



مناخة

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SAUDI HRC PRESIDENT VISITS IMCTC



On Tuesday, August 29, 2023, Maj. Gen. Mohammed bin Saeed Al-Moghedi, the Secretary-General of the Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition (IMCTC), received Her Excellency Dr. Hala bint Mazyad Al-Tuwajri, President of the Human Rights Commission in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and her accompanying delegation. The delegation was briefed on IMCTC's activities and counter-terrorism efforts. The two sides also discussed issues of common concern. For her part, the President of the Human Rights Commission commended the efforts made by IMCTC and called for building bridges of cooperation between the two sides.

AMBASSADORS OF THE CUSTODIAN OF THE TWO HOLY MOSQUES VISIT IMCTC



On Monday, August 21, 2023, Maj. Gen. Mohammed bin Saeed Al-Moghedi, the Secretary-General of the Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition (IMCTC), received a number of recently appointed ambassadors of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques outside the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The ambassadors were briefed on IMCTC tasks, activities, and domains of work. They also met with a number of delegates of IMCTC Member States.

At the end of the visit, IMCTC Secretary-General wished Their Excellencies the Ambassadors continued success in performing their duties. It is worth noting that this visit is part of the efforts exerted to strengthen IMCTC international relations and to intensify the efforts aimed at countering terrorism.

MALAYSIA'S AMBASSADOR VISITS IMCTC



On Tuesday, August 22, 2023, H.E. the Malaysian Ambassador, Datuk Wan Zaidi Wan Abdullah, and his accompanying delegation visited the Islamic Military Counter-Terrorism Coalition (IMCTC) and were received by Maj. Gen. Mohammed bin Saeed Al-Moghedi, IMCTC Secretary-General. The visiting delegation was briefed on IMCTC's activities and domains of work. The meeting discussed issues related to countering terrorism and extremism and ways to enhance joint cooperation between IMCTC and the State of Malaysia in counter-terrorism domains. H.E. the Malaysian Ambassador commended the pioneering role played by IMCTC in eliminating the scourge of terrorism.

TANZANIAN AMBASSADOR VISITS IMCTC



On Wednesday, August 16, 2023, Maj. Gen. Mohammed bin Saeed Al-Moghedi, the Secretary-General of the Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition (IMCTC), received H.E. the Ambassador of the United Republic of Tanzania to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Ali Jabir Mwadini, and his accompanying delegation. His Excellency was briefed on IMCTC's activities. IMCTC Secretary-General explained to the visiting delegation that IMCTC's role constitutes an integrated system that seeks to enhance cooperation between Member States. He further indicated that this role is based on the values of legitimacy, independence, coordination, and engagement, and that IMCTC seeks to ensure that all counter-terrorism actions and efforts exerted by IMCTC Member States are compatible with international laws, regulations, and customs.

INDEPENDENCE DAY OF THE REPUBLIC OF CÔTE D'IVOIRE



On Monday, August 7, 2023, Cpt. Moussa Soumahoro, the delegate of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire to the Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition (IMCTC) held a ceremony marking the Independence Day of his country. The ceremony was attended by Maj. Gen. Mohammed bin Saeed Al-Moghedi, IMCTC Secretary-General, delegates of Member States, and IMCTC personnel. On this occasion, Cpt. Soumahoro gave a speech in which he stated the following:

“On this particular day, we meet to celebrate the 63rd anniversary of the independence of Côte d'Ivoire, which coincided with August 7, 1960. The late Félix Houphouët-Boigny, the first president of the Republic, officially announced its liberation from colonial rule. On this historic occasion, we would like to commemorate the glorious heroes of Côte d'Ivoire, and all figures who contributed directly or indirectly to the country's acquisition of national sovereignty. Today, Côte d'Ivoire's march is led by Dr. Alassane Dramane Ouattara. After the death of the first President Houphouët-Boigny, Côte d'Ivoire was ruled by the following Presidents respectively: Henri Konan Bédié, the late General Guy Robert, and Laurent Gbagbo.”

Cpt. Soumahoro also offered his deepest thanks to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and to HRH Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Crown Prince and Prime Minister, for accepting Côte d'Ivoire's membership to IMCTC. He also extended his thanks to Maj. Gen. Mohammed bin Saeed Al-Moghedi, IMCTC Secretary-General, and all IMCTC personnel for the tireless efforts they have been making on a daily basis for the comfort of the delegates of Member States.

Soumahoro then added:

“The scourge of terrorism has affected all the peoples of the world. No nation is permanently immune or protected from terrorist threats and activities. Côte d'Ivoire has gone through this bitter experience; therefore, its government has commended the establishment of IMCTC, and its support to Côte d'Ivoire in fighting terrorism, as it has ratified a number of international treaties and agreements related to countering terrorism. Côte d'Ivoire did even better, as in 2019, it established the International Counter-Terrorism Academy, inspired

by IMCTC model. This Academy performs a dual mission:

1. Providing expertise to defense executives, administrative staff of governorates, internal security, justice, police, and relief personnel involved in countering terrorism; and
2. Serving as a training camp for intervention units, by training specialized counter-terrorism units to live in conditions as close to reality as possible.

Côte d'Ivoire has also engaged in some missions launched by the United Nations. For example, it has sent soldiers to Mali, the Central African Republic, and Haiti.

Côte d'Ivoire is a hospitable country with distinctive features, as non-citizens constitute more than 22% of its population. Such a high rate of foreigners has resulted from the open immigration policy adopted by the country. The late President Félix Houphouët-Boigny always declared, “Our country, Côte d'Ivoire, is a friend of all countries and an enemy of none.” Even our national anthem praises the value of our hospitality, as we are one of the most hospitable countries in the world.

Côte d'Ivoire and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia enjoy a strong and wonderful relationship. As evidence to this relationship, while I am now delivering this speech, a city is being built in my country consisting of 144 buildings. Each building is composed of seven floors and a ground floor and contains 4,464 apartments. The whole project is financed by Saudi and Ivorian economic operators, and will be called Riyadh city, to emphasize the close relations between our two countries.”

At the end of the ceremony, Soumahoro showed a documentary about his country.

■ Overview of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire

System of Government: A republican country with a multi-party presidential system since 1960.

Capital: Yamoussoukro.

Independence: Côte d'Ivoire gained independence from France on August 7, 1960.



Currency: West African CFA franc

Official Language: French

President: Alassane Ouattara

Prime Minister: Daniel Duncan

Area: 322,460 km²

Geographical Location: The Republic of Côte d'Ivoire is located in western Africa, on the coast of the Atlantic Ocean, and is bordered to the north by Burkina Faso and Mali, to the west by Guinea and Liberia, to the south by the Gulf of Guinea, and to the east by Ghana.

Flag: The flag of Côte d'Ivoire consists of three vertical stripes: orange, on the side of the flagpole, followed by white, and then green. It is similar to the Irish flag, but the latter is longer, and its colors are reversed in order, with green on the side of the flagpole, followed by white, and then orange. It is also similar to the Italian flag, with the green stripe on the side of the flagpole, followed by white, and then red.

Climate: The coastal region of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire is characterized by a tropical, hot, and very humid climate. The climate is semi-arid in the far north part of the country. In general, Côte d'Ivoire has three climatic seasons: warm and dry, from November to March; dry hot, from March to May; and hot and humid, from June to October.

■ Natural Resources

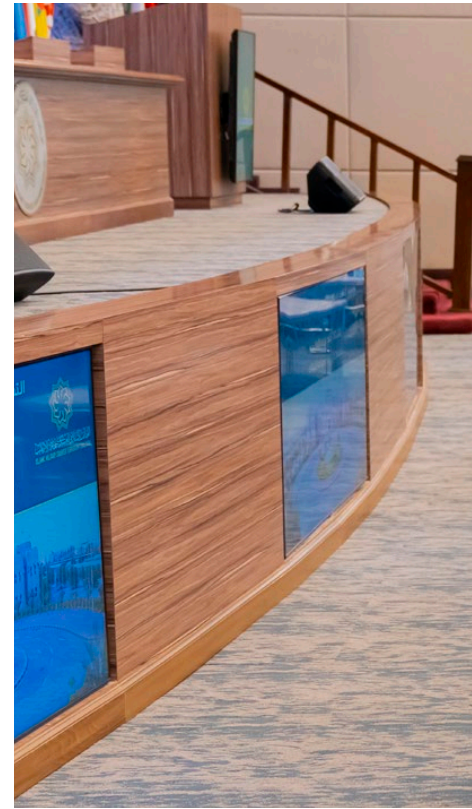
The major natural resources of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire comprise oil, natural gas, diamonds, manganese, iron ore, cobalt, bauxite, copper, gold, nickel, tantalum, silica, clay, cocoa, coffee, palm oil, and hydropower. Many of these resources are precious and expensive, such as diamonds, gold, oil, gas, nickel, copper, manganese, cobalt, and the like.

Agriculture: Côte d'Ivoire is among the world's largest producers and exporters of coffee, cocoa beans, and palm oil. Therefore, the economy is extremely sensitive to any fluctuations in the international prices of these products and to weather conditions. Despite the government's attempts to diversify the economy, it

remains mainly dependent on agriculture and its related activities.

Tourism: Côte d'Ivoire is one of the richest countries in West Africa; it is an exciting tourist destination for explorers. It comprises rainforests that pour their water on vast plantations of cocoa and bananas, and beautiful beach resorts. Its national parks and nature reserves offer wonderful wildlife, and some of these places are included in UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Côte d'Ivoire also offers enjoyable tours to important tourist attractions such as Zigurat, the concrete La Pyramide, St. Paul's Cathedral, the Great Mosque, and the unique French historical attractions.





DATA MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE: WORKSHOP HELD AT IMCTC

On Tuesday, August 15, 2023, the Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition (IMCTC) held a workshop entitled “Data Management and Governance,” in collaboration with the Center of Excellence in Information Assurance (CoEIA) at King Saud University. This workshop has been part of the efforts made to achieve IMCTC objectives and principles and to support all effective measures taken to enhance prevention, detection, and elimination of terrorist operations through coordination of consultations, development of protection methods, and support of cybersecurity. The workshop was conducted by Mr. Ahmed Al-Oraij, a specialist in the field of technological leadership, and was attended by IMCTC Secretary-General and the delegates of Member States.

Al-Oraij discussed the essential concepts of data and information. He also touched on data as an asset of any establishment and the principles of its management. He then moved to discuss the challenges of data management and the strategy of such management.

Al-Oraij then elaborated on the data management frameworks, DAMA, and DMBOK theory. He described data management as a set of plans, policies, programs and practices for development, implementation, and supervision to ensure control, connection, protection, and improvement of the value of data and information as assets of establishments throughout their respective life cycle.

Al-Oraij defined a data professional as any person who works with any aspect of data and its management, including the technical aspect related to use and improvement. He then highlighted a set of data management principles and objectives, which include

supporting knowledge of the requirements and service elements of any establishment, namely customers, employees, and business partners.

Al-Oraij also highlighted essential concepts in data fields and explained that all types of data can be participatory, analyzable, and usable to create benefit and improve performance. Data can also influence decisions through technology. The rapid progress in technology has coincided with the expansion of human needs, which in turn led to an increase in the speed of production, control, and deep research of data and its impact.

Moving to data management challenges, Al-Oraij explained that several factors make data look like assets which are different from other intangible and sustainable assets. Data cannot be created or destroyed, but its value can only change with the passage of time. Data is also easy to copy and move, and because of its importance, it must be managed very carefully to avoid any loss of value.

Al-Oraij also discussed data quality, explaining that it requires various forms of planning, starting with the establishment’s awareness of controlling data acquisition, which requires thinking at the level of systems. Likewise, planning for better data also requires strategic standards for structuring, modeling, and other functions of design and strategic collaboration between the two fields of business and IT leadership.

Discussing the life cycle of data, Al-Oraij added that it begins with creation, then storage and release, followed by utilization, improvement, and planning, then by design and launch, and so on. He also highlighted several types of data and stated that



each type has a special life cycle, including data challenges, risk management, and technology. He explained that effective data management requires strong leadership and high commitment. He then illustrated the data management strategy and framework for action.

In this workshop, Al-Oraij reviewed many models, including the Strategic Balance model, the Amsterdam Information Model, and the DAMA Framework, and concluded his workshop with an

account of the types of Data-Information-Knowledge-Wisdom (DIKW) hierarchy, or pyramid, for data management.

At the end of the workshop, IMCTC Secretary-General, Maj. Gen. Mohammed bin Saeed Al-Moghedi, asserted that data is a valuable asset in decision making and support. He added that data governance should be taken for granted as a guarantee to ensure the safety and quality of professional outputs in order to achieve IMCTC strategic objectives.





PAKISTAN INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATED



On Monday, August 14, 2023, Lt. Col. Muhammad Farooq, the delegate of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to the Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition (IMCTC), held a ceremony marking the 76th Independence Day of his country. The ceremony was attended by Maj. Gen. Mohammed bin Saeed Al-Moghedi, IMCTC Secretary-General, delegates of Member States and IMCTC employees. On this occasion, Lt. Col. Muhammad Farooq delivered a speech starting with an expression of gratitude for being given the opportunity to celebrate the anniversary of the independence of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan at IMCTC headquarters. IMCTC constitutes an edifice that embodies the unity of its Member States in the face of the multidimensional counter-terrorism challenges.

Farooq said that freedom is taken for granted as a great blessing bestowed by Allah on all people. The Islamic Republic of Pakistan is particularly endowed with an exceptionally beautiful nature, rich cultural values, and strong determination. It is the land of purity and dreams where every new day represents a new beginning on the paths of life. Allama Muhammad Iqbal, also known as the "Poet of the East," presented his vision of an Islamic state with a unique character based on the two-state theory. This vision indicated the idiosyncratic differences between Muslims and Hindus. Each race had different customs, religion, traditions, and social and moral values, thus necessitating the establishment of an independent homeland for Muslims. The Great Leader Muhammad Ali Jinnah turned this vision into reality and the Pakistani people made huge sacrifices for the sake of freedom. In this way, Pakistan came into existence on the 27th of the blessed month of Ramadan 1366H (corresponding to August 14, 1947). The name "Pakistan" in Urdu means "the land of the pure"; the first part of the word (paki-) denotes "pure" and the second part (-stan) denotes "land/country"; i.e. the land of the pure. The national flag of Pakistan stands for the concept of religious freedom, as the green color symbolizes Muslims, the vast majority of the population of the Republic of Pakistan. Pakistan is a democratic country with a federal parliament that derives its legislative powers from a parliament consisting of two chambers: the National Assembly (Lower House) and the Senate, which enjoys higher powers. The executive authority consists of the President of the Republic, the Council of Ministers, which is headed by the Prime Minister, the judiciary, and the Supreme Court.

Geography of Pakistan: Pakistan has an area of 796,096 km². It is

bordered to the north by the People's Republic of China, to the west by Afghanistan and Iran, to the south by the Arabian Sea, and to the east by the Republic of India and the Line of Control located in the disputed Kashmir region. Pakistan consists of four provinces: Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan and Khyber (Pakhtunkhwa), along with the federally administered Gilgit-Baltistan and the autonomous state of Azad Jammu and Kashmir. This is a reminder to the United Nations to hold an independent referendum based on the UN Security Council Resolution. Islamabad is the capital of the Republic of Pakistan, and other major cities include Lahore, Rawalpindi, Peshawar, Quetta, and Karachi. Northern Pakistan is characterized by the three highest mountain ranges in the world: the Himalayas, the Karakoram, and the Hindu Kush. These mountain ranges meet in the northern part of Pakistan in a breathtaking landscape. This region also has the world's second highest peak, namely the K2 Mountain. This region includes one of the world's highest plateaus plains known as Deosai, which reaches an altitude of more than 4,000 meters. To make things clearer, Farooq gave an example of the height of Jabal Sawda in the Saudi city of Abha, which amounts to 3,133 meters. On the other hand, Pakistanis play polo in the Gilgit Heights at an altitude of more than 3,700 meters. "The Shindur Polo Ground is the highest in the world." The Katpana desert in the Gilgit-Baltistan region is known as the highest cold desert in the world. Central Pakistan mostly consists of vast, highly fertile plains called "Pakistan's food basket", where a large part of the population lives. The highlands of Balochistan, rich in mineral resources, are located to the west of the country. In southeast Pakistan are situated the deserts of Thar and Cholistan, the home of the jeep racing rally. The coast located on the Arabian Sea is characterized by its amazing beaches in terms of their width and beauty, not only in their external appearance, but also in their formation, as these beaches are marked by their pure blue waters and bright white sand.

Climate of Pakistan: The climate in Pakistan is divided into five seasons, namely summer, winter, spring, rainfall, and monsoons; the country has a dry, semi-tropical continental climate.

Population of Pakistan: With a population of 231 million people, the Republic of Pakistan is the sixth largest country in the world in terms of population. 96% of its people are Muslims while other religions include Christianity, Hinduism, and Sikhism whose followers enjoy religious freedom under the constitution.



Language and Culture of Pakistan: Urdu is the most spoken national language in Pakistan. English and Urdu are the two official languages of the country. There is a great deal of affinity between the dialects of Urdu and the Arabic language. As far as culture is concerned, Pakistan combines several differences and varieties where modernity and traditions coexist side by side. On the one hand, the country endeavors to reduce poverty and, on the other hand, exerts every possible effort to achieve development and prosperity. These varieties and differences endow the Pakistani society with a sense of distinction and vitality. The fashion industry in Pakistan has witnessed an amazing development over the past two decades. Several festivals are held in the country, including Eid al-Fitr (following the fasting month of Ramadan) and Eid al-Adha (Feast of Sacrifice), as well as horse and cattle shows, and the Shandur polo festival. The country also witnesses religious ceremonies held by Hindu and Christian citizens. Pakistan is also home to one of the oldest civilizations in the world, namely the Indus Valley Civilization. Pakistan produces 70% of the world's soccer balls used in the World Cup. Pakistan has the second largest salt mines in the world. The Karakoram Highway, which connects Pakistan and China, is the highest paved road in the world and is referred to as the "Eighth Wonder of the World."

Agriculture and Industry in Pakistan: The two main food crops in Pakistan are wheat and rice. Pakistani cuisine is characterized by delicious and spicy flavors, in its three categories: hot, hotter, and hottest (depending on the quantity and quality of spices used). Pakistan has a rich and diverse history in the practice of traditional handicrafts throughout the ages. Each city has its own specialty in handicrafts, ranging from weaving, embroidery, and jewelry. These crafts include ceramic works, blue pottery, carpets, leather shoes for men and women, pashmina and women's shawls, embroidered drawings on trucks, and wood and copper carvings.

Prominent Figures in Pakistani History: Among the prominent figures in Pakistani history is Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan, who is considered the father of Pakistan's nuclear weapons program. Abdul Sattar Edhi is the most famous philanthropist in Pakistan, called the richest poor, who runs the world's largest volunteer ambulance service. Benazir Bhutto was the first woman to head the government of an Islamic country. Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan entered the Guinness Book of World Records for his Qawwali music, a type

of Sufi music, with more than 125 albums. Imran Khan, the former Prime Minister, led the Pakistani cricket squad to win the World Cup in 1992. Dr. Abdus Salam was awarded the 1979 Nobel Prize in Physics. Arfa Karim holds the Guinness World Record for being, at nine years old, the first youngest Microsoft Certified Professional. However, another Pakistani named Arish Fatima later set a new world record by being, at four years old, the youngest Microsoft Certified Professional. Aitzaz Hasan Bangash, from the Pakistani Province Khyber, confronted a suicide bomber and thwarted the detonation of his explosive belt, saving the lives of two hundred children. Malala Yousafzai became the youngest person to win the Nobel Prize. Shoaib Akhtar holds the world record for the fastest bowler in the history of cricket. Jahangir Khan also holds the world record for winning the World Open Squash Championships 6 times, with 555 consecutive international wins.

Aspects of Military Power in Pakistan: Pakistan's armed forces are the sixth largest in the world with 653,000 active-duty soldiers, aiming to "consolidate peace at home and have a peaceful coexistence with our neighbors and the outside world". Women have been an integral part of the military forces since 1947. As far as the army and police are concerned, Pakistan produces main battle tanks, such as the Al-Khalid and Al-Zarrar, and several armored personnel carriers that have entered active service over the past two decades. As for the navy, Pakistan produces submarines, in cooperation with China, as well as gunboats and frigates. In the field of air forces, Pakistan is proud to produce the JF-17 fighter, as well as training aircraft and drones.

Pakistan is one of the countries affected by terrorism, especially by the global war on terrorism. In addition to economic losses amounting to approximately US\$180 billion, 70,000 Pakistani citizens lost their lives. Terrorism has also affected exports, foreign investment, privatization programs and education, thus causing great damage to economic growth.

"August 14th is a day teeming with memories of the long struggle of our ancestors and the relentless efforts of the Great Leader. Our country is currently encountering great challenges on the social, economic, security and governance levels, but we are confident that these challenges will be transformed into opportunities." At the conclusion of his speech, Farouq showed a documentary film about the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

CYBER-TERRORISM

Dr. Mansour bin Saeed Al-Qarni

A researcher interested in issues of violent extremism, rehabilitation, and integration.

The virtual world is an online computer-based community environment, which includes information, software, systems, and applications. It is described as “virtual” because this environment and everything that people record in and through such media is not real, but only virtual.

In the past, people used to employ hard and solid tools, such as sticks and stones, then they moved into using cold and light weapons. Then followed assassinations and arson attacks, and later acts of destruction, using all kinds of weapons, both light and heavy. Finally, bombs and missiles, and even drones, have been used, as well as other weapons that may appear in the future. In the past two decades of this century, a new type of terrorism appeared, whether side by side with hard terrorism or in isolation from its traditional counterpart. Since its inception, this new terrorism, especially the type directed against governments, has occupied the forefront in terrorist action due to its strong influence and consequences on its targets. Its spread goes back as well to its limited risk to terrorist actors and its low financial and human costs.

Cyber-space terrorism is a new term and approach that has gained a prominent position in recent times. This approach has materialized on the ground, particularly after using modern technologies in the field of violent extremism, and has been used by violent extremist organizations. Based on the nature of their existence, their practices, and their potential for continuity, these terrorist organizations always adopt flexibility and adapt to reality. Every time and place has its own nature in terms of terrorist ideology and behavior. This flexibility gives these organizations a proactive opportunity to outwit law enforcement agencies, thus making the security operations initiated by these agencies only reactive, not proactive.

An investigation of violent extremism would indicate the ingenuity of terrorist minds in creating means and methods to achieve their goals, namely intimidation and terror. Therefore, the methods used by these organizations differ according to their objectives, their organizational ideologies, and also to the perpetrators of their operations. However, this type of terrorism adopts all means and methods, or approaches, through which the violent extremism

system can be implemented, starting with symbols, gestures, and words, all the way to violent action. The new means and methods of cyber-space technology, such as the Internet and social media, now produce the same effects that used to be achieved by traditional means of violent extremism. They serve to terrorize and intimidate the targeted communities, spread violent ideology and hate speech, incite people to violence, and even instigate destruction and sabotage, since these strategies have been adopted by violent extremist organizations. Indeed, some organizations, such as ISIS, strongly advocated these strategies as a result of the security strikes to which ISIS was subject and the killing of its leader Al-Baghdadi in a dawn operation on Sunday, October 27, 2019. This strategy was later manifested in ISIS calling itself the “electronic” or “digital” caliphate. Worthy of note is that ISIS began to adopt a soft approach to terrorist behavior from an early stage. In 2014, ISIS strongly set foot on social platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube to maintain its presence and communicate with its followers.

In light of the foregoing, it has become extremely important to investigate and monitor this terrorist approach, and even to fight its organizations relentlessly through the same digital media. Many countries are now seeking to achieve these goals, either through proactive action, or by way of technical, ideological and security solutions.

The Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition (IMCTC) has become aware of the threat of this virtual type of terrorism and has focused its attention on its fight. It has also taken actual steps that are consistent with its counter-terrorism objectives, particularly through activities, events, and initiatives. It has employed several methods such as dissecting this phenomenon and monitoring its development, as well as building capabilities that can address its impacts. IMCTC’s aim has been to reduce and neutralize the information threat of this type of terrorism at the level of its Member States in particular and the international community in general. This could be done through information cooperation and exchange of experiences with counterpart agencies, bodies, and organizations.

IMCTC LAUNCHES UNIFIED DIGITAL PLATFORM



On Wednesday, August 9, 2023, Maj. Gen. Mohammed bin Saeed Al-Moghedi, the Secretary-General of the Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition (IMCTC), launched the secure digital transformation plan and the unified digital platform, mainly concerned with safe and secure digital automation in cyberspace. The inauguration ceremony was presented by Mr. Ali bin Saleh Al-Shaneef, the Director of IMCTC Department of Information Technology. Al-Shaneef indicated that secure digital transformation includes application of innovative procedures and policies to protect sensitive data and information from cyber threats. He also emphasized that the unified digital platform is a technological infrastructure that aims to provide a unified system for various digital services. It also allows the integration of data and information

from various sources and provides a unified interface for users to access various digital services, such as e-government and logistical, technical, and administrative services. It also comprises other services intended to ensure simplification of access and interaction with digital services, improve operational efficiency, reduce costs, and enhance interaction and communication between departments and service providers.

At the conclusion of the inauguration ceremony, IMCTC Secretary General pointed out that the secure digital transformation plan and the unified digital platform is an initiative aimed at promoting digital transformation at IMCTC. This plan aims to promote the safe and effective use of digital technology and to improve integration between various digital systems and services.



63RD INDEPENDENCE DAY OF THE REPUBLIC OF GABON



On Thursday, August 17, 2023, Col. Jean-Baptiste Maviri, the delegate of the Republic of Gabon to the Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition (IMCTC), held a ceremony marking the 63rd Independence Day of his country. The ceremony was attended by Maj. Gen. Mohammed bin Saeed Al-Moghedi, IMCTC Secretary-General, delegates of Member States, and IMCTC employees. On this occasion, Col. Maviri began his speech by expressing utmost gratitude and appreciation to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. He specifically offered thanks to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, HRH Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Crown Prince and Prime Minister, and HRH Prince Khalid bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, the Minister of Defense and Chairman of IMCTC Defense Ministers Council, as well as H.E. IMCTC Secretary-General, for the good reception and exceptional hospitality that he received since his arrival in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. On this particular day, the Republic of Gabon celebrates the 63rd anniversary of its accession to international sovereignty. It is a special day in the collective human consciousness, serving as a reminder of all the efforts and sacrifices made by the founding fathers of the country throughout their struggle for freedom and dignity. It also marks their ability to establish and enforce the legitimate and legal foundations for the rise of the nation of Gabon, which boasts of its capacity to overcome the exceptional circumstances of its history with courage despite all hardships.

Gabon is a tropical country, entirely located at the horn of the Gulf of Guinea and endowed with great natural resources. Its total area is 267,667 km². Gabon is seeking with confidence and conviction to ensure a better future for its people thanks to a combination of rapid economic growth, governance, and trade centered on diversifying sources of production and sustainable development. These components are strongly connected to dynamism, patriotism, societal approach, and a sense of duty and pragmatism. The country is also seeking to strengthen the professional and intellectual capabilities of the national elite without any gender discrimination. International experts described 2022 as an

extremely difficult year around the world. This year was teeming with terrorist attacks and violent extremism. Indeed, no continent today is safe from terrorism. The harbingers of terrorism are gradually expanding with the influx of militants, funding, and weapons from one region to another. Therefore, transnational crime has become a serious and influential issue, and it is greatly aggravating on a continuous basis. Every day we witness new alliances aimed at giving rise to highly organized terrorist groups, and the digital world is becoming more and more complicated. This atmosphere would create a global platform for disseminating violent ideologies on a larger scale and for reviving terrorist and extremist operations, thus spreading a strong wave of violent destruction, loss of life, mass population displacement, misery, and destitution everywhere on earth. Illicit and illegal exploitation of natural resources, drug trafficking, trafficking in persons and abduction for ransom are now major sources of financing for terrorist networks. In this way, terrorism and violent extremism are dividing the world and spreading fear and terror.

Fortunately, the war against this cross-border epidemic of terrorism has brought world countries closer together in a real battle lying at the heart of the efforts that IMCTC continues to make. These efforts are ultimately and relentlessly in line with IMCTC strategic vision, which aims to protect the essential traditional achievements and ensure population security and world peace. Moreover, out of their conviction in IMCTC mission in the current context of multidimensional cooperation to enhance military capabilities, the supreme Gabonese authorities have asserted their full readiness to enforce the memorandum of global ratification and coordination drawn up to wage the fiercest war against terrorism and violent extremism, each of which feeds the other on a daily basis. Gabon calls for a four-dimensional approach centered around the level of “zero” tolerance with violent extremism, strict respect for international law, clear support for joint bilateral action, and exchange of common interests free from any polarization. The response to terrorism must also be coherent, effective, and historic, noting that other challenges remain to be



addressed, namely humanitarian crises, natural disasters, and the consequences of climate change. These are realistic factors that may, in the future, constitute added value for motivating terrorist organizations.

At the conclusion of his speech, Col. Maviri showed a video highlighting the beautiful and color-rich natural scenes of a few Gabonese legendary sites.

■ Overview of the Republic of Gabon

Geographical Location: The Republic of Gabon is located in West-Central Africa on the coast of the Atlantic Ocean in the Gulf of Guinea. It is also located at the Equator and is bordered by the Republic of Equatorial Guinea and the Republic of Cameroon to the north, the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the east, and the Atlantic Ocean to the west; the sea coast of Gabon extends for 800 kilometers along the Atlantic Ocean.

Capital: Libreville

Official Language: French

Area: 267,667 km²

Population: The population of Gabon is estimated at 2.5 million people and is characterized by its ethnic diversity. This population was formed throughout history from the mixing of Indigenous people with the African Bantu ethnicity through successive historical migrations.

Climate: Gabon has a moist, hot climate of tropical regions; the rainy season lasts for nine months (October to June), while the dry season extends for three months (July to September). Average temperatures range from 21°C in the southwest of the country to 27°C on the coast and inland. Minimum and maximum temperatures range from 18 to 36 degrees Celsius. The average rainfall ranges from 1,500 mm in the northeast and savanna areas to 3,300 mm in the northwest and southwest.

Economy: The Gabonese economy is dependent on oil, gas, tax revenues and exports.

Currency: CFA franc.

Religions: The Republic of Gabon stands on an equal footing in dealing with all people without any discrimination on the basis of religion. The population is distributed according to religion as follows: 76.5% are Christians; 12% are Muslims; and 6% follow traditional local religions. The Republic of Gabon has a large Muslim community spread throughout the country, and its members are characterized by their vitality and activity as well as their major contribution to the growth and development of the country. Muslims in Gabon enjoy mutual respect and equality among citizens; they maintain fraternal relations and peaceful coexistence with people from all religious beliefs.

Tourism: Since September 4, 2002, Gabon has established a network of 13 national parks covering 12% of its national territory. Two of these sites have been classified as UNESCO World Heritage Sites.



WORKSHOP ON CREATING MILITARY CONCEPTS TO COUNTER TERRORISM



On Monday, August 28, 2023, the Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition (IMCTC) held a workshop entitled “Creation of Military Concepts for Counterterrorism” delivered and moderated by Col. Ali Mohamed Mahmood Mohamed, the Kingdom of Bahrain’s delegate to IMCTC. The workshop was attended by the Delegates of Member States and IMCTC Secretary General, Maj. Gen. Mohammed bin Saeed Al-Moghedi.

Col. Ali Mohamed addressed the definition of military concepts, their importance, their objectives, and the elements for which they have been established. He also elaborated on how military concepts of an international character are devised in accordance with the legal frameworks related to the sovereignty of each individual country. He further added that the goals of creating military concepts include, among others, the sciences and knowledge required to explain how to use military force in conflicts and the general framework for conducting military operations at all levels, in addition to explaining the constants and variables prevailing in wars and conflicts and assisting to create common ground when working through coalitions and alliances.

Col. Ali Mohamed said that terrorism is not a new phenomenon, but it has certainly developed and changed to such an extent that it can be considered a mobile phenomenon. During the 1970s, this phenomenon used to irritate politicians and security personnel in Europe when the continent was subjected to attacks by right- and left-wing extremists alike, especially in Greece, Italy, and Spain. The United States, on the other hand, did not show any serious concern towards this phenomenon at the time. However, when the United States was engulfed by the fire of terrorism, starting with the 1995 Oklahoma bombing, it began to push countries to pay attention to the importance and necessity of fighting and eliminating terrorism. As the disputed proverb says, “Necessity is the mother of invention.” Since the war on terrorism has become an urgent need, it is necessary to develop military techniques suitable for addressing the danger and threat and for handling and overcoming terrorist activities. These methods will serve as guidelines and general frameworks to define the broad lines, general activities, and appropriate weapons required to eliminate this phenomenon.

Col. Ali Mohamed added that these techniques are devised



in accordance with the nature of the risk or threat and the strategic environment. He highlighted a general model serving as an introduction to the development of this military concept in countering terrorism and violent extremism. He introduced this model after studying history, delving into military theories, making use of experiences, and finally through actual practice.

In his definition of this concept, Col. Ali Mohamed quoted General Rommel, known as the Desert Fox, who was reported to have said, "In the absence of orders, go find something and kill it." This saying shows the ugly face of war in the absence of guidelines and governing principles. On the other hand, the military leader and philosopher Sun Tzu said: "Victorious warriors win first and then go to war, while defeated warriors go to war first and then seek to win." This saying stresses the importance of having a military doctrine in planning to win battles.

Definitions of military doctrine, as it is called in English, vary, but most modern military schools agree on an almost unified concept that can be summarized in brief words. It is a guideline on how to use military force to achieve a specific objective or objectives. A military doctrine cannot be understood and built up without understanding and being aware of two particularly important terms: policy and strategy. Policy can be defined as a directive or educational guide that specifies the goal to be achieved. Strategy, on the other hand, is defined as broad lines that define how operations are implemented to achieve national policy goals.

Military doctrine refers to specific activities that contribute to the achievement of military objectives set by and derived from the objectives of national strategy and policy. It is defined by the Rand Corporation as a fundamental set of principles that guides military forces as they pursue national security objectives. The American Modern War Institute agrees with the previous definition and describes military doctrine as a set of ideas that determines how to use military force in combat and as a general framework that helps leaders to achieve military objectives.

"Terrorism is a specter that only lives in the dark."

The workshop moderated by Col. Ali Mohamed addressed terrorism and ways for its confrontation. It explained that there is an urgent need to build military concepts for countering terrorism based on strategic constants and geopolitical variables. These concepts are updated on a periodical basis to ensure their consistency with new events. They can be devised and developed by studying the strategic level related to countering terrorism at IMCTC. They can be formulated as follows: Comprehensive concepts for IMCTC domains of work aimed at countering violent extremist ideology, depriving this ideology of financial support in all its forms, seeking to neutralize its media activities by raising the level of public awareness of the threat of extremism, and finally by providing military support under international law to the legitimate authorities of Member States to assist these states in their war against violent extremism and its criminal activities. These methods can be outlined in the following word couples: "ideological challenge; financial deprivation; media neutralization; and military support." Through these common strategic concepts, each domain separately builds and develops its procedures at the executive and tactical levels in accordance with the available resources and in line with international laws, customs, and prevailing values.

At the end of the workshop, IMCTC Secretary-General stressed the importance of creating and developing military concepts for countering terrorism based on several reasons, most notably the different nature of the conflict and threat. Religious and ideological extremists cannot be compared to traditional enemies, which simply took the form of specific states, armies, or geographical areas. The Secretary-General pointed out that the methods of fighting terrorist groups are different from those followed in traditional wars. He also added that violent extremist groups and organizations do not recognize the international laws governing war, and that creating military concepts in this regard has a crucial dimension in standardizing international approaches in the various counter-terrorism domains, in accordance with the policy, sovereignty and legal matters of each country.



National Day of Malaysia 66



On Thursday, August 31, 2023, delegates of Malaysia to the Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition (IMCTC) held a ceremony marking the 66th Independence Day of their country. The ceremony was attended by Maj. Gen. Mohammed bin Saeed Al-Moghedi, IMCTC Secretary-General, delegates of Member States, and IMCTC employees. On this particular day of each year, the Malaysian people celebrate the anniversary of their country's independence. Lt. Col. Ahmad Ermi Fakri Bin Harris Fadhilah, the delegate of Malaysia to IMCTC, stressed the importance of this day for the Malaysian people. He also highlighted the vital role of IMCTC, as it is aimed at countering terrorism that threatens all world countries. He further commended the approach used by IMCTC in countering terrorism and emphasized its beneficial to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Lt. Col. Ahmad Fadhilah pointed out that August 31, 1957, is an immortal day, as it marked the end of British rule in Malaysia after more than a hundred years of colonialism. The Declaration of Independence – or “Merdeka” in Malay – proclaimed by Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra AL-Haj, the first chief minister of the Federation of Malaya, became the starting date for an independent and sovereign nation. On the occasion of this Independence Day, Malaysia is still known as the Federation of Malaya. On September

16, 1963, Singapore and two other states on the island of Borneo, namely Sabah and Sarawak, joined the Federation of Malaya, which gave rise to the federal state of Malaysia, as it is known today.

In his speech, Malaysia's delegate asserted that the threat of terrorism has become a challenging problem confronting the world, including Malaysia. Although the situation in Malaysia is almost under control, as the last terrorist bombing occurred in 2016, the possibility of new attacks cannot be excluded.

At the end of his speech, the delegate of Malaysia expressed his deep gratitude to his country's international friends, especially to IMCTC Member States, for their support and assistance to Malaysia in curbing terrorist threats.

■ Overview of Malaysia

Malaysia is located in Southeast Asia and is made up of thirteen states and three federal territories, with a total area of 329,845 km². Its capital is Kuala Lumpur, while the seat of the federal government is in Putrajaya. The population of Malaysia has amounted to more than 34,376,592 people in 2023. Malaysia is divided into two parts separated by the South China Sea: Peninsular Malaysia and Malaysian Borneo (also known as East Malaysia).





Malaysia is bordered by Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore, and Brunei. Malaysia is located near the equator and has a tropical climate.

Malaysia is ruled by a king, who is elected by nine states, while the government is headed by a prime minister. Malaysia was controlled by the United Kingdom in the form of colonies until the end of the 18th century. However, Malaysia has recently witnessed an economic boom and has undergone rapid developments due to being bordered by the Strait of Malacca, which is an important sea route in international navigation, and international trade is an essential part of its economy. Industry is one of the main sectors of the country's economy. Malaysia has also joined the Group of Eight Developing Islamic Countries (D-8). The currency used in Malaysia is the Malaysian ringgit. Malaysia is a federal constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary and democratic system of government.

Malaysia consists of thirteen states, namely as follows:

- Nine states are ruled by nine sultans, including Selangor, Pahang, Terengganu, Kedah, Kelantan, Perak, Johor, Negeri Sembilan and Perlis.
- The other four states are ruled by governors appointed by

the King on the recommendation of the Prime Minister, namely Malacca, Sabah, Sarawak, and Penang.

Culture and Heritage

Malaysia is characterized by a diversity of cultures and heritage due to the different races and religions prevailing in the society. In the celebrations of the Malaysian National Day, each state presents singing shows and folklore dances that are unique to that state.

Components of Malaysian Society

The Malaysian society consists of three main ethnicities:

- **Malay:** These are the Indigenous people of the country and constitute 60% of the total population.
- **Chinese:** These are the people who came from China over hundreds of years for work purposes and stayed in the country. They were considered as part of the Malaysian population under the agreement concluded by the Sultans with Britain as a precondition for Malaysia's independence. They make up 23.7% of the total population.
- **Indians:** Indians constitute 7% of the total population.



IMCTC Delegates Visit Saudi National Museum



On Wednesday, August 2, 2023, a delegation from the Islamic Military Counter-Terrorism Coalition (IMCTC), including delegates of Member States, visited the Saudi National Museum in Riyadh. The delegates were briefed on the contents on display in the Museum. The Saudi National Museum includes eight galleries filled with the spirit of history. In the Man and Universe Gallery, you can learn about the origins of the universe and the solar system, as well as the natural factors that have contributed to its evolution for millions of years. In the Ancient Arab Kingdoms Gallery, you will feel immersed in civilizations that existed from the 4th millennium BC to the 2nd century AD. You can also see the religious and social patterns of life before Islam in the Pre-Islamic Era Gallery. In the Prophet's Mission Gallery, you can learn about the life of Prophet Muhammad, starting with the revelation until his Hijrah (migra-

tion) to Madinah. You can watch a documentary about the history of unification of Saudi Arabia in the Kingdom Unification Gallery. The Hajj and Two Holy Mosques Gallery exhibits the urban development of Masjid Al-Haram and Masjid Al Nabawi. This visit to the Saudi National Museum has been part of the activities of the annual program for IMCTC delegates of Member States, which includes many diverse field visits to exhibitions and museums to learn about and be open to the culture and history of the Headquarter State. It is also part of the cultural activities through which Member States' delegates are informed of the historical development of human beings in the Arabian Peninsula, the journey of Islam, and the birth of a nation. The Museum also offers an account of the rise of the first and second Saudi states, the Kingdom's unification, and Hajj and the Two Holy Mosques.

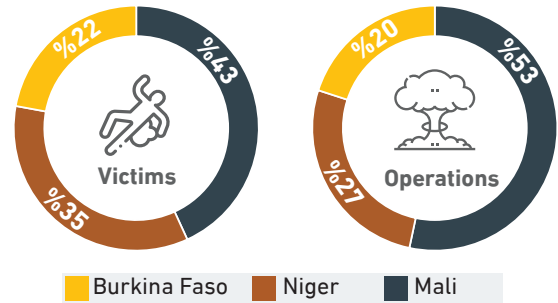


Terrorism in the G5 Sahel Countries during August 2023



During August, the G5 Sahel Countries witnessed an increase by 88%+ in terms of the number of terrorist operations, and a corresponding increase by (116%) in the number of fatalities and wounded, as compared to July 2023.

Country	Terrorist Operations		Victims (deaths and injuries)	
	July 2023	Aug 2023	July 2023	Aug 2023
Mali	1	↑ 8	1	↑ 82
Niger	2	↑ 4	36	↑ 66
Burkina Faso	5	↓ 3	51	↓ 42
Chad	0	= 0	0	= 0
Mauritania	0	= 0	0	= 0
Total	8	↑ 15	88	↑ 190



Sectors targeted by terrorist attacks

	Military Sector	Civilians	Security Sector	Business sector	Non-governmental Organizations	Transport sector
Mali	22 Victims, 2 Operations	51 Victims, 4 Operations	0 Victims, 0 Operations	5 Victims, 1 Operation	4 Victims, 1 Operation	0 Victims, 0 Operations
Burkina Faso	0 Victims, 0 Operations	32 Victims, 1 Operation	9 Victims, 1 Operation	0 Victims, 0 Operations	0 Victims, 0 Operations	1 Victim, 1 Operation
Niger	66 Victims, 4 Operations	0 Victims, 0 Operations	0 Victims, 0 Operations	0 Victims, 0 Operations	0 Victims, 0 Operations	0 Victims, 0 Operations

Impact of terrorist operations according to perpetration method

Explosion	2 Victims, 1 Operation	2 Victims, 1 Operation	Mali
Artillery shelling	5 Victims, 1 Operation	5 Victims, 1 Operation	Mali
Ambush	85 Victims, 6 Operations	56 Victims, 3 Operations (Niger), 20 Victims, 2 Operations (Mali), 9 Victims, 1 Operation (Burkina Faso)	Niger, Mali, Burkina Faso
Armed Attack	98 Victims, 7 Operations	55 Victims, 4 Operations (Mali), 33 Victims, 2 Operations (Burkina Faso), 10 Victims, 1 Operation (Niger)	Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger

Terrorist operations and victims according to perpetrators

Perpetrator	Mali	Niger
Daesh in the Greater Sahara	16 Victims, 1 Operation	12 Victims, 1 Operation
NASRAT AL-ISLAM WA AL-MUSLIMEEN	10 Victims, 3 Operations	10 Victims, 1 Operation

Key Political and Security Developments

- **Burkina Faso:** France has suspended its development aid as well as its financial assistance for the budget to Burkina Faso. These actions were subsequent to announcements by Burkina Faso and Mali that they would consider any military intervention against the new military rulers in Niger as a “declaration of war.”
- **Mali:** The head of the United Nations Peacekeeping Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) has affirmed that the UN will keep its presence in the country to support stabilization efforts, despite the withdrawal of the peacekeeping mission.
- **Niger:** The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has expressed grave concern over the rapid deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Niger, in light of the continuing political

crisis with no clear solution in sight.

- **Chad:** There have been rising fears of an escalating “security deterioration” in Chad, following announcements made by “rebels” that they would take up arms again against the “transitional authority” in Chad. Researchers warned against “escalating confrontations, more violent conflicts and chaos.”
- **Mauritania:** Mauritania rejects “change of power by force” in Niger. The government spokesperson affirmed that the Mauritanian President Mohamed Ould Cheikh El Ghazouani has been in direct contact with the leaders of the G5 Sahel Countries regarding the situation in Niger.

IMCTC SECRETARY-GENERAL HONORS JORDAN'S DELEGATES



The Secretary-General of the Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition (IMCTC) presented IMCTC Decoration to Col. Ahmed Khalef Alsarhen and Col. Radi eid Alsbua, delegates of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, in honor of their efforts during their assignment period at IMCTC that ended on August 8, 2023. This ceremony was held in implementation of the order issued by HRH the Minister of Defense and Chairman of the IMCTC Defense Ministers Council to award IMCTC Decoration to all delegates of Member States at the end of their assignment at IMCTC.

In the same context, Col. Fadi Abdul Karim Al-Ghazawiyih and Col. Mohammed Abdullah Al-Khazaleh, delegates of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, assumed their duties at IMCTC headquarters in place of their colleagues. IMCTC Secretary-General received the new delegates of Jordan and wished them success in performing their duties.



IMCTC Congratulates Member States on their National Days

The Islamic Military Counter-Terrorism Coalition (IMCTC) congratulated the Republic of Benin on the 63rd anniversary of its Independence Day, on August 1, 2023. IMCTC also congratulated the Republic of Niger on the occasion of the 63rd anniversary of its Independence Day, on August 3, 2023. IMCTC further congratulated the Republic of Chad on the occasion of the 63rd anniversary of its Independence Day, on August 11, 2023. IMCTC also congratulated the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan on the occasion of the anniversary of its Independence Day, on August 19, 2023. IMCTC wished these countries and their peoples more security and prosperity. It is customary for countries and their peoples to celebrate their national days since these occasions have a great impact in strengthening loyalty and patriotism.