



UNITED NATIONS OFFICE OF COUNTER-TERRORISM

Statement by Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, Under-Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism Group of Friends of Countering Terrorism

12 February 2018, 3 pm.

Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to warmly thank Ambassador Hilale and the Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Morocco for convening this meeting of the Group of Friends of Countering Terrorism.

Preventing and countering terrorism is one of the top priorities of the Secretary-General. This is why he proposed, as his first reform initiative the establishment of the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism. This proposal was supported by consensus by the General Assembly, and I am personally grateful by the consistent and strong support extended by Member States to the Office and to me personally.

As I reported to the Security Council last Thursday, despite the military setbacks inflicted on ISIL over the past months, terrorism remains a global challenge that is rapidly evolving. It demands an urgent and concerted multilateral response.

The Secretary-General delivered a major statement on counter-terrorism and human rights in London on 16 November, in which he identified five key counter-terrorism priorities:

- First, enhancing international cooperation;
- Second, placing a sustained focus on prevention;
- Third, investing in and empowering young people;
- Fourth, addressing the general inequalities and stereotypes that drive terrorist groups;
- And fifth, winning the fight on the Internet.

We have a solid foundation. With the strong and united support of the General Assembly and many of you in this room, we have the four pillars of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the UN

Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, and several Security Council Resolutions to build our next efforts. We now need to focus on implementation.

I have identified three key areas for my remarks today:

- First, the Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact;
- Second, the Sixth Biennial Review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy; and
- Third, the first UN Summit of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States.

First, the Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact

One of the primary objectives to establish UNOCT was the need to strengthen coordination and coherence of UN's counter-terrorism work.

In this context, the Secretary-General announced in the abovementioned speech in London last November, his intention *“to develop [a] UN system-wide Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact.”*

The overarching theme of the Global Compact is the development of an effective working partnership across the UN System, Interpol and the World Customs Organization to strengthen the quality of the UN's counter-terrorism work. To make the long story short – to step up both the exchange of information and joint project implementation. The Global Compact, which was developed through an extensive consultative process with 38 entities, will address the existing coordination and coherence gaps, providing an agreed framework to promote action-oriented collaboration among entities.

The Secretary-General approved the Global Compact in a meeting of his Executive Committee on 1st February, and we expect it will be signed shortly by the Heads of all these entities, and then shared with Member States. I will chair a Coordination Committee to oversee the implementation of the Global Compact, and will present an annual report to the Secretary-General on the progress achieved.

The Secretary-General is planning to report to Member States on the Global Coordination Compact through his report on implementation of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy to the General Assembly in April.

Second, the Sixth Biennial Review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy

The five biennial reviews have been critical in taking stock of the progress and challenges in the implementation of the Global Strategy. The value-added of these reviews is that, through biannual

General Assembly resolutions, they make the Global Strategy a “living document.” They provide crucial updates of the Strategy in light of the evolving threat of terrorism.

The Office of Counter-Terrorism is currently working on the report of the Secretary-General for the sixth review of the Strategy that will be released in April. I invited Member States on 20 December to provide their contributions to the report, and to date we have received 30 submissions.

I welcome the appointment of the Permanent Representatives of Jordan and Finland by the President of the General Assembly as co-facilitators for the sixth review. My office stands ready to support the co-facilitators based on their request.

Third, the first UN Summit of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies

In his landmark speech in London, the Secretary-General also announced the first ever UN Summit of this kind. The Summit will take place at the end of June immediately after the review, which would provide for a high-level “UN counter-terrorism week” in New York.

The aim of the Summit is to bring together the senior-most officials in charge of day-to-day counter-terrorism efforts within Member States, for operational and practical exchanges to strengthen international cooperation.

This will provide a unique opportunity to forge a new international partnership to address the complex and transnational threat from terrorism, by establishing new channels of communication to improve the exchange of critical information between and within Member States.

I hope that the Summit will also contribute to strengthening the role of the United Nations to support Member States to counter terrorism. This includes identifying needs and opportunities to facilitate the sharing of expertise and resources.

The Secretary-General will shortly write to the Heads of Government of all Member States inviting them to nominate their delegations to the Summit, led by the most senior official responsible for coordinating the Government’s work on Counter-Terrorism. OCT expects that Heads of Delegation will include Ministers of Interior, heads of law enforcement or security and intelligence agencies.

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to conclude with some observations on OCT counter-terrorism capacity-building support.

The threat from ISIL may have been reduced from a military perspective, but returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters now poses a significant threat to international peace and security. Effectively

assisting the most affected Member States, upon their request, is a priority in the foreseeable future in terms of both the coordination and capacity-building functions of UNOCT.

We have a number of tools at our disposal in this regard – such as the Integrated Assistance for Counter-Terrorism—or I-ACT—initiative deployed in the Sahel region; or the UN Foreign Terrorist Fighter Capacity Building Implementation Plan mandated by the Security Council, which we are now updating, together with CTED, in response to Security Council resolution 2396.

To better guide the UN capacity-building work, I am committed to further strengthen UNOCT's relationship with CTED. Security Council resolution 2395 (2017) is a milestone and provides the basis for better integration of CTED's assessments into the design of UNOCT capacity-building support. National ownership and sustainable impact remain the key principles in these efforts.

I hope that our steady efforts to improve coordination and coherence, as well as our effectiveness will be met with additional investments from Member States, as resource mobilization, not only for UNOCT but the UN system as a whole, is a serious challenge.

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to thank you again for the opportunity to brief the Group of Friends. I am very grateful and hope for the Group's continued engagement and strong support to UN efforts to prevent and counter terrorism.

Thank you.