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## UN Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact first 2021 Ambassador-level Quarterly Briefing

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Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am honoured to join today's briefing and I thank USG Voronkov for inviting me.

As we continue to face complex and unprecedented challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, the vulnerabilities exposed and intensified by the crisis have made it more necessary than ever to unify and coordinate counter-terrorism action.

The World Bank estimates that by 2030, up to two-thirds of the world's extremely poor people will live in areas impacted by fragility, conflict and violence - conditions which offer fertile ground for terrorist and criminal groups to operate.

UNODC is committed to working in partnership with our fellow Compact members, and with all stakeholders, towards countering these threats.

The Compact has proven to be a successful vehicle for harmonizing our collective efforts, guided by the UN Global Counter Terrorism Strategy.

At UNODC, we take very seriously the unique responsibility that we hold in the global counter terrorism framework.

Terrorism thrives where rule of law falls short, and corruption traps people in poverty.

Transnational organized crime is often a source of funding for terrorist groups.

UNODC's cross-cutting mandates addressing crime, drugs, corruption and terrorism are therefore key to supporting Member States to build the legal, institutional and operational capacities to counter terrorism nationally and to enhance cross-border, regional and global cooperation.

I am grateful that Member States have recognized our work. Through several policy-making organs, including the Security Council and most recently the General Assembly, you have called upon UNODC to continue providing support and building capacities against terrorism. I can assure you that UNODC is answering your call.

UNODC delivers integrated capacity-building in over 140 countries, and our field network has helped us to support Member States in developing systemic responses to terrorism, even as the pandemic persists.

Last year, while COVID-19 shut down nearly all travel, UNODC provided counter terrorism-related technical assistance to over 2,000 criminal justice officials and civil society participants, representing 70 Member States. More than 700 were trained via UNODC's virtual Counter Terrorism Learning Platform.

In many cases, online tools have been essential in preserving UNODC's ability to deliver support, such as with the newly-developed training course on "Counter-terrorism and International Humanitarian Law".

In other cases, we have successfully resumed in-person activities, for example in Iraq, where we provided training for Iraqi practitioners on human rights-compliant and gender-inclusive investigation, prosecution and adjudication of terrorism-related cases.

We have continued support for implementation of the global counter-terrorism instruments, including through a joint global project with UNOCT to promote the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.

Our Office has also developed an eLearning module on the international legal framework against chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear terrorism, which has been completed by 1,200 practitioners from over 90 countries.

In South and South-East Asia, as well as in West Africa, UNODC supported authorities in developing national plans, strategies and approaches, including to address the phenomenon of returning or relocating foreign terrorist fighters and their family members.

UNODC drafted, upon request, a roadmap for the development of a South Asian Network of practitioners on preventing and countering violent extremism leading to terrorism.

In Nigeria, a joint UNODC-UNICEF national advocacy initiative led to the release of 223 eligible juveniles from correctional facilities across five States, as part of efforts to reduce crowding and curb the spread of COVID-19.

Our Office also continued to develop tools to equip Member States with effective, people-centred responses, including the UNODC Technical Guide on Preventing Violent Extremism through Sport.

Looking ahead, UNODC is strongly committed to enhancing its joint work with our partners in the Compact.

USG Voronkov and I signed a Plan of Action just last month to ensure ongoing information-sharing about programme development and to explore prospects for joint work.

I look forward to seeing this plan bear fruit, fully leveraging the combined capabilities and mandates of UNODC and UNOCT in the fight against terrorism.

UNODC will also be launching its new corporate strategy in February to advance our integrated support to Member States.

The strategy will be supported by a new Strategic Vision for Africa, which highlights the need to protect all Africans, and in particular vulnerable people, from terrorism and violent extremism, as a key area for international investment.

Allow me to highlight some of the advances that have been made in the region with UNODC support. In the Sahel, we have reinforced capacities of criminal justice actors, notably in Niger and in Mali, to collect and share information from the battlefield, to be used as evidence in courts. We are soon to launch a similar project for Burkina Faso.

In Mali, we have also been supporting the drafting of a revised Criminal Procedure Code, together with MINUSMA and other UN agencies.

In Mozambique, UNODC agreed on a roadmap with and for the country, which includes a component on terrorism prevention, and supported criminal justice capacities, including in the vulnerable region of Cabo Delgado.

Alongside these efforts, UNODC is also developing a strategic vision for Latin America and the Caribbean , and we have a new partnership framework that will further strengthen engagement with our UN counterparts, as well as with the private sector, civil society and other allies.

Excellencies,

The fight against terrorism is more complex than ever.

The pandemic is fomenting conditions conducive to terrorism and violent extremism. Economic and health emergencies are diverting resources even as terrorists regroup and new threats such as rising right-wing extremism loom on the horizon.

In times when our societies are at their most vulnerable, our strongest defence lies in building resilience and lawfulness through solidarity.

UNODC stands ready to support Member States through responses that place the needs of people at the heart of counter-terrorism; that can meet tomorrow's challenges; and that are coordinated to ensure full synergy and efficiency with our fellow Compact members.

Thank you.