



UNITED NATIONS OFFICE OF COUNTER-TERRORISM

**Statement by Mr. Vladimir Voronkov,
Under-Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism**

**Briefing of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism
to Member States
26 February 2018**

Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to welcome you to this second briefing to Member States this year.

I am glad to brief you today alongside the Executive Director of CTED, Ms. Michèle Coninx.

In my last briefing to Member States on 13 December, I highlighted two major initiatives of the Secretary General: the development of a Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact; and the convening of a High-Level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies. Today, I would like to brief you on the implementation of these two initiatives of Secretary-General Guterres, as well as other important activities and plans of the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism [UNOCT].

Firstly, I would like to provide you with an update on the first UN High-Level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies

In my briefing in December, I highlighted this initiative of the Secretary-General to help enhance practical multilateral cooperation against terrorism. Initially announced as “Summit”, the event is now confirmed as a “High-Level Conference” and will take place on 28-29 June immediately after finalization of the sixth biennial review. As noted by the President of the General Assembly, the sequencing of the conference immediately after the review will create a high-profile “UN Counter-Terrorism Week.” It will be the first time in the history of the organization that such an event is convened.

The High-Level Conference will be convened by the Secretary-General under the theme of “Strengthening international cooperation to combat the evolving threat of terrorism.”

In December, I sent a letter to all Member States requesting their suggestions on possible topics to discuss during the Conference. I am very glad to emphasize that more than 30 responses that Member States sent us. Based on these inputs, the High-Level Conference will focus on sharing of information, prevention of violent extremism, including preventing terrorist use of cyberspace and modern technologies, addressing the life cycle of the foreign terrorist fighter phenomenon and the United Nations' role in promoting international cooperation.

The Secretary-General is writing to Member States inviting them to nominate a delegation led by the most senior national security and/or counter-terrorism head of their Government. Our view is that, to achieve its goals, the High-Level Conference would primarily benefit from participation of Member States' National Security Advisors and heads of counter-terrorism and intelligence services.

The High-Level Conference will provide a unique opportunity to forge a new international partnership to address the complex and transnational terrorism threat. We hope also that the conference will help identify and pursue opportunities to share counter-terrorism information, expertise and resources between Member States, and that it will strengthen the role of the UN in this respect.

The High-Level Conference will be opened by the Secretary-General and will conclude with a non-binding Chair's summary outlining the key points and commitments made during the event.

Secondly, the Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact

This is the next good news. The Secretary-General has signed the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact on 23 February. I along with a number of other head of UN entities based in New York also signed the Compact on the same day. As our entities are scattered around the world, we are expecting the signing process of the Compact could finish by the end of March.

The Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact will be the largest coordination framework in the UN system. It brings together the heads of 36 UN entities plus Interpol and the World Customs Organization. It is an important step towards implementation of the principle of UN common action.

The Global Compact has three main elements designed to enhance the UN's work on counter-terrorism:

1. First, in terms of **process** - the Global Compact represents a political commitment by the heads of UN entities to strengthen coordination and coherence at both Headquarters and in the field, especially through the existing 12 thematic inter-agency working groups;
2. Second, in terms of content, the Global Compact will support better UN's counter-terrorism action in implementing the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, including

through joint, complementary and mutually reinforcing projects; project activities in this regard are the most important.

3. Third, the Global Compact envisages increasing the **impact** of the UN's counter-terrorism efforts through the development of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and common resource mobilization, which is important to make our work more effective.

To make the long story short, the Global Counter-Terrorism Compact creates a new framework for partnership across the UN System in line with the Secretary-General's reform of the UN counter-terrorism architecture and in line with the expectation of Member States. Going forward, the Compact aims to support Member States counter-terrorism efforts in a more coordinated and cohesive way.

This brings me to the third part of my briefing, the Sixth Biennial Review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy

The review is a comprehensive process, which results in a detailed General Assembly resolution that provides crucial updates to the Strategy in light of the evolving threat of terrorism, and sets the counter-terrorism agenda for both Member States and the UN system for the next two years. The Strategy is therefore a "living document," as it emphasizes different counter-terrorism priorities in line with the evolving threat.

The review this year is particularly timely. Despite the military setbacks inflicted on ISIL over the past months, terrorism remains a global challenge that is rapidly evolving. It demands an urgent and concerted multilateral response. It is crucial that the international community not only maintains but strengthens its united front against the scourge of terrorism, as embodied by the Global Strategy.

Preventing and countering terrorism is one of the top priorities of the Secretary-General and this review will be the first since he took office. It will also be the first review since the establishment of UNOCT. The creation of United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism was the Secretary-General's first reform initiative and was based upon a mandate provided by Member States through the fifth review of the Global Strategy. The Secretary-General therefore attaches great importance to the review to reflect on the progress achieved in strengthening the coherence, coordination and effectiveness of the UN in supporting Member States' efforts to prevent and counter terrorism.

The review will also provide an excellent opportunity to consider how the role, capacity and resources of the United Nations could be enhanced to support Member States in the implementation of the Strategy. UNOCT is currently working on the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Strategy, which will be released in April and inform Member States.

In addition to the United Nations entities, I have invited Member States to share their comments on the implementation of the Strategy. These inputs could contribute to a repository of best practices on our

joint efforts to counter-terrorism, and also enrich the discussions during the review. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the 32 Member States and the European Union that have shared their contribution with us.

My Office will also continue to support, upon their request, the Ambassadors Permanent Representatives of Jordan and Finland, who were appointed by the President of the General Assembly as co-facilitators for the sixth review.

Excellencies,
Dear colleagues,

Thanks to the strong and consensual support of the General Assembly, the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and its successive reviews have provided the international community with a solid, constantly updated foundation to address terrorism comprehensively, along four mutually reinforcing pillars.

This consensus must not waiver. I am confident that Member States will approach the review process constructively to reaffirm their common determination to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. We need to have a consensus document to be able to implement our mandate.

I am also hopeful that building on a successful review, and with the support of Member States, the High-Level Conference could start a new chapter in the role of the United Nations in counter-terrorism.

We need to take the convening power and the capacity-building role of the UN to a new qualitative level. We need to forge a new international counter-terrorism partnership to achieve more impact by facilitating practical cooperation and by effectively assisting, at their request, those Member States most affected by terrorism.

Thank you for your attention.