

Virtual Dialogue with human rights and civil society partners on the theme "Building a Better Paradigm to Prevent and Counter Terrorism".

Closing Session, 26 May 2021

Mr. Francisco de la Torre, Mayor of Málaga, Spain

Thank you very much, Ambassador Santos Maraver. Words of gratitude and greetings to Mr. Maraver and Mr. Voronkov, who have invited me to participate in the closing session of a relevant dialogue on human rights and civil society to build a better paradigm to prevent and counter terrorism.

I would like to greet those who are following this meeting around the world. So good morning, good afternoon and good evening, depending on your location.

Terrorism is a very important issue, we must emphasize the good work that you have been doing for months, and you have referred to it in your words.

I have listened to the discussion that took place before, in the previous session, on the voices of the women victims of terrorism. The Spanish contribution of José Manuel Rodríguez Gómez, in dialogue with Irene Villa, has delved in this documentary. Emotional, this type of message touches the heart.

That should be strong enough, that work of guiding the heart to move the obstacles that impede the encounter, the dialogue and the consensus, which Ambassador Santos Maraver mentioned, to advance on this matter among all countries, within the framework of the United Nations.

Spain and Afghanistan are being proactive on the issue of victims; they are doing a good job. In addition, it is clear that international collaboration is essential for this work.

Collaboration can come from the civil society and the cities. In fact, we have been doing it in the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals. We are achieving this framework in our city. In collaboration with the Cifal center of Málaga, within UNITAR, to encourage local and regional leaders to be proactive in the fulfilment of the SDGs.

Goal 16 'Peace, justice and strong institutions' is a goal that we have to achieve throughout the planet. If we achieve those realities now, there is no room for terror. There is no room for terror if there is peace and justice everywhere, if there are solid institutions that achieve good governance and government, that place the common good as a common objective, which the wealth of a country serves everyone. There is no doubt that by 2030, if we achieve these Goals, it will be in detriment of terrorism.

It is also necessary to be proactive, to study, to have experts; to have agents specialized in understanding how it works, the causes of terrorism, how there are connections, how sometimes terrorist movements also operate in drugs, arms and human trafficking. How there is a perverse relationship that feeds a vicious circle.

I would like to point out that in Málaga we have created a Forum for Religious Pluralism. A good coexistence is vital in the cities, and at state and global level. In history, there have been wars of religions that led to millions of deaths centuries ago in Europe. We have to learn from the experience of others in order to create situations where we can avoid these risks.

Terror should not be added adjectives, according to Mr. Voronkov's speech.

The situation of children in refugee camps should not go on forever, it should end and we must ensure that there are no reasons for unhappiness. We have to seek people's happiness in a rational way. And the world has plenty of resources for this. It is a question of organizing ourselves well.

In Málaga we have been working on social policy, looking at experiences for the prevention of extremist radicalization, which can lead to possible terrorism, based on detecting situations of people who change their behavior, who isolate themselves, who have a worrying situation in their personal evolution. By taking care of people, in the end we are taking care of everyone. By taking care of those who can be radicalized we are avoiding the danger for those who can suffer that radicalization.

In any case, it is a complex topic to discuss, which is why these conferences are useful. I hope that the conference in Málaga will go very well, it will be a pleasure to welcome experts coming from the United Nations, from different countries, on gender perspective, civil society, and to reflect on these aspects in relation to terrorism. Moreover, when, as Ambassador Santos Maraver pointed out, the conditions of mobility are already safe, and in Málaga we are doing well in terms of incidence, we are going down solidly. We will be delighted to welcome you with a city that already has collective immunity, with safety for all.

We want it to be an unforgettable meeting for you, to be useful, to allow you to advance. We will be delighted to continue collaborating with the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism and with the Spanish Government in this very sensitive matter. Because Spain has suffered, unfortunately, terrorism for decades, in a State that wanted to be democratic, that was democratic, that paradox. In spite of creating a democracy, it suffered the onslaught of an absurd terrorism.

It is good to reflect on history, on why things have happened, to avoid repeating examples, whether of misunderstood nationalism, of political movements that can have their normal course in a democratic society. That is why it is so good to advance our democratic societies, on human rights and the Sustainable Development Goals. In fact, terrorism itself is a threat to the fundamental right to life.

I know that a brief two-minute video on Málaga will follow, so I am going to end my remarks and encourage you to come to Málaga.

I know that the issue of terrorism is so relevant that whenever the meeting happens, it will be worth it. It will take place in a medium-sized city, comfortable, attractive, with good climate, with a beautiful landscape and great cultural offer. We are welcoming, friendly, hospitable and cooperative. We collaborate with the United Nations -we have a few agencies working, still a small

presence, I hope it will grow-, then there are more reasons for you to feel at ease and for it to be an unforgettable meeting for you and for us.

Here is the video of Málaga, a little more than two minutes, where we try to summarize the charm and attractiveness of the city.

Thank you all, sincerely, for inviting me to be in this event, announcing also the meeting, the conference of Málaga.