



# UNITED NATIONS OFFICE OF COUNTER-TERRORISM

**Opening Remarks by Mr. Raffi Gregorian, Director and Deputy to the Under-Secretary-General,  
United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism**

**Side event on 'UNOCT moving closer to Member States – the activity of the UNOCT programme  
offices'**

**23 June 2023**

Dear Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Yesterday the General Assembly adopted its resolution on the eight review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

Similar to its 2021 resolution on the seventh review, the GA noted UNOCT's efforts in increasing its field presence, including at the regional level through programme offices, to – quote – “facilitate the delivery of programmes closer to beneficiaries, enhance their impact and cost-effectiveness, and strengthen cooperation with national and local counter-terrorism actors as well as regional bodies and other providers and recipients of assistance.”

As an entity that relies on voluntary contributions for 91 percent of its budget and for all of its capacity-building work, we could not have Programme Offices without host countries providing premises, security, and utilities as well as financial support for programme management and activities.

So, I would like to begin by extending my heartfelt thanks to Hungary, Qatar, Spain, and Morocco for being such generous hosts and staunch supporters of UNOCT's work outside of New York.

As we are still a young office, some of you may be wondering what is UNOCT's laydown away from Headquarters?

Compared to, say, UNODC, which has more than 2,500 people working in 137 locations in 98 countries, it's exceedingly modest. But that's because our mandate allows us to take a different approach, which includes working with UNODC and other entities to get work done.

When the General Assembly established UNOCT in 2017, it inherited the UN Counter-Terrorism Center (UNCCT), which already had a team in the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy in Central Asia in Ashgabat helping implement the regional Joint Plan of Action.

Over the course of the following six years, UNOCT has established just five programme offices and currently maintains only four field presences, including the one in Ashgabat.

But here's something I bet you won't hear from other UN entities: when UNOCT's work in a field location is done or no longer suitable, we *close* them!

That's right: we have closed down field presences in Bishkek, Dhaka, Khartoum, Nouakchott, and Ouagadougou. Our presence in Manila, implementing the CT Travel Programme, will close when the system becomes operational.

We have established a senior field coordinator to make sure our field presences and our programme offices are fit-for-purpose, results-oriented, and appropriately resourced, as well as help institutionalize our relationships with Resident Coordinators and the Development Coordination Office.

In that regard, let me highlight three characteristics of our Programme Offices that define our operational model:

- First, UNOCT Programme Offices away from Headquarters are UNOCT structures established in a host-country and deployed from UNOCT Headquarters in New York with the aim of achieving UNOCT's institutional priority of "Moving Closer to Our Partners and Activities," as defined in UNOCT's Strategic Plan and Programme Framework 2022-2025.
- Second, Programme Offices are extensions of UNOCT, with Heads of Programme Offices being part of our Senior Management Team in New York. This ensures that programmes are approved by UNOCT HQ in New York and support Member State policies and priorities set by the United Nations Security Council and General Assembly; and minimizes the tendency for field offices to self-perpetuate their work.
- And third, UNOCT programmes are results-oriented and aim to "graduate" beneficiaries so that when the outcomes are achieved or priorities shift, Programme Offices either close or transition to handle new Member State priorities.

The Programme Offices that you will hear more about today are the vanguard of UNOCT's efforts to support Member States to develop CT capacities together.

We think they represent a very solid beginning for us to grow and innovate in order to support Member States' efforts to implement the requirements of Security Council and General Assembly counter-terrorism resolutions.

Thank you for your attention.