorism efforts. System-wide evaluations are technically within the mandate of the UN Joint Inspection Unit in Geneva, but we likewise found no evidence that counterterrorism has been considered as a topic. It may be worth considering how such lessons could be adapted to the UN counterterrorism field, for example through the creation of a CTITF working group on the subject.

124. Counterterrorism issues are not the only governance-related policy priority that is being advanced within the UN system at present. For example, considerable time and effort is being put into developing, testing, and rolling out rule of law performance indicators. Measuring the impacts of UN counterterrorism programming addressing these functions may be worth considering, given the proximity of programming in these fields. Similarly, certain CTITF members, such as ICAO and the IMO, have considerable experience in assessing member states’ implementation of technical measures. Outside of the UN system, the FATE, with whom the Security Council’s counterterrorism bodies interact extensively, has evolved a highly regarded mechanism for peer review and mutual evaluation of standards regarding anti-money laundering/countering the financing of terrorism. These may provide a touchstone for the United Nations if counterterrorism performance measurement is to be advanced.

125. Third, actors within the United Nations should make more of the United Nations’ unique comparative advantage in monitoring. Research for this study made one related point very clear: because of its broad participation, access to information at headquarters and in the field, and perceived neutrality and legitimacy, the United Nations is uniquely positioned as a performance measurer, i.e., as a monitor, across the whole international counterterrorism system. After all, this rationale was the original logic behind the CTC and CTED, to monitor efforts by the international community to better equip itself to tackle terrorism, specifically under the framework of Resolution 1373. We suggest that the time is now ripe for the United Nations to revitalize this monitoring role while taking a more holistic

69. See <http://www.uneval.org/>.

and consensual approach to norm implementation than the Security Council originally undertook in monitoring compliance with Resolution 1373. The United Nations is better positioned to assess holistic implementation of the international community's counterterrorism norms than any other international actor, but it has not capitalized on this potential.

126. The advent of new organizations such as the UNCCT and GCTF creates alternative forums to CTED and the CTITF for targeted capacity building. This creates a massive opportunity for the United Nations to refocus its role back toward monitoring and strategic leadership. In the final section of this paper, we set out some ideas that might be considered to reorient UN counterterrorism work, providing a more rational and strategic relationship between the various parts of the system performing different functions and thereby freeing the United Nations to better exploit its natural comparative advantages.

B. A Global Movement Against Terrorism

127. The Strategy mandates the United Nations “to further encourage nongovernmental organizations and civil society to engage, as appropriate, on how to enhance efforts to implement the Strategy.” In recent years, policymakers at the United Nations and among member states have been developing a greater appreciation of civil society's role in countering violent extremism. Some states have developed their own appreciation for this civil society role through their own experiences with civil society organizations tackling extremism at home or in overseas assistance programming. Other states have also learned lessons about the role of civil society as a bulwark against violent extremism through the recent uprisings in the Middle East and North Africa. Perhaps as a result, UN representatives increasingly see civil society actors as potential partners in implementing the Strategy. This positive trend should be encouraged to strengthen global understanding and implementation of the UN counterterrorism program.

128. For their part, global civil society actors have become steadily more engaged in addressing global counterterrorism challenges over the last decade. A recent civil society conference in New York addressed some of the unintended impacts of repressive counterterrorism measures and explored ways in which civil society actors can help to implement the Strategy. Participants came from five continents, representing dozens of organizations working on a range of issues, including women's rights, conflict prevention and peace building, development, security sector reform, Internet freedom, and human security. Some citizen groups are building partnerships with governments to counter violent extremism and transform conditions conducive to armed conflict and the spread of terrorism. Partnership-based approaches can bring civil society's valuable skills, partners, and perspectives to UN counterterrorism efforts and can open space for more comprehensive policy approaches. Civil society seems likely to have an even more important role to play as UN-backed counterterrorism efforts move away from responsive, military- and law enforcement-based approaches toward a more comprehensive suite of political, social, and economic efforts designed to prevent terrorism.

129. Our research and interviews led us to conclude that the United Nations could be doing better at harnessing the knowledge and ability of civil society actors to foster a global movement against terrorism. By invoking its comparative advantages, especially as a strategic leader and convener, the United Nations could give greater direction and clarity to emerging civil society efforts. This will require the United Nations to broaden its outreach and engagement efforts beyond member states, encouraging them to work in partnership with the private sector and civil society. There are two main avenues for achieving this.

130. First, the United Nations could do much more to leverage its presence in the field to counter and prevent terrorism. This will require leadership not only from the highest ranks of the UN Secretariat, but from the top of a variety of UN programs, funds, and agencies to encourage UN actors in the field to engage local partners on these issues. Education, development, human rights, and humanitarian actors all potentially have important roles to play in encouraging states and societies to work to prevent terrorism through fostering a culture of dialogue, tolerance, and nonviolent

dispute resolution. The United Nations has undertaken a number of important steps in the last decade to create global forums for fostering dialogue, such as its support for the AoC, and the Security Council is paying increasing attention to CTED efforts under Resolution 1624 to support states in combating incitement to terrorism. Yet, these thematic efforts are not well integrated into UN work in the field. A greater focus on such efforts in the field could help to foster a broader global movement against terrorism, preventing it before it arises.

131. Second, the United Nations could provide a centerpiece periodic conference to mobilize disparate actors around the world on these issues. Most straightforwardly, the General Assembly could turn the biennial Strategy reviews into a biennial International Meeting on Counter-Terrorism, using the United Nations' convening power to create a broader movement against terrorism. (Alternatively, such a conference could be convened by the Secretary-General.) This conference should not be limited to member state participation but should instead embrace active participation by regional organizations, the private sector, and civil society, using as models the periodic NPT review conferences or the events surrounding the recent 10th anniversary of Security Council Resolution 1325. This conference could allow states to discuss best practices while also involving civil society organizations to provide input on the successes and challenges they face in helping to prevent terrorism, especially where such challenges result from counterterrorism measures imposed by states, including those in apparent pursuit of the implementation of UN counterterrorism norms.

132. At present, by many accounts the biennial Strategy reviews are rather moribund affairs involving states piously declaring their commitment to counter terrorism and cataloguing their victories. They should instead be seen as a unique opportunity to bring greater operational specificity, programming prioritization, and civil society engagement and mobilization to the discussion—a biennial gathering of all interested stakeholders at the United Nations to “motivate the troops” in the global fight against terrorism. They should serve less as an opportunity for state self-reporting and more as an opportunity for building a global movement against terrorism. Little attempt has been made to encourage

public participation or attract public attention and engagement. The Secretary-General does not give a major address, and major government players and world leaders are not asked to offer specific presentations or concrete proposals with a strategic focus in mind. The recent Secretary-General's High-Level Symposium on International Counter-Terrorism Cooperation, limited to member state participation, shows the limitations of such an approach: As a recognition of states' ongoing support for the Strategy and the central UN role in counterterrorism efforts, it was priceless; as an opportunity to create anything more than symbolism, we were repeatedly assured, it was of very little real value.

133. A similar approach was taken in marking the 10th anniversary of the Security Council's adoption of Resolution 1373, although a side event was tacked on late in the day through the personal efforts of the Indian Permanent Representative of the United Nations working in coordination with CTED. As a rule, civil society is treated as something of an afterthought, even though by all accounts it was the collaboration between the UN bodies and civil society bodies to create side events that brought the last review to life. Much more could be made of such collaboration, with a more full-throated engagement by the UN Secretariat and CTITF creating space for civil society to organize workshops, present position papers, and provide an injection of energy, ideas, and support into UN counterterrorism work. Civil society should be seen as a positive multiplier for Strategy implementation and not just as a check and balance on the excesses of state power under the guise of that implementation.

134. Under this option, empowered by the General Assembly, the CTITF would take the lead in convening this biennial conference in New York that includes member states and other relevant stakeholders, such as regional, subregional, and functional organizations; the GCTF; civil society; and the private sector to actively explore ways of enhancing Strategy implementation across all four Pillars. The conference would not be viewed as an opportunity to reopen the Strategy itself; on the contrary, it would seek to ensure that each element of the Strategy, as it was adopted in 2006, is receiving the attention it deserves. The conference should include break-out sessions that allow officials and experts to focus on specific areas of Strategy implementation, using the

opportunity to share best practices and discuss innovative ways of overcoming challenges. The conference would also enable other relevant entities such as the GCTF to interact with the United Nations and present their contributions to Strategy implementation.

C. Architectural Adjustments

135. In this final section, we offer three practical options for adjustments to the UN counterterrorism architecture designed to allow it better to exploit its comparative advantages in the years ahead. As we stated earlier, 10 years of organic growth may require a little pruning to ensure the United Nations is best exploiting its comparative advantages.

136. Still, all our consultations suggest that the membership is not in the mood for a radical reconfiguration of responsibilities between the Security Council, General Assembly, Human Rights Council, the Secretary-General, and other parts of the UN system. Nonetheless, the arrival of the GCTF and UNCCT and the upcoming 2012 Strategy review suggest that consideration of some adjustments may be warranted, particularly in the area of how the UN counterterrorism system is coordinated and led.

137. In the research consultations conducted for this report, we have heard that the United Nations can do more to provide political leadership to guide and encourage international cooperation against terrorism. We heard that the Secretary-General and other senior officials should be more vocal and visible in inspiring and directing UN agencies and member states to fulfill their counterterrorism obligations. Time and time again, two questions arose, both from the United Nations in New York and Vienna as well as in member state capitals in the global North and South: When it comes to counterterrorism, who at the United Nations is in charge, and what is the role of the CTITF? Member states are also keen to see the United Nations organize its work in a manner that better allows it to assess the impact and value-added



L-R: B. Lynn Pascoe (left), Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs; Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon; and Robert Orr (second from right), Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Strategic Planning.

UN PHOTO BY EVAN SCHNEIDER

from programming, adjusting that programming to ensure it plays to UN strengths and does not waste precious donor funds. Furthermore, they want to see a closer integration of UN field efforts and discussions at UN headquarters, including within the Security Council.

138. The understanding of a need for improved coordination within the UN system appears to be gaining traction around the United Nations. On 18 January 2012, we released a draft consultation version of this report, which included three options for architectural adjustments, as discussed below, to a small group of UN counterterrorism officials and select UN member states in New York. On 25 January 2012, the UN Secretary-General presented to the General Assembly his Five-Year Action Agenda, titled “The Future We Want.” In his oral remarks, the Secretary-General proposed “creating a single UN Counter-Terrorism Coordinator, by combining some of the existing functions” of UN counterterrorism bodies. The published account of the Secretary-General’s Five-Year Action Agenda, called for “*consideration* by relevant intergovernmental bodies of creating a single UN counter-terrorism coordinator.”⁷⁰

70. Executive Office of the Secretary-General, “Secretary-General’s Five-Year Action Agenda” (emphasis added).

139. To inform that consideration, in the final section of this paper, we suggest how this might occur. Based on ideas heard during our consultations, which we have refined with input from key stakeholders, we offer three possible options for changes to the UN counterterrorism architecture to address these concerns. The overall aim of any of these changes would be to maximize efficiency and effectiveness and enhance UN coordination with other relevant multilateral entities going forward while not reopening to debate the areas of consensus that have been developed slowly and often painfully over the last 10 years, such as the Strategy and the relationship between the Security Council and General Assembly. We present three options for architectural adjustments that would allow the United Nations to exploit its comparative advantages better through the creation of a single coordinator position, taking one of three different forms: a narrow Coordinator position, a broader position of SRSG CT, or, broader still, a position of USG TNT.

140. These three options for change are presented in order from those we consider most easily within reach, i.e., the lowest-hanging fruit, to those we consider most ambitious and longterm. As the table below shows, however, we also consider that they range from having the weakest to the strongest impact on improving the United Nations' ability to

exploit its comparative advantages in global counterterrorism efforts. We outline these proposals in more detail below.

I. OPTION ONE – A UN COUNTER-TERRORISM COORDINATOR

141. Perhaps the most straightforward change would be to graft a new position of UN Counter-Terrorism Coordinator onto the existing UN counterterrorism structures without altering or replacing any of the existing parts. As we noted above, this idea has recently been aired by both the United States and the UN Secretary-General. The establishment of such a position would create a post that, unlike the current arrangement, involves a senior official working full-time as the chair, coordinator, and spokesperson for the entire CTITF. This would provide clearer strategic leadership for the UN system, particularly on tasks of internal cross-agency coordination and field-headquarters cooperation.

142. The central objective of this change would be to better exploit the United Nations' potential for thought leadership and the development and projection of a counternarrative to the narrative of violence propounded by terrorism by providing a clearer, single voice on counterterrorism issues. As one UN expert intimated, without someone of real authority full-time as chairman, the CTITF itself does not attract the

ARCHITECTURAL ADJUSTMENT	IMPROVES STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP?	IMPROVES CONVENING FUNCTION?	IMPROVES CAPACITY-BUILDING FUNCTION?	IMPROVES MONITORING FUNCTION?	PREPARES UNITED NATIONS FOR TOMORROW'S SECURITY CHALLENGES?	NET COST
1. UN Counter-Terrorism Coordinator	X	X				\$317,500 COST SAVING
2. Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism	X	X	X	X		\$21,900 COST SAVING
3. Under Secretary-General for Transnational Threats	X	X	X	X	X	NOT ESTIMATED

kind of participation and attention that is needed: The CTITF “has not been that impressive,” we were told. “[T]he participants tend to be from the same group of players. UNDP is reluctant to be involved because of the continuing concern about mixing development and security issues.”⁷¹ The creation of a single Coordinator position would likely also improve UN interaction with external bodies, such as the GCTF, because it could help ensure that there was one single entry and exit point for the United Nations on counterterrorism issues, which would serve as a router to connect relevant parts of the UN system.

143. In order to have sufficient gravity within the UN galaxy to serve as an effective CTITF Chairman, the post would need to be that of an Assistant Secretary-General at a minimum. The previous system, with the D-2 head of the CTITF Office serving as chairman, served to show that no matter how effective the individual in the post, at least an Assistant Secretary-General position would be needed to move UN bodies within the CTITF, which are themselves led by Under Secretaries-General.

144. We do not think it is necessary or appropriate to establish this post at the level of an Under Secretary-General. Creating such a position at that level, absent additional responsibilities, would create a mismatch between the apparent seniority of the position and the mandate of the office, which, under this formulation, would not include any executive role, but only serving as a true CTITF Chairman and spokesperson. To adjust for this level, the Assistant Secretary-General position could be based within the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, answering directly to the Secretary-General rather than operating out of the DPA. This direct line of communication to the Secretary-General would help underline the seriousness of the effort and the Coordinator’s authority to speak for the highest ranks of the UN Secretariat on these issues. It would also give him or her sufficient seniority over other UN counterterrorism program actors, such as the Assistant Secretary-General in charge of CTED, although we also suggest that this position be removed and that CTED be led by the person in the D-2 position that already exists in CTED.

145. The creation of such a setup could save \$317,500. We envisage the total cost of the new office being \$677,600 based on the UN system 2011 standard salary costs for New York. This includes \$361,200 for the new Assistant Secretary-General position; \$216,500 for a new P-4 Special Assistant Position; and \$99,900 for a support staff position. Given the roles assigned to this Coordinator position, however, we believe that these costs could be found by eliminating equivalent positions in existing CTITF member entities. Specifically, we propose

- within CTED, removing the current Assistant Secretary-General position and having CTED be led by an already existing D-2 position (saving \$361,200); eliminating the P-4 Special Assistant Position to the Assistant Secretary-General CTED (saving \$216,500); and eliminating one support staff position in CTED (saving \$99,900). In effect, these positions are moved into the new Coordinator’s office within the CTITF Office; and
- within the CTITF Office, eliminating the D-2 position that has remained unfilled for the last 10 months and is clearly not necessary for the functioning of that office if an Assistant Secretary-General/Coordinator position is created, superseding it (saving \$317,500).

146. The weakness of such a change, however, is that it might not actually change much. Such a Coordinator would face a number of challenges. Crucially, she or he would not likely have sufficient authority within the UN system to fashion a coherent message where none already existed. Even if she or he could, it might prove difficult to attract much attention to these messages, given that the bully pulpit discussed in part 1 by its nature attaches to a specific office, such as that of the Secretary-General. If the Secretary-General does not exploit that potential of his office, it may be difficult for a UN Counter-Terrorism Coordinator to do so.

147. Such a change would not do anything to address the human rights concerns that, as outlined in part 1, continue to hamper the United Nations’ strategic leadership. It also adds little value in the area of the United Nations’ other potential comparative advantages in this field. It does not

71. UN official, interview with authors, July 2011.

make the United Nations a better convener in the counterterrorism field because it is not clear that the creation of a single UN Counter-Terrorism Coordinator within the CTITF Office will change the centripetal dynamic within the CTITF itself, with UNDP and other bodies unwilling to engage on counterterrorism issues absent clearer leadership from the Executive Office of the Secretary-General or the Secretary-General's Policy Committee. It also does not have much of an impact on the United Nations' role as a monitor of implementation of counterterrorism norms. For these reasons, we believe more robust architectural adjustments should be considered.

II. OPTION TWO – A SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR COUNTER-TERRORISM

148. Option 2 involves not just grafting a new position on top of the existing structures, but a minor rationalization of functions across these bodies. Under this option, the central change is a transferal of the capacity-building facilitation role currently played by CTED and more informally the 1267 Monitoring Team and 1540 Committee Expert Group. This role would shift across from the Security Council's subsidiary bodies to a new UN Secretariat body: an Office of the SRSG CT, which would supersede or absorb the existing CTITF Office. This would leave CTED and other Security Council bodies free to focus on monitoring and on providing the political advice and niche expertise that the Security Council increasingly is requiring in order to discharge practical terrorism prevention efforts in the field, for example in Libya.

149. The consolidation of technical assistance functions within a new SRSG CT office would allow that office to take on a number of additional roles not currently being adequately discharged by any part of the UN counterterrorism system or that are newly envisaged. The SRSG CT would serve as a full-time CTITF Chairman and take over the new role of Executive Director of the UNCCT. The SRSG CT and his office would thus

- play a similar role to that of the Coordinator discussed under option 1;
- assume the existing functions of the CTITF Office and replace that office, absorbing its staff;

- improve integration among CTITF members' technical assistance efforts; and
- connect the UNCCT to the CTITF membership, allowing the UNCCT to become a go-to resource center for technical assistance facilitation and counterterrorism policy development within the CTITF.

In addition, we believe this office could take on a number of new and innovative projects to bolster the United Nations' internal integration and external communications on counterterrorism issues. It could, for example,

- oversee structured reporting by UN and member state entities on Strategy implementation, compiling a periodic (every two years) report on worldwide progress in Strategy implementation and the fight against terrorism;
- serve as the focal point for UN engagement with other international counterterrorism actors such as the GCTF;
- serve as the focal point for UN engagement with civil society, including through the organization of a biennial International Meeting on Counter-Terrorism;
- draw on the expertise within civil society on a continuous basis through a Civil Society Advisory Committee; and
- convene CTITF member entities in rapid-response task forces to provide on-request expert analysis and advice to UN bodies, such as the Secretary-General or the General Assembly, on the application of the Strategy to specific cases with recommendations for integrated UN response.

150. Commensurate with this broader role, the SRSG CT would have the status of an Under Secretary-General; and his office would be attached to the DPA, as is the Office of the High Representative for Disarmament. That office could also provide a model for the selection of the advisory board (by the Secretary-General and from around the world) for the UNCCT, which the SRSG CT would serve on *ex officio* as Executive Director of the UNCCT.

151. Such an SRSG CT at the Under Secretary-General level would have a convening authority within the UN system as a whole that an Assistant Secretary-General-level Coordinator (option 1) will not have. This is particularly important for UN counterterrorism work at a time when departmental policy positions seem to be becoming

entrenched, and notwithstanding the rhetoric of integration and coordination, there are signs of normative fragmentation within UN work. An SRSG CT could reach out to and potentially bring in the development, humanitarian, conflict prevention, and human rights parts of the system in a way that an Assistant Secretary-General within the CTITF Office or the Executive Office of the Secretary-General will never be able.

152. Importantly, we estimate that this option would require no new spending. In fact, it might achieve a cost saving of \$21,900 for the organization. This would be achieved by funding the new Under Secretary-General-level SRSG CT position (\$411,100) through the elimination of two P-4 positions, one in CTED and one in the CTITF Office for a saving of \$216,500 on each post. All other positions within the Office of the SRSG CT would be funded by moving existing positions within the CTITF Office and CTED into this new office.

153. Member states might also consider, as one variation on this option, placing some of the eight new UNCCT positions at UN stations outside New York to improve interaction with UN country teams and other UN bodies in affected regions. Obvious candidates might include the UN offices in Abuja, Ashkabat, Bangkok, Dakar, Nairobi, or even Kabul or Tripoli.

154. The creation of an SRSG CT within the UN system thus seems comparatively easy to achieve with potentially major payoffs. It should also be clear what this move will not achieve: Alone, it will not have a major impact on the human rights concerns that continue to linger around UN counterterrorism programming. It will not prepare the United Nations for tomorrow's transnational security challenges, with terrorism, organized crime, and other related threats such as piracy increasingly becoming intertwined. To prepare the United Nations to respond to that reality, even bluer-sky thinking may be needed.

III. OPTION THREE – AN UNDER SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR TRANSNATIONAL THREATS

155. Option 3 would be difficult to achieve under current circumstances: it involves the creation of a position of USG TNT with a small office attached. As we explored in part 1, at present there is an uncoordinated and proliferating array of actors within the UN system all seeking to address interwoven transnational threats (transnational organized crime; terrorism; piracy; trafficking in humans, drugs, and arms; and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction), frequently through strengthening rule of law and criminal justice institutions at the state and regional level—a task in which a whole other array of UN and non-UN actors are also deeply engaged. These efforts are highly fragmented and stove-piped, leading to significant duplication and repetition, if not competition. This fragmentation makes it difficult to assess which efforts are performing well and which ones should be let go.

156. A centralized strategic leader is needed to overcome these deficiencies at the United Nations to better leverage its comparative advantages in dealing with transnational threats.⁷² The USG TNT and his office would be mandated to play strategic leadership, convening, and monitoring roles. The office would be mandated to

- mainstream analysis of transnational threats into integrated mission planning processes and conflict reporting to the Security Council, pursuant to its request in Presidential Statement 2010/4 of 24 February 2010; and
- drive forward integration of transnational threat analysis into UN operations in the field, providing expert advice and guidance to UN entities, including field missions, seeking such support.

157. The USG TNT would not only be the CTITF Chairman but would also be the new Chairman of the Task Force on Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime and would be involved in UN rule of law coordination work, improving integration among these various activities across the UN system and improving insights into mixed-purpose transnational criminal and militant networks. Concerning capacity

72. See James Cockayne and Christoph Mikulaschek, "Transnational Security Challenges and the United Nations: Overcoming Sovereign Walls and Institutional Silos," International Peace Institute, February 2008, <http://www.ipacademy.org/media/pdf/publications/westpoint.pdf>.

building, the USG TNT would play a facilitative role, including through his or her role as CTITF Chairman. The USG TNT's office would specifically not undertake capacity-building or political convening work on the ground, however, to avoid becoming a competitor to other CTITF members, as some argue the CTITF Office has become, and to avoid constraining the Under Secretary-General's monitoring and advisory role. Convening and capacity-building work on the ground would be left to specialized bodies such as UNODC/TPB, UNDP, the DPKO Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions, and UN country teams.

158. Such a position might require new resources, although costs could be mitigated through staff secondments from relevant UN departments and entities, especially the DPKO, UNDP, DPA, and UNODC. Particular thought would need to be given to determining the relationship between the USG TNT, which would be based in New York, and the role of the Executive Director of UNODC, which is based in Vienna and has for some time been combined with the Under Secretary-General-level position of head of the UN Office Vienna.

Part Three: Recommendations

BASED ON OUR ANALYSIS OF THE COMPARATIVE advantages of the United Nations in global counterterrorism efforts, we present a series of recommendations to various UN bodies for reshaping UN counterterrorism activities in four main ways:

- by creating a broader movement against terrorism, involving not only states but also a range of other actors;
- by strengthening engagement in the field and at UN headquarters with human rights experts and civil society;
- by placing greater emphasis on measuring UN counterterrorism efforts' performance; and
- by enacting one of three options for architectural adjustments to streamline UN counterterrorism efforts and improve monitoring, political analysis, and capacity building (a UN Counter-Terrorism Coordinator, a Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism [SRSG CT], or an Under Secretary-General for Transnational Threats [USG TNT]).

TO THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY:

KEY RECOMMENDATION:

1. Work with the Security Council and the Secretary-General to reshape the review process of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy as well as UN counterterrorism leadership arrangements.

2. Reform the biennial Strategy review process, including through

- a. issuing **reporting guidelines** for member states, providing a self-reporting template or self-reporting criteria or simply exemplars of types of programming against which states should report for different paragraphs of the Strategy;
- b. working with the Secretary-General to ensure his **report on Strategy implementation** addresses these criteria and indicators for each state;
- c. creating a **peer review mechanism** modeled on the Universal Periodic Review system in the Human Rights Council, in which member states consider each others' Strategy implementation efforts; and
- d. developing the review into or mandating the Secretary-General to organize a biennial **International Meeting on Counter-Terrorism**, involving member states, regional organizations, the private sector, and civil society, modeled on the periodic review conferences of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear

Weapons or the events surrounding the recent 10th anniversary of Security Council Resolution 1325.

3. Streamline UN counterterrorism leadership arrangements. The General Assembly should work with the Security Council and Secretary-General to streamline the coordination and functioning of existing counterterrorism resources by mandating and resourcing a new leadership position. Options include the following:

Option 1: Grafting a new position of UN Counter-Terrorism Coordinator onto the existing structure. The Secretary-General's recent proposal for intergovernmental bodies to consider the creation of such a position is welcome, but to inform those considerations, more details are needed about the level of the position and its responsibilities. We suggest that the Coordinator would serve as a full-time chair, coordinator, and spokesperson for the entire UN Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF), providing clearer strategic leadership for the UN system on counterterrorism issue integration and making more of its convening power. It would be the key interlocutor for other international counterterrorism players, such as the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum (GCTF). The Coordinator would have the status of an Assistant Secretary-General, based in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General. He or she would be supported by a P-4 Special Assistant and a support staff officer. These posts would be funded by eliminating a P-4 and support staff position within the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), downgrading the Assistant Secretary-General for CTED to an already existing D-2 position (to emphasize that the Coordinator will be *primus inter pares*); and eliminating the D-2 position in the CTITF Office, which has gone unfilled for more than 10 months and seems increasingly unnecessary to the effective functioning of that office. **Net cost: a saving of \$317,500**, based on the reorganization of positions we outline in this report.

Option 2: Creating a new position of **Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism** at the Under Secretary-General level attached to the Department of Political Affairs (DPA). The SRSG CT and his or her office would

- serve as CTITF Chairman and Executive Director of the UN Centre for Counter-Terrorism (UNCCT);
- assume the existing functions of the CTITF Office and replace that office, absorbing its staff;
- improve integration among CTITF members' technical assistance efforts;
- connect the UNCCT to the CTITF membership, allowing the UNCCT to become a go-to resource center for technical assistance facilitation and counterterrorism policy development within the CTITF;
- oversee structured reporting by UN and member state entities on Strategy implementation, compiling a periodic (every two years) report on worldwide progress in Strategy implementation and the fight against terrorism;
- serve as the focal point for UN engagement with other international counterterrorism actors such as the GCTF;
- serve as the focal point for UN engagement with civil society, including through the organization of a biennial International Meeting on Counter-Terrorism;
- draw on the expertise within civil society on a continuous basis through a Civil Society Advisory Committee; and
- convene CTITF member entities in rapid-response task forces to provide on-request expert analysis and advice to UN actors such as the Secretary-General or the General Assembly on the application of the Strategy to specific cases, with recommendations for integrated UN response.

Net cost: a saving of \$21,900. This would be achieved by funding the new Under Secretary-General-level SRSG CT position (\$411,100) through the elimination of two P-4 positions—one in CTED, one in the CTITF Office (saving \$216,500 on each post). All other positions within the Office of the SRSG CT would be funded by moving existing positions within the CTITF Office and CTED into this new office.

Option 3: Considering the future creation of a position of **Under Secretary-General for Transnational Threats** to play a similar role to the SRSG CT but also encompass other transnational threats such as drug trafficking and organized crime. This is a longer-term blue-sky option to address the threats of the next 10 years, not the last 10 years. It would likely require new resources to create a larger office able to (1) service both the CTITF and the new Task Force

on Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime; (2) mainstream analysis of transnational threats into integrated mission planning processes and conflict reporting to the Security Council, pursuant to its request in Presidential Statement 2010/4 of 24 February 2010; and (3) drive forward integration of transnational threat analysis into UN operations in the field. This would require substantial new resources or the pooling of existing resources from the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the DPA, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, and UN counterterrorism bodies. **Net cost: not estimated.**

4. Explore procedural options for breaking the deadlock in the negotiation of a Comprehensive Convention on Terrorism, and adopt a definition of terrorism. The General Assembly should not be satisfied with the lack of progress in the negotiation of the convention, which weakens UN leadership in global counterterrorism efforts. New efforts should be put into finding creative procedural approaches to identify common ground among the various negotiating positions and finally conclude the negotiation.

5. Use the upcoming 2012 Strategy review to work with the CTITF to **clarify how the United Nations will engage with the GCTF.**

TO THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL:

KEY RECOMMENDATION:

6. Work with other UN actors, including the Secretary-General and the General Assembly, to reshape UN counterterrorism leadership arrangements (as noted above), and to improve monitoring, political analysis, and capacity building by **refocusing the mandate of CTED on monitoring.** CTED should be refocused on identifying specific entry points for engagement by UN bodies to work with states of recurring concern on the implementation of UN Security Council norms. This would allow some CTED staff positions to be shifted to venues where they might be able to better exploit the United Nations' convening and capacity-building strengths. It would also help to separate the monitoring and advisory role of CTED from the capacity-building and policy-convening work of other parts of the UN system.

7. Require field missions to more proactively report on transnational threats in their reporting to the Security Council, as called for in Presidential Statement 2010/4. This will help foster cross-entity cooperation and joint analysis, both at the headquarters and field levels.

8. Explore possibilities for mandating and resourcing field missions on terrorism prevention, as in Security Council Resolution 2017 on Libya, for example by creating positions for counterterrorism and/or transnational threat analysis officers within appropriate field missions, mandated to work with relevant parts of the UN system to provide improved outreach, reporting, and project management on these issues. These officers could also be mandated to work with local, national, and regional officials and donors to develop comprehensive plans to implement the Strategy.

9. Create one consolidated reporting mechanism to service each of the four or five committees that focus on counterterrorism issues related to al-Qaida, the Taliban, Security Council Resolution 1373 and Resolution 1540, and Somalia/Eritrea.

10. Require counterterrorism-related subsidiary bodies to include more comprehensive performance measurement data in their reporting on their own activities.

11. **Further strengthen independent review of listing and delisting decisions** in the Security Council's 1988 Committee and 1989 Committee beyond the positive steps already taken. It could consider, for example,

- a. giving the Ombudsperson's recommendations to the council greater authority through the creation of a presumption that the council will follow her recommendation unless it takes a vote to the contrary;
- b. adding a "sunset" clause to decisions to include persons on a sanctions list;
- c. clarifying that appeals to the council from its counterterrorism committees should be exceptional; and
- d. expanding the Ombudsperson's mandate to other relevant UN sanctions lists.

12. **Empower CTED to engage with UN and outside human rights expertise and civil society** when conducting country visits and assessments.

TO THE UN SECRETARY-GENERAL:

KEY RECOMMENDATION:

13. Encourage the development of **global movement against terrorism** through more regular and focused use of the "bully pulpit." This could include speeches, visits, and activities designed to foster a hopeful narrative of peaceful dispute resolution that could counter violent extremist narratives' calls to violence.

14. Encourage **integrated counterterrorism efforts** across the UN system by

- a. working with the Security Council and General Assembly to consider the options outlined in Recommendation 1;
- b. working with the Secretary-General's Policy Committee to provide guidance to UN bodies on the limits of and approaches to **engagement** with militant groups characterized by the Security Council or member states as "terrorist" groups; and

- c. working through CTITF to better **integrate** UNODC, especially UN country teams and other relevant UN bodies, into UN political discussions and mission planning processes prevention activities.

TO THE UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL:

KEY RECOMMENDATION:

15. Increase the attention focused on counterterrorism issues during the Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review process.

16. **Empower the Special Rapporteur** on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism **to participate in CTED country visits and assessments.**

TO THE COUNTER-TERRORISM IMPLEMENTATION TASK FORCE:

KEY RECOMMENDATION:

17. Create a **Civil Society Advisory Committee** for the CTITF and its working groups, also providing input to the UNCCT. The Civil Society Advisory Committee would serve as a sounding board on key policy and programming issues and as a source of expertise for policy development and analysis, and its representatives could be invited to propose mechanisms for increased engagement with civil society on Strategy implementation. It could be modeled after a similar body that advises the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict.

18. Develop a **public work plan** clarifying CTITF core objectives and the roles of different members in achieving them, including the UNCCT.

19. Develop a **technical guide** for member states' and UN entities' implementation of the Strategy, providing guidance on the types of programming relevant to implementation of each of the four Pillars.

20. **Agree on guidance for CTITF entities on counterterrorism programming**, addressing issues such as engaging local partners on Strategy-related issues; including actors working on education, development, human rights, and humanitarian issues; and dedicating resources to performance measurement.

21. Create a **Working Group on Measuring Effectiveness in Counter-Terrorism**, which could work with the UN Evaluation Group, UN Rule of Law Coordination and Resources Group, and others to develop guidance on best practices in performance measurement in this area.

22. Publicly clarify details of the **UNCCT**, including

- a. selection criteria for the UNCCT Advisory Board, which could be modeled on the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters;
- b. programming priorities and modalities; and
- c. staffing arrangements, including whether any UNCCT staff will be posted to UN offices involved in counterterrorism-related activities, such as Abuja, Ashkabat, Bangkok, Dakar, Nairobi, or even Kabul or Tripoli.



Center on Global
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