

**TENTH SYMPOSIUM AND EXHIBITION ON ICAO MRTDs,
BIOMETRICS AND BORDER SECURITY**

ICAO Headquarters, Montreal, Canada, 7 October 2014

Opening statement of the Chair of the Counter-Terrorism Committee

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

It is an honour for me, as Chair of the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee, to address you all today at the 10th symposium on ICAO MRTDs, biometrics and border security.

The Counter-Terrorism Committee, or CTC, is required by Security Council resolution 1373 to oversee and assist the efforts of Member States to prevent acts of terrorism and bring to justice those who commit terrorist acts.

Under resolution 1373, States are called upon to introduce legal and operational measures in a number of areas, including measures to prevent the movement of terrorists and terrorist groups.

The Committee is well aware that any vulnerability in travel-identification systems, travel-document security, or the security of document issuance can facilitate the movement of terrorists and other criminals across borders.

We therefore consider secure, effective identification management to be of the utmost importance.

As you are all aware, this issue has been thrown into sharp relief over recent months by the growing problem of “foreign terrorist fighters” who leave their home States to engage in conflicts abroad.

Indeed, less than two weeks ago, the Security Council convened a rare Head-of-State-level meeting to discuss the challenges to peace and security posed by this phenomenon.

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The Council's discussions resulted in the unanimous adoption of resolution 2178, which requires that all States prevent the movement of terrorists or terrorist groups by effective border controls and controls on the issuance of identity papers and travel documents, and through measures for preventing counterfeiting, forgery or fraudulent use of identity papers and travel documents.

Resolution 2178 also underscores the need for States to address the threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters and encourages States to employ evidence-based traveller-risk assessment and screening procedures.

It also notes that the collection and analysis of travel data should not include "profiling" founded on grounds of discrimination prohibited by international law.

Like resolution 1373, resolution 2178 was adopted under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. Implementation of its provisions is therefore mandatory for all Member States.

Through its regular country assessment visits, the CTC has become aware that some of the biggest challenges faced by States in implementing resolution 1373 relate to border-management measures aimed at preventing terrorist movements.

Fortunately, the CTC is not alone in addressing those challenges. It is mandated by the Council to work with a variety of specialized international, regional and subregional organizations, and works very closely with ICAO, as the leading international agency for the development of travel document standards and recommended practices.

I sincerely hope that we can continue to build on the excellent relationship we have developed with ICAO. In this regard, I count on ICAO to continue to assist us in assessing the implementation by Member States of resolution 1373, including through its participation in CTC country visits. In the meantime, I would like to assure you that we intend to continue, as part of our dialogue with Member States, to promote the full

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spectrum of ICAO standards regarding aviation security and the security of travel documents.

I also wish to recall the critical role played by INTERPOL in helping States secure their borders and protecting their citizens from terrorists and other dangerous criminals who attempt to use fraudulent travel documents.

The CTC continues to welcome and value highly its close cooperation with both organizations.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

The CTC is fully supportive of the importance placed by ICAO on encouraging States to issue ICAO-compliant machine-readable travel documents (MRTDs) and electronic machine-readable travel documents (e-MRTDs).

These tools are essential to our joint efforts to help States prevent terrorist movements.

The Committee shares ICAO's view that a holistic, coherent and coordinated approach to the issuance of travel documents is critical. A travel document is only as secure as the various safeguards built into the entire system to ensure that the identity of the individual to whom the passport is being issued is genuine.

The Committee therefore considers the ICAO TRIP Strategy to be the best way to help States meet their international obligations under resolution 1373. It is essential to develop a holistic and systematic model for traveller identification management and to ensure that all Member States have the capacity to uniquely identify individuals.

I fully endorse the TRIP Strategy and look forward to continuing our close cooperation aimed at promoting its implementation by all Member States.

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I am also aware of the need to provide capacity-building assistance for the Strategy's implementation and to strengthen the facilitation of technical assistance, linking donor funding, States in need and ICAO expertise.

The CTC and its Executive Directorate are committed to working with ICAO to help procure the resources needed to meet the technical assistance needs associated with the Strategy's roll-out.

I welcome ICAO's intention to focus on the practical implementation of the TRIP Strategy and I encourage all States represented here today to intensify their efforts — as an integral part of their overall national counter-terrorism efforts — to develop and implement a robust identification-management system that safeguards the security and integrity of the passport-issuance process.

In doing so, they will not only be in full compliance with the relevant Security Council resolutions, but also taking a significant step towards protecting their borders from terrorists and other criminals and towards ensuring the safety of their citizens.

I wish you all a fruitful day's discussions and look forward to learning about your ideas and proposals.

Thank you.