



**Statement by Mr. Vladimir Voronkov
Under-Secretary-General
United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT)**

**High-Level Research Launch on Examining the Intersection between Gaming and Violent
Extremism**

5 October 2022, 10:00 am - 11:45 am EST

Excellencies,
Distinguished Experts,
Dear Colleagues,

It is my pleasure to join you today and welcome you to the Research Launch on Examining the Intersection between Gaming and Violent Extremism.

Let me begin by extending a warm welcome to the representatives from the European Union, Global Center for Combating Extremist Ideology ETIDAL, the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism, the Department of Homeland Security in the US and the North Yorkshire Police in the United Kingdom. It is a great privilege to have you with us today. I deeply appreciate your consistent efforts in support of the United Nations, and my Office, in particular, in the field of preventing and countering violent extremism.

We are also honoured to have with us representatives from the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism, the Extremism and Gaming Research Network, which UNOCT has recently joined as a member, Royal United Services Institute, Moonshot, Fair Play Alliance, Take This and distinguished speakers from the academic community, and experts from the gaming industry, as well as gamers themselves. I look forward to listening to your experiences and insights.

And a warm welcome also goes to the audience joining us online via UN Web TV.

There has never been a more vital time to undertake research on the nexus of video games and violent extremism. Today more than one-third of the global population are gamers. These platforms connect people to each other and transcends borders, age ranges, gender and nationalities.

We must face the reality that digital gaming environments have the potential to be exploited by violent extremists, including to radicalize young people. We know already that violent extremist actors make use of gaming content to generate attention, spread disinformation and increase the attractiveness of their propaganda and target vulnerable individuals for recruitment.

To better understand this threat, my Office commissioned research to understand the potential relationship between violent extremism and video games. Today's launch enables us to share with the gaming and PCVE community significant findings arising from this research.

Dear Experts and Colleagues

In the last fifteen years, we have seen the UN system architecture take a more comprehensive, Whole-of-UN and Whole-of-Society approach to address the complexity of violent extremism. This includes supporting action to address the conditions conducive to violent extremism; strengthening the protection of human rights and the rule of law; ensuring young people and women are meaningfully engaged; and that civil society has a voice and role in prevention measures.

These core values have been integrated into our work across the office. In particular, the UNOCT/UNCCT Global Programme on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism focuses on building this whole of community resilience through evidence-based approaches of the lived experience of communities impacted by violent extremism. This is why the voices of gamers are central to the research, and at this event today.

Dear Participants,

In undertaking this work, it is important to not unfairly malign video games or video gaming culture, whilst we look at ways of developing methods of safeguarding against its misuse.

Preventing terrorism requires partnership, coordination and collaboration anchored in respect for international law, including international human rights law. To this end, my Office is committed to building these partnerships moving forward.

However, we cannot do it alone and welcome the support of our partners on this important venture.

I look forward to the discussions of the key research findings and exploring together the

potential for preventing and countering violent extremism in gaming spaces.

Thank you.