Implementation of the UN Global Counterterrorism Strategy

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Executive Summary

The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy was adopted by the General Assembly (GA) on September 8, 2006 (General Assembly Resolution 60/288).[1] This event marked the first time member states agreed to a comprehensive, global, strategic framework on counterterrorism since the issue came before the League of Nations in 1934. The strategy aims to bring all the counterterrorism activities of the United Nations system into a common framework, putting special emphasis on the Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED) and the Secretariat's Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF). The GA is scheduled to review progress on the strategy in September of 2008, adding urgency and incentive for UN agencies, member states, and other actors to show progress on its implementation.

To examine how the international community of intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), governments, and transnational actors could better implement the counterterrorism strategy, the Stanley Foundation convened its 42nd conference on the United Nations of the Next Decade, "Implementation of the UN Global Counterterrorism Strategy," on June 8-13, 2007. Representatives and experts from the United Nations, national governments, think tanks, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) met in St. Michaels, Maryland, to discuss how future activities could be made more effective and coherent.

The primary conclusions of the assembled participants—on points of both policy and UN organization—stressed the following issues and ways forward:

Defining Terrorism: The Role of a Human Rights–Based Approach

There is a widespread feeling inside and outside of UN circles that global counterterrorism initiatives are primarily of importance to the "Northern" states while, in fact, the majority of deaths from terrorism are South-South rather than South-North in nature. Seen in this light, effective and fair counterterrorism efforts actually align and integrate with the goals of sustainable development and human rights. This alignment and integration is reflected in the United Nations' strategy which takes a holistic approach to addressing the terrorist threat.

However, the absence of a clear definition of *terrorism* is an impediment to the development of uniform laws necessary for implementation across the international system. Participants observed that a binding definition of terrorism would help shape law enforcement efforts, intelligence roles, and the establishment of "universal rules of engagement." A clear definition would also standardize the measurement of results for UN and donor programs. Therefore, a successful global framework would require codifying what constitutes a *terrorist act* and developing instruments for enforcement.

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[1] For the full text of the strategy and annexed plan of action, including a detailed list of recommended measures by UN member states, see *http://www.un.org/terrorism/strategy-counter-terrorism.html*.

Human rights norms and conventions repeatedly surfaced in discussions as being essential to the global definition of a terrorist act. The results of terrorism are clear *human rights violations*, every bit as reprehensible as the more traditionally recognized violations by governmental authorities. Thus the common ground for global action on terrorism is not any one terrorist group's agenda and ideology, but rather the violation of the victims' human rights.

Accordingly, respect for fundamental freedoms and the rule of law are essential tools in countering terrorism, and should not be viewed as privileges to be sacrificed in times of high pressure. Such measures not only increase the legitimacy of counterterror efforts in civil society, but following proper police procedures also increases the reliability and hence the effectiveness of any intelligence gathered. The training of judicial and law enforcement branches throughout the world was viewed by participants as a potentially significant development goal, further illustrating the consensus among participants that development and counterterrorism are intimately linked.

In sum: existing human rights protocols should be incorporated into counterterrorism training on a consistent and universal basis. But to accomplish this, the counterterrorism and human rights communities need to recognize and promote the inherent synergies between their two frameworks. The United Nations could help the two communities create a joint communication program that presents their common ground and objectives—something toward which both the UN Security Council's CTED and the UN Secretariat's CTITF might be able to act in a mediating or coordinating function. Participants recommended the further integration of human rights representatives with technical assistance teams and strategic planning committees of the United Nations and member state governments.

UN initiatives should also create a platform for victims' voices via a forum for a real dialogue with governments and international leadership. This global forum, perhaps starting with a major public conference, should facilitate what one UN participant deemed three "axes of communication: victims to victims; victims to governments; and government to government." These activities would be a powerful means of countering terrorist recruitment and incitement activities. A human face should be put on the ability of terrorist activities to underscore mankind's vulnerability in the face of this security threat and to show the lives that terrorism destroys. Testimonies of survivors or victims' families could be distributed via the Internet and other media to create a public image narrative.

Building State Capacities:
The Role of the United Nations in Coordination and Coherence

Law enforcement and intelligence communities within and across states are collaborating to address issues such as the terrorist use of chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear (CBRN) materials; misuse of the Internet for terrorist purposes; improvement of border security; the detection and confiscation of forged travel documents; and the protection of the most vulnerable targets.

> ...counterterrorism and human rights communities need to recognize and promote the inherent synergies between their two frameworks.

Many of these training and assistance programs will naturally be bilateral in nature and based on the national initiatives of wealthier states. However, the legitimacy and effectiveness of the current process is undermined by donor incoherence among Northern states, as well as a preference for what one participant called "pet projects" of donors. Follow-up, monitoring, and evaluation of results have thus far been largely haphazard. Too often, overlapping service providers create wasteful redundancies in the training process.

Continuity of training and structured follow-up are two critical components of truly durable state capacity-building. In this effort, the United Nations could have a role in helping Northern donor states match their intentions and goals with realities on the ground in specific localities. Several participants suggested that the United Nations is best positioned to make sure that "the right meeting is held at the right time, with just the right group of 15-20 people around a table" to achieve the next step—whether the participants come from domestic civil society groups, the private sector, transnational NGOs, state governments, regional IGOs such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) or the Organization of American States (OAS), or the multitude of UN agencies working on overlapping issue areas.

Toward this end, clearer structural and procedural guidelines would create a more synergistic and positive-sum relationship between the CTED and the CTITF, as well as between the Security Council (SC) and the GA. Thus far, the focus of the CTED has been fairly narrow, equipping member states to incorporate acceptable international legal norms and addressing money laundering and terrorist financing issues. Over the next year, prior to the 2008 assessment of progress made on strategy implementation, SC members need to do more to review and clarify the role of the CTED and its relationship to the CTITF.

Many participants contended that the CTITF can and should play a greater role as a bridge-builder between the GA and SC, more effectively synergizing the activities of different stakeholders and ensuring standardized training, monitoring, and evaluation of efforts across countries. Acquiring additional funding and personnel for the CTITF is a significant step that the UN community can take to bolster these efforts. The CTITF is currently an underfunded and under-staffed committee that must borrow all but one intern of its 24-person staff from other mandates and agencies. Participants also encouraged member states and officials to discuss funding and resource issues with the United Nations' Administrative and Budgetary Fifth Committee, and to set up an in-progress review for member states at the fall 2007 meeting of the GA.

The Challenges Presented by Modern Media and the Internet

Many participants complained about the role of the media in responding to terrorist incidents in their home countries. Some argued that the media, by repeatedly showing graphic images of destruction, can actually publicize the terrorists' cause; add to societal perceptions of the terrorists' "success"; and exaggerate the importance and magnitude of the acts, ultimately spreading precisely the kind of fear and insecurity among the public that the terrorists want to create.

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Meanwhile, Internet-based activism has changed the nature of social and political movements. Terrorist organizations have learned to leverage the Internet to transform themselves into truly organic social movements. This Internet trend has empowered disgruntled citizens across the globe to become producers, not simply consumers, of terrorist ideologies. It has also enabled groups to capitalize on easy market access to new recruits.

Although there was consensus on the need to address the role of the mass media and the Internet in countering terrorism, participants were dubious about the ability of either civil society or governments to significantly influence coverage. Nonetheless, participants tabled several suggestions for the CTED and CTITF: heighten awareness in member states of acceptable standards of journalistic practice, especially for television networks and other professional media outlets; serve as a facilitator to bring together lawmakers, the private sector, and technical and functional experts to address the challenges of norm-setting and monitoring for the media; and establish a universal but voluntary code of conduct for the media and the Internet.

Role of the United Nations in Increasing Private-Public Synergies

Given greater resources, private sector contributions across many industry sectors could provide value-added knowledge to global efforts. Several participants acknowledged existing partnership initiatives with private entities in the finance, private security, transportation, and communications sectors. Unfortunately, systematic and comprehensive ways to integrate the private sector into information-sharing efforts still do not exist. Whether in the financial sector, across critical infrastructure industries such as energy and communications, or in multinational corporations, enhanced cooperation is required. In its coordinating role, the United Nations should therefore start an initiative that draws consistently and regularly on private sector resources and expertise by establishing a Center of Excellence for best practices across industries.

The Role of Education, Intercultural, and Interfaith Initiatives

More educational initiatives are needed to weaken support and sympathy for terrorist activities and groups. Participants acknowledged, however, that government involvement in "education" activities tends to undercut the legitimacy of the moderate groups it might be supporting in the community. Several participants stressed positive intergovernmental examples by organizations such as ASEAN, which may be seen as more legitimate than individual efforts by state governments. One UN official suggested that the CTITF and UNESCO develop and disseminate education and reeducation materials to avoid agenda-pushing by any individual country.

The United Nations, with the cooperation of regional IGOs, can facilitate intercultural and interfaith dialogues by convening global and regional events. Yet such discussions should not limit themselves to counterterrorism. Many participants thought that the issue may be better couched in terms of meeting *human security needs*. Also, there is a need for such dialogues in *non-Muslim* countries as well as in the Arab or Islamic world. Throughout the discussions, participants noted the importance of ensuring

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that audiences understand that the use of terrorism as a tactic also occurs in Christian, Orthodox, Hindu, Buddhist, and secular societies.

Conclusion: Actions Needed/Next Steps

Conference members agreed that the global community will not succeed in implementing the Global Strategy simply by military or security means; the way ahead requires a determined and dedicated holistic effort. Overall, participants identified the need for both concerted short-term or "triage" tactics and longer-term efforts, embracing an incremental approach (toward clearly defined long-term goals) in order to illustrate progress by 2008. Concrete recommendations of both a short-term and longer-term nature included:

Short Term

- Increase and deepen awareness of the strategy and CTITF capabilities among UN members and at the regional levels (top-down). Hold states accountable for progress reports (bottom-up).

- To increase ownership of the process, the secretary-general and others should seek buy-in from member states that have a reputation for taking on challenging issues and moving them forward in the United Nations. In short, the counterterrorism issue and entities such as the CTED and CTITF need more member states as clear and explicit supporters of their activities and mandates.

- Empower the UN counterterrorism community with greater resources, including financial and human resource support, particularly to the CTITF as its current staff resources are already committed to other full-time jobs.

- Help reshape the lexicon of counterterrorism by avoiding terms that ostracize and/or generalize. Promote a public awareness campaign, possibly spearheaded by a special envoy or eminent person.

- Promote awareness of and support program for victims of terrorism, including a UN conference or discussion forum that gives these victims a stronger international voice.

- Review the CTED role and encourage a dual mandate from the GA and SC to illustrate comprehensive support for implementation oversight.

- Glean best practices from other UN, regional, national, private sector, and civil society best practice initiatives (e.g., peacebuilding commission, anti-money laundering networks, regulation of pornography over the Internet, civil aviation security standards).

- Research and catalog efforts by civil society, government, and private sector actors in the areas of education/reeducation and interfaith/intercultural dialogues in an effort to join forces and leverage resources.

- Convene meetings with appropriate private sector leaders and experts to

discuss how to better use and counteract the use of the media and Internet by terrorist groups and actors.

Long Term
- Narrow the gap of understanding between the G-8 and G-77 on substantive issues.

- Promote interfaith and intercultural dialogues.

- Maintain an aggressive focus on combating the conditions conducive to terrorism, especially mediating and resolving violent conflict.

- Establish an international counterterrorism center to promote a global policy network.

- Reconcile the dichotomy between counterterrorism and human rights paradigms. Seek and promote common ground.

- Require periodic review of state progress.

- Advocate for a binding definition of *terrorism*, based on acts rather than actors, to define law enforcement roles, intelligence roles, and universal rules of engagement.

- Over time, empower entities such as the CTITF to *coordinate activities* in all realms of counterterrorism by states, regional and other IGOs, the private sector, and civil society. Allow and enable the United Nations to add badly needed *coherence and governance* to donor-recipient relations through such instruments as conferences with "the right 15 people around a table"; better measurement, monitoring, and evaluation capabilities; and more analysis of issues.

- Work toward consistent, reliable, and regularized information-sharing among the private sector, civil society, and governments with particular emphasis on infrastructure protection; creation of norms; and a code of conduct for the media, cultural dialogues, technical advice on communications issues such as terrorist traffic on the Internet, cyber-terrorism; and other tasks where private entities or civil society NGOs may have more technical expertise, cultural nuance, and experience with a given problem. Move away from current ad hoc and uncoordinated efforts that, though effective, fall short of leveraging the knowledge inherent in the private sector and civil society.

- Consult with regional organizations for leadership and better on-the-ground knowledge when appropriate, and empower the CTED and CTITF to "connect the dots" between concerned regional actors and ongoing global initiatives. Use examples of success such as ASEAN initiatives, European Union-OAS initiatives, and European Union-Caribbean programs in areas such as education, reeducation, interfaith dialogue, civil society engagement, and intelligence-sharing and enforcement.

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Participant List

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Affiliations are listed for identification purposes only. Participants attended as individuals rather than as representatives of their governments or organizations.

Opening Remarks

by Richard H. Stanley

Welcome to the Stanley Foundation's 42nd annual conference on the United Nations of the Next Decade. Since 1965 we have gathered policy experts from around the world to explore and develop multilateral solutions to important global concerns. Unfortunately, there is still no shortage of issues for us to discuss this year.

In selecting a topic for this year's conference, we consulted many sources. Through that process we concluded that implementation of the United Nations' recently adopted Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy is a timely topic meriting serious attention. Our goal is to explore how the international community can better address terrorism from *all* perspectives—beyond those of a single state, organization, or region, and including those of the private as well as the public sector.

Calls for a more effective and integrated response to terrorism have been heard consistently over the past several years. In its 2004 report, *A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility*, the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges, and Change cited terrorism as one of the six clusters of threats that must be of concern today and in the coming years. It acknowledged that the front line of defense against terrorist activities is the state. At the same time, the panel made it quite clear that, due to the nature of this security threat, individual states require support and assistance beyond their individual capabilities. "Today's threats recognize no national boundaries, are connected, and must be addressed at the global and regional as well as the national levels."

In her acceptance speech as she assumed the General Assembly presidency in 2006, Her Excellency Sheikha Al Khalifa said, "We must work to preserve humanitarianism and to ensure that our planet is a safer and more suitable place in which to live. Essentially, we are all human beings who share a common fate, and that is what inspired the founders of our organization. Thus it is crucial that we find a comprehensive and practical strategy to combat one of the greatest evils of our time: terrorism."

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon echoed the recommendation of his predecessor in suggesting that this conference would be a good forum to gain essential input on how the international community—including the United Nations, regional organizations, member states, and civil society—can more effectively implement the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy adopted by the General Assembly last year.

The secretary-general reinforced this view in an address to the General Assembly earlier this year. He said, "Terrorism hurts all nations—large and small, rich and poor. It takes its toll on human beings of every age and income, culture, and religion. It strikes against everything the United

Richard H. Stanley
Chair and President
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Nations stands for. The fight against terrorism is our common mission.... Together, we must demonstrate that we are up to the task. Whether we like it or not, our generation will go down in history as one that was challenged to protect the world from terrorism."

As we gather here, we have a significant opportunity to help advance thought, practice, and results in the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and Plan of Action.

The Nature of the Threat

Even with this current sense of urgency regarding the threat of terrorism, it is important to note that terrorist acts have been committed for years and even centuries. This is not the first time that it has caught the attention of the international community. In 1934 the League of Nations discussed a draft convention to address the issue of terrorist activities.

Yet most of us can agree that even though the threat has existed for a long time, there has been an evolution in its nature over the past 20 to 30 years—namely in terms of the sophistication and reach of some transnational terrorist actors.

The reach and sophistication of regional and international terrorist networks add new dimensions to the threat.

This is not to suggest that local and regional terrorist actors and organizations are unsophisticated or unimportant. Quite the contrary. Many UN member states continue to counter threats from local and regional groups. For example, the citizens of Sri Lanka have faced violence at the hands of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, more commonly known as the Tamil Tigers, for more than 30 years. In South America, Colombia and several of its neighboring states continue to address the activities of FARC—the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia—a group whose origins date back to the 1960s. Within the United States, there have been internal terrorist actions and plans—some prevented and some carried out.

At the same time, the reach and sophistication of regional and international terrorist networks add new dimensions to the threat. The objectives of the groups I previously mentioned tend to be more "national" in nature, such as seeking an independent state of their own, or challenging or overthrowing existing state authorities. The objectives of the international networks tend to be much larger in scope. Al Qaeda may be the most well-known among them and appears to be the one receiving the most global coverage. According to the US-based Council on Foreign Relations, Al Qaeda, "seeks to rid Muslim countries of what it sees as the profane influence of the West and to replace their governments with fundamentalist Islamic regimes."

These few examples begin to illustrate the complex nature of the terrorist threat. This one word—*terrorism*—is used to describe violent actions used by disparate groups to attain very different objectives based upon the aims of those conceiving them. This is one of the reasons why agreement on a common definition has been so difficult and contentious. The report of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges, and Change included a working definition of terrorism as:

> "any action, in addition to actions already specified by the existing conventions on aspects of terrorism, the Geneva Conventions and Security Council Resolution 1566 (2004), that is intended to cause death or serious bodily harm to civilians or non-combatants, when the purpose of such act, by its nature or context, is to intimidate a population, or to compel a Government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act."

We are not going spend our time here trying to agree on a definition of *terrorism*. Rather, we will consider the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and examine what must be done to implement and strengthen it. How must we respond at all levels? Terrorism threats are complex and disparate. They are launched both within and across national borders. They have varied motivations. They will require a constellation of responses rather than a general "one-size-fits-all" approach. To the extent the international community limits itself to a simplified single overarching conceptualization, such as a "war on terror," it may also limit its ability to develop optimal strategies and tactics at the local, state, regional, and international levels that best deal with the acts and aspirations of different actors.

[Terrorism threats] will require a constellation of responses....

The Need for a Comprehensive Approach

As the breadth and reach of the terrorist threat evolves, multilateral efforts must match that breadth and reach. The United Nations and regional organizations have taken quite a few steps in an effort to keep pace with this evolution.

Let me highlight some of the more significant UN actions to date. I'll concentrate on the activities of the General Assembly, Security Council, and secretary-general that preceded and fostered the development of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and Plan of Action.

The international community currently has 13 conventions and protocols covering specific acts of terrorism. UN member states are now drafting a 14th which will be a comprehensive convention against terrorism. Over the past 30 years, the General Assembly has created a variety of instruments to combat terrorism. These include the International Convention against the Taking of Hostages adopted in 1979, a Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism in 1994, and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism in 1999.

The UN Security Council has acted to address the ever-broadening nature of the threat:

• In 1999 the Resolution 1267 was adopted and the 1267 Committee established. The committee was given the task of monitoring compliance with sanctions against the Taliban. Its role was expanded in 2000 to include monitoring of compliance with sanctions against Al Qaeda.

• In 2001, with the adoption of Resolution 1373, states were obligated to implement more effective counterterrorism measures at the national level

and to increase international cooperation. This resolution included establishing the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC), whose membership is comprised of all 15 members of the Security Council. The CTC was given the task of monitoring the states' implementation of the resolution.

- In 2004, Resolution 1535 established the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED). The CTED assists the CTC to help states strengthen their capacity to combat terrorism. This includes working with a wide variety of international organizations and regional actors to build cooperation with and promote assistance to nations implementing the various resolutions.

- Also in 2004, Resolution 1540 required states to refrain from supporting nonstate actors attempting to acquire weapons of mass destruction and delivery systems and to establish effective domestic controls to prevent the proliferation of these items. The Security Council set up the 1540 Committee to assess the implementation of this resolution.

- That same year, the Security Council adopted Resolution 1566 and set up the 1566 Working Group. The resolution condemned terrorist acts as one of the most serious threats to peace and security. The working group submits recommendations on practical measures that could be imposed upon actors involved or associated with terrorist acts other than those designated to be under the domain of the 1267 Committee.

- In 2005 during the World Summit, Resolution 1624 was adopted to deal with incitement to commit acts of terrorism. It directed the CTC to work with member states to implement the resolution.

- Also in 2005 the CTED began carrying out country visits. These visits focus on implementation of Security Council Resolution 1373 and evaluate the assistance that a state may need to further implement the resolution's provisions.

The secretary-general has also taken initiatives.

- He convened the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges, and Change that assessed current threats to international peace and security. The panel's 2004 report cited what it considered the six most critical threats, one of which was terrorism, and offered recommendations for strengthening the United Nations' response to them.

- In 2005 the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) was established by the secretary-general to ensure coordination and coherence between the various UN entities involved in counterterrorism efforts.

- In 2006 he submitted to the General Assembly his detailed recommendations for a global counterterrorism strategy that helped further guide creation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

...the CTITF was established by the secretary-general to ensure coordination and coherence between the various UN entities....

It's important to acknowledge that while individual states and the United Nations were taking substantial actions to address terrorism, regional organizations were doing the same. These regional efforts encompassed everything from condemnation of terrorist activities to guidance for their member states, and measures to counter the broader transnational terrorist threats. Formal documents were produced by such vital organizations as ASEAN, the African Union, the OAS, the OSCE, the EU, the G-8, the OIC, the GCC, and the League of Arab States.

The UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and Plan of Action

That brings us to our focus for the next five days. On September 8, 2006, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 60/288—the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and Plan of Action. The significance of this was expressed by General Assembly President Al Khalifa at the formal launch of the strategy on September 19, 2006:

> The passing of the resolution on the United Nations Global Terrorism Strategy with its Annexed Plan of Action by 192 Member States represents a common testament that we, the United Nations, will face terrorism head on and that terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purpose, must be condemned and shall not be tolerated.

It marked the first time that this many states agreed upon a common approach and a concrete plan of action. It underscored the commitment of the international community to address terrorism.

The Counter-Terrorism Strategy's Plan of Action urged all states to expeditiously consider becoming parties to all existing international conventions and protocols against terrorism and to implement them, to conclude a comprehensive convention on international terrorism, and to implement all General Assembly and Security Council resolutions on matters related to international terrorism.

As he introduced the strategy in 2006, 60th General Assembly President Jan Eliasson stated,

> The Plan of Action sets out a number of practical and operational measures that will enhance our efforts to fight terrorism. These include the call for Member States as well as the United Nations system to step up their efforts and strengthen their counter-terrorism measures in a number of concrete areas.

The Plan of Action presents a holistic approach, emphasizing the need for coordination and coherence within the United Nations and among all involved. It is organized into four sections and includes some 47 actionable measures for implementing the Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

[The strategy] underscored the commitment of the international community to address terrorism.

I. Measures to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism. These include, among others: prolonged unresolved conflicts; dehumanization of victims of terrorism; lack of rule of law; violations of human rights; ethnic, national and religious discrimination; political exclusion; socio-economic marginalization; and lack of good governance.

II. Measures to prevent and combat terrorism. This section focuses on denying terrorist groups access to the means to carry out their attacks, to their targets, and to the desired impact of their attacks.

III. Measures to build States' capacity to prevent and combat terrorism and to strengthen the role of the UN system in this regard. This section recognizes that capacity-building in all States is a core element of the global counter-terrorism effort. It proposes measures to achieve this and to enhance coordination and coherence within the United Nations system in promoting international cooperation in countering terrorism.

IV. Measures to ensure respect for human rights for all and the rule of law as the fundamental basis of the fight against terrorism. This fourth section reaffirms that the rule of law and the protection and promotion of human rights are essential to all components of the strategy. It also stresses the need to promote and protect the rights of victims of terrorism.

The scope and diversity of the actionable measures heighten the importance of effective collaboration among states, regional organizations, the United Nations, civil society, and the private sector. This will undoubtedly extend through our deliberations.

Additional UN Activities to Date

Of course, the United Nations has not been standing still over the past nine months since the launch of the strategy. It continues to offer counterterrorism tools and actions.

In January the UN Counter-Terrorism Online Handbook was made available. It was created by the CTITF to "ensure overall coordination and coherence in the counter-terrorism efforts of the United Nations System." It also provides "best practices" from various UN organizations.

Last month, the CTED launched an online database to provide information about technical assistance requested by and provided to states.

The 1267 Committee concerning Al-Qaida and Taliban Sanctions is revamping its procedures and improving the list of targeted persons and organizations.

The 1373 Counter-Terrorism Committee is receiving reports from all member states assessing counterterrorism measures they have taken. Last month, Committee Chairman Arias expressed his expectation that all of these reports will have been presented to the committee by now.

> The scope and diversity of the actionable measures heighten the importance of effective collaboration....

The 1540 Committee dealing with preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and delivery systems is working with states to assist them in fulfilling their reporting requirements. As of last month, some 55 reports remained to be submitted.

On May 17-18, a two-day counterterrorism symposium was convened jointly in Vienna by the executive office of the secretary-general, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, and the state of Austria. It focused on translating the strategy from words into action. It emphasized that the main responsibility for carrying out the strategy falls squarely on the member states.

Why We're Here

Much is happening, but the international community must step up its pace and performance.

Over the next five days our objective is to bolster strategy implementation through discussions that consider questions such as: implementation progress; what significant tools, policies, and best practices have been and need to be developed; and how can future work be optimized at the national, regional, and international levels? We will press you to propose recommendations and initiatives that can and should be undertaken to achieve superior implementation progress by the time the strategy is reviewed in 2008. We will seek your ideas and recommendations on what will be needed beyond the 2008 review to continue to build momentum and address whatever future challenges may arise.

We're fortunate to have gathered here an excellent mix of participants from the United Nations, regional organizations, national governments, and civil society. This collective expertise should spur creativity, ensure consideration of varied perspectives, and encourage the development of a strong set of recommendations that will support the United Nations in its efforts.

There is one overarching goal for all of us at this event—to offer constructive insights and actionable policy recommendations that will assist the international community to move forward with an effective counterterrorism strategy and its implementation. In this way, we will lend our efforts toward a world that is more peaceful, secure, free, and just.

Thank you in advance for your time, energy, and wisdom. We hope this conference will be productive and rewarding. And we also hope that it will be enjoyable along the way.

> ...the international community must step up its pace and performance.

Conference Report

Introduction:
Assessing Progress on Global Counterterrorism

The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy was adopted by the General Assembly (GA) on September 8, 2006 (General Assembly Resolution 60/288). The adoption of the resolution marked the first time that all member states agreed to a comprehensive, global, strategic framework on counterterrorism since the issue had come before the League of Nations in 1934.

The operational intent of the strategy is summarized by an annexed "Plan of Action" consisting of four core components:

I. Measures to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism.

II. Measures to prevent and combat terrorism.

III. Measures to build states' capacity to prevent and combat terrorism and to strengthen the role of the United Nations system in this regard.

IV. Measures to ensure respect for human rights for all and the rule of law as the fundamental basis of the fight against terrorism.[2]

The GA is scheduled to review progress on the strategy and its Plan of Action in September of 2008, adding urgency and incentive for UN agencies, member states, and other actors to show progress on its implementation.

To examine how the international community of intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), governments, and transnational actors could better implement the counterterrorism strategy, the Stanley Foundation convened its 42nd conference on the United Nations of the Next Decade, "Implementation of the UN Global Counterterrorism Strategy," on June 8-13, 2007. Representatives and experts from the United Nations, regional organizations, national governments, think tanks, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) met in St. Michaels, Maryland, to discuss how future activities could be made more effective and coherent.

The Context: Recent History of Global Counterterrorism Efforts
The adoption of a universal, global strategy was a culmination of efforts begun in response to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. In reaction to this tragic event, the Security Council (SC) established via Resolution 1373 a Counter Terrorism Committee (CTC), comprising all members of the SC. Resolution 1373 obliges member states to take a number of measures to prevent terrorist activities, to criminalize terrorist actions, and to cooperate

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The GA is scheduled to review progress on the strategy and its Plan of Action in September of 2008....

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[2] For the full text of the strategy and annexed plan of action, including a detailed list of recommended measures by UN member states, see *http://www.un.org/terrorism/strategy-counter-terrorism.html*.

in adhering to international counterterrorism instruments. Member states are also required to report regularly to the CTC on the measures they have taken to implement the terms of Resolution 1373.

To assist the CTC's work, in 2004 the SC adopted Resolution 1535, which called for the creation of a Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED). The CTED monitors the implementation of Resolution 1373 and facilitates the provision of technical assistance to member states. Also in 2004, the SC established the 1566 Working Group, made up of all council members, to submit recommendations on practical measures that could be imposed on actors involved in or associated with terrorist acts. The 1566 Working Group is also meant to explore the possibility of setting up a compensation fund for victims of terrorism.

Additionally, in conjunction with the World Summit, on September 14, 2005, the SC held a high-level meeting and adopted Resolution 1624 (2005) condemning all acts of terrorism irrespective of their motivation, and the incitement to such acts. It also called on member states to prohibit by law terrorist acts and incitement to commit such acts, as well as to deny safe haven to anyone guilty of such conduct.

Finally, in 2005, the secretary-general established the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) to foster coordination and coherence among at least two dozen entities in the UN system that are involved in counterterrorism efforts. The CTITF has established working groups to carry forward a first set of initiatives. These initiatives:

- Factor counterterrorism into conflict prevention.

- Provide a forum for ending political and economic exclusion, especially among youth.

- Enhance technical assistance assessment, delivery, and follow-up.

- Improve UN coordination in planning the response to a terrorist attack that uses chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear (CBRN) materials.

- Bring together stakeholders and partners to discuss and develop measures to counter the use of the Internet by terrorists for propaganda, incitement, and recruitment purposes.

- Find ways to meet international standards to block the financing of terrorism.

- Establish best practices to protect vulnerable targets—including UN field staff—and create a mechanism to share expertise.

- Assist countries in strengthening domestic legislation to protect human rights in accordance with international standards.

The CTED monitors the implementation of Resolution 1373 and facilitates the provision of technical assistance....

• Bring together victims from around the world to identify their needs and determine viable government responses to those needs.

Toward these ends, the CTITF is cooperating with a number of regional and subregional organizations, including the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC); the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO); the European Union (EU), the Council of Europe (CoE); and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).[3]

The Current Status of UN Initiatives
The participants praised the adoption of the Counter-Terrorism Strategy and its annexed Plan of Action as a significant step toward a progressively cohesive and coordinated global response to a significant security threat. The approval of the strategy by all 192 member states was viewed by participants as providing much-needed legitimacy to the United Nations' counterterrorism efforts. It was also viewed as offering greater opportunities for the United Nations to work more closely with the private sector, civil society, and regional organizations.

Participants spent considerable time discussing tensions and dynamics within and between UN bodies that were viewed as hampering efficient strategy implementation. Some of the most critical issues were:

• An atmosphere of tension and distrust between the SC and the GA.

• The lack of dedicated resources in the CTITF, coupled with the ineffectiveness of the CTED. Several participants also expressed some confusion over the actual purpose and role of the CTED within the SC.

• Jurisdictional disagreements within and between the GA and SC regarding which body should have the authority and responsibility for implementing the strategy.

• The perception of counterterrorism as a "Northern" (Northern Hemisphere) concern while the need for counterterrorism capacity-building and development assistance is perceived as a "Southern" (Southern Hemisphere) concern—obscuring the fact that counterterrorism and the development agenda are interrelated.

• The "division of labor" between the United Nations, regional organizations, and member states—including the overlap and/or competition and/or contradictions among bilateral donor-recipient relationships; partially multilateral efforts at the regional levels; and universal efforts under UN auspices, agencies, and programs.

[The strategy] was viewed by participants as providing much-needed legitimacy....

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[3] Much of this section is taken directly from UN-generated Web language and documents. For more details on the CTITF, see *Implementing the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy*, a Fact Sheet published by the Peace and Security Section of the Department of Public Information, the United Nations, DPI/2439B/Rev.1, May 2007, at *http://www.un.org/terrorism/pdfs/CT_factsheet_may2007x.pdf*. For even more details about *all* UN actions on counterterrorism, see *www.un.org/terrorism/*.

Participants agreed that successful implementation depends on how individual states engage with the strategy. Even then, significant challenges are limiting states' responses. Those challenges were:

- Developing countries' lack of capacity to respond to the many elements of the strategy.

- States already engaging with the strategy are burdened with ongoing reporting requests that overtax their limited resources.

- The lack of authority and mechanisms to address states who are not reporting and/or are not in compliance with the strategy measures.

- Redundancy in and a lack of coordination of the training efforts for officials in developing countries.

- Ambiguity as to the status of each member country's progress in regard to capacity-building, largely as a result of a lack of follow-up on training activities.

- A consistent lack of monitoring and evaluation of the activities undertaken according to the UN Strategy and Plan of Action.

There was also considerable debate regarding whether a strategy whose content is more aspirational and normative than policy-focused truly constitutes a strategy. As written, the strategy does not offer guidance on how

...successful implementation depends on how individual states engage with the strategy.

The pictures throughout this publication depict several elements of the United Nations of the Next Decade Conference. The conference features informal roundtable discussion sessions, ample opportunity for individual conversations, and social events in a relaxed setting. Together these elements stimulate thinking and develop relationships that enhance understanding.

stakeholders can and should prioritize, implement, measure, and enforce the various provisions. One participant noted that these documents are more a *guiding framework* than a strategy. A true strategy lays out exactly how macro-level goals and objectives are to be connected to resources at the disposal of the various parties, ultimately resulting in an ends-means calculation of the achievement of strategic goals.

In sum: the Counter-Terrorism Strategy does not have the detailed and authoritative status of an international treaty, such as that seen in conventions on nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction. This raises serious issues as to which UN entities and/or officials have the authority and responsibility to prioritize, fund, carry out, enforce, and measure the success of the strategy's normative elements. Implementation is further complicated by the fact that individual states are the frontline actors in counterterrorism, and each state has communities with different needs that cannot be met with a "one-size-fits-all" approach. It was also agreed that each region will need to adopt approaches that take into account its own cultural norms and needs.

> ...each state has communities with different needs that cannot be met with a "one-size-fits-all" approach.

The absence of a clear definition of terror and agreement upon what constitutes terrorism were also noted by some participants as impediments to the development of laws necessary for uniform implementation across the international system. These participants claimed that a binding definition of terrorism would help define law enforcement efforts and intelligence roles, and establish "universal rules of engagement."

Toward this end, participants suggested that a successful framework would codify what constitutes an *act* of terrorism (as opposed to defining what constitutes a terrorist group) and develop instruments for enforcement. In the absence of such a definition, civil liberties and human rights are at grave risk of abuse by states using counterterrorism to justify the preemptive use of force, torture, and jailing of regime opponents.

Given all of these difficulties, a vital element of the strategy's success will be the *United Nations' ability to engage member states and regional organizations* in the development and implementation of viable counterterrorism measures. Equally, *leadership from member states and regional organizations* was cited as critical to ensure sustainability. There was also general agreement that civil society and the private sector could and should play significant roles in the campaign.

The Structure of This Report
There remain persistent challenges in translating the abstract concepts of the Counter-Terrorism Strategy into operational activity. Accordingly, the remainder of this report will present the details of the conference discussions, including policy recommendations and analytical arguments by:

- **Addressing the global and regional conditions that are conducive to the spread of terrorism**, including the roles that conflict, underdevelopment,

education, religion, culture, and the needs of victims can play in either combating or inciting terrorism.

• **Defining and adopting measures to prevent and combat terrorism** at the global, regional, national, and civil society levels. Special emphasis is placed on law enforcement, intelligence, the private sector, the media, the Internet, and stronger coordination roles for the United Nations and regional organizations.

• **Building state capacities for the prevention and combating of terrorism.**

• **Ensuring respect for human rights and the rule of law** as the basis of the global fight against terrorism.

Addressing Conditions Conducive to the Spread of Terrorism

Conflict and Underdevelopment

Several participants argued that poverty, political oppression, social and economic marginalization, victimization, dehumanization, lack of self-determination, and foreign occupation contribute to terrorism. Others agreed that persistent and prolonged conflicts such as those in Afghanistan and Iraq create pockets of lawlessness and conditions that facilitate terrorist recruitment and training.

Conference participants agreed on the need to strengthen and make the best possible use of the United Nations' capacities to deal with such conflicts, fulfill agreed-upon development goals, refocus the global debate on victims' rights, strengthen the rule of law, promote good governance, and change the conditions in the developing world that can make terrorism seem attractive.

However, others questioned many of these claims, arguing that no direct evidence links these factors to the development of a "terrorist." Indeed, one comprehensive study has shown that no one socioeconomic characteristic "explains" either the creation of terrorist groups or predicts what they are likely to do. As one high-ranking UN expert remarked, no single socioeconomic demographic has been shown to be a significant factor.

One national official offered that regardless of whether there is direct linkage between these factors and terrorism, these factors help create "conditions that terrorists exploit" and, therefore, must be addressed. This statement met with general agreement and was followed by a variety of recommendations on how to alleviate those conditions.

Education

Education and reeducation were cited as key means to weaken support and sympathy for terrorist activities and groups. One participant stated that no child is born a bomber, but when subjected to incitement through education, he/she is vulnerable to developing a negative ideology. Current efforts geared

...these factors help create "conditions that terrorists exploit"....

toward deterring terrorist activity through religious education or reeducation have shown some success.

One participant from an Islamic country proposed a state-based framework that might work in other countries or regions. In the universities of this participant's country, a program is being vetted by the government to ensure teachings eschew extremist rhetoric. In the state-run prison systems, a reeducation program tries to dispel misconceptions about religious interpretations and also prepares inmates to become productive members of society. State aid to at-risk inmates is sometimes supplemented by counseling, mentoring, and probationary oversight.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) also recently hosted an intercivilization dialogue with the intent of sharing best practices among its member states. The dialogue used a community discussion format to exchange ideas on education and the importance of targeting youth in counterterrorism endeavors. Several state-level examples provided concrete ideas:

- Indonesia: the government developed a three-phase method—prevention, rehabilitation, and follow-up. During the prevention phase an inventory of specific state and community activities is conducted, with a focus on minority groups that have been prone to "radicalization." This phase also includes training and lecture series on moderate Islam for universities and Madrassas. The rehabilitation phase uses psychological counseling operations and focuses on prisoners, their family members, and communities that have been impacted by terrorist organizations and activities. The follow-up phase assists former terrorists in finding jobs and helps them integrate back into their communities.

- Singapore: the government has sponsored a religious rehabilitation program for Jemaah Isalamiya terrorists and their families. The initiative is led by local scholars and religious leaders. The Singapore government has also established a center to promote greater understanding of Islam and Muslims.

- Thailand: a Muslim-Buddhist conflict has led to violence, and there are now several initiatives to encourage reconciliation. A special initiative, the Dialogue of Life, serves as a locus for interreligious dialogue by promoting peaceful interaction in daily life. The initiative focuses on areas in which Buddhists and Muslims can find common ground in meeting their everyday social and economic challenges. Another initiative, this one led by Buddhist monks, educates NGOs, foreign organizations operating in the state, and other actors on Buddhism.

Religion and Culture

The integrated approach sought in all areas of the strategy could also be applied in intracultural and intrafaith dialogues and conferences. Several participants thought the United Nations could facilitate such efforts by convening international and regional events. Several recent precedents were cited as examples: the G-8 hosted the World Summit of Religious Leaders in

...efforts geared toward deterring terrorist activity through religious education or reeducation have shown some success.

St. Petersburg in July 2006, and the GA hosted intercultural forums in October 2006 and May 2007.

Yet while such initiatives are positive and progressive, participants noted that these should not be limited to counterterrorism. Many participants claimed that the issue would be better couched in terms of meeting *human security needs*. Countering terrorism may in fact be a tangential focus of such events; the general debate should approach the issue in broader terms— relating to peace and security, while targeting the roots of the radicalization and extremist ideology that could lead to terrorism. One participant high- lighted the need for interethnic and interfaith dialogue in *non-Muslim* coun- tries, discounting exclusively Islamic-focused initiatives. For example, Russian communities are affected by seasonal migration patterns and ethnic and religious tensions that could also benefit from international assistance.

Again, while terrorism is not exclusively a problem for radicalized Muslims, most participants advocated greater awareness of the compassionate aspects of Islam to change shared (mis)perceptions across non-Muslim countries. Several participants reiterated the importance of the careful use of language. For example, governments could avoid branding terrorist fighters as "jihadists" and conflating the benevolent aspects of "struggling" or advo- cating one's faith with "struggling" on the battlefield as a terrorist.

One participant noted that the best hope for moderating language and slogans lies with governments themselves. While it is technologically impos- sible to censor and monitor the media in any one country or around the globe (and indeed, this has repercussions on the right to free expression), governments can and do strategically decide what rhetoric to use in response to terrorism, whether in televised statements, press releases, press briefings, and the official release of strategic and doctrinal documents. In this regard, the hyperbole used by both Northern and Southern governments (e.g., "Great Satan," "Axis of Evil") feeds into, and exacerbates, existing preju- dices rather than shining light on productive solutions. At worst, govern- ment rhetoric can incite violence among already-radicalized segments of

...most participants advocated greater awareness of the compassionate aspects of Islam to change shared (mis)perceptions....

their populations. Thus state-level diplomacy—both public and intergovernmental—should be recalibrated and carefully worded to avoid adding to the problem of societal radicalization and lack of cooperation among UN member states.

Role of the United Nations
Despite these examples, participants acknowledged that government involvement in activities can undercut the legitimacy of the moderate groups it hopes to support. In this regard, to increase legitimacy and thus effectiveness, grassroots initiatives by civil society or private sector actors will be critical. The best way to meet these needs is to find the intersection of government, civil society, and private sector interests. Several individuals acknowledged existing (but largely ad hoc and uncoordinated) partnership initiatives with transgovernmental organizations, as well as private entities in the financial sectors, private security companies, transportation, and communication industries. It was also suggested that incorporating these private sector partners at the start of framework-building will increase their acceptance of the measures and the feasibility of compliance and regulation.

Some participants warned that such activities should not focus solely on a particular religion or culture, because terrorist activities are found in many states and faiths. One participant suggested that framing an education program or other activities to address *broader* religious and cultural tensions may embolden moderates and dispel some of the misperceptions in non-Muslim countries. Most of the Muslim participants agreed that separating religion from terrorism could also help the broader Muslim community to feel less alienated, and perhaps make it more willing and able to contribute to the fight against radicalization.

Given these difficulties, one UN official suggested that the CTITF and UNESCO produce education and reeducation materials to avoid agenda-pushing by any individual country. These materials could be delivered via a variety of media, from paper copies to compact discs and Web messages. It was also noted that Human Rights Watch already develops and disseminates these types of materials. This led to the suggestion that such programs might be excellent public-private partnership opportunities for the United Nations.

Victims of Terrorism
Many participants observed that the international community has collectively done little to assist the victims of terrorist acts. At best, victim assistance has been seen as a state responsibility. Yet governments often leverage terrorist acts to promote larger political or ideological agendas, to the exclusion of the victims' needs.

Fortunately, the increased mobilization of victims' families and the growing information exchange among advocacy groups have raised international awareness and placed victims' needs higher on the international agenda.

The best way...is to find the intersection of government, civil society, and private sector interests.

Coordinated, international progress in this area will face challenges. Terrorist attacks are typically executed within state boundaries, even though its victims tend to be multinational. Conversely, while more than a dozen UN instruments address definitional issues, these instruments almost exclusively apply to international terrorism, thereby excluding domestic acts by homegrown insurgent or minority groups. Thus there is a two-way mismatch: first, a foreign national who is injured in a terrorist strike may not receive assistance from the state where the act occurred, conversely, global or international norms may not apply well to a local attack by a domestic terror group. Thus without a comprehensive approach, the strategy's stated opposition to "all forms of terrorism" will fall short.

Current and future UN initiatives suggested creating a platform for victims' voices, such as an international conference, and a real dialogue with governments and international leadership. It was also considered important to open what one UN participant called three "axes of communication": victims to victims, victims to governments, and government to government. By soliciting best practices in these fields, the United Nations can develop a framework or set of standards that advocate for adequate victim assistance in future responses to terrorist attacks. For example, one participant cited Israel's assistance to victims as among the best. Participants also stressed that future initiatives must support victims of all races, religions, genders, and political ideologies.

Beyond the immediate value to the victims themselves, these activities are also a powerful means of discouraging terrorist recruitment and incitement activities. Several participants argued for the need to put a human face on the victims of terrorism. For example, the testimonies of victims or family members could be distributed via the Internet and other media as a public rebuttal to terrorist propaganda. Organizations such as Human Rights Watch are already using these types of initiatives to educate civil society and advocate for victims' needs and rights.

Measures to Prevent and Combat Terrorism

While UN entities such as the 1566 Working Group, the CTITF, and the CTED (and their associated resolutions and strategy documents) provide some guidance to member states, primary responsibility for action rests on the member states themselves. It is therefore imperative that member states develop their own initiatives to prevent and combat terrorism. This objective should be approached through a holistic, not simply a security-oriented lens. Communities that are critical to the success of these initiatives are law enforcement, the intelligence community, the private sector, and civil society including the media and the Internet.

Law Enforcement and the Intelligence Community

Several conference participants thought that many of the measures the global community should take to prevent or combat terrorism required more effective law enforcement and intelligence initiatives. Consequently, it is necessary to involve police at all levels in an operational sense, and to find

> Participants argued for the need to put a human face on the victims of terrorism.

areas for integration and fusion. Interpol, a non-UN member of the CTITF, leads several initiatives to exchange vital operational information between the law enforcement and intelligence communities.

Law enforcement and intelligence communities within and across states are trying to improve the venues for collaboration to stop terrorist use of CBRN materials; to prevent misuse of the Internet for terrorist purposes; to improve border security; to find and confiscate forged travel documents; and to protect vulnerable targets. Improved communications among both producers and consumers of intelligence about expectations and needs will help to create synergies and make intelligence-sharing more efficient. Beyond the technological issues, there is also increased need for better human intelligence capacities that most countries currently lack.

The UN Role in Better Law Enforcement and Intelligence. From first responders to the highest level decision makers, the international community would benefit from better collaboration and information-sharing on best practices. States with fewer resources would also benefit from more technical training. The CTITF could play a larger role in coordinating the activities of different stakeholders and avoid duplication of efforts, with the goal of providing the best possible advice to member countries.

In this regard, many participants commented on the value of bilateral versus multilateral exchange of information and technical assistance. There is tremendous value in bilateral partnerships and this may remain the preference of some sovereign states. However, this does not minimize the need for streamlined coordination of donor capabilities and recipient needs. The CTITF should play a greater role in matching donors to recipients; encouraging standardized training across countries; and connecting the strong efforts of regional organizations, such as ASEAN or the Organization of African States (OAS)—the multitude of UN agencies, other global IGOs (such as Interpol, IAEA, ICC), and NGOs.

Role of the Private Sector in Counterterrorism
According to participants, the private sector often outpaces government initiatives in technologically innovative arenas such as critical infrastructure protection and cyber-security. For this reason, some level of coordination between government officials and private sector actors has been initiated. Examples include public-private collaboration with financial entities against terror financing and with transportation security organizations to employ CBRN technical detection mechanisms.

But even after highly publicized terrorist attacks in New York, Washington, Madrid, London, Turkey, and Indonesia, information-sharing between federal governments and the private sector remains a significant challenge. While admirable progress has been made, efforts to share homeland security intelligence information with the private sector remains limited and is generally ad hoc. Systematic and comprehensive ways to integrate the private sector into information-sharing efforts are still nonexistent. Although private sector officials have an obligation to share threat information, and

…information-sharing between federal governments and the private sector remains a significant challenge.

there is a general expectation that the federal governments will be diligent in its efforts to protect public and private infrastructures, concern over the process is widespread. Whether in the financial sector, across critical infrastructure industries such as energy and communications, or in multinational corporations, enhanced cooperation could benefit collective interests in global security governance.

With this in mind, participants agreed on the need for the international community to holistically engage civil society and the private sector down to the grassroots levels, whether in law enforcement and human rights training initiatives or through public-private partnerships in protecting critical infrastructure.

A critical step in promoting this type of collaboration is defining high value targets and priorities in the critical infrastructure industries. There are still several areas where national governments have gaps in protection, and where the private sector is privy to the more granular information necessary for analysis of the associated threats. Both sectors can play a role in research and in offering technical assistance.

Role of the United Nations in Increasing Private-Public Synergies. What can the United Nations do to engage private sector leadership? For a start, the United Nations can establish a Center of Excellence for best practices across industries. The United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute is spearheading this type of initiative in collaboration with the OSCE. These initiatives involve private organizations such as Citigroup (investing in cutting-edge technology to assist in the monitoring of financial transactions in order to identify suspicious activity) and Microsoft (exploring cyber terrorism and cyber warfare techniques).

Given greater resources, greater access, and often better skill sets, private sector contributions across industry sectors will provide value-added knowledge to

> A critical step… is defining high value targets and priorities….

global efforts. In addition, the private sector can contribute valuable intelligence on suspicious activities, as well as trends in political risks in emerging markets to which governments may not always have access.

The Media, the Internet, and Civil Society

There was rough consensus that the nature, tone, and extent of media coverage all influence public perceptions. But despite the consensus on the need to explore the role of the mass media and the Internet in countering terrorism, for example by encouraging media outlets to denounce terrorist ideology and actions while highlighting the plight of victims, participants were dubious about how much civil society or governments can influence a shift in coverage.

The media is in a difficult position. On the one hand, showing graphic details of crime scenes; beheadings; and injured victims creates powerful images, exposes emerging threats, and supports freedom of speech. Each of these can also help build a case against terrorism. On the other hand, these media images can be exploited. For example, by traumatizing victims' families, sensationalizing violence, and repeatedly showing graphic images of destruction, the media can actually advertise the terrorists' cause, reinforce perceptions of the terrorists' "success," and exaggerate the importance and magnitude of the acts, ultimately creating exactly the climate of fear and insecurity that the terrorists are trying to create. While terror events and the campaign against terrorism have been frontline news for the last few years, sensationalist coverage can lead to public fatigue, detachment, or ambivalence. There is a fine line between using the media for incitement or propaganda and using it for education and protecting freedom of speech.

Many participants accused the media of paying too much attention to Islamic extremists and "global jihad" movements. This continued media focus helps create a strong link in the Western mind between Islam and terrorism. The effect is that Muslim communities feel stigmatized. Throughout the discussions, participants noted the importance of ensuring that audiences understand that terrorism also occurs in Christian, Orthodox, Hindu, Buddhist, and secular societies.

Though no participant advocated censorship, several participants wanted to find more acceptable descriptions of problems that do not alienate and/or ostracize communities while balancing this perspective with an accurate representation of facts on the ground. Although the public has a right to be informed, coverage should not exploit victims or serve the agenda of the perpetrators.

Meanwhile, Internet-based activism has changed the nature of social and political movements, from terrorists inciting or celebrating violence to advocacy by victims' groups. Terrorist organizations have quickly learned to leverage new information and communication technologies, often transforming themselves into organic social movements and making their simple but powerful tools available to anyone with Internet access.

...coverage should not exploit victims or serve the agenda of the perpetrators.

One participant noted that the investigation of recent terrorist arrests in an Arab country revealed that a majority of the perpetrators had been recruited or radicalized over the Internet. Terrorists' use of the Internet to spread their ideology, incite violence, and engage in other criminal activities has no limits. The Internet has empowered disgruntled citizens around the world to become producers, not simply consumers, of terrorist ideologies. It has also given groups easy access to potential recruits.

Most participants claimed that, to some degree, governments have not done enough to monitor or control these Web-based activities. However, government intelligence and law enforcement agencies are often constrained by a lack of language skills and legal barriers. They also tend to have inadequate or ineffective re-messaging and public diplomacy skills. Furthermore, efforts to shut down terrorist Web sites do not necessarily solve the problem. Terrorists can easily migrate their Web data to a different server, one that may be even more difficult for a government to locate or track. In some cases, it may be more productive to monitor a terrorist Web site in order to collect valuable data on users.

The Role of the United Nations, Other IGOs, and Governments. Most participants supported the establishment of a code of conduct for non-Internet media and possibly even enforcement measures for clear instances of terrorist incitement. However, they disagreed on censorship; on what actually constitutes the differences among news, propaganda, and/or incitement; and how the international community could realistically implement such a code of conduct. The international community, the CTED, and the CTITF have very little ability to censor or regulate the media in an age of instantaneous media transmissions. This is especially true of self-publication on the World Wide Web, where no journalistic standards or editors are present to engage in dialogue and norm-setting, and un-vetted information is immediately available to anyone.

Despite these obstacles, participants tabled several suggestions for the CTED and CTITF: heighten awareness in member states of acceptable standards of practice; bring together lawmakers, the private sector, and technical and functional experts to address the challenges; and establish a universal but voluntary code of conduct or UN-led international convention on the media and Internet.

Participants agreed that effective countermessaging and promotion strategies and tactics must be created and disseminated at the state, regional, and international levels to counter the rhetoric of terrorists and extremists. Governments and IGOs must become more nimble, adept, and creative in using new media and Internet technologies. High-level UN diplomats could also make a concerted effort to launch a public awareness campaign with media outlets around the world.

One member of the CTITF cited the importance of involving communications companies and civil society groups in this effort, including civic groups

...effective countermessaging and promotion strategies and tactics must be created and disseminated....

that are trying to combat extremism and radicalization in their own communities. Not only is their expertise essential, but this could also reinforce links and build much-needed relationships with other sectors, while utilizing those actors most motivated to change the status quo: companies that want their services and technologies used responsibly, and civic groups that want to increase the prosperity and well-being of their own constituents.

Building States' Capacity to Counter Terrorism

Participants agreed that implementation of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy rests first and foremost on the shoulders of member states. A major objective of the strategy is building state capacity so that states can design; implement; and contribute to national, regional, and international counter-terrorism strategies and tactics rather than simply receiving direction from external actors.

It was also agreed that empowering states to address internal development, socioeconomic, and political challenges will have broader positive effects beyond helping them to fight terrorism. Couching counterterrorism assistance in this framework could overcome the misconception that global counterterrorism initiatives are important only to the "North." In fact, one participant noted that a majority of terrorist attacks and deaths from terrorism are South-South rather than South-North in nature. Hence effective and fair counterterrorism efforts integrate well with the goals of sustainable development and human rights.

The majority of participants concluded that no single formula could eradicate terrorism in all countries. Therefore, any assistance should strive for state ownership in the process, and should be cognizant and sensitive to state needs.

The Role of the United Nations and Other IGOs in Building State Capacities

In building state capacities, there are simultaneous roles for bilateral initiatives and for regional and global ones. However, while bilateral assistance is necessary and effective, simultaneous, multilateral, integrated approaches and coherence efforts are necessary to establish *governance frameworks* to ensure coordination and information-sharing.

The legitimacy of the current structure and process is undermined in part because of donor incoherence among Northern states. Thus far, the focus of the CTED has been narrow—equipping member states to incorporate acceptable international legal norms and trying to hinder money laundering and terrorism financing. Although the CTED has identified a set of best practices and made it available on its Web site, participants believed that more substantial efforts were required to equip states and assess implementation of the requirements. For example, one country may donate technical equipment and training, but may not be in the best position to give advice on the international legal implications of using that equipment. This complicates the delivery assessment. As another example, one country may own the

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Any assistance should strive for state ownership in the process....

technology to assist with counterterrorism efforts but require outside expertise on how to use it.
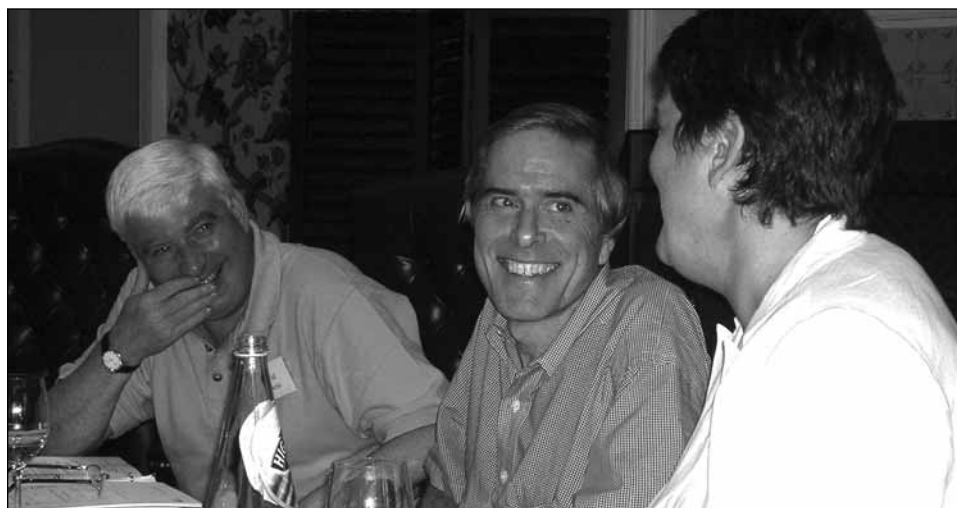
Continuity of training and structured follow-up were cited as critical components of state capacity-building. Recipients and donors alike must strive to maintain continuity, avoid attrition, and promote accountability of the individuals and institutions that have received training. The turnover of government personnel in developing countries sometimes cancels the benefits received. It was also noted that too often overlapping service providers create wasteful redundancies in the training process. Therefore some type of accountability and coordination mechanism is needed.

For instance, global IGOs and major UN agencies may have training and development programs in the judicial and police areas that overlap with the bilateral capacity-building being done by individual Northern states, and vice versa. Thus coordination of bilateral, UN, and regional organizations' efforts raises the possibility of more efficient and effective results. "Bundling" of services may be a role for the CTITF to consider.

Some participants suggested a joint mandate, wherein the SC and CTED would focus on compliance, while the GA and CTITF would focus on capacity-building. However, impediments cited as obstacles to this idea were the United Nations' organizational structure, resources, and leadership, particularly the friction and distrust pervading SC and GA interactions. The inability to overcome these obstacles has prevented forward momentum similar to what was encountered in previous initiatives such as improving peacekeeping and promoting human rights regimes.

Yet, in spite of these organizational challenges, participants agreed that there must be a *comprehensive architectural structure that incorporates ownership at all levels* and overcomes hostility within existing structures and programs. One precedent for this is the UN peacebuilding commission, in which member states and regional organizations are integrating their approaches to achieve some mission success.

Continuity of training and structured follow-up were cited as critical....

As a start, some type of international effort to educate the GA members this year on current counterterrorism progress and best practices was mentioned as a good way to raise awareness, encourage greater buy-in, promote information-sharing, and hold states more accountable for their progress (or lack thereof). Toward this end, the United Nations' strong analysis and convening capabilities were cited as potential means of promoting the strategy; sharing best practices/lessons learned; and engaging actors from governments, the private sector, and civil society. According to several participants, the United Nations is in the best position to make sure that "the right meeting is held at the right time, with just the right group of 15-20 people around a table" to take the next step. It was also claimed that the United Nations can do more to match donor priorities and capabilities to recipients' needs.

Streamlining and highlighting the CTITF's matrix of terrorist-related agencies and committees, and its online handbook, were other means of defusing conflicts among the actors. It was also recommended that the CTITF staff be increased, since the only full-time staffer dedicated to the task force's work is an intern (who has other tasks). The picture of CTITF operations that has emerged is of an overburdened and underfunded staff. All 24 task force members (apart from the intern) are currently contributing to the task force in their "spare time," having been pulled from other mandates and agencies.

There were also calls for the counterterrorism community to clarify expectations and standards for donors within a coherent framework. The CTED has assembled a packet on these standards (by functional organizations); but according to one participant, when it comes to implementation on the ground, many countries do not understand or embrace the standards. Another participant suggested assigning "troop-to-task" so there is a division of labor across donor states, with each donor giving money for capacity-building in one area to multiple recipients simultaneously, rather than covering all areas of capacity-building with a few favored recipients. Participants also noted that there must be more equity in the training to counter the current emphasis on individual donors' pet projects.

Participants noted that the lack of reporting mechanisms, compliance oversight, and accountability weakens the current UN-led initiatives. One idea to correct this suboptimal trend is to hold member states "accountable" by recognizing and rewarding the most productive donor-recipient relationships—or alternatively, naming and shaming the more ambivalent players.

One participant suggested that regional peer mechanisms could be even more useful in generating both uniform compliance and long-term sustainability. Regional centers could promote sustainable solutions by serving as conduits for regional-specific needs, hosting training, and providing oversight for top-down and bottom-up coordination mechanisms. This model exists in ASEAN and could be used for other regional initiatives. Other examples of promising regional and subregional cooperation included efforts to counter terror financing in Europe, South Africa, and the Caribbean and those of the EU, OSCE, and the OAS to hinder drug trafficking. In contrast, one participant

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cited Iraq, Afghanistan, and Somalia as states in which there is little integration of training.

Summary of UN Efforts Toward State Capacity-Building and Compliance
In spite of the different opinions, most agreed that plugging into existing mechanisms rather than dissolving current instruments and creating new structures is more feasible. Despite a palpable sense of urgency for coordination and coherence in any UN initiatives for state capacity-building, the prevailing view was that an incremental process will bear results sooner than an all-or-nothing, make-or-break approach.

However, it was also agreed that the increments must be of significant size to move forward, and incrementalism should not be equated with apathy and lack of strategic direction. Clear annual goals and process milestones should be set, with a well-defined, long-term agenda that allows states to monitor and evaluate incremental efforts in a larger context. Further, these efforts should not be zero-sum: merely taking resources or personnel from one program to empower counterterrorism efforts will not create greater utility across all UN programs, nor will it ensure success in counterterrorism.

Providing additional funding and personnel for the CTITF is something that the UN community can do to bolster the existing structure. The CTITF, given its status as a more neutral body of the secretary-general, can and should play a greater role as a bridge-builder between the GA and SC. The CTITF also works with non-UN organizations such as Interpol—a critical contributor to law enforcement, intelligence, and terror financing pursuits—and to myriad NGOs. Such an integrated approach is more likely to produce durable and acceptable solutions. On a positive note, participants encouraged member states and officials to discuss funding and resource issues with the United Nations' Administrative and Budgetary Fifth Committee and to set up an in-progress review for member states at the fall 2007 meeting of the GA.

In sum: more independent resources need to be mobilized for the global counterterrorism effort, involving both Northern and Southern parties in the GA. There is a clear need for urgent SC-GA dialogue and more purposeful mobilization of leading member states who consistently back up rhetoric with actions in the funding and diplomatic support of universally agreed-upon UN mandates. Over the next year, prior to the 2008 assessment of progress made on this issue, the more active countries in the GA need to come together to ensure Fifth Committee funding of the CTITF, while the SC members need to do more to review and clarify the role of the CTED and its relationship to the CTITF.

Ensuring Respect for Human Rights and Advancing the Rule of Law
A significant challenge for counterterrorism experts and governments is balancing the need to protect the human rights of those who are/may become victims of terrorism against the rights of those accused or suspected of plotting and perpetrating terrorist acts. Striking a balance by striving to ensure due

...more independent resources need to be mobilized....

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process and domestic rule of law will remain difficult in high-threat situations. Should "foreigners" receive the same due process as citizens? When are tougher elicitation methods justified, if at all? Can the international community standardize when extradition is acceptable? What is "the lesser evil"?

These questions persist within states and at the UN level, as illustrated by the disagreement over the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime terrorist watch lists and the often lengthy due process period for convicting or removing a suspect. To combat the threat in a balanced manner, most agreed that it was important to resist new legal frameworks, build on existing institutions, and enable states to deal with the many legal challenges of implementing Resolution 1373.

Viewing Terrorism Through the Frame of Human Rights Protections
One participant emphasized the importance of security sector reform as states develop their own counterterrorism strategies. As individual member states are given aid to bolster their law enforcement efforts, measures should be taken to ensure accountability, transparency, and involvement from independent judiciaries. The rights of individual citizens could be at risk, including:

- **Right to life.** Protection from the controversial use of overwhelming military strikes against suspects, shoot-to-kill policies, and expansion of death penalties is necessary to ensure that counterterrorism actions are seen as legitimate and do not lead to more radicalization.

- **Right to nondiscrimination.** Protection from growing animosity against ostracized groups, both globally (in regard to Muslims) and locally (for minority ethnic, religious, or cultural groups who may house some violent elements at the domestic level) is necessary to avoid indiscriminate policies.

- **Right of free speech.** Freedom of public expression against government actions (e.g., via the Internet and media) needs to be protected.

- **Right to property.** The United Nations and national governments should not freeze assets without due process.

- **Right to a fair trial and protection from arbitrary detention without charge.** Adjudicated courts should be used to vet suspects.

- **Right to be free of torture and other ill treatment.** Freedom from abuse or torture to obtain intelligence is necessary, not only to protect the human rights of suspects but also to increase the effectiveness of counterterrorism efforts. Forced confessions may not always lead to better enforcement, and proper police procedures actually improve the reliability of intelligence obtained.

- **Right of return.** Protection against torture or discrimination when refugees attempt to return to their homeland is a matter not only of refugee protection and the UNHCR mandate but will also strengthen counterterrorism efforts.

...striving to ensure due process and domestic rule of law will remain difficult....

Others countered that terrorists threaten these same rights, and the demands of protecting innocent civilians from terrorist attacks will inevitably mean that civil society will have to sacrifice some of these rights. One national representative noted that government officials live in an age of instant information where citizens demand increased protection from the negative externalities of globalization, and where even one high-impact explosion or attack is viewed as a failure to protect citizens. Governments must therefore logically follow procedures of preemptive detainment if tactical intelligence shows that a terrorist act is highly likely in the immediate future. Not surprisingly, given these pressures, the legal framework and mindset of many involved in intelligence, law enforcement, and lawmaking believe that the same citizens who want security should be willing to sacrifice some rights to preserve it.

Several participants said that one way to balance these competing demands is to strengthen national and international legal frameworks to make sure that "preemptive detentions" adhere to a reasonable and constrained amount of time; sequestering of potential suspects should not go on forever, as has often been the case with overloaded court systems. Also, it has been a practice of police and intelligence agencies in both the North and the South to detain people as long as it takes to garner evidence that validates their original suspicions; this sort of practice should be clearly constrained.

In this regard, many participants argued against the US position that its citizens have rights that foreign visitors or immigrants do not. The majority thought that domestic constitutional guarantees on due process and the rule of law should apply to all people in a country, whether they are nationals or not. Among developed countries, the United States was generally seen as standing apart on this issue in comparison to other developed/Northern countries such as those of the EU, which apply the same due process standards to all people detained on member states' territory.

One participant argued that the use of torture to extract confessions can and does lead both to bad enforcement (incorrect information and intelligence

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that actually hurts police efforts) and the creation of new grievances that could feed into, rather than prevent terrorism. As argued by this expert, human rights training for police officers in regard to detentions and interrogations will make for more effective domestic counterterrorism in developing states, protect suspected innocents from becoming radicalized, and provide greater legitimacy to government efforts. From a development perspective, ensuring a respect for human rights, fostering social justice, and enhancing legal frameworks can build stronger institutions that help mitigate the spread of terrorism.

The Role of the United Nations and Other IGOs in Human Rights and Counterterrorism. According to one UN official, because the elements of the strategy have thus far been addressed in a rather discrete approach, the human rights component is at risk of becoming an "orphan." Another participant noted that a contributing factor is the unfortunate perception of antagonism between the counterterrorism and human rights communities. At the extreme, human rights activists are seen as "pro-terrorist" or indirectly aiding and abetting terrorism. The fact that the aims of these two communities actually complement one another is often lost.

To implement the strategy, the counterterrorism and human rights communities need to recognize and promote their inherent synergies. Toward this end, the two communities should create a joint communication program that presents their common ground and objectives.

Overall, promoting human rights conventions and protocols and high standards in training should be a core component of the Global Strategy. Without this training, countries may naively abuse the privileges of the counterterrorism donor programs. For example, equipping states with anti-money laundering software does not entitle intelligence officials unfettered access to private citizens' records, and training and equipping police to better track and capture a potential criminal does not entitle law enforcement to use torture to elicit information.

Several participants also thought that it was imperative for the United Nations to maintain high standards in its own activities regardless of the behavior of member states or citizens. Along these lines, there were calls for the United Nations to do a better job of vetting the suspects on its own watch list to ensure due process. Several conference participants thought that suspects had unfairly been held hostage on this list without proper vetting. Others also noted that the SC cannot and should not serve as a court, per se.

Various mechanisms exist to address the specific human rights challenges in the context of terrorism. UN mechanisms that provide recommendations include the Committee Against Torture, Human Rights Council, and other experts such as the special rapporteurs in Human Rights and Counterterrorism. Several NGOs, such as Human Rights Watch, produce reports and recommendations. Full integration of human rights representa-

...the human rights component is at risk of becoming an "orphan."

tives and frameworks on technical assistance teams and strategic planning committees will attenuate the problem, but this requires a shift in mindset among the players in both the security and human rights communities.

Participants acknowledged uncertainties over whether human rights frameworks apply equally to states and nonstate actors such as terrorists. While states have the ability to inflict greater harm on greater numbers of people, they also have greater international and legal constraints and accountability mechanisms. States that are in earlier stages of development face even greater challenges due to limited capacity to alter the conditions that may be conducive to the acceptance of terrorist ideologies. While consensus was not reached regarding nonstate actors, a majority of participants believed that current international legal frameworks were sufficient to counter these threats and actors.

...this requires a shift in mindset among the players....

Conclusion: Actions Needed/Next Steps

The legitimacy conferred by the adoption of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy by all 192 of its member states, combined with the reach and resources of UN agencies, places the United Nations in the best position to assist the global community in coordinating counterterrorism efforts. Overall, participants identified the need for both concerted short-term or "triage" tactics and longer-term efforts, embracing an incremental approach (toward clearly defined long-term goals) in order to illustrate progress by 2008.

Concrete recommendations of both a short-term and longer-term nature include:

Short Term
• Increase and deepen awareness of the strategy and CTITF capabilities among UN members and at the regional levels (top-down). Hold states accountable for progress reports (bottom-up).

• To increase ownership of the process, the secretary-general and others should seek buy- in from member states that have a reputation for taking on challenging issues and moving them forward in the UN. In short, the counterterrorism issue and entities such as the CTED and CTITF need more member states as clear and explicit supporters of their activities and mandates.

• Empower the UN counterterrorism community with greater resources, including financial and human resource support, particularly to the CTITF as its current staff resources are already committed to other full-time jobs.

• Help reshape the lexicon of counterterrorism by avoiding terms that ostracize and/or generalize. Promote a public awareness campaign, possibly spearheaded by a special envoy or eminent person.

• Promote awareness of and support for a program for victims of terrorism, including a UN conference or discussion forum that gives these victims a stronger international voice.

- Review the CTED role and encourage a dual mandate from the GA and SC to illustrate comprehensive support for implementation oversight.

- Glean best practices from other UN, regional, national, private sector and civil society best practice initiatives (e.g., peacebuilding commission, anti-money laundering networks, regulation of pornography over the Internet, civil aviation security standards).

- Research and catalog efforts by civil society, government, and private sector actors in the areas of education/reeducation and interfaith/intercultural dialogues in an effort to join forces and leverage resources.

Narrow the gap of understanding between the G-8 and G-77....

- Convene meetings with appropriate private sector leaders and experts to discuss how to better use and counteract the use of the media and Internet by terrorist groups and actors.

Long Term
- Narrow the gap of understanding between the G-8 and G-77 on substantive issues.

- Promote interfaith and intercultural dialogues.

- Maintain an aggressive focus on combating the conditions conducive to terrorism, especially mediating and resolving violent conflict.

- Establish an international counterterrorism center to promote a global policy network.

- Reconcile the dichotomy between counterterrorism and human rights paradigms. Seek and promote common ground.

- Require periodic review of state progress.

- Advocate for a binding definition of terrorism, based on acts rather than actors, to define law enforcement roles, intelligence roles, and universal rules of engagement.

- Over time, empower entities such as the CTITF to *coordinate activities* in all realms of counterterrorism by states, regional and other IGOs, the private sector, and civil society. Allow and enable the United Nations to add badly needed *coherence and governance* to donor-recipient relations through such instruments as conferences with "the right 15 people around a table," better measurement, monitoring, and evaluation capabilities, and more analysis of issues.

- Work toward consistent, reliable, and regularized information-sharing among the private sector, civil society, and governments with particular emphasis on infrastructure protection, creation of norms and a code of conduct for the media, cultural dialogues, technical advice on communica-

tions issues such as terrorist traffic on the Internet, cyber-terrorism, and other tasks where private entities or civil society NGOs may have more technical expertise, cultural nuance, and experience with a given problem. Move away from current ad hoc and uncoordinated efforts, which though effective, fall short of leveraging the knowledge inherent in the private sector and civil society.

• Consult with regional organizations for leadership and better on-the-ground knowledge when appropriate, and empower the CTED and CTITF to "connect the dots" between concerned regional actors and ongoing global initiatives. Use examples of success such as ASEAN initiatives, EU-OAS initiatives, and EU-Caribbean programs in areas such as education, reeducation, interfaith dialogue, civil society engagement, and intelligence-sharing and enforcement.

Conference members agreed that the global community will not succeed in implementing the Global Strategy simply by military or security means; the way ahead requires a determined and dedicated holistic effort. An agenda to address these complex issues must reflect values; democratic freedoms; responsibility to others; and justice and fairness for all, regardless of race, religion, economic status, or gender. These values are universal.

Toward counterterror actions that reflect and embody these common values, the United Nations has the chance and the challenge to develop instruments and best practices for member states. But member states also must find the political will to create mechanisms and institutions for coordination. The international community as a whole must adopt a comprehensive, aggregated approach and commitment to moving the agenda forward. The debates over local versus global, religion versus civilization, or use of existing UN structures versus organizational reform only paralyze forward momentum. These debates are pervasive in UN initiatives, but should not sideline implementation where positive-sum interests and common ground exist. Member states can take initiative by voluntarily spearheading programs or building coalitions of the willing, even without an official GA or SC mandate or further guidance. In fact, the strategy's forward momentum will depend on member states' entrepreneurial spirit.

...empower the CTED and CTITF to "connect the dots"....

Chairman's Observations

This year's conference on the United Nations of the Next Decade under-scored the importance of moving expeditiously to implement the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and Plan of Action adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2006. Already, the strategy is providing legitimacy to counterterrorism efforts in many parts of the world. It also is providing the rationale for internal coordination of the various United Nations' activities dealing with counterterrorism.

The strategy properly places primary implementation responsibility on member states. Encouragement and capacity-building assistance are impor-tant parts of helping states handle this responsibility.

Implementation progress will be reviewed by the General Assembly in the fall of 2008, offering an excellent opportunity to assess progress, tune the strategy, and take additional actions toward effective implementation.

Conference participants identified several obstacles to effective implementa-tion and offered both short-term and long-term recommendations to over-come them. These are included in the conference report. Three obstacles merit mention here.

The first is conceptual. Unfortunately, there is a fairly widespread perception that counterterrorism is primarily of interest to the more developed coun-tries and of much less interest to developing ones. This perception misses the mark. Many more people from developing countries than from developed ones are victims of terrorist acts. Further, the capacity-building actions envi-sioned in the Counter-Terrorism Strategy are a necessary part or subset of overall national development work—for example, the call for further inten-sive development of effective criminal justice systems based on the rule of law and respect for human rights. The linkage to development, peace and security, and human rights is expressly included in the strategy itself. Counterterrorism capacity-building should be seen and coordinated as a part of a state's overall development efforts.

A second obstacle is operational and primarily within the United Nations. UN counterterrorism efforts, particularly those of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, are severely underresourced. The various UN entities involved in counterterrorism are not sufficiently coordinated. And thus far, there has not been sufficient communication between these entities and UN members. Even though this is not surprising, given the comparative newness of the strategy and the number of entities involved, it is still an obstacle. UN leadership and members should move expeditiously to provide adequate funding, strengthen coordination, and improve communication.

A third obstacle is definitional. The Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy reaf-firms member states' determination to make every effort to reach an agree-

> UN counterterrorism efforts...are severely underresourced.

ment on and conclude a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. To now, a major difficulty in doing this has been that of agreeing on a definition of *terrorism*. This has given rise to the oft-repeated cliché that one person's terrorist is another person's freedom fighter. It seems to me that the answer here is most likely to be found by defining and criminalizing terrorist acts. A terrorist act is one that deliberately and violently targets civilians for political purposes. It violates the fundamental human rights of those targeted. Terrorist acts are defined by what is done, not by who does it or for what purpose.

Adoption of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy offers a major opportunity to strengthen principled multilateralism in world affairs. The strategy properly asks member states; the United Nations; and other appropriate international, regional, and subregional organizations to support its implementation. Let's all work for substantial progress by the fall of 2008, be prepared to update the strategy if indicated, and sustain these efforts through the coming years. If this is done, the world will be more secure, peaceful, free, and just.

The Stanley Foundation

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