



*Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

Let me begin by expressing my sincere gratitude to the Government of the United Arab Emirates for co-organizing this important regional conference.

Declaring 2019 as the Year of Tolerance shows your commitment towards creating peaceful and tolerant communities. As you are aware, tolerance for diversity and intercultural understanding are at the heart of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goal on building peaceful, just and inclusive societies.

Let me also

We need to remain vigilant to mitigate the risk posed by terrorist groups and their affiliates, which have proven a remarkable capacity to adapt.

We need to thwart their push to regain or expand control of weakly governed territories.

We need to counter their propaganda and distort their arming, financing and recruitment efforts, particularly amongst vulnerable individuals and groups.

That is why this conference, with its emphasis on empowering youth and promoting tolerance, is so important.

Through the Regional Conferences, we are bringing together Member States, regional and sub-regional organizations, civil society and non-government organizations, to help strengthen our global organization.

In fact, many young people are already leading local, national, regional and global efforts to prevent and counter violent extremism across the globe. There are countless youth groups that are waging peace, and we must support them.

Third, I hope this Conference encourages the development and implementation of youth and tolerance-centric national and regional plans of action based on full national ownership.

Such plans can provide a renewed and sustained focus on prevention, including by addressing the underlying conditions that cause young men and women to be lured by terrorism.

Young people should be included in the design, development, implementation and evaluation

This initiative will train them in the effective use of strategic communication methods to promote a culture of peace, social cohesion and respect for diversity.

It is a pleasure to have Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos, High-Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, as well as Mr. Adama Dieng, UN Secretary-General's Special Adviser for the Prevention of Genocide, together with us today

Lastly, as in every regional conference of this kind, I am keen to hear from you how the United Nations can enhance its counter-terrorism support to Member States in close cooperation with civil society organizations.

The establishment of my Office and the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact provides a clear framework and a solid platform for our joint work with Member States.

My Office is implementing capacity-building projects in 71 countries on a wide range of issues such as mitigating the threat of foreign terrorist fighters, empowering and engaging youth, countering terrorist financing and travel, and supporting victims of terrorism and their families.

I would also like to emphasize that we cannot counter terrorism and build resilient societies without promoting full respect for human rights and the rule of law. The struggle to protect human rights is often our last line of defense against the collapse of a society into violent conflict and chaos.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues,

This brings me to my final point, which is to update you on our plans for the Second United Nations Counter-Terrorism Week, which will take place in New York from 29 June to 2 July 2020, and will focus on

The 2020 Counter-Terrorism Week will consist of three main elements:

First, the seventh biennial review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy under the leadership of the President of the General Assembly, with the concluding debate to take place on 29 June.

Second, the first-ever Global Congress of Victims of Terrorism which will take place on 30 June. This event will be a historic global gathering of Member States, civil society organizations and other key stakeholders to lift up the voices of victims and strengthen our collective commitment to address their needs and uphold their rights.

Third, the Second United Nations High-level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States will also take place during the UN Counter-Terrorism week, on 1 and 2 July. We are keen to make the Conference more interactive and we will work again with all Member States to ensure that civil society organizations are able to meaningfully participate and contribute to th inige

*Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

To empower young people and promote tolerance at global, regional and national levels, our efforts must be holistic, predictable, well-funded, and backed by strong political will.

The United Arab Emirates has created a good example on how to empower its youth to build a tolerant and resilient society population (46 percent) in younger than 25 years-old. The Middle East and North Africa have the highest proportion of young people.

As the Secretary-  
threat, but as an enormous potential for our world, especially in our search for peace,