



## Opening of UNOCT's Programme Office on Parliamentary Engagement in Doha, Qatar

### PRESS RELEASE

**New York and Doha, 16 June 2021** – Today, the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) and the Shura Council of the State of Qatar officially opened the UNOCT Programme Office on Parliamentary Engagement in Preventing and Countering Terrorism in Doha, the State of Qatar.

The UNOCT Programme Office aims at fostering the collaboration with multilateral parliamentarians and parliamentary assemblies to address the scourge of terrorism. It will serve as a platform for research, knowledge, capacity-building and coordination for parliaments from all over the world, while promoting innovation and partnerships in a human rights-compliant and gender-responsive manner. The activities of the Office will be coordinated with relevant United Nations entities, as well as multilateral parliamentary assemblies, regional and international organizations, civil society, research and academic institutions.

The opening ceremony was opened by the Speaker of the Shura Council of the State of Qatar, H.E. Mr. Ahmad bin Abdulla bin Zaid Al Mahmoud, and the United Nations Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, Mr. Vladimir Voronkov.

The event took place in hybrid format, both online and in Doha, with the participation of Member States, including representatives of their Permanent

Missions to the United Nations in New York, parliamentary assemblies, international and regional organizations, as well as the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact entities.

In his opening remarks H.E. Mr. Ahmad bin Abdulla bin Zaid Al Mahmoud, Speaker of the Shura Council of Qatar "welcomed the establishment of the Office in Doha and regards the event as an important historical development in the global counter-terrorism efforts". H.E. Mr. Al Mahmoud "expressed full support to the mandate of the Office and pledged to make available the appropriate resources for the Office to carry out its functions in serving parliamentarians all over the world, in their efforts to enact the necessary legislation and exercise their monitoring and other parliamentary roles in preventing and countering terrorism".

““There is a growing recognition of the important roles that parliaments play in countering and preventive measures to terrorism and violent extremism. There is also a strong demand from parliamentarians for greater understanding of their roles and ways to complement executive branch actions. Indeed, legislators are integral elements of the whole-of-society approach recognized in various General Assembly and Security Council resolutions as a cornerstone of efficient counter-terrorism efforts.”, Under-Secretary-General Voronkov, stressed. He thanked the State of Qatar and its leadership for the unwavering political and financial support, which enabled UNOCT to carry out the mandate given by the General Assembly.

The UNOCT Programme Office on Parliamentary Engagement was established pursuant to the signing of an Exchange of Letters and a Contribution Agreement by Under-Secretary-General Voronkov and the Speaker of the Shura Council of the State of Qatar, H.E. Mr. Ahmad bin

Abdulla bin Zaid Al Mahmoud, on 25 November 2020, in line with the Memorandum of Understanding signed on 17 February 2020.

The Shura Council of the State of Qatar will provide a \$12.5 million contribution to UNOCT for a period of five years, as well as premises and operational support for the Programme Office. UNOCT will manage the work of the Programme Office and administer its activities. The new contribution is in addition to the existing strong financial support provided to UNOCT by the Government of the State of Qatar.

The hybrid event included remarks from H.E. Mr. Duarte Pacheco, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union; H.E. Mr. Rik Daems, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe; H.E. Mr. Gennaro Migliore, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM); Mr. Reinhold Lopatka, Chair of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism; Mr. Dmitriy Kobitskiy, Secretary-General of the Interparliamentary Assembly of Member Nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States; Mr. Achim Steiner, Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme; Ms. Ghada Fathi Waly, Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime; and Ms. Michèle Coninx, Assistant Secretary-General and Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate.

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