

Foreword

With the increased mobility of people, information and goods, terrorism has progressively evolved into a transnational threat, transcending classic geographic and cultural borders, as both actors and victims alike have become involved on a worldwide scale. With this ever-growing challenge for the international community, one State alone is no longer in a position to respond to terrorism. Rather, international cooperation has become a fundamental necessity in the global fight against terrorism.

Legal responses, from the national, bilateral and regional levels serve to facilitate cooperation and harmonize criminal justice responses to terrorism by and amongst States. The implementation of effective judicial cooperation through extradition and mutual legal assistance allows for an effective response. The authorities of eight countries in South Asia - Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, have cooperated with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in an effort to produce this compilation of legal documents on international cooperation in criminal matters, namely mutual legal assistance and extradition. The Compendium aims to provide practitioners and other actors involved in international cooperation in criminal matters with a reference tool to assist them in information sharing and the gathering of evidence for use in criminal investigations and prosecutions involving terrorism, in addition to traditional police to police cooperation. It contains bilateral and regional agreements, as well as related national legislative provisions.

It is with the hope that its wide distribution among legal practitioners and criminal justice officials in the region will contribute to facilitating international cooperation in criminal matters.

This Compendium has been elaborated by UNODC, in cooperation with the Indian Law Institute, New Delhi, as well as the Research Society of International Law, Pakistan. This Compendium would not have been finalized without the indispensable contribution from the national government counterparts in the eight countries, including Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Home Affairs, Interior, Law and Justice, Attorney General Offices, and distinguished research institutes from the countries in the region, as well as the generous financial contribution of the Government of the United States of America.

