



# UNITED NATIONS OFFICE OF COUNTER-TERRORISM

## PRESS RELEASE

### **The United Nations Head of Counter-Terrorism Strengthens Collaboration with the European Union and The North Atlantic Treaty Organization during Visit to Brussels**

*Brussels, 5 November 2019* – Mr. Voronkov, the Head of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) concluded a visit in Brussels where he met with representatives of the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

Briefing the EU Political and Security Committee (PSC – COPS), Mr. Voronkov reaffirmed the importance of cooperating with the EU. “Over the past two years, we have significantly strengthened our EU-UN partnership at the political and technical levels by building institutional frameworks, exchanging information and collaborating on capacity-building activities. But we should not remain complacent,” the Under-Secretary-General stated.

Highlighting the need for ensuring international cooperation in view of the changing counter-terrorism landscape, he added that the terrorist threat is significant, and Member States’ demands for assistance are growing. “Together, the UN and the EU can reach further and have true impact in strengthening international peace and security. Only through multilateralism will we be able to defeat transnational terrorism,” he stressed.

Mr. Voronkov also referred to the situation concerning foreign terrorist fighters. He re-iterated UN Secretary-General’s reminder that Member States have primary responsibility for their own nationals, that children should be primarily treated as victims, and that Member States should refrain from any action that renders individuals stateless. In this regard, the Under-Secretary-General highlighted the [Key Principles](#) issued by the Secretary-General in March to enhance coherence and United Nations support to Member States efforts for the protection, repatriation, prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration of women and children with links to United Nations-listed terrorist groups.

In addition, Mr. Voronkov met with Mr. Julian King, EU Commissioner for the Security Union; Mr. Dimitris Avramopoulos, EU Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship; Mr. Pedro Serrano, Deputy Secretary General of the European External Action Service (EEAS); Mr. Koen Doens, European Commission Director-General for International Cooperation and Development (DG DEVCO); and Ms. Christine Roger, Director-General for Justice and Home Affairs in the Council Secretariat, among other senior officials from different EU institutions. Topics of discussion included the 2020 UN-EU Counter-Terrorism Leaders’ Dialogue and the 2020 UN Counter-Terrorism Week; ongoing UNOCT-EU programmatic cooperation—e.g. on the prevention and countering of violent extremism in Asia under the UN STRIVE Asia programme; and common priorities such as the foreign terrorist fighters and dependents phenomenon, support to victims of terrorism, countering terrorist travel, human rights and civil society engagement, and terrorist misuse of the Internet and new technologies, among others.

One of the highlights of the Under-Secretary-General's visit to Brussels was the signing of a five-million-Euro contribution agreement for the UN-EU Countering Terrorist Travel Partnership with Mr. Doens. The UNOCT flagship Countering Terrorist Travel Programme aims to enhance the detection capabilities of selected partner countries to stem the flow of foreign terrorist fighters and serious criminals, as well as to strengthen regional cooperation to counter terrorism. The EU funding will support a three-year joint project within the global UN Countering Terrorist Travel Programme to assist partner countries in building their Passenger Information Units (PIUs), which collect, analyze, and share passenger data, including Advance Passenger Information (API) and Passenger Name Record (PNR), in accordance with international standards and recommended practices, as well as other international law and human rights obligations. The joint project will also add a maritime component to the UN Countering Terrorist Travel Programme.

During his visit to Brussels, Mr. Voronkov also met with Mr. Mircea Geoana, Deputy Secretary General of NATO. In line with the Updated Joint Declaration on UN-NATO Secretariat Cooperation signed in 2018, they discussed ongoing counter-terrorism cooperation, including on enhancing Member States capabilities to prepare for and respond to a chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear (CBRN) terrorist attack. They also explored capacity-building cooperation on matters such as countering Improvised Explosive Devices (c-IED).

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*For more information, visit [www.un.org/counterterrorism](http://www.un.org/counterterrorism) or contact Ms. Gerard, United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, New York, [gerardl@un.org](mailto:gerardl@un.org)*