



**UNITED NATIONS**  
**OFFICE OF COUNTER-TERRORISM**  
**UN Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT)**

**Opening statement by Mr. Vladimir Voronkov,  
Under-Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism and UNCCT Executive Director**

**19<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the UNCCT Advisory Board  
20 January 2020, 10:00-12:00**

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me start by thanking the distinguished Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and my good friend Abdallah Al-Mouallimi, for his continued strong support and able leadership of the Advisory Board.

I also want to thank His Excellency the President of the General Assembly, Ambassador Muhammad-Bande, for honouring us with his presence and for his informative statement. His Excellency has always been a good friend of UNCCT and I am grateful for his continued support.

I am also pleased to introduce my new Deputy, Dr. Raffi Gregorian, who am sure many of you already know. Dr. Gregorian joins the Office following a distinguished career at the US State Department where, for the past several years, he was a strong supporter of UNCCT. Among Dr. Gregorian's main responsibilities is to ensure that UNCCT's capacity-building work is aligned with and benefits from and all-of-UN approach.

We are currently in the process of drafting the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, which will feed into the review process this summer. In this report we are detailing how UNCCT is effectively supporting the implementation of the Strategy.

We are also finalizing the report of the Secretary General on the threat posed by ISIL, in which UNCCT programmes and projects on the repatriation, prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration of suspected foreign terrorist fighters and their dependents; information exchange on FTFs; and countering the financing of terrorism, will feature prominently.

I look forward to the continued good cooperation with His Excellency, the President of the General Assembly, as well as the two co-facilitators, Egypt and Spain, in the coming months.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Chairman of the Advisory Board has asked us to improve the visibility of UNCCT. The video we have just seen is one of the steps we have taken in this regard. As part of launching the new Office website we have significantly expanded UNCCT's online content, making it more dynamic and engaging, and giving project teams the opportunity to showcase their work, highlighting their successes and impact.

We frequently use the UNCCT hashtag on our Twitter profile and last year UNCCT tweets generated more than 250,000 impressions.

In your folder you will see some of the brochures we have produced on UNCCT programmes and projects.

We will continue to expand our visibility efforts in 2020, including by providing more information on the website about our activities. We will also organize an exhibition to showcase UNCCT's work during this summer's Counter-Terrorism Week and I have asked UNCCT to take the lead in organizing the first ever Victims of Terrorism Congress, which will take place on 30 June in New York, as part of this year's Counter-Terrorism Week. UNCCT will also co-organize a Regional High-Level Conference on countering terrorist financing, scheduled to take place in Riyadh in November, in connection with the G20 Summit.

To build on our ongoing efforts to be more visible, accountable and transparent, I would like to suggest posting a brief summary of the discussions of this Advisory Board meeting on the website. Subject

to your agreement, UNCCT will also circulate a document for Board members' review with a summary of the past 18 meetings.

Of course, visibility needs to be grounded on concrete achievements and tangible impacts. I am therefore pleased to inform you that in 2019 UNCCT significantly increased its delivery of capacity-building assistance to Member States.

The Centre organized 71 capacity-building workshops, training over 2,400 individuals in 2019. This represents a 60 percent increase in the number of individuals trained, compared to 2018. UNCCT also organized 32 outreach and awareness raising events, reaching more than 2300 people in 2019. This represents a 115% increase in the number of individuals reached and almost 150% in the number of events organized, compared to 2018.

Responding to demands from Member States, and Security Council and General Assembly resolutions, we also launched new programmes and expanded existing ones in priority areas such as countering the financing of terrorism; youth engagement, cybersecurity, victims of terrorism, Weapons of Mass Destruction/Chemical Biological Radiological and Nuclear terrorism, and screening, prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration of FTFs.

The deepening of our support to Member States has been made possible through the recruitment of staff members with technical expertise, who bring world class experience in technical areas such as strategic communications, border security and management, prison management, cybersecurity and human rights.

The distinguished Director of UNCCT, Dr. Khan, will shortly provide further details on the work done last year and we are also in the process of drafting UNCCT's Annual Report for 2019.

I hope that in future meetings of the Advisory Board we could invite some beneficiaries of our work to brief you on joint efforts and results achieved on the ground.

Excellencies,

With all these achievements we must recognize that more needs to be done.

You may recall that the Office of Internal Oversight Services conducted an audit of UNCCT in 2018, which did not have any critical findings, but made 12 important recommendations, which we have been implementing since then.

One recommendation was to review and update the 5-Year Programme to ensure that we remain responsive to the ever-changing threat of terrorism and emerging challenges.

At the initiative of the Chairman of the Advisory Board, and with the support of the Secretary-General, following a successful procurement process the UN has recently engaged one of the best consulting firms, KPMG, to undertake a strategic review of our work.

KPMG has about six months to produce a forward-looking report based on an evaluation of UNCCT's current status, performance, and progress made towards the implementation of the 5-Year Programme. This evaluation will inform the development of the Centre's future strategy.

KPMG will look at a representative number of programmes and projects across the four pillars of the Strategy, with global, regional and national scope, more specifically:

- Technical and Vocational Education and Training under Pillar I;
- Border Security and Management under Pillar II;
- Development and implementation of regional counter-terrorism strategies under Pillar III; and,
- Human rights, under Pillar IV.

To this end, consultants may travel to some of the beneficiary countries to discuss implementation and assess impact. It is also possible that KPMG consultants will reach out to members of the Advisory Board.

KPMG will also look at the efficiency and effectiveness of the organizational structure of UNCCT for implementing the 5-year programme, including how effective we have been at mainstreaming human rights and gender in our work.

KPMG will assess UNCCT's engagement with other parts of the Office, the UN Secretariat, Global Compact entities and other relevant stakeholders.

On the basis of the above assessments, KPMG will provide recommendations on how to strengthen UNCCT, including its visibility and positioning as a Centre of Excellence.

Recommendations will also be made as to the future orientation of ongoing projects. Key lessons learned and best practices will be identified to improve future project implementation, relevance and contribution to programme outcomes, providing actionable measures necessary to ensure the successful implementation of projects in the remaining year of the Programme.

I look forward to working with the Chairman of the Advisory Board to ensure that this review is productive and results-oriented.

I also look forward to sharing the findings with this Advisory Board, as I believe they can help incentivise our discussions on the future of UNCCT. I hope that we will be able to share some preliminary results with the Advisory Board in advance of the next meeting in Jeddah, scheduled for early June.

We are also developing our own ideas on how we can continue to position UNCCT as a Centre of Excellence.

This year we will also have to develop our new UNCCT programme of work starting in 2021. It might be reasonable to shorten the tenure of the programme from five to 2-3 years as this timeframe will allow us to better calibrate programming with available funding and emerging trends. I look forward to your feedback in this regard.

And let me end with the issue of funding. UNCCT has been privileged by the generosity and vision of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. We are near the end of the 5-Year Programme and we are also getting closer to the time when the current contribution from Saudi Arabia has been almost utilized.

Depending on actual spending and projects being implemented, we estimate that in 2021 we will have approximately 30 million remaining of the \$100 million contribution.

As was always the plan, we have seen a steady upscaling in implementation and staffing each year, leading to a corresponding increase in expenditures, utilizing funds from all our Trust Fund donors. This year we estimate UNCCT's expenditures to reach approximately \$27 million.

If we want to continue to respond to the many requests from Member States we need to ensure sustainable, predictable and diversified funding for UNCCT and its multi-year programmes and projects in the years to come.

I urge Member States to consider supporting UNCCT programmes and would like to thank those that already have made significant financial contributions, first of all, Belgium, Finland, Japan, Kazakhstan, Russia, Spain, the UK and the US, as well as the European Union.

I would also like to express my deep gratitude to those Advisory Board members that are providing Junior Professional Officers to UNCCT. We currently have eight JPOs in UNCCT [from Saudi Arabia, Switzerland, Sweden, Kuwait, Norway, Italy, Kazakhstan and France] who have been critical to strengthening our capacity-building work.

While I recognize that these are years of financial restraint at the United Nations, I also believe a more realistic regular budget allocation should be considered bearing in mind the breadth and depth of the mandate that Member States have given to my Office, including in areas such as countering the financing of terrorism, border security and management, and screening, prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration of terrorist fighters .

I hope I can count on this Advisory Board to support our call for sustainable funding as the wider membership initiates consultations on the seventh review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

I am very pleased, in this regard, that both co-facilitators are members of the Advisory Board, as I am sure this will add a useful dimension to their work.

Maintaining the consensus on the Global Strategy is essential. My Office stands ready to continue to support Member States in their fight against terrorism.

I will now ask the distinguished Director of UNCCT, Dr. Khan, to provide a more detailed briefing on the work of the Centre in 2019.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.