Inter-American Committee against Terrorism - CICTE

Secretariat for Multidimensional Security - Organization of American States

Mission Statement

The main purpose of the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism (CICTE) is to promote and develop cooperation among Member States to prevent, combat and eliminate terrorism, in accordance with the principles of the OAS Charter, with the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism, and with full respect for the sovereignty of states, the rule of law, and international law, including international humanitarian law, international human rights law, and international refugee law.

Objectives

The Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS) appoints the Secretary of CICTE to head the Secretariat located at OAS Headquarters in Washington, D.C. In order to fulfill the mandates established by the Member States in the CICTE Work Plan, the Secretariat:

- Provides technical and administrative support for the CICTE sessions and maintains communication and coordination between sessions;
- Provides technical assistance and training to Member States in response to their needs and requests; and
- Promotes international cooperation and partnerships with other international, regional, and sub-regional organizations
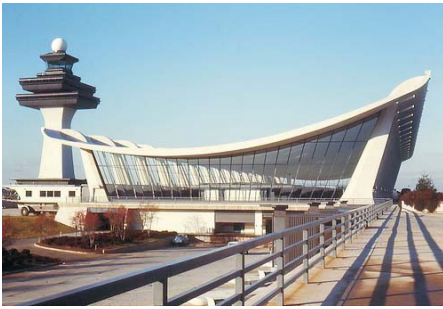
PROGRAMS

Maritime Security

Objective

Strengthen the capacity of Member States to effectively comply with the security requirements of the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code (ISPS) of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) for protection of port facilities and cruise ship terminals.

Description

This program is implemented through three sub-programs: 1.Port facility security and training needs assessments, and follow-up training;2.Crisis Management Exercises; and 3.Workshops on Best Practices in implementation of International Maritime Security Standards.

Training is aimed at strengthening counter-terrorism and law enforcement capabilities within the port facilities and enhancing coordination among the relevant government authorities responsible for maritime security. The program addresses the range of facilities that fall within the purview of the ISPS Code, including access controls to and within ports; control of passengers; cargo security, customs and immigration controls, including security procedures; management of crises; and security awareness in general. Strengthening the capacity of OAS Member States to effectively comply with the security requirements of the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code (ISPS) is critical to controlling international borders and complying with UN Security Council Resolution 1373.

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Aviation Security

Objective

Build capacity of Member State to comply with the standards and recommended practices set out in the Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation, its annexes (particularly Annex 17), and other International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) recommendations, with respect to safeguarding international civil aviation and its facilities against acts of unlawful interference.

Description

This program is implemented through two projects: 1) national training on security-related aviation procedures and improvements to help meet ICAO standards, provided in-country by a variety of international experts; and 2) scholarships to attend training courses implemented by ICAO in other countries. Strengthening the security of international airports is a critical element in controlling borders, in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 1373 and international civil aviation conventions, and in creating or restoring passenger confidence in commercial air transport.

Document Security and Fraud Prevention (DSFP)

Objective

To improve capacity to issue and handle identity and travel documents securely in compliance with the security standards and practices set out in the Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation, its annexes (particularly Annex 9), and recommendations of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO); and to strengthen border controls through the prevention and detection of the alteration or fraudulent use of those documents.

Description

The DSFP currently consists of two projects: 1) workshops for law enforcement, customs and immigrations personnel on detection of fraudulent documents and imposters; and 2) sub-regional Workshops on Best Practices in Travel Document Security, including identification and issuance of "breeder" documents used in the issuance of travel documents. Enhanced detection capabilities will improve border security and help to promote cooperation and the exchange of information to prevent and control document fraud, in accordance with UNSCR 1373, the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism, and the universal counterterrorism instruments (conventions and protocols) of the United Nations.

Strengthening Strategies on Emerging Terrorist Threats (Crisis Management)

Objective

Strengthen the capacity of Member States to better prepare to respond, in a coordinated manner, to potential terrorist threats.

Description

This program is implemented primarily through a series of "table top" (simulation) exercises for senior decision-makers of Member States to highlight specific issues of contingency planning and threat mitigation. Engaging with counter terrorism experts, participants play through a terrorism scenario designed with the particularities of a State or group of States in mind. Each scenario highlights a specific potential terrorist threat and challenges the players to devise real time responses to the problems presented to them. A post-simulation discussion provides decision-makers with professional critiques to assist them in improving their national contingency planning and coordination.

Legislative Assistance and Terrorism Financing

Objective

Assist Member States to enhance or strengthen a functional criminal justice regime against terrorism and terrorism financing, in compliance with the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism (IACAT) and the universal legal instruments against terrorism and terrorism financing. Strengthen national, sub-regional and regional expertise and capacity to implement effectively the IACAT and the universal legal framework.

Description

Technical assistance and training is provided to Member States in accordance with the international legal framework--UN Security Council Resolutions 1267 and 1373, the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism (IACAT), and UN conventions and protocols—and FATF Recommendations on Money Laundering (40) and Terrorist Financing (9). CICTE's activities in this program are implemented primarily through a partnership with the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC/TPB), and, in regard to the Financing of Terrorism sub-program, with the Inter-American Commission on Drug Abuse Control (OAS/SMS/CICAD).

Activities are implemented through two sub-programs. Legislative Assistance encompasses three main sets of activities: 1) legislative technical assistance missions--consultations with senior officials of the three powers of the State and national workshops with legislation drafters; 2) specialized in-country training for prosecutors, judges and law enforcement officials; and 3) regional or sub-regional activities (e.g., training courses or Ministerial Conferences). Assistance to combat Terrorism Financing is provided through specialized training and workshops at the national or sub-regional level. Both sub-programs are consistently related to one another, as terrorism financing issues are dealt with under the Legislative Assistance sub-program, and vice-versa.

Tourism Security

Objective

To strengthen the capacity of the public and private tourism sectors to prevent and respond to potential terrorist or other security attacks on tourist and recreational facilities, whether perpetrated by terrorists, criminal organizations, or common criminals; and to help establish or strengthen public-private partnerships in tourism security.

Description

The tourism security program provides specialized security training through workshops aimed at participants from both the public and private sectors, taking into consideration the realities and needs of individual countries and localities. The program also promotes public-private partnerships, in compliance with the UN Global Counter Terrorism Strategy of 2006. The nature of tourism, because of the high concentration of people in open places, high levels of employment, and economic importance: tourist facilities such as hotels, resorts, athletic venues, cruise ships, etc. are usually identified by security officials as "soft targets" - vulnerable to a wide variety of security threats from common crime to terrorist attacks. The high visibility of these targets represents an attractive opportunity for criminal or terrorist elements seeking to inflict serious economic and political damage by attacking them.

Cyber Security

Objective

Help Member States establish national 24/7 "alert, watch, and warning" teams, also known as Computer Security Incident Response Team (CSIRT) through technical assistance and training; build the capacity of CSIRT personnel in Member States to comply effectively with the requirements established in the "OAS Comprehensive Inter-American Strategy to Combat Threats to Cyber Security"; and facilitate the creation and maintenance of a hemispheric network of CSIRTs to promote the sharing of information and best practices.

Description

This program is implemented through three projects: 1) sub-regional and hemispheric workshops; 2) technical assistance missions to build national CSIRT capacity; and 3) training and support for the hemispheric CSIRT network hosted on the OAS secure server. The CICTE Secretariat is one of three OAS entities mandated to assist Member States in implementing "OAS Comprehensive Inter-American Strategy to Combat Threats to Cyber Security" adopted by the OAS General Assembly in 2004.

International Cooperation and Partnerships

Objective

Promote international cooperation and coordination on counterterrorism policy and programs in the Hemisphere through development of partnerships with international, multilateral, regional, and sub-regional organizations, as well as with security and technical agencies of individual countries.

Description

The CICTE Secretariat serves as a clearinghouse of information and technical assistance on counter-terrorism policy and programs on behalf of OAS Member States. To do so, the Secretariat promotes coordination with many international partners, such as the United Nations (UN CTED, UNODC, UNICRI), other International Organizations (ICAO, IMO, INTERPOL), regional organizations (APEC, OSCE, the Council of Europe, the Commonwealth Secretariat), sub-regional organizations (CARICOM, SICA), and the technical agencies of major donors, such as the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (Coast Guard, Transportation Security Agency, Customs and Border Protection), Canada (Transport Canada, Canadian Border Services Agency), Spain, and Israel. A network of National Points of Contacts from each country serves as a means of communicating with each other and with the Secretariat on technical issues.

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