

**ICAO meeting with Directors of Immigration of Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)**

*Abidjan, 7 October 2013*

**Opening statement of CTED Executive Director**

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

The Counter-Terrorism Committee and CTED are together committed to identifying effective ways to prevent acts of terrorism and to bring to justice those who commit terrorist acts.

As I'm sure you are all aware, CTED plays a significant role in assessing compliance by United Nations Member States with the counter-terrorism measures required by the Security Council in its resolution 1373.

As a facilitator of technical assistance, CTED works closely with Member States to help enhance their capacity to implement the resolution.

Of particular interest to all of you here today, perhaps, is that resolution 1373 obligates all Member States to prevent the movement of terrorists or terrorist groups through effective border controls and controls on issuance of identity papers and travel documents, and through measures to prevent counterfeiting, forgery or fraudulent use of identity papers and travel documents.

Moreover, Security Council resolution 1624 (2005) calls upon all States to “cooperate, *inter alia*, to strengthen the security of their international borders, including by combating fraudulent travel documents and, to the extent available, by enhancing terrorist screening and passenger security procedures with a view to preventing those guilty of [incitement to commit a terrorist act] from entering their territory”.

## **Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED)**

**CTED, through country assessments and visits conducted on behalf of the Committee, is deeply aware that one of the biggest challenges faced by States in implementing resolution 1373 is effectively managing borders to prevent the movement of terrorists.**

**Fortunately, CTED is not alone in addressing these challenges. It is mandated to work with a variety of international, regional and subregional organizations in its efforts to address the challenges faced by States in effectively implementing counter-terrorism measures.**

**CTED has worked very closely over the years with ICAO, as the lead international agency in developing travel-document standards and recommended practices.**

**CTED fully supports the importance attached by ICAO to promoting States' issuance of ICAO-compliant machine-readable travel documents (MRTDs) as essential tools to prevent the movement of terrorists across borders, as well as to providing the technical assistance required.**

**With respect to States' issuance of ICAO-compliant travel documents, CTED is very aware that lack of secure and robust identification management is a major vulnerability, which has been exploited by terrorists.**

**CTED shares ICAO's assessment that a holistic, coherent and coordinated approach to the identification-management process leading up to the issuance of travel documents is a crucial aspect of efforts to ensure the legitimacy of secure travel documents.**

**A travel document is only as secure as the various safeguards built in to ensure that the identity of the individual to whom the passport is issued is genuine.**

**For these reasons, CTED regards the ICAO TRIP Strategy as the best approach to helping States meet their international obligations under resolution 1373 and fully supports the Strategy's aims to develop a holistic and systematic model for traveller identification management and to ensure that all States have the capacity to uniquely identify individuals.**

**Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED)**

**CTED fully endorses the ICAO TRIP Strategy and looks forward to cooperating closely with ICAO in encouraging Member States to subscribe and to working with ICAO to help procure the resources required to address States' related technical assistance needs.**

**CTED encourages the ECOWAS States present today to intensify their efforts, in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions, to develop and implement a robust identification management system and thereby safeguard the security and integrity of the passport-issuance process.**

**I wish you all a fruitful day and look forward very much to hearing about your ideas and proposals.**

**Thank you.**