



**UNITED NATIONS
OFFICE OF COUNTER-TERRORISM**

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

**UNDP SECOND GLOBAL MEETING ON PREVENTING VIOLENT
EXTREMISM**

23 May 2018

SPEAKERS:

1. Mr. Nikolai Astrup, Minister of International Development, Norway
2. Mr. Achim Steiner, Administrator, UNDP
3. Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, Under-Secretary-General, Office of Counter-Terrorism
4. Ms. Somia Okoued, State Minister, Sudan (TBC)

Moderator: Ms. Laila Bokhari, Independent Adviser and former State Secretary, Norway

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you, dear Leila.

Thank you, Minister Astrup for Norway's strong political and financial support for the activities of the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism. We are ready to increase our level of cooperation with Norwegian colleagues to implement this new funding in the most effective way.

I would also like to thank the Administrator of UNDP, Mr. Achim Steiner, for co-organizing and inviting me to speak at this important Second Global Meeting on Preventing Violent Extremism conducive to terrorism.

I would also like to welcome Her Excellency State Minister of Sudan Somia Okoued, and thank her for the excellent cooperation between her Government and the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism.

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Antonio Guterres, places high importance on preventing violent extremism and personally spearheads a common approach on PVE through his High-Level PVE Action Group. The prevention of violent extremism is one of the top priorities and part of the core mandate of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism.

As the Secretary-General highlighted in his major counter-terrorism statement in London last year, prevention is the first line of defense against violent extremism and terrorism.

There are no quick fixes to tackle this complex and multifaceted threat. Addressing violent extremism and terrorism through security measures is essential but rarely sufficient on its own. We need to focus our efforts on conditions that are conducive to young men and women being lured by violent extremism and terrorism.

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The United Nations is stepping up its efforts to prevent violent extremism. More than two thirds of the initiatives of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, for example, are dedicated to addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism.

These efforts are based on the consensus of the UN General Assembly that mandated the United Nations to support requesting Member States in this important area. The Secretary-General himself has directly instructed the UN system to place high priority on the prevention of violent extremism, prevention based on national ownership. It is a sovereign right of a country to request this assistance. It is a demand-driven process. As a result, a growing number of Member States from all regions of the world are requesting the United Nations to support them through the sharing of good practices and concrete capacity building projects. 15 United Nations entities are implementing at this moment more than 260 PVE projects in 84 countries.

In order to coordinate and make this work more coherent and collaborative, the Secretary-General has nominated UNOCT as his Secretariat to the his High Level PVE Action Group. We also chair a UN Inter-Agency PVE Working Group to foster information exchange and collaboration.

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

As I mentioned before, the United Nations efforts to prevent violent extremism are based on General Assembly resolutions and driven by high demand from Governments from around the world. However, due to a difference of opinion among Member States on the approach to the prevention agenda, this area of work has become one of the key challenges facing Member States as they seek to forge a consensus outcome for the Sixth Review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, taking place this June in the General Assembly.

For this reason, I would like to appeal to Member States to engage in dialogue and discussion to build the necessary common understanding on this very issue. It is essential that the international community remains united and increases its international cooperation to comprehensively address the threat of violent extremism and terrorism.

It is very important to reach a compromise in the first ever counter-terrorism week of the United Nations.

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

In order to foster a more practical approach to preventing and countering terrorism, the Secretary-General is holding a High-Level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States immediately after the Sixth Review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

This Conference aims to exchange good practices and lessons learned and build a new partnership to increase international counter-terrorism cooperation.

One of the four sessions of the Conference will focus on strengthening global action to prevent violent extremism, including by engaging youth and preventing misuse of new technologies and the Internet by terrorists. It will be a key session bringing together both practitioners and representatives of civil society.

Civil society has an important role to play in regard to our joint efforts to counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism. We are doing our best to ensure adequate participation of civil society representatives from all regions of the world in the Conference. The Conference will thus serve to promote an inclusive approach to preventing violent extremism, as recommended by the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, and Security Council resolutions 1624 (2005) against incitement to terrorism, and 2178 (2014) against foreign terrorist fighters.

This session and the session on strengthening the role and capacity of the United Nations to support Member States to implement the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy will be open to the participation of civil society organizations.

The Secretary-General believes that we need to look at creative and dynamic ways of partnering with youth; we need to support them with more employment opportunities, relevant education and skills development. This is one of the most important ways for the international community to prevent violent extremism.

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Secretary-General has asked the UN Office of Counter- Terrorism to further improve UN coordination and coherence in its prevention of violent extremism and counter-terrorism efforts and has signed a new UN system-wide Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact with 36 UN entities, Interpol and the World Customs Organization.

The Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact provides clear terms of reference for engagement between Compact entities and will ultimately enable us to better serve our Member States.

The Compact will help us:

- (i) Support the implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy;
- (ii) Involve UN Country Teams in counter-terrorism and PVE activities through a country-by-country approach;
- (iii) Help share relevant capacity building and coordination and coherence related information with members of the Compact;
- (iv) Develop mutually reinforcing counter-terrorism and PVE capacity-building projects; and
- (v) Establish a joint resource mobilization and outreach strategy with donors.

Based on this Compact, a number of UN entities are intensifying their collaboration. For example, over the past months we have managed to significantly improve our cooperation with the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate—or CTED. Thanks to the adoption in December last year of Security Council resolution 2395, we have also started to build up our capacity in the field using as a basis CTED’s expertise.

We are also bringing together UN entities through different partnership frameworks. For example, UNOCT is signing its first Memorandum of Understanding with UNDP today. With its strong field presence, UNDP is one of the most important UN partners for UNOCT.

Mr. Steiner, I am looking forward to signing the UNDP-UNOCT Memorandum of Understanding today with you to intensify the cooperation between our two organizations.

I hope that, through the conclusion of the new Memorandum of Understanding, we will further strengthen our common efforts to better support Member States and make a real difference in the field.

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the beginning of the year we have launched a global UNOCT PVE Policy programme that supports requesting Member States and regional organizations in developing their PVE policies and national and regional plans, based on their request and on national ownership.

Through this programme, we are combining UNOCT's policy expertise with the sustained presence of UNDP on the ground to utilize synergies and maximize our impact.

I want to express my sincere gratitude to the Governments of Norway and the Republic of Korea for their generous support and financial contributions to the success of this new programme.

At the regional level, UNOCT has already supported Member States through the League of Arab States, ASEAN, CARICOM, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the G5 Sahel Countries, Southern African States and Central Asian States, in developing their regional counter-terrorism and prevention of violent extremism plans and strategies.

At the national level, we are supporting Special Representatives of the UN Secretary-General and United Nations Country Teams with expertise, and provide coordinated "All-of-UN" support to requesting Member States in Tunisia, Jordan, Sudan, Indonesia, Somalia, Mali, and Mauritania.

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I look forward to our discussions and the exchange of good practices and lessons learned during this important conference. I believe that events like these will help us engage on the practical dimensions of our work and ultimately improve our support to Member States in better preventing violent extremism conducive to terrorism around the world.

Thank you.