

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1196th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

4 October 2018

In response to the address by the Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, Mr. Vladimir Voronkov

Mr. Chairperson,

We are pleased to welcome the distinguished Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, to the Permanent Council. Those in this room no doubt remember well his outstanding and productive work at the OSCE. We firmly believe that he will succeed in achieving significant results in his new position of responsibility too.

We have high hopes for the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism. In its fairly short period of operation, it has already made a contribution, imparted a fresh impetus and made counter-terrorism co-operation under the aegis of the UN more effective. High-profile international events under the auspices of the UN are organized with the Office's assistance.

First of all, I should like to mention the first international High-Level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies held in New York on 28 and 29 June, where there was a fruitful discussion between persons involved in counter-terrorism efforts from more than 100 countries.

Russia has supported and will continue to support the Office's work, and not only at the political level. For example, a Russian Federation Government order provided for a voluntary contribution of 2 million US dollars to the Office's budget for 2018, then as of 2019 an annual contribution of 500,000 US dollars.

Since the very beginning, Russia has consistently promoted the importance of systemic work on various international platforms to combat terrorism. It was on Russia's initiative that the Transnational Threats Department was set up within the OSCE, and it is now operating in a highly professional manner. We also played a direct part in the establishment of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism. We believe that establishing close co-ordination between the aforementioned UN and OSCE bodies would help to increase the effectiveness of collective efforts to combat the danger posed by

terrorism. This work could be focused on the organization of joint projects and specialist events.

Mr. Chairperson,

The terrorist threat unfortunately remains a global one. Terrorists exploit the gaps in the border control systems to cross borders and use modern technology to disseminate their ideology, recruit new members and obtain funds. There have been attempts by terrorists to invest in legal sectors of the economy of a number of countries. Islamic State continues to fight for control of the drug flows, including those from Afghanistan. We are also witnessing a definite change in terrorists' tactics, their transition to low-budget terrorism by individuals and the waking of sleeper cells around the world. All of this leads to a reduction in the level of public security in the OSCE area and beyond.

Under these circumstances, the need for successful international co-operation can only grow. Even home-grown terrorists do not become radicalized and swear their allegiance to the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant all by themselves, they either have direct contact with the recruiters, which happens rarely, or they "drown" in the terrorist ideology disseminated via the Internet.

Honest co-operation between States, without hidden agendas and double standards, is needed to neutralize the terrorist threat.

As the main international body bringing together the countries of the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian region, the OSCE can and should continue to play an important role in consolidating international efforts to combat terrorism. It goes without saying that the leading role should be played by the United Nations. The OSCE already has considerable potential and experience in this area and has agreed upon a large compendium of inter-State decisions adopted in accordance with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

We support the OSCE's counter-terrorism profile. We believe it important to enhance this in any way we can. We welcome the practice of holding annual OSCE counter-terrorism conferences, which leading counter-terrorism experts attend. In that context, we should like to mention that we attach great importance to the Belarusian initiative to hold an OSCE international conference on "Preventing and Countering Terrorism in the Digital Age" in Minsk on 9 and 10 October. Russia is planning to send a representative delegation to that event.

We urge that the OSCE focus on combating the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters, with an emphasis on comprehensive implementation of UN Security Council resolution 2396, and combating terrorist ideology and propaganda, as stipulated in UN Security Council resolution 2354.

In that connection, we should like to stress that it is unacceptable to use the concept of "countering violent extremism" to interfere in the internal affairs of sovereign States under the pretext of "preventing extremism" or to defend terrorists and extremists who are allegedly opposing "authoritarian regimes". This can in fact lead to a situation where the perpetrators of terrorist attacks are able to avoid facing the mandatory criminal penalties.

We expect that at the forthcoming OSCE Ministerial Council meeting in Milan we will succeed in adopting serious and substantive decisions that will be able to enhance the contribution to fighting terrorism.

Distinguished colleagues,

The Russian Federation is interested in suppressing the global threat of international terrorism and is ready for honest, open and effective dialogue and partnership. In that context, we should like to draw attention to the Code of Conduct presented by Kazakhstan on 28 September at the 73rd session of the UN General Assembly. This Code has the lofty goal of achieving a world free from terrorism and was signed by the authorized representatives of 70 States, including the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Sergey Lavrov.

We note that the Code brings together not only all the fundamental principles of international counter-terrorism, but also literally all its current priority goals. What is of decisive importance is that the Code complies with the spirit and letter of the relevant UN documents, all its fundamental decisions on countering terrorism, its ideology and its political, financial and weapons-based support.

Russia is grateful to our Kazakh partners and sponsors of that document, and also expresses its gratitude to the States involved in its preparation.

We call on all countries without exception to accede to the Code, sign it and be guided by its provisions on co-operation in the fight against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations on the basis of the Charter of the United Nations, including the principles of respect for sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

Thank you for your attention.