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Promoting Resilience of "Soft" Targets against Terrorist Attacks through Public-Private Partnerships

16-17 December 2019

OUTCOME DOCUMENT

Hofburg, Vienna

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, terrorists have increasingly exploited the open nature and public character of "soft" targets to maximize civilian casualties, chaos, publicity and economic impact. Attacks against "soft" targets, "a term typically used to describe public places or other locations that are easily accessible and predominantly civilian in nature"[1], such as concert halls, pedestrian zones, public transportation, hotels, schools, sport venues and places of worship, are often small scale and low cost, using knives and guns, improvised explosive devices or vehicles as weapons. However, there is also growing concern about the potential misuse of new technologies, including the use of drones.

On 16-17 December 2019, more than 120 international experts, representatives from international and regional organizations, the private sector, academia and civil society gathered in Vienna to explore how to strengthen the resilience of "soft" targets against terrorist attacks through public-private partnerships.

The event, organized by the Action against Terrorism Unit of the OSCE Secretariat's Transnational Threats Department (TNTD/ATU), served as a platform for experts to share knowledge and experiences, *inter alia*, on the establishment of public-private partnerships, involving local actors and the private sector, as well as on building public awareness and promoting community engagement.

2. THE INTERNATIONAL NORMATIVE FRAMEWORK

In December 2017, United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolution 2396[2] was the first to include specific references to "soft" targets.

UN Security Council Resolution 2396 (2017):

- *[PP] Acknowledges that returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters have attempted, organized, planned, or participated in attacks in their countries of origin or nationality, or third countries, including against "soft" targets, and that the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) also known as Da'esh, in particular has called on its supporters and affiliates to carry out attacks wherever they are located,*
- *[PP] Stresses the need for Member States to develop, review, or amend national risk and threat assessments to take into account "soft" targets in order to develop appropriate contingency and emergency response plans for terrorist attacks,*
- *[OP27] Calls upon Member States to establish or strengthen national, regional and international partnerships with stakeholders, both public and private, as appropriate, to share information and experience in order to prevent, protect, mitigate, investigate, respond to and recover from damage from terrorist attacks against "soft" targets;*
- *[OP28] Urges States able to do so to assist in the delivery of effective and targeted capacity development, training and other necessary resources, and technical assistance, where it is needed to enable all States to develop appropriate capacity to implement contingency and response plans with regard to attacks on "soft" targets;*

The UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy[3] [pillar II (para 18)] refers to infrastructure and public places as 'vulnerable targets'. In this context, it is important to recall UN Security Council Resolution 2341[4] on the protection of critical infrastructure against terrorist attacks, which was adopted in February

[1] CTED Analytical Brief: Responding to Terrorist Threats against Soft Targets, UNCTED, September 2019
[2] S/RES/2396 (2017)
[3] A/RES/60/288
[4] S/RES/2341 (2017)

2017. The importance of partnerships and the sharing of information was already recognized under this resolution.

On 27 December 2018, the UN Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee adopted addenda[5] to the Madrid Guiding Principles (2015), which provide guidance for an effective response to the evolving FTF phenomenon, including measures to be taken in the areas of protecting critical infrastructure, vulnerable targets, "soft" targets, and tourism sites.

3. INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL INITIATIVES

Momentum has been building on this issue, with States taking resolute action at the national level and the international community stepping up its efforts.

GCTF
GLOBAL COUNTERTERRORISM FORUM

The *Global Counter-Terrorism Forum (GCTF) Antalya Memorandum on the Protection of Soft Targets in a Counterterrorism Context*[6] offers a comprehensive set of non-binding good practices on understanding the threat landscape, risk assessments and information sharing, public private partnerships, as well as preparing, planning and protecting. In 2019, the GCTF adopted the *Berlin Memorandum on Good Practices for Countering Terrorist Use of Unmanned Aerial Systems*[7].

In 2018, the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (UNCTED), and INTERPOL, developed the *Compendium of Good Practices on the Protection of Critical Infrastructure against Terrorist Attacks*[8], which provides reference material and guidance on the development and strengthening of risk-reduction strategies, focusing on, *inter alia*, prevention, preparedness, mitigation, investigation, response, and recovery.

The OSCE has teamed up with UNOCT, UNCTED and INTERPOL to promote the Compendium of Good Practices on the Protection of Critical Infrastructure against Terrorist Attacks in the OSCE area.

UNITED NATIONS
Office of Counter-Terrorism

In 2020, the UNOCT is launching a *Global Programme on the protection of vulnerable targets against terrorist attacks*[9], with a focus on urban centres, tourist venues, religious sites, sporting events and the threats posed by UAS/drones. The multi-agency programme is implemented in co-operation with UNCTED, UNICRI, UN Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) and INTERPOL. It will support the development of capabilities and assist selected Member States in detecting, monitoring and countering threats against vulnerable targets, in particular through the development of collaborative approaches and public-private partnerships. The programme will also identify and share good practices, complementing the *Compendium of Good Practices*.

[5] S/2018/1177, Guiding Principles 15 and 16
[6] Antalya Memorandum on the Protection of Soft Targets in a Counterterrorism Context, GCTF, September 2017
[7] Berlin Memorandum on Good Practices for Countering Terrorist Use of Unmanned Aerial Systems, GCTF, September 2019
[8] The Protection of Critical Infrastructure against Terrorist Attacks: Compendium of Good Practices, UNOCT/UNCTED/INTERPOL, June 2018
[9] Vulnerable Targets, UNOCT website

In the context of the *Programme on Security of Major Sporting Events & Promotion of Sport and its Values to Prevent Violent Extremism*[10], the first international expert group meeting on security measures of major sporting events was held in New York on 3-4 February 2020. The programme is led by UNOCT, in partnership with UNICRI, UNAOC and the International Centre for Sport Security, and in consultation with UNCTED. It aims at developing innovative policies and practices to strengthen the protection of major sporting events, through enhanced international co-operation, public-private partnerships and sustainable security approaches.

The UNAOC developed the *UN Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites*[11] to support States in their efforts to ensure that religious sites are safe, worshipers can observe their rituals in peace, and values of compassion and tolerance are fostered globally. The UNOCT programme will contribute to operationalize this Plan.

INTERPOL works with law enforcement agencies around the globe to counter threats against "soft" targets. The diverse set of tools and instruments it offers for counter-terrorism investigations span from prevention (Major Events Support Teams and databases) to response (incident response teams, disaster victim identification, notices and diffusions). INTERPOL's Project Watchmaker aims at countering the global threat of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), chemical agents, biological agents and toxins, and emerging technologies used to deploy CBRNE materials.

At the regional level, the European Union (EU) has developed several initiatives to facilitate co-operation and to support its Member States in the field of "soft" target protection against terrorist attacks. The European Commission *Action Plan to support the protection of public spaces*[12] outlines operational measures to foster the exchange of expertise and involve different stakeholders, including cities and the private sector. EU expert formats, such as the Practitioner's Forum (for law enforcement practitioners and EU networks - ATLAS, AIRPOL, RAILPOL, the European Network of Law Enforcement Technology Services, the EU High Risk Security Network) and the Operators Forum (policy makers and operators from different sectors including mass events, hospitality, shopping malls, sports and cultural venues, transport hubs), work on approaches to better protect soft targets.

4. BEING PREPARED: SHARING KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

A. PREVENTION, PROTECTION, MITIGATION, INVESTIGATION, RESPONSE AND RECOVERY

In accordance with UN Security Council resolution 2396 (2017), States are encouraged to share information and experience with all stakeholders, including the private sector, as appropriate, in order to prevent, protect, mitigate, investigate, respond to and recover from damage from terrorist attacks.

In addressing "soft" targets protection, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) is developing measures proportionally adapted to the identified risk level, in order to avoid over-securitizing public life and the risk of infringing upon human rights and fundamental freedoms, such as privacy, freedom of expression and association. The focus of the BiH effort is on prevention and building strong partnerships with civil society, including religious communities. BiH also strives to create effective security for "soft" targets through detailed planning of civilian-military co-operation, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in case of a terror incident, communication strategies and protocols, a list of indicators for suspicious activity which are shared with government entities and societal stakeholders, a local risk profiling

[10] Sports and Security, UNOCT website
[11] UN Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites: In Unity and Solidarity for Safe and Peaceful Worship, UNAOC
[12] Action Plan to support the protection of public spaces, European Commission, October 2017

system and assistance to victims of terrorism. BiH currently works with foreign terrorist fighters returnees, including women and children, in order to determine which cases to prosecute, and where to institute disengagement programs or offer other kinds of support.

The *European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation* (EUROJUST) offers a regional platform for regular co-ordination meetings, co-ordinated and joint investigations, and the timely exchange of operational and strategic information. Other regional information-sharing tools and instruments include the European Judicial Counter-Terrorism Register and the Counter-Terrorism Conviction Monitor.

To secure major sporting events, the Counter-Terrorism Headquarters of the Spanish National Police conducts threat and risk assessments, and develops a security- and an intelligence framework plan. The security plan includes a *preparatory phase* to gather information, co-ordinate between stakeholders (e.g. sport clubs, private security providers, first responders, etc.), and develop corresponding emergency response. During the next phase (*alert phase*), key security personnel are deployed to core locations, and a detailed threat assessment and risk analysis is conducted. Preventative actions related to the event (accommodation checks, screening/providing of access cards) are then carried out. During the last phase (*operational phase*), 24 hours before the event, all security personnel are deployed and police conduct routine measures and searches for explosive devices, whilst carrying out continuous risk analysis. An operational co-ordination centre ensures effective and efficient communication during the major sporting event.

In response to specific terror incidents and threats in the national context, the Ministry of Defence of Belgium deploys military personnel at public places and critical infrastructure, demonstrating civil-military co-operation. At each level of preparedness, a comprehensive response is required from different stakeholders involved, including intelligence, law enforcement, private security firms and the military. To optimize security measures, also *vis-à-vis* "soft" targets, synergies between public-public and public-private actors should be identified and investments in technology and infrastructure should be considered.

B. PLACES OF WORSHIP AND SPORT VENUES

Places of worship and sport venues are often considered as "soft" targets in the national context. According to the Global Terrorism Database, attacks on places of worship have become more fatal in recent years. Terrorists have also targeted sporting events for a long time, including in recent years during the Boston marathon in 2013 and at the Stade de France in 2015.

The protection of crowded places and national critical infrastructure are two of the strategic objectives of the National Counter-Terrorism Security Office (NaCTSO) of the United Kingdom. NaCSTO developed the *Crowded Places Guidance*[13], which covers twelve sectors, including sporting stadia and places of worship. Most stadia and arenas are tiered crowded places and receive tailored advice from counterterrorism security advisors (CTSA's) based within police forces all over the UK. Following the targeting of the Stade de France in 2015, Counter Terrorism Policing has stepped up its engagement with the football industry and other stadia-based sports. A communication toolkit '*Know the Game Plan*'[14] was provided at the start of the 2016/17 season to increase the knowledge of and access to protective security advice offered by NaCTSO.

[13] Crowded Places Guidance, NaCSTO, 2017
[14] Know the Game Plan, NaCSTO

A terrorist plot to attack a Football World Cup qualifier game on 12 November 2016 was foiled by police in Albania. Through the sharing of information by partner law enforcement agencies, the terrorist plot was uncovered. Consequently, the Counter Terrorism Directorate of the Albanian State Police increased its alert mode and created a task force with the Prosecutor's Office, law enforcement agencies and private stakeholders. For security reasons, the venue for the game was changed and additional security measures were put in place.

The national security alert system, *Vigipirate Plan*[15], is a central tool of the French anti-terrorism system. The plan lists 300 measures that apply to 13 action areas, such as facilities and buildings, and mass gatherings. The *Vigipirate Plan* rests on three pillars, namely vigilance, prevention and protection, and involves all actors, including the State, local authorities, businesses and citizens. The Public Security Directorate of the Ministry of Interior in France highlighted the role of a network of 500 crime prevention officers whose mission is to anticipate and assess the risk, analyze each identified threat and develop an appropriate protection strategy. Since 2015, France has prioritized the protection of "soft" targets, including places of worship and sport venues. Security audits have been conducted for schools, in country and abroad, hospitals, the European Football Championship, etc.

In Tajikistan, protecting places of worship from terrorist attacks is a priority for the Ministry of Internal Affairs and relevant bodies. The Directorate on Countering Organized Crime of the Ministry of Internal Affairs promotes interagency co-operation and engages the general public and civil society in national counterterrorism efforts. To that end, the Ministry adopted a strategy on working with civil society in 2018 as well as a law on enhancing public involvement. Public involvement has also been enhanced through the establishment of a reporting hotline and various public-awareness campaigns.

C. INVOLVING LOCAL ACTORS AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR

To effectively protect "soft" targets, many of which are privately owned and operated, it is crucial to strengthen partnerships with all stakeholders, including local actors and private sector owners and operators. Since the adoption of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in 2006, the role of the private sector has steadily increased, and many countries have adopted legislation stipulating the importance of public-private partnerships in preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism (VERLT).

UBER has dedicated Law Enforcement Operations teams across the globe that work to strengthen partnerships with local law enforcement agencies, ensuring safety and preparedness everywhere that UBER operates. These teams, largely composed of former law enforcement officers, maintain close contact with national counter terrorism departments, enabling efficient transfer of UBER data when an incident occurs. UBER abides by local legal processes to shorten response times and supports emergency services through its '*Decision Action Cycle*', which can involve enforcing blackout zones and preventing people from requesting rides to the incident location, among other measures. Establishing networks at the local level has proven key to successful co-ordination between UBER and law enforcement agencies related to prevention, protection, mitigation, recovery and response to terrorist incidents.

[15] Tackling Terrorism Together, Vigilance, Prevention, and Protection against the Terrorist Threat, Sécretariat Général de la Defense et de la Sécurité Nationale, December 2016

Antwerp Shield[16], a project initiated by the Antwerp Police in Belgium, is part of a wider global program that aims to facilitate information sharing between law enforcement agencies and the public-private sector at the local level. Members of the Antwerp Shield network can benefit from training courses, weekly briefings on terrorism and radicalization to violence, annual meetings with all members, as well as the opportunity for direct communication with other members. The Shield network intends to expand further into Europe.

In the counter terrorism context, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) focuses its efforts for enhancing engagement with public-private partners around building awareness of the threat environment, strengthening information sharing between law enforcement and public-private partners, and the facilitation of suspicious activity reporting. Through its National Critical Infrastructure Team, the RCMP engages in various ways with stakeholders responsible for the protection of Canadian critical infrastructure (including the development of intelligence products and counter terrorism awareness training sessions) to ensure strong partnerships and a sense of shared responsibility over countering terrorism.

NorthPoint International Ltd offers security, crisis management and incident response training to the hotel sector, as well as advisory services in support of governmental counterterrorism initiatives in the tourism sector. As good practices in establishing public-private partnerships, it highlighted the need for reliable threat assessments, trusted personal relationships, communication, collaboration and contribution.

Federal Ministry Republic of Austria Interior

The Federal Agency for State Protection and Counter Terrorism of Austria fully developed its PVE/CVE strategy in 2018, creating a Prevent Unit that operates at the grassroots level to prevent violent extremism that leads to terrorism. The Agency relies heavily on co-ordination with and expertise from the private sector, such as tailored policy papers and data sharing.

D. PUBLIC AWARENESS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The development of responses from prevention to recovery should also include engagement with civil society and the public in general. UN Security Council Resolution 2341 (2017) acknowledges the role that informed, and alert communities can play in promoting awareness and understanding of the threat environment, as well as the importance of expanding public awareness and engagement in general.

The Protection of Public Spaces Branch of the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency is responsible for enhancing societal preparedness for major accidents and crises, including terrorist attacks on public spaces. The Agency works to raise public awareness and trust in authorities through disseminating transparent guidelines and videos. It also delivers trainings for both, public and private actors, and conducts regular risk and vulnerability assessments.

MSB Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency

The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Division of the US Department for Homeland Security offers a wealth of training initiatives and guidelines to law enforcement, the private sector and the general public on preventing and countering terrorism, applying a whole-of-community approach to ensure alert and informed communities. The *Guide to Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience*[17]

[16] Antwerp Shield website, Antwerp Police
[17] A Guide to Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience, Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, US Department of Homeland Security, November 2019

(November 2019), is one such resource on mitigating potential risks associated with crowded spaces and "soft" targets.

The International Centre for Sport Security (ICSS) works, *inter alia*, to protect "soft" targets in the context of major sporting events, including by promoting public-private partnerships and community engagement. The ICSS has developed several tools to facilitate reporting from civil society to national authorities as well as grassroots level projects, envisaging sport-related volunteering opportunities and workshops to youth and vulnerable groups, as part of efforts to prevent radicalization that leads to terrorism and create resilient communities with a sense of common responsibility. The ICSS takes part as an official partner in the UNOCT leaded-programme on security of major sporting events and the promotion of sport to prevent violent extremism.

The Service for Combating Terrorism of the Ministry of Interior in Serbia focuses on enhancing the capacities of local actors such as law enforcement, educational institutions, and social services in preventing radicalization and violent extremism that leads to terrorism and promoting positive community values, through specialized trainings and workshops. It has also established a dedicated Initial Radicalization Risk Assessment Team, working on the ground to detect radicalization amongst vulnerable groups.

The ZIP Institute, a civil society organization based in North Macedonia, aims to address pressing societal issues and build tolerance at the local level through community engagement. Through its tailored workshops and programmes, ZIP facilitates open dialogue, creating safe spaces for the most vulnerable groups in society to discuss issues such as violent extremism and radicalization that leads to terrorism.

5. WAY FORWARD

States ultimately define what constitutes critical infrastructure and "soft" targets, based on the national context, as they bear the primary responsibility to protect their citizens. However, there is an increasing need for co-operation and partnerships between States and with private stakeholders that often own, operate and manage critical infrastructure and "soft" targets. "Soft" target protection is therefore complex and requires multiple streams of effort, including threat and risk assessment, intelligence and information sharing, co-ordination and dialogue, as well as engaging with the public and communities.

The OSCE can help address these challenges in protecting "soft" targets. As part of a robust toolbox to prevent and counter terrorism and VERLT, the Organization has designed a comprehensive programme on protecting critical infrastructure against terrorist attacks. The OSCE approach encourages thorough threat and risk assessments, cross-sectoral co-ordination when developing national contingency and response plans, public private partnerships, and sustainable community engagement.

Currently, the OSCE is working in close partnership with the UNOCT, UNCTED and INTERPOL to support States in the implementation of their commitments to protect critical infrastructure against terrorist attacks. A first regional expert workshop in South-Eastern Europe[18] was organized in Skopje, North Macedonia, on 19-21 November 2019. A second regional expert workshop in Central Asia will be held in 2020. At the request of OSCE participating States, TNTD/ATU stands ready to organize additional workshops in the OSCE area.

[18] OSCE and international partners open regional workshop in South-Eastern Europe on protection of critical infrastructure against terrorist attacks, OSCE website, November 2019

To promote partnerships between States and the private sector, the OSCE will continue to foster an inclusive dialogue for the exchange of information and expertise, highlighting the role of civil society, and upholding human rights and other fundamental freedoms.

As a follow-up to the workshops, the OSCE will develop further tailored capacity-building and technical assistance, in full complementarity with international and regional partners[19].

[19] The OSCE will work in full complementarity with its international and regional partners, e.g. by coordinating its work through international mechanisms such as the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact Working Group on Emerging Threats and Critical Infrastructure Protection

6. CONTACT DETAILS

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