



**Introductory Remarks by Mr. Vladimir Voronkov  
Under-Secretary-General  
United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism**

**Fifth EU – UN Leaders' Dialogue on Counter-Terrorism  
11 July 2023**

Thank you, dear Joanneke, dear Raffi, for co-chairing this Fifth European Union-United Nations Leaders' Dialogue on Counter-Terrorism.

I would like to thank the European Union for hosting this annual event, which is a key moment in our strategic partnership to reflect on, and coordinate our common efforts against the global scourge of terrorism and violent extremism.

Unfortunately, I could not join you in-person today due to my mission to Kazakhstan which is also my first joint visit with my dear colleague Assistant Secretary-General Natalia Gherman since she took the helm of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate.

We are participating in the First Central Asian Peace and Security Forum, which is also attended by the EU Special Representative for Central Asia, Ambassador Terhi Hakala.

Dear Colleagues,

As you know, we just concluded the Third High-Level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States, which took place on 19 and 20 June.

The Conference was part of the UN's Third Counter-Terrorism Week, which on 22 June saw the adoption of a consensus resolution by the General Assembly on its eighth review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

We also had a rich programme of some 40 side events and other activities covering a wide range of thematic issues, including those focused on prevention, human rights, gender mainstreaming, and civil society engagement.

I am grateful to the European Union and its Member States for their support, contributions and active engagement, including the co-organization of six side events, to make this Counter-Terrorism Week a success.

Throughout the Week, Member States' discussions underscored the importance of a

reinvigorated multilateralism, including strong cooperation with regional and sub-regional organizations to enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations counter-terrorism efforts.

I closed the High-Level Conference together with the Mayor of New York with a call to convert these sentiments into pragmatic action.

The United Nations' strategic partnership with the European Union enables exactly that: concrete, joint efforts based on the tenets of multilateralism as embodied by the Charter of the United Nations.

I am delighted that our cooperation has deepened since our last dialogue in New York, through various political engagements, as well as programmatic initiatives. This includes:

- the CT Tech initiative;
- the Countering Terrorist Travel Programme;
- the second phase of our project to promote ICSANT, the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism;
- support to Member States to implement the security and accountability pillar of the Global Programme on Prosecution, Rehabilitation and Reintegration;
- the EU-UN Global Counter-Terrorism Threats Facility; and
- the Compendium of Good Practices for Measuring Results in Counter-Terrorism and Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism.

I am also pleased that UNOCT is invited to brief the COTER at least twice a year, which allows us to update and directly interact with EU Member States on our ongoing cooperation.

Dear Colleagues,

I would like to share with you the five most important cross-cutting issues emphasized by participants at the High-Level Conference.

First is the importance of effective law enforcement mechanisms and related capacity-building through technical assistance and institutional cooperation.

Second, the United Nations Secretary-General re-iterated that "Human rights can be the greatest weapon we have in fighting terrorism".

Indeed, grounding our actions in good governance, the rule of law, and the full realization of human rights is imperative for successful and sustainable efforts to prevent and counter terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism.

Third, we need to continue to mainstream gender perspectives, advance gender equality and ensure women's meaningful participation in our common fight against terrorism and violent extremism.

Fourth, we must stand in solidarity with, and strengthen support to, victims of terrorism, building on the first United Nations Global Congress of Victims of Terrorism held in September last year, and looking forward to the conference in Spain next year.

Lastly, as the Secretary-General has made clear, more needs to be done to bring foreign terrorist fighters to justice, and to address the complex issues faced by tens of thousands of individuals, especially children and women, who continue to be stranded in camps and detention facilities in dire circumstances.

Dear Colleagues,

The magnitude and complexities of the evolving terrorist threat require a strong and coordinated regional and international response.

This includes preventing and countering the criminal exploitation of cyberspace, new technologies and social media platforms by terrorists.

Terrorism is also growing at an alarming rate in conflict zones, and continues to spread in parts of Africa, with groups in the Sahel now probing southward towards the Gulf of Guinea.

Against this backdrop, UNOCT will partner with the Government of Nigeria to co-organize an Africa Counter-Terrorism Summit in Abuja, in 2024, to mobilize international support for African States affected by terrorism and violent extremism.

Next month I will travel to Nigeria to crystalize our plans and lock in a date. We welcome the active involvement of the European Union in this Summit, which can serve as valuable platform for announcing initiatives and demonstrating our common resolve to help Africa turn the tide.

Dear Colleagues,

The recent consensus review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy is testament to the enduring resolve and unity of the international community to fight terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

Recognizing the significant advances that were made during the review two years ago, Member States this time agreed on a few important updates in areas such as transnational organized crime, countering terrorist travel, and prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration.

Member States also sent a clear signal on the need to measure the impact of the work of the United Nations system to support the balanced implementation of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, which they will review again in 2026 on the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Strategy.

They requested the Secretary-General's reporting be based on a results framework, which will help us in our aim for more information-sharing, harmonization, and efficiency through the Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact.

Dear Colleagues,

As we move through challenging and uncertain times, I would like to reiterate my deepest appreciation to our European Union partners for the continued policy, programmatic and financial support of my Office and United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact entities.

We count on strengthening our strategic cooperation going forward.

I wish you fruitful discussions and I look forward to the outcome.

Thank you.