



**Statement by  
Major General Abdulaziz Abdullah Al-Ansar, Head of the National Counter Terrorism  
Committee of the State of Qatar**

**Monday, 7 December 2020**

Your Excellency Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs,

Your Excellency Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, Under-Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to celebrate with you the inauguration and launch of the International Hub on Behavioral Insights to Counter Terrorism, in the State of Qatar, as one of the building blocks of cooperation with the United Nations represented by the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT). The establishment of the International Hub, which is the first and only one of its kind in the world, has come to fruition by virtue of the agreement signed between the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism and the State of Qatar, on 15 December 2019, on the margins of the Doha Forum.

In view of its uniqueness on the global level, the International Hub aims to conduct and develop research in the field of behavioral sciences to better understand the motivations and factors that contribute to radicalization leading to violent extremism and terrorism, and to provide capacity-building assistance to member states, regional organizations, and partners in the civil society, with a view to developing and implementing programs, projects and initiatives that integrate behavioral insights to counter terrorism based on scientific foundations and theoretical tenets. The International Hub aims also to enhance communication, outreach and partnerships to share knowledge, expertise, experiences and lessons learned on behaviorally informed counter-terrorism interventions.

It goes without saying, perhaps, that the International Hub on Behavioural Insights to Counter Terrorism we are inaugurating today will benefit from the expertise of local, regional and international counter- terrorism actors, and enhance programming cooperation and coordination with the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact entities

operating in the field to achieve an impactful and “all-of-UN” program delivery on behavioral insights to counter terrorism.

Rather than relying on assumptions based on traditional models to explain behavior, the International Hub is designed to adopt a scientific methodology that is anchored in social, cognitive, behavioral and psychological sciences with a view to understanding what actually affects people's decisions and behaviors, to ensure that policy and programs reflect the actual needs and motivations, in order to have a stronger impact and greater efficiency. Drawn from behavioral sciences, such insights no doubt help in grasping a better understanding of the threat of terrorism and violent extremism. There is however no single set of motivations that may drive or attract an individual to extremism and violent extremism.

Hence, such endeavor requires conducting an evidence-based research and an analysis of individual, contextual and structural factors that influence human motivations, actions, interactions and responses. Research helps identify frequent motivations that, independently of or in combination with other factors, lead to radicalization and violent extremism conducive to terrorism. Since such multiple and varied motivations have behavioral roots, addressing them requires behavioral tools such as education, strategic action, rehabilitation, youth empowerment, employment facilitation, skills development, community engagement, gender equality, inclusion, and conflict resolution.

There is no doubt that the establishment of the International Hub is clearly in line with both the active role of the United Nations in combating the scourge of terrorism and violent extremism, represented by the UNOCT, and the resolutions of the General Assembly of the United Nations that are issued at a pace that matches the evolving nature of the phenomenon of terrorism and violent extremism, since 1979 through its international condemnation of terrorism in its resolution 145 adopted in its thirty-fourth session, and subsequent resolutions.

The establishment of the International Hub in Doha is also in line with the State of Qatar's clear and decisive position on the phenomenon of terrorism. Through its political discourse, international endeavors, and national strategic options, the State of Qatar has consistently affirmed that the phenomenon of terrorism is not linked to a particular religion or sect, but rather is a non-educational behavior, and that the eradication of terrorism requires the adoption of a holistic approach that involves addressing the political, economic and social root causes of terrorism, alongside security and military action. The official position of the State of Qatar condemns all forms of terrorism and violent extremism and stands against them relentlessly and without hesitation.

The establishment of the International Hub on Behavioral Insights by the State of Qatar reflects also the strategic choice that country has made against all forms of terrorism and violent extremism, and its continuous and sustained support for international organizations engaged in combating terrorism and violent extremism, that have come together under the umbrella of the General Assembly of the United Nations, represented here, in addition to the Hub, by UNOCT,

the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol).

Nothing perhaps speaks to the keenness of the State of Qatar to combat terrorism and violent extremism better than the declaration by the Emir of the State of Qatar, who announced in his speech at the General Assembly, on 22 September of last year, the imminent opening of a United Nations program office to combat terrorism, designed to applying behavioral insights to combating terrorism and violent extremism. Such declaration was a confirmation by His Highness of the active participation by the State of Qatar in the international and regional efforts to combat the phenomenon of terrorism and address its root causes.

In sum, the State of Qatar spares no effort to actively participate in the international and regional efforts to deal with the phenomenon of terrorism and violent extremism, and address its root causes, by supporting education for millions of children, young people and women, and creating job opportunities for those who are able to work. The State of Qatar plays also an active role through its strategic partnership with the various aforementioned relevant organs of the United Nations. Through the International Hub on Behavioral Insights that we are inaugurating today, the State of Qatar will also ensure leveraging the methodology of scientific research, emerging theories and results of research and studies to combating the phenomenon of terrorism and violent extremism.

Finally, I thank all the participants in and organizers of this event and wish you success.

May God's peace, mercy and blessings be upon you.