Since 11 September 2001, terrorism and the reaction to it by many governments and intergovernmental bodies, including the UN, have had an increasing impact on civil society. For their part, non-governmental and other civil society organizations (CSOs) have played a critical role in encouraging governments and the UN to calibrate their response to terrorism by working to be effective against those who mean harm without eroding human rights and the rule of law. In 2006, with that challenge in mind, the United Nations General Assembly unanimously agreed to a global strategy that outlines a holistic approach to countering terrorism, which requires the collective effort of an array of stakeholders, including civil society, to implement it.

The UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (Strategy) includes not just law enforcement and other security-related preventative measures that have been the Security Council’s focus since September 2001, but also gives priority attention to long term efforts to address underlying conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism. The Strategy is also clear about the imperative for respecting human rights and promoting the rule of law across every element of the document and throughout its implementation. One of the Strategy’s achievements is that for the first time the United Nations’ global membership has agreed that long term efforts to address conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism are an essential part of an effective and comprehensive strategy to combat and prevent terrorism.

Part of the Strategy’s significance lies in the fact that it is an “instrument of consensus” on an issue where consensus has been difficult to achieve within the United Nations. Although it does not add anything not already contained in pre-existing UN counterterrorism resolutions, norms, and measures, the Strategy pulls them together into a single, coherent, and universally adopted framework. Contributions from a wide range of stakeholders including not only member states and the relevant parts of the UN system, but also civil society will be needed to implement that framework.

Since its adoption, most work explicitly linked to implementing the UN Strategy work has focused on the United Nations itself, under the leadership of the UN’s Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (Task Force), which brings together twenty-four entities across the UN system and various specialized agencies, funds, and programs, with a view to improving the cooperation and coordination among the different UN entities in the field of counterterrorism. The Task Force and its constituent working groups have done some important work in that regard.
and, according to the President of the General Assembly, are working to reach out to relevant regional bodies and civil society around the world.²

CSOs have been recognized by the United Nations for decades as having an indispensable role to play in furthering the objectives of the UN Charter. As the Chair of the UN Secretary General’s Panel of Eminent Persons on United Nations–Civil Society Relations noted, CSOs are “the prime movers of some of the most innovative initiatives to deal with emerging global threats.”³

The UN Strategy specifically encourages “non-governmental organizations and civil society to engage, as appropriate, on how to enhance efforts to implement the Strategy.”⁴ CSOs can play important roles in promoting implementation of a number of discrete elements of the Strategy. Civil society needs to be part of the development and contribute to the implementation of any comprehensive counterterrorism strategy for it to be effective. Broad-based engagement between the state and CSOs can help soften the antagonism that can often exist between the state and the public in the context of specific counterterrorism actions. They help to give voice to marginalized and vulnerable peoples, including victims of terrorism, and provide a constructive outlet for the redress of grievances. They have important roles to play in activism, education, research, oversight, and even as potential assistance and service providers. They can also play a critical role in ensuring that counterterrorism measures (CTMs) respect human rights and the rule of law, and help generate awareness of a range of other Strategy-related issues.

Much of the work of CSOs and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) is not and should not be labeled counterterrorism as such, but nevertheless contributes to implementing elements of the Strategy. In other cases, however, for example with regard to promoting good governance and human rights monitoring, the Strategy may provide these groups with a compelling overarching framework and powerful tool to remind states of their international commitments.

CSOs are undertaking an array of activities which both directly and indirectly contribute to implementation of the UN Strategy but often with little or no acknowledgment that those efforts contribute to implementation of the Strategy or even combating terrorism generally. It is not necessary to coral those efforts under the banner of counterterrorism but simply to recognize that a diversity of activity helps contribute to that long term goal. A prerequisite to increasing the involvement of NGOs and other CSOs in efforts to promote UN Strategy implementation, however, is that they need to be certain that the UN Strategy is relevant to their concerns and interests and that supporting its implementation will not just further narrow government interests. So far, this crucial message has not been clearly articulated or disseminated either by the United Nations – the Task Force⁵ has in fact yet to seek ways to involve CSOs in its work or develop an outreach plan – or at the regional, subregional, and national levels, but it needs to be.

The Strategy’s action plan contains four pillars: 1) Measures to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism; 2) Measures to prevent and combat terrorism; 3) Measures to build states’ capacity to prevent and combat terrorism; and 4) Measures to ensure respect for human rights for and the rule of law as the fundamental basis of the fight against terrorism. This paper provides a brief, and by no means comprehensive, survey of the work of CSOs as it relates to these pillars and identifies some of the obstacles that will need to be overcome to build genuine partnerships between CSOs and governments and the UN in the context of countering terrorism.

The paper is intended as background to stimulate discussion for a 21-22 July 2008 Center on Global Counterterrorism Cooperation workshop, which is being financed by the governments of Sweden and Germany and will involve representatives from the United Nations’ Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force and CSOs from different regions working on an array of
Strategy-relevant issues. The meeting, and the larger project of which it is part, aims to assist both the Task Force and CSOs in building partnerships that will ultimately heighten the effectiveness of their work. It seeks to define more clearly the role of CSOs in implementing the Strategy and explore what the Strategy and the broader UN system have to offer CSOs in return.

I. Measures to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism

NGOs and other CSOs around the world have been actively engaged in long term efforts to address underlying conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism since well before the Strategy labeled those efforts as such. For example, CSOs have been working to support sustainable development, realize the Millennium Development Goals, provide humanitarian relief, empower marginalized communities, promote dialogue, protect human rights, improve governance, expand political participation, empower women, and prevent and resolve violent conflict. They are working to give voice to marginalized and vulnerable groups and provide a constructive outlet for the redress of grievances. In many instances, CSOs have access to and have engaged with groups with which states have little contact or over which states have limited influence.

These CSO activities have significant intrinsic benefits in their own right and need not be specifically labeled as or identified with “counterterrorism.” In fact, doing so may be counterproductive as it might unduly politicize this work. However, there needs to be a greater recognition and understanding both within governments and CSOs themselves of the unique contribution that CSOs make particularly with regard to long term efforts to address conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism. Governments need to recognize that CSOs not only have a vital contribution to make to helping alleviate conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, but that a strong, independent, and lively civil society is an essential ingredient for democratic governance and sustainable development.

It is the holistic approach of the UN Strategy, which includes both preventive measures and long term measures to address conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism that distinguishes the Strategy. In fact, the inclusion of these two elements in a single document was the key compromise that allowed the General Assembly to adopt the Strategy by consensus. According to the Strategy, conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism include: “poverty, prolonged unresolved conflicts, dehumanization of victims of terrorism, lack of rule of law and violations of human rights, ethnic, national and religious discrimination, political exclusion, socio-economic marginalization and lack of good governance.” More specifically, in the Strategy states reiterated their “commitment to the realization of the Millennium Development Goals and their determination to pursue and reinforce development and social inclusion agendas at every level as goals in themselves, recognizing that success in this area, especially on youth unemployment, could reduce marginalization and the subsequent sense of victimization that propels extremism and the recruitment of terrorists.”

For their part, CSOs need to be made more aware of how the broad-based UN Strategy, can be viewed as a response to the growing dissatisfaction among the wider UN membership with the narrow Security Council-led approach that focuses on law enforcement and other security-related issues and has contributed to the adoption of some of the post-9/11 CTMs that have had a negative impact on CSOs around the globe. The UN Strategy provides CSOs with an alternative narrative to the US-led “global war on terror,” which some argue has resulted in the adoption of counterterrorism measures around the world that have “threaten[ed] the spaces for civil society to flourish and act.”
While CSOs are sometimes seen as potential allies of the state in promoting development, good governance, and human rights and other issues that help prevent terrorism and other forms of violence, too often they have been viewed with suspicion because they might be working among marginalized populations or be perceived as supporting political opponents of sitting governments. The result is that rather than stimulating greater CSO support for government counterterrorism initiatives and “using social development [and other “soft” measures] as a means of countering terrorism, NGOs are being pushed into a highly defensive position about carrying out social development work with marginalized groups.”

As mentioned, in a number of instances, measures adopted by states to counter terrorism have also restricted the operational space and otherwise limited the ability of CSOs to continue with their existing work, which undermines prospects for both development and security. The negative impact of these CTMs on the ability of CSOs to carry out their work (and thus contribute to the implementation of the UN Strategy) has been well documented in recent years.

For example, new financial reporting rules and validation requirements by donor governments and agencies have created administrative burdens for some NGOs, obligating them to screen their staff, partners, and aid recipients, which creates a disincentive for NGOs to operate in some volatile areas where conditions for violent radicalization and the recruitment to terrorism exist. In the end, the need for donors and partners to “vouch” for groups they intend to support or work with tends to favor better established NGOs and marginalizes smaller or newer groups that may bring a voice to otherwise isolated, and perhaps more vulnerable communities.

Further, a number of governments have adopted overly expansive counterterrorism legislation and used it to clamp down on political opponents and, more broadly, freedom of association, speech, and assembly. This has had the effect of restricting the ability of civil society groups to raise funds, and hindering efforts to support development and relief activities in marginalized communities. Moreover, with military forces becoming more involved in humanitarian relief and development work, particularly in Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Horn of Africa, such as the building of schools, hospitals, and wells, and delivering food, the work of humanitarian and development CSOs has become “more complicated and ambiguous,” as they are often no longer seen as neutral, independent, and impartial.

More broadly, there has been an increasing convergence of development, foreign policy, and security agendas since 9/11, with bilateral aid donors linking their development assistance programs to counterterrorism and other security and foreign policy objectives. The OECD’s Donor Assistance Committee has helped to stimulate this shift by endorsing 'A Development Co-operation Lens on Terrorism Prevention: Key Entry Points for Action' 2003 policy statement. Parts of the paper have been interpreted as allowing for a new definition of aid to include expenditures relating to a donor-driven counterterrorism agenda, the result being that more donor funds are being diverted towards security objectives with questionable development purposes, with some going so far to say the ODA funds are now “being used to support military budgets at the expense of help to poor people.” This so-called “securitization of aid” has tended to increase the tensions between governments and development and humanitarian CSOs and thus created an additional barrier to allowing for deeper engagement between these stakeholders on how to cooperate in addressing the commonly shared terrorist threat in a manner that does not interfere with ongoing CSO activities.

At the end of the day, as the British Overseas NGOs for Development (BOND) has pointed out, in addition to finding ways to limit the negative impact of CTMs on CSO’s, “issues of development and security need to be examined in their mutual interaction rather than as distinct
and separate areas of analysis and policy-making.” Further, CSOs should help design and encourage support for counterterrorism policies and measures that link security “with respect for social justice, respect for human rights and pursuit of peace processes and realization of effective development practice.”

II. Measures to prevent and combat terrorism

Partnerships involving governments and civil society and CSOs on their own also make important contributions to shorter term preventive counterterrorism and related efforts. For example, interaction between governments and CSOs on the issue of small arms and light weapons (an issue that is explicitly mentioned in the Strategy) has developed into an effective partnership over the past fifteen years. Similar efforts have also flourished between government and nongovernment experts seeking to address the threat of illicit transfers of biological, chemical, and nuclear materials to potential terrorists. In addition, CSOs have an important role to play in the implementation and monitoring of security sector reform activities, which are linked to a state’s ability to carry out effective law enforcement and other security-related counterterrorism measures. Some CSOs, especially research organizations, also foster closer, cooperative initiatives involving states and other stakeholders to improve and raise awareness of threats and encourage collective action to address vulnerabilities. The UK Department for International Development, for example has noted that:

> Improving civic awareness of security issues is a starting point for improving relations between the security forces and the public, creating a national consensus on a reform programme, and building political coalitions to sustain the process. Civil society can also play more specific roles by facilitating dialogue, monitoring the activities of the security forces, and expressing views on security policy as well as providing policy advice. This may be particularly useful where state capacity is weak: the role of legislatures or other government departments in analysing security issues, for instance, can be greatly enhanced by assistance from specialist external campaigning groups or think tanks providing research and analytical support.

In addition to the long term efforts to address causes conducive to the spread of terrorism, the Strategy in its second pillar reaffirms states’ existing UN mandated counterterrorism obligations to implement law enforcement and other security-focused measures to address the terrorist threat, including through tightened border controls, judicial, police, and other forms of law enforcement cooperation, and comprehensive counterterrorism legislation. Although these actions are traditionally confined to the domain of states, which are guarded about involving other stakeholders in often sensitive national security issues, CSOs have nevertheless made some important contributions in these fields.

Despite the above examples, because of sensitivities surrounding much of the security-related counterterrorism activity, partnerships between governments and CSOs in law enforcement and other security-related fields are few and far between. Instead, counterterrorism measures are often implemented without consultation with CSOs. In fact, there is growing concern that as a result civil society’s space to operate is in many cases being reduced. In some instances counterterrorism measures are being used to justify state repression against innocent civilians, particularly from minorities and marginalized communities. Even when it is not feasible or prudent to work alongside the state, CSOs have an invaluable role to play in the realm of monitoring state actions to protect civil liberties and maintain and enhance space for a diversity of views and participation.
Vague and overly broad anti-terrorism laws that hinder CSOs’ work in contributing to addressing terrorism’s underlying conditions, noted in section I above, are also counter-productive to states’ wider counterterrorism objectives. Governments will therefore need to be more sensitive to CSO concerns if they hope to build broader public support for counterterrorism measures.

III. Measures to build states’ capacity to prevent and combat terrorism

Professional associations, international NGOs, and local CSOs are critical sources of technical expertise and can act as independent contractors and carry out on-the-ground implementation of much counterterrorism-related capacity building. Increasingly CSOs are seen by many donor states and other assistance providers as independent and reliable partners and serve as implementing agencies for technical and other counterterrorism-related assistance. Capacity building assistance on many counterterrorism-related matters is enhanced by bottom-up approaches, rather than top-down strategies, and local CSOs and NGOs can help build support for the capacity building efforts of other actors and ensure that they receive the necessary follow-up attention to ensure they are sustainable.

Some of the most visible counterterrorism-related capacity building (CTCB) assistance being undertaken by CSOs relate to strengthening respect for human rights and the rule of law and on promoting democratic accountability. Philanthropic foundations such as the Open Society Institute, the Ford Foundation, and Heinrich Böll Foundation provide millions of dollars a year and technical support to improving respect for human rights and the rule of law and promoting democratic governance in countries world wide. Professional associations such as the International Legal Assistance Consortium (ILAC) and various national bar associations are similarly working to strengthen the rule of law in countries around the world. The ILAC, a consortium of NGOs with experience in rebuilding justice systems, for example, works to conduct assessments of the legal and judicial systems in war-torn countries and to implement programs to help rebuild those systems. The American Bar Association conducts relevant rule of law programs world-wide on, among other things, anti-corruption, criminal law reform, human rights and conflict mitigation, and legal education reform.

Local CSOs, as well as international NGOs, also perform an advisory function for governments. They can provide input on specific technical questions, help guide policy with independent research, and engage directly with legislators regarding the potential impact of planned or actual impact of existing CTMs. Local CSOs can help work with authorities to increase their awareness and understanding of minority communities to assess the impact of and improve the effectiveness of community policing efforts and help to combat stereotypes and prejudices which may compromise the effectiveness of those efforts. And they can help supplement the oversight capacity of governments by monitoring security services, conducting investigations abuses, drafting guidelines, and scrutinizing counterterrorism legislation.

In addition to these more traditional capacity building functions, CSOs are increasingly contributing to building state capacity on ‘hard security’ matters as well. The IGAD Capacity Building Program against Terrorism (ICPAT) program, launched in June 2006, is an example of a rather innovative partnership between civil society (the Pretoria-based Institute for Security Studies (ISS)) and government (the member states of IGAD and interested donor states) on counterterrorism capacity building. ICPAT is funded by European and other donors, administered by ISS, and overseen by a steering committee made up of the member states of IGAD. Working closely with partners at the regional and global level, the program focuses on capacity and confidence building measures in five areas: 1) enhancing judicial measures; 2)
working to promote greater inter-agency coordination on counterterrorism within individual IGAD member states; 3) enhancing border control; 4) providing training and sharing information and best practices; and 5) promoting strategic cooperation.\textsuperscript{24} ICPAT member states appreciate its technically focused apolitical work and are deeply engaged in the program. ISS also functions as the hub of the African Research Network on Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism, a network of research and technical assistance organizations working on terrorism and counterterrorism in Africa.

The UN Strategy recognizes that “capacity-building in all States is a core element of the global counterterrorism effort.”\textsuperscript{25} Although typically the purview of bilateral assistance providers and other donors, CSOs increasingly have a role to play in helping build the capacity of states to prevent and combat terrorism across the full range of measures outlined in the UN Strategy, from combating conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism to ensuring respect for human rights, and increasingly even in the realm of actual security and prevention.

Ironically, one the most significant challenges to the role of civil society in CTCB may in fact be the diminishing space afforded to them and restrictions placed on their work, in some cases ostensibly as part of efforts by states to combat terrorism. Although frequently seen by Western donors states as independent and in many ways preferable partners for the provision of assistance, CSOs in many countries are perceived as unaccountable interest groups, surrogates for external actors, and/or representing foreign interests. While the role of civil society in promoting respect for human rights and the rule of law is controversial in some states, there is even greater reluctance on the part of states to grant CSOs a role in the realm of security-related capacity building. Finally, CSOs own capacity shortages place a limit on the extent to which they can contribute to counterterrorism capacity building efforts. In most cases, CSOs are themselves reliant on donors (be they philanthropic foundations, individual members, or donor states and multilateral bodies) for resources, or are themselves recipients of capacity building assistance. Therefore the degree to which they can contribute to building the capacity of states to prevent terrorism is in large part dependent on the extent to which their donors make such efforts a priority.

Despite these challenges, CSOs are making substantial contributions to building the capacity of states to prevent terrorism not only in their more traditional roles as development partners and in promoting human rights and the rule of law, but also in the realm of security and prevention. Key to maximizing their potential is raising awareness of the contributions that CSOs can make to building states’ capacity to prevent terrorism and ensuring that such work is given priority treatment by donors. In this regard, donor states and agencies have a particularly important role to play, but more needs to be done to build this awareness within recipients and to promote the space afforded to CSOs generally.\textsuperscript{26}

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

CSOs often have a wealth of knowledge concerning the human rights situations in different countries, some of which may be otherwise unavailable to states and international organizations. They provide critical input to the work of relevant UN human rights bodies and help inform their findings. They can be instrumental in strengthening respect for human rights in international and national counterterrorism frameworks and to the establishment and effective functioning of national human rights mechanisms and institutions. As advocates, CSOs play an important role in condemning attacks against civilians, disappearances, unlawful detentions, and other human rights abuses that may occur under the guise of combating terrorism.
In addition to “assess[ing] the implications of national and international definitions of terrorism and build[ing] cross-sectoral coalitions,” NGOs and other civil society groups also help increase public awareness and understanding of human rights issues in the context of waging an effective campaign against terrorism, including by undertaking research and action at the local and international levels. By promoting the rule of law, engaging the media, sharing best practices, and disseminating other information, they help to bring attention to human rights abuses, provide a voice for victims, and encourage governments to improve their own adherence to human rights norms. As acknowledged in the *Club de Madrid Series on Democracy and Terrorism*, “human rights organizations continue to monitor the situation on the ground in most countries, and the information at their disposal can form a valuable database for analyzing the long-term repercussions of momentarily devaluing respect for human rights in favour of short-term security.”

Independent and impartial nongovernmental human rights monitors play a critical role in ensuring that CTMs respect human rights and the rule of law by monitoring the actions of military, law enforcement, and other security services, laying down guidelines, conducting investigations into alleged abuses, scrutinizing counterterrorism legislation, and generating awareness of unlawful practices and other human rights and Strategy-related issues. Their role is even more important in weak states and areas where the credibility and impartiality of formal monitoring mechanisms may be in doubt.

Civil society actors can articulate how respect for human rights and the rule of law is an essential part of any effective strategy to address the complex terrorist threat and its different forms and manifestations. For example, in 2005, the International Commission of Jurists launched the Eminent Jurists’ Panel on Terrorism, Counter-Terrorism and Human Rights “to consider the nature of today’s human rights threats and the impact of new and old counterterrorism measures on human rights. The [eight-member] Panel is also exploring how considered counter-terrorism measures and policies can produce effective results while also assuring the necessary respect for human rights and the rule of law.”

Through the Strategy, all UN member states have committed to adopting measures to ensure respect for human rights and the rule of law as the fundamental basis of the fight against terrorism. They further resolve to ensure that any measures taken to counter terrorism comply with their obligations under international law, in particular human rights law, refugee law, and international humanitarian law. One of the Strategy’s achievements is that it prioritizes “respect for human rights for all and the rule of law as the fundamental basis for the fight against terrorism.” As Sweden’s counterterrorism ambassador has stated, “[h]uman rights law is, in effect, key to all counterterrorism…. If we do not take this into account in our daily efforts to counter terrorism, we will become counterproductive.” The challenge is finding ways to ensure that this human rights–based approach, which is reflected in the Strategy, is translated into action at the global, regional, and national levels. CSOs can contribute in a number of ways to ensuring that it is. Human rights NGOs and civil society can make a valuable contribution by engaging in dialogue with states and the United Nations and other intergovernmental bodies. Active engagement by the academic and research communities that possess expertise in human rights can help infuse fresh ideas into formal governmental or intergovernmental settings.

Challenges to the work of human rights-related civil society and NGOs at the national level, however, are serious. As the *Club de Madrid Series on Democracy and Terrorism* notes, for example, “[H]uman rights groups and their allies have not been able to disseminate their point of view effectively and, in some countries, they have come under sharp attack. Yet at no other time
has the monitoring function of human rights groups been so indispensable to the democratic process, as well as in ensuring accountable and transparent governance.\textsuperscript{31} In some cases, human rights activists have been depicted by state authorities as enablers and defenders of terrorists. Consequently, harassment and the disruption of fundraising, particularly at the local level, has ironically placed human rights defenders in physical danger and repressed their rights to affect policies through nonviolent and democratic means. This point was reinforced at a March 2007 OSCE/ODIHR meeting on the role of civil society in countering terrorism involving representatives from some 30 civil society organizations.\textsuperscript{32} International civil society groups may be less vulnerable to intimidation by governments, and participation with these groups may afford domestic organizations some degree of protection. All civil society actors, however, face challenges in getting access to information in matters that even in the most democratic of countries are often viewed as highly sensitive issues of national security. These challenges are exacerbated in countries where there is little political pluralism and where civil society structures are weak.\textsuperscript{33}

In many cases, given the political sensitivities surrounding many Strategy-related issues, international NGOs will be in a better and safer position to contribute to Strategy-related implementation. NGOs in many countries are under heavy scrutiny from the states in which they work.\textsuperscript{34} Unlike their national or local counterparts, however, international NGOs can continue to work on an issue even if they are shuttered in a country because they have the ability to operate outside of the country in question.

**Conclusion: Preliminary Ideas for Deepening UN-CSO Engagement on UN Strategy Implementation**

As highlighted in this paper, CSOs are already doing a lot and can do more to contribute to implementation of the UN Strategy. However, the challenges to building the necessary trust between individual states and their respective civil societies to develop state-CSO partnerships to facilitate further contributions are significant. In addition, there are a number of hurdles to overcome in building partnerships between CSOs and the UN itself on Strategy-related issues. For example, the lack of a common definition of terrorism leaves CSOs without a common understanding of the problem and sows confusion regarding the limits of their operations and interactions. Second, the lack of transparency and information-sharing by the UN leaves civil society unsure of what they are signing up to support and without a sense of how it is in their interest to do so. Third, the continuing problem of serious human rights violations being perpetrated by some states in the name of counterterrorism contaminates the larger effort and makes some groups reluctant to align themselves with the UN effort. Fourth, civil society does not speak with one voice, but rather reflects a range of concerns and interests, which makes targeting civil society in a framework as broad as the Strategy a particular challenge. Encouraging a division of labor among CSOs with comparative advantages could help to enhance implementation. It is important to note that diversity and independence of action is a valuable component of good governance that should be strengthened. Related to this, as noted above, most groups are not working under a “counterterrorism” label and may see little benefit to being connected with a UN counterterrorism framework. Thus, more work is needed to articulate what is meant by “counterterrorism” and how the Strategy provides an international framework to push existing advocacy and other work.

In addition to identifying ways in which these challenges can be addressed, among the goals of this workshop, and the larger project of which it is a part, is to brainstorm about how the UN Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, and its constituent entities, and CSOs can work together to further both the work of CSOs, as well as the implementation of the UN Strategy. For
starters, the UN cannot passively expect civil society engagement on Strategy related issues; it needs to be more proactive in raising awareness of the Strategy among, and develop a channel for engagement with, civil society groups. To get the ball moving in the right direction on this, the Task Force may wish to appoint a focal point for such engagement.

Given the diversity of interests, perspectives, and even definitions of “civil society” in different parts of the world, and the challenges this presents the UN, it will also be important for interested CSOs to reach out to the UN on these issues. To this end, consideration could be given to establishing local civil society networks and/or focal points on Strategy implementation or using existing appropriate networks in regions. In addition, thought could be given to the creation of an on-line directory of ongoing civil society activity around the world that is relevant to the Strategy. Such a tool could prove useful not only in enhancing the sharing of information and experiences of CSOs in the context of counterterrorism, but in encouraging collaboration among CSOs within and across regions on Strategy-related work.

Finally, consideration could be given to the development of a “Track II” process to provide the Task Force with outside, expert perspectives on a variety of Strategy issues and help foster interaction among academic and research institutions and CSOs from different regions, as well as key UN and UN member-state officials. In addition to engaging a broad range of civil society actors in promoting the Strategy, such a process could help foster the development of partnerships and coalitions of governments, multilateral institutions, NGOs, and other parts of civil society to enable them to work together better on the wide range of Strategy issues.
NOTES

1 For the purposes of this project, the following definition of civil society, which has been used by the UN Secretary General’s High-Level Panel on United Nations-Civil Society Relations, is useful. It includes associations of citizens (outside their families, friends and businesses) entered into voluntarily to advance their interests, ideas and ideologies and organizations such as professional associations, social movements, indigenous people’s organizations, religious and spiritual organizations, academe and public benefit non-governmental organizations. The term does not include profit-making activity (the private sector) or governing (the public sector). “We the peoples: civil society, the United Nations and global governance: Report of the Panel of Eminent Persons on United Nations–Civil Society Relations” New York, United Nations, 7 June 2004 http://www.un-ngls.org/Final%20report%20-%20HLP.doc

2 Remarks by the President of the UN General Assembly President, Srgjan Kerim, at an informal briefing of member states by the Secretary-General’s Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, 21 May 2008.

3 Ibid.


5 The twenty-four different entities represented on the UN Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force are: the Counter-Terrorism Committee’s Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate, the Department for Disarmament Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Public Information, the Department for Safety and Security, the Expert Staff of the 1540 Committee, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the International Civil Aviation Organization, the International Maritime Organization, the International Monetary Fund, the International Criminal Police Organization, the Monitoring Team of the 1267 Committee, the Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights, the Office of Legal Affairs, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights while countering terrorism, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the World Customs Organization, the World Bank and the World Health Organization.


“A Development Co-operation Lens on Terrorism Prevention: Entry Points for Action,” DAC Guidelines and Reference Series, 2003, http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/17/4/16085708.pdf (noting that “[d]evelopment co-operation does have an important role to play in helping deprive terrorists of popular support … and donors can reduce support for terrorism by working towards preventing the conditions that give rise to conflict in general and that convince disaffected groups to embrace terrorism in particular…this may have implications for priorities including budget allocations and levels and definitions of ODA eligibility criteria.”).


Chair’s Report, Cordaid Conference on Counterterrorism Measures, Security and Development Maastricht, the Netherlands, 10-11 January 2008, para. 17. [Copy on file with Center on Global Counterterrorism Cooperation]

For example, CSOs were instrumental in the formulation of the Nairobi Declaration on the Problem of Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa that ultimately became the basis for the establishment of the Nairobi-based Regional Centre on Small Arms and Light Weapons. Other regions in Africa have similar such networks. For example, in West Africa, the West African Action Network on Small Arms is a loose network of some fifty civil society organizations established in May 2002 in Accra, Ghana, which serves as a forum for sharing information and strategies on combating illicit small arms and light weapons in that region.

Initiatives involving NGOs have been created to enhance political and financial support from governments for efforts to reduce the dangers from nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons. Led by the Center for Strategic and International Studies, the Strengthening the Global Partnership project is a consortium of 24 research institutes in 19 European, Asian, and North American countries working to bolster G-8 commitments to address WMD issues in the former Soviet Union and beyond. See: http://www.sgpproject.org/.


This point was also emphasized by a gathering on NGOs convened by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe’s Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights in Barcelona 2007 http://www.osce.org/documents/odihr/2007/05/24495_en.pdf


ICPAT was launched some three years following the development of the IGAD “Draft Implementation Plan to Combat Terrorism in the IGAD Region” and a subsequent vulnerability assessment of terrorism in the IGAD region. IGAD’s “Draft Implementation Plan to Combat Terrorism in the IGAD Region” is available at www.iss.co.za/AF/RegOrg/unity_to_union/pdfs/igad/confjun03plan.pdf.

Examples of the capacity-building training and other assistance ICPAT has delivered since its establishment include a one-month counterterrorism training course designed in conjunction with EAPCCO for law enforcement officials in each IGAD member state. The training has already been provided to twenty-five Ugandan and twenty-five Somali police officers. ICPAT has launched assessments on interdepartmental cooperation in countering terrorism in Djibouti, Kenya, and Uganda. It has commissioned border management and control field research on both sides of the borders in neighboring states in the region (Djibouti-Ethiopia, Kenya-Uganda, and Sudan-Kenya) and made recommendations to relevant states on steps that need to be taken to strengthen border management. ICPAT has also started to research and compile information on terrorism cases in the courts of IGAD states (over the past ten years), as well as on the effectiveness of laws relating to money laundering, organized crime, corruption, drugs, and arms trafficking in three states in the region. Working in close cooperation with UNODC’s TPB, ICPAT has organized national legislative drafting and judicial training workshops in five of the seven IGAD states (including one in Ethiopia for Somali officials) aimed at promoting the ratification and the implementation of the international conventions and protocols related to terrorism. “IGAD Capacity


32 OSCE ODIHR, “Role of Civil Society in Preventing Terrorism,” p. 8. This meeting also produced a set of recommendations aimed at states, the OSCE, and civil society on how to strengthen the role of civil society and NGOs in preventing terrorism. The recommendations are annexed to the official report.

33 Ibid., para. 21.