

CICTE Informe #5

April, 2003

Counter-terrorism Activities

El Salvador, Mexico Ratify Inter-American Convention Against Terrorism

El Salvador and Mexico became the third and fourth states to ratify the convention. It will come into effect when a total of six states ratify it. Of 34 OAS Member States, 33 have already signed.

Cyber Security Seminar to Tackle Critical Infrastructure Protection

CICTE, CITEL, and REMJA are working with the governments of Argentina and the United States to develop a hemispheric strategy to safeguard telecommunications and computer networks. As a first step, Argentina will host a conference on cyber security in late July in Buenos Aires with representatives from the three OAS organizations, the Member States and the private sector. The conference will mark a first step towards coordinating efforts in this area of critical infrastructure protection and to preparing a framework for future efforts to insure the integrity of this vital sector. Additional details will be contained in future editions of *Informe*.

Antigua and Barbuda Sets Standard for FATF Compliance

The Caribbean Financial Action Task Force has singled out Antigua and Barbuda for their "outstanding" approach to countering money laundering - doing better than anyone else in achieving compliance with the FATF 40 and the Aruba 19 plus the 25 NCCT requirements that do not apply to FATF members. (World Money Laundering Digest)

South American Customs and Police Cooperation Yields Huge Drug Haul

A recent joint operation of INTERPOL and national customs and police authorities in Chile, Bolivia, Colombia, Argentina and Peru yielded more than 130 tons of chemical drug precursors, nearly 7 tons of cocaine, and numerous arrests. Operation ANDES utilized the WCO Customs Enforcement Network (CEN) as an on line message platform between officials of the participating countries. This allowed effective identification and targeting of suspect vessels and trucks. The operation focused on illicit shipments of chemical precursors used in the production of cocaine but demonstrated the ability of multiple organizations to work together to intercept illegal movements of materials. Further information at the World Customs Organization (www.wcoomd.org).

New Technical Advisory Group to Tackle Port Security

CICTE has joined with the Inter-American Committee on Ports and the US Maritime Administration on an OAS initiative to improve port security, the Technical Advisory Group on Port Security (TAG/PS). The charter goals of the TAG/PS are to: (1) develop a hemispheric approach to improving the security of the Inter-American maritime trade corridors; (2) develop a common port security

strategy; (3) devising basic guidelines and minimum standards of security for ports of member countries of the OAS; and (4) organize and conduct annual courses planned under the Inter-American Port Security Training Program, which are managed by US Maritime Administration (MARAD). Recommendations on best practices for port security may be found in the CICTE on-line database at www.cicte.oas.org/olat.

New Zealand Counter-Terrorism Bill Criminalizes New Offenses

New offenses under the bill include improper use or possession of nuclear material; threatening to use such material; importing, acquiring or possessing radioactive material with the intention of causing injury, and knowingly possessing, using, making, exporting or importing unmarked plastic explosives. It will also be an offense to contaminate food, crops, water or other products intended for human consumption, or to infect animals with disease with the intention of causing serious risk to an animal population or major damage to the national economy. Other new offenses include harboring terrorists or those about to commit terrorist acts. The new offenses carry penalties ranging from 7-10 years in jail and \$500,000 fines. Full text of the legislation may be found at http://www.legislation.govt.nz/browse_vw.asp?content-set=pal_statutes

Upcoming Conferences and Meetings of Note:

- Apr 22-24: "Bio-Criminalization: Preventing Bio-Terrorism by Fortifying Legislation and Law Enforcement" Geneva, Switzerland. For more information contact Prof. Barry Kellman at bkellman@depaul.edu.
- Apr 29-30: The World Customs Organization Regional Conference for the Americas "Security and Trade Facilitation in the Supply Chain" Cancun, Mexico. The CICTE Executive Secretary will make a presentation on regional counter-terrorism initiatives against terrorism during the conference's Symposium on "Security and Facilitation in the International Trade Supply Chain Against Terrorism." The conference sponsored by the World Customs Organization (www.wcoomd.org) and jointly chaired by the customs services of Mexico and Nicaragua.
- May 5-6: FATF Terrorist Financing Working Group, Paris, France

Recent Developments in the News:

In a March 17th article, the *New York Times* reported that Spain's Supreme Court outlawed the radical Basque political party Herri Batasuna due to the groups ties with the terrorist group ETA. The unanimous decision by the court means that the group must immediately cease all political activity and cannot participate in the upcoming May elections. More information on the Spanish law and

reasoning can be found in documents in the CICTE on-line database at www.cicte.oas.org/olat.

The *World Money Laundering Report* reports that two Al Qaida fund-raisers were each jailed for 11 years by a U.K court. In sentencing the two Algerian nationals, the judge ruled that raising money for terrorism was tantamount to being involved in terrorist acts, even though the two were not linked to any deaths. The case specifics involved the manufacture and distribution of false passports and credit card fraud. The credit card fraud yielded at least GBP 200,000. The case involved more than 30 arrests, two dozen convictions thus far, and the cooperation of police forces in Afghanistan, the US, the Netherlands, France, Canada, Belgium and Spain.

The *New York Times* reported recently that facial recognition technology has improved substantially since 2000. The U.S. National Institute of Standards conducted the latest in a series of biannual tests and is expected to recommend deployment of facial recognition systems in combination with fingerprinting and other biometric identification systems for use in verifying individual identities. The report also highlighted the shortcomings of the systems in outdoor settings. The systems also perform better with men than women and with older subjects rather than younger. The systems are judged to be 90% effective in matching a picture to a database when used under reasonably controlled indoor lighting. The systems only generated one false positive in 100.

In a *Washington Post* story the US Department of Homeland Security reported that Chinese hacker groups were planning increased attacks on U.S. and U.K. based Web sites to protest the war in Iraq. The Finnish Internet security firm F-Secure Corp reported that about 10,000 web sites had been marred with digital graffiti by protesters and supporters of the war.