



# UNITED NATIONS OFFICE OF COUNTER-TERRORISM

## **Closing Remarks by Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, Under-Secretary- General of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism**

### **“Surviving Terrorism: Victims’ Voices”**

**New York, 17 August 2018**

Mr. Secretary-General,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for attending the launch of this exhibition to commemorate the International Day of Remembrance of and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism.

I would also like to express my gratitude to those Member States, especially Afghanistan, who initiated and prepared the General Assembly resolution last year that established this annual international day to honour and support the victims of terrorism.

I thank those Member States who are generously funding this event.

I would particularly like to thank the speakers from around the world who have just shared their experiences as survivors of terrorism.

Their stories are harrowing, but their courage and resilience are an inspiration to all of us.

They are extremely powerful and credible messengers in our fight to counter the warped narratives of terrorists and violent extremists.

I returned yesterday from Kabul, where I attended an international conference to commemorate the Victims Day. I was invited to take part in this event by the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission and the Government of Afghanistan.

I heard from civil society organizations about the valuable work they do to raise awareness of the needs and rights of victims of terrorism.

I met with a large group of victims who told me about the devastating impact of terrorism on their lives. It was a very emotional and sincere conversation!

Many had been forced from their homes, lost loved ones or suffered serious injuries.

But, what struck me, was their bravery and determination to rebuild their lives and speak out against the evil of terrorism.

The victims of terrorism that I have met in Maiduguri, Fallujah, Timbuktu or Paris were similarly resilient in the face of such adversity.

The first International Day of Remembrance of and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism is an opportunity to highlight the tragic human cost of terrorism.

Terrorism is an evolving global menace that requires a concerted multilateral response at global, regional and national levels.

That is why the Secretary-General convened the first-ever United Nations High-level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States in June to strengthen international counter-terrorism cooperation. The issue of victims of terrorism was a topical one during the discussions.

We would like to learn more from Member States and civil society organizations about their experiences and good practices in supporting victims of terrorism.

We need to stand in solidarity with victims, be united in our efforts to protect their rights, and recognize the crucial role they can play in preventing terrorism and violent extremism.

We pay tribute to them. We must remember them. We must support them. And we must empower them.

I look forward to continue to work with all of you on this noble endeavor.

I encourage you to view the exhibition, which features interviews and documentaries, and to listen to the voices of victims of terrorism.

Now, I would like to invite the Secretary-General and Ambassador Saikal to view the exhibition.

Thank you.

