



**UNITED NATIONS  
OFFICE OF COUNTER-TERRORISM**

**Video Remarks of the Under-Secretary-General UNOCT**

**Mr. Vladimir Voronkov for**

**17th commemoration of the European Remembrance Day for Victims of Terrorism**

**11 March 2021**

Your Excellency Commissioner Ylva Johansson,  
Honorable ministers,  
Mr. Gilles de Kerchove,  
Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am humbled to stand in solidarity with you to commemorate the 17th European Remembrance Day for Victims of Terrorism.

I would like to thank both the European Commission for organizing the event, and the Government of Spain for hosting it.

[PAUSE]

When I think back to this time last year, we were at the outset of a pandemic that has since spread across the globe.

At that time, we could not have imagined the devastating impact COVID-19 would have across the world—and how it would impact specific population groups, including victims of terrorism.

Today, we know that the pandemic has had a heavy toll on victims.

It has retriggered trauma, deepened the pain and loneliness, delayed or hindered victims' access to justice, and caused the loss of essential services necessary for victims' rehabilitation.

It is therefore very appropriate that the theme of this year's commemoration is "Always United".

This theme reminds us that no matter what, we will always stand united with those whose lives have been shattered by heinous terrorist violence.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Remembrance means honouring those who have lost their lives and those whose lives have been destroyed.

It also means looking forward, taking decisive action to break endless cycles of hate and violence to fulfil our responsibility to prevent more deaths and suffering.

This includes acknowledging the rights of victims, listening to their voices, and translating our heartfelt solidarity into concrete actions.

We can do this, for example, by facilitating victims' access to justice; strengthening mental health and psychosocial services; addressing the specific impact of terrorism on women and girls; engaging more with civil society; and enhancing our support to victims' associations.

This is the true meaning of "Always United".

Excellencies, dear colleagues,

Our actions will be judged not on what we say, but on what we do.

The United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism is ready to lead these international efforts, together with the European Union and other partners, including the Group of Friends of Victims of Terrorism co-chaired by Spain and Afghanistan.

The First Global Congress of Victims of Terrorism, which my Office is planning to organize towards the end of this year, will be a critical opportunity for us to prove that multilateralism is a force multiplier for this just and noble cause.

Dear colleagues,

Today is about more than remembrance—it's about reaffirming our common humanity.

Let us come together to honor the departed, support the survivors, and pledge to redouble our preventive efforts.

I thank you.