



**UNITED NATIONS
OFFICE OF COUNTER-TERRORISM**

Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, Under-Secretary-General

United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism

**Enhancing Civil Society Engagement in UN Counterterrorism and Preventing and Countering Violent
Extremism Efforts**

25 June 2021

12.30pm – 2.00pm

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to offer my sincere gratitude and appreciation to the Global Center on Cooperative Security and the Swiss Confederation for organizing this important and timely event.

UNOCT strongly advocates for safeguarding the role of civil society organizations, as key interlocutors and partners of State authorities, multilateral organizations, and the private sector.

Civil society holds unique insights, expertise, and access to local communities, all of which are essential to strengthen social cohesion and build resilience.

In addition, many civil society organizations are also well positioned to provide credible counter terrorism-narratives, and to support rehabilitation and reintegration efforts.

My Office actively involves civil society, including women- and youth-led organizations, across all areas of its work.

But we know much more can and needs to be done in this area. This is why in March last year we adopted a Civil Society Engagement Strategy to have more systematic and meaningful outreach and partnership with civil society.

We also invited civil society to provide inputs to the Secretary-General's report for the 7th biennial review of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

And we are developing a password-protected online platform, which will act as an essential tool for civil society outreach and engagement by providing a secure space to connect, engage and share knowledge among civil society organizations, in order to exchange best practices and expertise.

Promoting a whole-of-society approach and investing in developing and consolidating partnerships with civil society to prevent and counter terrorism is a priority for us.

Over 200 civil society organizations were invited to the Virtual Dialogue with Human Rights and Civil Society Partners on Building a Better Paradigm to Prevent and Counter Terrorism, convened in May by UNOCT and Spain.

And we also extended invitations to over 300 civil society organizations to participate in this year's Counter-Terrorism Week.

This reflects our strong commitment to streamline civil society engagement in programmatic, coordination and policy activities of my Office and the broader United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact.

I look forward to the discussion today, as well as the active participation and contribution of civil society in the high-level conference on human rights that UNOCT will organize in Málaga early next year.

Thank you.