

JOINT PLAN OF ACTION

in Central Asia

Tashkent ▶ 3-4 March 2022

FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL COUNTER-TERRORISM STRATEGY

High-Level International Conference on
Regional Cooperation

Conference Report



"The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy has pioneered comprehensive, integrated, and principled efforts to tackle security challenges of the twenty-first century.

I commend Member States in Central Asia for having adopted the first regional counter-terrorism strategy, the Joint Plan of Action, ten years ago.

And for their close cooperation with the United Nations to bring it to life across all phases of the Joint Plan of Action project."

Mr. Antonio Guterres

United Nations Secretary-General







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“Fifteen years ago, all the countries of the world unanimously endorsed the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. It became the first comprehensive, collective, and universally recognized legal basis for combining national and international efforts in the fight against terrorism. In 2011, Central Asia provided the first successful example of regionalization of this policy document—when all five countries adopted the Joint Action Plan for its fulfillment. The implementation of the Plan has strengthened regional consensus on shared principles and approaches in counter-terrorism, and established effective mechanisms for cooperation both bilaterally and multilaterally. The countries of the region have formed national systems for countering terrorism. National action plans have been developed that fully comply with the UN recommendations”.

Mr. Shavkat Mirziyoyev

President of the Republic of Uzbekistan

Executive Summary

The High-Level International Conference on “Regional Cooperation among Central Asian Countries within the framework of the Joint Plan of Action for the Implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy” was jointly co-organized by the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), the United Nations Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA), the Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies under the President of Uzbekistan (ISRS), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan, and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The Conference was held in the Congress Hall of the Tashkent City International Business Center (Uzbekistan) from 3-4 March 2022.

The idea for holding this Conference was proposed by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Mr. Shavkat Mirziyoyev, during the high-level debate at the 75th United Nations General Assembly.

The event was held in a hybrid format and brought together over 400 representatives, including 327 in-person participants, from 46 Member States, 29 international and regional organizations and United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact entities, and 11 civil society organizations (CSOs) from Central and South Asia. On the margins of the Conference, side events were organized by the OSCE, UN entities, UNOCT and the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO RATS).

Coinciding with the 10th anniversary of the Joint Plan of Action (JPoA) for the Implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia, which was endorsed in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan in 2011, the Conference was a timely demonstration of regional solidarity and a renewed commitment to multilateral cooperation on counter-terrorism amidst the turmoil in Afghanistan.

The Conference outcomes included the adoption of a renewed JPoA and the “Tashkent Declaration” by Central Asian States, reflecting the strong political will and commitment of these countries to continue implementing the regional strategy over the next decade.

The updated JPoA was developed by Central Asian Member States during 2021 with expert support provided by UNRCCA and UNOCT and based on the analysis of the “Ten Year Review of the Joint Plan of Action for the Implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia,” which took stock of what had been achieved in the past decade since the adoption of the JPoA in the region, including new and emerging issues and challenges.

Conference participants emphasized the importance of prevention, education, youth empowerment, human rights-compliant law enforcement, and the inclusion of civil society in building resilience. Combating the financing of terrorism, strengthening border management and cyber security, tackling terrorist use of the Internet and the prevention of radicalization leading to terrorism or violence in prisons were identified as regional priorities. In view of the region’s experience in bringing back its citizens from the conflict zones in North-East Syria and Iraq, repatriation and rehabilitation of foreign terrorist fighters and their families was another highlight of the discussions.

Representatives of all five Central Asian countries underscored the need to further strengthen the work of UN entities and other international and regional partners in the region as well as enhance international and regional cooperation, including the sharing of good practices and lessons learned to prevent radicalization and fully address the conditions that fuel the lure of terrorism.

“ Keeping up with how the threat landscape changes is instrumental to preempt terrorism and save lives. Overall, we must stay abreast of how the threat of terrorism to international peace and security evolves. I am convinced this will help inform the global counter-terrorism response over the next few years.”

Mr. Vladimir Voronkov

Under-Secretary-General, United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism

Summary of the Opening Plenary Session

“Strong partnerships within the international community are crucial to tackle all security threats and common challenges”.

Ms. Helga Maria Schmid

OSCE Secretary-General

Mr. Abdulaziz Kamilov

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan, and moderator of the Opening session, reminded that 11 years ago, on 30 November 2011, the States of Central Asia adopted the world's first Joint Plan of Action for the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. They thus declared their determination to take concrete collective steps to combat terrorism and become an example to the international community for the implementation of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy at the regional level.

Mr. Viktor Makhmudov

Secretary of the Security Council under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, delivered the *Address of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Mr. Shavkat Mirziyoyev*. The President acknowledged that Central Asia is one of the safest regions of the world which he attributed to the implementation of the JPoA. He also stressed that the JPoA had allowed Central Asian “nations to conduct more structured and productive dialogue, share experiences and important information, build counterterrorism capacity, and achieve together what cannot be done alone.” The President proposed a number of initiatives for consideration. These included: 1) the opening of an Office of UNOCT in

Central Asia; 2) the creation of a unified electronic network on cyberterrorism in Central Asia to promote the development of the exchange of experiences and data, and research and collection of best practices in this area; 3) the establishment under the auspices of UNOCT of a regional council of experts on rehabilitation and reintegration, comprised of leading experts from Central Asia; 4) the convening in 2023 in Samarkand of the Permanent Youth Council of Central and South Asia on youth engagement on preventing and countering violent extremism (PCVE); and, 5) the holding of a high-level conference on “Enlightenment and Religious Tolerance” under the auspices of the UN to emphasize the importance of eliminating illiteracy and ignorance, and, promoting tolerance, mutual respect and understanding in the name of strengthening security and peace on the planet.

Mr. António Guterres

Secretary-General of the United Nations, in his video message noted that the Conference on Central Asian cooperation had reminded the international community of the importance of uniting to counter terrorism. He commended the Member States of Central Asia for having adopted the first regional counter-terrorism strategy, the Joint Plan of Action, ten years ago, and appealed to Member States to keep working to deliver on ‘security, prosperity, and hope.’ The Secretary-General emphasized that his new *Agenda for Peace* – proposed in his report on *Our Common Agenda* – had recognized that terrorism and security challenges could not be effectively addressed in the absence of concerted action on development and human rights for all people.

Mr. Vladimir Voronkov

Under-Secretary-General, United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), recalled that following its seventh review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in June 2021, the General Assembly adopted a forward-looking, comprehensive and - most importantly – a *consensus*-based resolution - to guide our counter-terrorism efforts going forward. This landmark resolution strengthened provisions in several areas, including human rights, the rule of law, and engagement with civil society, youth, and women. He emphasized the need to redouble joint efforts in preventing terrorism as the region is facing new threats and challenges. In this regard, he reminded participants of the importance of keeping up with the constantly evolving threat landscape as it is instrumental to pre-empting terrorism and saving lives. Noting the centrality of human rights, gender, and a coherent all-of-society approach, he underlined that counter-

terrorism must be comprehensive and inclusive as this will enable societies to be better prepared today for the terrorism of tomorrow.

Ms. Alena Kupchyna

OSCE Co-ordinator of Activities to Address Transnational Threats, delivered the *address of the OSCE Secretary-General, Ms. Helga Maria Schmid*. In her speech, the Secretary-General recalled the OSCE's efforts in the region to support activities aimed at addressing Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism (VERLT). She reminded of the necessity to regularly assess risks emanating from the territory of Afghanistan, while supporting the repatriation and rehabilitation of former terrorist fighters and their family members from there and other conflict zones. The Secretary-General further highlighted the OSCE's commitment to helping respond to these challenges faced by Central Asian participating States, particularly on border security, the detection and seizure of illicit small arms and light weapons, and, in countering the financing of terrorism.

Ms. Natalia Gherman

Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Central Asia and Head of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA), informed of UNRCCA's and UNOCT's joint engagement in the development of the renewed JPoA. She noted that in addition to the strengthened focus on cyber security, border security, and the return of terrorist fighters, the updated plan contains a separate section on the role of women and girls in PCVE efforts. It is also envisaged that UNRCCA and UNOCT will continue its support for implementation, monitoring and communication, and with a view to increasing the effectiveness of the JPoA.

Mr. Zhang Ming

Secretary-General of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), in his video message, praised the efforts of Central Asian States in the implementation of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and underlined the SCO's strong cooperation with the United Nations entities. He noted that the SCO had adopted a few legal documents to strengthen cooperation in the field of countering terrorism during the last two years. He further informed that SCO Member States are focused on working with youth to prevent radicalization to violence, eradicate poverty, and reduce unemployment as well as on strengthening regional and global cooperation.

Mr. T.S. Tirumurti

Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to UNSCR 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism, in his video message noted that the terrorist threat to the countries of the Central Asian region had remained high due to returning foreign terrorist fighters, and developments in Afghanistan. He recalled that due to the importance of Central Asia in the international fight against terrorism, some States of the region had been visited by the Counter-Terrorism Committee more than once. The Chair reminded that the Committee's findings had become a primary source of reference for technical assistance providers and noted the importance of Member States' giving their consent to the sharing of the Committee's findings.

“The common understanding of the countries of Central Asia on the issues of violent extremism and terrorism and the desire to cooperate at the regional level contributed to the adoption of such a unique document (JPoA)”.

Ms. Natalia Gherman

Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Central Asia and Head of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia

KEYNOTE REMARKS

All five Foreign and Deputy Foreign Ministers of Central Asia stressed in their statements the important role which the JPoA played over the last ten years. They pointed out that the JPoA was a clear example of a common understanding and readiness to cooperate in Central Asia. They expressed their full support to the renewed JPoA and its role as a unique regional framework.

Mr. Mukhtar Tleuberdi

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, noted that since the adoption of the JPoA, the world order had changed, the situation in Afghanistan remains unstable, and the spread of the idea of violent extremism and terrorism persists.

He noted that Kazakhstan is firmly committed to the implementation of the goals and objectives of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The challenges posed by foreign fighters remains a pressing issue for Kazakhstan, as most of the country's radicalized residents have joined the ranks of militants in Syria and Iraq. At the same time, Kazakhstan has a unique experience in repatriating its citizens and their children from the war zones of the Middle East. The Minister also informed that the returnees were provided with comprehensive support of a social, economic and legal nature, and noted that the country was ready to share its experience on returning citizens from conflict zones and their rehabilitation and reintegration.

Mr. Sirojiddin Mukhriddin

Minister of Foreign Affairs of Republic of Tajikistan, made reference to the 4th phase of the multiyear UNRCCA-UNOCT project to implement the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia, launched at the meeting of Deputy Foreign Ministers of Central Asia, and convened by UNRCCA in Dushanbe in December 2021. He informed of his Government's plans to organize a High-Level Conference under the "Dushanbe Process" on 18-19 October 2022.

The Minister also stated that in the northern part of Afghanistan the ground is being prepared for the expansion of criminal networks and terrorist organizations, which can become a serious threat to the implementation of initiatives proposed by Central Asia States for the development and prosperity of the region. In this regard, he proposed use of the logistics capabilities of Tajikistan (6 transnational bridges) in the transfer of international humanitarian aid to Afghanistan to prevent further aggravation of the humanitarian crisis.

“The relevance of this conference is that it provides an opportunity to analyze the accumulated experience of interaction between the countries of the region within the framework of the Joint Plan and consider critical prospects for strengthening cooperation in the face of new challenges”.

Mr. Abdulaziz Kamilov

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan

Mr. Azizbek Madmarov

Deputy Foreign Minister of Kyrgyz Republic noted that the situation in Afghanistan remains the main threat to security in the Central Asian region. The presence of such destabilizing factors as international terrorism, violent extremism, illegal migration and cross-border crime, as well as further exacerbation of the socio-economic and food crises, could lead to a real humanitarian catastrophe in Afghanistan. He reiterated his country's proposal to establish a research center for Central Asia and Afghanistan under the OSCE Academy in Bishkek.

Mr. Vepa Hajiyev

Deputy Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan recalled that the JPoA process started with the signing of the Ashgabat Declaration in 2011, and that it had become the model policy document for other regions of the world. Similar strategies have been adopted in South, Central, and North Africa as well as in the Middle East. The Deputy Minister encouraged his Central Asian and international counterparts to expand project activities, particularly related to capacity building. He also mentioned the proposal of Turkmenistan to establish a regional counter-terrorism office to provide tailored activities in response to the needs of the Central Asian States.

INTERVENTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Ms. Jiang Yan

Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to the Republic of Uzbekistan, noted that the security situation in Central Asia is aggravating because of global threats, including the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Ambassador emphasized that China is committed to cooperation with Central Asian States on bilateral and multilateral levels, including through the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. She recalled the urgency of socio-economic issues in Afghanistan and appealed to Central Asian States to continue to support to the people of Afghanistan.

Mr. Olivier Caron

Special Envoy for Counter-Terrorism of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, France, in his video message noted that in many countries, including France, the phenomenon of radicalization to violence of the population was increasing. Key factors of radicalization to violence and involvement in terrorist activities are a lack of education and training, demographic issues, and influence of extremist ideologies.

Mr. Christopher Landberg

Acting Coordinator for Counterterrorism, United States Department of State, in his video message recalled that Central Asia was the first region to develop and commit to a regional Joint Plan of Action for the comprehensive implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. He also noted that the region remains a front line in the battle against terrorism and underlined that collaborative efforts like the Joint Plan of Action are critical to our shared security. Mr. Landberg informed that the United States encourages and bolsters capacity-building in Central Asia bilaterally and through multilateral efforts, including through the C5+1 regional diplomatic platform. He thanked the countries of the region for their partnership and commended them for taking responsibility for their citizens held in North-East Syria. He urged others to continue repatriating, rehabilitating, and reintegrating their citizens.

Mr. Alexey Lyzhenkov

Deputy Director of the Department of New Challenges and Threats, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, informed of the work of the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Anti-Terrorist Center of the Commonwealth of Independent Countries (CIS). Mr. Lyzhenkov noted that within the framework of the CIS, a number of documents have been signed, which provide a legal platform for a rapid response. Also, since 2006, joint anti-terrorist exercises of the CIS Member States have been held annually. An international database of terrorists has been formed by CIS for an effective response, and some 53 special services of the law enforcement bodies of the CIS countries are involved in this work.

“The terrorist threat to the countries of the Central Asia region has remained high due to the returning foreign terrorist fighters, and more recently due to the developments in Afghanistan. For over 10 years, the Joint Plan of Action to implement the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia has been a vital instrument for delivering technical assistance across its four pillars”.

Mr. T.S. Tirumurti

Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to UNSCR 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism

“The States of Central Asia make a significant contribution to the implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy”.

Mr. Zhang Ming

Secretary-General of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization

“Kazakhstan is firmly committed to the implementation of the goals and objectives of the UNOCT in the fight against terrorism and for a region free from terrorist and violent extremist threats. The relevance of this conference is that it provides an opportunity to analyze the accumulated experience of interaction between the countries of the region within the framework of the Joint Plan and consider critical prospects for strengthening cooperation in the face of new challenges.”

Mr. Mukhtar Tleuberdi

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan

Four Break Out Sessions

SESSION I

Addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism

Mr. Eldor Aripov

Session I was moderated by **Mr. Eldor Aripov, Director of the Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan (ISRS)**, who stated that countering terrorism requires increased cooperation at both regional and international levels, and that the opening of a regional office of the UNOCT in Central Asia – a suggestion of the President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev – can further develop cooperation in this area. He also reiterated the proposal by his President for the establishment of the regional expert Council of Central Asian States under the auspices of UNOCT, which will also serve as a platform for a sharing of best practices and information on de-radicalization, reintegration, and rehabilitation.

Mr. Yerkin Tukumov

Director of the Institute for Strategic Studies under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan (KazISS), reminded of the tragic events that took place in the Republic of Kazakhstan in January 2022. He highlighted that the threat of religious radicalization in Kazakhstan has been on an upward trend for many years, and the work on de-radicalization and rehabilitation was one of the effective methods in countering violent extremism. He also underscored the positive experience of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the repatriation and subsequent reintegration of citizens who have been in conflict zones, implemented during the country's Zhusan and Rusafa rescue operations in 2018-2019.

Mr. Parviz Muhamadzoda

Deputy Director of the Center for Strategic Studies under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan stated that since 2016 Tajikistan has been implementing a National Strategy to counter extremism and terrorism, as well as convening two international high-level conferences in 2018 and 2019, through the "Dushanbe process". In general, the Republic of Tajikistan has established itself as a reliable partner in countering terrorism and violent extremism. Mr. Muhamadzoda further noted that work with vulnerable social groups and youth has shown to have great potential in preventing terrorism and violent extremism. He reminded of the important role of civil society organizations in the rehabilitation and reintegration efforts due to their involvement in the development, adoption and implementation of legal acts, state programmes and prevention measures. He suggested the creation of an online educational platform in all five Central Asian languages, as well as in Russian and English, to contribute to the dialogue of all groups involved and the development of joint action. The speaker underlined the importance of ensuring gender equality, increasing social activity and the role of women in society.

Mr. Erlan Tologonov

Expert of the National Institute for Strategic Studies of the Kyrgyz Republic highlighted the variety of causes for violent extremism, such as socio-economic, ideological, and migratory. According to the panelist, there is a need to continue to study these factors for radicalization to violence, including among youth. He noted, that while building a nationwide system of countering terrorism and violent extremism, the main causes and conditions prompting the manifestation of terrorism should be identified first. According to Mr. Tologonov, measures to be taken into consideration in addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism and violent extremism, include preventive work among students and labor migrants, with an emphasis on promoting religious literacy and a state policy in the field of countering violent extremism and terrorism involving representatives of state authorities, civil society institutions, scientific and educational communities, religious organizations, and the media.

Mr. Jumamyrat Gurbangeldiyev

Rector of the Institute of International Relations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan stressed that terrorist groups started to use completely new approaches in their work in the conditions of accelerated technical and technological progress and

development of new media. According to Mr. Gurbangeldiyev, it requires effective countermeasures— including developing counter-narratives online.

Mr. Mirzayusup Rustambaev

Head of the University of Public Security of the Republic of Uzbekistan reminded that Uzbekistan was among the first post-Soviet states that had a terrorist attack and adopted counter-terrorism legislation that is being constantly updated. He stated that a forceful resolution of terrorist and extremist questions alone is not efficient, and that the response should be more complex. He called for a shift from law enforcement solutions to preventive ones, where education would play an important role. He also emphasized that international standards in the field of human rights are now more actively implemented in his country. Highlighting various achievements of the Republic of Uzbekistan, he mentioned poverty reduction programmes, continuous support for religious freedom and tolerance, strengthened anti-corruption measures as well as strengthening freedom of speech and the media.

Ms. Terhi Hakala

European Union Special Representative for Central Asia noted that in this rapidly changing security environment the world is facing a threat that is combined with new disruptive technologies. She underlined that to effectively tackle this reality, cooperation at the international and regional levels is required. She highlighted that the countering of terrorism is a top priority for the European Union, which is taking active steps to counter terrorism and prevent radicalization. According to Ms. Hakala, close attention is paid to controlling money flows with the help of new technologies to prevent financing of terrorism and money laundering. Ms. Hakala also reiterated the importance of cooperation in the region through actions such exchange of information and best practices.

Ms. Matilda Dimovska

Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme in Uzbekistan stated that socio-economic development plays an important role in addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, with ensuring human rights as the fundamental basis for any efforts in this regard. She noted that UNDP in Uzbekistan, together with other UN entities, devised multiple programmes and projects aimed at

addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, with special attention paid to the role of women and youth. Among others, she highlighted the results of their programme on Strengthening Resilience Against Violent Extremism in Asia (STRIVE Asia), a joint EU-UN endeavor, contributing to P/CVE in Central, South and Southeast Asia.

Mr. Fejzo Numanaj

Acting Head of the Action against Terrorism Unit at the OSCE Secretariat spoke on the importance of coordinating efforts and initiatives in the region, which strengthens the cooperation and collaboration of international and regional actors in preventing and countering violent extremism and radicalization that leads to terrorism (VERLT). He reminded that approaches that are centered exclusively around law enforcement risk closing the space for civil society, which can lead to a cycle of disenfranchised people who may opt for violent extremism. Mr. Numanaj also highlighted several initiatives pursued by the OSCE Gender Issues Unit and Action against Terrorism Unit to increase the role of women in the context of preventing and countering P/CVE. He noted that these actions include an emphasis on the young generation in the region and the establishment of connections among women professionals in Central Asia and South-Eastern Europe.

INTERVENTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Mr. Ali Rashed Al Nuaimi

Chairman of Hedayah, Abu-Dhabi, UAE (online), noted that terrorism is a threat to the world that is not limited to a region or country. He called upon each State in Central Asia to work on its own strategy on countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism, as there is no one solution for all. He also highlighted that coordination among countries is crucial in addressing terrorism and violent extremism.

Mr. Khaled Akram Timur

Executive Director of the Centre for Global and Strategic Studies, Pakistan, suggested in his intervention the need to raise awareness about terrorism, counter-terrorism, and human rights. Taking into consideration the increasing number of young people

worldwide, he proposed creating a joint narrative to guide them against terrorism and violent extremism.

Mr. Shabir Ahmed Khan

Director of the Centre for Regional Studies (Russia, China and Central Asia), Peshawar University, Pakistan, noted the importance of addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of violent extremism and emphasized the significance of cooperation and collaboration not only at the State-level but among government institutions and civil society organizations as well. Mr. Khan also highlighted terrorist and violent extremist threats in Central Asia as emanating from Afghanistan due to “religious extremists” and the lack of appropriate institutions in the country. To fight against these threats in Central Asia, he pointed to the significance of joint actions to strengthen cooperation.

“Tajikistan is ready to unite the joint efforts of the Central Asian countries to combat the spread of transnational violence, terrorism and alleviate the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan.”

Mr. Sirojiddin Mukhriddin

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan

SESSION II

Preventing and Countering terrorism

Ms. Roli Asthana

Session II was moderated by the **United Nations Resident Coordinator in Uzbekistan, Ms. Roli Asthana**. The Panel discussed measures for preventing and countering terrorism. The moderator highlighted, inter alia, the importance of coordinating efforts to

combat terrorism and countering violent extremism between the Member States, international organizations and donors in Central Asia while ensuring the involvement and participation of civil society organizations.

Mr. Amanzhol Urazbaev

Chairman of the NGO "Counter-Terrorism Committee", Republic of Kazakhstan, outlined various challenges in countering the financing of terrorism in the context of new technologies. Mr. Uruzbaev highlighted, inter alia, the issue of international transfer companies, the Darknet, and to paying particular attention to cryptocurrencies that are complicating the tracing of transfers, thus leading to the need for new regulations. He suggested intensifying the analysis of international experience on legislative regulation of crypto assets and other new technologies to counter terrorism, as well as developing a legal and operational mechanism to prevent the use of cryptocurrency for criminal purposes.

Mr. Adylbek Kadyraliev

Head of the Department of the State Committee for National Security, Kyrgyz Republic, presented various achievements of the Kyrgyz Republic in countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism, including the adoption of the new law on combating the Financing of Terrorist Activities and the Legalization (Laundering) of Crime Proceeds, as well as the Strategy on Cybersecurity for 2019-2023. He outlined the tasks of the Anti-Terrorism Center of the Kyrgyz Republic and noted its cooperation with civil society institutions, as well as international organizations. He underscored the results of the Kyrgyz Republic and its rescue operation "Meerim" for FTFs' family members. He noted that particular attention was also paid to the implementation of the Advance Passenger Information and Passenger Records (API/PNR) system in the country, which proved to be a useful tool.

Mr. Sukhrob Rajabov

Deputy Head of the Counter-Terrorism Department, State Committee for National Security, Republic of Tajikistan, highlighted the countering radicalization to violence within the society as one of the priority areas of the Republic of Tajikistan. In this regard, he presented several approaches of the Republic of Tajikistan, such as the development of a comprehensive national policy in countering terrorism and preventing violent

extremism; adoption of the necessary legal framework in this area; development of administrative measures to prevent violent extremism; preventing violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism, including through engaging with media, education institutions, youth, women, etc. Finally, Mr. Rajabov stressed the role of international and regional cooperation in countering terrorism.

Mr. Maksud Nabiev

Head of Project at the Academy of the State Security Service, Republic of Uzbekistan, covered the subject of countering the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes. Taking into account that the issues of countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism on the Internet are of a cross-border nature, he called for increased cooperation. Mr. Nabiev also listed the dangers associated with an illegal use of the Internet by terrorist organizations, including to target youth. In this regard, he noted the development of a specific mechanism for blocking illegal resources, involving various actors in the Republic of Uzbekistan. The panelist also highlighted the ongoing systematic work on revision and implementation of legislative acts on countering terrorism and violent extremism and emphasized the progress in terms of social rehabilitation and reintegration of persons who are involved in terrorist and violent extremist activities.

Mr. Viktor Mikhailov

Director of the Center for the Study of Regional Threats, Republic of Uzbekistan, presented major achievements of his organization in countering violent extremism and terrorism. He suggested continued support for online projects based on real-life examples to prevent violent extremism and for further development of critical thinking among young people. According to Mr. Mikhailov, young people could become a partner in the development of alternative and counter-narratives. He also invited international and regional organizations to support the Action Plan for a Media Strategy entitled “Consolidation of actions of state structures, media and civil society of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan to strengthen friendship, inter-ethnic harmony and tolerance, the formation of an unacceptable attitude to extremism leading to radicalization, conflicts and terrorism”, initiated by the European Union and the German Konrad Adenauer Foundation.

Mr. Greg Hinds

Counter-Terrorism Director, INTERPOL, described the main objectives, tools and potential of INTERPOL in preventing terrorist threats. He noted that in addition to identifying members of terrorist groups, INTERPOL is paying close attention to the issues of prevention of radicalization to violence. While implementing its programmes in Central Asia, INTERPOL takes into account the specificities of the region. Particular attention is paid to the movement of weapons through national borders. Various training courses are also being conducted, and a guidebook on the prevention of nuclear terrorism has been published.

Mr. Azizbek Erkaboev

Counsellor/Head of the Information and Analysis Unit of the Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre (CARICC), highlighted the link between the proceeds of drug trafficking and the financing of terrorism, which he said created the need for increased cooperation. He called on the international community to join forces to effectively counter the new challenges and threats associated with transnational organized crime and terrorism. He informed that CARICC had recently conducted research to analyze the threats of money laundering and terrorism financing, taking into consideration the financial and economic crisis in Afghanistan, and had prepared a list of recommendations to help build the capacity of States to address this threat.

“Amid the rapid growth in the popularity of virtual assets, it is necessary to develop and establish uniform rules for the circulation and regulation of the crypto industry, including control measures to ensure the stability of the financial system and reduce the use of cryptocurrencies in illegal activities, including prosecuting crimes in the field of drug crime, financing of terrorism, human trafficking, and other global threats against humanity.”

Mr. Amanzhol Urazbayev

Head of Republican Public Association “The Counter-Terrorism Committee”, Kazakhstan

INTERVENTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Mr. Sergey Teterukov

Executive Secretary of the Eurasian Group on Combating Money-Laundering and the Financing of Terrorism stressed the main risks for Central Asia in the financing of terrorism. He noted the impact of the current situation on Afghanistan on security in Central Asia that could lead to the travel of foreign terrorist fighters to the region and the possible growth of illegal drug trafficking and subsequent use of the proceeds of crime to finance terrorism. In this regard, Mr. Teterukov called for attention to addressing the collection of money through online platforms and by using informal settlement systems (Hawala) or cryptocurrencies, given the multiple reductions in the number and volume of transactions sent to Afghanistan through transparent channels. He also forecasted an increase in the number of transactions related to cash withdrawals through Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) using bank cards issued by banks bordering Afghanistan and sent then to finance terrorism in Afghanistan.

Mr. Evgeniy Sysoev

Head of the CIS Anti-Terrorism Center, also focused on the issue of the increasing threat of terrorism from Afghanistan to countries in the region. In his view, the success of the Taliban movement contributes to the radicalization to violence of the population in the Central Asian States. He predicted further intensification of terrorist and violent extremist activities in the information space, including propaganda, recruitment, and disinformation. At the same time, he noted that the threat of using more sophisticated means of carrying out terrorist attacks, including cyber weapons, robotics, and biological pathogens, deserved special attention.

Mr. Guenaël Le Breton

Project Director of the EU's Law Enforcement in Central Asia Project (LEICA) stressed that international terrorists have been using the latest information and communication technologies (ICT) in their criminal activities. In this regard, he called on countries and partners to allocate high-class ICT specialists to the implementation of projects in the field of countering terrorism.

Mr. Vladimir Zaguzovs

Deputy Head of the Border Management Programme in Central Asia – Phase 10 (BOMCA-10), European Union, emphasized the high level of cooperation between the countries of Central Asia within the framework of the BOMCA Programme. He also noted the impact of the BOMCA programme in implementation of the GCTS through strengthening border security management and enhancing the capacities of the participating Member States.

Mr. Lokanathan Venkateswaran

Director of the School of International Cooperation, Security and Strategic Languages at Rashtriya Raksha University, Gujarat, India, noted the special role of Uzbekistan in establishing close relations between Central Asia and India. At the same time, he also stated that the main factors in the spread of violent extremist ideas and terrorism in Central Asia are the unstable situation in Afghanistan and the lack of close interaction and cooperation between the competent authorities of the region.

“The UN should play a central role in coordinating the efforts of the international community in the fight against the terrorist threat.”

Mr. Azizbek Madmarov

Deputy Foreign Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic

SESSION III

Building States' capacity to prevent and combat terrorism and to strengthen the role of the United Nations system in that regard

Ms. Ashita Mittal

Session III was moderated by the **UNODC Regional Representative for Central Asia, Ms. Ashita Mittal**. Ms. Mittal recalled that the UN had been supporting global counter-terrorism efforts through norm-setting role that includes a) the development and promotion of a Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and efforts to counter violent extremism, b) a set of international conventions, and c) Security Council resolutions with counter-terrorism obligations by Member States, as well as capacity building activities to help countries meet these obligations. The panel discussed measures to build national and regional capacity to prevent and combat terrorism, as well as to strengthen the role of the United Nations.

Mr. Baurzhan Bakirov

Deputy Head of the Committee on Religious Affairs of the Ministry of information and social development, Republic of Kazakhstan, commended the cooperation between the Republic of Kazakhstan and various UN agencies, like UNOCT and UNODC, on counter-terrorism related topics. He also presented various achievements, such as the adoption of necessary regulatory framework, and the *National Strategy on countering terrorism and prevention of extremism for 2018-2022*. The panelist emphasized major results in the repatriation of Kazakhstan citizens from Syria and Iraq under the humanitarian

operations “Zhusan”. Finally, he highlighted the importance of various preventive and awareness-raising measures implemented by the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Ms. Nargiza Muratalieva

Analytical Reports Editor, CABAR.asia Media Outlet, noted that banned groups are actively using modern media propaganda. At the same time, State institutions, including law enforcement agencies, were not immediately ready to resist the flow of information promoting such radicalization to violence. She suggested conducting educational and awareness-raising training on terrorism for journalists and editors of online media outlets. The speaker also proposed the creation of a rehabilitation center for victims of terrorist and violent extremist propaganda, where appropriate psychological assistance could be provided.

Mr. Khamzaali Muzofirov

Head of the Department for Combating Terrorism, Extremism and Monitoring of the Compliance with National Security Laws, Office of the Prosecutor General of the Republic of Tajikistan, informed the audience of the achievements of his country in the implementation of the National Counter-Terrorism Strategy for 2016-2020, as well as the adoption of an updated Strategy for 2021-2025. He underscored the results achieved by the Republic of Tajikistan, such as increased cooperation with local communities, civil society, academia, the education sector, and youth. He noted that Tajikistan has enhanced awareness-raising to prevent radicalization to violence. The Republic of Tajikistan has also adopted the *Law on Prevention of Extremism* and amended its Criminal and Administrative Code with regards to violent extremist and terrorist-related crimes. Taking into consideration new challenges and trends, priority is being given to enhanced cooperation and coordination between various partners on internal and international levels.

Mr. Hans Friedrich Schodder

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Representative for Central Asia highlighted that social inclusion and justice are important to prevent terrorism. He noted that the UNHCR, together with UN sister agencies and partners, are working to ensure that States prioritize the full inclusion of refugees and stateless persons, like other marginalized people, in their national development strategies and plans. He underscored

that the Refugee Convention and its Protocol and implementation thereof will help so that no one is left behind in the sustainable development of Central Asia. The panelist also suggested that attention be paid to countering the rhetoric that mixes refugees and terrorists, and whereby the fear of terrorism further victimizes refugees who are often victims of terrorism, by denying them protection. He invited all partners to increase the support to the establishment and protection of sensitive reception and referral systems in Central Asia.

Mr. Rustam Khatamov

Head of the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Republic of Uzbekistan, presented the achievements of the Republic of Uzbekistan in countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism. He called for early preventive measures to deal with violent extremism and radicalization that leads to terrorism. He highlighted the important role of international and regional cooperation and coordination to address new challenges and threats in the region. One of possible measures in this direction could be the establishment of *the Central Asian Research Center to Analyze Problems of Extremism and Terrorism*, and to unite the efforts of leading specialists and experts (political scientists, psychologists, sociologists, religious scholars, prominent representatives of the Muslim clergy, and others) in conducting comprehensive scientific research, development of new methodologies and related recommendations.

Mr. Adel Adaileh

Expert on New Threats and Challenges at the Secretariat of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measure in Asia (CICA) highlighted the importance of promoting the concepts of pluralism, tolerance, a culture of democracy, peaceful coexistence through national laws and regulations, school, and university curricula, and, of intensifying the organization of seminars, conferences, and workshops, in this area. Moreover, he emphasized the necessity to use modern technologies and artificial intelligence to counter terrorism and the spread of hate speech on the Internet and social media. The speaker noted that in addition to existing restrictions imposed by countries, development of additional technical mechanisms is needed to stop the dissemination of terrorist content on the Internet.

INTERVENTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Ms. Ghada Fathi Waly

In her video-message, **Ms. Ghada Fathi Waly, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)**, confirmed the importance of supporting Central Asian States in countering terrorism and violent extremism. She highlighted that joint efforts with UNOCT, UNRCCA, the OSCE and other partners help in implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in various areas, such as countering the financing of terrorism, preventing violent extremism, protecting victims' rights, as well as the repatriation of women and children.

Mr. Kunio Mikuriya

Secretary-General of the World Customs Organization (WCO) suggested the increased use of modern technologies by customs services and called for increased participation in various regional seminars. He also noted that WCO provided support to the Member States in combating the illegal trafficking of small arms and drugs and emphasized that the exchange of information was crucial for the success of preventing illegal tracking.

Mr. Weixiong Chen

Acting Executive Director of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (UN CTED), recalled that the States of Central Asia remained at the forefront of the international fight against terrorism. He emphasized that the JPoA is a unique instrument, designed to ensure the delivery of tailored counter-terrorism technical assistance in accordance with the Strategy's four pillars. Mr. Chen noted that CTED had played an important role in facilitating the provision of technical assistance by its UN and other partners to build States' capacity. CTED has for many years been engaged in constructive dialogue with the Governments of Central Asian States on their efforts in countering terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism. Some States in the region have been visited more than once. Mr. Chen further stressed the need to address the situation with women and children with presumed links to Da'esh who remain stranded in crowded camps with limited access to services that continued to deteriorate during the COVID-19 pandemic. He also recommended strengthening national, regional, and international cooperation to counter terrorism.

“The JPoA has become a model policy document for other regions of the world. Similar programs have been adopted in South, Central, North Africa and the Middle East.”

Mr. Vepa Hajiyev

Deputy Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan

SESSION IV

Ensuring respect for human rights for all and the rule of law as the fundamental basis for the fight against terrorism

Ms. Alena Kupchyna

Session IV was moderated by the **OSCE Co-ordinator of Activities to Address Transnational Threats, Ms. Alena Kupchyna**, who underlined that respect for human rights and the rule of law is the fundamental basis for countering terrorism.

Mr. Akmal Saidov

Director of the National Center for Human Rights, Republic of Uzbekistan, highlighted the common will to make Central Asia a secure region with sustainable development as a priority. He observed the negative impact of terrorism on human rights, national stability, security, and peace, as well as social and economic development. He noted that security and respect for human rights should not be mutually exclusive, but rather complementary to each other. Social, economic, and political factors can be root causes for terrorism, therefore, he called for ensuring the rights of citizens while countering terrorism. According to Mr. Saidov, the Republic of Uzbekistan has formed and strengthened its national capacity in the field of countering terrorism and violent extremism at the international, regional, and bilateral levels. Among other things, he mentioned the ratification of international conventions, and significant progress made in

terms of the preventive approach to counterterrorism, as well as and the country's humanitarian repatriation operations "Mehr".

Ms. Shynar Yergalieva

Judge of the Nur Sultan city, Republic of Kazakhstan, focused on the humanitarian operation "Zhusan" to repatriate citizens of Kazakhstan from the conflict zones in Syria and Iraq. She supported preventive measures to eliminate the causes and conditions contributing to the emergence and dissemination of the ideas of terrorism. At the same time, Ms. Yergalieva emphasized the complexity of countering terrorism in the current environment, characterized by mobility and flexibility, for example, through the use of electronic communication channels.

Ms. Guzel Maitdinova

Director of the Center for Geopolitical Research, Republic of Tajikistan informed of the increased use of the Internet for propaganda by international terrorist organizations in Central Asia, thus affecting public opinion, social processes, and religious and collective psychology. She suggested some initiatives, such as the creation of a safety belt along the Tajik-Afghan border; the development of a regional program for the reintegration of returning working migrants to facilitate the implementation of the National Labor Migration Strategy; and the implementation of global, regional and national programmes to counter terrorism and violent extremism through audio-visual products.

Mr. Bakhriddin Valiev

First Deputy Prosecutor General, Republic of Uzbekistan, highlighted the importance of the rule of law, and corresponding principles, such as equality before the law and the presumption of innocence, that apply to counterterrorism measures and efforts. He called for strengthened and knowledgeable involvement of specialists and religious figures to address the issue of propaganda spread among the population, namely, among the youth, to prevent violent extremism and radicalization that leads to terrorism. Mr. Valiev noted the necessity to further develop international cooperation in countering the financing of terrorism. He suggested considering the principle of "voluntary counterterrorism restrictions" on the Internet and social media to prevent further radicalization to violence and violent extremism. The speaker also emphasized the need for whole-of-society approaches in preventing and countering terrorism. While the panelist

acknowledged the important role and progress of current legislation in countering terrorism and violent extremism, he called for a continued update of the related legislation, to encompass modern challenges and threats, like cyberterrorism.

Mr. Albert Kolopov

Deputy of Akyikatchy (Ombudsman), Kyrgyz Republic, highlighted the protection of citizens as a top priority, taking into consideration threats of terrorism and violent extremism in the Middle East, Afghanistan, and other hot spots. The panelist stressed that universal and high-quality education is a fundamental element in countering ignorance, terrorism, and crime.

Ambassador Alexey Rogov

Head of the OSCE Programme Office in Bishkek, noted that the High-Level Conference in Tashkent witnessed the adoption of the Tashkent Declaration, that will provide direction to the daily work of all partners. The panelist underlined that countering terrorism should not be limited to special operations, control of financial flows and monitoring of passenger traffic, but also needs to include a clear understanding that all people are born free and equal in dignity and with inherent rights.

Ms. Fionnuala D. Ni Aolain

Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms while Countering Terrorism, in her video message, expressed enthusiasm for the reorientation of the efforts of the countries of Central Asia towards the promotion and protection of human rights. The Special Rapporteur highlighted and praised the work of Uzbekistan in expanding the role of civil society, which would play an important role in the implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

Mr. Ryszard Komenda

Regional Representative for the Regional Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Central Asia commended Central Asian countries and in particular Uzbekistan, for their significant efforts and whole-of-government approach to facilitating the return of their citizens from conflict zones. He also noted that

the Mahalla institution in Uzbekistan plays a positive role in the implementation of rehabilitation and reintegration programmes.

“Terrorism and terrorist activities are a global problem and threat to all nations directly or indirectly irrespective of religion, race, culture, or geo-location. We believe that acts of terrorism violate human rights and continue to remain one of the crucial challenges to national, regional, and international peace and security.”

Mr. Mohammad Shahjahan

Deputy Director of “Young Power in Social Action”, Bangladesh

“The role of civil society organizations in Uzbekistan has grown in preventing the spread of ideas of violent extremism, primarily among young people on the Internet.”

Mr. Viktor Mikhailov

Director of the Center for the Study of Regional Threats, Republic of Uzbekistan

Summary of the Plenary Wrap-up Session

Mr. Vladimir Voronkov

The session was moderated by **Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, United Nation Under-Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT)**. The panelists presented the key points emanating from the four break out sessions' discussions which they had moderated during the Conference.

Mr. Eldor Aripov

Director of the Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan (ISRS), summarized the outcomes of Session I on ***“Addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism.”*** He noted that the speakers of his session were the heads and experts of leading Central Asian research institutes and of specialized entities of the EU and the UN. He reported that the experts noted the importance of P/CVE work, especially the use of preventive measures aimed at protecting the most vulnerable segments of the population (youth, women, labor migrants) for successful counter-terrorism efforts. The participants of Session I had urged Central Asian States to further enhance cooperation. They supported the proposal to open the office of the UNOCT in Tashkent to provide capacity-building support to regional CT and P/CVE efforts, and to hold an international conference on religious and inter-ethnic tolerance in Uzbekistan in 2023 at the initiative of the Uzbek President.

Ms. Roli Asthana

United Nations Resident Coordinator in Uzbekistan, reported on the outcomes of Session II on ***“Preventing and countering terrorism”***. The participants of this session were the representatives of all Central Asian States, international and regional organizations, such as the Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism, Interpol, the CIS Anti-Terrorism Center, the SCO RATS, the European Union Law

Enforcement Project in Central Asia (LEICA) and Border Management Program in Central Asia (BOMCA-10), international experts, academia, and civil society organizations.

Ms Asthana reported that participants of Session II made the following recommendations: 1) strengthening coordination efforts to combat terrorism and counter violent extremism between international organizations and donors in Central Asia, while ensuring the involvement and participation of civil society organizations; 2) building the capacity to counter terrorism and violent extremism on the Internet, including the financing of terrorism through online platforms; 3) addressing emerging challenges and security threats emanating from Afghanistan; 4) increasing the resilience against radicalization to violence among young people by promoting education, the development of critical thinking skills, communication and media literacy; and, 5) strengthening preventive measures by addressing the problems of marginalization or social exclusion of minorities through the empowerment of women and youth, as well as labor migrants.

Ms. Ashita Mittal

Regional Representative of UNODC for Central Asia, informed of the discussions of Session III on *“Building states’ capacity to prevent and combat terrorism and to strengthen the role of the United Nations system in that regard”*. She reported that participants of Session III agreed that it is important to continue to encourage capacity building and technical assistance programs and projects delivered by international and regional partners, the UN system, the OSCE, CICA and others. Prevention of violent extremism and terrorism among vulnerable groups, including youth, was one of the key areas of discussions. Constructive collaboration with civil society, the media, local communities, academia and youth leaders is important to maximize the efforts of both the State entities and the UN in this area. In order to enhance the capacity of national and regional counter-terrorism entities the UN and other actors also need to facilitate intra-organizational and intra-regional exchange networks and platforms, share available tools and best practices, organize training, and build the capacity of law enforcement, the judiciary, academia and other stakeholders.

Ms. Alena Kupchyna

OSCE Co-ordinator of Activities to Address Transnational Threats, summarized the discussions of Session IV on *“Ensuring respect for human rights for all and the rule of law as the fundamental basis for the fight against terrorism”*. She informed that participants

of Session IV noted that the criminal justice system needs to be strengthened regarding important rule of law principles, such as fair trial or compliance with judicial procedural guarantees, the prevention of torture, as well as the protection of victims and witnesses. Ensuring compliance of national and regional counter-terrorism regulations with international human rights, humanitarian and refugee law was deemed one of the most pressing issues. As one specific example, participants discussed the importance of foreign terrorist fighters being prosecuted and held accountable in accordance with due process parameters. The repatriation and rehabilitation of foreign terrorist fighters and their families was also discussed during this session. Considering that most of the returnees to Central Asia so far were women and children, the need for a particularly considerate approach is apparent, given the specific vulnerability of these groups of returnees. Moreover, the need for continued work with the public was highlighted, in order to reduce the stigmatization of returnees and to achieve broader public support for their rehabilitation.

Summary of the Closing Plenary Session

Mr. Vladimir Voronkov

Under-Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism, summarized that the Conference had underscored the importance of multilateralism, regional solidarity, prevention, and strengthening partnerships to combat terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism. He noted that the Conference deliberations had contributed to a better understanding of the challenges and emerging trends likely to be faced over the next decade and what can be done to address them. He commended the Central Asian States for their unity and leadership through the adoption of the updated Joint Plan of Action and the Tashkent Declaration, and thanked participants for the wide-ranging exchange of views on how to intensify regional and international cooperation, leverage public-private partnerships, and pragmatic interventions in several critical areas such as combatting terrorist financing, strengthening border management and cyber security, tackling the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes, preventing radicalization to violence, especially among the youth, education, empowerment, FTFs, and law enforcement based on the rule of law and human rights. He called upon regional and international partners to align their activities with the strategic objectives of the Joint Plan of Action and assured that the United Nations will continue to support the Central Asian States through tailored capacity-building and technical assistance across all four pillars of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

Ms. Natalia Gherman

Special Representative of the Secretary General for Central Asia and Head of the UNRCCA, praised the efforts of Central Asian states in adopting the JPoA and the Tashkent Declaration. She underlined that these two documents would lay the foundation for the advancement of regional cooperation in the CT and PCVE areas. She also reminded of the importance of donor support for implementing concrete activities implemented based on the JPoA, including establishing an early warning network as the first step in this process.

Ms. Alena Kupchyna

OSCE Co-ordinator of Activities to Address Transnational Threats, called upon Central Asian States and their international and regional partners to ensure that the implementation of the regional and national strategies guarantees a non-discriminative approach, with inter-cultural and inter-religious tolerance, and respect for human rights.

Mr. Gayrat Fazilov

Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Uzbekistan, expressed sincere appreciation to all co-organisers on behalf of the Government of Uzbekistan and emphasized the importance of the adoption of Tashkent Declaration and the JPoA. The Deputy Minister expressed the readiness of the Government of Uzbekistan to continue its support to the joint efforts in CT and PCVE areas.

Annexes

ANNEX I

Tashkent Declaration

Adopted on 3 March 2022, by the participants of the International Conference Dedicated to the Tenth Anniversary of Joint Implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia, held in the city of Tashkent, Uzbekistan

The representatives of the countries in Central Asia - the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Tajikistan, the Republic of Turkmenistan, and the Republic of Uzbekistan - gathered at the ministerial level at the initiative of the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia, and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe on 3-4 March 2022 in Tashkent, to participate in the International Conference on “Regional Cooperation among Central Asian States within the Framework of the Joint Plan of Action (JPoA) for the Implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy”.

Reaffirming their support for multilateral cooperation under the auspices of the United Nations and its Charter, and declaring their commitment to the principles and objectives of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2006 through its resolution 60/288, and the subsequent resolutions adopted for its review, including resolution 75/291 on 30 June 2021,

Recalling the Dushanbe Declaration adopted at the conclusion of the High-Level Conference on “Countering Terrorism and its Financing Through Illicit Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime”, which took place on 16-17 May 2019 and was hosted by the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan in cooperation with the United Nations, the

European Union and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, as well as the Ashgabat Declaration adopted at the conclusion of the “High-Level United Nations-Central Asia Dialogue on Implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia”, which took place on 13 June 2017 and was hosted by the Government of Turkmenistan in cooperation with the United Nations.

The representatives of the countries in Central Asia:

1. *Reiterate* their strong condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, as it constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security, impedes sustainable development, and impairs the enjoyment of universal human rights;
2. *Underline* the unique nature of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy as the first comprehensive, multilateral blueprint for action and coordination to combat terrorism, including to address the conditions conducive to this scourge, endorsed by all Member States of the United Nations;
3. *Emphasize* that the fight against terrorism and the promotion and protection of human rights and the rule of law are not contradictory but mutually reinforcing goals;
4. *Underscore* that terrorism cannot and should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group, and agree to continue making every effort to promote interconfessional, interethnic and intercultural tolerance and dialogue, and to prevent discrimination based on race, ethnicity, gender or religion;
5. *Call on* the international community, governments, civil society and the private sector to engage and cooperate closely at the national, regional and global levels to prevent and counter terrorism, in all its forms and manifestations;
6. *Highlight* the efforts of their countries to repatriate, prosecute, as appropriate, and rehabilitate and reintegrate their nationals with suspected links to terrorist groups stranded abroad in conflict zones, while taking into account their age and gender, and encourage other Member States to consider this experience to address the situation of their own nationals;

7. *Emphasize* that prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration measures should be tailored, gender- and age-sensitive. Recognize that women and children may have played diverse roles in terrorist groups, including as supporters, facilitators, or perpetrators of terrorist acts, and, as such, may also be victims or victims and perpetrators at the same time. Note that some terrorist groups have utilized sexual violence as part of their tactics and encourage the adoption of prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration measures that respond to this dimension of terrorism, with particular attention paid to the rights and needs of victims.
8. Based on centuries-long friendship and good neighborliness, and the common history of the countries of Central Asia, *agree* to further strengthen cooperation and to take collective and individual measures to prevent and counter terrorism in the region, in line with international human rights law, international humanitarian law and international refugee law;
9. *Affirm* that enhancing multi-faceted cooperation between the countries of Central Asia on the basis of mutual benefit serves the vital interests of the community of nations and is a key factor for maintaining peace and security and realizing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the region, and for gaining wide international recognition;
10. *Express* appreciation for the efforts of the United Nations system, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization to enhance mutual trust, cooperation and national capacities in Central Asia, including to prevent and counter terrorism, and stress that further strengthening inclusive and multidimensional partnerships in the region would significantly bolster the efforts of Central Asian countries to effectively and sustainably prevent and counter terrorism;
11. *Recall* that Central Asia was the first region to develop and commit to a regional Joint Plan of Action for the comprehensive implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, and note that the United Nations General Assembly has encouraged the development of such national and/or regional plans, guided by the assessments of the United Nations Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee conducted on its behalf by its Executive Directorate, as well as by relevant provisions of international law, including international human rights law, international humanitarian law and international

refugee law, for the provision of prioritized and coordinated United Nations technical assistance;

12. *Express* concern at the threat of recruitment, incitement and radicalization to terrorism, including through the spread of hate speech and misinformation and the use of information and communication technologies, and encourage the exchange of practical experiences in preventing terrorist radicalization and recruitment, countering violent extremism conducive to terrorism and the spread of terrorist ideologies, such as countering the narratives used by violent extremist groups and amplifying positive and credible alternatives to audiences vulnerable to violent extremist messages, online and offline; and also encourage preventing the misuse of information and communication technologies, including the Internet and social media, for inciting acts of terrorism and other terrorist purposes, especially among youth and particularly in the post COVID-19 environment, while upholding fundamental freedoms;
13. *Also express* concern over the use of innovative forms of terrorism financing, connection between some forms of transnational organized crime and terrorism, the use of new and emerging technologies for terrorist purposes, and encourage engagement and practical cooperation in the areas of countering the financing of terrorism, the nexus between organized crime and terrorism, preventing and combating trafficking in persons, the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons, border and aviation security, cybersecurity, prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration efforts, criminal justice, and victims of terrorism.
14. *Underline* the need for sustained and inclusive efforts by Central Asian countries, drawing on contributions from all sectors and at all levels of society, including engagement with civil society, youth, women, religious, cultural and education leaders, to prevent terrorism and eliminate the conditions conducive to its spread;
15. *Commit* to strengthening regional dialogue and engagement to address challenges and priorities of common concern with consideration to new and emerging threats, expanding international, regional, bilateral and local cooperation as a cornerstone for consolidating efforts to prevent and counter terrorism, and using and strengthening the framework of the Joint Plan of Action for the effective and balanced implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia;

16. *Emphasize* the importance and timeliness of holding this international conference in 2022 in Tashkent, to improve mutual understanding and strengthen a common approach to preventing and countering terrorism, and express gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan for initiating and generously hosting this event.

Tashkent

ANNEX II

Joint Plan of Action

For the Implementation of the United Nations Global Counter Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia

We, the representatives of the Central Asian Member States of the United Nations, namely the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan;

Reaffirming our determination to condemn terrorism, committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purposes and to take necessary action to prevent and combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations; We also affirm that terrorism should not be associated with any religion, nationality, culture, civilization or ethnic group;

Reaffirming that in the fight against terrorism, enforcement measures need to be combined with preventive ones that are based on the rule of law, respect for human rights, and on addressing conditions conducive to terrorism, be they ideological, socio economic, cultural or religious; We further *recognize* that the prevention of terrorism in Central Asia is essential to protecting the well-being and human security of our populations while ensuring national and regional stability;

Recognizing also that linkages between terrorism, organized crime, money laundering, arms, drug and human trafficking make multi-faceted cooperation at the national, regional and international levels an imperative in Central Asia as well as with countries bordering the Central Asian region;

Concerned about the new threats in the region stemming from the movements and potential return of foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) and their affiliates from conflict zones and their settlement in countries in and bordering Central Asia;

Concerned about the growth of terrorists' exploitation of the Internet and other information and communication technologies for the purpose of recruitment and spreading propaganda, as well as for planning and executing terrorist acts, including the unlawful attacks or threats of attack on computers, networks and scientific and technological information systems and critical infrastructure;

Determined to eliminate and stamp out the threat of terrorism in the region and to create an enabling environment for effective regional cooperation, economic development, peace, security and stability in Central Asia;

Recalling that we have become party to most international conventions and protocols against terrorism and are implementing relevant United Nations General Assembly and Security Council resolutions related to the fight against terrorism as well as to the conventions against terrorism of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS);

Reaffirming that all counter-terrorism measures must comply with our obligations under international law, including the Charter of the United Nations and relevant international conventions and protocols, in particular international human rights law, international refugee law and international humanitarian law;

Recognizing that the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (UNGCTS) offers a unique opportunity to coordinate efforts and provide direction for national, regional and international counter-terrorism initiatives; establishing a common framework for inter-governmental action and cooperation on practical matters taking into consideration the latest developments on the prevention and combating of terrorism and ensuring synergies in states' actions at the national, regional and international levels;

Recognizing further that while the primary responsibility to implement the Strategy remains with us as Member States of the United Nations, there is a need for an increased engagement by international and regional organizations and donors through utilizing their mandates, experiences, programmes, tools, and best practices in support of implementing the Strategy in Central Asia;

Building on the achievements and lessons learnt from implementing the first Joint Plan of Action for the Implementation of the UNGCTS in Central Asia (JPoA) adopted in 2011 in Ashgabat;

Reaffirming our collective commitment, *inter alia* for cooperation among ourselves and with regional and international partners reiterated through the two Ashgabat Declarations adopted in November 2011 and June 2017;

Expressing our appreciation for the support provided by the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) and the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA) in the design and implementation of the first JPoA in Central Asia through three phases of a capacity-building project (2011-2021);

Noting also with appreciation the existing efforts of regional and international organizations and their use of the JPoA as an overarching document that shaped their strategic thinking, planning and coordination to provide coherent capacity-building support for the prevention and mitigation of the threat of terrorism and violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism in Central Asia;

Taking into consideration new threats and challenges that have appeared in the region in the past decade since the adoption of the first JPoA in 2011, assessments and recommendations of the UN Security Council's Counter-Terrorism's Committee, as well as outcomes stemming from the seventh review of the Global Strategy organized by the UN General Assembly in June 2021;

1. *Adopt* the present Joint Plan of Action as a comprehensive, integrated and operational framework for our joint efforts at the regional level towards countering and preventing terrorism and violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism, and for enhanced cooperation and coordination between our States and with regional and international organizations and donors in Central Asia;
2. *Reaffirm* our commitment to updating and implementing our national counter-terrorism strategies and national action plans in line with the UNGCTS and this updated JPoA for Central Asia;
3. *Commit* to putting in place robust national mechanisms to assess progress in delivering our national counter-terrorism strategies and implementing our obligations under international law and relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions and relevant recommendations of the United Nations human rights mechanisms;
4. *Recognize* the assessments of our counter-terrorism efforts by the UN Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee, conducted on its behalf by its Executive Directorate (CTED), as a valuable tool to identify progress made, remaining shortfalls, and priority areas for technical assistance needs;

5. *Request* the continued support of the United Nations entities, including through the Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact, as well as regional and international organizations, civil society organizations and private sector, to coordinate their activities in Central Asia and to strengthen their financial, material and technical support (including training, research and exchange of information) for the effective implementation of this Joint Plan of Action;
6. *Commit* to strengthen national efforts to enhance domestic coordination and coherence of our counter-terrorism efforts through adopting, implementing, monitoring and evaluating national strategies developed through a “whole-of-government” and “whole-of-society” approach, and to fully engage all key stakeholders, including civil society organizations, in efforts to implement the regional JPoA.

Adopted in Tashkent, on 3 March 2022

PILLAR I

Measures to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism

We recognize challenges that could create conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism and violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism in Central Asia, in terms of both external factors related to unresolved conflicts in the region and beyond, as well as domestic factors that can contribute to radicalization to violence in our societies. Conflicts in the region, as well as continued instability in Afghanistan, can become grounds for the growth of terrorism and criminal networks in the region which could in turn threaten the stability of our states. At the same time, we recognize challenges related to lack of socio-economic opportunities and access to basic services, social exclusion of the youth and labor migrants, lack of quality education, and low religious literacy, etc. The low level of knowledge about laws and rights makes people vulnerable to violent extremist propaganda and to joining extremist groups. These factors highlight the importance of engaging youth, women and migrant workers and other marginalized communities in preventing violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism, in order to protect them from recruitment while enhancing their roles as agents of change among their peers. We also recognize that, in line with the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, full implementation of human rights obligations prevents terrorism and the creation of conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism in Central Asia.

To this aim, we commit to the following initiatives to address the root causes of terrorism and violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism:

1) Prevent the spread of terrorism through resolving conflicts

- To strengthen regional mechanisms for dialogue, including regularly holding high-level consultative Summits among Central Asian States.
- To intensify mechanisms for settling conflicts along our borders and foster confidence-building measures.
- To reinforce efforts to resolve conflicts and other underlying conditions of instability by promoting national reconciliation, tolerance, pluralism, respect for diversity, conflict prevention, management and resolution.

- To reinforce the mandate and capacities of regional and international organizations on conflict prevention, mediation and preventive diplomacy.
- To prevent the (re-)recruitment of youth into violent extremist groups and terrorist organizations.
- To promote community resilience as a means to contain the spread of violent extremism.
- To support the disengagement, rehabilitation and reintegration of former members of violent extremist groups, who decide to voluntarily leave the group and submit themselves to competent authorities.
- To support peace efforts aimed at solving conflicts, including through peaceful settlements at the national and local level as well as alternative approaches, in line with transitional justice frameworks.
- To intensify efforts to implement in full international human rights obligations, including by addressing the recommendations of the UN human rights mechanisms, particularly relevant recommendations on counter-terrorism and human rights.

2) Contribute to the stabilization of Afghanistan and invest in peacebuilding efforts as a critical factor for regional stability and prevention of the spread of terrorism

To collaborate with representatives of Afghanistan in hampering the movements and flow of terrorists and criminal networks or traffickers across the borders with Central Asia through, *inter alia*, information sharing, joint capacity-building, regular exchanges.

While recognizing that the stabilization of the situation can only be achieved through an Afghan-led, Afghan-owned and Afghan-controlled negotiation and peacebuilding process, to continue supporting political and economic initiatives which contribute to the peace process, *inter-alia*, by increasing investments in projects related to infrastructure development to facilitate transport, transit and trade, including the construction of major railroad projects, gas pipelines, transmission lines and bridges.

To support cross-border trade projects in order to alleviate the insecurity of border communities who are especially vulnerable to recruitment into criminal/terror networks.

3) Address the root causes of terrorism and conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism in terms of social exclusion and lack of socio-economic opportunities

- To promote the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals on the eradication of poverty and sustain economic development in the region. At the same time, to step up monitoring and evaluation of development projects in order to ensure their specific impacts on preventing violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism.
- To develop, implement, monitor and update national strategies on countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism in a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach, in accordance with our priorities and taking into account, as appropriate, the Secretary-General's Plan of Action, as well as other relevant documents, including this JPoA.
- To involve civil society organizations in the design, implementation, and monitoring of the strategies and national action plans on countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism.
- To develop targeted programmes to provide opportunities specifically geared towards vulnerable populations facing economic and social hardships while alleviating social exclusion, inequality, discrimination, unemployment and marginalization as possible risk factors for radicalization to violence in ways that do not further stigmatize communities.
- To involve and consult government and non-governmental entities, committees and organizations, including those representing respectively the youth, women and migrant workers and other marginalized/vulnerable communities, in the development, implementation and monitoring of PVE/CT projects, strategies and policies.
- To better understand and address the drivers of terrorism and violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism in Central Asia, including a gender analysis of the drivers of radicalization of women and men, by conducting actionable, evidence-based research involving all levels of society, including religious leaders, the private sector, academia, the media, civil society, as well as non-governmental organizations, community groups and other relevant institutions and stakeholders.
- To share good practices such as success stories in rehabilitation and reintegration programmes across the countries of the region, including by using local platforms created by international and regional organizations.
- To conduct regular monitoring and evaluation and impact assessments of programmes designed to prevent violent extremism and counter terrorism.

- To strengthen child protection and social welfare systems to prevent the trafficking, exploitation and/or recruitment of children and other vulnerable persons by groups classified as terrorist or extremist.

4) Protect populations vulnerable to recruitment into violent extremism, such as youth, women and migrant workers, while promoting them as agents of change in society

For youth:

- To involve youth in the promotion of a culture of peace, tolerance and intercultural and interreligious dialogue and develop, as appropriate, an understanding of respect for human dignity, pluralism and diversity.
- To include youth and youth organizations in decision-making processes, and in the development of programmes and initiatives aimed at countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism conducive to terrorism, including counter-terrorist narratives.
- To invest in youth's access to employment and alleviate difficulties in getting started in the labor market through placement, training and retraining programs.
- To invest in quality youth-focused formal and informal education, including religious education.
- To intensify training for young people on the use of information technology, raising their digital and media literacy knowledge and skills.
- To develop sports, physical and other recreational activities that could prevent and discourage their participation in acts of terrorism and violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism.
- To promote the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda in the region.
- To invest and strengthen youth capacity to fully enjoy their rights and freedoms, including increased access to basic services and decision-making processes without discrimination.
- To invest in addressing the needs of youth living in rural and disadvantaged areas by expanding their access to education, employment, housing and transportation.
- To develop opportunities for youth to freely express their thoughts, including electronic participation as an additional tool.

- To support youth organizations in building peaceful communities based on diversity, social cohesion and integration, in a spirit of respect, tolerance and understanding.
- To develop mechanisms to inform young people about their rights and opportunities to seek legal assistance.
- To develop counseling for young people affected by violence, exploitation and abuse.

For girls and women:

- To promote gender equality and the advancement of the status of women in the society and family as an end in itself and a means to prevent radicalization to violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism, by providing opportunities for women in education, in the labor market and in political life, and strengthening their resilience.
- To build the capacity of women's national machineries, committees, non-governmental organizations and their regional branches in educating girls and young women on the dangers of radicalization to violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism and building their resilience to engage in prevention work.
- To develop and use gender responsive guidelines and gender disaggregated data in programmes to prevent violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism, and to study and address the differential impact of both terrorism and counter-terrorism on women and girls.
- To address gender-based violence.
- To ensure the full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership of women in efforts to prevent violent extremism conducive to terrorism and counter-terrorism, including in the design, implementation and monitoring of this Joint Plan of Action and the UNGCTS.
- To engage men as agents of change as part of gender transformative processes, especially addressing social and cultural norms that inhibit progress towards gender equality.
- To facilitate the recruitment of women within the security, border control, law enforcement and defence agencies.
- To promote the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in the region.

For migrant workers both in the country of origin and in a host country:

- To increase the access of migrant workers to training opportunities, knowledge and information, including legal knowledge before departure and in a host country.
- To coordinate with relevant consulates and organizations dealing with migration services abroad to provide support for migrants, protect their rights, improving their conditions and prevent recruitment by violent extremist groups.
- To facilitate job creation and integration of migrants after their return, including through trainings and preferential micro-credits.
- To continue supporting initiatives of regional and international organizations related to protecting migrants' rights and improving access to communication and information.

5) Improved access to Human Rights and Critical Life Skills curriculums in educational institutions as a way to build community resilience

- To reinforce critical education and human rights education as part of efforts to counter violent extremist propaganda and introduce curricula about human rights, conflict prevention and resolution, as well as values of diversity, equality, mutual respect and tolerance between people and religions.
- To develop curriculum in support of promoting media and digital literacy skills starting in primary schools.
- To invest in developing curriculum on human rights for educational institutions in addition to courses on the prevention of violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism with the appropriate teaching materials and trained teachers.
- To promote legal awareness among the population.
- To develop a postgraduate education system and research infrastructure in the field of democracy studies, human rights protection and countering extremism and terrorism.

6) Ensure a culture of tolerance and respect for diversity among ethnic and religious groups and eradicate discrimination and hatred as root causes of violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism

- To adopt and, where necessary, review and strengthen legislation and policies to ensure transparency, equality, inclusivity and the broad-based representation of, or meaningful consultation with, various segments of society, including ethnic, religious, gender and youth groups, as well as other independent civil society organizations, in all government's political and economic institutions and bodies.
- To implement a zero-tolerance policy against racism and other forms of discrimination based on ethnicity, gender, religion, nationality, political opinions or any other grounds.
- To promote initiatives that encourage tolerance, pluralism, moderation, mutual respect and understanding, as well as intercultural, inter-faith and intra-faith dialogues in the region involving all levels of society including religious leaders, private sector, academia, media, civil society, together with non-governmental organizations, community groups and other relevant institutions.
- To invest in intra-religious and inter-religious dialogue with religious leaders on aspects related to the prevention of violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism.
- To support capacity-building for religious institutions and leaders through specialized training courses and exchanges with other countries beyond the region as voices for peace and tolerance.
- To respect the rights to freedom of religion, opinion, belief and expression when adopting specific legislation and policies to counter terrorism and violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism, and ensure that they comply with international obligations and commitments under international human rights law, including the principles of legality, proportionality, non-discrimination and necessity.

PILLAR II

Preventing and combating terrorism

We recognize that preventing and combating of terrorism in our region rests on the need to intensify efforts and enhance whole-of-society, whole-of-government and regional collaboration on key areas, notably: Improving the compliance of national legislation with the legislative basis provided by international standards; Intensifying cooperation and

coordination among law enforcement agencies; Strengthening inter-agency cooperation, effective border liaison and intelligence-led cooperation among the security agencies of our countries and with representatives of Afghanistan; Developing critical infrastructures and soft/vulnerable targets protection; Preventing and countering the movement of terrorists, including FTFs and returnees; Preventing and suppressing the financing of terrorism, including new modalities; Curbing the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs), including the Internet, by violent extremists and terrorists for activities such as recruitment, propaganda, planning of attacks, communication, raising and transferring money, organizing training and logistics; Curbing cyber-criminal activities; And, finally, improving cooperation in all areas that are relevant to combating the illicit trafficking and smuggling of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) weapons and materials and preventing the access of weapons to terrorists, including IEDs and their components. In these efforts, we seek to engage civil society, research institutions and private entities to raise public awareness of our national and regional counter-terrorism strategies, tap into local expertise to assist in implementation, receive feedback on the effectiveness of our counter-terrorism policies, and facilitate two-way information sharing with the public.

1) Strengthen national legislation and ensure the ratification and implementation of international Counter-Terrorism legal instruments

- To establish a national legal and regulatory framework against terrorism in line with international obligations, in particular those emanating from the 19 international treaties and protocols dealing with terrorism and the relevant Security Council resolutions and international human rights instruments.
- To consider ratifying or becoming party to prominent international CT legal instruments and any of the outstanding international human rights treaties.
- To seek support from regional and international organizations in drafting counter-terrorism legislation and regulations, harmonizing national legislation with international obligations, and monitoring the status of ratification of international CT legal instruments.
- To define terrorist-related offenses within domestic criminal law in clear and precise terms, according to the definitions contained in international conventions and protocols, in compliance with international counter-terrorism instruments and international human rights law, including the principle of legality and procedural protection of rights and fundamental freedoms.

- To periodically review and update national legislation according to new threats and to enhance the capacity of Prosecutors' offices and Ministries of Justice and other relevant national authorities to improve the legislative framework related to violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism and ensure its consistent compliance with international law, including international human rights law.
- To ensure that criminal offences related to extremism are respectful of applicable international human rights standards, including those of freedom of expression, freedom of belief and of association.
- To harmonize between national and multilateral lists of individuals and groups associated with terrorism, given conceptual and legal differences pertaining to the classification of groups as terrorist or violent extremist at the regional and international levels, and to ensure that the designations of groups or individuals as terrorist or extremist groups are consistent with international law, including international human rights law.
- To promote national sentencing policies, practices and guidelines for the treatment of offenders in which the severity of penalties is proportionate to the gravity of the offences in accordance with national legislation.
- To ensure that national legislation and directives on counter-terrorism have explicit safeguards that preserve humanitarian space and humanitarian action in conflict and high-threat environments.
- To use applicable international instruments, as appropriate, as a basis for mutual legal assistance and, as appropriate, for extradition in terrorism cases, and, in the absence of relevant conventions or provisions, to cooperate where possible on the basis of reciprocity or on a case-by-case basis.

2) Intensify cooperation and coordination among law enforcement agencies, including through the improvement of data sharing across the region

- To strengthen sub-regional and international cooperation, and exchange of information and intelligence among law enforcement agencies in order to prevent, detect and suppress terrorist activity and minimize its consequences, including in sharing biometric data and biographical information, in a responsible manner, by regularly organizing exchanges among our counter-terrorism coordination centers, and by ensuring that publicly accessible legal frameworks are in place that outline clear parameters for such information exchange consistent with international human rights law and the creation, reinforcement and/or

strengthening of independent oversight mechanisms given the power to consider all aspects of activities related to intelligence-sharing.

- To facilitate the appointment of liaison officers, police-to-police cooperation, the creation/use, when appropriate, of joint investigation mechanisms, and enhanced coordination of cross-border investigations in terrorism cases in a manner consistent with international law, including international human rights law.
- To promote community policing for the prevention of violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism within the framework of police reforms.
- To address the terrorism- crime-arms-drugs nexus.
- To consider establishing unified forensic agencies to facilitate investigation and prosecution of terrorism-related offenses, based on best practices and international standards, including the use of digital evidence and special investigative techniques (SIT) in terrorism cases, with full respect for international human rights and rule of law obligations.
- To improve data sharing mechanisms between the countries of the region, ensuring that data is accessible, responsibly shared with all relevant agencies in a timely manner and analyzed properly consistent with the right to privacy and other international human rights law protections, as well as data protection laws.
- To populate and utilize the different regional and international databases, including those set up by CARICC, SCO and CIS, the Al-Qaida Sanctions List as well as the INTERPOL databases, including the Stolen and Lost Travel Documents (SLTD) database. At the same time, to work towards unifying various databases which maintain similar information/themes.
- Within the framework of this strategy, countries will improve information sharing and study best practices of other states.
- To prevent, mitigate and respond to attacks against vulnerable targets including critical infrastructure and public places, also through the exchange of information and experience with public and private stakeholders.
- To intensify regional and whole-of-government collaboration to counter the use of new and emerging technologies for terrorist purposes, including but not limited to artificial intelligence, 3D printing, virtual assets, unmanned aircraft systems, as well as weaponization of commercial drones, consistent with our obligations under international law.

3) Strengthen border management and cooperation for border security to prevent terrorist travel

- To strengthen border control efforts on combating document and customs fraud, smuggling, and the flow of illicit drugs and weapons as part of broader approaches to securing frontiers against potential terrorist attacks.
- To strengthen border security and information-sharing, including the use of advance passenger information (API) and passenger name record (PNR) data and biometrics, consistent with the right to privacy and other international human rights law protections, as well as data protection laws, to prevent terrorist travel.
- To reinforce regional efforts in information collection, timely information exchange, mutual trust and the use of INTERPOL databases to strengthen border security.
- To develop and implement comprehensive national border management strategies and plans of action inclusive of counter-terrorism elements and in accordance with international human rights law, refugee law, and humanitarian law.
- To implement national border strategies, or laws, which mandate the State Customs Services to take action against terrorism by preventing the unlawful transport across the territory of small arms and light weapons (SALW), ammunition or explosives, cash and bearer negotiable instruments (BNI), substances or materials and dual-use items.
- To adopt biometric passport systems, and issue machine-readable travel documents (MRTDs), as well as to utilize the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Public Key Directory (PKD) to authenticate e-passports. To systematically include biometrics such as fingerprints and DNA data, which are key identifiers for terrorist profiles used in terrorism-related INTERPOL notices. To ensure that biometric data collection and systems are governed by a clear legal framework consistent with international human rights law, and that the collection, use, storage, and transfer of biometric data is subject to human rights risk assessments and carried out consistently with international human rights law and recognized data protection safeguards.
- To ensure that border guards responsible for entry-exit registration of persons through state borders at all check points in the region have access to updated data, especially in real time; including national databases and watch lists, and the INTERPOL Stolen Administrative Documents (SAD) database, accessible via eASF

or FIND, to detect documents that might enable terrorists to gain access to critical infrastructure, register vehicles, or obtain import/export clearance certificates.

- To establish a system for the responsible collection and analysis of Advance Passenger Information (API) and Passenger Name Record (PNR), as well as of biometric data, based on the obligations under UN Security Council resolutions 2178 (2014), 2396 (2017) and 2482 (2019), in compliance with Human Rights and Data Protection Standards, and ICAO standards, and in line with international human rights law.
- To ensure that effective security arrangements are in place to safeguard civil aviation against terrorist attacks in accordance with Security Council resolution 2309 (2016) of 22 September 2016 and reinforce collaboration among Central Asian States in this regard.

4) Take measures to curb the financing of terrorism

- To fully implement UN resolutions related to the prevention and suppression of the financing of terrorist acts as well as the 1999 International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, to which Central Asian Member States are all party, and to follow up on commitments made in the Dushanbe Declaration adopted at the High-Level Conference on International and Regional Cooperation on Countering Terrorism and its Financing Through Illicit Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime in May 2019. To continue to review and update legislation on Countering the Financing of Terrorism (CFT) in accordance with evolving international standards, including recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and Security Council resolutions, especially resolution 2462 (2019) and 2482 (2019), as well as build capacity to implement laws and practices in CFT, including by ensuring that all measures are consistent with international law and international human rights obligations.
- To build the capacity of our Financial Intelligence Units (FIUs) to collect and analyze specific terrorist financing risks, to identify the economic sectors most vulnerable to terrorist financing, and to share data, including through regional and multilateral systems, through the Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism, the Egmont Group, etc.
- To facilitate, regulate and institutionalize more exchanges with the FIUs of the region and to improve the system of timely information sharing of financing information, including operational information and financing intelligence, as well

as sharing and providing mutual legal assistance in connection with criminal investigations.

- To address pending issues such as freezing terrorist funds without delay, implementing a risk-based approach that is consistent with international human rights law to assess the risk of being abused by and for terrorists faced by the non-profit organization sector, while also safeguarding independent civic space, and regulating procedures for monitoring money remittance services.
- To improve risk-based supervision and regulation of systems to safeguard the non-profit sector from potential terrorist abuse.
- To strengthen efforts in gathering and sharing information and intensifying cross-border cooperation in combating arms and drugs trafficking, which contributes to the financing of terrorism.
- To work cooperatively with non-profit organizations to prevent the abuse of such organizations by and for terrorists.
- To organize education of young people (high school and university students) to raise awareness in this area.

5) Counter the use of information and communication technologies, including the Internet and other media for terrorist purposes

To regulate the use of information and communication technologies:

- To reinforce legislation to investigate and prosecute the use of the Internet and other media for terrorist purposes, including on the use of e-evidence while ensuring full respect for international law, as well as international human rights law and the right to freedom of speech, information and expression.
- To regulate the use of information and communication technologies with the support of regional and international organizations through a multi-stakeholder approach, involving the academia, civil society and the private sector, in full respect of international law.
- To harmonize national laws, regulations and practices in this domain and to share model laws on information and communication technologies in the region consistent with international human rights law.
- To instigate specialized training for law enforcement and criminal justice officials on prosecuting the use of the Internet and other media for terrorist purposes, and

enhancing mutual legal assistance at the regional level, including on the legal access to data and e-evidence across borders.

- To facilitate and intensify cooperation with the private sector, including with foreign domain registrars, hosting, communication and social media platforms, through developing a proactive framework for public-private cooperation and communication, and improving the knowledge and capacity of law enforcement and criminal justice authorities to work with online service providers.
- To seek technical assistance and capacity-building, exchanges of experiences and best practices both on technical and legal issues.
- To issue orders to block Internet service providers, web hosting companies, file-sharing sites (domains) and social networks, in case of identification of violations of national legislation related to terrorism and other crimes, in the interests of sovereignty, integrity and security of the countries – members of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.
- To consider the possibility of developing a universal mechanism for online information sharing on identified and blocked extremist and terrorist websites to address the anticipatory measures encountered locally.

To develop adequate alternative content:

- To promote public and media awareness on terrorist threats and terrorism activities including through public education on counter-terrorism measures.
- To encourage the development of alternative and counter-narratives with the help of the civil society including youth organizations, the media, academia, religious authorities, community leaders and the private sector to be used as alternatives to terrorist narratives and propaganda, and to boost the capacity of the media with knowledge, new tools and technologies to help them engage positively and proactively in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism.
- To develop and implement, together with relevant regional and international organizations, civil society, academia and the private sector, where appropriate, comprehensive regional communication campaigns to counter terrorist narratives through information and communication technologies.
- To train and raise awareness on the role of media in the fight against terrorism and develop skills of the Central Asia media representatives and press offices of

government agencies in the fight against terrorism, including to develop effective tools to counter terrorist propaganda and incitement, support the youth with the necessary knowledge, as well as Media and Information Literacy (MIL) skills and critical thinking education in order to develop more resistant psychology to the ideology of violent extremism.

- To build resilience among the youth against propaganda and hate speech on the Internet by instigating education and skills in critical thinking and MIL.
- To address the dissemination of terrorist content, hate speech, fake news and incitements to violence through the Internet in ways that do not violate international human rights law, including the freedom of expression.
- To create a unified database of electronic guidance material used in awareness-raising work aimed at the development of immunity to radical ideology, zero tolerance to any radical manifestations.

6) Ensure cybersecurity

- To develop comprehensive legal and regulatory frameworks for cybersecurity consistent with international human rights law and adopt concept papers for the creation of national cybersecurity strategies, while sharing best practices in this regard.
- To consider the possibility of developing pamphlets for law enforcement officials, brief recommendations for detection and investigation, taking into consideration regional specificities and being updated quarterly.
- To set up new institutionalized frameworks, such as specialized units for investigations on cybercrime activities and Computer Emergency Response Teams (CERTs), with adequate legal, financial, and technical support, including through strengthened public-private partnership and ensuring regular meetings to exchange information and good practices at the regional level.
- To create dedicated cyber programs at national universities to train information and cyber experts for CERT agencies and to institutionalize exchanges in the region.
- To intensify regional and international exchanges of best practices in addressing legislation and technical matters.
- To seek support in sharing databases and analysis by regional organizations, further training for law enforcement agencies, and support for the creation of new

institutional frameworks, such as specialized units, set up at the national and regional levels with adequate legal guidance.

7) Prevent and respond to attacks using weapons of mass destruction and prohibit illicit trafficking of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear materials

- To adopt and enforce appropriate, effective laws which prohibit any non-State actors to manufacture, acquire, possess, develop, transport, transfer or use nuclear, chemical, radiological or biological weapons and their means of delivery to improve border and customs control.
- To improve cooperation and coordinate mitigation and planning response to an attack using CBRN weapons or materials at the national, regional and international levels.
- To enhance information exchanges and joint needs assessments.
- To develop critical infrastructure protection pertinent to CBRN weapons or materials, as requested under SC Resolution 2341 (2017).
- To make full use of existing assistance mechanisms at the regional and international levels on preventing and prohibiting the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction through the instruments of the OSCE and CICA, while collaborating on measures to prevent and protect critical facilities from terrorist threats through the CSTO, SCO, ATC/CIS and INTERPOL.
- To seek further assistance for joint activities, tailored dialogues, and the sharing of experiences and lessons learnt on the prevention of proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) by non-state actors, pursuant to Security Council resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1977 (2011).

PILLAR III

Measures to build States' capacity to prevent and combat terrorism and to strengthen the role of the United Nations system in this regard

We resolve to undertake measures to develop State capacity to prevent and combat terrorism and recognize with gratitude the role of regional and international partners, the United Nations, including the Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact to develop

our capacities to prevent and combat terrorism directly or through facilitating matchmaking between requests and offers of assistance. We pledge to continue to seek support in capacity-building and technical assistance in the following areas, including through seeking the assistance of relevant Security Council Committees and expert groups in the preparation of assessment reports and technical assistance requests.

1) Enhance the capacity of criminal justice system responses to terrorism

- To seek capacity-building for national criminal justice systems to ensure access to legal aid and full adherence to fair trial standards in terrorism related cases, transparency and accountability in criminal investigations and proceedings, to properly address incitement and/or provocation leading towards political, national, ethnic or other violence, in accordance with obligations under international law, including international human rights law and international humanitarian law.
- To seek expertise on legislation and analysis of judicial practice.
- To consider raising awareness and seek capacity-building for the investigation and prosecution of terrorist offences committed abroad by foreign terrorist fighters.
- To seek capacity-building support for the use of the information, as well as for the use of digital evidence and digital forensics.
- To ensure that national legislation on extradition and mutual legal assistance on terrorism cases is streamlined, as well as that relevant regional cooperation mechanisms are in place.
- To seek support for new methodological tools in investigations related to incitement of political, national, ethnic or other forms of hatred and/or hostility
- If necessary, to make adjustments to criminal justice systems to deal with FTF cases in full compliance with the rule of law, international human rights law and the UN Resolution 2178 (2014); to update and amend existing legislations to implement the measures aimed at stemming the movement and flow of FTFs, as well as dealing with returning FTFs, according to SC Resolutions 2178 (2014) and 2396 (2017), the Madrid Guiding Principles, and the United Nations Guidance on Human Rights-Compliant Responses to the threat posed by FTFs.
- To ensure that criminal justice responses for returnees, including prosecution (if relevant), rehabilitation and reintegration, be conducted in a gender and age-sensitive manner and in compliance with international law, including international human rights law.

- To actively share best practices in introducing the community-policing approaches to prevent and counter terrorism and violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism within the framework of police reforms.
- To address the terrorism-arms-crime nexus comprehensively, including through developing unified forensic agencies to facilitate investigation, in full compliance with international human rights law.

2) Prevent the spread of radicalization to violence and violent extremism in prisons

- To seek financial and expert support to develop evidence-based prisoner risk assessment and classification systems, and set up disengagement and rehabilitation programs.
- To instigate prison reforms, in particular in the area of the treatment of terrorist offenders, and the need to strengthen staff training, including through the engagement of psychologists, social and religious workers.
- To provide opportunities for prisoners to be engaged in meaningful activity, in particular vocational training and employment.
- To develop effective follow-up mechanisms for post-prison, including with support from families and communities as well as employment opportunities, in order to prevent recidivism of terrorist offenders.
- To enhance cooperation in the development of gender- and age-sensitive rehabilitation and reintegration programmes and strategies to manage offenders, in accordance with international law.

3) Boost the capacity of national and regional counter-terrorism units and promote intra-organizational and intra-regional exchange networks

- To strengthen the capacity of national counter terrorism units within different ministries and instigate systematic exchanges between them, including via fusion center capacity.
- To cooperate with the counter terrorism units of relevant international and regional organizations, encourage intensified cooperation, coordination and exchange of experiences between them for coherent support and avoid duplications of efforts. Particularly, using the coordination tools created by international and regional organizations for exchange of information.

- To encourage the UN and other stakeholders to produce manuals and guidelines on counter-terrorism in Russian and in the official languages of Central Asian countries and disseminate them widely.
- To develop national and regional capacity-building plans, guided by CTED assessments and recommendations in order to seek coordinated assistance.

PILLAR IV

Measures to ensure respect for human rights for all and the rule of law as the fundamental basis of the fight against terrorism

We recognize the need to ensure the full respect for human rights and the rule of law as the fundamental basis of the fight against terrorism, and that effective counter-terrorism measures and the protection of human rights and the rule of law are not conflicting, but complementary and mutually reinforcing goals. As such, we pledge to:

1) Ensure that counter-terrorism measures and national legislation comply with obligations under international human rights law, international humanitarian law and international refugee law

- To ensure that all counter-terrorism laws and measures comply with obligations under international human rights law, international humanitarian law and international refugee law, including by addressing and implementing recommendations of UN human rights mechanisms, with the technical support of the United Nations, as needed.
- To conduct human rights-based reviews on procedures, practices and contents of counter-terrorism laws and strategies, including by seeking support from regional and international organizations, as well as civil society organizations, to ensure the full and effective implementation of obligations under international human rights law.
- To improve procedures on the movement of persons, including respect for the non-refoulement principle and other procedural safeguards for asylum seekers. To take appropriate measures, before granting asylum, for the purpose of ensuring that the asylum-seeker has not planned, facilitated or participated in the commission of terrorist acts and, after granting asylum, for the purpose of

ensuring that the refugee status is not used to organize, instigate, facilitate or participate in terrorist activities.

- To ensure that the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention against Torture are fully respected, including the provisions related to the arrest, detention, trial, interrogation extradition and transfer of persons suspected of acts of terrorism, and to address and implement relevant recommendations of the UN Human Rights Committee and the Committee against Torture.
- To ensure that legislation to counter terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism does not arbitrarily or unlawfully infringe in law or implementation upon human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the rights to freedom of conscience, freedom of religion or belief, as well as freedom of religious organization, freedom of expression, of assembly and the right to privacy.
- To ensure that counter terrorism measures fully respect the Convention of the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols with the best interest of the child principle guiding all actions concerning children with actual or perceived association with, or family ties to, designated terrorist groups by both public and private actors as well as in all legislative, judicial, and administrative decisions. This includes for State Parties to take appropriate measures to promote the physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of child victims, to include their right to privacy and family life, nationality, and family unity.

2) Enhance the capacity to ensure the respect for human rights and the rule of law in the fight against terrorism

- To enhance the capacity of Prosecutors' offices, Ministries of Justice and relevant authorities to ensure that the development and implementation of the legislative framework related to countering terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism complies with Member States' obligations under international law, including international human rights law, international humanitarian law and international refugee law.
- To build the capacity of law enforcement and criminal justice authorities in protecting the rights and freedoms of citizens, in particular ensuring their access to justice, timely and fair investigation of allegations of human rights violations, abuse complaints and claims related to CT operations, inquest, prejudicial inquiry,

and the implementation of justice as well as ensuring effective remedy in case of violations.

- To strengthen the role of National Human Rights Institutions, including Ombudsman Offices and National Prevention Mechanisms, to monitor the criminal justice response to terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism, engage in preventing human rights violations and abuses with measures taken or means employed to counter terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism, and support the follow up of recommendations of the UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism. This includes training for staff of the National Human Rights Institutions on the human rights and fundamental freedoms of vulnerable groups.
- To organize trainings on human rights in the context of terrorism investigations for related criminal justice officials, including law enforcement officers, judges, lawyers and prosecutors.
- To make full use of the UN Human Rights mechanisms and their recommendations, including independent special procedures of the Human Rights Council and UN human rights treaty bodies.
- To encourage regional and international organizations to develop information materials, guidelines and training manuals specifically adapted for Central Asia and in the official languages, on the inclusion of human rights instruments in activities to counter terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism.
- To train specialists in PVE and CT to integrate and mainstream the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including with the help of civil society organizations and academia.
- To support the role of civil society actors in the design, implementation and monitoring of the JPoA, and to create and maintain an enabling environment for civil societies, including a legal framework that protects and promotes human rights, in accordance with international human rights law.

3) Address the needs of victims of terrorism and provide platforms and opportunities to amplify their voices

- To promote and protect the rights of victims of terrorism, their families and communities, and provide them with the support they deserve, including through

the development of comprehensive gender-sensitive assistance plans and distribution of funds duly seized or recovered from terrorists, with a view to facilitate their immediate, short-term and long-term physical, medical, legal and psychological needs, including security, rehabilitation and reintegration.

- To give victims of terrorism and violent extremism a more proactive voice before, during and after criminal legal proceedings efforts, while respecting their right to truth, dignity, justice and reparation.
- To further work with the media to provide a platform to give a voice to victims and their families, in full respect of their right to privacy, family, and confidentiality.
- To collaborate with civil societies and private sector organizations, including victims and victims' associations, to assist and support victims of terrorism.
- To collaborate with UNOCT to strengthen the Victims of Terrorism Support Programme and work with the global Victims of Terrorism Support Portal, which seeks to strengthen victims' voices and their role in preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism.

Specific measures towards the Screening, Return, Prosecution, Rehabilitation and Reintegration of individuals suspected of terrorism, including Foreign Terrorist Fighters and their family members

The need to return and repatriate alleged FTFs and their families from conflict zones in the Middle East presents several new challenges for Central Asian Member States. In order to fully comply with resolutions 2178 (2014) and 2396 (2017) of the Security Council, the Madrid Guiding Principles 2015 and its Addendum 2018, and the Key Principles for the Protection, Repatriation, Prosecution, Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Women and Children with Links To United Nations-listed Terrorist Groups set out by the Secretary-General, and to implement a comprehensive, tailored and long-term support in terms of screening, prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration (SPRR), we pledge to undertake the following initiatives:

Screening:

- To conduct screening and evidenced-based comprehensive risk assessments in accordance with sound evidence-based standards and international law, in particular international human rights law, international humanitarian law and

international refugee law, to assess and investigate individuals whom they have reasonable grounds to believe are terrorists, including suspected foreign terrorist fighters, and distinguish them from other individuals, including their accompanying family members who may not have been engaged in foreign terrorist fighter-related offenses.

- To conduct extensive needs and threat-assessment research to ensure effective capacity-building efforts. This involves liaising with different entities within the government, civil society organizations and communities to understand and plan for comprehensive interventions that take into account local concerns and challenges as well as the short, medium- and long-term needs of returnees.
- To establish systems for the swift handover of children with actual or perceived association with, or family ties to, designated terrorist groups to civilian child welfare actors, including juvenile justice actors, where relevant, for individual best interest assessment that is age-sensitive and gender-responsive, care and protection, and assistance to support recovery and reintegration.

Prosecution:

- To ensure that FTFs are prosecuted and brought to justice in accordance with international human rights and legal standards, including guarantees of due process and fair trial.
- To cooperate with other countries for the collection of evidence and data necessary to investigate and prosecute terrorism-related offences, (including information and digital evidence), through mutual legal assistance.
- To ensure that criminal justice processes are gender-responsive. This includes preventing stereotyping and stigmatization of both men and women and bestowing adequate sentences based on proven guilt and not gender stereotypes.
- To ensure that all children with actual or perceived association with, or family ties to, designated terrorist groups are treated as victims of armed conflict and terrorism, and that as such they need to be treated in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child as well as domestic and international standards and norms regarding child rights and child victims of crime.
- Any judicial proceedings for children who are above the age of criminal responsibility and suspected of an alleged crime shall respect internationally recognized juvenile justice, fair trial standards and procedural safeguards, with a

focus on recovery and restorative justice to assist children's recovery and reintegration.

- To treat all children as victims of terrorism as well as of other violations of international law and ensure adequate protection of children affected by the FTFs phenomenon in a manner consistent with their rights, dignity and needs, and in accordance with applicable international law, in particular the obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, with the best interest of the child as primary consideration, to consider alternatives to prosecution and detention and promote transparency and a whole-of-society approach in the work with children;
- To develop handouts aimed to address conditions conducive to terrorism in the host countries, including the ideas of mutual respect between peoples of various religions, religious values, faiths and cultures.

Rehabilitation/Reintegration

- To develop and implement a comprehensive and tailored gender- and age-specific rehabilitation or recovery program for returnees with actual or perceived association with, or family ties to, designated terrorist groups, using a whole-of-society approach, including through dialogue and engagement with a wide range of actors, as well as civil society organizations, families (including extended), community members and leaders, religious scholars, teachers, and local authorities.
- To ensure adequate allocation of resources to fund sustainable civil society participation in the reintegration work with returnees.
- To ensure the collection of best practices and lessons learnt and promote regional exchange and dialogue on policies applied upon the return of FTFs and their families.
- To work with the public to lessen stigmatization of returnees in order to solicit public support for reintegration and rehabilitation in accordance with the human rights-based approach.
- To address the special needs of women when it comes to rehabilitation and reintegration, including mental and physical health, legal aid, protection, employment and education and building their resilience so as to prevent the risk of their stigmatization when returning to their communities.
- To work with communities to prevent the risks of stigmatization of individuals, in particular women, when returning to their communities.

- To strengthen national and international child protection, social welfare and juvenile justice frameworks and systems to provide assistance and promote the recovery and reintegration of returning children with actual or perceived association with, or family ties to, designated terrorist groups, building on good practices being implemented by Member States across Central Asia to include:
 - Individualized case management to include assignment of a social worker to assess and provide protection and assistance to the child, parent/caregiver, and family – and mediate challenges that may arise during the reintegration process.
 - Promotion of family-based care arrangement for children with relatives or guardians in their communities of origin.
 - Avoidance of institutionalization or isolation of children, to reduce stigma.
 - Identification and support to ‘guardian’ families able to care for unaccompanied children, who do not have family or are unable to remain with parents that may face prosecution.
 - Enrolment of children into school following education assessment; additional supplementary tutoring to help children adjust and catch up after being without formal education for a significant period.
 - Targeted behavioral mental health and psychosocial support to address specialized needs of individual children, and to understand and address underlying causes or effects of exposure to violence and promote healing.
 - Implementation of effective responses that do not focus exclusively on ideology, but on the totality of the child’s experience and work to restore children’s wellbeing and enable their integration and acceptance into a community while minimizing stigma and isolation.
 - Access to pediatric and specialized medical care for children returning with health issues (i.e. physical disability or impairment, victims of violence, etc.).
 - Commitment to long term holistic support and approaches that benefit returning children, and broader communities of returnees.
 - Life skills for adolescents to increase resiliency, address issues related to identity, and improve (i) Decision-making and critical thinking, (ii) Communication and interpersonal skills and (iii) Coping and self-management skills.
 - Prepare and sensitize families and communities that will receive children returning from conflict-affected areas, to strengthen community supports and social acceptance, while respecting the right to privacy and avoiding stigmatization.

ANNEX A

Suggested Roadmap for Implementation Means of Implementation, Monitoring and Communication

The primary responsibility for the full and effective implementation of this JPoA shall remain with the Central Asian States. International and regional organizations working in Central Asia are also called upon as stakeholders to provide their support in the implementation of the JPoA.

Implementation

1. Central Asian Member States are encouraged to develop or update their national counter-terrorism or counter-extremism strategies in line with this JPoA. Such strategies should draw from and aim at providing practical support to the full implementation of the JPoA;
2. Line agencies shall, in accordance with domestic policies, be provided with adequate resources and funding including, where necessary, through appropriate mechanisms.
3. States, together with their regional and international partners, are encouraged to allocate sufficient resources (in kind and/or in cash) to the implementation of the JPoA in addition to their national CT and P/CVE strategies and action plans.
4. In order to ensure systematic follow-ups and effective monitoring of the implementation of this JPoA and to improve the flow of communication and coordination among agencies related to counter terrorism, Member States shall assign a contact person in each respective agency or unit as focal point.
5. Central Asian Member States may use the JPoA to propose appropriate project activities in line with its objectives in their dialogue with donors. At the same time, initiatives within the JPoA are aligned with activities identified in the Multi-Year Appeal for Counter-Terrorism which is a tool to coordinate the UN resource mobilization and outreach efforts.
6. Regional and international organizations working in Central Asia are encouraged to use the JPoA as a strategic document to align their activities with its objectives and initiatives.

Monitoring and reporting

1. Member States shall agree on a timeframe for assessment of progress in measures taken and challenges encountered in the implementation of this Plan of Action.
2. Central Asian Member States shall contribute their experiences in implementation to the preparation of reports that feed into the biannual General Assembly Review of the Global Strategy.
3. Focal points shall meet regularly or whenever deemed necessary to examine progress made in the implementation of the JPoA.
4. Regular consultations are to be organized among government agencies that are involved in counter-terrorism, including representatives of ministers of foreign affairs, justice and interior, National Security Committees, judges and justices, police and security chiefs, intelligence chiefs, investigators, prosecutors, and other stakeholders, to monitor, evaluate and recommend more effective measures for strengthening coordination on counter-terrorism matters among Member States.
5. The JPoA shall be reviewed and evaluated at a timeframe agreed upon by Central Asian Member States, to ensure that all activities remain relevant to the needs and priorities of the region.

Communication

1. Awareness building and strategic communication shall be launched to inform citizens of the Central Asian States in order to strengthen transparency as well as support for the implementation of the JPoA.
2. Best practices and lessons learnt in implementing the JPoA at the national and regional levels shall be periodically shared. The exchange of experiences will also be extended to inter-regional cooperation in regions which have also adopted regional plans for the implementation of the UNGCTS.
3. Regional contact lists of national focal points will be created and updated for regular exchange of information.
4. An inventory of good practices and challenges in implementing the JPoA at the regional level and CT and P/CVE strategies at the national level will be developed and shared regularly with other interested and concerned countries.

ANNEX III

Side Events

OSCE Side Event on “Age- and Gender-Sensitive Approaches to Returning FTF Family Members”

Ambassador Dr. Pierre von Arx

The side event was moderated by **OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan, Ambassador Dr. Pierre von Arx**, who underlined the high relevance of the topic worldwide, and its particular importance for Uzbekistan and other Central Asian States, who face the return of foreign terrorist fighters (FTF) and affiliated family members.

Ms. Oliya Ilmuradova

Head of the NGO *Barkaror Hayot, Uzbekistan*, spoke about the work of her NGO in helping with the rehabilitation and reintegration of former FTF-affiliated women and children back into society. Elaborating on further main efforts, she highlighted [*Bakaror Hayot's*](#) engagement with returning vulnerable migrants and victims of human trafficking. In addressing these challenges, the NGO conducts regular educational activities to prevent human trafficking and provides legal, psychological and social assistance to the aforementioned groups. This includes the development of professional skills to help with finding new employment, and efforts in the prevention of violent extremism more in general.

Ms. Seran de Leede

Ms. Seran de Leede from the [**International Centre for Counter-Terrorism in The Hague \(ICCT\)**](#), focused on analyzing the various factors that prompt women and girls to join terrorist groups, based mainly on experience gathered in connection with the movement of FTFs to Syria and Iraq. She concluded that rehabilitation and reintegration efforts needed to take into account this background in order to be properly tailored to individual cases and that – as a more general observation – women from western countries appeared to have more agency in the decision whether to travel to the conflict zone or not, compared with the situation of women from Central Asia. Ms. De Leede suggested

that such findings should have an impact on the decision to investigate and potentially prosecute female returnees, or to treat them mainly as victims.

Mr. Manuel Eising

Senior Legal Officer with the **OSCE Action against Terrorism Unit in Vienna**, highlighted the OSCE's efforts in connection with returning FTF family members, including the close cooperation between the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan and *Bakaror Hayot* and other related efforts pursued by OSCE field operations in Central Asia and South Eastern Europe. Two regional events on the experiences gathered in these two OSCE regions had been organized in 2021, focusing on [discussions among government and civil society experts](#), as well as on a related [policy dialogue among legislators](#), organized jointly with the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

United Nations Multi-Year Appeal for Counter-Terrorism: Capacity Building and Technical Assistance Programmes in Central Asia

On 4 March, the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) organized a hybrid side event on the United Nations Multi-Year Appeal for Counter-Terrorism: Capacity Building and Technical Assistance Programmes in Central Asia. The event brought together up to 120 representatives from Central Asian governments (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan); regional and international organizations (CICA, CTED, EAG, ICAO, Interpol, LEICA, OSCE, SCO RATS, UNODC, UNRCCA); diplomatic corps in Uzbekistan (Azerbaijan, European Union, France, Germany, Malaysia, Romania, United Kingdom, United States); and civil society.

The side event provided a key opportunity to raise awareness on UN capacity-building and technical support in Central Asia and showcase successful counter-terrorism projects from the multi-year appeal in the region.

The hybrid event was moderated by Ms. Oguljeren Niyazberdiyeva, Chief of the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism. She presented the new Multi-Year Appeal for 2021-2022 as an interactive digital tool that facilitates a dynamic user experience for Member States and potential donors and allows them to search by country, region, thematic priority or implementing partner.

Representatives from UNOCT and UNRCCA highlighted multiyear cooperation in Central Asia in the context of the project “Towards a comprehensive implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia”. The organizers also presented a number of innovative programmes that donors can select through the Multi-Year Appeal (MYA), e.g. the UNOCT Global Counter-Terrorism Programme on Unmanned Aircraft Systems and the Global Programme on Countering Terrorist Threats against Vulnerable Targets. Finally, some success stories on cooperation with UNOCT in Central Asia within Global Framework on UN Support on Syria / Iraq Third Country National Returnees were highlighted. All projects and programmes showcased during the side-event support the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (UNGCTS) in the region.

The hybrid event is part of a series of briefings to show case the MYA as the UN’s coordinated approach to supporting counter-terrorism efforts of Member States upon their request with subsequent events planned to showcase capacity building and technical assistance programmes for Africa and the MENA region.

ANNEX IV**Address of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, H.E. Mr. Shavkat Miromonovich Mirziyoyev, to the participants of the conference**

Dear heads of delegations!

Dear heads of international organizations!

Ladies and Gentlemen!

I welcome you, all the participants of the High Level International **Conference dedicated to the implementation of the United Nations Global** Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia, organized jointly with the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

I would like to express my special gratitude to the Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr. António Guterres for supporting our initiative to hold this forum.

I would also like to thank OSCE Secretary General Mrs. Helga Schmid, United Nations Under-Secretary-General Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, the Head of the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia Mrs. Natalia Gherman, and, Ministers of Foreign affairs of Central Asian countries for jointly organizing this important event.

Your participation in this Conference is clear evidence of your commitment to jointly fight against terrorism and other challenges and threats in the name of global security and stability.

Dear participants of the Conference!

Today we are witnessing an intensification of contradictions in international relations, an overall decline in the level of confidence and cooperation among countries. At the same time, flashpoints and armed conflicts persist in various regions of the world.

The pandemic, which has affected all spheres of public life and economic activity, is having the most negative impact on the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Crises in economy and social life are exacerbating inequality in the world, significantly increasing the risks of exacerbation of conflicts and creating a breeding ground for the spread of terrorist ideas.

In such difficult circumstances it is important for the international community to consolidate its efforts in combating against the increasing global and regional security threats.

Fifteen years ago, all the countries of the world unanimously endorsed the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. It became the first comprehensive, collective and universally recognized **legal basis for combining national and international efforts** in the fight against terrorism.

In 2011, Central Asia provided the first successful example of regionalization of this policy document, when all five countries adopted the **Joint Action Plan** for its fulfillment.

The implementation of the Plan has strengthened regional consensus on shared principles and approaches in counter-terrorism, and, established effective mechanisms for cooperation both bilaterally and multilaterally.

The countries of the region have formed national systems for countering terrorism. Country action strategies have been developed that fully comply with the UN recommendations.

This has allowed our nations to conduct more structured and productive dialogue, to share experiences and important information, to build counterterrorism capacity and achieve together what cannot be done alone.

And as a result, today many authoritative international ratings consider Central Asia as one of the safest regions of the world.

In recent years there have been fundamental positive changes here. Gradually developing good neighborly relations among the countries of the region, based on the principles of friendship, mutual benefit and trust.

Regular consultative meetings of the heads of Central Asian States contribute to the realization of the huge potential of our countries in ensuring regional security and sustainable development.

Considering Afghanistan as an integral part of Central Asia, the states of the region provide humanitarian assistance to the Afghan people, fully assisting in rebuilding a peaceful economy and integrating the country into the regional trade and economic links.

Dear ladies and gentlemen!

Uzbekistan has signed 14 main universal international legal documents and actively participates in global efforts to counter international terrorism.

The state policy in this area is based on a comprehensive, inclusive and consistent approach. As is well known, this approach combines the use of preventive, prophylactic measures along with law enforcement, and not only state bodies, but also civil society institutions actively participate in the implementation of the key elements of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

Key priorities in this regard include, the establishment of an atmosphere of mutual understanding and the promotion of dialogue and tolerance in society, conflict prevention, spiritual and moral education, the advancement of education, including professional training, employment creation, and social protection of vulnerable populations. Particular attention is paid to intercultural and interreligious dialogue and the empowerment of women and young people.

The fundamental basis for combating terrorism in Uzbekistan is to ensure human rights and freedoms and the rule of law. We are convinced that combating terrorism and protecting human rights are not conflicting goals, but complementary and mutually reinforcing.

I am confident that today you will be able to comprehensively analyze the course of our cooperation within the framework of the Joint Action Plan and provide new and innovative directions.

In this context, we suggest considering a number of proposals to increase the effectiveness of our joint counteraction against terrorism and extremism.

First. It is obvious that further successful implementation of the counter-terrorism strategy in the region requires **the strengthening of mechanisms for constant monitoring and critical evaluation of the Joint Plan of Action's implementation and coordination of cooperation among the Central Asian countries.**

In this regard, **we believe that it is long overdue to open an office of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Office in our region.**

In order to achieve maximum synergy from coordinated cooperation in countering terrorism in Central Asia, we propose to ensure its close interaction with the leading international and regional organizations involved in resolving security issues.

Second. Today almost every country in the world faces terrorism in cyberspace. The Internet is becoming a tool for spreading radical ideology, recruiting people, providing financial support, and for the planning and carrying out of terrorist activities.

Under these circumstances, it is crucial to develop the capacity of our States to effectively counteract the use of digital technologies for terrorist purposes.

We call on the UN Counter-Terrorism Office to intensify its efforts to implement the Program on Cyber Security and New Technologies in Central Asia adopted in 2020.

Within the framework of this program, **we consider it important to create a unified electronic network** on cyberterrorism in **Central Asia** to promote the development of the exchange of experience and data, research and best practices in this area.

In addition, the transboundary nature of threats to security in cyberspace **requires the creation of unified international legal mechanisms to effectively counter various forms of extremism and terrorism in the information sphere.** We look forward to the UN's assistance in organizing and coordinating a dialogue on this issue.

Third. In recent years, the Central Asian countries have repatriated more than 1,500 of their citizens from war conflict zones, and have developed unique approaches to their rehabilitation and reintegration.

In this regard, we propose establishing, under the auspices of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Office, a regional council of experts comprised of leading experts from Central Asia. Its main task would be to improve programs for the rehabilitation and reintegration of radicalized citizens and to develop proposals for combating terrorist propaganda in our countries.

Fourth. The essential condition for successfully countering terrorism and extremism is an effective youth policy. The UN Youth Strategy emphasizes that young people are a valuable and extremely important resource, an investment that will pay off many times over.

The future of our countries depends on what kind of young people we raise, what kind of education and upbringing we provide, and, what conditions and "social elevators" we create for them.

The future of our countries depends on how the younger generation will grow up, what kind of education and upbringing they will receive, what conditions and "social lifts" we will create for them.

For comprehensive discussion of all these issues we propose to convene in 2023 in Samarkand the permanent Youth Council of Central and South Asia that we proposed earlier. As a result of the meeting, it is important to develop a substantive Action Plan to expand multilateral cooperation among the youth of our countries, exchange experience in creating favorable conditions for self-realization of the young generation and the formation of a stable immunity to the ideas of extremism and terrorism.

Fifth. In the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, as you know, the key subject is the promotion of the ideas and principles of tolerance, mutual respect, and interreligious and intercultural dialogue with participation from all levels of society.

In 2018, at the initiative of Uzbekistan, the UN General Assembly adopted a special resolution "Enlightenment and Religious Tolerance", which emphasizes the importance of eliminating illiteracy and ignorance, and, promoting tolerance, mutual respect and understanding in the name of strengthening security and peace on the planet.

We propose that next year a high-level conference on "Enlightenment and Religious Tolerance" be held under the auspices of the UN to identify promising areas for practical cooperation in promoting the ideas embodied in the UN Special Resolution.

Dear ladies and gentlemen!

Our efforts to prevent and combat terrorism will be productive only if they are effectively coordinated at the regional and global levels.

Therefore, the deliberations of this Conference,, and the adoption of the Tashkent Declaration and the updated Joint Action Plan to implement the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia, are of exceptional importance.

I wish all participants in the High-Level International Conference fruitful deliberations, thoughtful and stimulating debates, and the development of new and innovative proposals and initiatives aimed at strengthening international security and stability.



ANNEX V

Video message of the United Nations Secretary General, H.E. Mr. Antonio Guterres, to the participants of the conference

This conference on Central Asian cooperation reminds us of the importance of uniting to counter terrorism – and realizing shared values like peace, human rights and social progress for all.

When people do not see these values reflected in their daily lives, division and extremism grow.

Poverty, violence and insecurity create fertile soil for terror to take root and spread.

The unfolding humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan is one tragic example.

The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy has pioneered comprehensive, integrated and principled efforts to tackle security challenges of the twenty-first century.

I commend Member States in Central Asia for having adopted the first regional counter-terrorism strategy, the Joint Plan of Action, ten years ago.

And for their close cooperation with the United Nations to bring it to life across all phases of the Joint Plan of Action project.

This includes anchoring efforts in the rule of law and human rights – and protecting and advancing the rights of women and young people.

My new Agenda for Peace – proposed in my report on *Our Common Agenda* – recognizes that we cannot address terrorism and security challenges in the absence of concerted action on development and human rights for all people.

We need societies defined by mutual trust, hope and respect for human rights.

Not fear, mistrust and terror.

As you continue implementing your Joint Plan of Action, let's keep working to help deliver the security, prosperity and hope that every person across Central Asia deserves.

ANNEX VI

Opening remarks by Under-Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism, Mr. Vladimir Voronkov

Mr. President,
Excellencies,

I am pleased to address you at the opening of this high-level international conference.

I would like to sincerely thank the President of Uzbekistan who suggested hosting this conference during the 75th General Assembly meeting. I also thank the Government for its hospitality.

I am also grateful to the Government of Uzbekistan for its support in helping organize this important event together with my Office, the Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, and the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia.

As you know, the Joint Plan of Action was a first-of-its-kind initiative that has since inspired other regions to do the same. Now, ten years after the Plan was first adopted, it is time to take stock and review its achievements, learn the lessons encountered along the way, and chart a course for the updated Plan's implementation.

This event is extremely timely. The turmoil in Afghanistan, where al-Qaida remains unchecked and Da'esh has nearly doubled in size, requires a coherent regional response to prevent spillover to neighbouring countries.

Member States in Central Asia have already shouldered a great responsibility in this regard.

The Joint Plan of Action can continue to provide the mechanism by which the region can have the sort of networked, multilateral cooperation needed in these circumstances.

In his report *Our Common Agenda*, United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres identified terrorism as a strategic global risk, and pointed to the need for continued international cooperation to prevent and counter terrorism.

The Secretary-General also underscored the need to tackle the global breakdown of trust and erosion of truth. I would like to emphasize today that social cohesion is an effective weapon against terrorism – that is why terrorists try to target our unity and sow the seeds of mistrust and confusion within and among our societies.

Distinguished participants,

It is more than 20 years since the Security Council adopted its landmark resolution 1373, demonstrating a united front against terrorism in the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. And a little over 15 years ago, the General Assembly adopted the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy – a global blueprint for our common counter-terrorism efforts.

As you know, last year the General Assembly adopted a forward-looking, comprehensive and most importantly, *consensus*-based resolution, following its seventh review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, to guide our counter-terrorism efforts going forward. This landmark resolution strengthened provisions in areas including human rights, the rule of law, and engagement with civil society, youth, and women.

As Central Asia moves into a new decade of regional counter-terrorism cooperation, the Tashkent Declaration and the updated Joint Plan of Action demonstrate the continued determination of Central Asian States to implement the Strategy, and fight terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

In this context, I would like to emphasize three points:

First, we must redouble our joint efforts to prevent terrorism as the region is facing new threats and challenges.

Military counter-terrorism operations may be necessary, but they are costly in terms of both human suffering and resources. An investment that *prevents* terrorism would offset some of the costs for security responses.

This includes addressing the conditions conducive to terrorism and curtailing terrorist efforts to radicalize and recruit new members to their ranks.

Human rights and gender considerations are central in this regard.

Second, counter-terrorism must be based on a comprehensive and inclusive approach.

This involves strengthening institutions and structures that respond to terrorism.

But we must also connect the community leader with the law enforcement officer, the educator with the communicator, and the parent with the practitioner, to set the stage for a coherent response from all of society.

Thirdly, we must be better prepared today for the terrorism of tomorrow.

Law enforcement agencies detect and foil terrorist plots every day around the world, but each day is a new opportunity for terrorists to damage our societies. As the saying goes, we need to be lucky every time, the terrorists need to be lucky only once.

Strengthening the capacities to detect, investigate and counter the financing of terrorism is crucial as well as challenging in times of cryptocurrencies. Anticipating terrorist cyber threats creates a whole new arena for counter-terrorism.

Keeping up with how the threat landscape changes is instrumental to preempt terrorism and save lives. Overall, we must stay abreast of how the threat of terrorism to international peace and security evolves.

I hope the discussions today and tomorrow will address these themes and include examples of good practices and experiences from this region.

I am convinced this will help inform the global counter-terrorism response over the next few years.

Excellencies,

I am proud that the United Nations system continues to support Member States in Central Asia to implement the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy through the Joint Plan of Action.

This includes support in rehabilitation and reintegration of individuals with perceived links to terrorist groups; management of violent extremist prisoners; technical assistance for developing national action plans to prevent and counter violent extremism; and strengthening resilience to violent extremism.

We will continue to help requesting Member States counter the supply of small arms and light weapons and secure and manage their borders. We are exploring assistance to protect vulnerable targets and will ramp up support to counter terrorist travel.

We also support the development of a Counter-Terrorism Early Warning Network for Central Asia to mitigate threats from the evolving situation in Afghanistan.

I am grateful to our partners, particularly the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia, and our civil society partners, for their common commitment to combat the spread of terrorism.

Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is well known that kindness and solidarity characterize Central Asian people and communities.

These traits serve as a vaccine against violence and I hope this spirit perseveres.

This conference is an opportunity to reaffirm the commitment of Central Asian countries to continued regional cooperation, within the framework of its updated Joint Plan of Action.

It also provides a solid footing for a balanced implementation of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia, with benefits extending beyond the region.

I look forward to thought-provoking discussions and creative solutions.

Thank you.

ANNEX VII**Closing remarks by Under-Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism,
Mr. Vladimir Voronkov**

Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I am honoured to help conclude this High-Level International Conference.

I would like to thank His Excellency Mr. Abdulaziz Kamilov, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and His Excellency Mr. Viktor Makhmudov, Secretary of the National Security Council, for the generosity and hospitality afforded by the Government of Uzbekistan.

I also thank my esteemed colleagues: Ms. Natalia Gherman, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Asia and Head of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia, and Ms. Helga Maria Schmid, Secretary-General of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, for having co-organized this event with my Office.

I am happy to acknowledge the participation of 250 representatives from Member States, regional and international organizations, United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact entities, and civil society partners.

Your engagement throughout this event has greatly contributed to our successful deliberations.

Dear colleagues,

This Conference underscored the importance of multilateralism and regional solidarity in combating terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism.

Over the past two days, we have listened to your needs, priorities and desired outcomes on a range of pertinent issues.

From your efforts to repatriate, rehabilitate and reintegrate your nationals stranded in camps in conflict zones, to addressing the impact of the evolving situation in Afghanistan.

We have taken stock of the results of the Joint Plan of Action in implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia, since its adoption in 2011.

We now understand better the challenges and emerging trends likely to be faced over the next decade and what can be done to address them.

Our deliberations pointed to the importance of prevention, stronger education, youth engagement and empowerment, and law enforcement based on the rule of law and human rights.

We identified pragmatic approaches to combat terrorist financing, strengthen border management and cyber security, and tackle the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes.

We exchanged views on how to intensify regional and international cooperation, leverage public-private partnerships, and step up interventions to prevent radicalization in prisons and recidivism of post-offenders.

My Office, together with our partners in the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact, will continue to support Central Asian States through tailored capacity-building and technical assistance across all four pillars of the Global Strategy.

Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

The scourge of terrorism demands that we remain vigilant, proactively share information, and work cooperatively to anticipate and dismantle new and emerging threats.

I commend you for your unity, and your dedication to a comprehensive and multilateral response to this phenomenon – as symbolized by the updated Joint Plan of Action and the Tashkent Declaration, both of which are adopted as the outcome documents of this Conference.

I encourage you to develop, implement and monitor the impact of comprehensive and integrated national strategies to prevent and counter terrorism and violent extremism

conducive to terrorism. These strategies should mainstream human rights and gender dimensions and promote private-public partnerships.

And I call upon regional and international partners to align their activities with the strategic objectives of the Joint Plan of Action.

I urge all Central Asian States to assist us to sufficiently resource the implementation of the updated Joint Plan of Action to realize greater, tangible impact over the next ten years.

I seize this opportunity to also draw your attention to the United Nations Multi-Year Appeal for Counter Terrorism, which includes targeted initiatives for the region.

In conclusion, let me reiterate the firm commitment of my Office to our strong and enduring partnership with Central Asian States.

I look forward to our continued cooperation to address the complex and evolving terrorism threats in the region.

Thank you.

ANNEX VIII

Address delivered by OSCE Co-ordinator of Activities to Address Transnational Threats, Ms. Alena Kupchyna (in absence of OSCE Secretary General Helga Maria Schmid)

Your Excellency,
Under-Secretary General Voronkov,
Excellences,
Distinguished Representatives, Experts,

I have the honor, on behalf of the **OSCE Secretary General Helga Maria Schmid**, of **welcoming all of you to this important Conference**, which the OSCE is co-organizing with the Government of Uzbekistan as well as with partners from the United Nations.

Let me express her sincere apologies for not being here today: she was looking forward to visit Tashkent, but you are all well aware of the unprecedented events ongoing in and around Ukraine.

Travelling at this time of crisis was impossible – I am sure you understand the situation.

Let me then express my **sincere gratitude to our Uzbek counterparts** for taking the initiative – so timely and important - to convene us in Tashkent, and to prepare such a splendid venue for us.

The **10th anniversary of the Joint Plan of Action** for the implementation of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia is certainly an occasion worth commemorating. As UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres noted back then, “Central Asian countries [were] leading by example”, and a number of subsequent efforts around the world were inspired by this first regional undertaking to put the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy into action.

In the course of these past 10 years, the **OSCE has been supporting** its Central Asian participating States in preventing and countering violent extremism and terrorism. With its **Concept of Comprehensive Security** and its longstanding network of field operations all across Central Asia, the OSCE managed to enhance the capacities of government agencies and civil society to address these threats. To give you a few examples:

- We supported Uzbekistan and Tajikistan in reviewing and **renewing their National Strategies and Action Plans on Counter-Terrorism**, promoting respect for human rights and the rule of law as the basis for effective responses to terrorism and violent extremism, in close cooperation with our Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR).
- The OSCE also supported Central Asian **efforts in the rehabilitation and reintegration of women and children formerly affiliated with Foreign Terrorist Fighters**, both through policy dialogues on age- and gender-responsive approaches, as well as through our field operations, helping to foster cooperation between government agencies and civil society experts on the ground.
- Moreover, we assisted in building national capacities through a comprehensive training on **Countering the Financing of Terrorism**, implemented jointly with UNODC in all five CA States, thereby also promoting cooperation between government agencies and the private sector.
- And the OSCE provided **technical assistance** in strengthening rule of law-compliant criminal justice responses to terrorism, corresponding approaches in countering the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes, and on **upholding respect for human rights** in counter-terrorism investigations.

Following this brief overview of OSCE work in preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism in the region, let us now look at the possible additional efforts to address challenges of the **current situation in Central Asia**. Even if the media focus tends to shift quickly, it remains our responsibility not to lose sight of ongoing **crisis in the immediate neighborhood** of the OSCE's area of responsibility – I am referring to the situation in **Afghanistan**, of course.

The **OSCE is committed to help responding to challenges and to mitigating risks** for Central Asian participating States (and beyond), in accordance with its mandate. Moreover, the re-emergence of terror groups such as *ISIS-Khorasan* since the Taliban takeover, with ambitions going far beyond the borders of Afghanistan, show the need for an OSCE-wide or even global response.

The **OSCE's support will continue focusing on border security** through related activities in the area of Patrol Field Capacity Building, integrated co-operation on the Explosive Hazards Programme, or the deployment of Mobile Training Teams on identification of potential foreign terrorist fighters, only to name the few.

Under the mandate provided by the OSCE Border Security and Management Concept (MC.DOC/2/05), we are also developing a new project to help strengthening effective controls at the Uzbek–Afghan border, while leaving legitimate movement of individuals and goods unimpeded.

We also plan to integrate training modules on the detection and seizure of illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons into existing efforts by the OSCE Border Management Staff College, based in Dushanbe.

Strong partnerships within the **international community** are crucial to tackle threats related to terrorism and violent extremism, as highlighted also by the co-operation between the UN and the OSCE in this very Conference.

In addition to the joint program on Countering the Financing of Terrorism, which I mentioned earlier, **collaboration with UNODC** further extends to the gathering and sharing of electronic evidence, with related training material being prepared in the Russian language. Furthermore, the OSCE will help advance digital literacy particularly among young people, which has proven a crucial factor for resilience against violent extremist narratives during isolation caused by the ongoing pandemic.

The OSCE is also **exploring possibilities for co-operation with other regional organizations** operating in Central Asia. The Head of the Commonwealth of Independent States Anti-Terrorism Center (CIS-ATC) will be speaking here today, and his experts are regular contributors to OSCE trainings and events. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is organizing a parallel side event.

In concluding, allow me **to once again extend my gratitude** to the Government of Uzbekistan for hosting this important exchange and to the Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies under the President of Uzbekistan, to UNOCT, UNRCCA and the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan for the co-operation in the organization of this event.

I am looking forward to our fruitful and interesting discussions.

Thank you.