



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

19–20 JUNE 2023

UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS • NEW YORK

PRESS RELEASE

**Third High-Level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies
opens in New York**

UN Chief calls for unity, prevention, Human Rights-focus and funding in global fight against terrorism

New York, 19 June 2023 – The Third High-Level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States under the overarching theme of “*Addressing Terrorism through Reinigorated Multilateralism and Institutional Cooperation*” is underway at the United Nations Headquarters.

Organized by the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), the two-day High-Level Conference provides a platform for Member States, United Nations entities, international and regional organizations, civil society, and the private sector to explore further cooperation on key counter-terrorism priorities, including terrorism threats in some regions of Africa and conflict zones across the globe, human rights and gender-responsive counter-terrorism approaches, and the complex issue of repatriation.

Speaking at the Opening Session, **the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. António Guterres** [called for](#) global unity in the international community’s fight against terrorism, which presents an increasingly diffuse, dynamic and destabilizing threat. “*Year after year, terrorism has chipped away at the bulwarks we’ve built up over the decades,*” warned the UN Chief. “*But as this conference reminds us, when it comes to combatting terrorism, we must stand as one against this global threat.*” He highlighted the need to continue strengthening the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy as a central tool in counter-terrorism efforts, thanking Canada and Tunisia for their leadership in facilitating the eight Biennial Strategy review.

The Secretary-General also stressed the importance of prevention and human rights-based approaches in countering the menace of terrorism and addressing its underlying causes. “*Evidence shows that counter-terrorism efforts that are solely security-focused rather than human-rights based can inadvertently increase marginalization and exclusion, thereby perpetuating the same conditions that can lead to terrorism in the first place*”, he said. Citing shortfalls in assessed and voluntary contributions, the Secretary-General called on all Member States to ensure that UN counter-terrorism efforts are sufficiently resourced.

Addressing the conference opening in a pre-recorded statement, **President of the 77th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, H.E. Mr. Csaba Kőrösi**, highlighted that “*A multilateral response to the terrorist threat can be the only answer*”. He challenged participants to develop new ideas in the multilateral response to terrorism, citing that “*Our collective success requires approaches which are innovative, agile, multi-faceted, and integrated*”.

United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism, Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, welcomed the broad representation of stakeholders attending CT Week, stressing that “*Counter-Terrorism Week*

represents an opportunity for us to synchronize our counter-terrorism watches. It is an opportunity to review the terrorist threat landscape, and to reinvigorate our enduring commitment to effective multilateral cooperation". "The magnitude, complexities and evolving nature of terrorism require a robust and coordinated regional and international response," he added.

The Opening Session also featured two returnees from the Al-Hol camp in northeast Syria who shared their firsthand account and perspectives on repatriation of women and children associated with Foreign Terrorist Fighters.

High-Level representatives of Members States and International and Regional Organizations, as well as the Co-facilitators of the Eighth review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (GCTS), the Permanent Representatives of Canada and Tunisia to the United Nations, briefed participants on the outcome of the Eighth Review. The GCTS resolution is set to be adopted in the UN General Assembly later this week.

The High-Level Conference encompasses four thematic sessions on:

- Multistakeholder Engagement in Countering Terrorism while Ensuring Compliance with Human Rights and the Rule of Law;
- Building Effective and Resilient Member States' Institutions in the Evolving Global Terrorism Landscape;
- The Global Threat Landscape: Assessment of Current and Emerging Trends; and
- Strengthening Capacity Building Programmes – Making Them Fit for Purpose to Meet Resilience Gaps

The closing session, scheduled for tomorrow, 20 June at 4:45 pm, will feature remarks by **the Hon. Mr. Eric L. Adams, Mayor of New York City** and **Dr. Jehangir Khan, Secretary General, Council of Presidents of the United Nations General Assembly (UNCPGA)** and summary conclusions by **Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, Under-Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism**.

The Third High-Level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States is the first event of the UN Counter-Terrorism week ("CT Week"), a biennial gathering of Member States and international counter-terrorism partners.

CT Week will also witness the adoption of the Eighth Biennial Review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (GCTS) resolution by the General Assembly following a Plenary meeting and General Debate (22-23 June). Throughout the week at total of 40 thematic side-events will focus on initiatives related to the four pillars of the GCTS.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Visit: <https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/2023-counter-terrorism-week>
- Follow #CTWeek on [UN WEBTV](#) and on Twitter [@UN_OCT](#)
- Contact the UNOCT Communications team at OCT-info@un.org