



## Global Programme on Countering Terrorist Threats against Vulnerable Targets

Implemented in partnership with:



UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL  
COUNTER-TERRORISM COMMITTEE  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTORATE (CTED)



# UNOCT launches five new thematic guides on Protecting Vulnerable Targets Against Terrorist Attacks

**New York / Madrid, 6 September 2022** - The United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) hosted a high-level virtual event to launch five new specialized guides (modules) dedicated to the protection of particularly vulnerable targets against terrorist attacks. While “vulnerable targets” refers both to critical infrastructure (e.g. public transportation systems, energy sector) and public places or ‘soft targets’ (e.g. tourist venues, urban centers, religious sites), these guides focus on the latter.

In the opening session, the **Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), Mr. Vladimir Voronkov** stressed that *“[The threat against soft targets] transcends the rhetoric of resolutions or declarations and goes to the heart of the principles of openness, tolerance and social cohesion that our societies defend and terrorists want to destroy. Because terrorists aim to frighten and divide us, only by working together at all levels we can successfully address this threat. The Guides we are launching today are a common effort.”*

These [five guides were published today](#) in Arabic, English, French and Russian and are presented by the [United Nations Global Programme on Countering Terrorist Threats Against Vulnerable Targets](#) which is led by UNOCT and jointly implemented with the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Institute (UNICRI), and the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC).

Also in the opening, the **Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations, H.E. Ambassador Alya Ahmed Saif Al-Thani**, noted that *“The [Global Programme on Countering Terrorist Threats against Vulnerable Targets] is one of the flagship projects of the partnership between my country and UNOCT,”* and that Qatar is *“glad to see the Program’s numerous achievements and activities.”* She added that *“the production of the five Thematic Modules being launched today... are of course the latest of the Program’s achievements.”*

The State of Qatar generously funded the development and translation of the thematic publications and is also the main donor of the Global Programme.

The **Acting Executive Director of CTED, Mr. Weixiong Chen**, highlighted that *“[the Global Programme] is a demonstration of close partnership, cooperation and coordination by UNOCT and CTED and the other programme partners,”* which since its launch in 2021 *“has achieved concrete results”*. He also noted that *“The five modules launched today will have added value to Member States in strengthening their capacity [to address] ... the threats against vulnerable targets.”*

The **Director of UNICRI, Ms. Antonia Marie De Meo**, warned that *“potential attacks against soft targets have become increasingly attractive to terrorist organizations because the attacks can be carried out with minimal resources and little to no complex planning.”* She welcomed the Modules

being launched noting that *“we have come together to produce an impressive and comprehensive framework that will equip Member States to better protect vulnerable targets worldwide and thereby to contribute to enhanced global security.”*

In closing the high-level opening, the **Chief of Cabinet of the Under-Secretary-General of UNAOC, Ms. Nihal Saad**, focused on the Module on religious sites protection and stressed that *“UNAOC will continue to work very closely with all relevant actors to keep the protection of religious sites high in the agenda of the international community so worshippers can exercise their right to conduct their rituals in peace.”*

Around 200 participants followed the event, and included decision-makers, practitioners and experts on vulnerable targets protection from Member States, international and regional organizations, the private sector, civil society and academia, including members of the [United Nations Global Expert Network to Protect Vulnerable Targets against Terrorist Attacks](#).

The high-level opening was streamed live via [UN WebTV](#) and was followed by an expert session, during which senior representatives from Costa Rica, the Republic of Korea and the United States shared experiences, good practices and tools related to the themes of the five modules.

The new guides present the knowledge and resources and lessons learned identified during the three Expert Group Meetings held by UNOCT with partners CTED, UNAOC and UNICRI in 2021. They are the product of a comprehensive process of research and consultations with Member States; the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact Working Group on Emerging Threats and Critical Infrastructure Protection; Global Programme Partners and international experts. The guides complement the 2018 [United Nations Compendium of Good Practices on the Protection of Critical Infrastructure \(CIP\) against Terrorist Attacks](#) by focusing on public places/"soft" targets as distinct types of sites worthy of a dedicated security approach. The guides feature specific case studies, good practices and recommended tools from around the world to support both the public and private sectors to further strengthen the safety and security of their public places, keeping them open and accessible and promoting shared responsibility.

#### **Links to access the thematic guides:**

- Module 1: Introduction - Protection vulnerable targets from terrorist attacks [[AR](#)] [[ENG](#)] [[FR](#)] [[RU](#)]
- Module 2: Protecting urban centres from terrorism attacks [[AR](#)] [[ENG](#)] [[FR](#)] [[RU](#)]
- Module 3: Protecting tourist sites from terrorism attacks [[AR](#)] [[ENG](#)] [[FR](#)] [[RU](#)]
- Module 4: Protecting religious sites from terrorism attacks [[AR](#)] [[ENG](#)] [[FR](#)] [[RU](#)]
- Module 5: Protecting vulnerable targets from terrorist attacks involving unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) [[AR](#)] [[ENG](#)] [[FR](#)] [[RU](#)]

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