



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



REPORT ON

UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON VICTIMS OF TERRORISM

Education as a Tool for Prevention, Peacebuilding and
Empowerment of Victims of Terrorism

8-9 OCTOBER, 2024
VITORIA-GASTEIZ, SPAIN

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The United Nations International Conference on Victims of Terrorism was made possible thanks to the generous financial contributions and firm commitment of the Government of Spain, in its capacity as co-chair of the Group of Friends of Victims of Terrorism, and the Municipality of Vitoria-Gasteiz, which also served as co-organizer and host of the Conference. The United Nations expresses its sincere appreciation for their unwavering support, which was instrumental in ensuring the successful convening of this important international gathering. The United Nations also gratefully acknowledges the financial support provided by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which has been vital in strengthening the capacity of the Victims of Terrorism Support Programme and its dedicated team.



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A. Introduction

The [United Nations International Conference on Victims of Terrorism](#), co-organized by the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) and the Kingdom of Spain, was held on 8 and 9 October 2024 at the Palacio de Congresos Europa in Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain. The conference brought together over 400 participants, including 66 Member States, 59 victims and survivors of terrorism, associations of victims and survivors of terrorism, civil society organizations, think tanks, and UN entities to express solidarity with all victims of terrorism around the world and review progress on the international victims of terrorism agenda. The conference was organized as a direct outcome of the [United Nations Global Congress of Victims of Terrorism](#), held in New York in 2022, whose [Chair's Summary](#), included the follow-up conference as one of seven action points to work towards post-Congress.

Held under the overarching theme of “Education as a Tool for Prevention, Peacebuilding, and Empowerment of Victims of Terrorism,” the conference discussed the role of victims and survivors of terrorism as educators, peacebuilders and agents for change. The event also served as a platform to examine how education can empower victims, support their rights, and contribute to efforts to prevent and counter violent extremism conducive to terrorism.

The conference placed victims and survivors of terrorism at the center of its discussions. Through a series of panel sessions and side events, participants explored ways to strengthen inclusive and victim-centered approaches that not only address immediate needs but also empower victims as leaders in peacebuilding and community resilience.

B. Conference Structure and Key Themes

The United Nations International Conference on Victims of Terrorism officially opened on 8 October 2024, with a statement by the Mayor of Vitoria-Gasteiz, Ms. Maider Etxebarria, who welcomed participants and emphasized the importance of collective solidarity in supporting victims of terrorism, highlighting Vitoria-Gasteiz as a symbol of resilience and unity.

Mayor Etxebarria underscored the need for communities to stand with victims, stating: *“In Vitoria-Gasteiz, we believe that supporting victims is not only a moral duty but a path towards healing and peace. Terrorism seeks to divide us, but our unity and collective strength are what bring us closer to justice and reconciliation.”* Her remarks set a powerful tone for the conference, reinforcing the idea that victim support is a shared responsibility, requiring collaboration at local, national, and international levels.

The conference took place over two days and included an [Opening Session](#), a High-Level Segment with global leaders reaffirming their commitment to victims and survivors of terrorism, four thematic panel sessions, namely ‘Voices of resilience: victims of terrorism as peace advocates and educators’, ‘Institutional action to ensure victims and survivors are granted their rights and supported in their needs’,

‘Nurturing resilience and social cohesion in the aftermath of terrorism: the role of civil society and grassroots initiatives’, ‘Empowering youth as peace advocates in the fight against terrorism’, and six side events that provided deeper exploration into these key themes. Together, these discussions contributed to a collective commitment to strengthening the rights and support mechanisms for victims and survivors of terrorism.

“Today is an opportunity to focus on the needs and experiences of victims and survivors of terrorism. A chance to listen as they courageously share their powerful stories. And an occasion to highlight how human rights education acts as a vaccine against violence.”
– **Mr. Volker Türk, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights**

Key themes of the conference highlighted the role that victims and survivors of terrorism can and often do play as peace advocates, educators, and peacebuilders within their communities. The conference also brought attention to the need for Member States to develop and institutionalize their national assistance frameworks to ensure that the rights and lifelong needs of victims and survivors of terrorism are upheld. The role of civil society, the local impact of grassroots initiatives, and the agency of youth in support of victims and survivors of terrorism also featured prominently in the discussions.

A cross-cutting theme emphasized throughout the event was how victim and survivor-led and centered storytelling drives individual and community healing, peace education, social cohesion and whole-of-society advocacy. Speakers underscored the importance of amplifying the voices of victims and survivors of terrorism to shape counter-terrorism strategies and to raise public awareness.

Another recurrent theme was the importance of whole-of-society approaches to combatting terrorism, stressing the need for collective action from victims and survivors, governments, civil society, youth, and local communities. Discussions highlighted how inclusive strategies promote resilience, collective healing, and social cohesion. Youth activism and leadership were recognized as powerful tools to prevent radicalization and violent extremism conducive to terrorism, with calls to integrate peace education and civic engagement into school curricula to empower youth, including youth victims and survivors of terrorism, as peace advocates.

The themes of building resilience, building a culture of peace, and rejecting violent extremism showcased community-based initiatives led by victims, survivors, and civil society, and demonstrated how local action strengthens societal cohesion and reduces the harms caused by terrorism. Discussions also emphasized the need for institutional action and accountability, calling on governments and international organizations to enhance legislative frameworks and sustainable support mechanisms for victims and survivors of terrorism.

C. High-Level Segment

The [High-Level Segment](#) gathered victims and survivors of terrorism, senior UN representatives and government officials to reaffirm global solidarity and the importance of placing victims at the heart of counter-terrorism strategies. The segment revolved around a Call to Action from five victims and survivors of terrorism across the world. They shared their personal experiences to galvanize global support for the rights and needs of victims, calling on all participants to build and sustain momentum around victim-centered initiatives and to include their views in national counter-terrorism strategies and initiatives.

Their message underscored the importance of ensuring that counter-terrorism efforts remain focused on the experiences and needs of victims and survivors. They also called upon the international community to ensure that the rights of victims and survivors of terrorism remain central to counter-terrorism policies, serving as a reminder of the resilience of survivors and the global responsibility to support their recovery and empowerment.

The speakers emphasized that healing is not only personal but collective, that true recovery is sustained when victims are connected, heard, and empowered. They highlighted the critical role of education as both a right and a powerful tool in preventing terrorism, countering extremist ideologies, and promoting critical thinking and social cohesion. They called for better access to mental health support, streamlined compensation systems, and meaningful participation in peacebuilding processes. Their voices reminded all present that survivor stories are rooted in lived reality and serve as essential guides for shaping policies that are human-centered, inclusive, and future-oriented.

“Healing is not an individual journey. It is a collective responsibility. Whether we have suffered from the loss of a loved one, being injured, or been haunted by the invisible scars, we are all branches of the same tree. That tree thrives when we nurture it with unity, education, and with action.” – Ms. Julie Wallace, Victim of Terrorism, Australia

His Majesty King Felipe VI of Spain delivered the keynote address, highlighting the role of education as a powerful tool for preventing terrorism. He called on the international community to transform the *“vicious circle of violence into a virtuous circle of learning,”* stressing collective action, solidarity, and justice as pillars for building resilient societies. His words underscored the moral responsibility of nations to support victims and prioritize education as a cornerstone for peacebuilding.

The United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism, Mr. [Vladimir Voronkov](#), reaffirmed the United Nations' commitment to supporting victims and survivors and amplifying their voices in peacebuilding. He called for recognition for the important role of victims and survivors of terrorism as *“educators, agents for change, and peacebuilders,”* and emphasized the critical role of multilateral cooperation in strengthening victim support mechanisms and enhancing global resilience to terrorism. *“We owe it to victims and survivors of terrorism,”* he noted, *“to provide the support they need to heal, recover, and rebuild their lives.”* He further called on Member States to *“come together to continue this*

important work, so that we can turn rhetoric into reality and deliver on our ultimate vision for a future free from terrorism.”

The Minister of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation of Spain, Mr. José Manuel Albares Bueno, and the Minister of Interior of Spain, Mr. Fernando Grande-Marlaska Gómez, alongside the President of the Basque Government, Mr. Imanol Pradales Gil, underscored Spain's role and dedication to championing victims' rights on the international stage and in leading global efforts to integrate victim-centered policies within counter-terrorism strategies, emphasizing the importance of solidarity, justice, and resilience.

The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Iraq to Spain and Co-Chair of the Group of Friends of Victims of Terrorism, delivered a message on behalf of H.E. Mr. Fuad Hussein, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of the Republic of Iraq. The message expressed strong support for victim-focused initiatives and announced Iraq's intention to host the 2026 International Conference on Victims of Terrorism, underlining Iraq's commitment to global efforts against terrorism.

Ministers and high-level representatives from Andorra, Argentina, Cuba, Hungary, Panama, Saudi Arabia, and Türkiye, alongside senior officials from Armenia, China, France, Pakistan, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean, and Slovenia, shared national achievements and reinforced the need for multilateral cooperation to enhance victim support mechanisms. Their statements emphasized the importance of collective action and the strengthening of institutional frameworks to address the needs of victims and survivors of terrorism effectively and to uphold their rights.

D. Thematic Panels

Panel 1: Voices of Resilience: Victims of Terrorism as Peace Advocates and Educators

Speakers:

- **Ms. Merlie “Milet” B. Mendoza**, Humanitarian, Peace & Development Worker and Volunteer, Victim of Terrorism, Philippines
- **Mr. Juan Francisco Benito Valenciano**, President, Fundación Victims of Terrorism, Spain
- **Mr. Clifford Chanin**, Executive Vice-President & Director, 9/11 Memorial Museum, United States of America
- **Ms. Ana Evans**, Advocate for Peace Education, Protection and Support of Child Victims of Terrorism, Argentina
- **Ms. Roula Helou**, President, Lebanese Association of Victims of Terrorism (AVT-L), Lebanon (via live video link)

[This session](#) explored the transformative role of victims of terrorism as peace advocates and educators, emphasizing their unique perspectives in shaping public understanding, policymaking, and education on issues related to radicalization, violent extremism, and terrorism. Rather than being seen solely as recipients of support, victims and survivors must be recognized as proactive contributors to peacebuilding and social cohesion. Participants highlighted how sharing personal testimonies not only facilitates individual healing but also fosters collective resilience and social cohesion.

Speakers showcased diverse approaches to victim-led education, including community dialogues, digital storytelling, memorialization events, and engagement with schools and universities. These methods were identified as powerful tools to humanize the impacts of terrorism, dismantle stereotypes, and build bridges across communities. Memorialization and storytelling were emphasized as ways to honor past tragedies while educating future generations. As Clifford Chanin, Executive Vice-President of the 9/11 Memorial & Museum, stated "*narratives of survival can shape generations if integrated into education systems.*"

The discussion highlighted the powerful role of victims and survivors in community-based peacebuilding and post-conflict recovery, offering human insights into the cost of terrorism and the transformative potential of victim-led healing initiatives. These efforts not only foster resilience but also contribute meaningfully to the broader goals of peacekeeping by strengthening social cohesion, restoring trust, and addressing the grievances that can fuel cycles of violence. Their stories bridge the gap between abstract policy and lived experience, reframing counter-terrorism and peacebuilding discussions through the lens of empathy, justice, and human dignity.

Many victims have turned their trauma into powerful advocacy for non-violence, dialogue, and education—core pillars of conflict prevention and peace consolidation. Through workshops, storytelling, and educational outreach, victims and survivors are actively challenging extremist narratives, promoting critical thinking, and helping to rebuild communities fractured by violence—playing an essential role in sustaining peace and preventing the re-emergence of conflict.

"Amplifying the voices of victims is not just about telling their stories; it is about influencing policy, creating change, and ensuring that the next generation learns from our pain to build a world where such suffering is not repeated." – **Ms. Merlie Mendoza, Humanitarian and Peace Worker and Victim of Terrorism, Philippines**

Turning victims into active advocates restores their sense of agency and amplifies their voices in policy spaces. With the right support and platforms, they become influential peace advocates and educators, driving meaningful progress and challenging systemic issues. Their lived experiences offer unique insights that inspire others, break the silence around terrorist violence, and build momentum and empowerment.

Recommendations resulting from the panel discussion:

- ✓ **Integrate Victims' Voices in Educational Curricula:** Educational institutions should incorporate the testimonies and experiences of victims of terrorism into school programs to promote empathy, resilience, and understanding of the consequences of violent extremism conducive to terrorism.
- ✓ **Strengthen Support for Victim-Led Initiatives:** Governments and international organizations should provide funding and platforms for victim-led advocacy and peacebuilding initiatives, empowering them as educators and community leaders.
- ✓ **Facilitate Global Knowledge-Sharing Among Victims' Networks:** Establish regular international exchanges and knowledge-sharing platforms for victims of terrorism to learn from each other's experiences, strengthen community resilience, and influence policy.

Panel 2: Institutional Action to Ensure Victims and Survivors are Granted their Rights and Supported in their Needs

Speakers:

- **Ms. Susilaningtias**, Deputy Chair/Commissioner, Witness and Victim Protection Agency (LPSK), Indonesia
- **Mr. Ulrich Garms**, Programme Manager, Terrorism Prevention Branch, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
- **Mr. Hasan Alaraji**, Victim of Terrorism, President of Iraqi Human Rights Defenders Association, Iraq (via live video link)
- **Ms. Zenaida Machado**, Senior Researcher, Human Rights Watch
- **Ms. Maya Shah**, Director of Operations, Global Survivors Fund

[This session](#) explored the crucial role of national institutional frameworks and multilateral actors in ensuring respect for the rights and support for the needs of victims of terrorism. Panelists emphasized that while many countries have established national victim support strategies, these frameworks often remain fragmented, reactive, or overly bureaucratic, leaving many victims without meaningful access to justice, care, assistance, or recognition. Moving from intention to implementation emerged as a key challenge, with participants stressing the importance of sustainable resources, victims and survivors' engagement, and legal accountability to make these frameworks effective and impactful.

“Protection of victims of terrorism is one of the priorities of our work. Upholding the rights of victims of terrorism is a moral commitment, and it aligns with the principles and values of the United Nations Charter. In order to provide the necessary support to victims and survivors, we need legislation and capacity building” – Mr. Holger Sperlich, Adviser to the EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator

Speakers shared practical examples where state institutions have piloted multi-agency approaches, formalized survivor consultations, and launched legislative reviews. These initiatives, while promising, highlighted the ongoing challenges of harmonizing services across jurisdictions and ensuring long-term sustainability. Effective institutional action to support victims of terrorism requires robust coordination between many different partners, including ministries of justice, interior, health, education, and social affairs, not just security, which is often the lens applied in the aftermath of a terrorist attack.

Cross-border collaboration for victim assistance was also highlighted as a critical mechanism to address challenges faced by victims impacted by terrorism across borders and to ensure consistent access to justice, compensation, health services, and rehabilitation. Panelists underscored the importance of international cooperation to bridge legislative and procedural gaps.

Legislative tools such as reparations, transitional justice, and institutionalized support mechanisms were identified as critical for ensuring accountability and lasting impact. The [United Nations Model Legislative Provisions to Support Needs and Protect the Rights of Victims of Terrorism](#) (MLP) was highlighted as a valuable resource, developed based on international good practice, to standardize rights-based support and ensure legislative coherence across national contexts. The discussion also underscored the importance of bridging the gap between civil society and national governments, to incorporate their views into legislative, policy and strategy development and reviews.

Establishing safe spaces for victims and survivors was also emphasized as essential for their healing and recovery, as well as their peace education and peacebuilding efforts. These spaces allow survivors to share their experiences in a secure environment, contributing to collective resilience and community understanding. Speakers called for victim-informed training and monitoring systems that reflect the real needs of victims and survivors of terrorism.

Panelists further stressed that institutional support must prioritize victim-centric and trauma-informed approaches within bureaucratic processes. Legal, medical, and social systems often present complicated procedures that can overwhelm victims and survivors already dealing with trauma. Simplifying these pathways and integrating empathy into these services would not only facilitate access but also restore victims' sense of dignity and trust in institutional support. This shift is vital for empowering victims and survivors and enabling them to seek assistance confidently and without fear of re-traumatization.

Recommendations resulting from the panel discussion:

- ✓ **Harmonize Legislative Frameworks for Victim Support:** Encourage Member States to adopt and implement legislative frameworks based on the United Nations Model Legislative Provisions to Support the Needs and Protect the rights of Victims of Terrorism, ensuring victims' rights are universally recognized and protected. Victims of terrorism and civil society should be part of strategic, legislative, and policy reviews.
- ✓ **Establish Comprehensive Victim Support Systems:** Governments should create or enhance support mechanisms that include medical, psychological, legal, and social assistance for victims of terrorism, to support their recovery and long-term resilience. Institutional support should be designed to be victim-centric, trauma-informed, and responsive to victims' needs and priorities both in the short and the long term.
- ✓ **Promote Cross-Border Collaboration for Victim Assistance:** Strengthen international cooperation to facilitate access to justice, compensation, and rehabilitation for victims, especially those affected by cross-border terrorist acts.

Panel 3: Nurturing Resilience and Social Cohesion in the Aftermath of Terrorism: The Role of Civil Society and Grassroots Initiatives

Speakers:

- **Dr. Fatima Ali Haider**, Victim of Terrorism, Co-Founder of The Grief Directory, Pakistan
- **Mr. Hassan Ndugwa**, Victim of Terrorism, Executive Director, Uganda Muslim Youth Development Forum, Uganda
- **Ms. Allyn "Aliya" Danzeisen**, National Coordinator, Islamic Women Council Team, New Zealand
- **Mr. Georges Salines**, Victim of Terrorism, Peace Activist and Author, Board Member, Association Française des Victimes du Terrorisme, France
- **Ms. Iye Mangset**, Principal Staff Officer, Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism, National Counter Terrorism Center, Nigeria

[This panel](#) explored the critical role of civil society organizations (CSOs) and grassroots movements in building resilience, fostering social cohesion, and supporting victims and survivors of terrorism. Panelists emphasized that local organizations often operate where state institutions fall short, acting as first responders and community anchors. Civil society was described as a bridge between institutions and citizens, addressing gaps in victim support and enhancing social solidarity. Effective grassroots action, participants noted, is deeply rooted in community trust and cultural understanding, making grassroots,

community-based organizations uniquely positioned to address the lifecycle of needs of victims of terrorism.

Discussions highlighted how CSOs address the root causes of violent extremism through peace education, interfaith dialogue, youth empowerment, and trauma healing. Examples were shared of community-led initiatives such as vocational training for at-risk youth, school-based peace education, and trauma-informed counseling. Hassan Ndugwa (Uganda Muslim Youth Development Forum) underscored the importance of local knowledge, stating, *"We are the grassroots- we understand the context."* These initiatives not only provide immediate support in the aftermath of a terrorist attack but also contribute to long-term community resilience and stability.

Speakers also underscored the sustainability of grassroots movements, highlighting the need for flexible funding, local leadership, and integration into broader recovery efforts. Strengthening policy frameworks for grassroots organizations was seen as essential to enhance their capacity, ensure legal recognition, and secure long-term support. Community-driven projects were described as vital spaces for victims to heal, regain their voices, and participate in peacebuilding efforts.

"CSOs are the bridge between the victims and the communities. We ensure that the stories are not lost, that the pain is not silenced, and that the lessons learned are transformed into community strength." – **Ms. Cherifa Keddar, President of Djazaïrouna (a victims' association operating in Algeria)**

The session emphasized the need to institutionalize support mechanisms that are inclusive and community driven. Grassroots initiatives were described as essential in empowering victims by amplifying their voices and ensuring their needs are met. Speakers advocated for stronger partnerships between CSOs, governments, and international organizations to scale up effective local solutions.

Recommendations resulting from the panel discussion:

- ✓ **Support Grassroots-Led Initiatives:** Governments and international organizations should fund and support grassroots projects led by civil society that foster community resilience, prevent radicalization, and address trauma after a terrorist attack.
- ✓ **Amplify Local Voices in Policy Discussions:** CSOs should be given a platform in national and international policy dialogues to represent the needs and realities of victims and survivors, and communities affected by terrorism.
- ✓ **Strengthen Community-Based Psychological Support:** Implement community-based mental health programs that are culturally sensitive and accessible, aimed at healing trauma and building long-term community resilience.

Panel 4. Empowering Youth as Peace Advocates in the Struggle Against Terrorism

Speakers:

- **Ms. Yasmine Bouzidi**, Victim of Terrorism, Morocco
- **Ms. Gro Lindstad**, Secretary-General, July 22 Support Group, Norway
- **Mr. Travis Frain**, Victim of Terrorism, United Kingdom
- **Mr. Sarmed Hekmat Al-Salihi**, Secretary, Counter-Terrorism Committee, National Security Advisory, Iraq (via live video link)
- **Mr. Khalifah Mwarangi**, Victim of Terrorism and UNOCT Youth Engagement and Empowerment Programme (YEEP) participant, Kenya

[This session](#) explored the transformative role of youth as peace advocates and community leaders in the fight against terrorism. With over 50% of the global population under 30, panelists emphasized the importance of actively involving young people in national and international discussions on counterterrorism and peacebuilding. Youth were described as powerful voices in challenging extremist narratives, building community cohesion, and promoting resilience.

Ms. Yasmine Bouzidi, a young victim of terrorism and advocate from Morocco, underscored the importance of youth empowerment, stating *"empowering youth is not just about giving them a voice, it is about trusting them to lead change. We are the next generation of peacebuilders, and our experiences can help prevent future violence if we are given the chance to be heard."* Her words reflected the shared sentiment among panelists that effective prevention and peacebuilding require meaningful engagement with youth, particularly those directly impacted by terrorism.

The discussion centered on four key themes: support systems, creating safe spaces, and amplifying youth voices at national and international levels. Panelists highlighted the need for sustainable support systems to help young victims heal and transition into roles as educators and community advocates. Many young survivors lack access to mechanisms that provide long-term care, particularly during legal processes, and are often expected to lead without adequate support. Strengthening cross-sector collaboration between governments, UN entities, and civil society was seen as essential for addressing these gaps and providing consistent support throughout recovery.

"In the silence of trauma, young victims and survivors of terrorism speak volumes. Let us listen, learn, and empower them to advocate for the peace their generation deserves". – Mr. Khalifah Mwarangi, Young Victim of Terrorism and UNOCT Youth Engagement and Empowerment Programme (YEEP) participant (Kenya)

Discussions also emphasized the importance of safe spaces where young victims can share their experiences, build trust, and participate in community dialogue. These platforms were identified as vital for healing and empowerment, allowing youth to reclaim their voices and advocate for change. Creating

inclusive and youth-friendly environments encourages participation and strengthens community resilience against radicalization into violent extremism conducive to terrorism.

Finally, the session called for the amplification of youth voices at policy and institutional levels. Panelists advocated for the establishment of youth forums at international conferences and the inclusion of youth victims in official delegations to ensure their perspectives are represented in decision-making. Strengthening youth participation in policymaking and community dialogue was seen as critical to driving sustainable change and enhancing community resilience.

Recommendations from the panel discussion:

- ✓ **Establish Youth Peacebuilding Networks:** Create national and regional networks that empower youth survivors of terrorism to lead community projects, advocate for peace, and participate in policy-making processes.
- ✓ **Promote Youth-Led Educational Initiatives:** Encourage educational programs that highlight the role of youth in countering extremist ideologies, using storytelling and community engagement as key tools.
- ✓ **Integrate Youth Voices in Counter-Terrorism Strategies:** Actively involve youth victims and survivors in the design and implementation of counter-terrorism strategies to ensure their perspectives are reflected in policy decisions.
- ✓ **Promote the Inclusion of Youth Victims in International Delegations:** Encourage Member States to include youth victims of terrorism in national delegations at international conferences to ensure their perspectives are represented in global decision-making.

E. Closing Remarks and Outcomes

In his [closing remarks](#), Mr. Mauro Miedico, Director of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre at the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), highlighted the power of victims and survivors' narratives and stories as tools for peacebuilding, reconciliation, and long-term community recovery. He reiterated the importance of ensuring that the voices and perspectives of victims and survivors of terrorism are at the heart of counter-terrorism efforts. He called for an inclusive, whole-of-society approach to preventing and countering terrorism, including concerted efforts worldwide to ensure the active involvement of victims of terrorism and civil society in shaping policies and societal responses to terrorism.

Mr. Miedico stressed the importance of youth empowerment and technological innovation in fostering resilience and combating violent extremism conducive to terrorism. He also recognized the significant momentum surrounding the establishment of the Victims of Terrorism Associations Network (VoTAN), another significant action point in the Chair's Summary of the 2022 United Nations Global Congress of Victims of Terrorism, set to be launched in 2025. VoTAN is expected to enhance global community, advocacy, peer-to-peer support and the generation and transmission of knowledge among victims of terrorism and victims' associations worldwide.

Finally, Mr. Miedico highlighted the need to strengthen victim-centric and trauma-informed support systems that prioritize mental health, legal assistance, and education. He urged Member States to review and improve their national support frameworks for victims of terrorism by reviewing their legislation, drawing on guidance from the United Nations Model Legislative Provisions. Mr. Miedico reiterated UNOCT's commitment to supporting victims and survivors and called for sustained global collaboration to build a future free from terrorism rooted in the dignity, rights, and resilience of victims and survivors. He also cautioned that, without sustainable funding, the gains achieved to date through the efforts of national governments, civil society, victims' associations, and the United Nations could be easily lost.

Mr. Miedico welcomed Iraq's offer to host the 2026 International Conference on Victims of Terrorism in Baghdad and its pledge of financial support for the [United Nations Global Victims of Terrorism Support Programme](#), which he highlighted as testament to Iraq's continued commitment to advancing the victims of terrorism agenda to improve the lives of victims and survivors across the world.

"As victims, we have every right to dignity, to empowerment, to access to criminal, social, and gender justice, but I think it is also our responsibility to act on this right. We as victims, I think, are in search of hope... Hope is not an emotion, it is an action. I think as educators and peacebuilders, we have to create it every day." – **Dr. Fatima Ali Haider, Co-Founder and Executive Director, The Grief Directory, Pakistan.**
