



# UNITED NATIONS OFFICE OF COUNTER-TERRORISM

**Statement by Mr. Vladimir Voronkov,  
Under-Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism**

**Briefing of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism  
to Member States**

17 July 2018, 3 p.m.

Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to welcome you to this UN Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact entities joint briefing to Member States.

I would like to thank Ms. Michele Coninx, Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, Mr. Edmund Fitton Brown Coordinator of the Al-Qaida and Taliban Monitoring Teams, Mr. Emmanuel Roux, Head of INTERPOL Liaison Office to the United Nations in New York, Mr. Alexander Avanesov Head of UNDP Global Programme on PVE and Mr. Mauro Medico, Chief of Terrorism Prevention Branch of UNODC, for having joined me on this occasion.

Immediately after this briefing has concluded, I will be joined by His Excellency Ambassador Abdallah Al-Mouallimi, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations and Chair of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre Advisory Board. We will brief you on the 16<sup>th</sup> meeting of the UNCCT Advisory Board that took place in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

I would like to focus this first part of our meeting on the outcomes of the Counter-Terrorism Week that took place at the United Nations from 25<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> of June. This was the first ever event

of its kind in the history of the United Nations. And it was a successful week, thanks to the strong support from all Member States.

The idea of the counter-terrorism week was put forward by the Secretary-General in his address to the General Assembly in September 2017. It was a response to the request of Member States, who urged more focus from the United Nations on countering terrorism and, in this context, on the prevention of violent extremism.

The Counter-Terrorism Week consisted of three main elements: the finalization of the review of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy; the first UN High-level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States; and twenty-five side-events.

These side events covered a wide range of practical topics, such as engaging young people and women to prevent violent extremism, global aviation security, the use of biometrics, countering terrorism financing, and ensuring human rights-compliant responses to the threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters.

Many of these side events were jointly organized by Member States, United Nations entities – such as CTED – and civil society organizations. I am grateful to those Member States who organized side events.

**Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The Counter-Terrorism Week began with the consensus adoption by the General Assembly of a resolution for the Sixth Review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

This followed four weeks of intense and sensitive negotiations, which were co-facilitated by the Permanent Representatives of Jordan and Finland, Her Excellency Ambassador Sima Bahous and His Excellency Ambassador Kai Sauer. I would like to salute their able and successful stewardship of the review process, which was for the first time supported by UNOCT as secretariat.

I would also like to express my deep appreciation to Member States for maintaining the consensus on the UN counter-terrorism agenda through consensus adoption of the Strategy review resolution. This consensus underpins the Strategy and its four mutually reinforcing pillars, sending a clear message of Member States unity to terrorists.

Close to 30 percent of the text has also been amended and strengthened, including new substantive language addressing various topics.

I would like to highlight three main aspects.

**First**, the review resolution maintains the momentum in support of the Secretary-General's initiatives who has made counter-terrorism one of his top priorities. The resolution reflects the establishment and role of UNOCT and the signature of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact.

It mandates continued efforts to enhance coherence, coordination, effectiveness and transparency in the UN work, under the leadership of UNOCT, to promote a comprehensive and balanced implementation of the Strategy. It stresses the use of CTED's expert assessment and recommendations in the design of capacity-building.

The Secretary-General will continue to report to Member States on these efforts as stipulated by the resolution. This will include a report by May next year with concrete recommendations on ways to assess the impact of and progress in the implementation of the Strategy by the UN entities.

We will also provide an annual briefing to Member States on efforts to ensure that UNOCT is fit for purpose in the way it is organized, coordinates with other, selects, funds and measures the impact of its projects.

**Second**, the resolution takes stock of the evolving threat of terrorism and the need for Member States to upgrade their responses and bolster international cooperation accordingly, within the

framework of international law, including international human rights, humanitarian and refugee law.

It includes new language on addressing returning or relocating foreign terrorist fighters and their families; protecting critical infrastructure and vulnerable targets; countering terrorist narratives; and countering terrorism financing.

I welcome the convergence of language between the General Assembly and the Security Council on some of these issues, which strengthens the pivot between the assessment mandate of CTED and the capacity-building role of other Global Compact entities.

The resolution also acknowledges the importance of building the resilience of victims of terrorism and their families as an integral part of a counter-terrorism strategy. This is one of the priority areas for UNOCT.

We are currently leading the preparations to mark the first International Day of Remembrance of and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism, as proclaimed by the General Assembly. As it was decided last year it will be 21 August.

**Third**, the review resolution reiterates the importance of preventing violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism, the need to involve youth and women, and the role that civil society organizations can play in this regard.

Prevention is a key route towards more effective counter-terrorism, as emphasized by the Secretary-General in his report on the implementation of the Strategy.

The UN work on preventing violent extremism will continue to be firmly anchored in the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and to be demand-driven, based upon request, and guided by the principles of national ownership and leadership of state authorities.

My Office followed closely the statements made by Member States for the review. Your expectations are high and we are committed to deliver.

However, aligning these expectations with the necessary resources for UNOCT to provide policy leadership, coordination and capacity-building remains a key challenge. I appeal to Member States to invest in the multilateral framework of the United Nations.

**Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Following the review, the Counter-Terrorism Week ended with the first-ever High-level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States.

Over 1,000 participants from 150 Member States, 30 international and regional organizations, 55 civil society organizations and 31 United Nations entities attended the High-level Conference.

Over 100 Member States were represented by delegations from capitals. Approximately half of the Heads of Delegation of Member States were from national counter-terrorism, law enforcement, security and intelligence agencies.

Allow me to summarize what I saw as the key outcomes of the conference.

**First**, it fulfilled the Secretary-General's key objective of strengthening multilateral counter-terrorism cooperation, breaking down silos and building new partnerships.

It brought together for the first time security, intelligence and law enforcement officials, diplomats and policy-makers, civil society and international and regional organizations to discuss practical and operational counter-terrorism issues.

**Second**, it underlined the need for Member States to share critical information to detect, identify, disrupt and prosecute terrorists in a lawful way consistent with human rights standards.

In this regard, many Member States highlighted the importance of implementing Security Council resolution 2396, including ensuring that countries use Passenger Name Record and Advance Passenger Information to prevent the transit of terrorists.

There was broad agreement that more needs to be done to share expertise, make better use of existing networks and consider agreeing non-binding best practices on the sharing of critical counter-terrorism information.

As a result, we will now consult Member States on establishing a Global Network of Counter-Terrorism Coordinators to finalize this agreement.

**Third**, Member States highlighted the benefits of adopting a comprehensive and inclusive “all-of-society” and “all-of-government” approach to countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism, including fully engaging women and young people in a meaningful way.

Civil society representatives made a valuable contribution with their statements both during the Conference and in many of the side events. Many expressed their interest in deeper engagement with the United Nations on counter-terrorism and violent extremism issues.

We will now consider establishing a new unit in my Office to ensure that the views of civil society are fully reflected in United Nations counter-terrorism policies and programmes. And we look forward for continuous support of member states to make this happen.

**Fourth**, several speakers highlighted concerns over human rights violations in the context of counter-terrorism and called for the United Nations to prioritize its efforts on promoting and protecting the rule of law and human rights while tackling terrorism.

My Office took careful note of all the points and suggestions, expressed by Member States during the Conference. We will publish a factual report on the High-level Conference in the next few weeks.

I was pleased that many Member States welcomed the signing of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact and the ongoing efforts of my Office to be more accountable and transparent.

**Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The successful outcome of the Sixth Biennial Review, the constructive results of the High-level Conference and the many side events during the Counter-Terrorism Week provide a clear direction for the future work of the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism.

I intend to develop a roadmap of action for my Office in collaboration with UN Global Counter-terrorism Coordination Compact entities and in consultation with Member States to build on these achievements.

In particular, I would like to invite interested Member States to partner with the United Nations to organize regional events on key thematic issues to pave the way towards the next High-level Conference, which will coincide with the review of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in June 2020.

Thank you.