



**Remarks by Mr. Rafi Shah, Chief of the Policy, Knowledge Management and Coordination
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**The Twenty-Third GCTF Coordinating Committee Meeting
Session 4: United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact**

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Mövenpick Residences, Nairobi, Kenya**

Co-Chairs, Excellencies
Dear Colleagues

Thank you for the opportunity to brief the GCTF Coordinating Committee on the activities of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact.

I am honored to lead the Counter-Terrorism Compact Delegation, and to be joined by my colleagues – Ms. Elena Rigacci Hay from UNODC, and Mr. Andrew Begg from CTED.

Before I brief you on our work since our meeting last September in New York, allow me to speak briefly about the evolving threat of terrorism.

The threat posed by Al-Qaida, Da'esh, and their affiliates remains high, with a disproportionate impact on conflict zones.

This is despite successful counter-terrorism initiatives by Member States and international partners.

The situation in West Africa and the Sahel, in particular, has deteriorated and become more complex, as local ethnic and regional disputes conflate with the agenda and operations of terrorist groups, further exacerbating regional instability.

Afghanistan remains a regional hub for terrorist groups, with so-called Da'esh-Khorasan viewed as the primary regional threat despite fewer attacks and territorial losses.

Also concerning is the increasing use of lethal and cost-effective improvised explosive devices by Al-Qaida, Da'esh and their affiliates, alongside the spread of small arms and light weapons in Afghanistan, the Middle East and Africa.

The repatriation of Da'esh fighters and their families from camps in the north-eastern Syria has seen limited progress, despite notable efforts by Member States, especially in Central Asia and Iraq.

The risk of breakouts by detained foreign terrorist fighters, or the radicalization and recruitment of associated family members held in these camps continue to pose short, medium, and long-term challenges.

The terrorist threat in Europe has also increased following recent fatal attacks in France and Belgium and other developments around the world.

In South-East Asia, while counter-terrorism efforts have reduced terrorist activities in Malaysia and Indonesia, the Philippines faces increasing attacks.

Co-Chairs, Excellencies, dear Colleagues

One of our joint priorities, as evidenced by several meetings organized throughout the week here in Nairobi, is to address the increasing terrorist threat in parts of Africa.

Today's GCTF meeting comes one month after the UN Counter-Terrorism Compact's Tenth Coordination Committee meeting. With the in-person participation of the Secretary-General, this meeting discussed *Strategic Coordination of Counter-Terrorism Initiatives in Africa* and adopted its Joint Programme of Work for 2024-2026.

The meeting underscored the need to prioritize and coordinate counter-terrorism efforts in Africa by addressing security concerns and underlying conditions that can be exploited by terrorist groups, strengthening partnerships with regional organizations, and enhancing operational coordination through the Compact – in particular within the framework of the *United Nations Joint Appeal for Counter-Terrorism in Africa*.

Stemming the increasing terrorist threat in the continent and around the world demands a more robust response that draws on our comparative advantages, is well coordinated, and adequately funded.

In April this year, the Government of Nigeria, in partnership with UN Office of Counter-Terrorism, will host a "High-Level Counter-Terrorism Meeting" in Abuja, Nigeria. The Meeting, with its Africa lead and Africa owned agenda, will contribute to a common understanding of the terrorism threat landscape in Africa, lead to commitments on critical counter-terrorism challenges and strengthen regional and international cooperation.

The GCTF with its important Member States is a key UN partner in these efforts. We welcome Kenya and Kuwait joining to GCTF. Our strategic partnership based on concrete, collaborative action to provide operational responses to the global terrorist threat enables exactly that.

On UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) and UN Global Counter-Terrorism Compact side, we are committed to further strengthening this partnership with GCTF.

I will now hand-over to my colleagues from UNODC and CTED for their brief interventions.

Thank you.