



Third United Nations  
**HIGH-LEVEL CONFERENCE  
ON COUNTER-TERRORISM**

19–20 JUNE 2023

UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS • NEW YORK

## PRESS RELEASE

### Victims of Terrorism honoured in United Nations Tree Planting Ceremony

**New York, 19 June 2023** – “*The United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism has never lost sight of the situation of the victims; of their needs, and of their rights... we will continue to place victims at the heart of our counter-terrorism efforts*” declared **Under-Secretary-General Vladimir Voronkov** today at a tree planting and ceremony dedicated to victims and survivors of terrorism across the globe.

The Victims of Terrorism Solidarity Tree symbolizes victims’ resilience and aims to strengthen the resolve of the international community to support victims through a permanent symbol of remembrance erected on the grounds of the United Nations Headquarters. It offers a space for quiet and dedicated contemplation on the impact of terrorism on victims and survivors of terrorism, their families, and their communities.

The dedication ceremony of the United Nations Victims of Terrorism Solidarity Tree was held on the margins of the Third High-Level Counter-Terrorism (CT Week).

The event was organized by the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) in collaboration with the Group of Friends of Victims of Terrorism, a forum of 37 UN Member States and two regional organizations that seeks to promote and protect victims’ rights and advocates for their diverse needs. Over 70 Member States representatives, partners, victims and survivors of terrorism joined Under-Secretary-General Voronkov for the tree planting ceremony in the gardens at UN Headquarters.

**Ms. Sara Tumulty**, a young woman who lost her father at the age of three in the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center stated “the dedication of this Solidarity Tree unifies all of our voices and acknowledges our diverse experiences and our shared pain”.

**Mr. Karambir Singh Kang**, a survivor of the Taj Mahal Palace Hotel attacks in Mumbai in November 2008, that killed his wife and two sons said “I truly believe that with solidarity and unity we are no longer victims and become stronger together to face any adversity”.

A third terrorism victim, **Ms. Fatma Zohra Kheddar** shared her written statement in which she noted that “the roots of this tree buried deep in the ground will evoke the memory of our dearly departed, and stand through the years as a symbol of the international community’s recognition of the key importance of memorialization for the recovery and healing of survivors”.

At the ceremony, **Ms. Ana Jiménez de la Hoz**, Deputy Permanent Representative of Spain to the United Nations delivered a statement on behalf of the Group of Friends of Victims of Terrorism which Spain co-chairs with Iraq. “*This tree represents the resilience, strength, and hope that people show in the face of adversity. It is a beacon of light that illuminates the way to a brighter future where terrorism is*

*eradicated, and peace prevails”* she said. **H.E Mr. Qassim al-Araji**, National Security Advisor of Iraq unveiled the dedication plaque for the Solidarity Tree. The Permanent Representatives of the State of Qatar and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia also delivered remarks at the ceremony.

The solemn and intimate ceremony concluded with the heads of each delegation laying white roses at the foot of the tree, as a symbol of peace, unity, and remembrance.

Remembrance, commemoration, and memorialization have long been essential to standing in solidarity with and recognizing victims of terrorism. The United Nations recognized the importance of these principles by establishing the International Day of Remembrance of and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism through General Assembly resolution 72/165 (2017), commemorated every year on 21 August.

\*\*\*\*

For more information:

- Visit the [Webpage of the Victims of Terrorism Support Programme](#)
- Ms. Laurence Gerard ([oct-info@un.org](mailto:oct-info@un.org)), Head of Communications, UNOCT

[www.un.org/counterterrorism/CTweek-sidevents](http://www.un.org/counterterrorism/CTweek-sidevents)  
[@UN\\_OCT](#) | [#CTWeek](#) | [#UNiteToCounterTerrorism](#)