



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

**Joint Briefing to Member States
on the High-Level International Conference on “International and Regional Border Security
and Management Cooperation to Counter Terrorism and Prevent the Movement of
Terrorists” in Dushanbe, 18-19 October 2022**

14 September 2022, 10.30 a.m.

Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Welcome to this briefing on the High-Level International Conference on “International and Regional Border Security and Management Cooperation to Counter Terrorism and Prevent the Movement of Terrorists,” which will take place in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, on 18-19 October.

I would like to thank His Excellency Ambassador Jonibek Hikmat, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Tajikistan to the United Nations, and the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Tajikistan for co-organizing this joint briefing with the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism.

The Government of Tajikistan has played a valuable role in strengthening multilateral cooperation against terrorism, including through its collaboration with my Office.

In May 2018, the Government of Tajikistan, together with United Nations entities, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the European Union (EU) launched the “Dushanbe Process” when it hosted the first High-Level International Conference on “Countering Terrorism and Preventing Violent Extremism”.

In 2019, Dushanbe was also the location for UNOCT’s first regional High-Level Conference, likewise held in partnership with the Government of Tajikistan.

Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Effective border security is particularly important for Central Asian countries, which now have to address increased challenges arising from the uncertain situation in neighbouring Afghanistan.

We all know that Tajikistan shares the longest, and most porous, border with Afghanistan. But not everyone knows that Tajikistan pioneered and developed a National Border Management Strategy and an accompanying Action Plan already in 2010.

The upcoming Conference provides a unique opportunity for the international community to learn from the Tajik experience and other experiences from the Central Asian region, to discuss lessons learned, and to share good practices and innovative solutions, which can be applied not only in the region, but across other regions around the world.

It also presents international and regional actors with an opportunity to assess support for the challenging border security needs in the region, and how to better meet the needs of Tajikistan and Central Asian countries.

Central Asia is one of UNOCT's priority geographic areas for support. This year in March, Central Asian Member States endorsed the updated Joint Plan of Action based on the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy to strengthen regional cooperation to address and respond to emerging challenges posed by terrorism.

The Dushanbe Conference is an important milestone in the implementation of this Plan, and a manifestation of the importance of regional cooperation.

Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

My Office is organizing the Dushanbe Conference with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan, the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA), the European Union (EU) and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), with the support of the State of Qatar and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The Conference will bring together over 300 high-level officials, experts, and practitioners, including representatives from international and regional organizations, United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact entities, including the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), civil society, and academia, to discuss border security cooperation and preventing the movement of terrorists. Several Foreign Ministers and Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies, as well as Heads of International Organizations are expected to attend.

We have also invited all participating States of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the European Union (EU), other international and regional partners, civil society organizations, and members of the diplomatic corps in Dushanbe.

The Conference outcomes will include a Co-chairs Summary and adoption of the “Dushanbe Declaration”, which will outline the strategic priorities and good practices in implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in the area of border security.

The Conference will feature a High-Level Opening Session with the participation of His Excellency, Mr. Emomali Rahmon, President of Tajikistan.

Excellencies,
Dear colleagues,

The Dushanbe Conference will cover four thematic areas:

The first topic is ‘Regional Border Security Challenges: Identifying Threats, Risks and Avenues for Improvement’.

This session will focus on an analysis of the current regional border security challenges in Central Asia and beyond. This includes the identification of threats and risks in the management of borders in the context of countering terrorism.

The second theme is “The Phenomenon of Foreign Terrorist Fighters and Its Implications for the Central Asian Region and Beyond and Addressing Related Border Security Funding Needs through the support of the International Community.”

This session will examine current trends in the movement of foreign terrorist fighters and explore ways to strengthen international and regional cooperation to counter foreign terrorist fighter flows. It will also address the border security needs of the Central Asian States and how to leverage increased international support, including funding opportunities, to meet those needs.

The third topic is “Towards Effective Rule of Law Based Border Security Management Strategies and Whole-of-Society Solutions.”

This session will cover the main features of effective, rule of law based and human rights-compliant counter-terrorism border security policies. It will focus on how to ensure gender-sensitive and human rights-compliant policies, as well as on how to improve engagement with civil society in border security management.

The fourth topic is “Strengthening Regional and International Cooperation on Border Security and Management in the Counter-Terrorism Context: The Way Forward”.

This session will cover lessons learned from border security management capacity-building policies and programmes implemented at the national, regional, and global levels; responsible use of biometrics; and innovative measures and tools such as advance passenger information, passenger name record data and artificial intelligence.

Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,
Dear colleagues,

I count on your personal engagement and support to convey a strong and positive recommendation to your respective capitals regarding your country's high-level participation in the Dushanbe Conference.

I would also like to reiterate my profound gratitude to Tajikistan for its leadership and support in hosting this Conference, and for its continued efforts in advancing the preparations for this event.

I thank you and would now like to invite H.E. Mr. Jonibek Hikmat, Permanent Representative, to deliver his remarks on the High-Level Dushanbe Conference. The floor is yours.