

Guide for Practitioners on the Use of Conflict Zone Information in Criminal Proceedings



News

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On 2 February 2025, the Council of Europe published a practical guide on the use of information collected in conflict zones as evidence in investigations and prosecutions of crimes of terrorism and crimes against international humanitarian law committed in armed conflicts. The guide entitled “[Comparative Practices on the Use of Information Collected in Conflict Zones as Evidence in Criminal Proceedings](#)”, was prepared by the Council of Europe Committee on Counter-Terrorism (CDCT), and the International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law (IIJ) under the support of the United States of America.

The document compiles experience from member states to the CDCT in identifying, obtaining, and sharing information and materials from conflict zones, and their use as evidence in criminal proceedings. It aims to provide guidance on how to use information from conflict zones effectively to advance justice and accountability, in accordance with national laws and relevant international human rights and rule of law standards. The following issues are addressed:

- Sources and types of information collected in conflict zones;
- Mechanisms to obtain and/or share information;
- Steps to analyse and use information.

An annex provides answers to practitioners on frequently asked questions in the context of information from conflict zones.

The Comparative Practices complements the Council of Europe Recommendation of March 2022 ([CM/Rec\(2022\)8](#)) which set up non-binding rules on the collection and use of information from conflict zones as evidence in criminal proceedings related to terrorist offences. The Recommendation called on CoE member states to translate and disseminate its content as widely as possible among competent State authorities and more specifically among those involved in the process of using information from conflict zones as evidence in criminal proceedings related to terrorist offences in accordance with the rule of law.

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