



**Opening statement by Mr. Vladimir Voronkov,
Under-Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism,
8th Meeting of the Global Counter-Terrorism Compact
Coordination Committee**

8 June 2022, *Trusteeship Council chamber*, hybrid

Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the eighth meeting of the Global Counter-Terrorism Compact Coordination Committee.

Allow me to start by thanking United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres, for his availability to join us for the opening of today's meeting.

I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his leadership of the Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact, because it was your idea, Mr. Secretary-General, to create the Compact, and it is now the largest coordination framework in the United Nations.

I am delighted to present and also greet here His Excellency Major General Abdulaziz Al-Ansari, Chair of the National Counter-Terrorism Committee of the State of Qatar, His Excellency Ambassador T. S. Tirumurti, Chair of the Counter-Terrorism Committee of the Security Council and Permanent Representative of India, His Excellency Mr. Tijjani Muhammad Bande, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Nigeria, His Excellency Ambassador Mr. Martin Kimani, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the of Kenya, His Excellency Mr. Mohammed Alateek, Chargé d'Affaires of the Permanent Mission of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations, Ms. Alena Kupchyna, Coordinator of Activities to Address Transnational Threats, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), and Mr. Ilkka Salmi, European Union Counter-Terrorism Coordinator.

Allow me to extend a warm and special welcome to the newest members of the Compact entities, the Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ISIL (UNITAD), and the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

UNITAD's work on accountability for the crimes committed by Da'esh in Iraq will add an important operational layer to the work of the Compact.

And our most recent member, the Financial Action Task Force, will strengthen the Compact's work on helping Member States counter the financing of terrorist activities.

Dear Colleagues,

Today's meeting is structured around two panel discussions. The first one will focus on the regional outlook on the pressing terrorist threat in Africa, the second panel discussion will center on progress updates and thematic priorities from Heads of Compact Entities and Chairs of the Counter-Terrorism Compact Working Groups.

After the second panel discussion, the Compact Secretariat will briefly present the Joint Programme of Work for 2022-2023, which we are hoping to adopt at the end of this meeting.

Let me now say a few words on the threat posed by terrorism in Africa and the importance of strengthening international cooperation and countering this threat.

In Africa, we have regrettably observed an increase in terrorist activities across the continent. This was highlighted over a week ago during the recent African Union Summit on Terrorism and Unconstitutional Changes of Government in Africa, in Equatorial Guinea, which I attended on behalf of the Secretary-General.

I am particularly concerned by the rapidly growing presence and activity of terrorist groups in parts of Africa, which is impacting the entire continent and beyond.

In West Africa and the Sahel, Da'esh and Al-Qaida affiliates continue to exploit intercommunal and social tensions in pursuit of their agendas.

In Central and Southern Africa, a regional terrorism threat has emerged in the form of organized groups in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Mozambique which have affiliated with Da'esh, and that continue to attack civilians and peacekeepers.

Increased terrorist activities, both in conflict and non-conflict settings, have continued to fuel chaos and the death of innocent civilians. This amplifies inter-communal tensions and humanitarian crises, and undermines state authority and development.

The magnitude of the challenge is further compounded by complex relationships between terrorists, armed groups and criminal networks, as well as the political upheaval caused by recent coups d'état.

These very concerning developments jeopardize human rights and the rule of law and perpetuate or even exacerbate conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism.

Looking ahead, supporting African Member States in their counter-terrorism efforts and responding to their needs will be among the top priorities of my Office.

I would like to take this opportunity to share that Nigeria and the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism are planning to organize an African High-Level International Conference on Counter-Terrorism, in Abuja, in October 2023. I look forward to working with you all in making this Conference a success.

Dear Colleagues,

The global nature of terrorism requires closer international cooperation and partnerships, especially with regional organizations.

For that reason, my Office has strengthened collaboration with the African Union. The African Union was invited to collaborate with the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact and is now a close partner through its coordination focal point for the Compact.

We have strengthened our collaboration with the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and the Lake Chad Basin Commission, the Group of Five for the Sahel.

We have also strengthened our engagement with African Parliamentarians as demonstrated by the High-Level Parliamentary Conference in Doha, Qatar, earlier in March. This was part of a broader initiative to give new momentum to inter-parliamentary cooperation in Africa and relevant parliamentary assemblies to collectively address the evolving threat of terrorism and violent extremism.

Together with partners and with Member States, our focus on rehabilitation and reintegration of individuals formerly associated with terrorist groups has proven to be effective in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Somalia.

And we have also had positive experiences working in prisons and detention facilities in Tunisia and Uganda to prevent terrorist radicalization in those environments.

As stronger regional capacities across all counter-terrorism areas have become an urgent priority, my Office has increased our presence on the African continent by opening programme offices in Kenya and Morocco. Their geographical proximity to our beneficiaries and partners helps to provide targeted support where it is most needed.

I am particularly proud that in addition to the training programmes our Rabat Office offers, it will also be hosting the EU-UN Global Terrorism Threats Facility, which will benefit the entire continent and beyond.

Our Behavioural Insights Hub based in Doha provides additional support in Africa, having already completed one workshop on the continent.

Beyond those new Offices, UNOCT continues to work throughout Africa to build and implement 26 capacity building programmes and projects, benefiting 44 Member States on the continent. I am very grateful for our donors for their generous support, first of all to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the State of Qatar for the very strong financial and political support.

The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact entities continue to work together to mobilize resources for approximately 20 programmes focusing on Africa under the Multi-Year Appeal for Counter-Terrorism, with an estimated value of \$75 million and an emphasis on gender and human rights.

In this context, the Resource Mobilization Monitoring and Evaluation Working Group convened last week, a successful virtual expert-level briefing with over 140 representatives from Governments and Compact entities to showcase Africa-focused inter-agency projects included in the Multi-Year Appeal.

Dear Colleagues,

The Compact plays a critical role in fostering coordination and coherence among Member States, United Nations entities and other partners in counter-terrorism.

I am delighted by the increased participation and support of Member States to the Compact and its Coordination Platform. It is significant that Member States mentioned the Compact 29 times in the consensually adopted resolution on the seventh review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy last June.

In that regard, I wish to acknowledge and congratulate the Chairs of Compact Working Groups, who have increasingly invited representatives of relevant Member States to their meetings. This

positive practice improves coordination and offers Member States the opportunity to request tailored support from relevant Compact entities.

My Office is also increasing online collaboration between Compact entities and Member States, including through information sharing via the Digital Coordination Platform.

It is also an encouraging development that nine regional organizations have so far nominated focal points to the Digital Coordination Platform.

Beyond our State partners, the Compact is working to further strengthen regional cooperation and coordination with civil society.

You will recall that in the last Coordination Committee Meeting, held in December, we agreed that regional cooperation and partnership with civil society can be best achieved through a field-centered approach.

Since then, we have jointly adopted practical steps to lay the groundwork for the inclusion of civil society, including women and youth-led organizations, as well as academia and the private sector, in our activities. Last month we held the first-ever High-Level Conference on Human Rights, Civil Society, and Counter-Terrorism in Malaga, Spain, which was well received by participating Member States, Compact Entities as well as Civil Society Organizations.

Dear Colleagues,

The Counter-Terrorism Compact lies at the core of our common efforts in countering terrorism. It capitalizes on the wealth of expertise and know-how of all of its now 45 member entities in support of the balanced implementation, by Member States, of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

I look forward to continuing working with you and your teams to meet the challenges ahead of us – for greater coordination, coherence, accountability, transparency and effectiveness of our efforts.

Thank you for your attention.