



High-level Conference on the Prevention of Radicalization to Terrorism starts in Budapest

Budapest, 7 November 2019 – The Regional Conference on “Prevention of Radicalization to Terrorism: Regional Policy Responses and Risk Mitigation”, co-organized by the Government of Hungary and the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), opened today in Budapest, Hungary. Additionally, a Host Country Agreement establishing in Budapest a UNOCT Regional Programme Support Office was signed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary, Péter Szijjártó, and the Under-Secretary-General of UNOCT, Mr. Vladimir Voronkov.

The Conference aims to examine strategies in countering violent extremist narratives that incite terrorist acts and to address the conditions conducive to the spread of violent extremism. It brings together over 200 participants from Member States, international and regional organizations, UN agencies, NGOs and civil society to share practical experiences and best practices on key thematic areas.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary, Péter Szijjártó, outlined in his opening remarks that “Hungary has made important contributions to the fight against terrorism, but the fight is not over. We are living in a complex and unpredictable world where security is threatened by the challenges related to terrorism. We have not yet managed to win the war against terrorism and must carry on with the struggle.”

The United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Counter Terrorism, Vladimir Voronkov welcomed the collaboration with Hungary on this important topic. “I hope [the conference] leads to a renewed and sustained focus on preventing terrorist radicalization, including addressing the underlying conditions that cause young men and women to be lured by terrorism (...) We need to focus on enhancing national and community resilience by ensuring good governance, tackling corruption and fully respecting and advancing human rights and the rule of law,” he said.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia Herzegovina, Mr. Igor Crnadak, and the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Gabriela Cuevas Barron, also participated in the opening ceremony.

The Conference includes three plenary thematic sessions including addressing terrorist narratives through preventive strategies; assessing and mitigating the risks posed by returning foreign terrorist fighters and engaging youth in preventing and countering violent extremism conducive to terrorism. At each session, senior representatives will have the opportunity to consider the practical implementation of relevant aspects of the four pillars of the United Nations Global

Counter-Terrorism Strategy and to share information, expertise and experiences to address these issues while upholding international law and human rights.

On the margins of the conference, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Mr. Péter Szijjártó and United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Counter Terrorism, Mr. Vladimir Voronkov signed a Host Country Agreement establishing in Budapest the Regional Programme Support Office of the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT). The Host Country Agreement officially brings UNOCT into the family of UN entities present in Budapest. In addition to hosting UNOCT programme support functions, the new Office in Budapest will also support the UN Countering Terrorist Travel programme. The establishment of this Support Office is part of the strategy of UNOCT to deliver more efficient, regional and impactful support to Member States.

Background

This Conference is the fifth in a series of regional conferences on counter-terrorism that follow-up on the first-ever UN High-level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism of Member States, which focused on “strengthening international cooperation to combat the evolving threat of terrorism,” and was held in New York on June 28-29, 2018 under the auspices of the United Nations Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres. These conferences are taking place around the world, at the initiative of Member States, to strengthen regional cooperation on common counter-terrorism and preventing violent extremism priorities. The outcomes and recommendations of these conferences will feed into the second High-level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States, which will take place in New York in July 2020.

The Countering Terrorist Travel programme, UNOCT flagship programme is implemented in partnership with the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the Office of Information and Communication Technology (OICT), and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) supports Member States to use travel information to prevent, detect, investigate and prosecute suspected terrorists, while respecting high safeguards for data protection and in compliance with international human rights laws.

For more information, visit: bit.ly/OCT-RegionalConferences