



# **The National Counter-Terrorism Committee**

## **The National Counter Terrorism Strategy**





**“Oman will continue its role as an effective member of the United Nations (UN), respect its Charter, and work with Member States of which to achieve international peace and security and spread economic prosperity. We will build our relations with all states upon the great legacy left by the late Sultan, the basis of which is commitment to friendship and cooperation with all, and respect for the charters, laws and conventions signed with various states and organizations”.**

An excerpt from the speech of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik.

## Introduction

In light of the ongoing assessment of the risks of terrorism and its financing conducted by the National Counter-Terrorism Committee (NCTC), and the assessment of the implementation of the National Counter-Terrorism Strategy issued in 2021, in addition to the outcomes of the National Risk Assessment for 2023, and the revision of the procedures followed by the Sultanate of Oman's investigation and law enforcement agencies and supervisory bodies concerned with combating terrorism and its financing; the National Counter-Terrorism Committee decided to update the Strategy, in line with the emerging risks and the observed practices adopted by terrorist organizations.

The strategy took into account the geographical location of the Sultanate of Oman, which is located in a region experiencing unstable geopolitical conditions, in addition to the activity of a number of terrorist organizations in countries witnessing armed conflicts. The international community unanimously agrees that terrorist organizations still pose a threat through sleeper cells and pockets spread in some conflict areas. These terrorist organizations are also active through internet platforms to spread their extremist thought, attract new members and finance their various activities.

Moreover, attention was paid to what the relevant authorities have observed regarding the interaction of a number of citizens and residents with the latest regional and international events; in order to sort out any connections between the interactions and extremism or terrorist organizations. Although subsequent measures confirmed that most of the interactions was personal and within the context of sympathy with no connection to terrorism and its financing, a package of preventive measures was taken, such as counseling.

## **Vision**

Maintaining the Sultanate of Oman is free from terrorist activities and terrorist financing.

## **Mission**

Protecting the Sultanate of Oman, its citizens and residents from the danger of terrorism and terrorist financing activities through integrated national efforts.

## **Principles**

### Vigilance

Protecting citizens and residents from being drawn into extremist ideas, addressing the conditions that lead to the spread of terrorism and its financing as well as preventing any attempts to exploit the financial system for terrorism financing.

### Justice

Condemning terrorism regardless of its motives, causes and justifications, as well as disassociating terrorism from any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group.

### Professionalism

Working on building national capabilities in combating terrorism and its financing, continuous evaluation of the efforts of the relevant authorities assigned to combat terrorism and its financing, strengthening the mandate of law enforcement authorities in the field of combating terrorism and its financing, ensuring the respect for human rights and promoting cooperation in countering terrorism between national authorities, civil society institutions, regional partners and international organizations.

## Objectives

1. Safeguarding the security and stability of the Sultanate of Oman against any terrorist threats and eliminating their causes.
2. Protecting citizens and residents from being influenced by the thoughts and ideology of terrorist organizations.
3. Raising awareness of the risks of terrorism and its financing.
4. Strengthening national partnership and cooperation to combat terrorism and its financing, including all government, community, and private sectors.
5. Updating the legislations and laws related to counter-terrorism and its financing.
6. Development of tools, mechanisms and policies related to counter-terrorism and its financing in order to withstand challenges posed by terrorist threats.
7. Strengthening regional and international security and stability, based on the principles of international law, treaties and conventions concluded in the framework of counter-terrorism.
8. Exchanging of expertise and information between the Sultanate of Oman and the other countries, international and regional organizations and bodies in the context of combating terrorism, without prejudice to the sovereignty of Sultanate of Oman, its applicable laws and national interests.
9. Emphasizing the protection of human rights and adherence to the international humanitarian law when taking counter-terrorism measures.
10. Emphasizing the legal prosecution against those linked to terrorism and its financing.
11. Emphasis on aligning with international efforts to combat terrorism and its financing.
12. Preventing the exploitation of financial institutions and non-financial institutions to fund terrorist activities.
13. Enhancing the capabilities of law enforcement authorities, supervisory and legal bodies in detecting and combating terrorism financing crimes.

## The Pillars of the National Counter-Terrorism Strategy

The Strategy consists of four pillars, namely: (Prevention from Terrorism, Preventing and Combating Terrorism, Building and Developing Capabilities and Respect for Human Rights and the Rule of Law). The pillars were decided in order to be consistent with the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Strategy (2006) and the Arab Combat-Terrorism Strategy (2022); with the addition of new items related to developments in the international arena and the results of local follow-ups; especially with regard to the exploitation of internet platforms and websites by terrorist organizations to achieve their goals, particularly financing their activities through virtual assets and currencies. The Strategy also emphasizes the Sultanate of Oman's keenness to address the conditions conducive to terrorism and its financing.

### Pillar One: Prevention from Terrorism

**Strategic Orientation:** Establishing a political approach based on the principles of justice and equality among the members of society, guaranteeing free exercise of religion for all religions in accordance with the applicable laws and regulations, renouncing terrorism and extremism of all forms and manifestations, and supporting all efforts that contribute to the maintenance of the international peace and security.

#### **Expected Outcomes:**

1. The Sultanate of Oman's commitment to combating terrorism and its financing effectively based on international laws, charters and principles, which contributes in strengthening trust between countries and reinforcing international relations.



2. Supporting all efforts that contribute to the maintenance of the international peace and security.
3. Strengthening international cooperation in relation to combating terrorism and its financing.
4. Ensuring accession to relevant international conventions and treaties on combating terrorism, its financing and organized crimes, in a manner that does not conflict with the provisions of the Basic Statute of the State of the Sultanate of Oman.
5. Following-up on the implementation of bilateral and international resolutions, agreements and treaties ratified by the Sultanate of Oman.
6. Criminalizing anything that could, in whatever manner, have the potential to fuel religious, sectarian, ethnic, provincialist and tribal strife.
7. Updating and developing legislation and laws related to combating terrorism and its financing in consistence with the relevant international laws.
8. Criminalizing the financing of terrorism and the financing of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) proliferation.
9. Drawing lessons from terrorist operations and terrorism financing cases domestically or abroad to tighten security measures.
10. Promoting effective cooperation between the government authorities and civil society institutions in order to prevent citizens and residents from being influenced by extremist thoughts or affiliation with terrorist organizations.
11. Providing the necessary protection for individuals working in the field of combating terrorism and its financing.
12. Strengthening the capabilities of the relevant authorities in monitoring and supervising the virtual assets trading sector, in a way that prevents its use in financing terrorism.

13. Adherence to international standards in the field of aviation, maritime security, and international cooperation in this regard.
14. Investing in modern science and technology to understand and confront terrorism and its financing; especially the risks arising from websites and applications and Artificial Intelligence (AI) applications.
15. The state guarantees freedom of religion and practice of belief for all faiths in accordance with the applicable laws and regulations.
16. Supervising places of worship and religious activities by the relevant authorities.
17. Adopting an approach of moderation, and religious tolerance, and avoiding all that can provoke sectarian strife.
18. Strengthening national loyalty among the youth, and inculcating the principles of maintaining the security and safety of the country.
19. Supporting the principles of dialogue between civilizations, and highlighting the human values and religious tolerance.
20. Seeking to develop programs and plans to raise the standards of living and social welfare.
21. Protecting charitable societies and volunteer work from being exploited for terrorist acts and its financing.
22. Obliging financial and non-financial institutions to report suspicious transactions to detect terrorist financing operations.
23. Safeguarding the integrity of the financial and economic system of the Sultanate of Oman, and ensuring that it is not exploited for financing any terrorist acts.
24. Identifying the factors leading to the spread of extremism, and pursuing ways to resolve them and confront the operations to attract individuals to conduct terrorist acts

### Key activities:

1. Raising public awareness of laws related combating terrorism and financing.
2. Raising awareness amongst the regulatory bodies about dual-usage items and their use in terrorism and its financing.
3. Taking preventive security measures at land, air and sea ports of entry, and securing borders, to prevent infiltration and trafficking activities.
4. Ensuring that security measures are in place to protect the interests of the Sultanate of Oman abroad, especially in diplomatic premises, against any terrorist attacks.
5. Continuing the follow-up and supervision over the importation, transportation, storage, use and/or dealing, in any way, with chemical, biological and radioactive materials and those used in the manufacture of explosives.
6. Conducting parallel investigations for cases of financial interest; to detect any aspects of terrorism financing.
7. Strengthening the preventive measures in tourist establishments and sites.
8. Reinforcing cooperation with customs authorities in the neighboring countries to create a unified front against terrorist crimes and their financing.
9. Ensuring that all entities of both government and private sectors as well as civil society institutions have a common understanding of the risks of the terrorist threat and its financing.
10. Keenness to sign MoUs with the friendly countries on combating terrorism and its financing.

11. Assessing terrorist threats and boosting informed predictability of their occurrence, in order to take the necessary measures to thwart them.
12. Intensifying the security follow-up and scrutiny of any suspects in the territory of the Sultanate of Oman.
13. Reviewing and updating security plans for vital institutions and evaluating those plans readiness and effectiveness on a regular basis to protect these institutions from any acts of sabotage, and to ensure robust response to any risks that these facilities might be exposed to.
14. Securing the Sultanate of Oman against any cyber-attack that might target government or private institutions.
15. Taking legal measures against websites, publications and printed materials that adopt an extremist or seditious approach.
16. Raising security awareness among personnel of the security and military services, the administrative apparatus, civil society institutions and the private sector to be well-versed of the risks of terrorism and its financing.
17. Developing the technical capabilities in the official border control (land, air and sea ports of entry); making sure that they are capable of detecting and identifying threats, hazardous, radiological and nuclear materials.
18. Publishing cases monitored in the Sultanate of Oman related to extremism as well as terrorism and its financing in coordination with the relevant authorities.
19. Encouraging local students to receive religious study locally which would ensure that they are not exposed to religious radicalism and extremism.

20. Guiding the teaching staff in the educational institutions of the importance of consolidate the principles of moderation, religious tolerance, and accepting others.
21. Encouraging and supporting research, studies and initiatives that contribute to enhancing security and addressing the causes of terrorism.
22. Supporting the local media to spread tolerance and moderation, and to avoid any issues that might incite hatred.
23. Highlighting inaccuracies using dialogue and argument, and addressing the phenomena that lead to the emergence of extremist ideologies.
24. Fostering dialogue, tolerance and harmony between civilizations, cultures and people, and bolstering mutual respect between religions, and religious principals and cultures.
25. Promoting the culture of peace and justice as well as racial, national and religious tolerance.
26. Inclusion of values and principles of moderation and tolerance in the school curriculums, and promoting the society's culture in this regard, in order to immunize the society from any extremist ideologies.
27. Developing a practical media plan to deal with any potential terrorist incidents.
28. Preparing reports by the relevant authorities about their roles against terrorism and its financing.
29. Adopting a comprehensive and evenly-distributed development policy across the Sultanate of Oman.
30. Adopting developmental plans, programs and projects to absorb as many job seekers as possible.

## Pillar Two: Preventing and Combating Terrorism

**Strategic Orientation:** The Sultanate of Oman's commitment to achieving an effective combating against terrorism and its financing based on international laws, charters and principles, which contributes to increasing trust between countries and strengthening international relations.

### Expected Outcomes:

1. Promoting the international cooperation in combating terrorism, with a view to detecting any individual who supports, facilitates, participates in or plans to participate in the financing, planning, arranging or committing terrorist acts, or providing safe haven for such acts. These steps are aimed at depriving that individual of safe haven and bringing them to justice.
2. Pursuing the sustained development of monitoring and protection mechanisms against cyber breaching, and strengthening local and international cooperation in this regard in order to ensure that any cyber-attack by terrorist organizations is thwarted.
3. Developing forensic laboratories and providing the necessary capabilities to analyze evidence related to explosives chemical, biological, radiological or incidents.
4. Supporting judicial cooperation at the regional and international levels in the field of investigations in accordance with the UN recommendations and resolutions issued in this regard.

## Key Activities

1. Conducting security checks for those wishing to visit or reside in the Sultanate of Oman so that the appropriate measures are taken regarding those designated in the local or international lists related to combating terrorism and its financing.
2. Adopting an approach of counselling and guidance with the people influenced by the extremist ideology, containing them, and taking all the necessary measures to ensure that they are not involved again in prohibited activities. More rigorous measures would be taken with those who return to extremism after rehabilitation.
3. Conducting investigations into suspicions of terrorist activities and their financing.
4. Listing, delisting and publishing names of individuals involved in terrorism and its financing cases in the local and international lists in accordance with the local and international standards and laws, as well as implementation of the UN resolutions related to combating terrorism and its financing.
5. Taking all necessary measures and efforts to protect sensitive and vital facilities.
6. Bolstering security and military procedures as well as the customs controls at border crossings to prevent infiltration, smuggling and detecting the terrorist's movements, in addition to preventing and detecting any illegal activities; while intensifying international and regional cooperation in this regard.
7. Prohibiting the sort of activities amounting to executing, inciting, participating in, financing, promoting or condoning terrorist activities, and taking appropriate practical measures to ensure that the territory of the Sultanate of Oman is not used to establish terrorist facilities or training camps, or used for planning or organizing terrorist acts against another country or its citizens.

8. Ensuring that the perpetrators and financiers of terrorist acts are arrested and prosecuted or extradited in accordance with the relevant provisions of domestic and international laws.
9. Confiscating the assets of the perpetrators in terrorism and its financing cases.
10. Exchanging information and maintaining continuous coordination with local and international bodies in the field of combating terrorism, as well as combating crimes that might be related to terrorism, including human trafficking, drug trafficking, corruption, illegal arms trafficking, money laundering and others.
11. Developing measures to prevent any misuse of nuclear, chemical, biological and radioactive substances, dual-use materials, and other materials that can be lethal.
12. Monitoring cyberspace to detect any content that promotes extremist ideas or supports terrorist activities and organizations, and taking legal measures against those active in this field, and coordinating at the local and international levels to ensure that terrorist elements have no safe haven in cyberspace.
13. Following-up the implementation of the procedures issued regarding the use of drones, and updating these procedures whenever necessary.
14. Activating the MoUs concluded by the National Financial Information Center with its counterpart in the field of combating terrorism and its financing.
15. Conducting international requests through the Egmont Group International Network in the field of combating terrorism and its financing.



16. Identifying patterns of terrorist financing and disseminating them to the relevant authorities.
17. Identifying and developing indicators of terrorist threats, where and how they can be monitored and how can they be dealt with.
18. Following up the global scientific and technological advances regarding unmanned surface vehicles (drone boats) and the extent of their impact and use in terrorist operations.

### **Pillar Three: Building and Developing Capabilities**

**Strategic Orientation:** To focus on building national capabilities in counter-terrorism and its financing, and to regularly assess the efforts made by the relevant authorities as well as to promote the role of law enforcement authorities.

**Expected Outcomes:**

1. Having national cadres with the experience that enables them to conduct analysis, evaluation, and preparation of studies in the field of developing mechanisms to combat terrorism and its financing.
2. Adopting the best practices in counter-terrorism field in order to keep up with the latest developments in terrorism-related crimes.
3. Effective performance of agencies working in the field of combating terrorism and its financing.

### Key Activities:

1. Exchange of training expertise with other countries to raise the efficiency of staff in the field of countering terrorism and its financing.
2. Maintaining training and development of the relevant services concerned with countering terrorism. The goal is for these services to cope with the continuous development in the methods of terrorist organizations and elements, especially with regard to the use of modern technologies by these organizations to achieve their terrorist goals.
3. Ensuring active participation in the international workshops, seminars and meetings related to countering terrorism and its financing, in order to keep abreast with the latest developments in relevant tools and policies in this regard.
4. Carrying out joint exercises to assess the readiness in the field of countering terrorism and to benefit from the lessons learned in developing security plans and building capabilities.
5. Developing the capabilities of staff in the field of nuclear, chemical, biological, radiological and dual-use materials.
6. Reinforcement and development of the capabilities and skills of staff at border crossings and enhancing their understanding of the risks of terrorism and its financing.
7. Reinforcement and development of staff capability in detecting explosives and IEDs
8. Strengthening the capabilities of staff in investigations, collection of evidences, and evaluating the information related to counter-terrorism and its financing.
9. Enhancing competencies of public prosecution and judiciary staff with regard to the risks of terrorism and its financing.

10. Carrying out training for the customs inspectors regarding the latest methods employed in terrorism financing.
11. Delivering specialized technical courses to develop the capabilities of staff working in counter-terrorism, and categorizing the dual-use commodities as well as monitoring the exports to ensure the common understanding among the staff.
12. Engaging the private sector, particularly the financial institutions in some training programs, including the program of categorizing the dual-use commodities. The aim is to enable the private sector institutions on how to handle these commodities and become aware of the rules of categorization.
13. Conducting training on prompt response for counter-terrorism emergency cases by all stakeholders, especially the frontline responders.
14. Assigning some local specialists to work in international organizations related to counter-terrorism and its financing.

#### **Pillar Four: Respect for Human Rights and the Rule of Law**

**Strategic Orientation:** Consolidating the protection of human rights in accordance with the Basic Statute of the State of the Sultanate of Oman and that all applicable local laws relevant to human rights are observed when taking any measure related to counter-terrorism and its financing.

**Expected Outcomes:**

1. Ensuring the provision of a legal and fair trial to those accused of terrorism and its financing in accordance with the relevant laws.
2. Respecting human rights principles when conducting investigations and interrogations into cases of terrorism and its financing.

3. Fulfilling the obligations of the international treaties to which the Sultanate of Oman has acceded with regard to human rights.
4. Countering terrorism and its financing measures are based on the principles of justice, equality and non-discrimination on religious, racial, tribal, sectarian or regional grounds.

### **Key Activities:**

1. Increasing awareness of human rights laws.
2. Enhancing the understanding of human rights principles among the personnel of law enforcement and countering terrorism and its financing.
3. Confirming the implementation of the national laws related to human rights when taking any measures related to combating terrorism and its financing.
4. Joining international human rights conventions, taking into consideration the national sovereignty and relevant local laws, and continuing to activate the conventions adhered to by the Sultanate of Oman in this context.
5. The extradition of those convicted in terrorism and its financing cases in accordance with the international laws and conventions.
6. Responding to any inaccuracies that may feature in some international reports about the human rights efforts of the Sultanate of Oman.

## **Mechanism for Strategy Implementation**

The strategy includes a special annex that explains the implementing authorities and the mechanism for implementing the strategy's provisions, including military, security and civilian authorities, in addition to civil society institutions, each in its field of expertise.

## **Evaluating and Following Up On the Implementation of the Strategy**

To ensure the implementation of the strategy's provisions and its continuous evaluation, the following measures will be taken:

1. Disseminating the strategy to the relevant implementing authorities.
2. The implementing authorities of the strategy will provide, on a regular basis, the National Counter-Terrorism Committee with the procedural position taken by them in the context of implementing the strategy's provisions.
3. Reviewing developments of the implementation plan during the Committee's periodic meetings to monitor progress made in implementing the strategy.
4. Conducting readiness exercises.

## **Timeframe for the Implementation Plan:**

The strategy includes an implementation plan that clarifies the roles of the parties concerned with the implementation, as the Committee seeks to implement the plan within (3) years. Some items of the Strategy can be updated at any time depending on any developments that may necessitate such updates.