

Opening Statement (delivered by pre-recorded video)
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UNCCT / MENAFATF / EMLCU (Egypt)
Joint Workshop
on
“Regional Capacity-building Workshop on Investigation of Terrorist Financing – the
Importance of Parallel Financial Investigation”

Cairo, 3-5 October 2021

Judge Ahmed Said Khalil

Mr. Suliman Al-Jabrin

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the United Nations, it is my distinct honour to welcome you to this Joint Workshop on Investigation of Terrorist Financing.”

I would like to begin by thanking the Middle East and Northern Africa Financial Action Task Force and the Egyptian Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Combating Unit for their collaboration with the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism and the UN Counter-Terrorism Centre in convening this important workshop. It is an honour for UNOCT-UNCCT to be organize this regional event on such an important topic.

I would also like to extend a warm welcome to all the national representatives who are taking part in this event, both in-person and through virtual means.

As part of broader international counter-terrorism efforts, countering the financing of terrorism remains a high priority for the United Nations and its Member States.

This has been reaffirmed most recently by the General Assembly in the review resolution adopted at the seventh Review of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The resolution calls on

Member States to enhance their efforts and strengthen their capacities to effectively prevent and counter terrorism financing.

The urgent priority to stop terrorist financing has also been prominently reflected in the landmark Security Council resolution 2462 (2019), in which all Member States are called upon to take effective measures to suppress terrorism financing. The resolution constituted a vital step forward in the international community's efforts against the threat of terrorism financing and contained important guidance on how to do so.

Resolution 2462 consolidated the existing international obligations on countering the financing of terrorism into a single document. It expanded the focus to include key emerging issues, emphasizing the importance of strengthening international cooperation to ensure the exchange of relevant financial intelligence, as well as to identify and address emerging techniques and tools that terrorists are using to raise, transfer and use funds.

Security Council resolution 2462 (2019) assigns to UNOCT and to UNCCT an important role to work with key FATF-style regional bodies and Member States to help national authorities in developing the necessary capacities to suppress terrorist financing.

The United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism and its capacity-building arm, the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre, are working together with a wide range of entities across the Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact to promote the implementation of resolution 2462 in all Member States.

Through our flagship global Programme on Countering the Financing of Terrorism, we are working closely with key entities, such as CTED, UNODC, INTERPOL and the Office of Information and Communications Technology on identifying areas where we can contribute to national and regional efforts to suppress terrorist financing, raise awareness on emerging terrorist fundraising techniques, and build capacities to identify and suppress financial flows linked to terrorists.

This workshop aims to enhance MENA-FATF member jurisdictions' technical capabilities to investigate terrorism financing offences and highlight the importance of conducting a parallel financial investigation for counter-terrorism cases, with due regard for international human rights and humanitarian standards.

The workshop also marks a milestone in our ongoing engagement with MENA-FATF. We have worked closely with the MENA-FATF to identify the needs of the region to and to combine forces

to host this timely and necessary initiative to offer fundamental and specialized training on financial investigation. It is ever more important that we offer effective and dynamic responses to counter terrorism financing threats and disrupt the criminal networks that facilitate it.

Over the years, the Middle East / North Africa region has made significant progress in detecting and preventing the financing of terrorism. Many countries present here today have accumulated first-hand knowledge and experience in combating terrorist financing. One of our purposes today is to build on that knowledge and further strengthen our capabilities to identify geopolitical risks related to terrorism and acquire capabilities to investigate these risks and prosecute the crimes.

Ladies and Gentlemen

COVID-19 has inflicted unprecedented stress on the entire international community. The pandemic has also created an advantageous environment for terrorist to exploit vulnerable groups particularly through the digital space.

As we grapple with the geopolitical and socio-economic impacts, I would like to highlight several key expected outcomes of this workshop that can serve as steppingstones for the future:

1. First, our aim is to raise awareness on the importance of conducting financial investigation alongside, or in the context of, a traditional criminal investigation.
2. Second, we intend to enhance the technical and operational capacity of all participating Member States to identify and pursue terrorist financing as a distinct criminal activity and conduct financial investigations
3. Finally, we would also like to ensure the effective and timely sharing of financial information, including through domestic coordination, in order to establish a functioning coherent system that includes investigation, prosecution, conviction and sanctions.

My Office is committed to providing technical assistance and capacity building support to Member States through the UNCCT whether regionally or nationally. We have had some very positive engagements with countries around the world, including member jurisdictions of MENA-FATF, such as Bahrain, Sudan, Tunisia, Iraq and now we are hoping to expand to include our distinguished host authorities in Egypt too.

Furthermore, I would like to note here that our newest state-of-the-art training hub in Rabat is now operational. This Programme office in Rabat will develop and deliver specialized and tailored



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capacity building support in the region. It will help provide knowledge, skills and tools to practitioners through training; develop and promote good practices, and facilitate cooperation among African and cross-regional counter terrorism, law enforcement, CFT and border officials.

Colleagues,

International fora such as this help exchange information, discuss common challenges and identify new good practices. Only through active collaboration and targeted efforts will we be able to achieve concrete results in our fight against terrorism and terrorist financing. This event constitutes a clear example of such commitment. I would like to once again thank the Government of Egypt, especially its Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Combating Unit and MENAFATF for the collaboration that has led to this event. I wish you a very productive discussion and a successful event.

Thank you so much.