# CPSSMUN XII



## UNITED NATIONS COUNTER-TERRORISM COMMITTEE (UNCTC)

Manav Doshi & Manav Patel )

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# Content Disclaimer

It is important to note that this background guide is based on the existing United Nation Counter-Terrorism Center. The imaginative elements that make this narrative possible are solely intended to emphasize the structure and goals of this committee. In consequence of this, this background guide will explore sensitive topics including terrorism, security, cybersecurity, violence, and extremism. These topics serve the purpose of enhancing this committee's direction and engage with delegates in formal debate. These ideas exist in this background guide for the overall success of the committee, and the actions and doings in this committee should by no means be replicated in real-world conduct.

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# DIRECTOR'S LETTER

*Dear Delegates,*

Welcome to CPSSMUN XII! My name is Manav Doshi, and I will be your director for the United Nation Counter-Terrorism Center (UNCCT) for this year's iteration of CPSSMUN. I am currently a grade 11 student at Central Peel and am interested in pursuing Civil Engineering. I have the pleasure of being joined by my co-director Manav Patel who is also a grade 11 student at Central Peel and interested in pursuing Mechanical Engineering. We can not wait to get into 2 days of meaningful debate surrounding the issues of counter-terrorism and hearing all your solutions.

This year we will be having 3 main topics of discussion. In no particular order, we will be looking at the regulation of online terrorist propaganda and recruitment. This focuses on shutting down the spread of terrorist organizations and ensuring they cannot grow. We will also discuss preventing terrorist financing and looking into how we can shut down the funding of organizations to weaken them and fight against them. Thirdly we will look into how we can balance all of these counter terrorism measures with human rights. This is to ensure that while we do focus on current issues we do not create new ones surrounding human rights and the protection of civilians

While we may be discussing counter-terrorism measures and focusing on more current issues, we cannot stress how important it is that delegates look at more historical conflicts and try to understand the methods that were used in those times to help develop their own resolutions and for their own research.

`       We hope this background guide serves a strong starting point for all your independent research and can be useful in crafting your resolutions and developing insight. If there is anything we as a dias can do to help your experience at CPSSMUN, please let us know. We look forward to seeing you at the conference and wish you the best of luck.

Manav Doshi (He/Him) Manav Patel (He/Him)

*Directors of UNCCT*

# Background Information

The United Nation Counter-Terrorism Centre was established in September of 2011 to build an international community that can help fight terrorim. Operating under the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), the UNCCT develops guidelines for states to strengthen their terrorism legislation, organize monitoring and border security systems as well as sharing important information across borders. The organization also pushes for international collaboration by facilitating joint training exercises and working with regional organizations such as the European Union. In addition, the group provides support directly to member states through technical expertise and financial assistance in cases of implementing counterterrorism strategies.

Since its formation in 2012, the UNCCT has developed a strong advisory board of over 20 members as well as the European Union. The group is chaired by the government of Saudi Arabia, who were the first to push for its implementation. Saudi Arabia's push for the UNCCT arose from their long battle with multiple extremist groups, including Al-Qaeda, during the early 2000s. Also, a series of terrorist attacks inside the Kingdom between 2003 and 2007, along with a growing concern of terrorism after the September 11 attacks, Saudi Arabia took a leadership role in creating a counter-terrorism UN institution. The building block for the UNCCT and all of its goals comes from the four pillars developed by the UN global counterterrorism strategy. Those pillars include:

**1. Measures to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism.**
   - These measures recognize that terrorism most commonly starts from instability, poverty, a lack of education, and political issues.
   - By addressing causes ranging from economic and social to political, the UNCCT can help reduce the startup of extremism in certain areas.

**2. Measures to prevent and combat terrorism.**
   - Creating concrete counter-terrorism actions, including law enforcement cooperation and interrupting financial networks of terrorist groups, as well as improving border security for the movement of fighters and weapons.

**3. Measures to build States' capacity to prevent and combat terrorism and to**

**strengthen the role of the United Nations system in that regard.**

- UNCCT plays an important role by providing training for border patrol officers, helping in the creation of national counter-terrorism strategies, and even helping strengthen the law system so states can help prosecute terrorists under international law.

**4. Measures to ensure respect for human rights for all and the rule of law as the fundamental basis of the fight against terrorism.**

- Ensuring that counter-terrorism strategies do not go against human rights.
- UNCCT works with states to keep a balance between security measures and the freedom of expression and religion to make sure terrorism does not demote democratic views

These pillars have become guidelines and will continue to be for the indefinite future of how the UNCCT operates and what considerations they make. Importantly, the UNCCT functions as an advisory body which means that it has no legal jurisdiction to implement policies or enforce mandatory counter-terrorism measures onto its sovereign states. Instead, the organization is known to provide support by recommending improvements to policies, technical expertise, and even workshops and programs to help sovereign states. Along with this, the UNCCT can also aid with funding in severe scenarios, as well as improve border control as some counter-terrorism strategies. The question now becomes, how can the UNCCT's plans be more refined so that terrorism can be reduced on a larger scale compared to what they already are? The UNCCT often works to the benefit of other organizations within the UN, such as the UNOCT. To elaborate, the UNOCT was established in 2017 in hopes of strengthening the UN's ability to aid its sovereign states in preventing and countering terrorism. After a General Assembly resolution, it was agreed to be created to improve the coordination across UN agencies, including the UNCCT who now operates under it. These measures often prove to not be enough, and maybe it might be time for the UN to expand its reach and cooperate with organizations outside the UN, such as banks, businesses, or not-for-profit organizations.

Now the UNCCT must take action with terrorim rising and new issues coming up every single day. Delegates must find creative solutions to tackle issues such as the spread of terrorists and their organizations and implement measures for more international

cooperation on prosecuting terrorists and shutting down terrorist financing methods. These solutions require the cooperation, diplomacy, and discussion of delegates; only then can these issues be solved.

# Topics of Discussion

## Topic 1: Regulating Online Terrorist Propaganda and Recruitment

The revolution of the digital world has created opportunities for connection but has also unfortunately helped spread the ideologies of extremists. Terrorist organizations, including ISIS, Al-Qaeda, and unconventional militant groups, have very commonly relied on encrypted messaging applications, social media platforms, and online forums to brainwash individuals and also coordinate attacks and threats. Al-Qaeda is the group responsible for the "deadliest" terrorist attack in human history, the September 11, 2001 attacks. Led by Osama Bin Laden, Al-Qaeda resulted in the death of nearly 3000 people. Originating in Pakistan, Al-Qaeda brainwashed multiple individuals in Pakistan and the Middle East to coordinate attacks in 1993 and 2001. Between 2014 and 2017, ISIS established a propaganda campaign using Twitter, Facebook, and Telegram which, at its peak, produced nearly 90 000 tweets per day with the sole goal of inspiring lone actor terrorism. To counter these, many tech companies began a joint forum called the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism, or GIFT, serving the purpose of removing and eliminating online terrorism and acts of extremism.  The group combats online terrorism through a shared hash database, which allows major tech companies to easily detect and remove extremist videos, images, and other media on multiple online platforms. Their efforts are all aimed toward a similar goal of limiting the spread of terrorism online and being able to respond to crises immediately.

On the other hand, one of the most known global efforts to rally governments and tech companies against online radicalization is the 2019 Christchurch Call to Action Summit, led by France and New Zealand after an ultranationalism supporter live-streamed the mosque shootings in New Zealand. To this day, the Christchurch Call continues to fight against terrorism and violent extremism content online to eradicate the possibility of the radicalization of individuals online. A problem remains however, there is no binding international framework that governs how digital platforms are obligated to respond to ultranationalist content. Efforts to counter online extremism remain a shattered plan. Russia and China's co-opted "anti-terror" censorship laws was a recent

failed attempt at eliminating online terrorism. Unfortunately, the laws didn't last long, as it brought up distrust in international regulation frameworks, and people felt as if these laws were pushing more towards governmental repression instead of counterterrorism. Nations continue to differ on the thresholds of free speech with the intervention of liberal democracies, who continue to strive towards civil liberties.

## GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. How can member states coordinate responses to online terrorism while maintaining freedom of speech?
2. Should technology and online platform companies be legally liable for terrorist content shared online?
3. How can the UNCCT help nation efforts in identifying and derailing terrorist networks and organizations?

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# TOPIC 2: PREVENTING TERRORIST FINANCING THROUGH INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL SYSTEMS

Money is a key component of society, and most humans, no matter what they do, spend their day-to-day life worried about money, as it is the cornerstone of most operations across the globe. This becomes especially true for terrorists, as the basis of criminal organization is funding. Some of the biggest terrorist/military organizations on the planet, such as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), which are organizations that have attempted to exploit the conflict in Syria and Iraq to position themselves in both states. They have reached total funds of up to 2 billion dollars USD, which is more than most small nations. This has to turn that conflict into an extremely dangerous affair, making it imperative that solutions are found to shut down terrorist organizations' funding.

Many methods that have already been tried have proven to be effective, such as loss of territory, which reduced ISIL's revenue by 50%. This was due to oil smuggling being shut down in Syria and Iraq.

Many other such methods exist, but the challenge always comes up where the nation is being affected by these processes. The UN is required to respect other nations' sovereignty, and that may be forgotten when tackling other issues. Delegates are required to come up with universal solutions that take into account all states' needs. This may include voluntary security training initiatives for the public. Creating more security in both online and physical banking systems. Some nations have the same source of income and their corresponding terrorist organizations, which may create a need for transparency. With all these issues surrounding the public and member states, delegates will need to account for all possibilities when creating solutions.

## GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. How can states ensure that when tackling issues of shutting down funding for terrorist organizations, they are not crossing the boundaries of other nations' sovereignty?

2. What is the root cause of all terrorist financing and how can it be used to shut it down?

3. What contrast is there between states and terrorist organizations funding methods and how might this be an issue?

# Topic 3: Balancing Counter-Terrorism with the Protection of Humans Rights

The balance between implementing counter-terrorism policies whilst protecting human rights standards continues to be one of the biggest struggles for many nations. Following the 9/11 attacks, the USA PATRIOT Act was enacted with the purpose of increasing surveillance and detention powers but ended up causing major controversy for racial profiling towards Muslim communities and warrantless searches across the U.S. Officials had argued that these measures were needed to prevent future attacks but civil groups believed it would diminish trust between citizens and the government. Similarly, the 2015 Counter-terrorism Law in China implemented similar policies including surveillance but also involved the use of "re-education" camps in Xinjiang. These camps held over one million Uyghur Muslims and other groups who had been incarcerated for the sole reason of preventing future terrorism and spread of extremism. Many critics felt that it was one of the worst abuses of human rights as a counter-terrorism policy.

In Europe, the situation was so severe that the European Court of Humans Rights (ECHR) was almost forced to intervene. In the case of A. and Others v. the United Kingdom (2009), the organization decided that detention without an international trial and based on extremism grounds was unethical and broke multiple rules in the European Convention of Humans Rights. The United Nations as a group had also warned about this issue. In 2021, the UN warned that counter-terrorism laws were unfortunately being abused to suppress civil groups and diminish other political groups. Still, many governments around the world believe these laws are a necessity for national security, their long-term effects continue to risk creating a sense of injustice between minorities. Arising the question for the UNCC, how can the international community continue to strengthen their counter-terrorism laws while continuing to uphold human rights and justice between everyone?

## Guiding Questions

1. How can states create counter-terrorism laws which strengthen national security

without neglecting basic human rights such as freedom of speech and privacy.

2. To what extent should international groups like the UNCTC or the Human Rights Convention oversee states' counter-terrorism policies to prevent abuse?

3. What safeguards can be implemented to prevent counter-terrorism measures from being used for political repressions and discrimination against minorities?

# GLOSSARY

Brainwashed - A state where someone's perspective on a topic or situation is forcefully changed or manipulated to someone else's advantage.

Counterterrorism - Actions or safety measures that have been taken by governments and militaries to fight against acts of terrorism.

Diplomacy - The act of using peaceful negotiation, discussion to create agreements that will maintain strong international relations between countries.

Extremism - Having social, political or religious views that go against peace and compromise and often lead to acts of violence

Legislation - When governments create and pass a singular law or a set of laws.

Multilateralism - An approach to political and diplomatic issues where at least 3 countries will work together towards common goals and creating solutions through treaties, agreements or organizations.

Propaganda - Information with bias that has been spread to influence or change people's beliefs, opinion and actions.

Prosecuting - The act of legally charging someone with a crime and then attempting to prove their guilt and crime in criminal court using evidence.

Radicalization - The process leading to one's conducting of violent actions, usually before adopting certain, political, social or religious beliefs.

Sovereign - having the power to govern your own state without the influence of external parties, referring to a government's authority over its own people.

Terrorism - The use of methods such as violence or threats against others, particularly civilians to help accomplish political, religious or ideological objectives.

Ultranationalism - Extreme pride in one's own nation that often leads to the belief of superiority over other nations and often creates a hostile or aggressive environment.

Uyghur - A Turkish group that lives in the Xinjiang region of China, consisting or primarily Muslims, known for distinct cultural traditions and beliefs.

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