



CICTE Informe #15

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Counter-Terrorism Activities

Latin American and Caribbean Regional Preparatory Meeting for the 11th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in cooperation with the Latin American Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (ILANUD) joined forces in organizing this year's Latin American and Caribbean regional preparatory meeting for the 11th Crime Congress. The meeting took place in San Jose, Costa Rica and concluded on 21 April 2004. The Congress has five substantive items on its agenda – one of which is improved international cooperation against terrorism and links between terrorism and other criminal activities in the context of the work of the UNODC. The Latin American and Caribbean regional preparatory meeting was followed by a two-day seminar, which concluded on 23 April 2004, and provided participants the opportunity to discuss the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its three Protocols, as well as promote the ratification of the United Nations Convention against Corruption.

Official Visits to U.S. Border Crossing Points from the “Group 3+1”

CICTE is working on a series of initiatives designed to improved coordination and professional practices in customs between Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay. Official visits from members of the “Group 3 + 1” were made to port and land-border crossings between the U.S.-Mexico. Visits were designed to facilitate the exchange of best practices and experiences regarding border control. This visit will be followed by a second round of visits by operational level officers of the aforementioned countries for a more detailed look at joint mechanisms of cooperation aimed at improving regional border security.

Training Workshop on Airport Security

The workshop was carried out in San Salvador, El Salvador, from April 19 to 29 of 2004, at the Central American Institute of Aeronautic Training (ICCAE), for Spanish speaking countries of the Central American and Caribbean region, including Haiti as special guest. It was organized by the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism (CICTE) of the OAS, jointly with the Department of Scholarships and Training of the Inter-American Agency for Cooperation and Development (AICD/OAS) and the Transportation Security Administration of the United States (TSA). 28 representatives from seven countries were present: Costa Rica (3), El Salvador (11), Haiti (2), Honduras (3), Guatemala (3),

Nicaragua (3) and Panama (1). Representatives from the Central American Corporation of Air Navigation Services (COCESNA) and from the Central American Agency of Aeronautic Security (ACSA) were also present. CICTE financed the travel, food and accommodation of the participants from the aforementioned countries. The workshop consisted of the application of standards and practices recommended by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) regarding matters of security controls in international airports. The 28 participants have been certified by TSA in airport security as a result of the workshop.

CICTE, UNODC Discuss Counter-terrorism Conventions at Jamaican Seminar

CICTE Executive Secretary Steven Monblatt, and Michael De Feo, representing the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, held three days of talks in Kingston last month on the international requirements of UNSCR 1373 and the Inter-American convention. They met with Jamaican legislators, lawyers, academics, the media, and representatives of civil society as part of an effort by the Jamaican Government to help explain the context within which they were preparing new counter-terrorism legislation.

Upcoming Counter-Terrorism Meeting and Events

- 12-13 May, CIFTA Small Arms Conference, Managua, Nicaragua
- 17-21 May, Inter American Port Security Training Program, Kingston, Jamaica
- 18-19 May, 3+1 FIU Conference, Buenos Aires
- 27-28 May, Seminario con Presidentes de Poderes Legislativos de la región Andina y PARLAMENTO ANDINO (UPD/CICTE)
- 31 May – 4 June, ICAO Crisis Management Course, Quito, Ecuador
- 3-8 June, Organization of American States General Assembly, Quito, Ecuador
- 16-18 June, Simulation Exercise (CTSIMEX 1), Barbados
- 21-25 June, Customs Professional Responsibility Training, Asuncion, Paraguay
- 21-24 June, CICAD Maritime Security Group of Experts Meeting, Tegucigalpa, Honduras
- 28 June – 2 July, WGTF and FATF Plenary, Paris, France

Recent Developments in the News

A U.S. court sentenced six Cuban men to prison terms of 20 years or more following their convictions for hijacking a plane last year from Cuba to the U.S. In an article written on April 21, in *BBC.com*, the six men said they were not hijackers because the plane's crew had been complicit in the incident. In response to the hijacking, Marcos Daniel Jimenez, a U.S. attorney for the southern district of Florida, said, "If you engage in violence to enter the United States you will be prosecuted and held accountable for your actions . . . Law enforcement will not tolerate this type of behavior and neither will our community."

Canada has developed an action plan designed to ensure the Government of Canada prepare for and respond to current and future threats. On April 27, *canada.gc.ca* wrote *Securing An Open Society: Canada's National Security Policy* adopts an integrated approach to security issues across Government. The National Security Policy has taken measures to strengthen marine security, improve intelligence, and enhance border security as well as international security. The policy states that Canada will "continue to play an important role in countering international terrorism, preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and defusing key inter/intra-state conflicts."

Three Irishmen acquitted of training left-wing rebels in Colombia are being held in jail in Bogotá pending a prosecution appeal. *BBC News* reported on April 27 that the men were accused of training Farc rebels in the use of explosives and using false documentation. The Irishmen were cleared of training the rebels, however were sentenced on the false passports charge. Nevertheless, former Colombian ambassador and legal expert Alfonso Gonzalez Mendes said, "This judgment still isn't definitive and is still subject to further examination." The men have been in custody since they were detained in August 2001 and are to be expelled from the country.

On the 28th of April, the U.N. Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution that will compel governments to make it a crime to transfer nuclear, biological and chemical weapon materials to terrorists and black-market arms dealers. On April 29, Colum Lynch of the *Washington Post* wrote, "the resolution calls on countries 'to combat by all means' the spread of such weapons. It requires that the United Nations' 191 members 'adopt and enforce appropriate and effective laws' to prevent 'any non-state actors' from being able to 'manufacture, acquire, possess, develop, transport or use nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their means of delivery.'" States are required to report within six months on steps they have taken to implement the resolution.

On April 29, the British security service, MI5, took the unprecedented step of issuing advice on how companies and the public could protect themselves from terrorist attacks, including a list of 10 tips on surviving bomb blasts and detecting spies. In an article by Jason Bennetto taken from the *Independent.co.uk* on May 1, Eliza Manningham-Buller, the director general of MI5, was quoted as saying, "Traditionally, this advice was confined mainly to government, but the threat of global terrorism makes it important for us to extend this advice to a wider range of people." For more information regarding the MI5's top ten tips on how companies can protect themselves against acts of terrorism go to www.mi5.gov.uk.

President Bush is now seeking delays on high-tech passports. Detailed in a *nytimes.com* article written on 21 April, two of the Bush Administration's top officials were sent to Congress to argue for giving 27 allies more time to develop high-technology passports for security screening rather than forcing their citizens to apply for U.S. visas until new passports are available. Both Secretary of State Colin L. Powell and Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge want to see the deadline for passports that have computer chips to provide facial recognition moved from October 26, 2004 to November 20, 2006. Although the Bush Administration firmly believes the time extension is needed to bring all documentation systems up to speed, some Hill members disagree.

Nearly 1,000 Central American soldiers have made important contributions to reconstruction and security efforts in Iraq, while representing their respective nations with distinction and making favorable impressions on their coalition counterparts. In an article published on 21 April on the U.S. International Information Programs website, Scott Miller wrote that the “first contingent of Central American personnel conducted security patrols and played an important role in the removal and destruction of landmines in Iraq.” They also carried out humanitarian efforts such as food donations, the construction of walkways and footbridges, the construction of well and irrigation infrastructure for local agriculture, and the distribution of school and sports equipment, including the construction of school playground equipment.

Continued Threat of Terrorist Attacks on Madrid

Spanish editorials on Monday, 26 April, gave a stark reminder that the country is still a terrorist target and advised on what should be the next move in dealing with Islamist terrorism:

In an editorial entitled “Spain lives the nightmare of suicide terrorism,” *El Mundo* said Prime Minister-elect Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero faces a huge challenge in dealing with the Islamist threat. “Spain is a particularly vulnerable nation, because of its nature as a border country with the Arab world and because it is a transit point and place of residence for millions of Muslims.”

La Razon said that recent events in Spain coincided with a “dramatic deterioration” in the situation in Iraq. It advised the new government, along with its allies and the US in particular, to try to find a way to allow the UN to coordinate the transition of power to the Iraqi people.

In an editorial entitled “A supreme challenge” *El Pais* said that all EU states should work together to fight terrorism as every country is now a potential target. “The new EU must overcome national differences, cultural misgivings and political mistrust to face the greatest threat to its democratic foundations, as this blind Jihadist terror highlights the absurdity of boundaries between the national and the international.”

New Documents on OLAT

- *Joint United States-Mexico Contingency Plan for Preparedness for and Response to Environmental Emergencies Caused by Releases, Spills, Fires, or Explosions of Hazardous Substances in the Inland Border Area*, US Environmental Protection Agency
- *Improving Security Across the Software Development Lifecycle: Task Force Report*

- *“Implementing Counter Terrorism Strategy: The Role of Regional and International Organizations.”* Summary of Best Practices and Self-Assessment by Patricia Holland
- *Patterns of Global Terrorism – 2003.* US State Department
- *Patterns of Global Terrorism – Western Hemisphere 2003.* US State Department
- *Homeland Security: Selected Recommendations from Congressionally Chartered Commissions and GAO.* United States General Accounting Office.