

THE BRICS COUNTER-TERRORISM WORKING GROUP
POSITION PAPER

I. BACKGROUND.

As the Counter-Terrorism Working Group (CTWG) prepares to celebrate its eighth anniversary, the present Position Paper is an opportunity for the BRICS Members to review its successes and to plan its future work.

The CTWG has proven to be a result-oriented platform for promoting dialogue amongst experts on preventing and combating terrorism and extremism conducive to terrorism and coordinating positions, when appropriate, on counter-terrorism issues.

The arrangement to establish the CTWG was reached at the 4th Meeting of the BRICS National Security Advisers and High Representatives on National Security (Cape Town, December 6, 2013). On September 14, 2016 in New Delhi, at the initiative of the Russian Federation, a new mechanism for cooperation within the framework of BRICS was launched, namely the CTWG.

The CTWG aims at promoting stronger partnerships amongst the Member States leveraging our strengths to combat the menace of international terrorism comprehensively. CTWG in particular allows to: 1) undertake the exchange of views regarding recent terrorist threats in the global and regional dimensions, especially on foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs), curbing misuse of the Internet for terrorist purposes, de-radicalization, countering terrorist financing, as well as to step up efforts in capacity building; 2) present national experiences and promote expert dialogue on counter-terrorism; and 3) exchange views and coordinate positions within the framework of the UN and other multilateral counter-terrorism fora. The CTWG also contributes to better exchange of information, best practices, knowledge and expertise amongst the BRICS competent authorities, including by accelerating procedures related to legal and technical assistance in terrorism-related cases.

The country holding the BRICS Chairmanship convenes at least one meeting of the Group per year at the level of directors as appropriate of relevant MFA departments of the BRICS Members. At the same time, it is agreed that the chairing country will not hinder the initiatives of the competent authorities of other Member States to suggest holding additional events within the framework of the CTWG on the basis of consensus.

During the 4th CTWG Meeting (Brasilia, August 1-2, 2019), the Member States agreed on the allocation of leadership functions in Sub-Working groups amongst themselves as follows: Brazil is chairing the Sub-Working Group on Capacity Building; the Russian Federation – the Sub-Working Group on Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs), India – the Sub-Working Group on Prevention of the Misuse of the Internet for Terrorist Purposes; China – the Sub-Working Group on De-radicalization, South Africa – the Sub-Working Group on Countering Terrorist Financing.

The CTWG records of its work are reported to the BRICS National Security Advisers and High Representatives on National Security. It is assumed that a Member State chairing the CTWG elaborates a summary of the results of the CTWG Plenary based on contributions of other Members that has been agreed on basis of consensus.

II. JOINT COMMITMENT.

The objective of BRICS counter-terrorism cooperation is to complement and strengthen the existing bilateral and multilateral ties amongst the BRICS countries, and to make a meaningful contribution to the global efforts of preventing and combating the threat of terrorism.

The expansion of BRICS to include Iran, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Egypt, and Ethiopia is a major development.

The CTWG's overarching and long-term goal is to strengthen the security of the BRICS countries by providing a platform for counter-terrorism cooperation as

well as to contribute to the global efforts of preventing and countering the threat of terrorism. These key tasks are achieved by mobilizing best expertise and resources to effectively prevent and counter terrorist threats, prosecute terrorist acts and counter the spread of terrorist ideology, incitement and recruitment to terrorism.

The CTWG reaffirms the principles contained in the Guidelines (2018), the BRICS Counter-Terrorism Strategy (2020) and the BRICS Counter-Terrorism Action Plan for the Implementation of the BRICS Counter-Terrorism Strategy (2021), this Position Paper provides guidance to enhance the CTWG's reach, efficiency and effectiveness.

The CTWG's activities shall be based on shared principles and norms of international law and relevant decisions of the BRICS Summits.

The CTWG, reaffirming the principles of our cooperation set out in the BRICS Counter-Terrorism Strategy, functions on the basis of full respect for the sovereignty of participating States, commitment to the principles of the international law and the UN Charter, recognition of the central and coordinating role of the UN in global CT efforts, comprehensive approach to prevent and combat terrorism with due regard for national priorities, experiences and specificities in this regard.

The BRICS Members call upon all States to refrain from organizing, instigating, facilitating, participating in financing, encouraging or tolerating terrorist activities and to take appropriate practical measures to ensure that their territories are not used for any terrorist-related purposes or preparation or perpetration of terrorist acts intended to be committed against other States or their citizens.

The BRICS Members acknowledge the significant role that the CTWG has played in bringing together different positions to help the BRICS Members more effectively prevent and counter terrorism and radicalization leading to it.

A distinctive feature of our cooperation in the CTWG format is that BRICS Members remain open to respectful dialogue and adherence to the rule of consensus-based decisions, resolutely rejecting any politicization and double standards in countering terrorism and extremism conducive to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including the cross-border movement of terrorists and terror

financing and safe havens, and extremism conducive to terrorism.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS.

1. Confirm the goals of our cooperation set out in the BRICS Counter-Terrorism Strategy, while ensuring further dialogue and coordinated efforts to understand, identify and collaboratively respond, when appropriate, to the persistent and emerging terrorist threats;
2. Continue the full and effective implementation of the BRICS Counter-Terrorism Action Plan in the following areas: combating terrorism; preventing and countering radicalization; preventing and countering online terrorist threats; countering terrorism financing; preventing/curbing travel of terrorists; capacity building; protecting soft targets; information/intelligence sharing; fostering international and regional cooperation;
3. Consider the idea of making new BRICS Members co-chairs in the Sub-Working Groups in order to ensure that its thematic and regional focuses continue to enable the effective functioning of the CTWG;
4. Discuss, if needed, the expansion of interaction amongst CTWG Sub-Working Groups;
5. Enrich the CTWG expertise and complement its work by engaging within the mandate of the CTWG and based on consensus decisions with various partners such as UN counter-terrorism agencies and regional intergovernmental organizations. Explore best ways to partner with relevant bodies of the UN counter-terrorism architecture to share more effectively their knowledge and experience within the CTWG, including research on matters of mutual interest such as current and emerging trends. Give due consideration to each other's listing proposals in the UN SC 1267 Sanctions Committee, when appropriate;
6. Confirm that the CTWG will further develop cooperation amongst counter-terrorism practitioners of the BRICS countries, including from law enforcement, security agencies and intelligence services of the BRICS countries, to prevent and combat terrorism with a special focus on countering new and evolving

- terrorist threats;
7. Consider the development of compendiums of best practices in counter-terrorism, taking into account legislative and law enforcement differences in BRICS countries;
 8. Continue to support the broad implementation of the universal counter-terrorism conventions and protocols, which the BRICS Members are their parties to, relevant UN SC resolutions and the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy;
 9. Commit to working towards to early finalization and adoption of the UN Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism;
 10. Commit to combatting terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including the cross-border movement of terrorists, and terrorism financing networks and safe havens.