



**Towards the Implementation of the Joint Plan of Action for the
United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia
Training on “Good Practices in Border Security and Management to Strengthen
National and Regional Capacities in Countering Terrorism”
Proposed dates: 15-19 October 2018
Ashgabat, Turkmenistan
Concept Note**

Rationale

In the Joint Plan of Action (JPoA) for the Implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (GCTS) in Central Asia, adopted in November 2011, Central Asian countries stressed the need for more efforts “aimed at identifying measures to address border management problems in the region.” They also resolved “to enhance national, regional and international cooperation, information exchange and joint training between the police, security agencies and border forces across the region.”

Central Asian States strive to secure their borders through a variety of measures, including surveillance, physical barriers, joint control operations and patrols, information exchange, intelligence assessment and engagement with border communities on control and policing issues. Nevertheless, challenges – both existing and new - are numerous, prompting the need to review modalities for cooperation.

Cooperation is especially necessary given concerns about the potential return of foreign terrorist fighters FTFs to Central Asia, as well as the opening of an ISIS/Daesh front in Afghanistan, with the ensuing challenges these developments pose for border control and border security. Central Asia is also a region where there is a large flux of movement of populations and goods, licit and illicit, transiting from neighboring regions such as Russia and Afghanistan, making border security paramount for stability. Protracted and new threats require a complex approach to securing borders that goes beyond mere interdiction and border control and starts with political will for cooperation around border security management.

In order to respond to the needs identified in the JPoA, the UN CTITF (now UNOCT) and UNRCCA, in collaboration with the OSCE Transnational Threats Department/Action against Terrorism Unit (TNTD/ATU), organized a first regional workshop on “Border Security and Management for Countering Terrorism” on March 4-6, 2015 in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, during the Phase 2 of the project on the Implementation of the UN Global Counter Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia. During that meeting, participants identified the following measures to prevent the trespassing of illegal groups and individuals: The need to implement a comprehensive strategy to fight terrorism at the borders, and that starts with multidimensional cooperation between law enforcement agencies and different units in charge of different sectors within the country: national security committees, border guards and police, customs units, police, financial intelligence units, prosecutors etc. It also requires synergies and combining different national strategies, such as counter-terrorism, counter-narcotics, integrated border management etc.

In addition to intra-agency and inter-agency cooperation, participants also identified the need for adequate cross-country cooperation, joint exercises and experience sharing between law enforcement bodies of Central Asia. Other measures identified by participants were the need for adequate legal framework, improving the flow of data, gathering, sharing, analysis and employing new tools and technologies for surveillance/interdiction. Above all, participants identified the need for more capacity building and training for law enforcement bodies, especially but not limited to border guards, in the area of border security and management for countering terrorism more effectively.

Participants of the regional workshop recommended that more capacity building exercises be held in support of the challenge faced by border guards and law enforcement bodies to prevent the movement of FTFs. This is especially important given that border authorities are not trained on the specific challenges posed by the potential return of FTFs from Syria and Iraq, and they are not equipped with the necessary equipment. Such capacity building would also inline with efforts to fulfill the requirements of UN Security Council Resolution 2178 (2014) reaffirming that “all States shall prevent the movement of terrorists or terrorist groups by effective border controls...”

The Government of Turkmenistan, has agreed to host the first of a series of regional training workshops which will be organized through the Third Phase of the Project in support of the implementation of the JPoA by UNOCT/UNCCT and UNRCCA. Turkmenistan was host of the meeting during which the JPoA was adopted in 2011 and the high-level meeting chaired by the UN Secretary General during which the implementation of JPoA was reviewed and the Ashgabat Declaration was adopted in 2017.

The UNOCT, in cooperation with the capacity Building Unit of UNCCT and the UNRCCA, are planning a Training that aims to strengthen the national and regional border security in the context of counterterrorism and prevention of free movement of FTFs. The five-day regional training on “Good Practices in Border Security and Management to Strengthen National and Regional Capacities in Countering Terrorism” will be organized from October 15-19, 2018 in Ashgabat.

Objectives

The objectives of the training are:

- ⇒ To familiarize representatives of law enforcement bodies, border guards, customs and immigration officials with the latest tools to assess risks and improve border security, bring them up to date on methods terrorists use to cross international borders and help them learn to mitigate the risk of illegal border crossings;
- ⇒ To enhance cross-border exchanges and harmonization of policy around border security for effective counter-terrorism at the regional level through the strengthening Joint Border Cooperation Centers and Liaison Officer Systems; and
- ⇒ To increase the capacity of Central Asian States in reinforcing their border controls and preventing the freedom of movement of FTFs.

Modality

The 5-day training will emphasize interaction and discussion to maximize the possibilities for exchanges. It will also include formal educational/training modules and interactive sessions

for brainstorming and discussions in order to ensure skills building and learning through participatory methods.

Themes covered during the training include:

- ⇒ Key areas in the national Border Management Strategies (BMS)
- ⇒ Inter-agency cooperation
- ⇒ Intra-agency cooperation
- ⇒ Border Community Policing
- ⇒ Engagement with Border Communities
- ⇒ Cross-border Cooperation and Information Exchange
- ⇒ Cross-border operational engagement and joint patrolling
- ⇒ Strengthening Joint Border Cooperation Centers and Liaison Officer Systems
- ⇒ Risk Analysis and Information Gathering
- ⇒ Anti-Corruption Measures

Targeted participants

- Up to six government officials, from the border related branches of government, responsible for border security and management, including from government ministries, the intelligence units, counter-terrorism investigation bureaus, transnational crime prevention offices.
- The course is targeted at senior level management and experts in BSM, counterterrorism and intelligence officers.
- To fulfill the objectives set forth by the UN Sustainable Development Goal No. 5 in promoting gender equality and the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in incorporating gender perspectives in all UN peace and security efforts, we would like to request a gender balance of nominated officers for the training.
- Participants nominated should have familiarity with their national BSM.