



**UNITED NATIONS
OFFICE OF COUNTER-TERRORISM
UN Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT)**

Remarks by Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, Under-Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism and Executive Director of the UN Counter-Terrorism Centre

24th Meeting of the Advisory Board of the UN Counter-Terrorism Centre

25 October 2023

Your Excellency Ambassador Abdulaziz Al-Wasil, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations and Chairman of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre Advisory Board,

Excellencies and distinguished guests,

Allow me to recognize the critical role of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as the founding donor of the UN Counterterrorism Centre and to express my sincere thanks to the Chair and all members of the Advisory Board for their participation. I would also like to thank you for your substantive and financial engagement with the Centre and its activities over the past several years.

We are honored today to welcome the distinguished representatives of Kenya, Uganda, Iraq, and Ghana who will provide, together with Advisory Board Member Spain, some comments on the work of the UN Counter-Terrorism Centre and the impact it has had on mitigating and countering terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism.

[CONTEXT]

Since our last Advisory Board meeting in January 2023, the threat posed by Al-Qaida, Da'esh, and their affiliates has remained high in and around conflict zones.

Conflicts across parts of Africa remain concerning, with the continued expansion of terrorist groups across the Sahel and Central Africa.

Successful counter-terrorism operations in some countries and regions have clearly limited terrorists' capabilities and affected their operations.

However, we have seen that relying only on security measures ultimately boomerangs. This is especially true if security-focused responses are not part of broader political strategies, anchored on international human rights law and accompanied by comprehensive, all-of-society preventive efforts.

We have worked hard over the past few years to make sure that UNCCT programming in support of Member States' efforts to prevent and counter terrorism reflect both a balanced implementation of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy as well as calls by the General Assembly for whole-of-government and whole-of-society responses to terrorism.

Mr. Mauro Miedico, the new Director of the Centre, will brief you in greater detail on our specific programmes and their impact later in the agenda.

[DEVELOPMENTS SINCE JANUARY 2023]

I would now like to highlight key developments that will help guide the efforts of the UN Counter-Terrorism Centre in 2024 and beyond.

Counter Terrorism in the United Nations remains a topic that unites Member States. Allow me to share a few examples.

We held the Third UN Counter-Terrorism Week here in New York from 19 to 23 June, featuring the Third United Nations High-level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States, on the theme of "Addressing Terrorism through Reinvigorated Multilateralism and Institutional Cooperation" with a record participation of 160 countries.

Over 40 side events were also held during the week, covering a range of issues with a particular emphasis on Africa, including countering the financing of terrorism; victims of terrorism; border security and management; countering terrorist travel; prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration; new technologies; engagement with civil society organizations; good practices for measuring results in countering terrorism and prevention violent extremism, human rights and gender mainstreaming.

Also, during the week, the General Assembly concluded its biennial review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, and adopted its eighth review resolution by consensus.

The resolution addresses substantial developments and offers updated language on transnational organized crime, countering terrorist travel, as well as prosecution, rehabilitation, and reintegration.

UNCCT will continue to work closely with Member States to support the integrated and balanced implementation of the Strategy at the national, regional and global levels.

[AGENDA FOR PEACE]

In his Policy Brief on "A New Agenda for Peace" launched on 20 July, Secretary-General Guterres recognizes terrorism as a global threat and highlights the related value of collective security and international cooperation, comprehensive approaches, and the need to address the underlying drivers of violence.

We stand ready to work closely with Advisory Board Members and entities in the United Nations peace and security pillar to explore how the Secretary-General's recommended actions could feature in the Pact of the Future, which is expected to be adopted at the 2024 Summit of the Future.

[AFRICAN CT SUMMIT]

UNCCT is focusing on Africa as we prepare for the African Counter-Terrorism Summit, to be co-organized with the Government of Nigeria, in partnership with the African Union, on 23-24 April 2024 in Abuja. It will be convened by the President of Nigeria and Secretary-General Guterres.

The objectives of the Summit will be to review the nature and severity of the threat of terrorism in Africa and agree on concrete priorities, measures and institutional approaches to address this scourge.

It will also seek to enhance multilateral counter-terrorism cooperation and reshape the international community's collective response to terrorism in Africa.

In preparation of the Summit, we organized with Nigeria, a ministerial-level meeting on the margins of the High-Level Week of the General Assembly on 21 September. Ministers and Heads of regional organizations from across the continent briefed on their priorities, and all recognized the threat posed by terrorism, and the need for proactive and preventive efforts to mitigate the risks. They also agreed that the Summit would be timely.

We look forward to support from our funding partners for this important Summit. The UN Counter-Terrorism Centre will have to play a critical role in ensuring that the needs of African countries be adequately supported.

[HUMAN RIGHTS AND GENDER]

UNCCT has continued to implement UNOCT's office-wide framework for human rights mainstreaming and due diligence tools and processes. We have continued to implement the UNOCT Gender Mainstreaming Policy and Action Plan.

[VICTIMS OF TERRORISM]

I am proud of our significant progress in generating momentum for the victims of terrorism agenda at the highest level.

In June, UNOCT, in collaboration with the Group of Friends of Victims of Terrorism, dedicated a tree in the garden of the United Nations Headquarters to honor victims and survivors of terrorism worldwide.

In August, we marked the sixth International Day of Remembrance of and Tribute to Victims of Terrorism with a high-level event that included the participation of the Secretary-General. Our

recently launched "Memories" exhibition amplifies victims' voices through a compelling visual narrative about the life-changing impact of terrorism on members of the public.

In addition, our new Legacy Project features 12 victims and survivors of terrorism worldwide in an interactive documentary gallery on Instagram.

[SUSTAINABILITY]

Turning to finances, the Centre continues to rely extensively on extrabudgetary contributions for most of its staff and programmatic activities.

I would like to thank the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for welcoming Mr. Miedico, the new Director of the UN Counterterrorism Center, to Riyadh earlier this month. Next week, I look forward to welcoming in New York the delegation led by Major-General Yousef Abdulaziz Almohsen, Head of the Permanent Committee for Counterterrorism and its Financing of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

I am also honored to recognize the other 34 strategic partners that have contributed to UNCCT programming with important financial and in-kind contributions. UNCCT and the Resource Mobilization team in my Office have continued intense engagement with partners to mobilize resources and diversify funding with a view to greater sustainability of funding for UNCCT's programmes.

This year alone, these efforts have resulted in \$8.4 million being mobilized for UNCCT from 10 funding partners. We will continue these efforts.

UNCCT has also embarked on a number of independent programme evaluations, including of its Global Programmes on Countering Terrorist Use of Weapons and Border Security and Management. The results of these evaluations inform and strengthen programmatic delivery and ensure that our funding is being used effectively and with the greatest possible impact.

[FUTURE PLANS]

I will now share key highlights of our future plans.

I have discussed with the Chair of the Advisory Board, His Excellency Ambassador Alwasil, ways through which UNCCT's role could be further reinforced.

As highlighted in January and reconfirmed in subsequent discussions with partners, our strategic vision for UNCCT rests on several important principles:

First, UNCCT will remain focused on assisting Member States on achieving effective and balanced implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and relevant resolutions of the Security Council.

Second, my Office will continue to seek convergence of our capacity-building efforts to ensure our global programmes are managed comprehensively and efficiently.

Third, UNCCT will maximize its impact through enhanced engagement with the 46 UN agencies and international organizations that form the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact, which I lead.

Fourth, UNCCT will continue all efforts to diversify its donor base.

Fifth, UNCCT will continue to recruit top-of-the line expertise to further solidify UNCCT's role as a true Centre of Excellence.

And finally, UNCCT will ensure impact-focused and results-based management, in line with UNOCT's Strategic Plan and Results Framework.

Excellencies,

As our work grows, it is critical that UNCCT continues to deliver cutting-edge technical assistance and capacity-building support to Member States.

As the Centre's Executive Director, I will continue to move our operations closer to beneficiaries with more work being delivered through our field locations, including the proposed regional programme office in Riyadh.

The support of all members of the Advisory Board is paramount in achieving our mutual goals. I look forward to working closely with you, Mr. Chairman, and with all Board members for this purpose.

Thank You.