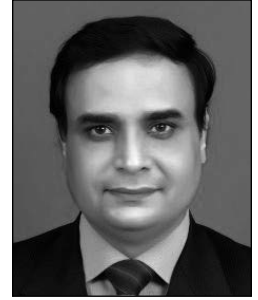


Turkmenistan's Response to Terrorism



MEHMOOD-UL-HASSAN KHAN

Turkmenistan is a peace loving country where writ of the state is enacted. Terrorism is a global menace, a potential threat to human survival and is anti-development whereas Turkmenistan stands for sustainable development. Terrorism spreads destruction whereas Turkmenistan speaks about diplomacy and dialogue. It has a comprehensive policy to counter terrorism.

Turkmenistan stands for the full implementation of the *UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy*. It cooperates with such international agencies as the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, the UN Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia.

UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy

The United Nations General Assembly adopted the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy on 8 September 2006. The strategy is a unique global instrument to enhance national, regional and international efforts to counter terrorism wherein ***Turkmenistan has become epicenter of counter-terrorism policies and implementation mechanism.***

On its part the **President of Turkmenistan H.E. Gurbanguly**



President of Turkmenistan, Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov

Berdimuhamedov is taking all possible measures to coordinate with the United Nations and all other regional as well as international organizations and entities of anti-terrorism. Moreover, Turkmenistan is currently participating in the implementation of the project being implemented by the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force of the UN Counter-Terrorism Center, in cooperation with the UN Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia in Ashgabat with the support of the EU and Norway.

UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres

UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres also appreciated Turkmenistan's efforts to curb incidents of terrorism. He also welcomed the adoption of the "Ashgabat Declaration on Countering Terrorism" by the Central Asian countries, as well as their continued efforts to implement the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and its joint action plan for Central Asia.

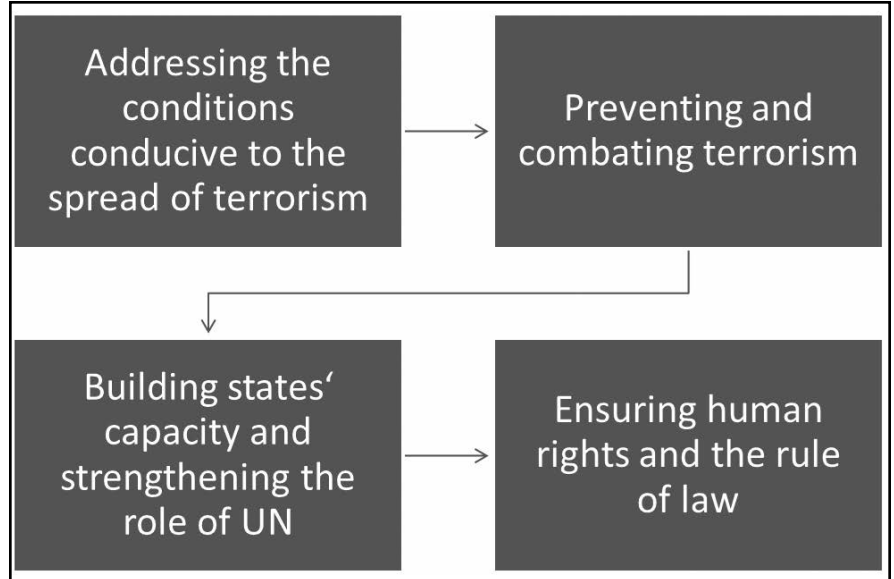
Ashgabat Joint Declaration

(a) Joint Plan of Action

The representatives of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan showed their collective commitment for the further strengthening of the Joint Plan of Action, which was adopted on 30 November 2011.

(b) Condemnation of Terrorism

All the participating countries strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and recognized that the prevention of terrorism is one of the most important components of ensuring national and regional security. They all



also affirmed that terrorism should not be associated with any religion, nationality, culture, civilization or ethnic group.

(c) Important Role of United Nations

All countries welcomed the important role of the United Nations in international counter-terrorism efforts, as well as the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and Security Council with regard to countering terrorism.

(d) United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT)

All countries recognized the valuable support of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT) of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) Office and UNRCCA in the implementation of the Joint Plan of Action, as well as the expertise provided by other international, regional and sub-regional organizations operating in Central Asia.

(e) Further Strengthening of Cooperation with UN

All agreed to further strengthening of cooperation and coordination

with the United Nations and other relevant entities, with a view to ensuring the effective implementation of the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and General Assembly with regard to countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism.

(f) Central Asia: First Region of an integrated and balanced implementation of UN Goals

The representatives of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan noted that Central Asia is the first region where comprehensive, integrated and balanced implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy was started. They will continue to support a balanced implementation of the four pillars of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy through a third phase of this project.

(g) Continued Support of the United Nations

They requested for the continued support of the United Nations, in particular, through its Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, to help the further implementation of the

Joint Plan of Action, by coordinating efforts, helping build capacity, and supporting a platform for regular exchanges of information on progress towards implementation.

(h) Countering of New Threats

All countries intended to exert all necessary efforts to counter new threats identified in the 5th review resolution of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, including the recommendations of the United Nations Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, through promoting dialogue and conflict prevention, addressing the foreign terrorist fighter phenomenon, promoting youth engagement, skills development and employment facilitation, countering terrorist narrative and the misuse of information technology, as well as sharing of information and best practices.

(i) Greater Harmony

They all called for greater coherence by partners, United Nations entities, as well as other regional and international organizations supporting our activities, including through the use of the Matrix of Activities of regional and international organizations in supporting the implementation of the Joint Plan of Action in Central Asia, jointly prepared by CTITF and UNRCCA, to coordinate their work.

(j) Supportive & Collaborative Role of Turkmenistan

All also expressed gratitude to the Government of Turkmenistan for its initiative and warm welcome in hosting the "High-Level United Nations-Central Asia Dialogue on Implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia" in Ashgabat.

The "Ashgabat Joint Declaration" reaffirmed Turkmenistan's strong political com-

mitment and strategic imputes to counter incidents of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

Turkmenistan's High-Level Meeting (April 2018)

Ashgabat hosted a high-level meeting titled "Towards a Comprehensive Implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia" in April 2018 wherein the 3rd phase of a joint project to support a joint action plan for Central Asia was also launched.

Turkmenistan is a reliable member of international community as well as one of active UN-member states to achieve strategic goals of sustainable development, peace, and reduction of poverty, greater regional connectivity and above all participatory and collaborative approach to consolidate international community efforts in countering the threats against humanity, especially terrorism and radicalism.

President of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov

The President of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov is a prominent dignified personality in Central Asia and the world to counter terrorism and radicalism. He underlines that countering terrorism acquires strategic significance on the agenda of multilateral cooperation of Turkmenistan within the community of Nations along with global tasks in ensuring security such as disarmament and non-proliferation, transport and energy, environment and several other aspects defined by the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Turkmenistan & Global Security

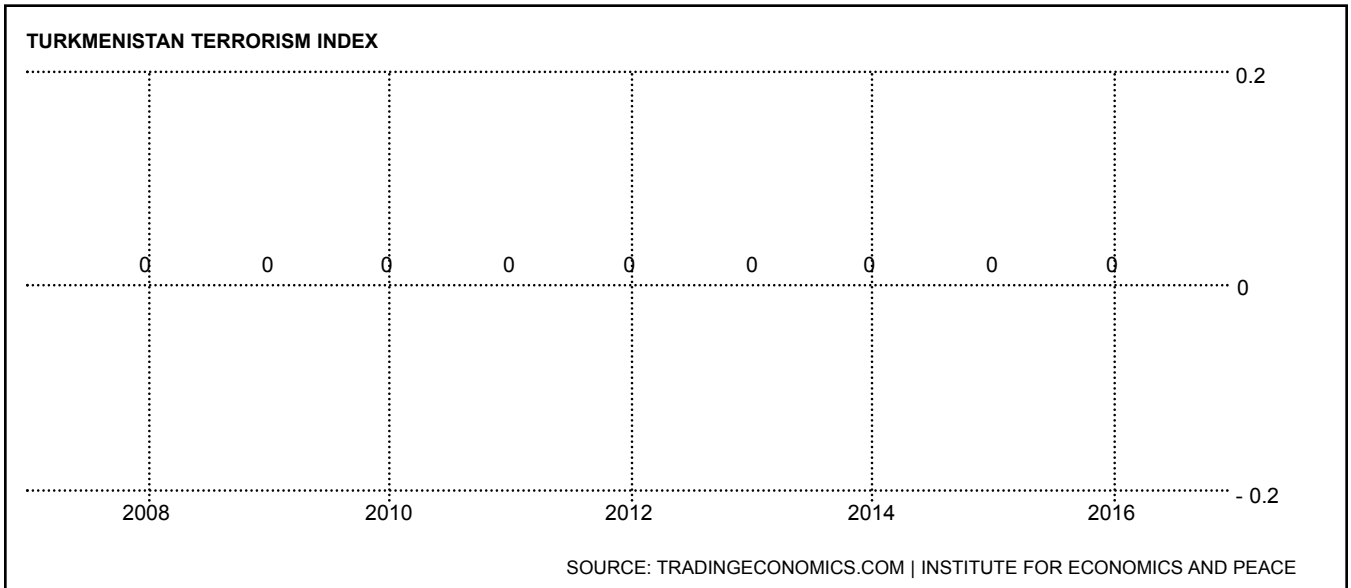
President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov has outlined a

fundamental concept to ensure global and regional security. It is comprehensive holistic approach to counter incidents of terrorism. It covers all aspects of geopolitics, socio-economic compulsions, geostrategic repercussions and human limitations to counter terrorism in the region and beyond. The basis of this "workable concept" is that security of one state may not be guaranteed when there is no security in the region, a continent and the world, therefore security is an interrelated actor of regional as well as global peace.

Moreover, countering terrorism needs a comprehensive approach because political and military security are heavily dependent on ensuring economic, energy and food security, preventing and neutralizing risks, threats of environmental and technological character, countering effectively international terrorism, organized crimes, proliferation of mass destruction weapons and other global challenges.

Turkmenistan's Counter Terrorism

Turkmenistan considers terrorism a very dangerous threats to humanity irrespective of development level of one specific country or others and regions. Terrorism is one of the biggest threats to terrorism. It is also one the biggest hurdles in ensuring sustainable development of states and regions under peaceful and safe environment. Role of non-state actors, globalization of terrorism and its sanctuaries, dawn of advanced technologies, mass media, and dissemination of propaganda, widening gap among states and dangerous role of social media requires effective measures of countering terrorism. On its part, Turkmenistan takes all necessary measures and actions at the national and international level to elimi-



nate threats against peace and security as well as counters terrorist and radical acts.

Turkmenistan’s Terrorism Law

Turkmenistan has a comprehensive law to fight against terrorism. It provides clear definition and forms legal framework. The Law of Turkmenistan “On countering terrorism” stipulates legal and organizational base for countering terrorism, authorities and responsibilities of state bodies, social associations, other entities and competent authorities, as well as it defines guarantees for legal and social protection of citizens involved in countering terrorism.

The above diagram clearly indicates Turkmenistan’s diversified but integrated political, social, legislative, administrative decrees and laws to fight against terrorism in its country. It shows its zero-tolerance towards any form or manifestation of terrorism due to which there is peace and harmony.

It is evident that terrorism may be countered successfully only with joint efforts of states in close cooperation with international agencies. In this

regard, Turkmenistan cooperates closely with other states, as well as, reputable international bodies, first and foremost the UN, EU and OSCE.

Turkmenistan’s Liaison with UN

Turkmenistan closely coordinates its actions with the UN on countering terrorism, drug trafficking and other threats. Strategic partnership between Turkmenistan and the UN is long-term, implemented in systemic basis and similar principles and views on final outcome are shared. In this context, Turkmenistan supports efforts of the international community to create effective mechanism for countering terrorism and is for full implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Turkmenistan maintains constructive and efficient cooperation with international agencies such as the UN Counter-Terrorism Office, UN Regional Center for Central Asia for Preventive Diplomacy and neighboring countries.

Turkmenistan’s Strict Adherence

Turkmenistan demonstrates its strict adherence to UN Global

Counter-Terrorism Strategy in practice and attaches regional context to it taking into account historical, economic, social, cultural and other features of one or another region. A high level dialogue in the region will give political impetus to adopt necessary, complementary and coordinated strategic approach to counter terrorism for Central Asian States. Consolidating efforts and developing commonly accepted approach in the states of the region to address existing issues will lead to explore and find effective ways of addressing them.

Turkmenistan and the International Community

The international community has already recognized the peaceful policies of the President of independent and neutral Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov when the Resolution on “The role of UN Regional Center for Central Asia for Preventive Diplomacy” was adopted. Turkmenistan is also striving hard to actively participate in Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF). It participates in project

Salient Features		
Chapter	Articles	Details
Chapter 1	General Provisions	<p>It contains five articles.</p> <p>Article-I: General terms, used in this Law It defines terrorism, terrorist activity, international terrorist activity, the act of terrorism, crimes of the terrorist nature, terrorist, the terrorist group, the terrorist organization, fight against terrorism, the anti-terrorist operation, the zone of anti-terrorist operation and hostage.</p>
		<p>Article-II: Legal framework of the fight against terrorism It covers all legal and administrative laws and measures initiated by the government of Turkmenistan. The legal framework of the fight against terrorism is the Constitution of Turkmenistan, the resolutions of the Halk Maslahaty of Turkmenistan, the Criminal Code of Turkmenistan, this Law, as well as other laws of Turkmenistan, Decrees and Resolutions of the President of Turkmenistan, generally recognized principles of international law, international treaties of Turkmenistan and legal acts of appropriate government agencies passed in accordance with them.</p>
		<p>Article 3: Goals of the fight against terrorism In Turkmenistan the fight against terrorism is carried out for the purpose of: protection of individuals, society and the state against terrorism; prevention, detection, suppression of terrorist activities and minimization of its consequences; detection and elimination of causes and conditions, facilitating implementation of terrorist activities.</p>
		<p>Article 4: Main principles of the fight against terrorism It is based on legality, prevalence of measures to prevent terrorism, inevitability of punishment for terrorist activities; combination of public and secret methods in the fight against terrorism, complex use of preventive, legal, political, social, economic and propagandistic measures; priority of protection of the rights of citizens, subjected to danger as a result of the act of terrorism; undivided authority in control over the forces and resources during used for implementation of anti-terrorist operations and nondisclosure of technical methods and tactics of anti-terrorist operations as well as the list of participants of such operations.</p>
		<p>Article 5: International cooperation of Turkmenistan in the area of fight against terrorism It shows Turkmenistan political commitment to cooperate with international organizations and entities to fight against terrorism.</p>
Chapter II	Organization of the Fight Against Terrorism	<p>It consists of six articles dealing with different necessary administrative measures to counter terrorism.</p> <p>Article 6: Government agencies implementing the fight against terrorism General control over the fight against terrorism and provision of necessary forces, means and resources shall be implemented by the President of Turkmenistan and the Cabinet of Ministers of Turkmenistan.</p>

Salient Features		
Chapter	Articles	Details
		<p>Article 7: Principal tasks of the State Committee on the Fight against Terrorism It defines the role of State Committee to fight against terrorism in terms of instructions of President, collection and analysis of information, protection to people and infrastructure alike, scientific research, training and education, proposal to improve legislation on terrorism.</p>
		<p>Article 8: Terms of reference of government agencies directly involved in the fight against terrorism Coordination among all government agencies to fight against terrorism, prevention, detection and suppression of crimes of terrorist nature, active role of interior ministry, security to President, befitting role of ministry of defense, vigilant role of the state service of Turkmenistan on Registration of Foreign Citizens, The State Border Service of Turkmenistan, The State Customs Service of Turkmenistan, Office of public prosecutor general of Turkmenistan and last but not the least coordinated role of government agencies.</p>
		<p>Article 9: Terms of reference of other government agencies in the fight against terrorism It determines role, contribution and authority of other government agencies to fight against terrorism</p>
		<p>Article 10: Assistance to government agencies directly involved in the fight against terrorism It speaks about necessary mechanism and procedure to assist all government agencies to fight against terrorism</p>
		<p>Article 11: The role of public unions and mass media in the fight against terrorism It tells about responsibilities of mass media, public unions and other organization to fight against terrorism</p>
Chapter III	Performance of Anti-Terrorist Operations	<p>It is based on six articles.</p> <p>Article 12: Control over anti-terrorist operation Formation of operational staff, determination the scale of public threat, reporting and responsibilities of chief of operational staff.</p>
		<p>Article 13: Forces and means for anti-terrorist operation Involvement of necessary forces and means of the government agencies directly involved in the fight against terrorism</p> <p>Article 14: Legal regime in the zone of anti-terrorist operation Initiation of all necessary measures to fight against terrorism,</p>
		<p>Article 15: Negotiations with terrorists Only personnel dully authorized by the chief of operative staff in charge of the anti-terrorist operation shall be allowed to conduct negotiations with terrorists.</p>

Salient Features		
Chapter	Articles	Details
		Article 16: Notification of public about an act of terrorism Role of chief of operative staff in charge of the anti-terrorist operation.
		Article 17: Completion of the anti-terrorist operation The anti-terrorist operation shall be considered completed when the act of terrorism is suppressed (terminated) and the threat to life and health of people located in the zone of the anti-terrorist operation is eliminated.
Chapter IV	Compensation of damage and social rehabilitation of persons who have suffered from the act of terrorism	It has two articles. Article 18: Compensation of the damage caused by the act of terrorism It determines the role of the State budget of Turkmenistan.
		Article 19: Social Rehabilitation of Persons, Who Have Suffered From The Act Of Terrorism Provision of legal assistance, psychological and medical aid.
Chapter V	Legal and social protection of persons who Participated in the fight against terrorism	It has three articles. Article 20: Persons who participate in the fight against terrorism and are subject to legal and social protection It speaks about comprehensive social protection to people engaged in fight against terrorism
		Article 21: Compensation of damage for persons participating in the fight against terrorism It shares category and mechanism of granting compensation for engaged people, agencies etc.
		Article 22. Exemption from liability for damage Servicemen, specialists and other personnel participating in the fight against terrorism shall be relieved from the damage caused in the course of the anti-terrorist operation.
Chapter VI	Liability for participation in terrorist activities	It consists of two articles Article 23: Liability of persons for participation in terrorist activities Accountability in accordance with the Criminal Code of Turkmenistan.
		Article 24: Liability of an organization for terrorist activities Definition, types, natures of terrorist organizations
Chapter VII	Final Provisions	It has three articles Article 25: Control over implementation of the fight against terrorism Control over implementation of the fight against terrorism in Turkmenistan shall be executed by President of Turkmenistan and the Cabinet of Ministers of Turkmenistan

Salient Features		
Chapter	Articles	Details
		Article 26: Supervision on the legality of implementation of the fight against terrorism Role of Prosecutor General of Turkmenistan and prosecutors subordinate to him.
		Article 27: Liability for violation of the legislation on the fight against terrorism Violation of the legislation on the fight against terrorism shall result in liability in accordance with the legislation of Turkmenistan

implemented jointly by Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) of United Nations Counter-Terrorism Center (UNCTC) and UN Regional Center for Central Asia for Preventive Diplomacy (UNRCCA) in Ashgabat with the support of EU and Norway. UN Regional Center for Central Asia for Preventive Diplomacy implemented project on applying abovementioned UN Strategy in Central Asian States jointly with Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force and EU.

Concluding Remarks

Turkmenistan is striving hard to eliminate curse of terrorism. It has zero-tolerance policy towards terrorism and radicalism. It values peace and harmony while fighting against terrorism. It has never violated the concept of human rights while engaging national force to eradicate ills of terrorism. Its constitution protects the rights of people.

President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov has a unique model of countering terrorism, it is a comprehensive plan to develop a national, regional and international narrative to fight against terrorism. It covers all crucial actors of politics, socio-economic obligations, geostrategic preferences and psychological make-up to launch a clear-cut strategy to fight against terrorism.

President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov has a unique model of countering terrorism, it is a comprehensive plan to develop a national, regional and international narrative to fight against terrorism. It covers all crucial actors of politics, socio-economic obligations, geostrategic preferences and psychological make-up to launch a clear-cut strategy to fight against terrorism. It also speaks about widening gap of mutual respect, intolerance and spirits of accommodation among the states in the world.

It also speaks about widening gap of mutual respect, intolerance and spirits of accommodation among the states in the world. It also shares its principal stance on the role of non-state actors in the growth of terrorism which requires a comprehensive approach because political and military security are heavily dependent on ensuring economic, energy and food security, preventing and neutralizing risks, threats of environmental and technological character, countering effectively international terrorism, organized crimes, proliferation of mass destruction weapons and other global challenges.

Turkmenistan has been working closely with international organizations and entities for countering terrorism

especially the United Nations. It played very important role in the adoption of a counter-terrorism strategy for Central Asia. Turkmenistan noted the need to intensify efforts and to switch over to concrete actions in the fight against terrorism and prevention of violent extremism in the region.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres also visited the Turkmen capital and welcomed the adoption of the Ashgabat Declaration on countering terrorism by the Central Asian countries. "Central Asian countries are an example in the joint implementation of the UN Global counter-terrorism strategy at the regional level," Guterres added. On its part, Turkmenistan is combating terrorism which shows it's

strong leadership, strengthens coordination and coherences throughout the system, increases support for capacity-building, mobilizes political will and reliable partnership in order to ensure a balanced implementation of the UN Global counter-terrorism strategy.

Turkmenistan has expressed its concern about the threat of terrorism in the region, as well as its determination to implement the UN Global counter-terrorism strategy and the recommendations of the Secretary-General's action plan related to prevention of violent extremism through dialogue and efforts for prevention of conflicts, struggle against the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters, involving of young people, improvement of their professional skills and provision of their employment, as well as prevention of the spread of terrorist ideas and the abuse of information technologies. Turkmenistan is also following the global counter-terrorism strategy which was adopted by the UN General Assembly through consensus in 2006. The Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) office was established to ensure system-wide coordination and coherence of the United Nations counter-terrorism activities where Turkmenistan played very important role.

Turkmenistan is a peace loving country which cares about human rights. Its policies of combating terrorism aim encompass all segments of society, particularly those that have been marginalized. It opinions that policies that limit human rights only end up alienating religious and ethnic communities, who would normally have every interest in fighting extremism.

Terrorism has become a transnational threat enabling and inspiring attacks and radicalising individuals, particularly youth, outside of conflict zones. Turkmenistan

considers multilateral solutions must for coping with terrorism.

Thanks to the efforts of Turkmenistan owing to which Central Asia has the opportunity to show global leadership by developing national and possibly a regional plan of action to prevent violent extremism. The Government of Turkmenistan continued its efforts to improve the capacity of law enforcement agencies to counter terrorism, ensure border security, and detect terrorist financing, by working with international organizations and participating in training in these areas. The government did not report any terrorist incidents, and authorities continued to maintain pervasive surveillance of the population.

Its legal system pertaining to counterterrorism is based on the 2003 counterterrorism law that defines which crimes are considered terrorist in nature. This law is supplemented by articles 271-273 of the criminal code, which pertain to terrorist acts and terrorist financing and are used to prosecute terrorism-related offenses.

There is significant political will in Turkmenistan to counter terrorism and ensure border security. Turkmenistan is a member of the Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism, a Financial Action Task Force-style regional body. The Financial Monitoring Department

(FMD) of the Ministry of Finance, the country's financial intelligence unit, was created in 2010. In 2016, Turkmenistan expressed interest in gaining admission to the Egmont Group of Financial Intelligence Units. Turkmenistan's law enforcement and security agencies also exercise strict control in the country.

Turkmenistan also supports regional and international efforts to fight terrorism. Law enforcement officials participated in Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and UN Office of Drugs and Crime training on border security. Government officials also participated in regional training on radicalism and countering violent extremism provided by the UN Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy in Central Asia. Turkmenistan continued to participate in the Central Asia Regional Information and Coordination.

Turkmenistan maintains close, effective and targeted cooperation with neighboring states, as well as with specialized UN agencies, primarily with the UNODC. Long-term national programs for combating drug addiction and drug trafficking have been adopted and are being implemented and good results are obtained.

Turkmenistan pursues a foreign policy directed at eliminating threats and dangers against peace and makes its significant contribution to consolidate international efforts. ♦

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mehmood-UI-Hassan Khan holds the degrees of MPA (Management & Marketing) and Journalism(Development & Public Relations) from the University of the Punjab., Lahore. He is research scholar. Did various courses relating to banking, law and HRM. Contributed articles on Banking, Economics (Pakistan & International), Geo-Strategic issues (regional & global) with especial reference to South East Asia, Middle East and Central Asia, Current affairs, Comparative international power politics and diplomacy in various local and foreign newspapers, journals and departments like, BBC Asia Network, MMN, USA, Journal of World Affairs and New Technology, USA and AIDS AND BEHAVIOR USA.

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