



# UNITED NATIONS OFFICE OF COUNTER-TERRORISM

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

**Opening Session of the Third United Nations High-Level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States  
19 June 2023, 10.00 a.m.**

Excellencies,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

Welcome to the Third United Nations High-Level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States.

I would like to thank the Secretary-General, Mr. António Guterres, for convening this conference.

Three years ago, the COVID-19 pandemic forced us to hold a virtual High-Level Conference. Two years ago, we held the High-Level Conference in a hybrid format. This year we are finally back to a fully in-person setting, and I thank you all for helping make it possible.

I am delighted that so many representatives from Member States, international and regional organizations, civil society organizations and United Nations entities are here today.

Counter-Terrorism Week represents an opportunity for us to synchronize our counter-terrorism watches. It is an opportunity to review the terrorist threat landscape, and to reinvigorate our enduring commitment to effective multilateral cooperation.

The magnitude, complexities and evolving nature of terrorism require a robust and coordinated regional and international response.

The emergence of new technologies, the exploitation of cyberspace, and the manipulation of social media platforms have added complex dimensions to the threat.

Terrorism is also growing at an alarming rate in conflict zones, particularly in parts of Africa.

Against this backdrop, the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism will partner with Nigeria to co-organize an African Counter Terrorism Summit in Abuja, in early 2024.

I count on your continued interest and support to make sure the Summit succeeds in opening a new chapter in the fight against terrorism in Africa.

Excellencies,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

We must also address the complex issue of repatriation. This is a matter not just of security, but also of human decency. I urge all Member States to accelerate their efforts to facilitate the safe and dignified repatriation of the tens of thousands of children, women, and men languishing in camps and detention facilities in northeast Syria.

In his forthcoming policy brief on A New Agenda for Peace, Secretary-General Guterres, has underscored Member States' call to prioritize prevention to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism and violent extremism that can lead to terrorism.

The New Agenda for Peace is also a call to ensure that counter-terrorism responses are firmly grounded in international law, international human rights law and gender-responsive approaches.

Good governance, the rule of law, equality, and the full realization of human rights are central to effective and sustainable counter-terrorism responses.

And in keeping the General Assembly's call for whole-of-society responses to countering terrorism, we also need to strengthen our engagement with civil society actors, including women, youth, and community organizations.

Promoting inclusive participation of various stakeholders and protecting open and safe civic space are fundamental to building trust between institutions and people as well as laying the foundations for a new and more equitable social contract called for in *Our Common Agenda*.

Excellencies,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

The General Assembly is about to conclude its eighth biennial review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The draft resolution under consideration has updated references to a number of important thematic issues, and enhanced provisions on measuring results and impact of the United Nations' efforts in support of Member States.

I thank the co-facilitators of the review, the Permanent Representatives of Canada and Tunisia, for their efforts to facilitate a consensual outcome. They will shortly share their observations and conclusions of the review process.

For its part, the United Nations system, through its Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact, stands ready to support Member States in implementing relevant outcomes of the eighth review.

The Compact now consists of 46 entities and remains an indispensable and unparalleled platform of expertise to coherently coordinate assistance to requesting Member States to prevent and counter terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

The United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism is currently implementing 17 global flagship programmes on priority counter-terrorism issues, in addition to tailored projects that respond to the specific needs of Member States. During the last two years, more than 21,000 people from 171 Member States participated in our capacity-building activities.

We are extremely grateful to the partners who make such assistance possible, including the State of Qatar and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, through their continued financial, political, and technical support.

I take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the support of the General Assembly last December, in approving the Secretary-General's proposals for the conversion of 25 posts to the Regular Budget. This support provides a greater measure of predictability and sustainability for our core mandated policy and coordination functions.

Excellencies,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

We continue to attach a high priority to multilateral dialogue and cooperation. Through eleven high-level regional counter-terrorism conferences and outreach events over the past six years, we have brought together diverse stakeholders and sustained the multilateral momentum on counter-terrorism.

We are aiming to further strengthen our efforts to address terrorism through reinvigorated multilateralism and institutional cooperation.

It is now my great honor to give the floor to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. António Guterres, whose leadership and support has been critical to both creating the Office of Counter-Terrorism and helping sustain the international consensus on multilateral approaches to counter terrorism during this complex and unpredictable time.

Mr. Secretary-General, thank you for your participation today; the floor is yours.