



UNITED NATIONS OFFICE OF COUNTER-TERRORISM

Video Statement by Mr. Vladimir Voronkov

Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism

Fourteenth UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice: Advancing crime prevention, criminal justice and the rule of law: towards the achievement of the 2030 agenda

7 March 2021

Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I am grateful to Executive Director of UN Office on Drugs and Crime Ms. Ghada Waly for the invitation to address you on the occasion of the fourteenth Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

This forum has become a centerpiece of multilateral efforts to promote law enforcement and criminal justice as standard bearers for human rights and the rule of law, as bulwarks against violence, as enablers of sustainable development.

Terrorism continues to pose a grave threat to international peace and security. A threat that is often immediate and even growing for many Member States, especially in Africa.

A threat that is becoming more complex and diversified with the use of new technologies, the spread of hate within and across borders— both online and offline, and the potential for opportunistic linkages with organized crime, which have accelerated during the COVID-19 crisis.

According to the 2020 Global Terrorism Index, the global economic impact of terrorism was estimated to be 26.4 billion USD in 2019; Nine of the ten countries most affected by the economic impact of terrorism suffer also from ongoing conflict.

It is therefore crucial to maintain focus, sustain resources, and adapt our responses at the global, regional and national levels.

This is an imperative to save lives from the scourge of terrorism, to ensure accountability and overcome the additional challenges posed by the pandemic, such as delayed hearings and extended proceedings, while upholding due process, and the access of victims of terrorism, including victims of sexual violence, to justice and support.

Strengthening and anchoring law enforcement and criminal justice capabilities into human rights is not only the fourth pillar of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, it is also a commitment of the United Nations system, and a central element of the Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact led by my Office.

UNODC chairs the Compact's interagency working group on criminal justice, legal responses and countering the financing of terrorism. It is a crucial partner for my Office. That is why I was pleased to sign with Executive Director Waly at the end of last year a comprehensive, bilateral plan of action to further enhance our collaboration.

We are partnering with UNODC under a wide range of capacity-building programmes and projects in priority areas, such as:

Countering the financing of terrorism, terrorist travel and the trafficking in small arms and light weapons;

Assisting the development of gender- and age-sensitive prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration strategies, including for Member States that are repatriating their nationals from Syria and Iraq;

And engaging parliamentarians, under a common initiative with the Inter-Parliamentary Union, through which we are, for example, developing model legislative provisions on victims of terrorism.

UNOCT has also established a Programme Office in Budapest that focuses on countering terrorist travel and aviation security. And we look forward to opening a Programme Office in Rabat, which will serve as a counter-terrorism training hub for law enforcement and border security officers in Africa.

I invite all Member States to partner with us under these programmes – whether they would like to benefit from or support them.

We need to work together to mitigate the wide-range impacts of COVID-19, putting Agenda 2030 back on track, including efforts to build peaceful and inclusive societies.

Please join us in realizing the aspiration of people from across the globe to live in a world free from terrorism.

I thank you.