

**Remarks of the UNODC Executive Director
Soft Launch of the International Hub on Behavioural Insights to Counter Terrorism
Doha, Qatar
Monday, 7 December 2020**

Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,
Dear colleagues,

It is an honour to join you for the soft launch of OCT's new programme office in Doha, and I thank Under-Secretary-General Voronkov for inviting me and our fellow Counter-Terrorism Compact entities.

The International Hub on Behavioural Insights to Counter Terrorism represents an exciting new initiative to inform and advance global efforts to prevent as well as counter radicalization to violent extremism and terrorism.

I am pleased to see that the aims and core functions of the International Hub are well in line with the integrated approach of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, and with the normative, operational and research support that we provide to Member States across our mandate areas of drugs, crime, corruption and terrorism.

A notable example of UNODC's comprehensive approach is our work under the Doha Declaration Global Programme supported by Qatar, which promotes a culture of lawfulness by:

- strengthening judicial integrity;
- fostering the rehabilitation and social integration of prisoners;
- preventing youth crime through sports-based programmes and life skills training; and
- integrating crime prevention and the rule of law into education.

Activities under this global programme have developed behavioural tools that can be used to support terrorism prevention responses, addressing key areas such as education, rehabilitation, youth employment and skills development, community engagement and gender equality.

Now more than ever, we need to support governments to invest in and innovate terrorism prevention.

One in six youth has stopped working since the start of the pandemic, and the crisis has worsened and further exposed existing inequalities: global extreme poverty is expected to rise in 2020 for the first time in over 20 years, and up to 150 million people could be driven into extreme poverty by next year. Frustration and lack of opportunity are leaving many more young people vulnerable to terrorist recruitment narratives.

To counter terrorist threats, we need effective law enforcement action that brings perpetrators to justice and supports victims, and that enables cross-border intelligence sharing and operational coordination.

We need to tackle cybercrime, money laundering and terrorism financing, and target linkages between organized crime and terrorist groups.

At the same time, we need greater attention to community-based interventions, with a particular emphasis on the role of the family, and we need well-designed and well-targeted programmes to prevent radicalization to violent extremism.

We especially need to sharpen the focus on preventing youth from being radicalized before they come into contact with the criminal justice system.

By applying behavioural insights, we can help countries elaborate evidence-based and validated behavioural interventions to address such challenges.

Preventing radicalization to violent extremism, as well as deradicalization and rehabilitation, represent complex undertakings that require knowledge, continuous assessment and sustained resources in order to work.

In this regard, behavioural insights can also help to direct interventions to where they are most needed and where they can be the most effective.

UNODC stands ready to work with OCT and all our partners within the framework of the new International Hub to support this work, including by building on and taking advantage of our ongoing programmes.

UNODC research draws on insights from the behavioural sciences, for example for our flagship World Drug Report, and our longstanding experience with implementing surveys in a

number of countries and contexts can contribute to the development of research methodology.

Moreover, our Office has developed resources addressing the gender dimensions of criminal justice responses to terrorism, as well as the treatment of children associated with terrorist and violent extremist groups. We have also developed a guide to support victims of terrorism, including to play a role in terrorism prevention efforts.

UNODC looks forward to contributing this experience and expertise to coordinated, all-of-UN programme delivery, and to the work of the International Hub.

Later today, USG Voronkov and I are signing the UNODC-UNOCT joint action plan. Our offices have elaborated the plan over the course of this year, to identify our respective capacities and strengths, and to set out concrete parameters for expanding our cooperation.

I am confident that the action plan will further enhance synergies between our offices, and support us as we also develop and expand cooperation with our fellow Global Compact entities and partners such as Qatar, to strengthen criminal justice responses to prevent and counter terrorism, and to promote peace.

In closing allow me to offer my congratulations on the launch of the International Hub. As ever, UNODC stands ready to cooperate and contribute.

Thank you.