



Head of the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism calls for stronger international cooperation on aviation security

Montréal, 29 November 2018 – The Head of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), the Under-Secretary-General Vladimir Voronkov, participated in the Second International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) High-Level Conference on Aviation Security in Montréal, Canada.

At the opening ceremony, Mr. Voronkov said that terrorists continue to see the aviation industry as a primary target. “Potential attacks on airports and airplanes have an impact on all of us. We continue to learn new lessons and adjust our counter-terrorism efforts. But the terrorists also adapt. We need to ensure that we remain vigilant, strengthen the weak links and use new innovations to keep us safe,” he added calling for stronger international cooperation.

Attended by Government Officials, representatives of international organizations and aviation security experts, the High-Level Conference considered progress on the implementation of the ICAO Global Aviation Security Plan in support of Member States efforts to address the evolving threat of terrorism. The Global Plan provides the foundation for all stakeholders in civil aviation to work together to enhance aviation security worldwide. It was welcomed by the UN Security Council in resolution 2396 (2017), which created new international obligations to strengthen border security and information sharing to curb the threat posed by terrorists, including in the context of civil aviation.

In this regard, Mr. Voronkov praised the collaboration between UNOCT and ICAO, through its capacity-building arm, the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT). In particular, he mentioned the project on Aviation Security in Nigeria and said that it was instrumental in strengthening the capacity of the Nigerian Government to counter terrorism by delivering screener training to more than 180 airport security officials, who have since been deployed to 26 airports across the country. “Following deployment, they immediately began to find weapons, ammunition, hidden cash and gold that would all have gone to Boko Haram,” Mr. Voronkov stated.

The Under-Secretary-General also highlighted a new global flagship project with UNOCT, ICAO and other UN entities. The project aims to enhance the capacity of Member States to use Advance Passenger Information (API) and Passenger Name Record (PNR) data to detect, prevent and investigate terrorist offences, including related travel. This new initiative is expected to have a significant impact on the capabilities of beneficiary countries and the broader international community to curb the mobility of foreign terrorist fighters. “This joint project is an example of how the UNOCT is partnering with other UN entities to develop and implement multi-year initiatives through an “All-of-UN” approach,” the Under-Secretary-General said.

On the margins of the High-Level Conference, Mr. Vladimir Voronkov and Dr. Fang Liu, Secretary General of ICAO signed the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact, which will further seal the collaboration between UNOCT and ICAO. This agreement between the UN Secretary-General and 36 UN entities plus the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL)

and the World Customs Organization (WCO) is the largest coordination framework at the United Nations. It aims to ensure that the United Nations system can have a better impact and provide stronger and more efficient counter-terrorism capacity-building support to Member States in implementing the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, with UNOCT playing a leading coordination role.

“We greatly appreciated Mr. Voronkov’s contributions to our 2018 High-level Conference on Aviation Security and are very pleased today to sign onto the Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact in support of the UN system’s broader global counter-terrorism strategy,” stressed ICAO Secretary General Dr. Fang Liu. “ICAO continues to demonstrate its leadership in global aviation security through its standard-setting and global plan efforts, as well as the wide range of partnerships and risk-based activities it pursues toward greater sharing of information, improved coordination among security agencies, and impeding terrorist mobility.”

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