



PERMANENT MISSION OF HUNGARY  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS  
NEW YORK

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY!

**SECOND UNITED NATIONS HIGH-LEVEL CONFERENCE OF HEADS  
OF COUNTER-TERRORISM AGENCIES OF MEMBER STATES**

**on**

**The imperative of strengthening international and regional cooperation to  
counter-terrorism in the new decade**

**30 June 2021**

**Intervention by**

**H. E. Péter Sztáray**

**State Secretary for Security Policy**

**Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary**

- Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Dear Colleagues!
- It is an honor to speak on behalf of Hungary and share my thoughts with you today. The title of this panel could not be more relevant since upholding and strengthening international and regional cooperation in preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism is crucial.
- We are delighted that this year, for the second time after 2018, the High Level Conference on Counter-Terrorism is taking place, even if only in a hybrid format. Prior to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, countering terrorism and violent extremism was already taking place within an increasingly complex geopolitical context. The COVID-19 pandemic, which was qualified by the UN Secretary General as “the most challenging crisis we have faced since the Second World War”, has imposed on Member States additional, multifaceted, and constantly evolving challenges that have affected almost every area of policy and practice.
- Against this backdrop, many have raised concerns that additional challenges arising from pandemic-related social isolation and rising political and economic pressures could exacerbate existing grievances, undermine counter-terrorism measures and heighten terrorist threats especially in conflict zones where terrorism is most prevalent and where preexisting issues of lack of governance, unrest, and gaps in institutional capacity continue to hinder efforts to advance efficient response.
- In our view, the implementation of effective measures against terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism is primarily a national responsibility, but the importance of international and regional cooperation has become obvious again despite the current challenging circumstances. UNOCT is a hugely important, coordinating actor in this process and Hungary would like to commend Under-Secretary-General Voronkov for leading such an effective organization.
- Over the course of a year a lot can change, and the growing online presence of terrorists has become an even bigger security threat than it was before. Preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism online has been a strategic goal for all of us for many years, but the effects of COVID-19 opened new virtual platforms for terrorists and terrorist groups. But in spite of the elevated online threat level, terrorism still manifests itself in the real world causing tremendous suffering. This became clear again in Europe as the result of the terrorist attacks perpetrated in Paris, Nice and Vienna last October and November.
- Despite the enormous public health and economic challenges posed by COVID-19, Hungary continues to allocate adequate resources to safeguard its security, adapt to new challenges and protect itself against old ones. Besides being capable of protecting itself, fostering and strengthening international and regional cooperation against

terrorism and violent extremism is still high on the agenda of the Hungarian Government, as it is one of the cornerstones of our foreign and security policy.

- Hungary's overarching goal is to find viable solutions to address the challenges posed by terrorism and violent extremism. As consequence, Hungary is present in international stabilization efforts, including numerous military missions, in the UN, EU, NATO and OSCE. Hungary is also an active member of the Global Coalition to defeat ISIS/Da'esh. Having understood the growing threat posed by the online presence of terrorist and violent extremist groups and their use of social media, Hungary joined the Christchurch Call in September 2019.
- Hungary also launched a comprehensive program called Hungary Helps having spent more than 43 million USD to provide direct humanitarian and development assistance to more than 70 000 people in the Middle East and Africa. Through this initiative, our country greatly contributes to local stabilization efforts in conflict-affected areas. Local stability will undoubtedly play an important role in reducing illegal migration flows to Europe, thereby decreasing the amount of certain foreseeable risks threatening our continent.
- Besides these efforts, Hungary is ready to support initiatives aimed at tackling the aforementioned challenges through understanding their ideological roots and finding practical solutions. Hungary was honored to co-host one of the high-level regional conferences leading up to the II. Counter-Terrorism Week of the UN in Budapest in November 2019. The event brought together over 200 participants from 61 Member States as well as other international, regional and civil society organizations to examine strategies addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of violent extremism. The conference had a special focus on the Western Balkans, our immediate neighborhood facing many security challenges nowadays. The stability and Euro-Atlantic integration of the Western Balkans is a major priority for the Hungarian government, and we do our utmost to contribute to this meaningful goal.
- As an essential part of our multilateral efforts, Hungary is also proud to host a Regional Program Support Office of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism in Budapest, which is able to offer significant contributions to the regional and global fight against terrorism. Understanding the importance of these offices, we were glad to financially support the establishment of the UNOCT Program Office for Counter-Terrorism and Training in Africa in Rabat, it is our firm belief this office will contribute significantly to regional and international counter-terrorism efforts as well. It is also a source of pride that the seventh review resolution of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy specifically names Hungary among the host countries.
- Finally yet importantly, let me thank Spain and Oman for their efforts in co-facilitating the 7th biannual review of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, a document of strategic importance. Both Member States have done an enormous and excellent job in coordinating the UN-wide work to adopt the respective General

Assembly resolution by consensus. In our assessment, this document reflects well the current terrorism-related challenges the international community needs to face and tackle. Terrorism is both a local and global challenge, and upholding the spirit of the UN Counter-Terrorism Strategy and fostering international cooperation is going to greatly help us all in confronting a common enemy.

- I thank you Mr. President.