



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

**Statement of Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, Under-Secretary-
General, UN Office of Counter-Terrorism**

**High-Level side event to the
74th session of the United Nations General Assembly on:
“International and Regional Cooperation on Countering
Terrorism and its Financing Through Illicit Drug
Trafficking and Organized Crime**

Friday, 27 September 2019, 10 AM

His Excellency, Mr. Qohir Rasulzoda,
His Excellency, Mr. Sirojiddin Muhridin,
Distinguished Ministers and Deputy Ministers,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very grateful to the Government of Tajikistan for convening this high-level side-event.

I would also like to thank the Permanent Missions of Canada, Kazakhstan, Peru, Qatar, Spain, as well as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, for their support.

My Office is privileged to enjoy strong partnerships with all these co-sponsors.

UNOCT was proud to collaborate with Tajikistan earlier this year in convening the High-Level Conference on “Countering Terrorism and its Financing Through Illicit Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime,” which was held in Dushanbe last May.

It was the first event in a series of regional conferences organized by my Office, in partnership with Member States, to follow-up on the High-Level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States convened by Secretary-General Antonio Guterres in June 2018.

These regional conferences are preparing the ground for the Second High-Level Conference that we will hold in New York in 2020, as part the second UN Counter-Terrorism Week.

The Conference in Dushanbe was as an important milestone. I commend the Government of Tajikistan for its leadership.

The Conference resulted in an outcome document, “the Dushanbe Declaration” which includes several strategic and operational priorities to ensure that terrorists are deprived of any kind of financial support.

The Conference also led to the launch of the Dushanbe Process on “Countering Terrorism and its Financing in Central Asia,” which seeks to institutionalize the dialogue and cooperation amongst countries in Central Asia in support of the implementation of the Dushanbe Declaration.

Terrorists use legal and illegal means of funding their activities.

They are increasingly adept at utilizing new technologies to raise funds and transfer money across borders.

As the Tajikistan Conference reminded us, the nexus between organized crime and terrorist financing is a growing concern for many countries, especially in Central Asia, a region confronted with the scourge of organized criminal activities and drug trafficking.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

My Office has long prioritized the provision of support to Central Asia.

We have worked closely with countries from the region on the development, adoption and implementation of a Joint Plan of Action to Implement the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy -- the first regional initiative of its kind in the world.

Guided by the Joint Plan of Action, Member States in Central Asia have greatly enhanced their regional cooperation on cross-border issues, including on countering the financing of terrorism. Last year, we started the third phase of implementation of the Joint Plan of Action, with generous financial contributions from Kazakhstan, the Russia Federation and Saudi Arabia.

Under this third phase, we have continued to provide capacity-building assistance to Central Asian countries in priority areas identified through our consultations with Member States and the assessment of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate – CTED.

I am extremely grateful to the United Nations Regional Center for Preventing Diplomacy for Central Asia – UNRCCA – for their longstanding and close partnership with my Office in supporting the Joint Plan of Action

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As we approach the seventh review of the United Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and its implementation, we should remain focused on showing practical and visible progress and impact on the ground.

The landmark resolution 2462 on countering the financing of terrorism adopted by the Security Council in March this year specifically mandates my Office to enhance UN-wide coordination and capacity-building work on countering the financing of terrorism.

In response to the resolution, I have prioritized expanding our work in this area.

The United Nations Counter-Terrorism Center within my Office is a Centre of Excellence and a major provider of technical assistance to many countries around the world on a wide range of topics, including on countering the financing of terrorism.

The Center will launch early next year a multi-year global counter-terrorism financing programme based on four pillars: (i) awareness raising; (ii) national assessments; (iii) legislative frameworks; (iv) and operational capacity-building.

Human rights, gender mainstreaming and sustainability of impact will be cross-cutting priorities across these four pillars.

The programme will also include several thematic priorities, such as addressing targeted financial sanctions, protection of the non-profit sector, financial inclusion, partnerships with the private sector, and international cooperation.

To ensure efficient implementation of the programme, we will emphasize an “All-of-UN” approach in our engagement with Member States and regional organizations, including FATF-style regional bodies.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Central Asia faces multiple challenges when it comes to countering terrorism, and the nexus between organized crime and terrorism financing is one of the most complex.

This requires continuous attention and dedicated follow-up. This side event helps contribute toward that.

It is an opportunity to remind ourselves of the need for concerted and practical action, including through the provision of technical assistance upon request from Member States.

I would like to call upon all Member States to make their experts available for participation in UN training programmes.

We need to share our expertise, good practices and lessons learned in order to effectively counter the financing of terrorism.

Significant financial support for more comprehensive packages of assistance is also needed to increase the capacity of Member States to prevent and detect terrorist financing.

It is only through strong collaboration and targeted efforts that we can achieve concrete results in our struggle against terrorism and terrorist financing.

My Office is fully committed to continue working with you towards this common goal.

Thank you.