



UNITED NATIONS OFFICE OF COUNTER-TERRORISM

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

**High-Level Round Table on the Protection of Major Sporting Events and the
Use of Sports' Values for the Prevention of Violent Extremism**

27 March 2022, 3 p.m. Doha, State of Qatar

Excellencies,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, it is my great honour to welcome you to the High-Level Round-Table Discussion on the Protection of Major Sporting Events and the Use of Sports' Values for the Prevention of Violent Extremism and to take the floor after His Excellency Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, State of Qatar.

I am proud to present the results that we were able to achieve despite the COVID-19 pandemic that descended on the world shortly after we formally launched the Global Sports Programme at UN Headquarters in New York two years ago.

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the State of Qatar for its generosity in hosting this event on the margins of the prestigious Doha Forum, which is so fitting considering Qatar's prominent role in hosting international sporting events, such as the FIFA Arab Cup and Qatar Grand Prix last year and of course the 2022 FIFA World Cup later this year.

I wish also to thank the Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy in promoting the use of sport and its values, which has contributed so much to the success of our Global Sports Programme, conducted in partnership with the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI), the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC), and the International Centre for Sport Security (ICSS).

Today we are presenting two guides for policy and decisionmakers dedicated to planning the security of major sporting events and leveraging sport and its values to pursue the objectives of preventing violent extremism.

In addition, we are endorsing a plan for a Global Awareness Campaign aiming at promoting sports' positive and inclusive values as counter-narratives to the violent and hateful ideologies disseminated by terrorist and violent extremist groups.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

Let me also take this opportunity to highlight the crucial role played by the nearly two hundred National Focal Points for the success of the Global Sports Programme.

The contributions made by National Focal Points are vital to sharing practical knowledge and expertise so that the Global Programme can provide technical assistance for the security of major sporting events and the operationalization of sport-based initiatives within national action plans on prevention of violent extremism conducive to terrorism.

Thank you for your participation and attention.