

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

**Briefing to the EU Council Working Group on Terrorism (external aspects) – COTER
24 June 2020**

Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

I am glad to attend this COTER meeting. It has

Ladies and gentlemen,

The Secretary-

Last week, we celebrated the first anniversary of the UN Countering Terrorist Travel Programme led by my Office, in partnership with CTED, UNODC, OICT, ICAO, and INTERPOL.

The EU is providing critical support to this flagship initiative, for which I am very grateful.

To date, 36 Member States are formally participating in the programme and 40 more have expressed interest in benefitting once capacity allows.

We are also exploring possible collaboration with the International Maritime Organization to add a maritime component to the programme.

Supporting Victims of Terrorism remains a top priority and we must keep up the strong momentum in this area.

Working together with the Group of Friends of victims of terrorism in the United Nations, we will ensure that the topic remains high on the agenda, including during the virtual counter-terrorism week next month.

I am determined to establish more practical cooperation with the EU on this issue, including by linking the EU Centre of Expertise for Victims of Terrorism to the UN Victims Portal to provide a unique platform for victims.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Every crisis brings opportunities. While we continue to understand and mitigate the negative impacts of COVID-19, we must also seize the opportunity provided by the pandemic to review, adapt and strengthen our counter-terrorism work.

For example, in recent weeks, the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre organized innovative online trainings for Kazakhstan's penitentiary system on violent extremist prisoners to keep delivering on EU-funded activities.

I would like to sincerely thank the EU for the constant support and flexibility in these difficult times, which enables us to continue our work, and to EU Member States that are financially contributing to my Office.

I am committed to increasing UNOCT's footprint in Africa, including by establishing a regional programme office in Nairobi, to enhance our capacity building assistance to Member States.

The recent launch of the International Coalition for the Sahel was an important development and my Office stands ready to support Member States' efforts in the region, upon their request.

