



# UNITED NATIONS OFFICE OF COUNTER-TERRORISM

**Statement by Mr. Vladimir Voronkov  
Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism**

**20th Anniversary of Security Council Resolution 1373 (2001) and the establishment of the Counter-Terrorism Committee: achievements in international cooperation, challenges and opportunities**

**12 January, 8:30 AM**

Mr. President,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Representatives,

Allow me to begin by commending Tunisia on its leadership role as chair of the Counter-Terrorism Committee and salute this important initiative of its presidency of the Security Council.

Twenty years ago, the Council took a momentous step to bolster the fight against the threat posed by terrorism to international peace and security.

It is hard to overstate the importance of the Council's rapid action to adopt resolution 1373 and establish the Counter-Terrorism Committee in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

I want to pay tribute to the victims of these heinous attacks - almost 3,000 people from 90 countries - and to all those around the world whose lives have been shattered by the scourge of terrorism over the years.

Throughout the last two decades, the threat of terrorism has persisted, evolved and spread causing unspeakable human suffering and loss.

Al-Qaida has proven resilient despite the loss of numerous leaders. It pioneered a dangerous transnational model of regional franchises exploiting local fragilities and conflicts.

The so-called “Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant”, was able to harness social media to mobilize and recruit followers worldwide, creating a foreign terrorist fighter phenomenon of an unprecedented scale.

In the face of these threats, this Council has provided critical impetus and guidance for Member States to demonstrate unity of purpose and action, stepping up national efforts and international cooperation.

This has led to important successes, helping Member States to bring terrorists to justice and to disrupt additional attacks.

ISIL’s territorial aspirations in Iraq and Syria were defeated. But it still remains a threat in the region, conducting attacks and seeking to reconstitute an external operations capability.

Urgent challenges remain to ensure accountability for the crimes perpetrated by ISIL and to repatriate thousands of associated foreign nationals, mostly women and children, who remain in limbo.

Terrorist activity has shown that we must remain extremely vigilant: the threat remains real and even direct for many States.

Terrorists have sought to exploit disruptions arising from COVID-19. They have sought to benefit from the setbacks to the development and human rights agendas, riding on the wavetops of polarization and hate speech amplified by the pandemic.

The threat has become even more difficult to prevent, with low-cost, low-tech attacks against soft targets by so called lone wolves.

Terrorists are adapting quickly, keen to exploit cyberspace and new technologies, linkages with organized crime, as well as regulatory, human, and technical gaps in national capacities.

Their tactics are appealing to new groups across the ideological spectrum, including racially, ethnically and politically motivated violent extremist groups.

The COVID-19 crisis has magnified these trends, just as it has been a stress test for international cooperation and solidarity.

Mr. President,

Saving lives from terrorism, like saving lives from viral diseases, requires reinvigorated and inclusive multilateralism, as called for by Secretary-General Guterres.

The Security Council's leadership remains critical to ensure a united front against terrorism that is anchored in the United Nations Charter and international law, with human rights and gender equality at its heart.

I would like to raise three fundamental points as you reflect on a multilateral way forward to effectively prevent and defeat terrorism.

First, international solidarity is ever more imperative in our interdependent world, including through practical collaboration and impactful capacity-building.

Law enforcement and criminal justice responses, as mandated by this Council, are indispensable to detect, deter, and bring terrorists to justice.

They are also increasingly complex and resource-intensive.

Even better-equipped States are challenged to keep pace with evolving and emerging threats both offline and online. We must therefore urgently bolster international counter-terrorism cooperation.

Second, we need a renewed commitment to look beyond terrorism as a tactic and address the underlying conditions and drivers that enable it to sustain and spread.

A strategic investment in building resilience is necessary to effectively counter violent extremism conducive to terrorism.

Your voice is critical to emphasize that preventing and countering terrorism is necessary to facilitate decisive progress on the interlinked peace and security, sustainable development, and human rights agendas.

Third, engaging more and better with youth, civil society, the private sector and the scientific community in the fight against terrorism is key to be responsive to the social and technological realities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Public-private partnerships are a critical tool to effectively address terrorism.

Mr. President,

Since 2001, the Security Council has built upon resolution 1373 to develop a comprehensive set of measures and guidance for Member States to prevent and counter terrorism, taking on new issues and strengthening attention to international human rights, humanitarian and refugee law.

Concurrently, supporting Member States' efforts to implement these requirements has grown as a matter of priority for the United Nations system,

guided also by the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy since 2006.

Today, we are more coherent and coordinated than ever in providing this support, thanks to the reform of the counter-terrorism architecture initiated by the Secretary-General in 2017.

The close collaboration between my Office and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate is at the heart of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact, which brings together 43 UN and non UN entities.

We have made steady progress through this partnership, in line with resolution 2395, ensuring that our capacity-building support builds on the assessments conducted by CTED and the recommendations adopted by the Counter-Terrorism Committee.

Our flagship programmes on countering terrorist travel, countering terrorism financing, and on prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration, are a few concrete examples of this approach.

We will continue working to consolidate and expand the gains from these reforms, further integrating and sharpening our assistance.

Mr. President,

As we mark the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United Nations, the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of 9/11 and Security Council resolution 1373, and the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the time could not be more relevant for this Council and all Member States to reaffirm the imperative of multilateral action against terrorism.

It is essential to reinvigorate international counter-terrorism cooperation during and after the pandemic, with a focus on emerging threats and challenges. We need an inclusive approach and a strategic investment in building resilience.

The United Nations, working through the Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact, stands ready to continue supporting Member States in these efforts, and looks forward to your guidance.

I thank you.