



**UNITED NATIONS
OFFICE OF COUNTER-TERRORISM
UN Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT)**

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

**Briefing to Member States by UN Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination
Compact Entities**

6 May 2019

**Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,**

Thank you for attending this Quarterly Briefing to Member States. I would also like to thank my colleagues from the UN Global Compact entities for joining me to brief the Member States on this occasion.

Allow me to start by remembering the victims and survivors of terrorism in recent months, and express my solidarity with those countries that have suffered attacks.

This year, there have already been devastating terrorist attacks in Nairobi, Christchurch, Colombo and many other places around the world.

I propose a minute of silence before going forward.

As the Secretary-General said last week, we are seeing a disturbing groundswell of intolerance and hate-based violence targeting worshippers of many faiths. Houses of worship have become targets rather than the safe havens they should be.

The transnational nature of these evolving threats means it is more important than ever that the international consensus on countering terrorism prevails over division and disagreement.

We must stand together and strengthen multilateral cooperation to create a new and united front against terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism.

**Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,**

I would like to use my briefing today to update you on four aspects of UNOCT's work. Firstly, on UNOCT's planning for next year's Counter-Terrorism week and the upcoming series of regional conferences being organized in the lead-up to this; secondly, the latest activities of my

Offices; thirdly, key capacity-building updates, and fourthly; change management within UNOCT. I will again focus on the practical deliverables in concrete terms.

2020 Counter-Terrorism Week

On the first issue, you would recall that last year, we held the first-ever United Nations Counter-Terrorism Week in New York in June. As part of the week, the General Assembly concluded its sixth review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, and the Secretary-General convened the first ever High-Level Meeting of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States.

Looking forward to next year, the United Nations will hold the second UN Counter-Terrorism Week in June 2020.

There will be three elements to the Week: the seventh biennial review of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy; the second High-level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States; and the first-ever Global Congress of Victims of Terrorism.

UNOCT is working closely with the Spanish government on the Victims Congress, which will be a landmark global gathering of victims, Member States and other stakeholders, including civil society representatives.

As next year also marks the 75th Anniversary of the United Nations, I believe that the Counter-Terrorism Week will contribute to the overall commemorative and celebration efforts. Moreover, the Week will also be an important reflection of the United Nations' role in advancing international cooperation and supporting Member States' ability to respond to emerging challenges. It will be our contribution to the promotion of multilateralism.

Regional Conferences

You would also recall that one of the key outcomes of last year's High-Level Conference was the decision to hold regional and thematic conferences to maintain momentum in the lead-up to the next Conference, which will be held in New York.

Member States from around the world are now working with UNOCT to host regional conferences in the coming months on key thematic issues, including empowering youth, preventing violent extremism, responding to terrorist narratives, and countering terrorism through the use of new and emerging technologies.

These events are aligned with the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, as well as relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions.

The enthusiasm for these events illustrates the collaborative nature in which Member States seek to address counter terrorism issues. I am certain that their outcomes will provide a strong foundation for the High-level Conference next year.

To briefly highlight some of these events, from 16 to 17 May, **Tajikistan** is holding a conference on countering financing of terrorism through drug trafficking and organized crime

while on 20-21 June, **Mongolia** will be holding a conference on a ‘whole-of-society-approach’ to preventing and countering violent extremism and radicalization to terrorism.

The **Kenyan government and UNOCT** will be holding a major conference in Nairobi from 10-11 July on the prevention of violent extremism conducive to terrorism. This will be followed by conferences in Belarus, on 3-4 September on countering terrorism through innovative approaches and the use of new and emerging technologies, as well as in **Hungary**, on 7-8 November on “prevention of radicalization to terrorism: regional policy responses and risk mitigation”. Planning is also underway for a conference in **the United Arab Emirates** in late December on youth, tolerance and prevention of radicalization. We are also planning an event with **Afghanistan** either in December this year or early next year. Planning is also under way with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) for a joint conference in Vienna next January, with the sponsorship of **Switzerland**.

The second area that I would like to mention is key activities undertaken by my Office so far this year, highlighting the important developments and achievements.

Global Compact Coordination Committee Meeting

When I last briefed you in December, I reported on the launch of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact and the first meeting of its Coordination Committee.

Last month, I chaired the second meeting of the Coordination Committee, where we agreed on a new streamlined and revitalized structure for the Compact’s inter-agency working groups.

The number of working groups has been reduced from twelve to eight to ensure results-oriented collaboration on key thematic priorities, without harming the various substantive aspects of UN counter-terrorism work. The groups are also now aligned with the four pillars of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy to promote its balanced implementation by Member States and avoid duplication. A presentation package on the new working groups is available on the table in the back of this conference room.

The Coordination Committee also approved the terms of reference and initial work plans of each of these eight working groups. These work plans will serve as the basis for the development of a Joint Programme of Work of the Coordination Committee, which will be finalized shortly. Later in this briefing, my UN colleagues will also be presenting on these Working Groups in more detail.

At the Coordination Committee meeting, I also announced that UNOCT would provide catalytic funding of US\$150,000 in support of joint projects undertaken by the new working groups.

FTF Women and Children – Key Principles

The UN Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact has also been tasked by the Executive Committee of the Secretary-General to undertake a number of specific tasks on the issue of women and children with links to terrorist groups listed by the United Nations.

As many of you would know, the Secretary-General has expressed great concern about the situation facing these women and children. Following the territorial collapse of ISIL, many remain stranded in overcrowded camps in the Syrian Arab Republic and the Republic of Iraq, with limited access to food, medical care, due process and other fundamental rights and services.

He therefore directed relevant United Nations entities, under the leadership of UNOCT, to produce a set of operational and policy principles, based on international law, regarding the protection, repatriation, prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration of these women and children.

This set of key principles aims to enhance the coherence of United Nations activities in this area so that the United Nations system can better assist Member States. The Secretary-General himself has signed and provided a foreword for this important document, which I believe can also help Member States as they design and implement policies and actions in this area. Please note the UN system will only provide support to those countries that request such assistance. Copies of these Key Principles are available at the side of the room for interested Member States.

Strengthening Partnerships and Political Dialogues

Turning to other key activities in my Office, let me now touch on the issue of strengthening partnerships and political dialogues. UNOCT and other Global Compact entities are fully committed to establishing and strengthening partnerships with other international and regional organizations to enhance global counter-terrorism cooperation.

So, I was delighted to co-chair the Second UN - EU Leaders' Dialogue on Counter-Terrorism last month with Mr. Pedro Serrano, the Deputy Secretary-General for Common Security and Defense Policy and Crisis Response of the European External Action Service. I am grateful to the 23 Global Compact entities, including Ms. Coninx who participated in the Dialogue, making this a truly "All of UN" approach to engaging with the EU.

DSG Serrano and I also signed a UN-EU partnership framework, which includes cooperation on capacity-building in Africa, the Middle East and Asia and support to the development of national and regional PCVE action plans promoting youth engagement and gender perspectives.

The successful dialogue with the EU also follows a similar engagement between the UN and Qatar in March, through a UNOCT-Qatar High Level Strategic Dialogue held here in New York in March. In addition, last month, I participated in the 140th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

The UN and the IPU have an ambitious joint programme of counter-terrorism cooperation over the next five years, which will enable us to work with national parliaments to push for the implementation of international resolutions and instruments in collaboration with civil society, women and youth.

In March, I also attended the 2019 OSCE-wide Counter-Terrorism Conference in Bratislava, Slovakia, along with Assistant Secretary-General Michele Coninx, Executive

Director of CTED. In March, I also visited Washington D.C. to hold consultations with the United States.

I also visited Rome in March at the invitation of the Italian Government and signed a Memorandum of Understanding between UNOCT and the Italian Guardia di Finanza on capacity-building in the field of countering terrorist financing. The Guardia di Finanza is ready to start training courses and we are preparing an action plan with Italy to make the best possible use of this important contribution.

Finally, Ms. Coninx, Ambassador Gustavo Meza-Cuadra Velásquez, Chair of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, and I conducted a high-level visit to Spain in February, which included meetings with the Government of Spain and civil society organizations, as well as a wreath laying ceremony to honour the victims of terrorism. One of the results of this visit was the decision to organize the first ever congress of victims' of terrorism.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to the Member States who hosted and facilitated these productive engagements.

Capacity-Building

The third area that I will now update you on is our efforts to strengthen the delivery of capacity-building assistance to the countries and regions most affected by terrorism.

Doctor Jehangir Khan, Director of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre, will also provide further details on the Centre's activities and achievements shortly but let me provide a brief overview.

My Office, through the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre, has worked in full gear this year to meet the capacity-building needs of Member States and regional organizations in countering terrorism at their request. In close collaboration with Global Compact entities, we continued to implement 40 programmes and projects across all four pillars of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. This includes projects in areas such as strategic communications, use of the Internet and social media, border security and management, preventing chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear terrorism, and South-South Cooperation, among others.

Allow me to highlight a few key developments. In March, I was joined by Her Excellency Ms. Sima Bahous, the Permanent Representative of Jordan, and Dr. Antonio Missiroli, Assistant Secretary General for NATO's Emerging Security Challenges, to sign a Memorandum of Understanding between UNOCT and NATO to launch a joint project to support Jordan's CBRN preparedness and response capabilities. In April, together with Deputy Secretary-General Serrano and UNODC, I also inaugurated a joint project to 'promote universalization and effective implementation of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism'.

Ensuring human rights and the rule of law - Pillar IV of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy - remains a key focus of our capacity-building work. We continue to make progress on our efforts to develop a handbook on the treatment of children affected by the foreign terrorist fighters phenomenon, as well as to support victims of terrorism.

I would also like to note that my Office has finalized the 2018 UNCCT Annual Report that provides a comprehensive overview of our capacity-building assistance and financial performance. A print version will be made available soon.

I would also like to mention the important work my Office is doing in the area of addressing terrorist travel, particularly through the use of Advance Passenger Information/Passenger Name Record (API/PNR) data. Here, I would like to invite all Member States to the official launch of our flag-ship ‘UN Countering Terrorist Travel Programme’ which will take place at 11am tomorrow in the General Assembly Hall in the presence of the Secretary-General.

As you may know, this programme, implemented in partnership with CTED, ICAO, UNODC and OICT, seeks to enhance the capacities of requesting Member States to collect, use, store and transmit API and PNR passenger data. A number of Member States have already expressed interest in benefiting from this initiative, which is expected to have a significant practical impact on national capabilities to curb the mobility of foreign terrorist fighters.

The launch event will be followed by interactive technical sessions during which participants will be briefed on the various programme components. I look forward to seeing you all tomorrow at this event.

All of this important work would not have been possible without the support of our donors. Since the inception of the Trust Fund for Counter-Terrorism, Member States have committed and contributed USD \$225.9 million in voluntary contributions, out of which 42.8% were committed in 2018.

I would like to thank you for your important support to my Office, which reflects your confidence in the work that we are doing.

The UN Office of Counter-Terrorism is expanding and diversifying its financial resource base for its critical counter-terrorism activities and initiatives and has signed 13 contribution agreements with Member States. This includes a number of new donors or new contributions, including from Qatar, India, the Netherlands, the Russian Federation and the European Union. Funding for a South-South Cooperation project was approved from the Peace and Security Fund (China), which is managed by the Executive Office of the Secretary-General.

Overall financial support from donors increased from USD 4.6 million in 2017 to USD 96.8 million in 2018. This included USD 11.7 million in cash contributions and USD 85 million as future commitments. As of today, our top 5 contributors are the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the State of Qatar, the European Union, the Netherlands and the United States of America.

Earlier this year, we also launched UNOCT’s first Consolidated Multi-Year Appeal, in close consultation with other Global Compact entities.

This donor appeal was unique in that we adopted an “All of UN” approach to resource mobilization for the first time. It included 60 global, regional and national projects from 10 Global Compact entities.

If you have not done so already, I hope that you will give careful consideration to supporting the appeal to enable us to do more to assist Member States affected by terrorism and vulnerable to violent extremism.

I would like to express my deepest appreciation to our donors and all of you and look forward to continuing our close cooperation.

Lastly, I would like to mention the changes that have been made to my Office. Let me emphasize that these changes are fully in line with the existing mandate of the Office, which is to:

1. provide leadership on the General Assembly counter-terrorism mandates entrusted to the Secretary-General from across the United Nations system;
2. enhance coordination and coherence across the 38 Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact entities to ensure the balanced implementation of the four pillars of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy;
3. strengthen the delivery of United Nations counter-terrorism capacity-building assistance to Member States; and,
4. improve visibility, advocacy and resource mobilization for United Nations counter-terrorism efforts; and
5. ensure that due priority is given to counterterrorism across the United Nations system and that the important work on preventing violent extremism is firmly rooted in the Strategy.

During the sixth review of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy last year, Member States asked that the UN counter-terrorism architecture and UNOCT become more effective and responsive to their needs.

In response, my Office has undergone a comprehensive change management process, which will be completed next year.

In line with our functions, we have identified key strategic priorities in our work, where the UN can play an important role in bringing the global community together. We have also strengthened our ability to provide policy support and advice, as well as better perform our coordination role within the UN system.

We have restructured the Office through re-allocating current resources and building new capacities, so we are growing in a sustainable way. This will ensure that our work and programmes become more efficient, results-oriented and impactful.

Ms. Sevil Alizaryeva, Chief of my Front Office, will shortly explain more details on UNOCT’s change management process.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

I am aware of the high expectations that Member States rightly have for the Office of Counter-Terrorism. I hope this briefing shows how we are continuing to enhance our transparency, accountability and effectiveness to meet the growing needs of Member States. I also want to stress that I am committed to strengthening the coordination and coherence of the UN system's work on these issues, and that we will continue to work closely with all UN entities.

Let me now hand over to Ms. Alirzayeva and then to Doctor Khan. We will then have a global threat update from the ISIL (Da'esh)/Al-Qaida/Taliban Monitoring Team, before our colleagues from the various UN entities brief us on the work of their respective Global Compact Working Groups. We will then open the floor for questions and comments from Member States.

Thank you.