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Overarching Considerations for Countering the Use of New and Emerging
Technologies for Terrorist Purposes

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Excellencies,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to begin by expressing my gratitude to the Republic of India for convening this meeting.

The General Assembly's 7th review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy specifically mandated the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism to support innovative measures to develop additional counter-terrorism capacities of Member States to address the challenges and opportunities that new technologies provide.

The UNOCT has operationalized this commitment through its impactful capacity-building work and by assuming a coordination role at the helm of the Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact.

The question we have to pose is: How counter-terrorism programming may need to change to respond to the evolving threat posed by the terrorist use of new technologies? Allow me to identify three critical points:

First, these are very complex areas, and specialized support to Member States needs to be strengthened. Our Office is increasingly working on both, helping Member States leverage new technologies for counter-terrorism and address the risk of use of new technologies for terrorism purposes.

We have reinforced our capacity-building efforts to focus on the use of unmanned aircraft systems, cybersecurity, the use of new technologies for investigations and digital forensics, cryptocurrencies, and the protection of

vulnerable targets such as critical infrastructure and "soft targets". But we are also putting a priority on promoting the benefit that new technologies can offer in counter-terrorism efforts. As an example, this year alone, UNOCT trained over 30 UAS operators in countries with challenging border areas. We are planning to complement our practical offer to help Member States leverage the broad world of autonomous and remotely operated systems in border security, CBRN and WMD detection, and incident response.

We also need to provide Member States, as a priority, with more technological solutions in countering terrorism, for which we already developed significant software solutions, such as goTRAVEL, and we will be developing a new one, the goFINTEL. In our programming, we also need to focus more on the Metaverse and continue to focus on the use of technology for the prevention and countering of violent extremist narratives, both online and offline.

Secondly, we need to broaden collaboration and partnership approaches. This area of new technologies and counter-terrorism requires the involvement and support by all actors, and those of specialized government institutions, academia and private sector.

For instance, today's commercial drone technology is reasonably affordable, easily accessible and simple to deploy. The scope and extent of commercial UAV use is a powerful indicator of how easily this technology gets adopted by state and non-state actors. As such, priorities for future programming must change, and include enhanced private sector partnerships, if we want to be effective in prevention.

Moreover, on the UN side, including on UNOCT part, we shall focus more on promoting discussions with ALL actors on policy and coordination particularly relating to innovation, regulations, best practices, training, global standards, and reciprocity so that to help Member States have comparative views, and adopt the best approach for any given situation.

Lastly, we consider of utmost importance the inclusion, in counter-terrorism programming, of measures aimed at promoting safeguards and full protections of fundamental guarantees and liberties.

We must remain mindful of the broad human rights implications of the use of new technologies, such as the right to privacy, data protection, and freedom of opinion & expression. We must strengthen support to States and other stakeholders

in proactively developing comprehensive human rights impact assessments during the design, development, and deployment of technological tools for counter-terrorism purposes. UNOCT and the UN priority shall continue to ensure that Member States are supported in adopting proper safeguards to prevent, mitigate and remedy the arbitrary or unlawful collection and use of personal data through digital technologies and any other violations of internationally recognized human rights in the counter-terrorism context. Our Office is also committed to support an inclusive process for integrating a risk-based approach and conduct human rights due diligence in the development of technological solutions, such as goTravel and goFINTEL, that we offer to Member States.

In conclusion, specialized support to Member States, partnership and broad collaboration, and due respect for internationally recognized human rights and guarantees shall remain our strategic programmatic priorities, and at UNOCT, we are certainly committed to promoting these three goals.

I thank you for your attention.