



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

28-30 JUNE 2021

UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS • NEW YORK

**Statement by Mr. Vladimir Voronkov,
Under-Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism**

**Second United Nations High-Level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of
Member states**

**Session V: The imperative of strengthening international and regional cooperation to
counter-terrorism in the new decade**

30 June 2021, 10 a.m. – 11 a.m.

Excellencies,
Distinguished Panellists,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to welcome you all to the Fifth Session of the Second United Nations High-Level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States on “The imperative of strengthening international and regional cooperation to counter-terrorism in the new decade.”

While COVID-19 has presented us with the greatest global challenge since the Second World War, terrorism remains a threat to international peace and security. Attacks in conflict zones and volatile regions continue, in some cases even increasing, all with devastating consequences.

Just as is the case with our responses to the pandemic, no State or region, big or small, can effectively tackle the threat of terrorism alone.

While Member States bear the primary responsibility for preventing and countering terrorism, the United Nations and other multilateral, regional and subregional organizations can contribute to a strong, networked response.

2021 COUNTER-TERRORISM WEEK

www.un.org/counterterrorism/HLC2021
[@UN_OCT](https://twitter.com/UN_OCT) | [#UNiteToCounterTerrorism](https://twitter.com/UNiteToCounterTerrorism)

These organizations are an essential link and force multiplier in the multilateral response to terrorism and their partnership with the United Nations is crucial.

In his latest report on cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, Secretary-General Guterres underlined the key role of and joint work with regional organizations in countering terrorism, preventing violent extremism, the promotion and protection of human rights, strengthening the rule of law, gender equality, and development, among other cooperation areas.

Likewise, the Security Council has reiterated the important role of regional and subregional organizations, including in helping us understand the root causes of armed conflicts, and urged these organizations “to develop their capacity to help Member States in their efforts to tackle the threats to international peace and security posed by acts of terrorism.”

The United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism has been working constantly to strengthen its partnerships with regional organizations. Please allow me to briefly share a few of our key contributions in this area.

First, as one of the key outcomes of the First United Nations High-Level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States held in 2018, my Office partnered with Member States and International Organizations to organize seven High-Level Regional Conferences across the world.

These Conferences provided an important platform for Member States to exchange information, expertise, experiences and good practices and to develop partnerships to collectively address a range of priority counter-terrorism issues.

Second, our engagement with regional and subregional organizations has acted as a critical force multiplier.

To solidify and guide these essential partnerships, my Office concluded Memoranda of Understanding or framework agreements with several regional organizations, including the African Union, the Arab Interior Ministers Council, the Caribbean Community, the Collective Security Treaty Organization, the Commonwealth of Independent States, the European Union, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

These cooperation instruments enable us to leverage synergies and complementarities for more effective interventions in support of our joint efforts against terrorism.

Third, my Office continues to work closely with the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and other United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact entities as well as United Nations field offices to guide the formulation of comprehensive and integrated regional counter-terrorism strategies.

The fruitful partnership between United Nations entities, Member States, regional and subregional organizations and other key partners has enabled UNOCT to deliver capacity-building programmes and projects benefitting 175 Member States across each of the four Pillars of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

During this session, we will discuss practical tools and strategies for further strengthening international and regional counter-terrorism cooperation to turn the Secretary-General's seven-point vision to counter terrorism into a reality.

We have identified four key questions to guide our discussion. These are:

- What are the main challenges for strengthening counter-terrorism cooperation and how can those challenges be overcome?
- How can international and regional organizations and other concerned stakeholders further support requesting States to address persistent legal, policy, practical and operational gaps?
- What are some of the lessons learned and best practices of Member States in developing national and regional plans of action to prevent and counter terrorism?
- And how can existing international legal cooperation instruments and tools be further refined and improved, including by making better use of technologies and capacity-building?

Answering these questions might be difficult given the limited amount of time we have. However, I am confident that given the extensive leadership experience and expertise that this session has brought together, we will have a very productive discussion.

I will now briefly introduce each panellist in turn and give them the floor for their respective six-minute presentations.

There will be no interventions from the floor in this session.