



**UNITED NATIONS
OFFICE OF COUNTER-TERRORISM**

**Statement of Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Office
of Counter-Terrorism**

Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament

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Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to thank the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the National Council of Austria for this timely initiative to demonstrate solidarity with victims of terrorism.

This event, held on the eve of the International Day of Remembrance of and Tribute to Victims of Terrorism, shows victims that we are serious about addressing their rights and needs even in times of crisis.

In recent years, there has been real momentum at the national, regional, and international levels to support victims of terrorism.

But the COVID-19 crisis risks undoing this progress.

The pandemic has triggered trauma and feelings of isolation, invisibility, and stress in many victims.

As government services slow or are suspended, and funds are redirected to address the public health crisis, its clear that the pandemic is having a detrimental impact on victims' access to justice and legal, financial, and psychosocial support.

It has also forced the cancellation of many remembrance ceremonies where victims hoped to come together to seek solace and comfort.

We must continue to support victims in these unprecedented and uncertain times.

The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy lays the foundation for upholding the rights of victims, while General Assembly resolutions 72/165 and 73/305 reaffirm this commitment and guide our work.

The United Nations Secretary-General's report on victims calls for the development of model legislation to address the rights and needs of victims of terrorism, including on gender-sensitive support and assistance.

The lack of a model legal framework and significant differences in national approaches hinders Member States' abilities to recognize and articulate victims' rights in a national context.

That's why my Office is working closely with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Inter-Parliamentary Union to address this issue.

Our innovative project will provide recommended legislative provisions that are based on international principles and can be adapted to each state's national context.

To make this initiative successful, we need the full support of parliamentarians. As representatives of your constituents, you have an important role in ensuring sustainable support to victims of terrorism.

I hope that impact of this project will be as influential for victims of terrorism as the Declaration of Basic Principles has been for victims of crime.

I would like to express my gratitude to the Inter-Parliamentary Union, especially its High-Level Advisory Group on Counter-Terrorism, for engaging with us on this important work.

I look forward to the launch of the model legal provisions at the first United Nations Congress of Victims of Terrorism in New York and at the Conference of Speakers of Parliament in Vienna in 2021.

Thank you for your attention.