



**UNITED NATIONS  
OFFICE OF COUNTER-TERRORISM**

**REMARKS OF VLADIMIR VORONKOV, UNDER-  
SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR COUNTER-TERRORISM**

**International Parliamentary Conference  
“Global Challenges and Threats in the Context of  
the COVID-19 Pandemic: Terrorism and Violent  
Extremism”**

***Thursday, 15 April 2021***

***Video Message***

***12 pm St. Petersburg time/5 am New York time***

Excellencies,  
Distinguished Members of Parliament,  
Dear participants,

It is my pleasure to participate in this international parliamentary conference on preventing and countering terrorism.

Let me begin by thanking the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly of Member Nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States (IPA CIS) which traditionally hosts this important global event every two years in Saint-Petersburg.

I have the honor to deliver my opening remarks alongside such distinguished speakers as Her Excellency Ms. Valentina Ivanovna Matvienko, Chairperson of the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly CIS Council; Honorable Rik Daems, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE); Honorable Alia Hatoug-Bouran, President Emeritus of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean ; and Mr. Reinhold Lopatka, Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

Such a high-level participation demonstrates a strong parliamentary commitment to address terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

One of the main functions of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) is to strengthen the delivery of United Nations counter-terrorism capacity-building assistance to Member States.

In fulfilling this mandate, we rely on strong partnerships with Member States, international and regional organizations, civil society organizations, the academia and the private sector. We acknowledge the critical role played by parliamentarians in securing a balanced implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

That is why UNOCT, with the generous support of the Shura Council of the State of Qatar, will soon be opening a Programme Office on Parliamentary Engagement in Doha.

This Office will create a new page in the United Nations response to terrorism. It will promote a stronger parliamentary engagement in efforts to prevent and counter terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism. And it will facilitate inter-parliamentary dialogue on this important subject. It will strengthen multilateral cooperation to fight terrorism in a post COVID-19 world.

The United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism intends to deliver a comprehensive package of assistance to parliaments and their secretariats:

Firstly, through our Programme Office on Parliamentary Engagement in Doha we will produce normative work, research and customized tools for the use of the global parliamentary community.

Secondly, we will build capacity on a wide spectrum of parliamentary functions and promote the participation of civil society.

Thirdly, we will prioritize the empowerment of women and youth parliamentarians in order to promote age-sensitive and gender-responsive counter terrorism policies.

Finally, we will provide a platform for formal and informal counterterrorism-related networking and coordination among parliamentarians and parliamentary assemblies.

We expect to launch this new office—which we see as a parliamentary hub—virtually in June. And hopefully, if the situation allows, we will have an official in-person opening ceremony in October.

I very much hope you will be able to join us in these events, for which the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism will circulate relevant information through your parliamentary assemblies in due course.

Dear Colleagues,

Terrorism remains a primary concern for the international community.

This June the United Nations will commemorate the 15th anniversary of the adoption of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. On this occasion, my Office is preparing a guide for parliamentarians to facilitate the implementation of this major policy UN document on countering terrorism.

Tragically, 2021 also marks the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks and milestone Security Council resolution 1373, adopted under Chapter VII of the UN Charter in response to this horrific act.

I would like to take this opportunity to remember and honour all victims and survivors of terrorism.

We must continue to stand in solidarity with them, enhancing our joint efforts to support their rights and address their needs.

UNOCT will precisely dedicate its session at this Conference to the importance of integrating a victim-centric approach into the work of legislators.

We encourage all parliamentarians and governments to work hand-in-hand to establish national comprehensive plans of assistance for victims, as called for by General Assembly resolution 73/305.

UNOCT remains committed to ensuring that victims of terrorism remain at the center of the international counter-terrorism agenda.

In January, my Office launched a newly expanded Victims of Terrorism Support Programme to strengthen victims' voices and the capacity of Member States to support them.

Furthermore, UNOCT, in partnership with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and IPU, is developing model legislative provisions that specifically address victims' rights and needs over the short to long term, including gender-sensitive support.

The first United Nations Global Congress of Victims of Terrorism, which will take place later this year, will be an opportunity to maintain the momentum and build on these efforts.

I look forward to hearing from you, distinguished Members of Parliaments, about what we can do together to better respond to terrorism and support victims and survivors.

Let me conclude by commending IPA CIS, IPU, PAM, OSCE PA, PACE and all parliamentary assemblies, that joined us today, for giving due attention to counter terrorism-related issues in their agendas.

I wish you a fruitful discussion and thank you for your attention.