

## At Security Council, senior counter-terrorism officials stress 'All of UN' approach

28 September 2017 – Addressing the Security Council, the head of the newly created United Nations counter-terrorism office today outlined a framework to devise a cohesive, well-coordinated programme to support Member States as well as the priority areas of such work.

“We must recognize that there are four important spheres of UN activity that need to be aligned if we are to effectively develop a coherent and well-coordinated ‘All of UN’ framework for our future counter-terrorism efforts,” Vladimir Voronkov, Under-Secretary-General of the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (OCT), said at a briefing to the 15-member body on the threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts.

These four spheres are the Security Council and its subsidiary bodies; the General Assembly; the UN Secretariat headed by the Secretary-General; and the 38 UN entities that directly or indirectly contribute to counter-terrorism efforts, Mr. Voronkov said.

Today’s meeting marked the 16th anniversary of Council resolution 1373, which was adopted today in 2001, following the 11 September terrorist attacks on the United States.

He said that he had more than 50 high-level meetings with Member States and international and regional organizations last week in the margins of the General Assembly’s annual debate and that he listened carefully to the statements delivered in the Assembly, in which counter-terrorism was clearly a priority for many UN Member States.

An effective, future-oriented and balanced counter-terrorism programme to support Member States would be built on six key areas; strengthening international counter-terrorism cooperation; preventing violent extremism conducive to terrorism; addressing the terrorist use of the Internet; enhancing the foreign terrorist fighters’ threat; and increasing the sharing of information and good practices, he said.

Also briefing the Council was David Scharia, Officer-in-Charge of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), who discussed how CTED’s work can contribute to the “All of UN” approach to combating terrorism.



David Scharia, Officer-in-Charge of the Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), addresses the Council’s meeting on threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts. UN Photo/Ariana Lindquist

He said that CTED provides the Counter-Terrorism Committee, a subsidiary body of the Security Council, with neutral and independent expert assessments of Member States' implementation of Council resolutions on terrorism. To date, CTED has conducted 133 visits to 96 Member States, including 16 this year. This process, Mr. Scharia said, helped these countries to enact new laws, establish new institutions and strengthen capacities. "Yet, many States still do not have all counter-terrorism measures in place," he added, expressing an expectation that the establishment of the Office of Counter-Terrorism will shorten the time period between CTED assessments and the delivery of assistance.

He noted that the entire UN system should benefit from CTED analysis, "which is probably the most updated and comprehensive research-based analysis in the UN system on counter-terrorism trends and developments."

"Together, we have achieved a great deal since the adoption of resolution 1373 in 2001," he said. "However, the terrorist threat continues to evolve at an alarming pace."

CTED recently updated the [Technical Guide](#) to the implementation of Council resolutions on terrorism.

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## [Horrific accounts of sexual violence against Rohingya 'just tip of the iceberg' – UN agency](#)

28 September 2017 – Warning that the horrific accounts of rape and sexual assault against Rohingya women and girls fleeing unrest in Myanmar could be "just the tip of the iceberg," the United Nations Population Fund ([UNFPA](#)) underscored the need to ensure that such violence is prevented and called for additional resources so that it can reach all those in need of assistance.

"Gender-based violence, including rape and sexual assault, is a key concern that has emerged from the ongoing humanitarian crisis," said UNFPA in a [news release](#) today.

The UN agency noted that it has already provided a range of services, including medical and psychosocial counselling assistance, to more than 7,000 Rohingya women refugees.

However, many victims have not reported their ordeal out of concerns over safety, confidentiality, shame and stigma, it added.

"This is what makes it challenging to come up with accurate numbers of gender-based violence survivors."

According to UNFPA, the lead UN agency on addressing gender-based violence in humanitarian crisis and emergencies, more than 480,000 Rohingya refugees – over half of them women and girls – have poured into Bangladesh’s Cox’s Bazar since August 25, having fled their homes since violence erupted in Myanmar’s northern Rakhine province.

Some 120,000 among them are women of reproductive age and 24,000 are either pregnant or breastfeeding.

SEE ALSO: [UN rights experts urge Member States to ‘go beyond statements,’ take action to help Rohingya](#) UNFPA has set up five ‘Women Friendly Spaces’ – areas which women can access at anytime for safety or to access information, education, support or other services – and plans to scale it up to fifteen by the end of the year.

It has also helped set up community watch groups and medical camps with psychosocial counselling assistance amid what it noted are “incredibly challenging circumstances.”

However, given the scale of the crisis, UNFPA and other UN agencies as well as partners, are struggling in need of resources. UNFPA alone needs an additional \$13 million to meet the demand for services over the next six months.

#### ***Humanitarian crises across the world suffering the blight***

The scourge of sexual and gender violence, unfortunately, is not only limited to the Rohingyas who fled Myanmar. Humanitarian crises globally are affected, with women and girls disproportionately affected, their specific needs not addressed adequately.

And it is therefore of paramount importance, underscored UNFPA, that each and every survivor of gender-based violence who needs such services must receive them in an environment that respects their right to self-determination, privacy and confidentiality, ensuring safety and, in so doing, helping them regain or strengthen their sense of dignity.

“All women and girls, regardless of their ethnicity or religious affiliations, [must have access to health care and other essential services without discrimination](#), and they must be protected from all forms of violence, including sexual assault,” emphasized Natalia Kanem, the Acting Executive Director of UNFPA.

“The health and safety of women and girls must be protected.”

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## [UN maritime agency spotlights link between shipping and sustainable development](#)

28 September 2017 – Marking the World Maritime Day, the head of the United Nations maritime agency today highlighted contributions the shipping industry can make to the achievement of the global development goals.

[“Shipping and ports can play a significant role](#) in helping to create conditions for increased employment, prosperity and stability through promoting maritime trade. The port and maritime sectors can be wealth creators, both on land and at sea,” said Kitack Lim, the Secretary-General of International Maritime Organization (IMO), in his message for the Day, observed annually on 28 September.

To highlight this potential, the theme of the [Day](#) for this year is ‘Connecting Ships, Ports and People.’ “It will enable us to shine a spotlight on the existing cooperation between ports and ships to maintain and enhance a safe, secure and efficient maritime transportation system,” Mr. Lim said.

The benefits of a free and efficient flow of goods and trade extend far beyond the ships and ports themselves, and an effective interface between them can improve the lives of people everywhere, especially in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals ([SDGs](#)), adopted by UN Member States in 2015.

But, to be sustainable, human activities have to be balanced with the oceans’ capacity to remain healthy and diverse in the long term. The so-called ‘blue economy’ is a large and growing industrial sector; and, as it grows, it must remain safe and secure and not threaten the environment, he noted.

Ultimately, more efficient shipping, working in partnership with a port sector supported by governments, will be a major driver towards global stability and sustainable development for the good of all people, he concluded.

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## [On World Day, UN announces global initiative to end deaths from dog-transmitted rabies by 2030](#)

28 September 2017 – The largest global anti-rabies initiative to end human

deaths from dog-transmitted rabies by 2030 was announced, today, World Rabies Day, making it a priority disease for key international organizations and governments, according to the United Nations health agency.

“The plan [ensures support](#) to countries in developing national plans, and provides innovative training and education tools across regional rabies networks,” said Dr. Bernadette Abela-Ridder today in a press statement on behalf the United Against Rabies collaboration, consisting of the World Health Organization ([WHO](#)), Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN ([FAO](#)), World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), and Global Alliance for Rabies Control (GARC).

The plan [Zero by 30](#): The Strategic Plan centres on a ‘One Health’ approach, addressing the disease in a holistic and cross-sectoral manner while highlighting the important role veterinary, health and educational services play in rabies prevention and control.

“Vaccines are a key component of the global plan and a trigger for national programmes. The United Against Rabies collaboration provides leadership and advocates for resources critical to reaching zero human rabies deaths by 2030,” Dr. Abela-Ridder added.

[Rabies](#) – a viral disease that occurs in more than 150 countries and territories – is usually fatal once symptoms appear. Dog-transmitted rabies accounts for about 99 per cent of human rabies cases. It is estimated that 59,000 people die every year from the disease. The statement pointed out that rabies is 100 per cent preventable, saying that the world has the knowledge, technology and vaccines for its elimination.

The alliance aims to prevent and respond to dog-transmitted rabies by improving awareness and education, reducing human rabies risk through expanded dog vaccinations and improving access to healthcare, medicines and vaccines for populations at risk.

**VIDEO:** Rabies Vaccination can save lives/FAO

Dr. Ren Minghui, WHO Assistant Director-General for HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, Malaria and Neglected Tropical Diseases maintained, “Working across sectors to eliminate human rabies aligns with WHO’s mission to leave no one behind by building a better, healthier future for people all over the world.”

The plan will generate and measure impact by implementing proven effective guidelines for rabies control, and encouraging the use of innovative surveillance technologies to monitor progress towards ‘zero by 30.’

“Eliminating human rabies contributes to the goal of providing affordable and equitable health care, while working with partners to prevent the disease in dogs, which is the most frequent source of infection,” underscored Dr. Minghui.

The plan will also demonstrate the impact of the United against Rabies

collaboration in national, regional, and global rabies elimination programmes to ensure the continued engagement and sustained financing of stakeholders at all levels.

Expressing FAO's enthusiasm in being part of the development of the initiative, Ren Wang, FAO Assistant Director-General said, "Rural communities suffer the most from this preventable disease. Rabies puts not only their own health and wellbeing at risk, but also that of their animals, which can be a major or sole source of their livelihoods."

"FAO has been supporting vaccination campaigns and the development of community-based programmes to prevent and eliminate rabies. This new initiative will enhance that work and can play an essential role in FAO's overall goal to build stronger rural communities," Mr. Wang stressed.

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## [Some 25 million unsafe abortions occur each year, UN health agency warns](#)

28 September 2017 – About 25 million unsafe abortions, accounting for 45 per cent of all abortions, occurred every year from 2010 to 2014 worldwide, with 97 per cent of those unsafe procedures occurring in developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America, a new United Nations study has found.

Increased efforts report are needed, especially in developing regions, to ensure access to contraception and safe abortion, says Bela Ganatra, a scientist and the lead author of the study, *The Lancet*, released today by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Guttmacher Institute.

Despite recent advances in technology and evidence, too many unsafe abortions still occur, and too many women continue to suffer and die, added Ms. Ganatra of WHO's Department of Reproductive Health and Research.

For the first time, the study includes sub-classifications within the unsafe abortion category as less safe or least safe. The distinction allows for a more nuanced understanding of the different circumstances of abortions among women who are unable to access safe abortions from a trained provider.

The risk of severe complications or death is negligible if procedures follow WHO guidelines and standards. About 55 per cent of all abortions from 2010 to 2014 were conducted safely.

Some 31 per cent of abortions were less safe, meaning they were either performed by a trained provider using an unsafe or outdated method such as sharp curettage, or by an untrained person using a safe method like misoprostol, a drug that can induce an abortion.

About 14 per cent were 'least safe' abortions provided by untrained persons using dangerous methods, such as introduction of foreign objects and use of herbal concoctions. Complications from 'least-safe' abortions can include a failure to remove all of the pregnancy tissue from the uterus, haemorrhage, vaginal, cervical and uterine injury, and infections.

The study also found that in countries where abortion is completely banned or permitted only to save the woman's life or preserve her physical health, only one in four abortions were safe; whereas, in countries where abortion is legal on broader grounds, nearly 9 in 10 abortions were done safely. Restricting access to abortions does not reduce the number of abortions.

Most abortions that take place in Western and Northern Europe and North America are safe. These regions also have some of the lowest abortion rates.

The proportion of abortions that were safe in Eastern Asia, including China, was similar to developed regions. In South-Central Asia, however, less than one in two abortions were safe. In Latin America, only one in four abortions were safe. Less than one in four abortions in Africa, excluding Southern Africa, were safe.