



## High-Level Launch of UNODC's Global Programme on Preventing and Countering Terrorism

### Remarks by Fionnuala Ní Aoláin, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism

UN Headquarters, New York, 24 October 2022

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a real pleasure to join this launch of UNODC's new global program on preventing terrorism which underscores the ongoing partnership between my mandate and UNODC.

As many here will know, last year my report my general assembly report focused on the human rights implications of UN models of capacity building and technical assistance in the context of counterterrorism and preventing violent extremism conducive to terrorism. My assessment highlighted a plethora of not only important, but **urgent gaps** that needed to be filled in order to make the UN's work human rights compliant, fit-for-purpose, and contributing to the broader and long-term goals of the United Nations to build secure, peaceful and inclusive societies, including:

- One recommendation, now bolstered by the 7<sup>th</sup> review of the GCTS, called on the UN to ensure engagement with the United Nations human rights mechanisms.
- A second recommendation urged full compliance with and the institutionalization of measures to apply the requirement United Nations Human Rights Due Diligence policy.
- And third, I urged most unequivocally, **UN entities to undertake immediate human rights assessments and reconfigurations of programming to respond to the specific risks and impacts identified.**

In this report, without underestimating the challenges you all face, I shared broad positive views on UNODC's models of assistance, as predating 9/11 counter-terrorism regimes, and rooted in a stronger consultative model, as well as long experience of criminal justice and legal reform at the core of the UN's role.

It is a pleasure to be a part of this discussion as UNODC's efforts to take back compliance with international law, international humanitarian law, and international refugee standards further, and challenge us all to do better. This revision of the UNODC's global program while it is not an end and there is a lot of enormous work up ahead it's a significant and positive step to envisioning what a human rights space, holistic building, and technical model might look like, and would uproot what we might think of as the alternative model perhaps service is driven model of state assistance and support to State institutions.

As I highlight in my newest report to the General Assembly, which I will present tomorrow morning, I have deep concerns about the encroachment of this model of counter-terrorism assistance across the UN system, including on the breadth of the United Nations' peacebuilding, peacekeeping, and peacemaking work. I underline the importance of more closely aligned objectives, programmes and support to communities and Member States to deliver on key objectives, including the Sustainable Development Goals, Our Common Agenda and other normative frameworks.

Ladies and gentlemen, we heard loud and clear in Malaga that "the code of silence on human rights violation committed under cover of counter-terrorism must be broken." The United Nations entities working in counter-terrorism must stop seeing their primary beneficiaries as States alone and instead work to serve the people of those Member States, the "people of the United Nations" as envisaged by the UN Charter. I welcome UNODC's leadership towards this reorientation in its new Global Programme and I look forward to continuing to work with UNODC to ensure that the UN ensures human rights due diligence and the full promotion and protection of human rights in counter-terrorism.

ENDS.