



The Republic of Botswana signs an agreement with UNOCT for capacity-building to detect the travel of terrorists and serious criminals

NEW YORK, 10 June 2021: The United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) and the Government of the Republic of Botswana signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) today signifying partnership under the United Nations Countering Terrorist Travel (CT Travel) Programme.

The agreement will allow the United Nations to help the country enhance its capabilities to detect the travel of terrorists and serious criminals by collecting and analyzing advance passenger information (API) and passenger name record (PNR) data, in compliance with relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions, international standards and human rights principles. The Republic of Botswana is one of 42 beneficiary Member States that have joined the CT Travel Programme since its launch in May 2019.

The signing of the MoU took place during a virtual ceremony between the Under-Secretary-General of UNOCT, Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, and the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Botswana to the United Nations, H.E. Ambassador Mr. Collen V. Kelapile.

"Today's Memorandum of Understanding is a symbol of the solid partnership and mutual commitment between the Republic of Botswana and the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism within the framework of the Countering Terrorist Travel Programme, to enhance Botswana's capabilities to detect and interdict known and suspected terrorists and criminals using passenger data," Mr. Voronkov said.

He further highlighted "the continued commitment and engagement of the Republic of Botswana throughout the past year and a half when the global COVID-19 pandemic resulted in many challenges. Botswana was the first programme beneficiary to take part in the programme's online training course late last year."

"Terrorism is a serious impediment to the full enjoyment of peace and security, human rights and sustainable development. It destroys innocent lives and livelihoods, instills fear in societies and inflicts damage on critical infrastructure. Therefore, States should take all legal and legitimate measures to counter terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. This can be achieved through the kind of capacity-building that the United Nations Office for Counter Terrorism and other stakeholders are offering to Botswana in the next years", Mr. Collen V. Kelapile said.

"Terrorism knows no national borders; a terrorist threat somewhere is a terrorist threat everywhere. It is therefore imperative that we have all the necessary capacities to prevent, detect and investigate terror related acts and bring perpetrators to justice. The UN Countering-Terrorist Travel Programme will help us in this endeavor", Advocate Ernest Mosate, Director General, Office of Counter Terrorism, Analysis and Fusion Agency said.

Building stronger partnerships to support Member States' efforts to prevent and counter terrorism is one of the top priorities of UNOCT. The CT Travel Programme, a flagship global initiative of UNOCT, aims to assist beneficiary Member States in building such capabilities to detect and intercept terrorists and serious criminals by using API and PNR data, cross-checking against INTERPOL and other international and national databases of known and suspected terrorists and criminals. The Programme also enhances international information exchange, in accordance with Security Council resolutions 2178 (2014), 2396 (2017) and 2482 (2019), international standards, relevant privacy laws, and human rights principles.

Through an 'All-of-UN' partnership with the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the United Nations Office of Information and Communications Technology (OICT), and the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), the UNOCT-led Programme provides comprehensive, yet tailored assistance to beneficiary Member States.

As a beneficiary of the CT Travel Programme, the Republic of Botswana is being supported across four key pillars of the programme, which include:

1. The development of necessary legislative frameworks regulating the collection, transmission, use, retention and sharing of passenger data, in compliance with internationally recognized standards and human rights principles;
2. The institutional set-up and development of operational capacity of Botswana's detection centre, also known as a Passenger Information Unit;
3. Engagement and cooperation with the transport industry to ensure technical connectivity; and
4. Technical support, including the licensing and deployment of the United Nations' specialized 'goTravel' software system.

The CT Travel Programme is funded by generous contributions from the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the European Union, the United States of America, the State of Qatar, Australia, Germany, Japan, the Republic of India, and with in-kind support from Hungary.

For more information:

UNOCT

Visit un.org/cttravel; follow on Twitter (@UN_OCT) or contact:

Ms. Laurence Gerard, gerardl@un.org, UN Office of Counter-Terrorism