



Statement by Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, Under-Secretary-General, United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism & Executive Director, United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT)

**23rd Meeting of the UNCCT Advisory Board
Second segment: Update on UNCCT Programming in 2021 – 2022
26 January 2023**

Your Excellency, Ambassador Alwasil, Chair of the UNCCT Advisory Board,
Excellencies,
Dear Colleagues,

Let me begin by thanking you, Your Excellency, for convening the 23rd Meeting of the UNCCT Advisory Board and for your welcome remarks.

I would like to use this opportunity to recognize the critical role of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in supporting the United Nations counter-terrorism efforts, and to extend my gratitude for the Kingdom's support to the work of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre, as well as for its effective leadership of the Advisory Board over the last eleven years.

I would also like to express my sincere thanks to all members of the Advisory Board for their participation, as well as for their substantive engagements with the Centre's activities and their financial and in-kind support to make them possible.

Mr. Chair,

As the Advisory Board is meeting after a certain gap, it is useful to remind ourselves of the important mandate the General Assembly gave UNCCT under resolution 66/10 and 71/291.

With thanks to a generous grant from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, UNCCT was established in 2011 with the main focus to assist Member States on the implementation of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Strategy, its review resolutions and relevant Security Council resolutions.

Over the years, the Centre has continued to deliver on its mandate by focusing on the Strategy's part related to building counter-terrorism capacities of Member States.

The Centre has worked with Member States and their national institutions, as well as regional and international organizations, civil society, the private sector and expert community on promoting international cooperation on counter-terrorism.

The Centre has also continued to work on the development of policy advice and the delivery of cutting-edge capacity-building assistance to help Member States address the threat of terrorism more effectively. UNCCT does this work through a variety of methods at our disposal, including through in-person trainings, virtual workshops, e-learning, study visits, publications, handbooks and other tools that help advance skills and knowledge.

Our work responds directly to the needs identified by Member States and is guided by the Counter-Terrorism Committee and its Executive Directorate assessments and recommendations.

For the Centre's work to be relevant, consistent, transparent and in line with evolving needs, the Advisory Board's strategic advice on our programming remains as vital as ever to ensure that we meet the key priorities and challenges faced by Member States.

The 21 Members of the Board, appointed by the Secretary-General, represent all regions of the world. The Board serves as a critical part of the UNCCT's institutional structure and one that helps the Centre do its work transparently and effectively.

Mr. Chair,
Dear colleagues,

I would now like to speak about the Centre's key achievements. Today, UNCCT implements eight global flagship capacity-building programmes which have delivered critical capacity-building support to more than 160 Member States around the world.

UNCCT has also led advocacy and policy development work around the globe. From Central Asia to Southern Africa and to the Caribbean, the Centre has led the way in building consensus among Member States on counter-terrorism and prevention of violent extremism conducive to terrorism.

The Centre has demonstrated excellent ability to adapt to changing circumstances and respond to shifting priorities, as well as commitment to cost efficiencies and greater impact.

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, UNCCT has diversified its methods of delivering trainings to include virtual workshops and e-learning, expanding UNCCT's conventional trainings and outreach, allowing us to reach more personnel and policymakers than ever before.

In addition, the Centre runs programming on emerging and frontier issues, such as prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration of foreign terrorist fighters and their family members, the role of video games in the spread of violent extremism, the potential for abuse of cryptocurrencies for terrorist financing, or the dangers presented to cyber infrastructure by terrorists.

Moreover, the Centre has benefitted from UNOCT's various overseas presences, including the one UNCCT first established in Ashgabat. This has allowed the Centre to better support operations closer to beneficiaries, which results in more effective implementation of programmes and projects, reduced costs, enhanced impact of delivery, and stronger cooperation with regional, national and local counter-terrorism actors.

Currently, UNOCT is working closely with the Government of Saudi Arabia to explore the opening of a Programme Office in Riyadh to spearhead the implementation of the Arab Regional Counter-Terrorism Strategy developed with the Arab Interior Ministers Council.

Finally, I am also proud to mention that UNCCT has successfully undergone rigorous audits and evaluations of its performance, including an audit by the Office of Internal Oversight Services in 2018, a KPMG evaluation at the request of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 2020, and then last year an audit of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Trust Fund, of which UNCCT's funds form a large portion.

These audits and evaluations have demonstrated the professionalism with which UNCCT has delivered its mandate, and we have worked diligently to implement the recommendations that have been made to further improve the Centre's work.

And turning to finances, the Centre continues to rely on extrabudgetary contributions for most of its programmatic staff and activities.

I am proud to note that UNCCT's work has so far benefited from 32 donors that have contributed to our programming, which also demonstrates the support and trust for the Centre's work.

The European Union, the United States and Japan are currently UNCCT's largest financial supporters after the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. I would like to thank all donors that have made important contributions to UNCCT's work.

Our fundraising efforts continue to ensure that UNCCT's donor base attains even greater depth and diversity. UNOCT's Multi-Year Appeal continues to include UNCCT's global programmes to attract interest from donors.

UNCCT has continued to invest in greater visibility and focused outreach for UNCCT's activities and products. The social media outreach to millions around the world has helped us reach a wider and more diverse audience every year.

Mr. Chair,
Dear colleagues,

Allow me now to share key highlights of our future plans.

I have discussed with Ambassador Alwasil the ways through which UNCCT's role could be further enhanced in the United Nations counter-terrorism architecture. I thank Ambassador Alwasil for his guidance and advice.

Our strategic vision for UNCCT rests on several important principles:

First, the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre will remain focused on assisting Member States in the effective and balanced implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and relevant Security Council resolutions.

Second, we will endeavor to make UNCCT into a true 'Centre of Excellence' that is capable of providing even more cutting-edge technical assistance.

Third, my Office will seek to consolidate key capacity-building programmes under UNCCT.

Fourth, UNCCT will maximize its impact through enhanced engagement with the 45 UN agencies and international organizations that form the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact.

Fifth, as noted previously, UNCCT will continue to diversify its donor base.

Sixth, UNCCT will make sure it has the best qualified staff to further solidify UNCCT's role as a true Centre of Excellence.

And finally, UNCCT will ensure impact-focused and results-based management, in line with UNOCT's overall Results Framework, to ensure that its work is measurable, transparent and sustainable.

We will be working closely with all members of the UNCCT Advisory Board in the achievement of our important strategic and operational goals.

Mr. Chair,
Excellencies,

The upcoming eighth review resolution of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the Meeting of the Heads of National Counter-Terrorism Agencies in June will lay out new priorities and actionable points for our work.

The African Counter-Terrorism Summit that UNOCT is jointly organizing with the Government of Nigeria in October will also set the agenda for our expanding work in Africa, which is faced with multiple challenges.

The support of all members of the Advisory Board will therefore be critical in the achievement of our mutual goals. I look forward to working closely with you, Mr. Chair, and with all Board members in the new year.

And I thank you for your attention.