



**UNITED NATIONS
OFFICE OF COUNTER-TERRORISM**

**Opening statement by Mr. Vladimir Voronkov,
Under-Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism
6th Meeting of the Global Counter-Terrorism Compact Coordination Committee
8 October 2021, 9:00am-12:00pm EDT, Virtual**

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear Colleagues,

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

This meeting is of particular significance against the backdrop of the General Assembly's seventh review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, recent developments around the world and our joint ongoing work to counter the threat of terrorism.

I am delighted that we are joined today by His Excellency Ambassador Bakhtiyor Ibragimov, Permanent Representative of Uzbekistan, His Excellency Ambassador Martin Kimani, Permanent Representative of Kenya, current President of the Security Council; Ms. Hilde Hardeman, Head of the European Commission's Service for Foreign Policy Instruments, and Mr. Jumakhon Giyosov, Director of the Executive Committee of the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure from the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

I am looking forward to hearing your valuable perspectives on the implications of recent developments in Afghanistan, especially as they may affect the context of United Nations' counter-terrorism efforts in Central Asia, Africa and priority preventive measures.

Afghanistan will be the focus of our initial panel discussion, followed by progress updates from working group chairs as well as the Compact Secretariat, but let me first share with you key outcomes of the Second Counter-Terrorism Week.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear colleagues,

A few weeks ago, Secretary-General Guterres presented his landmark report on “Our Common Agenda” in which he calls for continued cooperation to prevent and counter terrorism as “a strategic security risk.” He also called for a stronger, more networked and inclusive multilateral system, anchored within the United Nations.

Earlier this year, UN Member States had reaffirmed its commitment to do just that.

The United Nations’ second Counter-Terrorism Week, organized by my Office in June this year, included the biennial High-Level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States convened by the Secretary-General. It provided a deeper understanding of the transformative impact of new technologies on both terrorism and our counter-terrorism efforts.

Throughout the week, Member States expressed appreciation for the counter-terrorism work of the United Nations system and reiterated their support for the important role played by the Counter-Terrorism Compact, providing a strong mandate to sustain international counter-terrorism cooperation. I would like to sincerely thank all of you for your contributions in making Counter-Terrorism Week a success.

A major development of CT Week was the consensus adoption of the seventh biennial review resolution of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy by the General Assembly to guide our counter-terrorism efforts for the next two years.

Four overarching thematic priorities emerged from this year’s discussions among Member States, civil society, regional organizations and UN entities and are reflected in the review resolution:

First, the need to address Da’esh’s legacies in Iraq and Syria in order to prevent its resurgence, both through accountability and by urgently repatriating third country nationals.

The review resolution specifically refers to the repatriation of children, on a case-by-case basis, with the consent of concerned governments. While the United Nations advocates for the repatriation of FTFs and associated family members to countries of nationality for which refoulement is not a concern, this modest mention still represents an important achievement given how contentious the issue remains.

The launch last week of the Global Framework on Prosecution, Rehabilitation and Reintegration, led by my Office and UNICEF, is a significant step forward in coordinating the efforts of 15 entities on this matter.

The second thematic priority is the need to tackle the scourge of terrorism in Africa, and to support capacity-building of African countries and regional partners – as a matter of global priority.

Third, the need for concerted action to address the rise in terrorist attacks “based on xenophobia, racism and other forms of intolerance, or in the name of religion or belief”.

And the fourth priority is the need to rise to the challenges of new and transformative technologies which are shaping tomorrow’s threat of terrorism as well as our response to it.

We have clear guidance from Member States on thematic and institutional priorities to strengthen our support to them, through the Counter-Terrorism Compact.

I look forward to continuing working with you and your teams to meet these expectations – for greater coordination, coherence, accountability, transparency and effectiveness of our efforts, as Member States have demanded.

I invite you to take into account the key priorities emerging from Counter-Terrorism Week during the revision of your respective working group plans, which will serve as building blocks to develop a new Joint Programme of Work of the Global Counter-Terrorism Compact.

Please also take into account outcomes of the recent General Debate of the 76th United Nations General Assembly. Counter-terrorism was high on the agenda of Member States, with an increase in the total number of Member States that mentioned countering terrorism and prevention of violent extremism as a national priority. The attention they attach to PCVE remains stable, while among law enforcement and criminal justice responses, countering the financing of terrorism and its nexus with organized crime continue to stand out as particular concerns. It is particularly encouraging that Member States put even more emphasis on the need for international and regional cooperation, and the role of the UN in global counter-terrorism efforts.

Last – but not least – twice as many Member States compared to the last two previous years highlighted the need to uphold human rights and the rule of law while countering terrorism. This stronger focus is certainly very welcome as one of the key lessons from the last 20 years of the international counter-terrorism efforts.

The review resolution includes significant advances in this regard, both in terms of Member States commitments and their expectation that the rule of law, human rights and gender should be further mainstreamed across our capacity-building efforts. It also requests the Secretary-General to report for the next review on the need and possible modalities for an internal advisory or monitoring and evaluation capacity on these cross-cutting issues within the United Nations system.

I also wish to highlight the International Day of Remembrance of and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism held on 20 August, as well as the commemorative event organized by my Office at the 9/11 Memorial in New York, which was attended by Heads of State and Government, Ministers and Permanent Representatives on the eve of the General Debate. These events served as important reminders of the need to address challenges faced by victims of terrorist acts and to uphold their human rights.

Excellencies,

Dear colleagues,

The Counter-Terrorism Compact lies at the core of our common efforts in the fight against terrorism. It capitalizes on the wealth of expertise and know-how of all its 43 member entities to pursue the implementation of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and of relevant Security Council resolutions in support of Member States' counter-terrorism efforts.

Through the Counter-Terrorism Compact, we have continued to strengthen the multilateral response to terrorism and are working towards solidifying our cooperation with Member States and other key partners. Allow me to highlight progress in two key areas:

First, I commend the working groups and their chairs for their steady progress in the implementation of their work plans. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the meetings of the working groups have increased both in number and quality - with 66 meetings held since our last Coordination Committee meeting in August 2020. Working groups have also brought nine joint projects with seed-funding from UNOCT to a successful completion.

Second, I am pleased that working groups have increasingly used the Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Platform for their online collaboration. The Platform has played a key role in facilitating the digital interaction and information exchange between 897 focal points of Counter-Terrorism Compact entities and 131 Member States, the European Union and the GCTF.

With over 2,300 documents in its various libraries, the Platform is a unique repository of key counter-terrorism resources. It now also hosts a new user-friendly matrix, developed in collaboration with CTED, allowing entities to easily access CTED's updated technical assistance recommendations and related country assessments. We did this effort very timely right before the COVID19 happened and its works and I think it is our common achievement, and because of this new technologies we could redouble our efforts in our coordination activities.

I would also like to express my appreciation to the methodical work of the Counter-Terrorism Compact Secretariat in supporting the Coordination Committee and working groups in their substantive and coordination work.

On a more strategic level, during the last meeting of the Coordination Committee and the retreat of the working groups' chairs, we underscored the importance of enhancing regional coordination through the Counter-Terrorism Compact, as well as strengthening its impact in the field. We contemplated options encouraging working groups to identify agenda items focused on geographic coordination in their meetings and to hold *ad hoc* meetings to explore thematic issues in a specific geographic setting.

I am pleased that working groups have invited representatives of relevant Member States and civil society organizations to their meetings and have advised and assisted Member States in the review of their counter-terrorism strategies. United Nations Resident Coordinators and colleagues working in the field have also been invited, as part of working groups' initiatives to integrate voices from the field.

We have also stepped up our cooperation with the GCTF. Joint initiatives, such as the successful side event which we co-organized in the margins of the CT Week and the recent partnership consultation meeting are good illustrations of our growing cooperation, as are our partnering to develop two new sets of good practices which GCTF ministers adopted yesterday.

But it is time to explore how we can take regional coordination through the Counter-Terrorism Compact to the next level. Today's meeting is an opportunity to reflect on this important matter and explore avenues to solidify the Counter-Terrorism Compact's engagement with Member States in more practical ways. I welcome your thoughts on how to enhance this collaboration.

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

I thank you for your attention.