



## UNITED NATIONS OFFICE OF COUNTER-TERRORISM

### **Closing Remarks by Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, Under-Secretary-General, United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism**

#### **Head of United Nations Counter-Terrorism Office reiterates the commitment to support efforts to counter-terrorism in Africa**

**Fez, Morocco, 5 June 2024**

Dear Director, General Mansouri,  
Distinguished guests,  
Dear colleagues,

Allow me once again to express my deepest gratitude to the Kingdom of Morocco for hosting and organizing this high-level event together with the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism

I would also like to thank representatives from African Member States, and international partners for your active participation in this event.

Excellencies,

This third iteration of the Marrakech Platform builds on the recommendations of previous events, including the High-Level African Counter-Terrorism Meeting, and the Regional High-Level Event of Heads of Counter-Terrorism and Security Agencies, held in April in Abuja and Tripoli respectively.

I am proud to see how this strategic initiative has grown, not only in the number of participating Member States, but also in the increasing significance of its outcomes. In this regard, I am heartened by the depth and practicalities of our discussions and the spirit of cooperation that has filled our sessions.

During the past two days, we had the opportunity to listen to an insightful and up to date assessment of the evolving terrorism landscape in Africa, with identified commonalities and specificities across different regions and contexts. This is critical to better understand the current situation in your respective countries and regions. We also learned in more detail about the commendable work by the Kingdom of Morocco to counter radicalization to terrorism through a holistic approach, and the critical role of security services in this regard.

Additionally, we explored the risks and opportunities presented by the rapid evolution of Artificial Intelligence, and how we can best leverage such emerging technologies to counter terrorism, while respecting international law, including human rights. I will inform the

Secretary-General about the outcomes and recommendations that have come out from our meeting, including the enhanced cooperation that this initiative has fostered among participating African Member States.

I also hope that the outcomes of this meeting will feed into the “Abuja Process” which is an African-owned and African-led initiative aimed at strengthening counter-terrorism efforts in the continent and providing tailored capacity-building support to affected countries, including through the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact entities.

Excellencies,

While important progress has been made by African Member States and international partners to combat terrorism, much remains to be done. We have heard throughout this meeting, the threat posed by Al-Qaida, Da’esh and their affiliates in Africa is increasingly testing the capacities of national security agencies.

As the threat continues to evolve, so too should our response. We must adopt counter measures that are as agile and as multifaceted as the threat persists. And we must continue to bear in mind that terrorism will not be defeated by military force, law enforcement measures and intelligence operations alone; we must equally advance our prevention efforts, including to address the drivers of terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism.

UNOCT is committed to supporting African Member States in their tireless efforts to address this scourge. We have increasingly invested in delivering comprehensive, tailored, and practical capacity building programmes to African Member States upon request, ensuring that our approaches are grounded in human rights and the rule of law as well as promote the meaningful engagement with civil society, including community and religious leaders.

This work is done together with our United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact partners and seeks to promote the balanced implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. In this regard, I am pleased that this meeting highlighted the work of our Programme Office in Rabat, as well as innovative global initiatives on Fusion cells, – for which the support from the Kingdom of Morocco has been indispensable.

I am also thankful for the opportunity to have heard from the beneficiaries of our technical assistance. Your observations will be instrumental in helping us to strengthen the design, delivery and impact of our capacity-building work.

Looking ahead, UNOCT will continue to increase its support to African Member States, including to implement the recommendations and outcomes of this meeting.

I would like to end by thanking His Excellency Mr. Nasser Bourita, Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation, and Moroccan Expatriates, and Mr. Mohamed Yassine Mansouri, Director General of the General Directorate for Studies and Documentation, for their extraordinary support to UNOCT.

We are extremely grateful with the announcement made by Mr. Mansouri of the next steps to install the UNOCT Training Academy in Rabat, allowing us to increase our support to African Member States.

Thank you once again for your commitment and collaborative spirit, and for the open and transparent dialogue that has made this event successful.

I wish you safe travels and look forward to our continued partnership and to seeing you, if not before next year, for our fourth edition of the Marrakech Platform.

Thank you.