



UNITED NATIONS OFFICE OF COUNTER-TERRORISM

Remarks by the Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, Mr. Vladimir Voronkov

Council on Foreign Relations Women and Foreign Policy Roundtable Series Women's Rights, Human Rights, and Counter-Terrorism

New York, 11 January 2019

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Council on Foreign Relations for the invitation and for organizing today's roundtable discussion on Women's Rights, Human Rights, and Counter-terrorism.

I would also like to especially thank Fionnula for her presentation – the Special Rapporteur has been a committed and active member of our Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact network, and a leading force behind the Compact's working group on Human Rights and the Rule of Law.

Forums such as the session today are critical for academics, researchers, civil society practitioners, government and intergovernmental organizations to get together and learn from each other's experience, and I am grateful to participate.

I must admit that regrettably, while the 2006 Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy is the source of the UN's work on counter-terrorism and prevention of violent extremism progress on integrating a gender lens has been slow.

In fact, it was not until the 5th review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in 2016 that the need for a dedicated gender analysis of the drivers of radicalization to terrorism and the impact of counter-terrorism strategies became evident.

The Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, launched in 2015, provides a comprehensive approach to addressing the conditions underlying radicalization and violent extremism. It highlights seven areas of priority action – one of which is Gender Equality and Empowering Women.

UN Women was a key partner in developing this comprehensive plan, and we are proud that gender equality is highlighted as one of the key areas for action.

UN Women and OCT are working together in delivering policy and programmatic outcomes. Collaboration includes joint analysis, developing normative frameworks, strengthening coordination, and investing in civil society capacity building.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On 6 December, the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact (GCTCC) was launched by Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, establishing a strategic level vehicle to enhance coordination and coherence in the United Nations' counter-terrorism work among 38 entities.

In fulfilling our coordination mandate, we are committed to making gender equality and women's empowerment a core priority in all of our work – this is why last year, an Inter-Agency Working Group on Gender was established. This group is chaired by UN Women and co-chaired by CTED.

Last June, Secretary-General Guterres convened the first-ever High-level Conference on Counter-Terrorism in New York, where large number of speakers underscored gender as a cross-cutting topic throughout the conference.

At the conclusion of the Conference, Secretary-General Guterres announced that the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism will look to establish a new mechanism to ensure that the views of civil society, including gender-focused organizations, are fully reflected in UN counter-terrorism policies and programmes.

In addition to mainstreaming gender across all the activities, the UN Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT) which is the capacity building arm of the Office of Counter-Terrorism, is leading several capacity-building projects focussed on engaging women and girls.

For example, we are implementing a project to develop a handbook on the human rights-based treatment of women and children accompanying FTFs. Support of victims of terrorism is one of our priorities and we have a number of significant projects having been implemented in this respect.

The OCT is currently recruiting a Gender Advisor to oversee that gender is effectively mainstreamed throughout our work, and to strengthen our collaboration with UN Women.

Finally, in 2019, we will be implementing a full gender programme, to be developed in close consultation with UN partners. This will ensure UNCCT programming will strongly contribute to addressing the drivers of violent extremism when conducive to terrorism while also protecting and promoting women's rights.

Thank you.