



# United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre

Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) Office

## **Engaging Partners for Capacity-Building: United Nations' Collaboration with Counter-Terrorism Centres International Conference**

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

16-17 February 2013

### **Opening Statement**

**16 February 2013**

Mr. Jehangir Khan

Director *a.i.*, CTITF Office

Your Highness, Prince Ambassador Turki bin Mohamed bin Saud Al Kabeer,  
Deputy to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia,

Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General, Mr. Derek Plumbly,

H.E. Ambassador Abdallah Y. Al-Mouallimi, Chair of the UNCCT Advisory  
Board,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen

I begin by welcoming you all to this important United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT) conference. On behalf of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) and the UNCCT, I would like to warmly extend our sincere gratitude to the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the hospitality and support it has so readily extended to organizing this Conference. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is a key supporter of the UNCCT – a centre that will soon be able to address challenges posed by terrorism in many parts of the world.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

For this conference, representatives of about twenty national, regional and international counter-terrorism centres have come to Riyadh. The range of activities and programmes that they implement are broad - some are, for instance, specialized on capacity building programmes addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism on the national level; others are focusing, for example, on law enforcement. What brings us all together, however, is one of the most serious threats to international peace and security.

The threat of terrorism, as the United Nations Secretary-General has pointed out repeatedly in the past, enabled Member States in 2006 to adopt the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The Strategy provides a consensus based comprehensive Plan of Action to counter terrorism.

This conference takes the commitment to the UN Counter-Terrorism Strategy to the next level. By gathering counter-terrorism centres, we wish to learn more about innovative and crosscutting capacity building programmes that are being implemented worldwide, but that are often not sufficiently known by fellow centres in different parts of the world. We hope that the centers will share important information about their programmes and experience that will contribute to foster international collaboration and exchange of the best practices.

This conference is only the first step. We seek to establish a useful network of counter-terrorism centres and organizations. Transnational terrorist organizations and groups are constantly evolving their methods and tactics. We also need to improve our collaboration and share what works and what does not work.

There are several reasons, why the UNCCT is in a distinct position to engage as a facilitator for such a network. In 2011, the UNCCT was established institutionally within the CTITF Office based on the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and a special resolution of the General Assembly. The UNCCT aims to support United Nations efforts to implement the Strategy at the national and regional levels, promote regional cooperation against terrorism and build Member States' counter-terrorism capacities.

In June last year, at the second meeting of the UNCCT Advisory Board, the United Nations Secretary-General set out six main strategic priorities for the UNCCT. Those priorities are:

1. Developing National and Regional Counter-Terrorism Strategies;
2. Supporting CTITF Integrated Assistance for Countering Terrorism initiative (I-ACT);
3. Countering Financing of Terrorism (CFT);
4. Fostering Dialogue, Understanding and Countering the Appeal of Terrorism (DUCAT);
5. Promoting the Respect for Human Rights and the Rule of Law; and
6. Supporting the Victims of Terrorism.

Many of these objectives are currently being implemented through the CTITF Office and CTITF entities, including CTED, UNODC, OHCHR, UNESCO, the Al Qaida and Taliban Sanctions Monitoring Team, INTERPOL, UNDP and the Alliances of Civilizations. The UNCCT has also delivered its own projects. Some of you have participated in the International Conference on National and Regional Counter-Terrorism Strategies in Bogota only two weeks ago (31 January-1 February 2013). It was one of the first projects that the UNCCT implemented.

Similar to the conference in Bogota, this conference is part of the endeavours to advance one of the key objectives of the Centre, that is to foster international counter-terrorism cooperation and promote collaboration between national, regional and international counter-terrorism centres and initiatives.

The UNCCT is supported by a highly committed Advisory Board. It brings together 21 Member States, including the 5 permanent members of the Security Council, a number of important developing and developed countries and the EU as a guest member. The Advisory Board provides guidance on the UNCCT program of work as well as the annual budget to CTITF Chairman and UNCCT Executive Director Mr. Jeffrey Feltman, the UN Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs.

The UNCCT is benefiting from CTITF's wide range of experience in fostering coordination and collaboration of counter-terrorism activities of international organizations located in all parts of the world. Through its multidisciplinary working groups and projects, the CTITF has contributed to countering terrorism based on all pillars of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. This vast expertise is instantly accessible to the UNCCT.

The legitimacy of the United Nation's universal membership, the Centre's institutional support and substantive objectives are the reasons for us to believe

that the UNCCT is prepared to serve as a hub for spanning and facilitating a global network of counter-terrorism centres and initiatives.

Such a network will only be successful if it responds to the needs of its individual partners. The centres know their needs best. Sharing them will enable the international community to respond to those needs. We are not only here to learn more about activities of the centres and to discuss the United Nations' counter-terrorism capacity building role, but also to listen and brainstorm how can we more successfully and jointly implement the UN Counter-Terrorism Strategy across borders and regions.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let us use these two days to share our counter-terrorism work, expertise and implementation challenges that we face in capitals and in the field, and build a useful informal network of centres across the world to counter-terrorism.

I wish you all a very successful conference and thank you all for your participation in this event.