



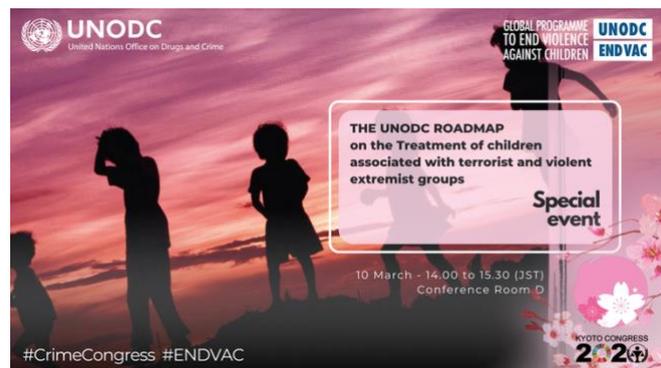
14TH UNITED NATIONS CONGRESS ON CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE KYOTO, JAPAN 7 – 12 MARCH 2021



14th UN Crime Congress - UNODC END VAC Special Event

The UNODC Roadmap on the Treatment of Children Associated with Terrorist and Violent Extremist Groups

10 March 2021- Kyoto, Japan – In the margins of the 14th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) [Global Programme to End Violence against Children](#) (GP to END VAC) co-organized the Special Event “*The UNODC Roadmap on the Treatment of Children Associated with Terrorist and Violent Extremist Groups*” with the European Union, and the Governments of Austria, Indonesia and Japan.



In recent years, the international community has been increasingly confronted with the recruitment and exploitation of children by terrorist and violent extremist groups. Opening the event, Miwa Kato, Director, Division for Operations at UNODC, highlighted that “The danger we will face coming out of this health crisis is the temptation of isolation, but forgetting these children is a price we cannot afford to pay. Their lives and futures are at stake, and we need to act now.” This was also emphasized by H.E. Ms. Mari Miyoshi, Ambassador in charge of International Cooperation for Countering Terrorism and International Organized Crime (Japan) who also stressed the challenging current context in which “the pandemic has led people, especially young people, to spend more time on the internet, resulting in a growing number of illegal acts conducive to terrorism in cyber space, and under such circumstances, the special event is very timely.”

The mission of UNODC is to contribute to the achievement of security and justice for all by making the world safer from crime, drugs, and terrorism. Building on its longstanding expertise in the areas of violence against children, justice for children and counter-terrorism, since 2015 UNODC has been consistently working to advance the cause of protecting children from terrorism and violent extremism, under the GP to END VAC. The Special Event aimed to discuss the results achieved under the [UNODC Roadmap](#), which is a crucial tool that provides concise and relevant guidance for action in the areas of prevention, rehabilitation and reintegration, as well as justice responses to requesting Member States on the treatment of these children.

One of our most exemplary partners, the Government of Kazakhstan, has taken a lead on the repatriation of children stranded in conflict areas. H.E. Mr. Talgat Kaliyev, Ambassador-at-large (Kazakhstan) pointed out that Kazakhstan “highly values our partnership with UNODC in rehabilitation and reintegration programmes for children affected by terrorism and violent extremism. Since 2019, we have been cooperating with the UNODC Global Programme to End Violence against Children in order to strengthen our legal, institutional and operational frameworks.”



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The Special Event also introduced ‘*STRIVE Juvenile: Preventing and Responding to Violence against Children by Terrorist and Violent Extremist Groups*’ a new three-year initiative, funded by the European Union, that partners with UNODC in Indonesia, Iraq and Nigeria for the implementation of this project. Ms. Hilde Hardeman, Head of the European Commission’s Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI), underlined “The specific action called STRIVE Juvenile acknowledges that children can be extremely vulnerable to terrorists’ tactics and that they have their own power to transform societal dynamics. When we invest in children, when we rehabilitate and reintegrate children who were once associated with terrorist and violent extremist groups, when we empower children, we prevent violent extremism and help to build peaceful societies.”

Mr. Andhika Chrisnayudhanto, Deputy Head for International Cooperation of the National Counterterrorism Agency of Indonesia (BNPT), stressed the strong commitment of the Government of Indonesia in taking measures at national, regional and global levels to protect children from terrorism and violent extremism, and referred to the Bali Call for Action. Additionally, Indonesia’s longstanding partnership with UNODC was further enhanced by announcing its renewed cooperation through STRIVE Juvenile.

Mr. Andhika’s statement was followed by Mr. Faiq Zidan, President of the Supreme Judicial Council and Chief of the Federal Court of Cassation (Iraq), who stated that “the Supreme Judicial Council in Iraq expresses its support for all efforts that have been made in the framework of violence against children by extremist groups”. Stressing the importance of continuing to build capacities of professionals to respond to the numerous challenges on the ground, Mr. Zidan welcomed UNODC’s upcoming initiatives in Iraq.

Furthermore, Mr. Rear Admiral Yem Musa, Coordinator, Counter Terrorism Centre, Office of the National Security Adviser (Nigeria), joined the other distinguished representatives by adding “we strategically invest in rehabilitation and reintegration of children as well as in prevention of child recruitment. Without strengthening our community to prevent and respond to this phenomenon, there will be no end to the cycle of violence that is generated and exploited by terrorists and violent extremists. We are pleased to note that STRIVE Juvenile bets on national ownership and multidisciplinary efforts. The safety of children is a matter of national security.” Similarly, Ms. Mairo Abbas, Head of the Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism Unit (Nigeria) expressed Nigeria’s “determination to collaborate effectively with UNODC to develop integrated and comprehensive responses that are aligned with our counter terrorism policy document to prevent and counter extremism against our children.”

UNODC expressed its sincere gratitude to these partner Governments and our co-sponsors for their valuable partnership with UNODC in recent years. Under the flag of the UNODC Roadmap, the Office renews its commitment for the protection of children from terrorism throughout the world, and pledges to continue working so that children can become agents for their own future and actors of their own protection.