

متى القوي

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STREAMLINING IMCTC COUNTERTERRORISM EFFORTS IN CONCERT WITH ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION



The **Secretary-General** of IMCTC, Major-General Mohammed Saeed Al-Moghedi, visited, November 10, 2021, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in Jeddah. Major-General Al-Moghedi was received by the Secretary-General, Dr. Yousef Saleh Al-Othaimeen, alongside other senior officials.

Both sides further explored avenues of cooperation, especially combating terrorist financing. Major-General Al-Moghedi pointed out that such joint cooperation enhances societies ideologically, promotes moderation, and endorses the IMCTC strategy to better build partnerships with international organizations, especially OIC.

AL-RABIAH SPEAKS AT IMCTC ABOUT KINGDOM RELIEF AND HUMANITARIAN AID



Secretary-General of IMCTC received, at the IMCTC Headquarters in Riyadh, November 30, 2021, His Excellency Dr. Abdullah Abdulaziz Al-Rabiah, Advisor to the Royal Court and General-Supervisor of the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center.

His Excellency was provided with a detailed explanation of the IMCTC counterterrorism efforts and coordinating the relevant efforts of the IMCTC member countries. The two sides discussed avenues of joint cooperation to achieve integration in protecting communities from the threats of extremism and terrorism.

His Excellency delivered a keynote lecture, featuring THE KINGDOM EFFORTS IN RELIEF AND HUMANITARIAN ACTION, highlighting several humanitarian initiatives and projects offered by King Salman Center locally, regionally, and internationally.

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IMCTC SECRETARY GENERAL DISCUSSES THE IMCTC UPDATES WITH THE UAE MINISTER OF STATE FOR DEFENSE AFFAIRS



The **Secretary-General** of IMCTC Major-General Mohammed Saeed Al-Moghedi, discussed with the UAE Minister of State for Defense Affairs, Mohammed Ahmed Al-Bawardi, the latest plans, initiatives and activities of the IMCTC. Both sides further explored avenues of common interest and methods of cooperation to better consolidate the common and joint relations in counterterrorism.

On the sidelines of the Dubai Airshow 2021, Major-General Al-Moghedi stressed the importance of the efforts made by the UAE to support IMCTC, driven by the highly appreciated extensive expertise in combating extremism and counterterrorism.



WOMAN & CHILD SUPPORT AND THE ROLE OF HUMANITARIAN ACTION IN COMBATING EXTREMISM AND TERRORISM

EFFORTS OF SAUDI ARABIA IN RELIEF AND HUMANITARIAN ACTION

His Excellency Dr. Abdullah Abdulaziz Al-Rabiah, Advisor to the Royal Court and General-Supervisor of the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center, spoke at the IMCTC Center in Riyadh, November 30, 2021, on THE EFFORTS OF THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA IN RELIEF AND HUMANITARIAN ACTION. Attendees included Secretary-General of IMCTC, Major-General Mohammed Saeed Al-Mogheidi, delegates of the IMCTC member countries, and IMCTC staff.

Humanization

Al-Rabiah explained the humanitarian aid provided by the Kingdom to more than 155 countries, with a value of more than 93 \$billion until 2020. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia showcased a quintessentially exemplary humanitarian image, par excellence, that could be emulated for transparency, justice and neutrality, without bias against race, gender or color; humanitarian action is not instrumentalized for any religious, cultural or political motivations. Al-Rabiah further highlighted that driven by the Kingdom's leading position in humanity towards the international community and inspired by the important contribution to alleviating human suffering for a decent life, the Kingdom has established the King Salman Center for Relief and Humanitarian Action in May 2015 to be an international center, providing relief and humanitarian action, with a generous capital of SAR billion, under the auspices of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz, may Allah support him.

The Center adopts key humanitarian principles and goals to provide aid to the needy and relief to those impacted anywhere across the world by accurate monitoring methods and advanced and fast transportation methods, implemented and supported by the UN organizations and international and local non-profit and reliable organizations in the target countries. To this end, the Center runs diverse projects and programs tailored to the needs of the beneficiaries across all sectors of relief and humanitarian action (relief security, protection, shelter, camp management, nutrition, water, health, early recovery, environmental sanitation, education, support for humanitarian operations, services). The Center seeks to be a global model in relief, based on several foundations, including:

- ◆ Promoting the Kingdom's approach in extending support to the needy across the world.



- ◆ Providing aid without any inhumane motives.
- ◆ Coordinating and consultation with trusted global organizations and bodies.
- ◆ Implementing all international standards followed in relief programs.
- ◆ Streamlining the efforts of the relief agencies in the Kingdom.
- ◆ Selecting qualified and experienced staff and volunteers.
- ◆ Reaching out to the needy to provide them with humanitarian aid, while ensuring that such aid is used only for purposes.
- ◆ Providing high-quality aid of trusted sources.

Projects and Beneficiaries

Al-Rabiah highlighted that the Center implemented 1,784 projects

with a total cost of about \$5.5 billion, across 76 countries: 613 food security projects, 556 health projects, 180 shelter projects, 89 education projects, 66 water and environmental repair projects, and 51 humanitarian operations support projects. The Center implemented 228 projects in the ten months of 2021, at a cost of more than \$508 million, and implemented 264 projects in 2020, at a cost of \$549 million.

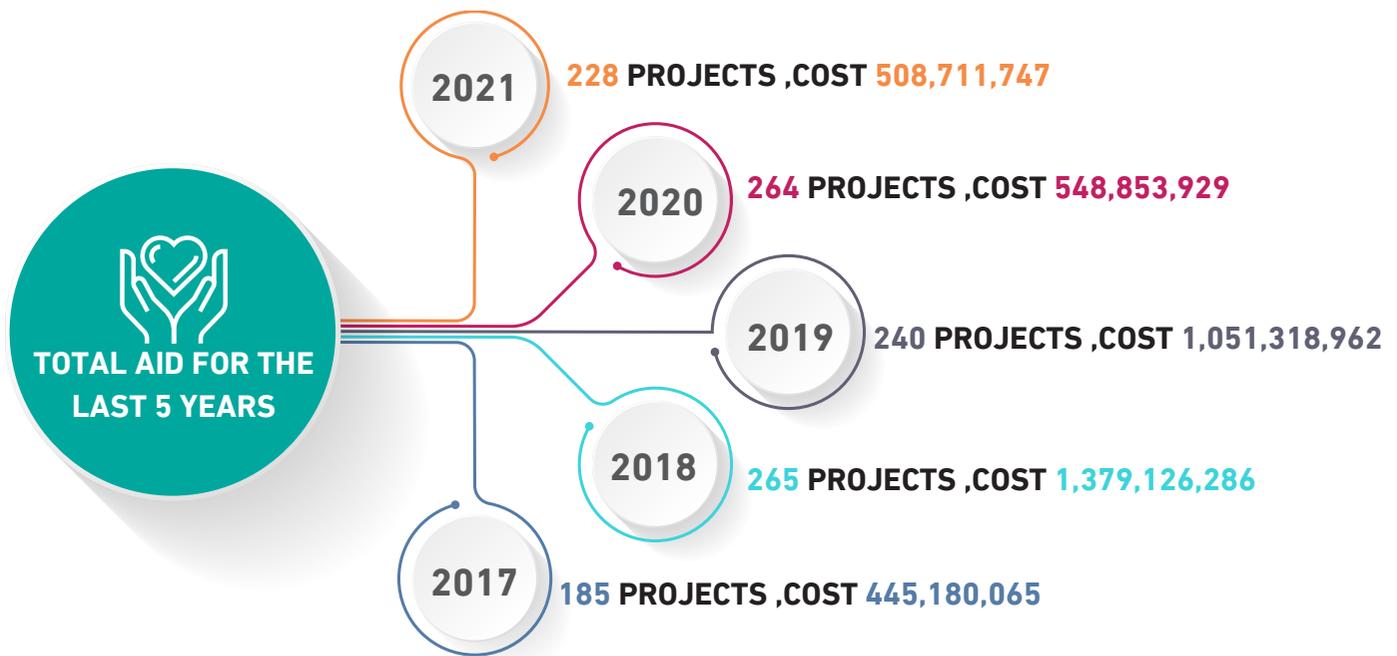
Partnership with UNHCR

Al-Rabiah explained that the Kingdom is a major partner of UNHCR, with a contribution of more than \$310 million in the current decade. Since the establishment of the Center, UNHCR has received about \$50 million to support operations in Yemen, Somalia, Lebanon, Jordan and Bangladesh. Less than a year into its establishment, the Center pledged in April 2016 to provide \$273.7 million in response to the Yemen Flash Appeal, an additional \$150 million is pledged.

The Kingdom's support for humanitarian needs in Yemen continued in 2020, through the Center, which pledged \$300 million in support of humanitarian operations, including \$20 million to support the UNHCR various activities. The financial partnership supports health projects for Syrian refugees in Jordan and Lebanon.

Women and Child Support

Al-Rabiah stressed that the Kingdom is keen to pay a special attention to women and children for humanitarian purposes; it further



supports education in countries facing challenges, indicating that the Center, in five years, has successfully reached out to more than 70 million women and 112 million children in 54 countries. Of great note, the Kingdom's Vision 2030, adopted by our wise leadership, promotes humanitarian and volunteerism.

The Center has been mandated and entrusted to be an incubator for external humanitarian volunteerism. With the stage set, the Center has been empowered to implement more than 140 volunteering medical campaigns up to 2021, in which 700 male and female volunteers from the Saudi health teams engage in humanitarian action and communicate the Kingdom's sublime message to the countries of the world. Such medical campaigns, which will be implemented in 44 countries, will contribute to helping 500,000 patients with intractable diseases, such as cardiology, pediatric and orthopedic surgery.

Al-Rabiah brought to focus a statement of the Kingdom's international efforts to support global and regional organizations, which made up \$500 million, of which \$150 million were allocated to the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), \$150 million to the GAVI Alliance, and \$200 million to international and

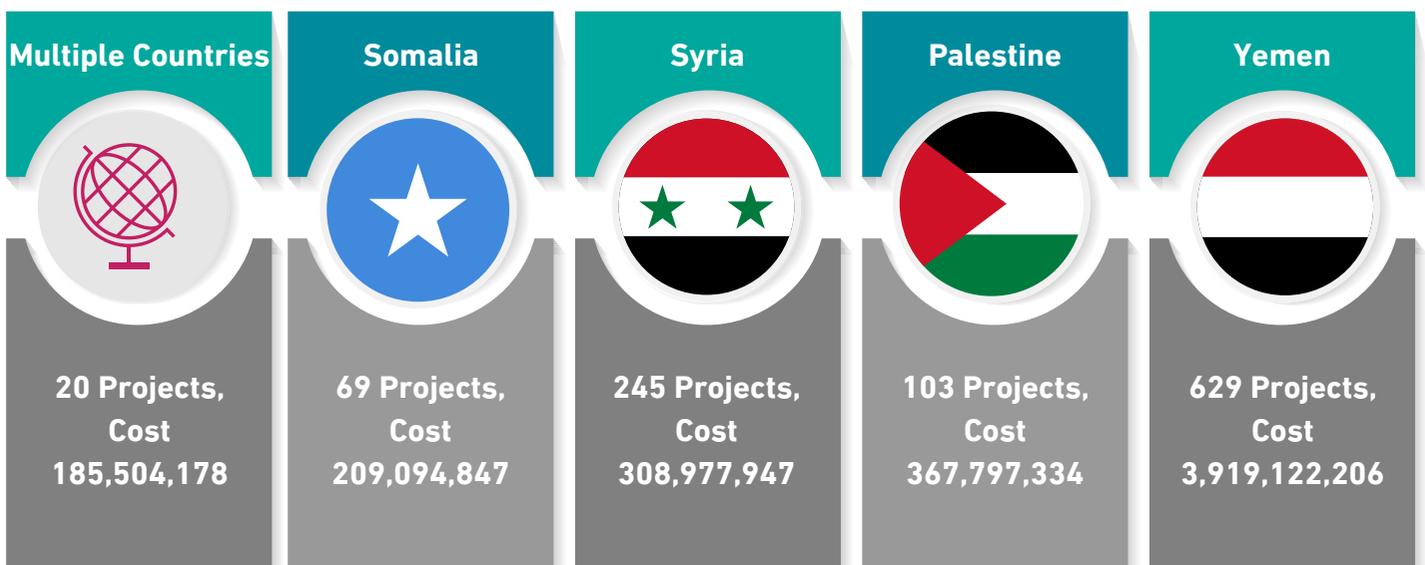
regional health organizations and programs (COVID-19 pandemic), in addition to providing \$220 million to support countries with poor health systems in Asia, Africa, Europe and America.

Combating Extremism and Terrorism

Al-Rabiah reviewed the initiative of the Role of Humanitarian Action in Combating Extremism and Terrorism, established by the Center, which included 5 projects to enlighten mothers, 34 projects for children, 7 projects to provide decent livelihoods, and 5 projects to achieve stability and resolve conflicts.

Among the important qualitative projects undertaken by the Center is a project developed to protect children from the threats of recruitment and joining terrorist organizations and eliminate the ideologies factored in such issues. It has been implemented in more than 14 countries, to rehabilitate children recruited by the Houthi militia in Yemen and educate them to be good members in their community, providing them with psychosocial support, as well as informing parents of the threats of child recruitment and prevention methods to steer clear of armed conflict.

Top 5 countries receiving aid



SAUDI ARABIA'S EFFORTS TO COMBAT TERRORIST FINANCING ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES, LEGAL REFERENCE, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION



Key measures to dry up sources of terrorism, inter alia, include clamping down on financial activities of terrorist organizations, cutting off supply arteries instrumentalized to carry out crimes and sabotage. The international community, albeit fully conscious and mindful, has not yet successfully eradicated terrorism. Various reasons contribute to delaying such long-awaited demise, including but not limited to globalization, which further facilitated the cross-border movement of people, goods and money, the continued development of strategies by terrorist organizations to evade security measures, the rapid expansion of financial market products and services, and the increasingly growing cash flows around the world.

KEEN INTEREST

Against a backdrop of such reality, the national and international commissions of inquiry have concluded that whatever control, oversight and arrangement for tracking down funds of terrorist organizations and affiliated networks there may be, they will not completely eliminate terrorist financing operations. Therefore, the main objective now is to limit, as much as possible, funneling such funds. IMCTC has paid great attention to combating terrorist financing, making it one of its four main domains. To this end, IMCTC held a keynote lecture, at the IMCTC Headquarters, November 1, 2021, featuring INSIGHTS ON COMBATING TERRORIST FINANCING: EFFORTS OF THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA IN COMBATING TERRORIST FINANCING AND BEST PRACTICES, presented by Colonel Saad bin Ali Al-Shahrani, Delegate of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to IMCTC for combating terrorist financing. The keynote speaker highlighted the most important Saudi efforts in combating extremism and countering terrorism internationally, the most prominent Saudi organizational efforts in combating terrorist financing and terrorism, the components of combating terrorist financing across the Kingdom, organizational structure, legal reference, and lessons learned from the experiences of combating terrorist financing.

REMARKABLE EFFORTS

Colonel Al-Shahrani presented the most important Saudi international efforts to combat extremism and terrorism, highlighting

the measures taken by the Kingdom to better combat terrorist financing, including:

- ◆ Approving the implementation of the 40 recommendations to combat money laundering issued by the Financial Action Team (FATF) in 1990, and the 9 recommendations for combating terrorist financing.
- ◆ Establishing a money laundering unit in the Saudi Central Bank, and in all local banks.
- ◆ Developing a guide reference to the rules and regulations for combating money laundering and terrorist financing operations.
- ◆ Applying the (know-your-customer) principle in financial and non-financial institutions.
- ◆ Establishing a permanent committee to combat money laundering.
- ◆ Implementing international resolutions issued by the UN Security Council related to combating money laundering and terrorist financing.
- ◆ Circulating the lists issued by the United Nations to take immediate action in freezing the financial assets of those whose names appear in the said lists.
- ◆ Establishing the Saudi Arabia Financial Investigation Unit (SAFIU) to combat money laundering and terrorism financing, dated September 10, 2005.
- ◆ Launching and developing the legislative framework for combating money laundering and terrorist financing in the Kingdom. It includes: Banking Control Law, Combating Commercial Concealment Law, Penal Code for Counterfeiting and Counterfeiting Money, Anti-Money Laundering Law and Executive Regulations, Anti-Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Rules for Insurance Companies, Anti-Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Rules for SAMA, Anti-Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Rules issued by the Financial Market Authority, the Anti-Money Laundering Guide of the Ministry of Commerce, and the Anti-Terrorism Crimes and Financing Law issued on November 1, 2017.

- ♦ Establishing Terrorist Financing Targeting Center on October 25, 2017, co-chaired by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United States of America, and the membership of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf.

STANDING COMMITTEE

Colonel Al-Shahrani also discussed the efforts of the Standing Committee for Combating Terrorism and Terrorist Financing, which was established by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (December 25, 2001) to be a national point of contact to receive requests submitted to the Kingdom by countries, organizations and international bodies related to combating terrorism and terrorist financing.

The Standing Committee includes permanent and non-permanent members from all government agencies. According to the provisions of the anti-terrorist crime and combating terrorist financing law, the Standing Committee is mandated with the following:

1. Coordinating public national policies in combating terrorism and terrorist financing, constantly reviewing and updating such policies, taking and developing the necessary relevant measures on the basis of international commitments, requirements and updates.
2. Assessing the risks of terrorism and terrorist financing, constantly updating and developing such issues on the basis of international commitments, requirements and developments, and coordinating on the assessment with the relevant authorities.
3. Receiving requests from countries, bodies and organizations related to the UN Security Council resolutions related to combating terrorism or combating terrorist financing.
4. Developing and updating the means and taking the necessary measures and procedures to implement the relevant UN Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 1267 (1999), 1373 (2001), 1988 and 1989 (2011), 2253 (2015), and subsequent relevant resolutions.
5. Grouping the names of individuals and entities on the national lists accused of terrorism or terrorist financing and taking

measures regarding the classification of the names of individuals and entities on the Consolidated List of the Security Council Committee (1267/1989/2253) and the Consolidated List of the Security Council Committee (1988).

To this end, the Standing Committee exercises a set of measures, including imposition of restrictions, travel bans, deportation, expatriation, freezing assets, listing on watch lists and screening of high-risk transactions. The Standing Committee draws on a variety of reference sources, including royal orders, guidelines, and approved regulations. It cooperates with countries, international and regional organizations and forums, and with relevant institutions in the Kingdom, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Saudi Central Bank, the Ministry of Commerce and Investment, the Ministry of Justice, Customs, the Capital Market Authority, and others.

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Colonel Al-Shahrani highlighted the key roles of the international organizations concerned with combating terrorist financing, chiefly the UN Security Council committees related to combating terrorism and terrorist financing and sub-groups, such as the UN Security Council Committee 1267/1989, 2253 on Daesh, Al-Qaeda, and associated individuals, groups, institutions and entities, the UN Security Council Resolution Committee 1373 (2001), the UN Security Council Resolution Committee 1988 (2011), and the executive arm of such committees, which is the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team that assists the committees in assessing the application of the Member States of sanctions related to the two committees and informing them of any new developments that affect the success of the law of sanctions.

The FATF recommendations set out the necessary actions that countries should take to identify risks, setting policies and internal coordination, and prosecuting money laundering and terrorist financing.

Best Practices

Colonel Al-Shahrani presented the best lessons learned in combating terrorist financing, including sharing experiences between member states at the international level to curb financing terrorist organizations, sharing technical assistance for best practices, the engagement of member states in relevant experiences in combating terrorist financing, and encouraging states to announce their actions taken against any individual or entity that supports terrorism in general (bilateral declaration and plural declaration).

Delegate of Pakistan referred to the inadequacy of international means to combat the financing of far-right organizations; some display violent terrorism with much funding funneled in various ways, holding concerts, selling fashion and others, making proceeds to support such organizations. While the UN Security Council resolutions

are developed to combat financing ISIS, Al-Qaeda and other terrorist organizations, no single resolution is developed to combat financing the far-right! Colonel Al-Shahrani emphasized that the UN Security Council Resolutions No. 2253 and 2254 are an international legal basis for the inclusion of any individuals or entities in the list of combating terrorist financing.

Brigadier-General Rashid Mohammed Al-Dhaheer, Delegate of UAE, asked about the position of persons or entities that a country includes in its national list to combat terrorist financing and how such a country can include such names in the regional or international list to combat terrorist financing. Colonel Al-Shahrani replied that the inclusion in the national list to combat terrorist financing is the first stage, followed by the submission to the UN Security Council, which investigates into

the issue in light of the information available about the individuals and entities required to be listed. If such entities are linked to a UN Security Council resolution, the international procedures towards such parties and supporters will be easy. However, if the entities included on the national list are not linked to the UN Security Council resolutions and are not on the United Nations list, their international inclusion takes effort and time. In most cases, the objection to the inclusion by the N Security Council is due to a lack of information.

Mr. Khaled Arab, Delegate of Afghanistan in combating terrorist financing, asked about the key threats that terrorist organizations capitalize on while financing activities. Colonel Al-Shahrani replied that the most prominent types of risks in combating terrorist financing are currently virtual currencies and the bank accounts on social networks.

SYMBIOTIC INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VIOLENT EXTREMISM, MIGRATION AND DISPLACEMENT



Forced migration has become a rapidly growing phenomenon; in a three-year lifespan, global displacement increased by 40% from 42.5 million up to 59.5 million in 2015, making up 80 million, (1%) of the world population. 86% of such displaced persons live in developing countries and suffer life fraught with crippling threats. The interrelationship between migration and terrorism is symbiotic; terrorism begets migration, and migration fuels terrorism. Millions of migrants have fled areas controlled or targeted by terrorist organizations. Refugee camps and asylum centers in developing countries and Europe have become targets for terrorist attacks and recruitment by terrorist organizations.

To this effect, IMCTC held a keynote lecture at the IMCTC Headquarter in Riyadh, November 7, 2021, featuring INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VIOLENT EXTREMISM, MIGRATION AND DISPLACEMENT by Colonel Ali Mohammed Mahmoud, Delegate the Kingdom of Bahrain to IMCTC. Attendees included Secretary-General of IMCTC, delegates of the IMCTC member countries and staff.

Extremism and Displacement

The keynote speaker addressed the root causes of migration and displacement, along with the possibilities of displaced persons slipping into violent extremism, providing an analysis of facts and figures related to the symbiotic interrelationship that exists between violent extremism and migration and displacement. The speaker has also brought to focus a future vision of what IMCTC can contribute to reducing the negative effects of migration and displacement, which – inter alia – trigger extremism.

Yoked together, migration and displacement are exponentially increasing, driven by political violence, armed conflicts, economic and environmental factors, unequal distribution of wealth, widening gap between the poor and the rich across the world, overpopulation of the third world, the IT revolution, ubiquitous human trafficking, and the loss of job opportunities because of globalization. Silhouetted against the symbiotic interrelationship between migration and violent extremism, measures to curb migration to counter terrorism have become widespread on a global scale. At core, the speaker also revisited the causal chains between terrorism and migration that must be further explored:

1. Fragility of State

Fragile or weak states have often been associated with terrorism. Poor central authority that lacks full legitimacy and a government helpless of maintaining law and order allow terrorist organizations to mushroom and balloon into such areas, on which the government relaxed its grip. Many fragile or weak states have experienced little or no terrorism, and have not had terrorism-induced migration, but have experienced economic-induced migration.

2. Terrorism of Organizations

As ISIS stormed and swept through Iraq in June 2014, 2.57 million people were forced to flee their homes to more than 2,000 locations across the country and beyond the borders of Iraq. Terrorist acts make people fear for their lives, stampeding in a mass exodus. The 2015 Global Terrorism Index (GTI) revealed that ten of the eleven countries that are most affected by terrorism have the highest rates of refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs).

3. Civil War

Many domestic battles snowball into violent civil wars. Terrorism often sneaks into countries that sustain such wars; more than 55% of all terrorist attacks have taken place in countries swallowed by war machine and enervated by domestic armed conflict. In such conflicts, millions flee to the backyard regions and migrate to other countries. For instance, the Bosnian war (1992-1995) begot the displacement of two million people, both internally and externally. The Armed Conflict Survey 2015 revealed 37 domestic conflicts; 50% happened in the Middle East, and the conflict in Syria since 2012, the deadliest since the end of the Cold War, which accounted for more than 53% of the victims of wars around the world,

followed by Iraq and Afghanistan 12% for each respectively. Terrorism and the three wars (Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria) were in unison, which caused a huge influx of displaced persons, migrants, and refugees.

The two-way link between violent conflicts and civil wars on the one hand and terrorism on the other is almost deeply ingrained. The Institute for Economics and Peace reveals 88% of all terrorist attacks occurred in countries that experienced or were involved in violent domestic conflicts.

4. Refugee Camps

Refugee camps swarm with refugees in more than 125 countries; such camps are often seen as temporary facilities. Sadly enough, however, refugees on average spend 17 years in such camps albeit temporary. Such camps are often unsafe and notoriously rife in misery and discomfort. As such, they may become like prisons; a breeding ground for terrorism.

Such camps provide extremist groups with favorable opportunities to recruit terrorists and guerrilla fighters, especially young fighters; more than 50% of the world refugees are under the age of 18. It is recognized that young people are more likely to join terrorist groups than adults. As such, violent extremism and recruitment to terrorist groups are more likely when refugee camps are in direct contact with combatants engaged in armed conflicts.

5. Xenophobia

Once host countries are flooded with an influx of refugees and migrants, locally fueled xenophobic campaigns are launched against them. Such local hate or resistance was manifested in Europe in arson, firebomb attacks, iron rods, hatchets and knives on asylum centers and refugee camps in Austria, Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Latvia, Macedonia, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, and the United Kingdom. Sweden, which alone received more than 160,000 asylum seekers in 2015, witnessed about 50 attacks on refugees in 2015.

Again in 2015, German authorities reported more than 900 xenophobic incidents, and about 700 people were injured in such incidents. There is no good reason to describe such attacks other than being extremist and terrorist acts.

6. Counterterrorism

Terrorism often begets a provocative situation, and terrorists may seek to provoke a severe overreaction. The less intelligence the government has about the identities and whereabouts of the perpetrators of such terrorist acts, the more likely the government will use tough methods that could impact the entire community with which terrorists are associated. This is often considered by the terrorists. For instance, following the 9/11 Attacks of 2001, the American attacks on Afghanistan caused hundreds of thousands of

refugees, among whom Al-Qaeda found a haven to mushroom. The US invasion of Iraq also displaced 1.3 million people, and Al-Qaeda capitalized on such chaos to carry out terrorist operations.

Diaspora Communities

When migrants leave their home countries, they can hardly abandon their past heritage. The hostilities that fueled such conflicts in their home countries often persist in their new host countries. For instance, PKK used Germany to raise funds and recruit youth and send them to the mountainous region in northern Iraq and eastern Turkey to fight. Again, The number of foreign fighters from the western diaspora joining ISIS made up more than six thousand people.

Analyses show that the vast majority of migrants have nothing to do with terrorism; between the fall of 2001 and early 2016, the USA accepted more than 800,000 refugees in the resettlement program. According to the US State Department and the Migration Policy Institute, only five of such refugees have been arrested on terrorism-related charges. Of the 600,000 Iraqis and Syrians who arrived in Germany in 2015, only 17 refugees were investigated for suspected terrorist links.

The fact, emphasized by many researchers and speakers have addressed the interrelationship between migrants and terrorism, is that it is unlikely that such people who have fled civil wars, repression or poverty would readily attack a society that provided them with safety and opportunities conducive for new and dignified lives. No empirical evidence is made available that would prove that the first generation of migrants is rebellious or receptive to extremist messages; rather, past and present realities indicate that they focus on building their new lives, families, and children, and they have little time to pursue politics or religious extremism.

IMCTC Responsibility

Taken together, the speaker presented a future vision of the responsibility of IMCTC in reducing the negative aspects of migration and displacement, being among the causes of violent extremism. In the ideological domain, the speaker stressed the importance of mental, social and ideological rehabilitation of displaced persons in refugee camps and affected countries, and the adoption of several initiatives to prevent violent extremism. In the media domain, the speaker called for establishing awareness campaigns and programs that sensitize displaced persons to avoid being lured into terrorism. In the domain of combating terrorist financing, the speaker emphasized the importance of controlling financial transfers to refugee camps and combating illegal activities, such as smuggling, trafficking, money laundering, funneling materials and contraband trafficking. In the military domain, the speaker called for helping displaced persons to return to their home countries and regions by providing security and restoring stability, as the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia did with the Iraqi refugees following the war to liberate Kuwait.



THE CAUSAL CHAINS BETWEEN TERRORISM AND MIGRATION

SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF THE IMAGE DISCOURSE IN TERRORIST CONTENT

Terrorist organizations pay great attention to image in media contents; they select and produce image with great accuracy and skill to deliver bespoke messages and ideas to the target audience. Image per se has become one of the key tools used to fight off opponents and promote their beliefs and goals; image can efficiently influence and persuade a given target audience and provide information and impressions that thousands of words remain helpless to do so. Image can be denotative and connotative, without the need for any texts.



WEALTH OF PROFESSIONALS

Terrorist organizations instrumentalize many professionals for development, production, design, and direction; such terrorist organizations have advanced equipment and programs that can produce meaningfully rich images, connotations, and symbols that have a profound impact on the behavior of the recipient, through suggestive features, signs, and scenes from various and comprehensive aspects. Research studies confirm that such terrorist groups have caused graphic scenes within living memory of humanity. Memory preserved graphic snapshots of the members as they were burned, slaughtered and shot dead; such striking images send messages that express their approach and ideology to justify their actions.

To reveal the terrorist contents of such graphic images, including messages, connotations, meanings and ideas, and realizing their hidden goals, IMCTC held, November 21, 2021, in Riyadh, a workshop, featuring SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF IMAGE DISCOURSE IN TERRORIST CONTENT, moderated by Dr. Mohammed Suleiman Al-Subaihi, Professor of Communication at the College of Media and Communication at Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University, Media Delegate of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to IMCTC. Among the attendees were the delegates of the IMCTC member

countries and IMCTC staff. The workshop aimed at deconstructing the discourse of image and to properly understand associated meaning. This also includes forming a visual and cultural awareness of the meanings couched in images and revealing the implicit connotations, using the techniques of semiotic analysis.

IMPORTANCE AND IMPACT OF IMAGE

Dr. Al-Subaihi highlighted the importance of image; it is one of the most powerful means of communication and expression. It is a universal language that the recipient can understand and be affected by without being bound by the limits of language. Image carries silent messages in various modalities and styles, relationships, places and times; image is a visual language that depends on understanding the relationship between things as they are in reality with signs that make them understandable meanings. Akin to a world of cultures, image has folds of messaging system directed with intent and bias to perform a communicative function alongside the word; image sometimes goes before or substitutes language research studies reveal that the information that the reader receives from the image is faster in perceiving and understanding, more influential on the recipient, and stays for a longer period of time in memory, compared to the information received from a normal text.

Terrorist organizations rely on image discourse to expand their influence, ideology, and control. Mostly, the goal is to increase unrest and spread terror among citizens. Image contributed to changing the patterns of traditional psychological wars, taking them out into the media space to achieve the goals of such groups in influencing human consciousness. With this in mind, the importance of learning about image in terrorist contents to reveal the underlying meanings and connotations, as a visual and meaningful discourse.

PREMISES AND CONCEPTS

Dr. Al-Subaihi highlighted several concepts of semiotic analysis, including:

INSIGNIA: It looks into signs and gestures used across nation, cultures, and how symbols are used as means of communication, such as greeting methods, eating and drinking habits, clothes, flags, coat-of-arms, emblems, and slogans. It provides an understanding of the relationship between a signifier and a signified, and the interrelationship of symbols to each other.

SEMIOTICS: It is the study of signs inherent in press photos, and the implications they carry that can be perceived and interpreted in an analytical context. It seeks to learn about the implicit meaning – implicitation – that the photographer aims at. Semiotics requires a deep textual study, reading between the lines, and an attempt to discover the implicit semantic relationships.

SEMIOLGY: It is the sign or signal that indicates more than one meaning.

Dr. Al-Subaihi stressed the importance of semiotic studies; semiotics is based on decodes used in communicative messages, whether verbal or non-verbal, and explaining such codes to each community according to the prevailing culture. In such research studies, the researcher seeks to achieve integration in the analysis of the implicit and explicit visual discourse, through two basic levels:

- ▶ **Indicative Level (descriptive):** It is the direct and immediate meaning of image, or the superficial meaning that everyone perceives.
- ▶ **Implicative Level (semantic):** It is the real meaning of image, or the deep and implicit meaning.

ANALYSIS THEMES

Semiotic analysis addresses two themes:

Theme One: Method of Cognitive Analysis and Skills

This approach is related to the signs and associated implications, which are divided into three signs:

Iconic: the signifier is similar to the signified, and the relationship is based on similarity.

Indicative: the signifier refers to the signified, either by a natural causal relationship or a spatial juxtaposition.

Symbolic: the signifier symbolizes the signified in a conventional, customary, or contractual relationship.

Theme Two: Production of Visual Content

- ◆ Producing ideas, defining the values and messages that the content creator seeks to achieve.
- ◆ Determining the appropriate method for drawing ideas and messages, alongside the persuasive treatment style according to the characteristics of the target audience.
- ◆ Developing the text and choosing the audiovisual elements that express the values desired.
- ◆ Assigning tasks to the team.
- ◆ Implement and producing work according to the type of medium and platform to be employed in publishing.

VISUAL CONTENT IMPLICATIONS

Visual content is all that is contained in the visual frame of the published image, including signs with specific meanings, which have their explicit and implicit meanings, whether they are a man-made or natural sign. The signs in the visual content are divided into levels, and each level comes into several formats that can be subjected to analysis and interpretation:

Level One: it is the framework system, which includes the architectural framework, the atmosphere surrounding the presentation, the title, the qualitative description, the previous announcements, and the introductory premise.

Level Two: the system of personalities, which includes personality trait, presentational ability and delivery, body language, signs, movement, clothing and adornment.

Level Three: it is the visual signs system, which includes decoration, lighting, accessories, colors, and visual representation of place.

Level Four: it is the system of textual signs, including speech, style, vocal tone, subtle nuances, rhythm, pace, timing, and cadence.

Level Five: it is the system of non-verbal sounds, which includes music and sound effects.

ANALYSIS TOOLS

Dr. Al-Subaihi reviewed sections in-

cluded in the implicit signs analysis tool, including:

Symbolic Signs: symbolic expression.

Indicative Signs: other signs.

Interrelationships of Work Elements: Determining the nature of the interrelationship between signs and visual elements.

Values: Revealing the values and implicit messages reinforced by work.

Dr. Al-Subaihi also highlighted the difference between theatrical work and television work in terms of influence and analysis. The audience watches the theatrical work directly; therefore, the effect of the general context of the work is determined by the audience according to own cognitive structure, personality type, demographic characteristics, and the relevant circumstance. The analyst of theatrical work depends on the critic's ability to determine the patterns that make up the work according to own view. As for the television work, the audience sees it in a symbolic manner, determined by the director and the production tools available, and accordingly the effect on the audience is related to the director's ability to highlight the work. The TV analyst does a rather complicated job, in addition to the direct analytical patterns that must be considered, which are the TV production patterns used by the director in conveying the work to the audience.

TV WORK

Dr. Al-Subaihi also highlighted some analytical patterns of television work as follows:

1. Camera movement.
2. Photography lighting.
3. Montage, arrangement of scenes and duration.
4. Visual effects.
5. Sound effects.

Equally important, Dr. Al-Subaihi discussed the explicit signs related to the level of descriptive analysis, which depends on deconstructing, documenting, classifying, monitoring and compiling the explicit signs in the visual scene to highlight the prevailing pattern in the content industry, and interpret it according to such patterns. Key sections of analysis included in this tool are:

Documentary Information: publication platform, time of publication, duration, etc.

Cast: the number of people, traits, and clothes.

Location: the features of the location, explicit significance, and the explicit background.

Technicality: production modalities, shooting style, and production techniques.

Theme: determining the subject-matter of the product.

Processing Direction: positive, negative, neutral.

Inference Sources: what the source relies on to confirm the content presented.

Working Language: determining the language and dialect.

Product Genre: News, Documentary, Drama, Fiction.

Lighting: natural, artificial.

Discussions

To put semiotic analysis of image in practice, Dr. Al-Subaihi showed a video footage of ISIS, asking the audience to identify the iconic, indicative, and symbolic signs, the existing interrelationship between such elements, and the implicit interpretation of such interrelationships. The participants asked different questions about the interrelationship of semiotic analysis to the fight against terrorism. Dr. Al-Subaihi emphasized that terrorist organizations use image with a high intensity; they successfully attracted many through image instrumentalization. It is critically important to better understand such images, deconstruct discourse, and reveal dimensions and connotations, which fall under ideological counterterrorism.



IMCTC AT MANAMA DIALOGUE FORUM 2021 IN KINGDOM OF BAHRAIN



IMCTC evinced robust engagement in the Seventeenth Regional Security Forum (Manama Dialogue), held in Manama, the capital of the Kingdom of Bahrain, November 19-21 of 2021, with more than 300 high-profile figures of senior leaders and officials in politics, defense and national security affairs, and subject-matter experts coming from about 50 countries alongside many regional and international companies and organizations. Over the course of 3 days, Manama Dialogue discussed regional security challenges, peace issues, and the settlement of conflicts across the region through diplomatic channels to contribute to achieving regional and global peace and security.

Key Meetings

On the sidelines of the forum, discussions were held between officials and ministers to bring peace and stability to the countries of the region, in addition to open and closed sessions between officials and experts in security and defense affairs from countries around the world to analyze important strategic planning issues.

Secretary-General of IMCTC, Major-General Mohammed Saeed Al-Moghedi, had a meeting with His Excellency Marshal Sheikh Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, Commander-in-Chief of the Bahrain Defense Force. The two parties reviewed avenues of cooperation, common visions, and strengthening relations between the two sides to achieve the desired goals in the war on terrorism. They also discussed security issues of common interest between Bahrain and IMCTC on the latest relevant developments.

Sheikh Khalifa bin Ahmed paid tribute to the unremitting efforts made by IMCTC to combat violent extremism, while coordinating the efforts of the IMCTC member countries in concert with international efforts to maintain international peace and security, affirming Bahrain's continued support for counterterrorism efforts put in by IMCTC.

On the sidelines of the forum, Major-General Al-Moghedi had a meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Bahrain, Dr. Abdul Latif bin Rashid Al-Zayani; the two sides reviewed issues

of common interest and the latest developments of the IMCTC strategies, initiatives and activities. Major-General Al-Moghedi commended the efforts of the Kingdom of Bahrain in supporting IMCTC with such a great extensive experience in combating extremism and terrorism.

Continued Cooperation

Such meetings are more encouraged and inspired by IMCTC to well establish strategic partnerships between the IMCTC member countries, supporting states, and international organizations, while strengthening ties and continued cooperation with all countries of the world. Taken together, such efforts contribute to capacity-building, sharing best international practices, information and experiences in counterterrorism, and joining other international efforts aimed at maintaining international peace and security.

Of great note, Manama has been hosting Manama Dialogue Forum since 2004, jointly organized by the Bahraini Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), based in London.

Manama Dialogue Forum is considered one of the most important global diplomatic and security annual summits. It aims to promote dialogue and common understanding among nations, cultures and civilizations, settle conflicts through diplomatic means, help establish regional and global peace and security, and support sustainable development goals.

In his keynote speech on US defense policies across the region, US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin stated that the US would further support the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in blocking the attacks of the Houthi terrorist militia and strengthening the KSA air defenses to further confront such challenges. His Excellency also expressed concern over Iran's destabilizing activities across the region, noting that Iran's recent activities are discouraging. He also called on the Houthi Militia to stop its provocative attacks against the Kingdom and immediately bring the war in Yemen to an end.

MEMORANDUM OF COOPERATION CONCLUDED BY IMCTC AND KING ABDULAZIZ UNIVERSITY



IMCTC concluded, November 9, 2021, a memorandum of cooperation with King Abdulaziz University represented by Prince Khaled Al-Faisal Institute for Moderation (ETIDAL), signed by Secretary-General of IMCTC, Major-General Mohammed Saeed Al-Moghedi and Professor Abdulrahman Obaid Al-Youbi, Rector of KAU.

Major-General Al-Moghedi spelled out that the said memorandum would lay the foundation for cooperation in combating extremism and deepening the sense of national belonging, hoping that it would contribute to the spread of moderation and harmony.

Equally important, Al-Moghedi also noted that the said memorandum would promote media campaigns, research enterprises, and educational programs to further combat violent extremism and promote moderation.

IMCTC SECRETARY-GENERAL RECEIVES SENIOR DELEGATION FROM THE UAE NATIONAL DEFENSE COLLEGE



The Secretary-General of IMCTC, Major-General Mohammed Saeed Al-Moghedi received, November 24, 2021, a senior delegation from the National Defense College of the UAE (NDC), headed by Brigadier-General Salem Saeed Al Shamsi at the IMCTC Headquarters. Major-General Al-Moghedi provided the delegation with a detailed explanation of the IMCTC counterterrorism efforts. Later, the senior delegation set off on a tour headed by Major-General Al-Moghedi to show them around the IMCTC Headquarters. On his part, Brigadier-General Al Shamsi expressed his thanks to the Secretary-General, looking forward to continued cooperation between NDC and IMCTC in areas of common interest.

DELEGATES OF THE SULTANATE OF OMAN MARK THE NATIONAL DAY



The delegates of the Sultanate of Oman to IMCTC held, November 23, 2021, at the IMCTC Headquarters in Riyadh, a celebration marking the National Day of the Sultanate of Oman. The Secretary-General of IMCTC, delegates of the IMCTC member countries and staff evinced robust engagement in the festive occasion.

SECRETARY-GENERAL RECEIVES DELEGATION OF YOUTH PROGRAM



The Secretary-General of IMCTC received, November 25, 2021, at the IMCTC Headquarters in Riyadh, a delegation of the Youth Program (Women: Homeland and Ambition), which is organized by the Ministry of Sports in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The delegation was provided with a detailed explanation of the IMCTC concerted efforts to combat violent extremism and terrorism.

IMCTC SECRETARY-GENERAL RECEIVES US MILITARY ATTACHÉ IN RIYADH



The Secretary-General of IMCTC received, November 4, 2021, Brigadier-General Thomas Crimmins, U.S. Defense Attaché to Saudi Arabia along with the official delegation.

Brigadier-General Crimmins was provided with a detailed explanation of the IMCTC counterterrorism efforts and the vital role in coordinating the counterterrorism efforts of the IMCTC member countries. Both sides reviewed the avenues of joint cooperation in enhancing international peace and security.

MAJOR-GENERAL AL-MOGHEDI RECEIVES AMBASSADOR OF SOUTH KOREA TO SAUDI ARABIA

The Secretary-General of IMCTC, Major-General Mohammed Saeed Al-Moghedi, received, November 7, 2021, Ambassador of South Korea to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Park Joon-Young, and the official delegation, who were provided with a detailed explanation of the IMCTC counterterrorism efforts and the coordinating roles for close cooperation among the IMCTC member countries.

Major-General Al-Moghedi commended the vital role of South Korea in countering terrorism and combating extremism in various manifestations and modalities, in perfect harmony with tolerance, coexistence and denunciation of violence and extremism.



IMCTC AND IBU SIGN MEMORANDUM OF COOPERATION

IMCTC and the Islamic Broadcasting Union (IBU) signed a memorandum of cooperation to further enhance solidarity in joint visions and counter the media propaganda of extremist groups. The Secretary-General of IMCTC expressed his confidence that the said memorandum would come to fruition for both sides.

The Director-General of IBU confirmed that the Union would draw up fast-track plans to better support the IMCTC media and ideological efforts in counterterrorism.

