



## **International Day of Remembrance of and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism**

### **"Surviving Terrorism: The Power of Connections" High Level Event**

**20 August 2021, 9.00 a.m. – 11.00 a.m. EDT (online)**

**Statement by Ms. Emma Craig**

**United Kingdom**

Under-Secretary-General,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

My name is Emma Craig and I want to explain to you today why our current 'one size fits all' support approach for victims of terrorism is failing our children.

On 7<sup>th</sup> July 2005, I was 14 years-old and on my way to work experience in London when bombs exploded on parts of the London Transport Network.

I didn't talk to anyone about my experience in detail until 6 years later when I began to lose my voice because my voice was cracking under the strain of holding my story inside. It was through both therapy and talking to other survivors that I began to find my voice again.

Connections to other survivors enabled me to learn vocabulary for things that were happening to me, for example, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, flashbacks, tension, fight or flight reactions. Talking to other survivors helped me practice how to describe my feelings about my experience in a safe place with people, who truly understood.

[www.un.org/victimsofterrorism/en/international-day-2021](https://www.un.org/victimsofterrorism/en/international-day-2021)

[#UNiteforVictimsofTerrorism](https://twitter.com/UNiteforVictimsofTerrorism)

In 2018, the UK's Survivors Against Terrorism network ran a survey of victims of terrorism in the UK and abroad, which found that 56% of survivors relied on other survivors as one of their primary sources of support.

When I first read this statistic, I nodded as this was just like my experience; connections to survivors made me feel like I was being listened to by someone who understood. Despite this, I could not help thinking what my life would have been like, had I been able to meet someone in the survivors' network sooner, instead of 6 years after the event. What would have happened if I had accessed this support earlier? Would I have lost my voice at all? Would I have been able to enjoy being a child again?

But, you see, this is where our current support approaches begin to fail children.

At the age of 14, I wouldn't have been able to access the network of survivors that helped me begin to talk about my experience.

Children cannot create connections without it having been facilitated in some way, for example through their school, or friends, or their parents.

This means that children, who have experienced a terror attack and do not know anyone else from the terror attack are left on their own, with no one else, who understands their experience until they are old enough and brave enough to look for others just like them.

As I said at the start, we tend to approach victims of terrorism with a 'one-size fits all' approach. This fails children on two counts: Firstly, children cannot access vital parts of recovery resources due to their age and secondly, parents cannot support their child's recovery effectively because the 'one size fits all' approach focusses on the individual affected, not the family unit. With the 'one size fits all' approach, nobody wins.

Under-Secretary-General,  
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My message to you all is that we need to create and implement child-specific support programmes, which facilitate building connections to other survivors.

Through child-specific support programmes we need to help parents, teachers, friends to spot warning signs of suicide, self-harm, and substance abuse before it reaches the danger point.

We need to treat the child, who has experienced the terrorist attack, not only as an individual, but also as family unit because their parents and brothers or sisters are those who manage the environment, in which the child recovers.

Children have different blockers and requirements from support services, so we need to take a whole family approach and provide more support to children and their families to survive the aftermath of terrorism. Thank you.