

**Statement of Mr. Voronkov, Under-Secretary-General Human Rights Council
Side Event on Respecting Human Rights while Countering Terrorism
11:00am – 12:30pm, 11 September 2018**

Madam Chair,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

First, I would like to thank the Swiss and Mexico Missions and OHCHR for co-organizing this side-event with the Office of Counter-Terrorism. It is an honor for me to be with you here at the Human Rights Council.

This event comes at an important time for my Office and myself. It has been slightly over a year since the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism was established in last June by the General Assembly. We are very young; only one year old. We are now taking stock internally to see how we can improve our support to Member States.

UNOCT has also convened international conferences on victims' rights and recorded testimonies of victims and survivors. We have also worked to build the capacity of victims and survivors to speak out about terrorism.

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Respect for human rights is a critical component of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism (PVE) also recognizes this as a key priority area. Prevention is a part of a comprehensive approach to address the conditions underlying radicalization and violent extremism. The Plan also recommends that Member States consider developing their own national and regional plans of action.

Shortly after the Plan's launch, the UN and the Swiss Government convened a landmark Conference on PVE here in Geneva in April 2016. The Geneva Conference brought the international community together to share experiences and good practices and build political support for the United Nations PVE work. My Office, together with UNDP, implements a Global PVE programme designed to support regional and national efforts to develop PVE Plans of Action.

I am pleased to launch t

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I want to end by touching on an important issue highlighted in the Reference Guide. The Guide recommends an inclusive process to developing PVE action plans. It stressed the need to involve relevant non-governmental partners, at all different stages, from design to delivery and evaluation.

This is because civil society actors play a critical role in counter-terrorism and PVE efforts. They are part of a “whole of society” approach. We are reaching out to PVE partners, as civil society represent a bridge between communities and Governments. This is a fundamental condition to build resilient societies.

Civil society experts also have a deep reservoir of skills and experiences. The UN counter-terrorism family needs to benefit from that in a well thought-out and organized manner. In this context, I am now looking to establish a new unit within UNOCT to improve the way we engage with civil society stakeholders.

Excellencies,

UN Office of Counter-Terrorism stands ready to support your counter-terrorism and PVE efforts while ensuring national ownership of these initiative.

Thank you very much.