



**UNITED NATIONS
OFFICE OF COUNTER-TERRORISM**

**Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, Under-Secretary-General
United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism**

**The Importance of Model Legislative Provisions to Strengthen Comprehensive National
Assistance Plans for Victims of Terrorism**

**25 June 2021
8:00AM – 9:30AM**

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you, dear Ambassador Santos Maraver. I would like to join you in welcoming all to today's discussion.

I want to thank Ambassador Raz for her leadership and her commitment as co-chair of the Group of Friends. I am so sorry she cannot be here with us today.

I am very grateful to our partners and co-organizers:

The Group of Friends, for their continuing dedication and efforts to ensure that victims' rights remain high in the international community's priorities.

Professor Fionnuala Ni Aolain for her strong advocacy in support of the rights of victims.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the International Parliamentary Union - for their partnership in our tripartite project to strengthen victims' rights in legal frameworks.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Terrorists have taken advantage of the disruption and grievances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic to spread their hateful narratives, invigorate their operations, and carry out attacks.

Hundreds of people have been killed, lost loved ones, had their bodies and mental health damaged, and seen dreams and communities shattered by acts of terrorism, made all the worse by the ravages of the pandemic.

I am especially appalled by the terrorist attacks that deliberately target children and students. And I am worried about the increasing embrace of terrorist tactics among xenophobic, racist and other intolerant groups.

Given the impact such wanton violence has, upholding the rights of victims—and addressing their immediate, medium and long-term needs—continues to be a critical human rights priority. It is a matter of commitment to the principles and values of the United Nations Charter.

We must stand in solidarity with victims of all forms and manifestations of terrorism.

There is growing recognition that they have pressing needs and face unique challenges, which is why the Secretary-General has stressed the importance of better and more sustained coordination and coherence to support them.

General Assembly resolution 73/305 adopted in 2019 called for the development of comprehensive, national assistance plans to provide holistic support to victims of terrorism, including the specific needs of women, girls, men and boys.

Such plans would strengthen the ability of Member States to provide victims with appropriate support, immediately after an attack and in the longer term.

Grounding these plans in sound legislation helps make sure that they are implemented and that rights are protected by law.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

With our partners from UNODC and the International Parliamentary Union, and the Global Compact Victims Working Group entities, we have recognized the importance of having strong domestic legislation to anchor the rights of victims.

Our tripartite project seeks to develop model legislative provisions on victims of terrorism to strengthen national mechanisms to better protect them.

Today we have an opportunity to share our experiences and expertise to better understand how the establishment of these legal frameworks can uphold the rights of victims.

This is and will remain a key priority for my Office.

I look forward to your attendance at the Global Congress of Victims of Terrorism later this year to continue this important discussion.

Thank you.