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## Launch of the joint Programme on Security of Major Sporting Events and Promotion of Sport to Prevent Violent Extremism

### Press Release

**New York, 3 February 2019** - In the last decades, many terrorist attacks have been perpetrated in public places against soft targets. Attacks against sports events are particularly hideous as sports have historically played a significant role in the dissemination of positive values across civilizations and cultures, especially for young people. To address this threat, the United Nations and its partners have launched today, at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, a “Global Programme on the Security of Major Sporting Events, and Promotion of Sport and its Values as a Tool to Prevent Violent Extremism (PVE).”

The programme was presented today on the occasion of a two-day expert meeting, which gathered over 100 of high-level representatives from Member States, international and regional organizations as well as the International Olympic Committee, national Olympic committees, sport federations and private companies.

“Through our joint programme, we will focus on the exchange of information and best practices, and on sharing resources and facilitating partnerships. We will explore how to develop and implement operational collaboration between Member States, and undertake joint initiatives with private stakeholders,” said Mr. Voronkov, the Under-Secretary-General of United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), at the launch.

This programme is aimed at strengthening the protection of major sporting events through enhanced international cooperation and sustainable security approaches, while promoting the values of sport as a powerful means to counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism. The initiative is led by UNOCT, in partnership with the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI), the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) and the International Centre for Sport Security (ICSS) and in consultation with the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED).

“Sport can be an engine for positive change. It is a viable tool for inclusiveness and diversity. The power of sport rests in its ability to break down the walls between people whether they are players or spectators regardless of their faith, race or culture,” stressed Mr. Moratinos, High Representative of the UNAOC.

Assistant-Secretary-General Coninx assured that “CTED will work with the programme partners to identify and develop innovative policies and practices to strengthen the protection of major sporting events through enhanced international cooperation, public partnerships and sustainable security approaches.”

Ms. Bettina Tucci Bartsiotas, Director of UNICRI said that for “15 years, we have pioneered actions resulting in a huge knowledge capital and a wide global network. We cooperated with 57 Member States to design new tools and deliver capacity building on major events security and terrorism prevention.”

Speaking on behalf of Mr. Mohammed Hanzab, Chairman of the International Centre for Sport Security, Mr. Massimiliano Montanari, ICSS CEO, added that “Protecting major sporting events means protecting opportunities for international dialogue and socio-economic development. Through the Global Programme, we will promote sustainable approaches to security, ways to preserve the legacy of major sporting events as a common good of the international community and advanced policies grounded on the principle of shared responsibility.”

The programme is supported by the State of Qatar, the United Nations Peace and Development Fund (UNPDF – funded by the People’s Republic of China) and the Republic of Korea.

*More information:* [www.un.org/counterterrorism/sports](http://www.un.org/counterterrorism/sports)