

**UNOCT Programme Office on Parliamentary Engagement
in Preventing and Countering Terrorism**

Hybrid opening ceremony
Doha, Wednesday, 16 June 2021

Remarks of

**Assistant Secretary-General Michèle Coninx
Executive Director, CTED**

Excellencies, honourable representatives, distinguished colleagues,

Allow me to begin by congratulating the State of Qatar and UNOCT on the opening in Doha of the UNOCT Programme Office on Parliamentary Engagement in Preventing and Countering Terrorism.

Parliamentarians and parliamentary assemblies are close and essential partners of CTED, including in the context of Member States' development of legislative measures and good practices to effectively counter terrorism and violent extremism that is conducive to terrorism.

For instance, we recommend to Member States that they include parliaments in their development of comprehensive counter-terrorism legal frameworks in order to ensure that the terrorist offences are clearly and precisely defined in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions and international counter-terrorism instruments and also respect international human rights law.

Excellencies, honourable representatives, distinguished colleagues,

Like all of you, we have been forced to innovate and adapt our working methods to deal with the challenges imposed by the pandemic and ensure the delivery of our Security Council mandate.

We have therefore introduced a new “hybrid” assessment visit model, according to which we conduct an initial virtual component of the country assessment visit, to be followed by a physical component, when circumstances allow.

I shall briefly outline three challenges identified during our recent hybrid visits, which should be addressed through strong partnerships between counter-terrorism bodies and parliamentary assemblies.

- **The first challenge is data protection and information-sharing, with respect to collecting, using and sharing biometric data; passenger data, financial intelligence; and data collected through the use of special investigative techniques.**

Although there has been considerable technological progress in this area, many States have yet to develop the laws and policies required to ensure that these new tools are used effectively, appropriately, and responsibly.

Parliaments could play a significant role in ensuring that these new tools are employed in a manner that is compliant with the rule of law.

CTED, together with UNOCT and UNODC, has published the “UN Compendium of Recommended Practices for the Responsible Use and Sharing of Biometrics in Counter-Terrorism” and is working with the UNOCT Programme on Parliamentarian Engagement and UNODC to develop a compendium of existing good practices on data-protection rules to facilitate international cooperation in counter-terrorism.

- **The second challenge is the drafting of comprehensive and tailored strategies for the prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration of individuals who return from the conflict zones.**

Parliaments can contribute here by ensuring that such strategies are effectively monitored in full respect for international human rights law, including by ensuring that appropriate legal frameworks are in place to investigate and prosecute terrorists offences.

- **The third challenge relates to family members associated with FTFs, especially children, and the various roles that women have played in terrorist organizations and activities.**

The efforts of parliamentarians in this regard are key to identifying and sharing good practices, especially those that address the gender dimensions of terrorism and violent extremism and respect human rights.

Excellencies, honourable representatives, distinguished colleagues,

CTED looks forward to working closely with the UNOCT Programme Office in Doha.

I wish you all success with the new Office and I look forward to further strengthening cooperation between CTED and all stakeholders and partners present today within the framework of our joint efforts to combat terrorism.

Thank you.