



International Day of Remembrance of and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism

"Surviving Terrorism: The Power of Connections" High Level Event

20 August 2021, 9.00 a.m. – 11.00 a.m. EDT (online)

Statement by H.E. Mr. Ghulam M. Isaczai

Chair of the Group of Friends of Victims of Terrorism

Thank you, Ambassador Santos Maraver,

Excellency, Secretary-General Antonio Guterres,
Under-Secretary-General Vladimir Voronkov,
Distinguished delegates, victims and their loved ones, participants, and representatives of
Victims Associations,

It is my honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of Friends of Victims of
Terrorism. In 2017, Afghanistan tabled Resolution 72/165 which designated the International
Day of Remembrance and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism because we believe that when

www.un.org/victimsofterrorism/en/international-day-2021

#UNiteforVictimsofTerrorism

as large-scale suicide and car bombings, mines and IED attacks, and targeting killings to achieve their goal of reaching power.

On behalf of the Group of Friends, I would further like to stress that the Taliban now in power must abide by their promises and international commitments to ensure the rights of women, children, minorities and victims of terrorism and their families. They must protect the safety and security of all Afghan and international citizens and respect international human rights and humanitarian law. They must cease their support of international terrorist groups and honor their commitments to prevent Afghan territory from being used to attack or threaten any country.

Today is a day to remember the victims that we have lost and those who have survived, pay tribute to them express empathy to grieving families, and recognize all people who continue to suffer from their horrific experiences. We are especially reminded to acknowledge the people of Afghanistan and remember the impact and longstanding suffering caused by terrorism, which disproportionately affects women and children. Above all, it is a day to stress that terrorism in all its forms and manifestations should be strongly and unequivocally condemned without reservations. All acts of terrorism are criminal and unjustifiable, regardless of their motivation, where and when they occur, and who commits them. No homage to victims of terrorism is complete unless perpetrators of these heinous terrorist acts are brought to justice, and in this regard, we urge Member States to fulfil their obligations.

Preventing and combating terrorism requires strong international cooperation. It should bring together Member States, the United Nations system, and all relevant stakeholders - including victims of terrorism who must play a central role in all our counter-terrorism efforts. This is why the Group of Friends of Victims of Terrorism was established and as such, we remain firmly committed to expand our efforts to raise awareness and solidarity on the need to promote and protect the rights of victims of terrorism, mainly women and children, and provide them with the support and assistance, with gender considerations, and to amplify their messages to counter the narrative of destruction and intimidation promoted by terrorist groups.

Terrorism which will, for the first time, bring together victims in a forum that puts their stories and experiences on the agenda.

But regardless of our progress, terrorism remains an ever-evolving threat. Despite the call for a global ceasefire by the Secretary-General and the UN Member States, the world has witnessed horrific terrorist attacks throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Around the globe, particularly in conflict zones, we have seen how terrorist groups have continued to cause death, despair, and destruction. They have cut off access to essential life-saving resources, including healthcare and humanitarian assistance.

This is why this year's theme on "connections" is so important. It is a theme that reflects the importance of solidarity and the need for the international community to promote a joint message against the actions of terrorists and those who seek to spread fear and hatred. It is a call for Member States to redouble their efforts to ensure nobody is left behind and that victims are provided with assistance and support during their difficult experiences.

As the Group of Friends of the Victims of Terrorism, we will continue to discuss ways to institutionalize a comprehensive voluntarily programme to support Member States in developing their national plans to assist victims of terrorism. We will base this programme on