

The Need for a United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordinator

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ICCT Policy Brief

August 2013

The case for a high level United Nations (UN) Counter-Terrorism Coordinator position within the UN system has become increasingly urgent in 2013. This need has diluted some Member State reticence to creating a new Assistant Secretary-General position that would supervise and manage the existing counter-terrorism structures in the UN system. A Coordinator would have a basic responsibility to keep track of all of the activities of many formal inter-governmental organisations operating at the international, regional and sub-regional level and would also work closely with national counter-terrorism focal points. In this ICCT Policy Brief, Dr. Howard Stoffer reviews the debate among Security Council and Fifth Committee members about the efficacy of establishing a senior UN Global Counter-Terrorism Coordinator. He argues that the creation of such a position could lead to a restructuring of the UN counter-terrorism architecture as well as its funding within the UN budget and among donors. The position would eventually make the UN overall counter-terrorism effort, under the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, a stronger, more effective and more efficient process with measurable impact on the ground among Member States.

About the Author

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1. Introduction

The world continues to live with active and dangerous global threats of terrorism. This concern is focused in the Maghreb (Mali, Algeria, Tunisia), South Asia, especially in Pakistan and Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf countries, other parts of the Middle East, South Sudan, other parts of east Africa including Somalia, Europe, the Russian Federation, the United States, and in Latin America. The threat is enduring and the need to act is urgent. Since the 9/11 attacks, the United Nations (UN) has been struggling to organise its piecemeal construction of a counter-terrorism architecture to operate more coherently and effectively. It has been somewhat successful with the efforts of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) and the work of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) to bring together the multitude of UN offices and policies to create a more holistic approach. The UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy adopted by the General Assembly (GA) in 2006 is the framework. However, the UN has been only partially successful in implementing the Strategy because there is no one high level authority within the UN system to coordinate and synchronise policy, funding and programmatic activities – someone who could integrate all UN initiatives with the various efforts of Member States, regional organisations, independent international organisations and civil society across the globe.

That high level authority needs to be filled by a senior UN Counter-Terrorism Coordinator who would lead UN efforts to make the international system work more effectively and efficiently, and who would multiply the political authority and power of the UN with the resources of the many states and other entities fighting global terrorism. This issue has been discussed for over two years in many informal meetings of the Security Council, in numerous sessions of the GA during its biennial review of the Strategy, in Fifth Committee sessions on the budget of the UN, and invariably among delegates in lunches and dinners both in New York and in UN centres around the world. The issue was also considered carefully in the 2012 Blue Sky Report of the Center on Global Counterterrorism Cooperation, which proposed three possible options for an “architectural adjustment” to the UN’s counter-terrorism structure: the appointment of a UN Counter-Terrorism Coordinator, a Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism or an Under Secretary-General for Transnational Threats.¹

The need for a UN Coordinator has grown more urgent during 2013 as incidents of terrorism continue unabated around the world. Member States recognise that the UN represents a tremendous resource and mechanism to galvanise national, regional and global efforts. They understand that improving the UN counter-terrorism infrastructure with a new Assistant Secretary-General as Coordinator is a vital step. The person in that position would supervise and manage the existing UN counter-terrorism structures, and use existing financial and staff resources to develop a holistic counter-terrorism policy for the entire UN system. A unified UN policy would harmonise the work of all key actors in the UN’s counter-terrorism architecture, including the CTITF, the UN Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT), the working groups of the CTITF, CTED, and the Office of Drugs and Crime-Terrorism Prevention Branch (UNODC/TPB) as the core counter-terrorism entities.

In the case of CTED, a new and seasoned Executive Director has just been appointed who brings a new perspective and energy to CTED’s counter-terrorism work and to its efforts to coordinate with the rest of the UN system. Similarly, the CTITF has a new senior Director who also brings fresh ideas and vigour to enhancing the counter-terrorism work and coordinating role of that body. With the new dynamism that these individuals bring to their organisations, it is possible that Member States will accede to the need for action in establishing a Coordinator post within the coming months. In the past, some Member States have focused on the issue of financing a new senior position as the reason for not moving forward. With national budget deficits across the

¹ James Cockayne, Alistair Millar, David Cortright and Peter Romaniuk, *Reshaping United Nations Counterterrorism Efforts: Blue-Sky Thinking for Global Counterterrorism Cooperation 10 Years After 9/11* (New York: Center on Global Counterterrorism Cooperation, 2012), <http://www.globalct.org/publications/reshaping-united-nations-counterterrorism-efforts/>.

globe, the reluctance to act appeared to reflect a political imperative to assume a nominal growth posture for the UN budget. In reality, however, the cost of funding a new Counter-Terrorism Coordinator at a senior level would be a minimal expenditure compared to, for example, funding current and new peacekeeping missions and operations. Moreover, the introduction of a Coordinator may quickly lead to more donor coordination and hence less duplication, thus saving much needed funds.

If a new position is considered, key Member States on the Security Council have indicated they want the position to be at the same level as the head of CTED, that is to say as Assistant Secretary-General. A similar viewpoint was expressed by a number of Member States during the GA's review of the UN's Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in 2012. A common theme is that a senior coordinating official would enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the UN system to implement the Global Strategy by engaging all parts of the Secretariat with a single policy and unified approach. A commitment was made during the 2012 GA review to return to the idea of establishing a Coordinator position. Nevertheless, no strong push from Member States has been forthcoming since that time, and little or no follow up has been pursued. The three Blue Sky Report proposals for the UN to adjust its counter-terrorism architecture to create a Coordinator position prompted some Member States to suggest in 2012 that a Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism, as proposed in the Report, would be too high level for what is needed. Those Member States call for a senior official who can be both in the weeds on issues and at the same time a senior presence before UN inter-governmental bodies or in meetings with high level national government officials. Other Member States also expressed in 2012 a concern about bringing counter-terrorism issues directly into the Office of the Secretary-General. Some Member States point out that the Under Secretary-General for Political Affairs already serves as the Chair of the CTITF and is also the Executive Director of the UNCCT, established within the CTITF. As the UNCCT Executive Director, the Under Secretary works closely with an Advisory Board which is chaired by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in conjunction with 21 other participating Member States. They note that a senior Counter-Terrorism Coordinator, reporting to the Head of the Department of Political Affairs (DPA), would fit best both in terms of organisational structure and policy terms. An Assistant Secretary-General Coordinator for Counter-Terrorism inside DPA would be a visible high level personality who could work full-time with the international counter-terrorism community.

2. A Maze of UN Counter-Terrorism Entities

One of the key functions of a new Coordinator would be to align the work of a staggering maze of UN entities that have a stake in counter-terrorism work. The core counter-terrorism bodies of the UN include the following. Firstly, the three Security Council Committees and their expert staffs that were created by Security Council resolutions. The first is the Resolution 1267 (1999) Al Qaeda Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team, with the latter now divided into two separate entities. Another is the Counter-Terrorism Committee, a subsidiary body created under Resolution 1373 (2001), and its Executive Directorate (CTED), established in 2004 by Security Council Resolution 1535. CTED has five internal working groups responsible for deploying many of its activities throughout the world. The Security Council also created the 1540 Committee and its Expert Group in 2004, which focuses on preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to non-state actors. This body also organises counter-terrorism meetings in various regions of the globe.

These three entities work closely with two other core UN counter-terrorism bodies, including the UNODC/TPB, created in 1997. This office focuses on crime prevention and criminal justice. It also provides assistance to Member States to help them ratify and implement all of the appropriate international legal instruments against terrorism and develop their domestic legislation and related criminal justice processes in tandem. The TPB hosts periodic workshops and conferences in all regions of the world.

The other core body is the CTITF, established by Secretary-General Kofi Annan in 2005. During the first biennial review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in 2008, the GA authorised the CTITF institutional staff to help Member States implement the Strategy and coordinate all UN efforts to achieve that goal. The CTITF has a small number of experts who support the initiatives of its working groups and member entities. Staff members also provide support to the Chair of the Task Force, who, as noted above, is the Under Secretary-General for Political Affairs. Staff also organise quarterly meetings of the entities that comprise the CTITF membership. The CTITF initiates its own workshops and meetings through its working groups or independently. Also, the UNCCT was established in 2012 as a unit within the CTITF, but with independent funding and a separate Advisory Board.

The Executive Director of the UNCCT, the Under Secretary for Political Affairs, works with the UNCCT Advisory Board to approve its work programme of counter-terrorism activities. This structure has generated some operational questions in recent months between the CTITF institutional staff and the Advisory Board, because UNCCT proposals occasionally are not in sync with the larger overall work plan of the CTITF. This outcome occurs because the UNCCT has an independent policy approach. Moreover, it receives a considerable portion of its extra-budgetary funding from an initial Saudi donation of ten million dollars as start-up financing for the UNCCT. Finally, the UNCCT's mandate covers several responsibilities that are also included in the mandates of some of the CTITF working groups. This outcome would be relatively easy to resolve with a full-time UN Counter-Terrorism Coordinator who would have the institutional weight and knowledge to work with members of the Advisory Board to align UNCCT activities fully within the work of the CTITF. This could start with a periodic annual forecast of planned UNCCT events that would be submitted to the Coordinator for review. The Coordinator would be well placed, if operating within the DPA, to implement a mandate to avoid overlap or replication of activities or expenditure of resources that are already forecast elsewhere in the UN system.

There are also key independent agencies that work closely with CTED, the CTITF/UNCCT and TPB to programme specific activities, but with separate budgets and agendas to fulfil their own mandates. Moreover, these agencies answer to independent governing bodies that determine their financing and programmes of work. These include: the International Civil Aviation Agency (ICAO), the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the World Customs Organization (WCO), the International Police Organization (INTERPOL), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and its regional working group structures.

In addition to these main UN counter-terrorism bodies, many departments and offices of the Secretariat engage in a number of activities in tandem with some of these entities, but often they act independently as well. In New York this group would include DPA, the Department of Public Information (DPI), the Department of Safety and Security (DSS), the Office of Legal Affairs (OLA), the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), and the Office of Disarmament Affairs (ODA), among others. In Europe, UN and non-UN bodies engaged in implementing the Global Strategy include the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and its Special Rapporteurs, the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the UN Educational/Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

The World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) are also frequently involved in the work of some of the core counter-terrorism bodies or departments and offices of the Secretariat. Finally, there are UN Funds and Programmes that are members of the CTITF, such as the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI). All have important roles to play in implementing the four pillars of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, especially pillar one on root causes and conditions conducive to terrorism and pillar four on respecting human rights and the rule of law.

3. Coordinating Through the Labyrinth

Essentially, the UN system of counter-terrorism entities is a disaggregated network of organisations that does not function well in the absence of a single coherent global policy on how to implement the Global Strategy. The lack of a common policy impedes the best use of limited resources within the UN, among Member States, within regional organisations and with civil society. Efforts to implement the Global Strategy are not synchronised and often are duplicated. Sometimes, the lack of a common UN policy sends mixed signals to national counter-terrorism practitioners who are trying to implement national counter-terrorism strategies within either regional or international frameworks. Most UN counter-terrorism entities engage separately or in various combinations with the more than 100 regional and sub-regional organisations, as well as with various civil society entities such as the Civil Society Network for Human Security or the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). Often, UN entities are devoted to undertaking independent action plans or programmes that do not per definition consider how such activities actually fit into an overall global UN effort to implement the Global Strategy and how to most effectively build the capacity of Member States or international regional organisations to address terrorism issues.

The UN needs an organised global work plan that would manage implementation of the Global Strategy by all CTITF counter-terrorism entities. That would require a Coordinator to establish an annual set of general goals, achievements or outcomes on behalf of CTITF members that would determine the elements of individual work plans that each of the UN counter-terrorism bodies would pursue. An annual global UN work plan or set of tactical goals would also help non-UN entities and civil society groups in planning their own annual or multi-year forecasts of work. A Coordinator should start with broadening information sharing among UN and non-UN organisations and later move to organising annual planning initiatives to engage as many players as possible to bring them into alignment. That would quickly result in avoiding inefficiencies and overlapping within the UN for all regions, sub-regions and individual countries.

The diffusion of approaches in the UN counter-terrorism community also has implications for the way the UN engages civil society. For example, the UN could make better use of expertise available in academic institutions and think tanks. It could reach out to research centres and universities around the world, or to national forensic laboratories, that have on-the-ground expertise in many practical areas, such as handling evidence in terrorism cases, sharing DNA typologies and some forensic data bases across borders, preparing expert testimony in courtroom cases, or incorporating rapidly changing technologies for police forces around the world. At the present time, this aspect of counter-terrorism work is not given enough attention by UN entities. A Coordinator would be in a position to identify the need for additional expertise that is available, either to fill a gap in knowledge or to tap as a resource in the counter-terrorism community, to wield as additional tools to help Member States fight global terrorism.

These challenges are not new, nor are they unknown. Member States have discussed them repeatedly over the last years, often in conjunction with the challenge and viability of establishing a Coordinator post. With no final conclusion reached as of yet, both CTED and CTITF have taken organisational steps in the interim to improve their role in coordinating the UN counter-terrorism community.

4. CTED Reorganises to Meet the Interim Coordination Challenge

In 2012, the Assistant Secretary-General of CTED decided to reorganise that office to respond to the new demands for better coordination from Security Council States as well as from donors. In effect, CTED took two steps to improve its ability to sponsor more workshops and conferences with as many institutions inside and outside of the UN as possible.

One step called for creating a Special Projects Unit within existing resources to undertake the logistical and organisational elements of hosting conferences, workshops and training sessions for Member States or regional organisations. This move gave its substantive experts greater opportunity to focus on policy issues and not be engaged with administrative questions. Around the same time, CTED asked the Secretary-General to establish a Trust Fund for CTED to allow it to accept extra-budgetary funding from donors to essentially expand the scope and depth of its operations in the field.

The reorganisation has given CTED a much greater capability to maintain informal coordination throughout the UN system and with the many entities in funds, programmes or organisations outside of the UN. With a Special Projects Unit and a Trust Fund, CTED has hosted or co-hosted many more workshops and training sessions with other UN and non-UN entities in 2012 and so far in 2013 than it did in earlier years. By harnessing extra-budgetary financing with CTED's unique authority under Security Council Resolution 1373 (2001), adopted under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, and also using Resolution 1624 (2005) as part of its mandate, CTED has managed to deploy a broader range of counter-terrorism activities to help Member States implement Resolution 1373 (2001), Resolution 1624 (2005) as well as the Global Strategy, which includes virtually all of Resolution 1373 in its text. Consequently, CTED is able to provide a more comprehensive picture of all UN counter-terrorism activities to the Counter-Terrorism Committee of the Security Council which serves as its oversight body.

5. CTITF Evolving to Fulfil Its Coordination Mandate

The Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force has formal responsibility to coordinate all UN counter-terrorism activities and has taken steps since 2012 to enhance its coordination efforts. Currently, it has 32 member entities and the responsibility to organise and fund eight working groups that initiate meetings and projects on various aspects of counter-terrorism on behalf of Member States and regional organisations, among others.

The recently appointed CTITF Director, reporting directly to the Under Secretary-General for Political Affairs for guidance and direction, has taken and is considering several new steps to improve coordination across the UN system. First, CTITF has already initiated a comprehensive plan to establish a common, coherent and focused reporting system concerning the activities of its members. The mechanism calls for members of CTITF to provide timely and regular information about planned or pending activities one year in advance. This reporting mechanism requests CTITF members to include data about the location and duration of planned events, the sponsoring and implementing organisations, the purpose of such meetings, their proposed agendas, the details of organisations that plan to participate, and expected outcomes. A compendium of all planned UN counter-terrorism activities in the field, looking one year ahead and updated regularly, will help reduce operational costs for participating entities, eliminate some duplication of efforts, and will reduce expenditure of extra-budgetary resources for overlapping workshops or conferences. A compendium is expected to be circulated to all CTITF entities on a monthly basis for discussion at the quarterly meetings of the CTITF chaired by the Under Secretary-General for Political Affairs.

Future CTITF information exchanges may also include proposed budgets for planned workshops and meetings, and measurable single impact or cumulative effects on the ground as a result of such conferences or meetings. This would ensure a more unified international policy approach to Member States, regions and sub-regions as well as to donors for forthcoming UN counter-terrorism initiatives and programming. It would also better document UN agency requests to seek regular budget funding from the Fifth Committee of the GA for counter-terrorism programmes or from Member States Assemblies that authorise regular budget funding for non-UN counter-terrorism entities. Working with donors on a system-wide, holistic basis could: a) generate more financial support from them for regular budget funding; b) develop better coordination between them and

Member State recipients; and c) lead to more reliable and long-term financial forecasting for regular and extra-budgetary funding of UN counter-terrorism activities.

The CTITF is also considering the idea of consolidating the number of its working groups and projects. This step would facilitate greater synergies among CTITF members and allow the working groups of other CTITF members to coordinate more effectively with CTITF institutional staff, rather than operating fairly independently. It would also simplify and aggregate requests to donors for extra-budgetary financing on behalf of all CTITF entities and their working groups. At the present time, initiatives of some CTITF entities and working groups duplicate the work of other UN and non-UN entities on counter-terrorism. This is an especially important issue to resolve with the UNCCT with respect to its programmes and planning. The UNCCT, operating under an independent Advisory Board, would benefit from the establishment of a senior Coordinator who would ensure that CTITF and UNCCT counter-terrorism initiatives are closely harmonised. Consolidating the number of CTITF working groups, where other entities already undertake the same work, would help CTITF fulfil its mandate to act as a strong coordinating task force for all UN and some non-UN entities engaged in the global fight against terrorism. CTITF could strengthen its working groups and projects by coordinating with the efforts of other entities, such as CTED, the 1267 Monitoring Team, or the 1540 Team, that report to different inter-governmental authorities.

A rather unique step that CTITF could take to improve its system-wide coordination – which it is in fact already considering – is to engage the resources of the DPA to improve the value of its reporting and extend the reach of its work. CTITF and UNCCT together could better integrate their activities within the scope of DPA's resources. This would require the preparation of a detailed plan that would bring appropriate work elements of both entities into the regional sections and country desks of DPA. Given the global distribution of DPA's staff and resources, such a step would provide Member States through CTITF a much more robust and unified picture of how UN counter-terrorism efforts, over time, fit into the broader security and political milieu of specific countries and regions. Moreover, more fully integrating the Task Force within DPA would also help embed the Counter-Terrorism Centre more deeply into the overall operational framework of the DPA and resolve any lingering issues of duplication or overlap.

6. UN Global Counter-Terrorism Coordinator: Roles and Responsibilities

In the absence of an overall Counter-Terrorism Coordinator, both CTED and CTITF have taken positive steps towards improving internal and external coordination and synchronisation of different programmes and work streams. Nevertheless, these improvements only go so far, and do not diminish the need for a Coordinator, as s/he will fulfil a number of crucial roles and responsibilities in the coordination of UN counter-terrorism efforts.

In a first step, a Coordinator would need to function as a central point of contact for all UN entities, Member States, and non-UN counter-terrorism actors operating on national, sub-regional and regional levels, especially with civil society. A Coordinator, functioning as a single UN counter-terrorism focal point, would work closely with the national counter-terrorism focal points that have been identified and organised as a result of a Swiss government initiative. National counter-terrorism focal points have been recognised as a critical need in many capitals across the globe to help them manage whole of government approaches to international counter-terrorism cooperation.

A Coordinator would need to reach out frequently, and travel to meet with, a wide range of groups and organisations to support the international counter-terrorism community in sharing information, expanding the type of information shared, and cooperating to the maximum extent possible. The Coordinator would best operate within the structure of the CTITF. The Coordinator would make presentations to quarterly Task Force meetings chaired by DPA's Under Secretary. In the absence of the Under Secretary, the Coordinator could chair

the meetings. Reports of the Coordinator would be supplemented by the Senior Director of CTITF. The Senior Director, as daily supervisor of CTITF's institutional staff, would report to the Coordinator in lieu of reporting directly to the Under Secretary. The Director would receive daily guidance from the Coordinator who, in turn, would meet with the Under Secretary-General to discuss more general policy issues and to develop approaches to the inter-governmental bodies that have oversight responsibilities for the members of the CTITF, such as the Security Council or GA.

The case for a UN Counter-Terrorism Coordinator is made stronger if consideration is given to the positive impact that the position would have on the many donors that give to individual UN counter-terrorism entities. It would also strengthen ties to (multilateral) organisations outside the UN, such as the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum (GCTF). The case of the GCTF is a good example, since it was created to function outside of the UN bureaucracy with its own independent working groups and with separate funding from the United States, Turkey and some of its other 30 members. The GCTF was established as an independent body, partly to help the UN enhance its coordination of counter-terrorism efforts among members of the international community. For a number of years, donors have complained that there was no big picture of how their extra-budgetary financing of specific UN counter-terrorism activities fits into an overall framework of efforts. There continues to be concern that specific financing of projects, in the absence of an overall comprehensive UN approach to implementing the Global Strategy, may lead to duplication of efforts with other UN bodies or with outside institutions. A UN counter-terrorism Coordinator would provide a platform for all donor states and entities to have information on the actions of other donors. That would lessen concern over duplication of efforts and increase donor perspectives that operations are functioning more effectively with greater transparency.

A basic function of the Coordinator would be keeping track of all the activities of the many formal inter-governmental organisations operating at the international, regional and sub-regional level as well as the many entities that conduct counter-terrorism work. A Coordinator would need to reach out to civil society actors to ensure that their activities voluntarily coincide with and support the aim of the Global Strategy and efforts of UN counter-terrorism organisations. Engaging civil society institutions would help bring better order and a more comprehensive approach to UN counter-terrorism work, but would also offer civil society actors a clearer idea of current and forecast UN activities. Programmes functioning as part of a broader and more coordinated UN approach would clearly help Member States better implement their national counter-terrorism strategies, and would help donor states and organisations, such as the European Union, to direct their finite resources more effectively to the most promising and innovative initiatives. Counter-terrorism donors would also have a central place in the office of a Coordinator to direct their funding to programmes that implement all four pillars of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

A second function of a Coordinator would be to represent the counter-terrorism bodies of the Secretariat before the Security Council, the GA and at meetings of independent organisations, such as the GCTF. The Security Council meets twice a year to review the work of its three expert counter-terrorism bodies and it periodically renews the mandates of those bodies by conducting reviews of their work in both informal and formal meetings. The Coordinator would be the best representative to articulate the accomplishments of the three expert groups and to explain the context of new work that is planned within the framework of an overall UN implementation plan for the Global Strategy. A Coordinator would also appear before the GA to report on progress made in implementing the four pillars of the Global Strategy, particularly during biennial reviews of the Strategy. Also, a Coordinator would be one of the best senior representatives of the UN to participate in GCTF meetings, which offer one seat to the UN. Whenever some of the planned activities of the GCTF duplicate or overlap with the overall work of the UN, the Coordinator, with a comprehensive perspective on all UN activities, would be best placed to encourage the GCTF to consider complementary actions that avoid duplication of effort.

Additionally, a Coordinator would ensure that all UN counter-terrorism activities incorporate appropriate measures to protect the rule of law, respect human rights, and enhance respect for international humanitarian

law. In the early years of the 1267 Monitoring Team, CTED and the 1540 Expert Group, the Geneva-based human rights bodies OHCHR, UNHCR, and OCHA were sceptical that the Security Council counter-terrorism bodies could actively consider issues of human rights and rule of law while helping Member States implement their international counter-terrorism obligations. Over time, however, the High Commissioners of OHCHR and UNHCR were invited to make presentations periodically before the Counter-Terrorism Committee of the Security Council and were engaged in high level consultations with the heads of CTED, the other Security Council counter-terrorism bodies, and the CTITF. These actions quickly led to a broad range of productive expert and senior level relationships among all these entities. They also led to OHCHR, UNHCR and OCHA taking an active role in two CTITF working groups, i.e. Protecting Human Rights While Countering Terrorism and Supporting and Highlighting Victims of Terrorism. These efforts at working together have been effective, but coordination of programmes within the working groups has been hindered by relatively infrequent meetings. A Coordinator would be responsible for ensuring that efforts to implement the Global Strategy stay in sync with the work of OHCHR, UNHCR, OCHA and other relevant bodies, including civil society entities.

A fourth key responsibility of a Coordinator would be to work closely with the Chair of the CTITF, the Under Secretary-General for Political Affairs, to organise and continuously keep the UN counter-terrorism community on track with a unified policy on the implementation of the Strategy. At an appropriate point, the Secretary-General could be brought in to help implement the Global Strategy and to call upon Member States, all UN entities, and those operating outside of the UN to use the unified policy as a guide for their future counter-terrorism planning. This outcome would help senior practitioners in many regions of the world. They have found that the current situation has led to a series of requests from different counter-terrorism organising bodies for their participation in events that are often held in close proximity to each other in terms of location and timing. The absence of an overall UN counter-terrorism implementation plan has forced some participants to defer their engagement in key activities or to send subordinates to such meetings. The maximum value of bringing together senior practitioners from national police, prosecutors, and judges as well as senior intelligence and military officers would be multiplied when counter-terrorism bodies hold combined events that consider their time and availability under a unified policy approach to the implementation of the Global Strategy.

A fifth important role for a Coordinator would be managing a comprehensive UN counter-terrorism policy with a streamlined work programme. That effort would eventually become linked to how individual UN counter-terrorism bodies prepare their annual work plans and budget requests (for both regular and extra-budgetary funding). A Coordinator could assume responsibility for outlining an overall budget request that would include the combined resource needs for all UN counter-terrorism entities. A Coordinator would then present that total budget to the Fifth Committee and GA for debate as a single funding item. A Coordinator would have the standing to make the strongest case for funding a coherent and rational, overall UN counter-terrorism work programme. At some point in the future, Member States may wish to create a single counter-terrorism department in the Secretariat that combines the many offices and entities that now exist. A Coordinator would be the best official to help Member States consider and possibly undertake such an exercise in the future.

A sixth benefit of having a Coordinator is to rationalise the selection of expert staff to fill vacancies in the UN counter-terrorism community. A Coordinator with operational oversight and responsibility for the relevant UN entities could establish unified selection criteria for filling posts, for moving experts among offices to meet evolving demands, or to provide career development for all UN counter-terrorism staff. Such a role would ensure that entities do not compete for staff inside or outside of the UN. It would strengthen and better integrate overall UN counter-terrorism efforts and make them more effective.

7. Concluding Remarks

A Coordinator position is clearly needed for a variety of reasons and the best level for that job, supported by most UN Member States, appears to be Assistant Secretary-General. The Coordinator could fit well into either the work of the DPA, under the supervision and management of the Under Secretary, or as some propose, in the Office of the Secretary-General. Each location has advantages and disadvantages. In the DPA, a Coordinator would be able to assume responsibility for managing the work of the CTITF more readily, especially if daily supervision of the CTITF and its working group programmes were left to the Senior Director. A Coordinator would also review the work of the UNCCT and, as noted above, develop a long-term management plan that integrates the work of the UNCCT with the CTITF.

If the Coordinator position were to be located in the Office of the Secretary-General, the position would have the vantage point of functioning at the top of the Secretariat. The work would be less likely to engender structural or turf tensions which would help the Coordinator reach out more easily to bodies throughout all UN locations, other Funds and Programmes, as well as to entities completely outside of the UN, including civil society. It would also give weight to the Coordinator for appearances in the Security Council, the Fifth Committee and the GA, as well as in the GCTF. However, any problems with the Coordinator would bring such issues directly into the Office of the Secretary-General, a prospect that some Member States had discussed when the Blue Sky Report first proposed a Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism.²

The key to having a Coordinator serve effectively would be to start with a limited mandate to coordinate, collate, and integrate the work plans of all UN counter-terrorism offices. It would require special sensitivity to coordinate the work of the three Security Council counter-terrorism entities. The Executive Directorate, as a Special Political Mission led by an Assistant Secretary-General, reports directly to the Counter-Terrorism Committee and the Security Council. The head of the 1267 Monitoring Team, which DPA supports administratively, reports to a Security Council committee that oversees its work, just as the 1540 Group of Experts, which ODA supports administratively, reports to another Security Council committee. None of the three expert bodies report to the Secretary-General on policy issues. A Coordinator would need to overcome these bureaucratic hurdles and secure Security Council concurrence to bring these bodies into a global UN policy approach for UN counter-terrorism activities. There will also be Member State political sensitivities to consider.

Despite these challenges, the need for a Coordinator remains strong and compelling. Member States remain committed to the idea of establishing a Counter-Terrorism Coordinator and the proposal is still on the table for action. If a Coordinator can develop a single counter-terrorism policy approach for all of the UN, that individual would become the face of the UN in the public eye, before inter-governmental bodies and organisations, and to national governments, regional organisations and to civil society around the world. To make the job a success, the work will require a seasoned hand with political skill, detailed counter-terrorism knowledge, and experience with the global media. Awaiting a final decision by UN Member States, there are several temporary measures that could be taken to appoint a Counter-Terrorism Coordinator ad interim.

One option is to request the Advisory Board of the UNCCT to authorise the use of approximately \$350,000 from the ten million dollar grant for DPA's Under Secretary to hire a Global Counter-Terrorism Coordinator for one year. The \$350,000 represents the salary and emoluments to bring an Assistant Secretary-General into the UN system for a year. This option is not likely to be repeated for a second year, but would provide a framework for how a Coordinator might be able to function and would demonstrate to the counter-terrorism community, donors and Member States the added value of the position and the potential cost savings that a Coordinator could have. Using donor funds would not require approval by the Fifth Committee and the GA.

Another option is to use vacant DPA posts to fund one new Assistant Secretary-General position by combining a few open mid-level positions in that large department. Such a step would require approval of the

²Cockayne, Millar, Cortright and Romaniuk, "Blue-Sky-Thinking" (2012), p. 36.

Fifth Committee and the GA. As noted earlier, taking steps to create a Coordinator position within DPA would strengthen the effectiveness of the job. The improvement in operational efficiency and better management of a fully coordinated UN counter-terrorism system would become evident in a relatively short period of time.

If a Coordinator position is created using one of these methods, the UN would have time to consider the impact of a Coordinator. Since the UN often takes decisions by a series of small steps, a dialogue may begin among Member States to consider the benefits of having better coordination among UN counter-terrorism entities, as well as between them and Member States. The debate among Security Council and Fifth Committee members about the efficacy of establishing a UN Global Counter-Terrorism Coordinator would then become clearer and more defensible. This could lead to a restructuring of the UN counter-terrorism architecture to create the position. It could also change the way the UN funds its counter-terrorism programmes of work and alter the role of donors in this process as well. The position would eventually make the UN overall counter-terrorism effort, under the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, a stronger, more effective and more efficient strike against global terrorism with measurable impacts on the ground among Member States.