



2021 Counter-Terrorism Week  
**SIDE EVENT**



UNITED NATIONS  
OFFICE OF COUNTER-TERRORISM  
UN Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT)



**unicri**  
United Nations  
Interregional Crime and Justice  
Research Institute

## Press release

### Launch of Report

#### ***Science, Technology and Innovation: Understanding Advancements from the Perspective of Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Terrorism***

**New York, 25 June 2021** – An event launching the report *Science, Technology and Innovation: Understanding Advancements from the Perspective of Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Terrorism* was held on 25 June 2021, as part of the Second Counter-Terrorism Week at the United Nations. The event was co-organized by the Republic of Iraq, the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT) of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) and the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) and gathered more than 200 representatives from Member States, international and regional organizations, academia and the private sector.

This report is the main outcome of the project *Technology and Security: Enhancing Knowledge about Advances in Science and Technology to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction Terrorism*, implemented by UNCCT and UNICRI within the framework of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact Working Group on Emerging Threats and Critical Infrastructure Protection. The project, implemented with the generous support of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, seeks to understand possible risks associated with the misuse of science and technology to perpetrate terrorist attacks using weapons of mass destruction, and to identify technological solutions that can be used to fulfil Member States needs in terms of preventing and combatting the threat.

The report launched today presents an analysis on how advances in science and technology could augment or enhance terrorist capabilities to acquire and/or deploy weapons of mass destruction and identifies innovative ways in which technology could be applied to counter threats related to weapons of mass destruction terrorism.



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The **Chairman of the Iraqi National Monitoring Authority for Non-Proliferation (INMA) of the Republic of Iraq, Mr. Mohsin Oleiwi Abdul Kadhim** stated that, *“It is well known to most of us that before 2014 large lands of Iraq were occupied by terrorist gangs of ISIS. During the liberation of these territories from the terrorist gangs a number of Iraqi security forces and civilians were attacked by toxic chemical agents. The number of casualties reached more than 2500 in one attack.”*

The **Director of UNICRI, Antonia Marie De Meo**, emphasized, *“The good news is that working together, we can improve responses to these threats, including by applying innovative technological advances and tools.”*

The **Director and Deputy to the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), Mr. Thomas Markram** noted that, *“As advances in science and technology continue to revolutionize human life, they are also diversifying the tools of conflict and the ability of both state and non-state actors to carry out attacks, including across international boundaries.”*

The **Senior Adviser to the Executive Director of Health Emergencies of the World Health Organization (WHO), Dr. Maurizio Barbeschi**, stressed that *“The COVID-19 pandemic has shown us the centrality of public health in national security, and demonstrated that the impacts of infectious diseases goes far beyond public health, healthcare and emergency systems - also affecting global socio-economic systems and grinding our everyday life to a halt.”*

The expert panel discussions, involving representatives the United States, the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) and the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP), provided a platform to better understand possible risks associated with the misuse of science and technology to develop and deploy weapons of mass destruction to perpetrate terrorist attacks, and how science and technology could be most effectively used in global counter-terrorism efforts.

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For more information:

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