

**Statement of Under-Secretary-General Vladimir Voronkov
Group of Friends on Sports for Development and Peace**

Sports are extremely popular in my home country, across all ages and segments of society. Sports bring us together across borders.

The role of sports is enormous in teaching positive values, forging bonds and building bridges within and between our societies.

I strongly

implementation because the time is right and we need to use also this channel, this tool in order to be more effective on prevention. This is the role of the United Nations.

This three-year programme will focus on the security of sports venues which are often terrorist targets.

Our programme seeks to draw on and disseminate these global best practices. It will also support the development of strategies to use sports as a means to prevent and counter violent extremism, including through a Global Awareness Campaign to Say No to Terrorism , which will involve some of the world top athletes.

This programme will be implemented in cooperation with the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, the United Nations Interregional Criminal Justice Research Institute, and the International Centre for Sport and Security. It will also benefit from the valuable experience of the Football for Peace Foundation.

Let me close by inviting this Group of Friends, and all its individual Members,