

**Regional Seminar on Machine Readable Travel Documents (MRTDs), Biometrics
and Security Standards**

Maputo, Mozambique, 24-26 November 2010

**Statement On behalf of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Implementation
Task Force (CTITF)**

Delivered by
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I am pleased to share with you a statement on behalf of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) Chairman, Mr. Jean-Paul Laborde who could not join us today, due to other pressing commitments.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen

None of us, especially after the most recent events, in the Middle East and Africa needs to be reminded of the dangers that terrorism presents to human life, welfare and global stability. Unfortunately, during the past years, the threat has only become more dangerous and more lethal.

Massive national actions, often through the use of force, have been conducted. Security Council's resolutions have been critical in ensuring that terrorists and their supporters are not given the space to hide or conduct their murderous activities anywhere in the world. However, we would be remiss if we failed to recognize that the threat of terrorism and the efforts to combat that threat affect many areas, more specifically in the security sector. In this regard, let me praise the efforts of ICAO which was the first specialized global agency to deal with security issues in the International Aviation Conventions.

We should all be very impressed by the work done by ICAO to provide the international community with norms and technical solutions to the Aviation Security and MRTDs. This great effort is being reflected in today's Regional Seminar.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen

Please allow me to shortly explain, the role of the CTITF. The CTITF was mandated by the General Assembly to coordinate UN system-wide counter terrorism activities to help Member States implement the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. It is currently an amalgam of 30 United Nations entities and international organizations. The composition of the Task Force reflects the four pillars of the Global Strategy. From entities that deal exclusively with development work, such as United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), to those with specific mandates on counter-terrorism work, such as Counter Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED), United Nations Office

on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the 1267 Monitoring Team, to those that work in specialized fields such as ICAO.

The CTITF houses a broad spectrum of organizations that bring together their respective expertise, resources and field capacities to contribute productively to the global fight against international terrorism. Each of these entities is responsible for the implementation of its own mandate, which is much broader than counter-terrorism activities alone.

It should be noted, in this regard, that ICAO has been one of its prominent and active member from the very beginning. Let me thank you for ICAO's efforts in this regard as well as all your colleagues who have been so supportive in this endeavor. As the Chairperson of the Task Force, let me assure you that I am fully committed to supporting ICAO and that the Task Force Working Group on Border Management will be fully informed of your key activities on MRTDs, Biometrics and Security Standards.

The CTITF Working Group on Border Management is a grouping of 20 entities whose primary objective is to provide support and assistance to Member States in their efforts to implement a comprehensive and coordinated approach to address the threat of terrorism in the context of cross-border activities. The mandate of the Working Group is drawn from pillars 2 and 3 of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy which refer to Prevention of Terrorism and Capacity Building.

The Border Management Working Group will compile a compendium of information on current and developing technologies, training materials and best practices to avail States with tools to deal with frontier threats. This information will be provided to all Member States through briefings, meetings and distributed electronically. The Working Group will also contribute to missions where specific border management and control needs are identified and assistance is requested.

The following themes of border management and control, relevant to addressing the threat of terrorism will be of particular focus:

1. Compliance of 'goods' crossing international borders with international conventions, legislation, prohibitions and restrictions
2. Mobility and processing of people, including refugees and asylum seekers
3. Integrity of identity and travel documents and their issuance process
4. Movement of cash and other bearer negotiable instruments
5. Cargo reporting and security
6. Security of facilities
7. Security of modes of transport
8. Early warning and alert systems
9. Open border controls and cross-border communities
10. Movement of weapons (small arms, explosives and ammunition/conventional/WMD) across borders

11. Prevention, detection, response, investigation and prosecution of border-related offences
12. Technologies in support of border control
13. Role of private sector
14. Cooperation, coordination and information exchange at national, regional and international levels
15. Anti-corruption programmes and best practices

ICAOs leading role on MRTDs biometrics and security standards have been essential in the work of the activities of the Working Group. What I really hope is that the engagement of ICAO in this area of work will also be truly beneficial to the work of ICAO itself.

Before concluding, I would like to say few words on supporting the victims of terrorism. It is critical to establish fair mechanisms to provide restitution, compensation and assistance to victims of terrorism. Members of this distinguished audience should remember the Symposium on the Victims of Terrorism held in September 2008 at the General Assembly. The Symposium marked the first time when victims of terrorism were given a face, a voice, an international audience and a platform to share their heart-wrenching stories with people around the world.

Our common objective under the guidance of the Secretary-General, who attaches a great importance to this issue, is ensuring that victims of terrorism are given the attention they deserve. There is a direct link between what we are doing today and the ultimate goal of protecting victims of terrorism. If more secure travel documents and effective border control mechanisms are in place, chances of terrorists inflicting harm on the innocent will also be reduced.

Terrorism today has links to many more issues than just explosives or border control, and counter-terrorism should be broader than military action or security force initiatives. Other elements, such as conflict prevention, political negotiations, criminal justice procedures, education, inter-cultural dialogue, institutional development, poverty alleviation and protection of human rights are equally important aspects that the international community cannot afford to lose sight of in the fight against terrorism. However without concrete actions on security issues, we will not be in the position to tackle terrorism with efficiency.

Thank you.