

**Open briefing of the Counter-Terrorism Committee on
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Thursday, 10 March 2016

*Economic and Social Council Chamber,
United Nations Headquarters, New York*

15:00-18:00

Background note

A. Introduction

1. Within the framework of its efforts to enhance the implementation of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) by Member States and strengthen international cooperation in the fight against terrorism, the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) has become aware of the many judicial challenges faced by regions affected by terrorism. Judges play a key role in implementing counter-terrorism measures and promoting counter-terrorism cooperation within a rule-of-law framework. However, there are few, if any, forums in which they can discuss the challenges they face in this regard and exchange good practices.

2. Formal cooperation among judges is essential in bringing individuals charged with crimes of terrorism to justice and ensuring that the rule of law is upheld throughout the process. CTED works with judges to support their efforts to achieve higher levels of formal cooperation both internationally and regionally

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Justices from Afghanistan, Pakistan (retired), Sri Lanka and the Maldives. The project is funded by the United States.

4. A central component of the project has been the development of a Regional Toolkit to support the effective adjudication of terrorism cases. Judges from the SAARC countries have led the process of formulating the Toolkit and have affirmed the need for a written regional product to improve the handling and management of terrorism cases. The Toolkit addresses

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8. The open briefing will serve to inform Member States about the efforts of the Committee in this area and to raise awareness of the need to support judges in their efforts to adjudicate terrorism cases.
9. The open briefing will consist of two substantive sessions.
10. In the first substantive session, the judges involved in the South Asia process will hold an interactive panel discussion on the *Regional Effort to Support the Judiciaries of South Asia in the Effective Adjudication of Terrorism Cases*, including the formulation and drafting of the Toolkit.
11. In the second session, Supreme Court justices of the Middle East and North Africa who have participated in CTED-supported initiatives will join senior representatives of international organizations engaged on this issue to *Supporting Senior Judicial*. The discussions will focus on the special role and responsibilities of Supreme Court justices with respect to: (i) international judicial cooperation; (ii) oversight mechanisms for specialized terrorism courts or terrorism-related cases; (iii) administration and material support for judicial academies; and (iv) the definition of flexible practices that are responsive to the ever-evolving methods and tactics used to commit terrorist acts.