



# UNITED NATIONS OFFICE OF COUNTER-TERRORISM

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

**UNOCT Quarterly Briefing to Member States  
7 September 2023**

Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,  
Dear colleagues,

Welcome to this year's second briefing by the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) to Member States.

I am honored that His Excellency Mr. Tijjani Muhammad Bande, Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations, has joined us today.

I also welcome senior representatives of the Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact and the Institute for Security Studies, as well as my UNOCT colleagues, who will brief us later in our meeting.

Since our last Member States briefing in February, the threat posed by Al-Qaida, Da'esh, and their affiliates has remained high in conflict zones and neighboring States.

The situation in parts of Africa remains especially concerning, with recent Secretary-General's reports observing an increase in violence and the continued expansion of terrorist groups.

Accordingly, we have continued activities that support African Member States' efforts to counter terrorism on the continent, which in terms of attacks and fatalities is now the epicentre of global terrorism.

We will discuss the evolving terrorism threat landscape and our joint efforts to address that threat in more detail later in the agenda.

Before I hand the floor to our distinguished speakers, I would like to highlight some recent developments that will help guide our joint efforts at the policy level and further strengthen the coordination and coherence of those efforts.

I will also brief you on our recent progress towards ensuring that all counter-terrorism efforts comply with international human rights obligations, mainstream gender perspectives, and protect, promote, respect, and support the rights and needs of victims of terrorism.

Excellencies,

Dear colleagues,

As most of you well know, we held the Third Counter-Terrorism Week here at United Nations Headquarters from 19 to 23 June.

This signature event featured the Third United Nations High-level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States on 19-20 June, on the overarching theme of *"Addressing Terrorism through Reinvigorated Multilateralism and Institutional Cooperation."*

It also featured 40 side-events co-organized by 41 Member States, 18 Global Counter-Terrorism Compact entities, 10 intergovernmental organizations, and 27 civil society, academia, and faith-based organizations from all regions of the world on a highly diverse set of critical topics.

These events drew over 4,500 in-person and virtual participants. To enable an even broader audience to gain insights into these discussions, recordings of 33 of these events are available on UN WebTV for a year.

Additionally, the General Assembly concluded its eighth biennial review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy by adopting another consensus resolution.

We commend Member States for their unwavering efforts to seek compromise and preserve the consensus behind the Strategy.

We also thank Ambassador Robert Rae of Canada and Ambassador Tarek Ladeb of Tunisia for facilitating the negotiations and ensuring constructive discussions.

The resolution on the eighth review addresses substantial developments in the past two years. It offers updated language on transnational organized crime, countering terrorist travel, as well as prosecution, rehabilitation, and reintegration.

The resolution also recalls the adoption of Security Council resolution 2664 (2022) on humanitarian exemptions to asset freeze measures imposed by UN sanctions regimes.

UNOCT will continue to work closely with Member States to support the integrated and balanced implementation of the Strategy.

In his Policy Brief on "A New Agenda for Peace," launched on 20 July, the Secretary-General recognizes terrorism as a global threat and highlights the related value of collective security and international cooperation, comprehensive approaches, and the need to address the underlying drivers of violence.

The document lists 12 recommendations for action, three of which are especially relevant to our mandate.

Action 9 calls to make available appropriate expertise to support counter-terrorism operations through the creation of strategic action groups with support from the Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact, backed as needed by Member States contributions.

Action 10 highlights the advocacy for UN-mandated African-led peace enforcement and counter-terrorism missions and emphasizes the importance of securing stable funding through assessed contributions to ensure the continuity of sustained peace efforts.

Action 12 recommends considering whether future UN sanctions regimes should include terrorism motivated by xenophobia, racism, and other forms of intolerance, or in the name of religion or belief.

We look forward to working closely with Member States, our partners in the Counter-Terrorism Compact, the whole of the UN system, and other key stakeholders in support of the Secretary-General's "New Agenda for Peace" and towards next year's "Summit of the Future."

Excellencies,  
Dear colleagues,

I am pleased to report that, since our last briefing to Member States, the Secretary-General's Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact in May added the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as an observer.

The IMF brings significant expertise and experience to the Compact's efforts to address illicit financial flows derived from terrorism and other forms of criminality, among other critical issues.

It also brings the total number of entities participating in the Compact – as members or observers – to 46.

Mr. Luis Urrutia, Deputy General Counsel of the IMF, will brief us later in the programme.

Meanwhile, the Secretariat of the Counter-Terrorism Compact, located within UNOCT, has further improved the digital Counter-Terrorism Coordination Platform, including by developing a dedicated section for Member States.

My colleague, Mr. Rafi Shah, will give you additional details on how you can benefit from this new section of the Platform.

Since our last briefing, UNOCT has engaged in several promising pilot projects with the UN Department of Operational Support aimed at leveraging the Regional Support Hubs that comprise the new Global Operational Support Architecture to provide more efficient and cost-effective support to UNOCT operations outside of New York.

UNOCT has also continued to develop an Office-wide framework for human rights mainstreaming and due diligence tools and processes.

As part of these efforts, our Human Rights Unit has guided several UNOCT programmes and projects on compliance with the UN's Human Rights Due Diligence Policy for non-UN security forces.

It is also our priority to promote the adoption of specific safeguards at the UN level and by Member States to prevent, mitigate, and remedy violations of internationally recognized human rights in digital technology use.

In addition, our Office has continued to implement our Gender Mainstreaming Policy and Action Plan including through analyzing emerging issues and progress in developing and implementing the individual gender work plans of different teams across UNOCT.

On 21 June, UNOCT and Canada launched the Gender and Identity Factors Platform, a user-led digital platform solely dedicated to mainstreaming gender and intersectionality in countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism.

The Platform includes a public library and interactive features to engage Member States, practitioners, and civil society organizations.

Finally, I am proud of our significant progress in generating momentum for the victims of terrorism agenda at the highest level.

In June, UNOCT, in collaboration with the Group of Friends of Victims of Terrorism, held a ceremony to dedicate the United Nations Victims of Terrorism Solidarity Tree, honoring victims and survivors of terrorism worldwide.

In August, we marked the sixth International Day of Remembrance of and Tribute to Victims of Terrorism with a high-level event that included the participation of the Secretary-General.

Our recently launched "Memories" exhibition amplifies victims' voices through a compelling visual narrative about the life-changing impact of terrorism on members of the public, including civilians in conflict-affected settings.

In addition, our new Legacy Project features 12 victims and survivors of terrorism worldwide in an interactive documentary gallery on Instagram.

Excellencies,  
Dear colleagues,

That concludes my opening remarks, and I thank you for your attention.