



Mission Critical or Mission Creep?

Issues to Consider for the Future of the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee and Its Executive Directorate

BY ALISTAIR MILLAR

The current mandate of the UN Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), which authorizes it to continue operating as a Special Political Mission, expires at the end of 2017. CTED's new Executive Director, Michèle Coninsx, was appointed in August 2017 and is expected to take up her duties in November. The mandate renewal and new Executive Director's appointment offer opportunities to consider CTED's future activities and focus at a time when the organizational, policy, and threat landscapes differ greatly from those that existed when CTED was established in 2004 and when its last mandate was extended at the end of 2013.¹

CTED was established with the core mission of supporting the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) in monitoring the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1373 and facilitating technical assistance to member states to aid their implementation activities. Since 2004, however, CTED's mandate has expanded considerably in response to the evolution of the threat and the increased number of stakeholders benefiting from CTED assessments and analyses, a group that

includes not only the council itself, but also UN member states in general, regional and functional organizations, and other counterterrorism-relevant entities inside and outside the UN system.

In addition, the Security Council has passed or adopted dozens of resolutions and presidential statements since 2004, some simply reiterating or amplifying issues already addressed by previous resolutions at the heart of CTED's mission, such as Resolution 1373. Others, however, have directed CTED to expand its dialogue with member states to address, among other things, new emerging threats related to critical infrastructure, the integration of gender as a cross-cutting issue throughout its activities, the identification of gaps related to civil aviation, trafficking in persons for the purpose of supporting terrorism, and the prevention of weapons acquisition by terrorists. Still others have taken CTED completely beyond its original focus on traditional counterterrorism-related issues, for example, asking the directorate to develop guidelines for countering narratives used by terrorist groups to recruit and motivate new members.² All the while, CTED

¹ For more information, see Alistair Millar and Naureen Chowdhury Fink, "Getting Back to Basics? Renewing the Mandate of the UN Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate for 2014–2016," Center on Global Counterterrorism Cooperation (CGCC), November 2013.

² UN Security Council, "Statement by the President of the Security Council," S/PRST/2016/6, 11 May 2016.

continues to conduct country assessment visits, monitor member states' implementation of counterterrorism measures, and respond to new emerging trends and developments in the terrorism sphere.

In addition to the evolution of its mandate, CTED must also adapt to recent modifications to the UN bureaucracy that require thinking not only about how best it can serve the Security Council, but how it interacts with the broader constellation of UN actors working to support member states to counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism.

This brief looks at CTED's role in light of the need to maintain and strengthen its comparative advantage in assessing member states' counterterrorism efforts while addressing emerging threats of terrorism and aligning its working methodologies with these developments. It also assesses what CTED and the CTC can do to enhance coordination with its partners within and outside the UN system. It then examines the benefits and limitations of CTED's outputs in relation to its mandate, comparative advantage, capacity, and impact. It concludes by offering some ideas and recommendations for the Security Council, the CTC, and CTED to consider for the next four years and beyond.

Core Tasks: Evolution and Dilution of CTED

CTED's core assessment and assistance facilitation functions are critical not only for the Security Council and CTC, but more broadly for the UN system and UN member states. Yet, there is a clear risk of CTED becoming a victim of its own success by being asked by the CTC to take on the responsibilities and tasks that other parts of the UN system should be doing but have failed to deliver. CTED was established by Resolution 1535 and, at the time, tasked primarily with monitoring member state implementation of counterterrorism measures articulated clearly in Resolution 1373, which was enacted in reaction to the 9/11 attacks two weeks

earlier. Resolution 1377, which highlighted the member states' differing capacities to implement said counterterrorism measures, informed the usage of CTED assessments and CTED's role as a facilitator of technical assistance. Subsequently, Resolution 1456, which focused on enhancing CTC cooperation with international and regional organizations, led to CTED's role in convening special meetings that include these actors.

As the report that informed the drafting of Resolution 1535 states, Resolution 1373 and the relevant provisions of the declarations annexed to Resolutions 1377 and 1456 provide the CTC's mandate.³ The Security Council endorsed that report, and it forms the basis for the resolution that created CTED. It is critical that these foundational documents are considered in CTED's mandate renewal in order to ensure that the directorate remains focused on its core responsibilities and that the delivery of these tasks is enhanced instead of broadened. Today, CTED has to address almost 20 Security Council resolutions, which undermines its ability to attend to its core functions with no additional resources.

CTED was also given roles in supporting the implementation of measures to counter incitement of terrorism under Resolution 1624 and developing comprehensive and integrated counterterrorism strategies under Resolution 1963, which extended CTED's mandate in 2010. Beginning in 2013, the Security Council has given CTED additional responsibilities in 13 resolutions⁴ during a time when there were concerns about the output of and coordination with the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) and the UN Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT).⁵ Some of these resolutions are clearly connected to CTED's original mission as articulated in Resolution 1535. For example, Resolution 2309 calls for continued cooperation between CTED and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) to identify gaps and vulnerabilities on a matter clearly addressed under Resolution 1373. Similarly, CTED's responsibilities under Resolution

³ UN Security Council, "Letter Dated 19 February 2004 From the Chairman of the Security Council Committee Established Pursuant to Resolution 1373 (2001) Concerning Counter-Terrorism Addressed to the President of the Security Council," S/2004/124, 19 February 2004, annex ("Proposal for the Revitalisation of the Counter-Terrorism Committee," para. 2) (hereinafter CTC revitalization proposal).

⁴ UN Security Council, S/RES/2129, 17 December 2013; UN Security Council, S/RES/2133, 27 January 2014; UN Security Council, S/RES/2178, 24 September 2014; UN Security Council, S/RES/2195, 19 December 2014; UN Security Council, S/RES/2199, 12 February 2015; UN Security Council, S/RES/2242, 13 October 2015; UN Security Council, S/RES/2253, 17 December 2015; UN Security Council, S/RES/2309, 22 September 2016; UN Security Council, S/RES/2322, 12 December 2016; UN Security Council, S/RES/2331, 20 December 2016; UN Security Council, S/RES/2341, 13 February 2017; UN Security Council, S/RES/2354, 24 May 2017; UN Security Council, S/RES/2370, 2 August 2017.

⁵ Alistair Millar and Naureen Chowdhury Fink, "Blue Sky III: Taking UN Counterterrorism Efforts in the Next Decade From Plans to Action," Global Center on Cooperative Security, September 2016, p. 13, http://www.globalcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Blue-Sky-III_low-res.pdf.

2370 relating to preventing terrorists from acquiring weapons and under Resolution 2322 on international judicial cooperation are evidently close to the intent of Resolutions 1373 and 1535. Others, such as Resolution 2129, task CTED with sharing its core assessment, priority recommendations, and analysis in a nonconfidential format with other actors in order to, for example, inform actions on the design and delivery of capacity building by other UN entities and external partners, such as the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF). The resolution also tasks CTED to assess and identify trends and developments relating to its core resolutions, to share them with UN bodies and give input when requested by the CTC on practical implications of these trends and developments. Although the CTC as well as the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and more recently ICAO and Interpol have been very proactive in seeking CTED advice and support in policy formulation and promotion of international cooperation, relying on its assessment, expertise, and analysis, other UN bodies have not been aware of this potential for cooperation or been active in benefiting from it.

Going forward, the Security Council may not be able to prevent itself from adopting new resolutions that address emerging threats to international peace and security, similar to Resolution 2178 on stemming the flow of foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs). Nevertheless, it may want to consider encouraging its own members that wish to spearhead the drafting of new counterterrorism resolutions to focus on implementing mechanisms within the UN system other than CTED, unless the measures fall squarely within CTED's core mandate. In particular, the Security Council should not ask CTED to take on specific tasks that fall more appropriately in the domain of member state competencies or those of other UN or non-UN bodies. For example, unlike assessing member states' capacity to collect and share digital evidence that plays a key element in investigation and prosecution of terrorism cases and facilitating relevant technical assistance, discussing the norms governing the internet at the CTC runs the risk of swerving CTED out of its lane as a technical body and into the dangers of oncoming traffic of potentially charged political matters.

The CTC has received and examined an unprecedented amount of information since the adoption of Resolution 1373, an achievement possible in no small part due to CTED's knowledge and expertise. Furthermore, the

directorates staff have cultivated and sustained valuable relationships with practitioners in member states and in functional and regional bodies around the world. The value of CTED's contributions should not be underestimated and certainly not diluted. It could and should be used to greater effect within and outside the UN system.

There will be diminishing returns if CTED meanders from its core functions, primarily, monitoring implementation of Resolutions 1373, 1624, and 2178 and gathering and using that information optimally to assist the entire global counterterrorism effort, and is asked to do other tasks that could be undertaken by non-Security Council bodies. This is too much, even if done to compensate for other parts of the UN system not functioning adequately. Tasking CTED with an active and ongoing role in the implementation of almost 20 resolutions and counting is evidence of understandable but un-strategic mission creep.

Looking ahead, the Security Council resolution on CTED's mandate renewal should ask the new Executive Director to provide an annex to her first report and work plan to the CTC. That annex should include a stocktaking of what CTED is doing, with recommendations regarding activities that are not core to CTED's intended original mission (e.g., work on counternarratives or on convening academic and other non-governmental researchers) and that might more appropriately be performed by the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) and UNCCT or others.

Assessment: Impact and Follow-Up

CTED's unique function of assessing member states' implementation of counterterrorism measures has multiple advantages for member states, the CTC, and other stakeholders. CTED assessments include coordinated visits with various UN and multilateral agencies and ongoing dialogue with relevant national actors. Member states benefit by having their counterterrorism efforts evaluated against a set of international standards and best practices deemed essential for effectively countering terrorism and working with bilateral, regional, and international partners. The assessment exercise brings together more than a dozen international and regional experts, as well as UN bodies, and serves to consolidate their various assessment methodologies. It results in a list of prioritized recommendations agreed by all the participating organizations and the member

state. The assessment exercise therefore serves to coordinate and deconflict international counterterrorism-related guidance being provided to states, and it offers states clear recommendations that assist in prioritizing often competing national counterterrorism priorities.

In 2005, CTED was able to complete only a handful of visits to member states in a single year. Following the CTED 2008 review, additional types of visits were introduced in order to enable the CTC “to engage directly with a significantly greater number of countries each year.”⁶ As result, CTED has been able to visit 135 member states by October 2017, which is an impressive accomplishment. Although a great deal has been achieved in improving CTED assessment functions and methodologies, in the next review of CTED, it could be useful to explore still other types of assessment visits to keep pace with the evolving threats, particularly as concerns increase with respect to FTFs returning from conflict areas to their countries of origin or elsewhere. Consideration should be given to more frequent monitoring visits that are undertaken in different ways to suit the purpose of the task at hand, with comprehensive visits in some situations and more specific, risk-based visits in other circumstances

Maximization of the impact of its visits and assessments, however, requires political and technical follow-up, which has been lacking. The CTC and CTED need to follow up on the visits and assessments to ensure the full and effective implementation of the recommendations agreed by the visited member state and the CTC and to ensure that partners develop follow-up projects and activities that could assist member states in the needs identified by CTED. To improve that follow-up, the CTC might consider holding meetings with officials of visited member states to take stock of progress made in implementing the recommendations. This would elevate the political visibility of CTED assessment visits, which are confidential and rarely made aware to others, beyond a general press release on the CTC website.

Technical follow-up is also key to ensure that proper steps are taken to implement or facilitate the

implementation of the set of priority recommendations that would enable a member state to counter terrorism effectively. To enable additional technical follow-up, the CTC might explore ways to share CTED assessments with relevant partners within and outside the United Nations, ensuring that it is done in an expeditious manner so that those beyond the CTC, such as the UNOCT and the CTITF entities, among others, can benefit from the content of these assessments. Sharing these assessments would enable all partners working on counterterrorism issues to better allocate their budgets for delivering projects rather than reassessing what has been already assessed by CTED. It would also enable all relevant UN actors to speak with the same legal and technical counterterrorism language when they deal with member states, perhaps by following the example that the Financial Action Task Force employs in this regard on matters related to anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism, with information available on one website for other partners to consult. CTED should endeavor to conduct its assessments and analyses in a manner that is more useful, accessible, and targeted toward specific audiences within the United Nations (e.g., the UNOCT and UNODC) and outside (e.g., the GCTF and Interpol), which will enhance these actors’ understanding of trends and improve their capacity-building efforts.

Finally, although the usefulness and impact of CTED assessments are taken for granted, there is little quantitative information in that regard. As part of its efforts to follow up on its assessments, CTED should track, to the extent possible, contributions by its assessments or recommendations toward improvements in member states’ counterterrorism efforts (e.g., new or amended laws and guidelines). CTED should also note where its assessments have helped to guide or inform the counterterrorism-related assistance or capacity-building efforts of other UN agencies, donors, and partners. This would help to ensure more systematic follow-up, allow for a more informed analysis of the effectiveness of its efforts, and allow CTED to justify and allocate its resources better.

⁶ UN Security Council, “Letter Dated 7 February 2008 From the Chairman of the Security Council Committee Established Pursuant to Resolution 1373 (2001) Concerning Counter-Terrorism Addressed to the President of the Security Council,” S/2008/80, 8 February 2008, annex (containing enclosure titled “Organizational Plan for the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate,” para. 8).

Coordination in Light of Architectural Changes

Over the past decade, there have been numerous recommendations for the United Nations to improve its inadequate coordination on countering terrorism and preventing and countering violent extremism. These ideas for improvement have come from within and outside the organization. For example, in 2012 the Secretary-General's five-year action agenda called for "consideration by relevant intergovernmental bodies of creating a single UN counter-terrorism coordinator."⁷ More comprehensive recommendations have come from independent observers, including the Global Center on Cooperative Security through its series of biannual "Blue Sky" reports.⁸ Many of these recommendations have been examined and discussed over the years, finally resulting in changes to the UN architecture in 2017.

The key overhaul came with the establishment of the new UNOCT, approved by consensus in the General Assembly in June 2017. Its stated purpose is to assist member states implement the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.⁹ It involves moving the CTITF and UNCCT from the UN Department of Political Affairs and putting them into the new UNOCT, together with their existing staff and all associated regular and extrabudgetary resources. There was certainly a long overdue need to clarify the purpose of the CTITF and UNCCT, as well as to try to untangle the relationship between them. There had become an increasingly yawning gap between overpromising and underdelivering on coordination across the nearly 40 members of the CTITF that contribute to the implementation of the Strategy and capacity building since the CTITF was established in 2005.¹⁰ There is now hope that the UNOCT and the appointment of Under-Secretary-General Vladimir Ivanovich Voronkov to lead this office will help to turn these efforts into something more transparent, coherent, and impactful.

It remains to be seen how the UNOCT will work alongside other counterterrorism-specific entities within the UN system, not the least of which is CTED. A lack of guidance portends that proper coordination may continue to be elusive. Noting without offering any specifics that "channels for communication already exist" between CTED and the entities now under the UNOCT, the plan approved by the General Assembly explicitly mentions that the new UNOCT Under-Secretary-General will "not have supervisory responsibilities over CTED"; the UNOCT would report through the Secretary-General to the General Assembly, "whereas CTED reports to the Security Council." Despite the fact that a key purpose of creating the UNOCT was to overcome long-standing problems related to inadequate coordination across UN counterterrorism and preventing violent extremism (PVE) bodies and programming, the potential for ongoing confusion about how the General Assembly-mandated and the Security Council-mandated agencies will work together is still likely, especially because these separate mandates are showing increasing signs of overlap.

CTED has a staff of up to 40 individuals (20 experts and 20 administrative support). This is the largest full-time body of counterterrorism experts in the UN system, yet they are not under the direction of the new Under-Secretary-General. Institutionalizing and clearly articulating the relationship between CTED and the UNOCT on an operational basis is essential so that the exchange of information between the two offices is regular and systematic. As the UNOCT takes shape, the Under-Secretary-General should work closely with CTED to ensure that the United Nations is better prepared to engage with partners such as the GCTF. This would help to ensure that data and analysis generated from assessments lead to better informed capacity-building action and, most importantly, implementation of counterterrorism and PVE measures guided in practice by clear roles and responsibilities for each player across all four pillars of the Strategy.

⁷ "The Secretary-General's Five-Year Action Agenda," United Nations, 25 January 2012, https://www.un.org/sg/sites/www.un.org.sg/files/atoms/files/sg_agenda_2012.pdf.

⁸ See James Cockayne et al., "Reshaping United Nations Counterterrorism Efforts: Blue-Sky Thinking for Global Counterterrorism Cooperation 10 Years After 9/11," CGCC, 2012, http://globalcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Reshaping_UNCTEfforts_Blue-Sky-Thinking.pdf; Naureen Chowdhury Fink et al., "Blue Sky II: Progress and Opportunities in Implementing the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy," Global Center, April 2014, <http://www.globalcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Blue-Sky-II-Low-Res.pdf>; Millar and Fink, "Blue Sky III."

⁹ UN General Assembly, A/RES/71/291, 19 June 2017.

¹⁰ Fink et al., "Blue Sky II," pp. 6–10.

Guided by national counterterrorism and PVE strategies and action plans, many member states have realized in their own country contexts that particular tasks are better handled by specific entities with the appropriate expertise and mandates as part of a wider counterterrorism strategy. It is obvious that although the military has one role, law enforcement has another, as do other, less traditional actors engaged in prevention work. Coordination and consistency are important, but it makes no sense for each of them to overlap and interfere by trying to handle the other's tasks. Unfortunately, this reality has not set in at the United Nations when it comes to Strategy implementation. To fix this problem, the Security Council and the CTC must remember what CTED is best placed to do and resist the temptation to introduce more tasks in the future unless a UN body other than CTED cannot undertake these. The council can also direct the CTC and CTED to focus on elements of Pillar II of the Strategy and facilitate the work of others on Pillar III (e.g., the UNODC Terrorism Prevention Branch [TPB]), while being mindful of and, where necessary, compliant with the important elements enshrined in Pillars I, i.e., Resolution 1624, and IV, to help ensure that member states counter terrorism while complying with international law, including human rights law, and refugee law. Also, CTED should promote more roles for women in law enforcement and respect for human rights as it assesses member state compliance with core resolutions, which does not mean they should develop comprehensive work streams on these issues. There should be limits on what each actor in the UN system is doing in order to ensure each performs its functions according to its mandate and strengths while assisting others to deliver theirs.

An essential first step is to conduct a stocktaking of the overlap between what the UNOCT and CTED are doing as the basis to inform a more streamlined approach going forward. Division of labor is usually realized fully only if it flows from clear directives. There are some precedents for the Security Council to consider. For example, serious concerns about the threat posed by FTFs led the council to issue a presidential statement in May 2015 calling for the council's 1267/1989 Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee and the CTC to work together more seamlessly to monitor and assess the FTF phenomena and support member state efforts to implement Resolution 2178.¹¹ The statement

also urged more constructive cooperation with non-Security Council entities (e.g., UNODC and the CTITF) to ensure that the efforts of the CTC and 1267/1989 Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee informed the design and delivery of capacity-building programs. This cooperation between the aforementioned council committees and at the expert level between CTED and the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team was quite effective. Furthermore, although the Security Council cannot direct the work of General Assembly-mandated bodies, it "encourage[d]" the then CTITF Office to develop an FTF action plan on the basis of the assessments of the council's subsidiary counterterrorism bodies. Although the outcome of such exercise merits enhancement, CTED may use the language in the council presidential statement during its review to encourage the directorate's partners, such as UNODC and the UNOCT, to develop their activities on the basis of CTED assessments.

The new architecture and any improved coordination that flows from it can and should be drawn from existing resources for all entities. The CTC must make the case for additional resources for any enhanced mechanisms or revamped working methods. The argument can be made that CTED, for example, cannot be expected to work with almost the same number of staff who were appointed to attend to a few tasks in 2004, when it has been tasked with multiple tasks since then. In addition, it can be argued that the burden of coordination with a new office will require more time and effort. There is an oft-repeated quote: "Bureaucracy gives birth to itself and then expects maternity benefits." With all of the Security Council- and General Assembly-mandated entities involved, improved outputs should be possible within existing resources. At the same time, however, the evolution of the threat of terrorism, the expanded multidisciplinary approach required to address it, and the need to make an impact are "nonbureaucratic" goals, and these very goals should be met with adequate resources.

Simply stated, CTED needs adequately resourced staff to fulfill its core functions: conducting monitoring missions and assessments that set priorities and otherwise inform capacity building by others in the UN system. Whether that can be achieved through the reallocation of existing resources to those core tasks or whether it

¹¹ UN Security Council, "Statement by the President of the Security Council," S/PRST/2015/11, 29 May 2015.

requires additional staff and budgetary resources is for the CTC to determine.

Communication

In its efforts to revitalize the CTC and establish CTED, the Security Council stressed the importance of effective communication.¹² It called for the creation of an Information and Administration Office that would not only support the assessment experts within CTED, but also implement a proactive communications policy and manage the CTC website, publications, and other material.¹³ There have been improvements to the website in recent years, but the CTED communications output could be much more effective. Improved communication will help to advance coordination and cooperation within the UN system and with external partners. It will allow for more systematic and user-friendly sharing of the valuable information generated by CTED through its assessments, ensuring that its findings inform actions by others. At the moment, CTED products, such as the Global Implementation Survey of Resolutions 1373 and 1646, are not benefiting from optimal reach and impact.

Encouraging member states to brief the CTC is also an important method to enhance communication and engagement. Similarly, special meetings can perform an important outreach function along with comprehensive site visits; but communication is most effective when it is disciplined, clear, and targeted. Concise, regularly updated information sheets about CTED's delivery of its core mandate, as well as its broader impact on Strategy implementation, would be a welcome addition. At the end of the day, its effective actions are the best mode of communication.

Conclusions

As the Security Council considers the extension of CTED's mandate, it should refocus that body on its core assessment and analysis functions and enhancing, disseminating, and following up on those outputs. The burden of other tasks, most notably capacity building, should be undertaken by other parts of the UN system but informed by CTED in a far more seamless and streamlined manner. Additional resources could be allocated to the readjustment and alignment of these

two ultimate goals with their respective entities but not solely to add an array of new tasks. The specific conclusions that stem from these general findings should be explicitly addressed in the language of the resolution that renews CTED's mandate as a Special Political Mission before the end of this year in relation to three intertwined issues.

1. Core Tasks

- The Security Council resolution renewing CTED's mandate should ask the Executive Director to provide an annex to her first report and work plan to the CTC that takes stock of what CTED is doing and includes recommendations that indicate which areas are essential (e.g., gathering information, assessing it, and using it effectively to advise member states and to provide relevant partners inside and outside the United Nations with prioritized assessment and evidence-based analysis of trends, good practices, and gaps) and identify tasks that are not core to CTED's intended original mission and examine whether they should necessarily continue (e.g., work on counternarratives or on convening academic and other nongovernmental researchers) or may more appropriately be performed by bodies such as the UNOCT and UNCCT.
- The Security Council should consider providing additional resources for CTED to carry out its mandate effectively and in full in light of the expanded "core tasks" so far.
- The Security Council should not ask CTED to assume responsibility for specific tasks that fall more appropriately within the domain of member state competencies or those of other UN or non-UN bodies.
- Any additional meetings, including special meetings with international, regional, and functional organizations, should be limited to enhancing exchanges of good practices and building enduring networks among officials and experts with specific relevance to CTED's core mandate.

2. Coordination

- The Security Council should proactively clarify the relationship between the UNOCT, headed by a new Under-Secretary-General, and CTED by

¹² CTC revitalization proposal.

¹³ Ibid.

requesting that the incoming CTED Executive Director meet at least once a month with the Under-Secretary-General to discuss matters that are of mutual interest and benefit. This would include providing information from CTED's analysis about capacity-building needs for the UNOCT to consider and address. The Under-Secretary-General also should be invited to brief CTED at least twice a year.

- At the working level, the CTED Executive Director and the Under-Secretary-General should appoint a staff member and support staff to meet regularly and promote more interaction, generating action items (mindful of the need for a division of labor) to be shared at staff meetings and acted on accordingly; to exchange information in an expeditious manner; to ensure the integration of operational data into policy discussions in each office; to secure the prompt sharing of prioritized recommendations resulting from confidential assessments; to provide quick referrals to UNOCT projects and prompt feedback on priorities; to reach out in a united manner to donors; and to explore ways to align the strategies of each office to the extent possible while bearing in mind their different mandates and the different UN bodies to whom they report.

3. Communication

- The Security Council should insist that CTED communicate more effectively within and outside the UN system. States should allow for the information gathered from site visits and reports to be shared. CTED should make better use of its country assessments, prioritized recommendations, and analysis on trends to provide clear direction and stimulate better informed actions, such as projects and capacity-building efforts undertaken, for example, by the UNOCT and UNODC TPB.
- CTED should track and make available information assessing and demonstrating the impact of its efforts, including its contribution to implementing the Strategy and its work with others within the UN system.
- Member states should make themselves available to the CTC and inform the committee of issues, trends, and developments that affect them, including steps that they have taken and measures that they have introduced to implement their obligations under the relevant resolutions and the recommendations of the assessment visits.
- CTED should more regularly and systematically engage with nongovernmental actors, especially as part of its comprehensive assessment missions.

About the Author

Alistair Millar is the Howard S. Brembeck Fellow and serves as the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Global Center on Cooperative Security, which he founded in 2004. He is also President of the Fourth Freedom Forum and an adjunct professor at The George Washington University.

Acknowledgments

This policy brief was funded by the government of Norway and informed by consultations, interviews, and survey responses from UN officials and member state representatives and external experts. The author is grateful to Eelco Kessels, Jason Ipe, and others who reviewed earlier drafts.

The views expressed in this policy brief are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Global Center, its advisory council, or the government of Norway.

Suggested citation: Alistair Millar, “Mission Critical or Mission Creep? Issues to Consider for the Future of the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee and Its Executive Directorate,” Global Center on Cooperative Security, October 2017.

About the Global Center

The Global Center on Cooperative Security works with governments, international organizations, and civil society to develop and implement comprehensive and sustainable responses to complex international security challenges through collaborative policy research, context-sensitive programming, and capacity development. In collaboration with a global network of expert practitioners and partner organizations, the Global Center fosters stronger multilateral partnerships and convenes key stakeholders to support integrated and inclusive security policies across national, regional, and global levels.