



**UNITED NATIONS  
OFFICE OF COUNTER-TERRORISM**

**(Pre-recorded statement)**

**Opening Remarks by Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, Under-Secretary-General  
United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism**

**UNOCT Rabat Programme Office and Training Center  
Hybrid expert level kick-off meeting on Counter Terrorism Training**

**24 February 2022**

Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to open this meeting and to welcome you to this event organized by UNOCT's Rabat Programme Office and Training Center.

Today's gathering is an opportunity to better understand the needs and realities of your countries. It is also an opportunity to introduce you to the Rabat Center, its training programme, its curriculum, and its approach to supporting African counter-terrorism efforts.

It is my hope that through our Center, UNOCT and our many partners can help strengthen national and regional capacities across the continent.

The need for African Member States to enhance their counter-terrorism capabilities is obvious. Despite the gains achieved against Al-Qaida and Da'esh in recent years, terrorism remains a serious threat.

Over the last five years, terrorist organizations have greatly intensified their operations in Burkina Faso, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali, Niger, and Nigeria. The General Assembly expressed concern about the spread of terrorism in Africa in last June's resolution on the seventh review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

It is with this reality in mind that UNOCT established the Rabat Programme Office and Training Center, to help by working closely with your national institutions and providing innovative solutions tailored to your challenges, needs and priorities. The Center, made possible by its host and benefactor, the Kingdom of Morocco, is a concrete manifestation of our commitment to deliver assistance that is collaborative, consistent, and coordinated between and across countries, sectors and disciplines. More importantly, that assistance will be based on your respective realities.

And, at the request of several African Member States, I am proud to say that our Center will provide certified, specialized trainings on several priorities including kidnap for ransom, border security and management, prison management, and prevention, deradicalization and reintegration. Our work will be delivered with human rights and the rule of law at the heart of our actions.

Today's and tomorrow's sessions will showcase the approach we are taking in supporting African Member States. Our sessions will allow us to understand your approaches, your capabilities, your challenges, your needs and your priorities. In this way we can determine how best to match your needs with our training curriculum offerings. The meeting will also facilitate linkages among peers and the development of communities of experts that can continue to serve you long after you leave Rabat.

This tailored approach is something we have actively implemented since opening our office. For months, the Center has engaged in extensive consultations with other UN agencies, international law enforcement academies, universities, international centers, and counter-terrorism experts to identify good practices and to collect and manage knowledge that should be made available to all requesting Member States.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear Colleagues,

This event will mark the beginning of a long-term relationship between the Rabat Programme Office and African Member States seeking to gain the capabilities they need to prevent and counter terrorism and to protect their populations.

I encourage all African Member States to take full advantage of the support made available by the Rabat Programme Office and Training Center in Africa. I particularly encourage those participating today to seek channels for cooperation between your institutions and our training center.

The United Nations Office of Counter Terrorism is committed to being your partner at this important moment as we shift to addressing terrorism in the “new normal” of a world emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic.

I would like to conclude by welcoming the participation of G5 Sahel representatives, as well as international training academies from Brazil, Mozambique and Saudi Arabia, and thanking, once again, the Kingdom of Morocco for its outstanding support and generosity, without which this Center would not exist.

Thank you.