



## UNITED NATIONS OFFICE OF COUNTER-TERRORISM

**Statement by Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations  
Office of Counter-Terrorism**

**Closing remarks at the High-level Event for the International Day of Remembrance of and  
Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism**

**21 August 2020**

Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We just watched a powerful and moving film. The message is clear - victims represent the very human dimension of terrorism.

I am humbled when I hear them relive some of their most personal and painful memories.

Terrorists try to depersonalize victims by reducing them to mere numbers or statistics.

We have a responsibility to do the exact opposite.

We must see victims' hopes, dreams and daily lives that have been shattered by terrorist violence – a shattering that carries on long after the attack is over.

We must ensure their human rights are upheld and their needs are met.

My Office has placed the rights of victims at the centre of its work in line with the Secretary-General's Call to Action for Human Rights – supporting victims and victims' associations, so their voices are heard and amplified.

As the world focuses on the response to the COVID-19 crisis, it is more important than ever to take time to remember victims and survivors of terrorism.

We have heard about the growing momentum of international efforts to support victims.

But we need to ensure that well-meaning statements, promises and resolutions lead to a concrete and sustained action.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The powerful stories you heard today show the terrible reality of terrorism.

But they also shine through as examples of resilience, and beacons of hope, courage and solidarity in the face of adversity.

Today we reaffirm our common humanity.

Today is about remembrance, but it is also about action.

Let us build upon the strong international momentum to support victims and survivors ahead of the first United Nations Global Congress of Victims next year.

Let us do more to raise awareness of their needs and rights.

And let us commit to showing them that they are not alone and will never be forgotten.

Please stay with us as we move to the second part of the event, which is an interactive discussion with victims, victims' associations and international organizations, moderated by the well-respected journalist Nicolas Hénin, who himself is a victim of terrorism.

This interactive discussion will continue after a musical interlude, performed by the United Nations Chamber Music Society.

Thank you.