**CALL FOR INPUTS: Special Rapporteur on the Protection of Human Rights by Regional Organisations when Countering Terrorism**

**1.0 Introduction**

Global terrorism has emerged as one of the most pressing security challenges. The Republic of Mauritius is committed to the promotion and protection of Human Rights, including the fight against terrorism.

**2.0 Legislative Framework**

The State of Mauritius has accordingly put in place the following legislative framework:

2.1 Prevention of Terrorism Act 2002

The Prevention of Terrorism Act 2002 is the main legislation for countering terrorism and related matters in Mauritius. The Act has been amended in 2016, to criminalise a larger number of acts which previously were not covered in these laws. For instance, Section 5A has been introduced to address “Terrorist Training”, new section 8A has been inserted to deal with “Terrorism Hoax”, and Section 12A provides for “Recruiting persons in terrorist groups.” These laws now enable initiation of investigation in a variety of terrorism related fields as well as provide for solidarity and support to the victims.

2.2 Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism Act 2003

This legislation was enacted togive effect to the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. The Act underwent amendments in 2019 that made a greater number of acts that were previously exempt from these regulations illegal. The main sections of the Act address the fight against terrorism financing such as the “Financing of terrorism” (Section 4), “Orders for seizure and restraint of property” (Section 5), and “Orders for forfeiture of property” (Section 6) amongst others.

2.3 Anti-Money Laundering and Combatting the Financing of Terrorism and Proliferation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2019

The FIAMLA was amended by the Finance (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2018 and the Anti-Money Laundering (AML) and Combating the Financing of Terrorism (CFT) Proliferation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2019 following the assessment conducted by Eastern and Southern Africa Anti-Money Laundering Group (ESAAMLG) against the standards of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). The assessment highlighted the gaps in our legislative and regulatory framework and the extent to which addressing the money laundering and terrorist financing risks, Mauritius will be in a better position to prioritise limited resources in an efficient manner.

**3.0 The Counter Terrorism Unit**

The State of Mauritius has set up a Counter Terrorism Unit (CTU) by virtue of Section 18 of the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2002. The aim is to prevent any attack from occurring and if it unfortunately happens, to be able to mitigate its impact on the society. The CTU is mandated to: -

1. collect, collate and analyse terrorism-related intelligence;
2. disseminate to investigatory authorities such intelligence concerning any suspicious person or activity or terrorism-related offence;
3. transmit terrorism-related information to the Commissioner;
4. educate the public against terrorism; and
5. enlist and foster public support in combating terrorism.

The mandate of the CTU has been re-structured and reinforced both with technology and human resources in order to implement the United Nations Global Counter Terrorism Strategy (UNGCTS). In terms of capacity building, continuous training is imparted to the staff through workshops dispensed by foreign experts in Counter Terrorism fields and related matters.

Mauritius, strongly acknowledges that no country can fight terrorism and violent extremism in isolation. Intelligence networking is an integral part of it. In that regard, the CTU has expanded its intelligence/ information sharing networking both at the local, regional and international levels. Bilateral agreements with a number of countries of interest have been established to ensure real time information sharing. In addition, exchanges of expertise and good practices in regional and international forums as well as countries dealing with similar threats are enabling the CTU to better gear its efforts towards developing counter terrorism measures/actions commensurate to the identified threats and challenges. The CTU is ensuring and maintaining a viable national, regional and international network to timely share critical information and all likely terrorism threats.

**4.0 Other national, regional or international counter-terrorism entities**

4.1 National Coordinating Committee

A Coordinating Committee has been set up at the level of the Prime Minister’s Office under the chairmanship of the Director of the CTU, to monitor and coordinate actions devolving under each component of the Plan of Action. The members of the Committee that meet on a quarterly basis include the Mauritius Police Force, the Counter Terrorism Unit, the Passport and Immigration Office, the Ministry of Technology, Communication and Innovation and the Ministry of Good Governance and Financial Services amongst other ministries.

4.2 Intelligence and Security Coordinating Committee

Joint working group meetings among local agencies Anti-Drug and Smuggling Unit (ADSU), Counter Terrorism Unit (CTU), National Security Service (NSS), Police, Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU), Custom Department, among others are ongoing to timely identify linkages and analyse trends with regard to combating organised crimes and terrorism. In this context, a National Intelligence and Security Coordinating Committee has been set up at the level of the Prime Minister’s Office to take stock of prevailing situations and direct actions at strategic level. It also reviews, assesses and proposes commensurate measures for national security. A coordinated approach has been adopted among all stakeholders for information sharing amongst the various agencies. This includes joint training and operations among agencies.

4.3 Regional and International CT forums

Mauritius has, since 2015, expanded and enhanced its intelligence networking capabilities at the sub-regional, regional, continental and international level through existing cooperation to effectively identify and disrupt terrorism threats. For instance:

1. at sub-regional level- Indian Ocean Commission (IOC);
2. at regional level - Southern African Development Community (SADC), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD);
3. at continental level - African Union (AU), The African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT) and
4. at international level - United Nations Office of Drugs and Crimes (UNODC), United Nations Office of Counter Terrorism (UNOCT), Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), Interpol.

The cooperation in exchange of timely and accurate information and information sharing has been enhanced through the use of different tools.

**5.0 Participation of civil society** **in counter-terrorism efforts.**

Mauritius has, in November 2019, finalised its first National Strategy to Prevent Radicalisation and Violent Extremism. The Strategy had been derived from the SADC Regional Counter Terrorism Strategy, based on the four Pillars of the UN Global Counter Terrorism Strategy and adapted to the domestic risk assumptions.

Measures were accordingly adopted based on four main objectives:

1. Counter Extremist Ideologies;
2. Disrupting Terrorist Activities;
3. Denying Support to Terrorism; and
4. Developing Response and Recovery Plan.

Community bonding is one of the key elements to counter violent extremism and prevent home-grown terrorist. This element of the Mauritian strategy aims at tackling the root causes and factors that contribute to terrorism by actively engaging with individuals, communities and international partners. A set of measures have been introduced to enable the participation of the community at large in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism.

**6.0 Conclusion**

The state of Mauritius believes that combating terrorism is vital. It is no secret that terrorist organisations keep embracing new digital technologies, and therefore it is crucial that Member States and International Organisations reinforce their cooperation and coordination in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism, in accordance with obligations under International Law. The Republic of Mauritius welcomes technical assistance and capacity building initiatives to support its fight against terrorism.

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