



## UNITED NATIONS OFFICE OF COUNTER-TERRORISM

### **Mr. Voronkov calls for a broad coalition involving governments, civil society, the private sector to prevent terrorist abuse of information and communication technologies**

**Minsk, 11 October 2018** - Under-Secretary-General Vladimir Voronkov, the Head of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) concluded a visit to Minsk, Belarus where he participated in the High-Level International Conference “Preventing and Countering Terrorism in the Digital Age”. The conference was co-organized by the Government of the Republic of Belarus and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).

“Terrorists continue to exploit social media, encrypted communications and the dark web to spread propaganda, radicalize new followers and coordinate attacks. There is an urgent need for innovative and coordinated action to prevent terrorist abuse of information and communication technologies,” Mr. Voronkov said. “There needs to be a broad coalition involving governments, civil society, the private sector, multilateral organisations and all those who can make a difference”.

During the visit, Mr. Voronkov met with the President of Belarus, Mr. Alexander Lukashenko and other high-level representatives of the Government including Mr. Vladimir Makei, Foreign Minister; Mr. Stanislav Zas, State Secretary of the Security Council; Mr. Vyacheslav Reut, Director of Department of Financial Monitoring of the State Control Committee as well as Mr. Valery Vakulchik, Head of State Security Committee.

Mr. Voronkov thanked the Government of Belarus for co-organizing the conference with OSCE on such an important topic and expressed appreciation for its active role in supporting the global efforts to counter terrorism including during the High-Level Conference on Counter-Terrorism that took place in New York in June 2018. Areas of future collaboration such as countering the financing of terrorism and cybersecurity were identified during the meetings.

The Under-Secretary-General also had the opportunity to meet with the UN agencies present in Minsk as well as with students and professors of the School of International Relations of the Belarus State University. “Young people are inspiring agents of change. We need to make a strategic investment in them to counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism. We need to harness the energy of the 1.8 billion young people around the world by investing in their futures through increased education and employment opportunities. We also need to empower them by giving them the tools they need to combat oppressive extremist narratives, xenophobia and hate speech,” Mr. Voronkov stated.

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