The Returning FTFs Initiative is one of eight core initiatives that the IIJ is implementing:

- Addressing Homegrown Terrorism
- Global Central Authorities
- Returning FTFs
- Judicial Capacity-Building
- Juvenile Justice
- Parliamentarians
- Prison Management
- Investigations

The IIJ is a non-profit intergovernmental organization dedicated to combatting terrorism through capacity-building training in justice and the rule of law. More than 4000 criminal justice practitioners have participated in IIJ workshops in Malta and abroad.

Initially launched in 2015 as the Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs) Initiative, the IIJ’s core Returning FTFs Initiative examines the challenge of relocating or returning battle-hardened individuals who traveled to conflict zones to participate in or train for terrorist acts. The IIJ’s Returning FTFs Initiative focuses on enhancing the capacity of justice sectors in West, North, and East Africa, the Middle East, and other regions it serves. Workshops address the full range of complex issues states confront, including, assessing, investigating, prosecuting, rehabilitating and reintegrating FTFs in compliance with applicable laws, including international human rights law.

Key Foci:

- **Addressing** the range of complex issues involved as states grapple with relocating or returning FTFs
- **Enhancing** the capacity of states to hold returning FTFs accountable for participating in terrorist activity while respecting the rule of law
- **Encouraging** states to develop multi-disciplinary and multi-agency approaches to rehabilitate and reintegrate Returning FTFs back into communities as productive citizens
- **Encouraging** states to undertake responsibilities set forth in UN Security Council Resolutions 2178 (2014) and 2396 (2017)

Next Steps

- The IIJ, with funding from the Netherlands, will continue its multi-phase program focused on Mali and Chad, building the countries’ capacities to rehabilitate and reintegrate terrorist fighters, including FTFs and Returning FTFs.
- From December 2018 through June 2019 – a series of capacity-building workshops in Mali and Chad focused on the rehabilitation and reintegration of terrorist fighters, FTFs and RFTFs.
- Early 2019, Valletta, Malta: Workshop on Returning Foreign Terrorist Families.

This initiative promotes and encourages implementation of the GCTF’s *The Hague – Marrakech Memorandum on Good Practices for a More Effective Response to the FTF Phenomenon*, and the IIJ’s Twenty-Two Principles for Reintegrating Returning Foreign Terrorist Fighters, while emphasizing states’ obligations set forth in UNSCRs 2178 and 2396.
In June 2017, with the support of the Netherlands and Canada, the IIJ held a Returning FTFs workshop in Malta for senior officials from Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Togo and Tunisia. International good practices were discussed and a basic needs and gap analysis was conducted where participants of the various countries discussed key elements currently lacking to effectively implement rehabilitation and reintegration programs. Mali and Chad welcomed further capacity-building efforts.

In October 2017, with funding from the US and in cooperation with UNICRI, the IIJ convened a workshop on the Role of Probation and Parole Officers in Rehabilitating and Reintegrating Returning FTFs for practitioners from Cameroon, Chad, Lebanon, Mali, Morocco, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal and Tunisia. The workshop facilitated the exchange of information among practitioners regarding approaches and programs as well as the identification of common challenges faced when supervising and monitoring released offenders as they transition back to society.

In November 2017, with funding from the US, the IIJ led a workshop on the Role of Psychologists and Religious Leaders in Rehabilitation and Reintegration for Imams, social workers and psychologists working in Kosovo, as well as prison officers and police officers working in the field of counterterrorism. The workshop, convened under the IIJ RFTFs initiative, highlighted the critical role religious leaders and psychologists can and should have in achieving sustainable rehabilitation and reintegration of terrorist offenders.