

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report analyses the financial response to the September 11, 2001 attacks, as compared with the fight against money laundering. This fight, which has been going on for some 15 years, can actually shed light on and provide an indication of the challenges that face those in charge of tracking down terrorist funds.

The first part of the report examines the multilateral instruments involved in combating the funding of terrorism and the complementary action taken by Canada, the United States, France and the United Kingdom. Following this is a comparison of these new instruments and the anti-laundering mechanisms put in place as part of the war against drugs and anti-corruption programs. This comparison is organized along three lines: 1. positions, conveyed through international treaties, concerning the organization and activities of criminal groups; 2. the definition of offences and the resulting cooperation mechanisms between states; and 3. the evaluation of national policies and sanctions prescribed for non-cooperative countries.

As in the case of drug and corruption money, funds supporting terrorism are difficult to trace due to a number of factors. Standard-setting instruments do not appear to take into account the structure and operation of criminal organizations. International cooperation, though seen as essential, is hampered by the impenetrability of the financial world, and apprehensions relating to the ultimate purpose of inquiries, and national sovereignty safeguards in penal and fiscal matters. Lastly, carrying out objective evaluations and imposing non-arbitrary sanctions on offending countries still present a daunting challenge.