



Europe and the United Nations need to build a stronger strategic partnership to overcome the huge challenges posed by terrorism and violent extremism, the UN Director of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force ([CTITF](#)) and the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre ([UNCCT](#)) said during a visit to Brussels.

Both terrorism and violent extremism represent a “direct assault” on the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, said Mr. Jehangir Khan, who was in Brussels this month for the annual strategic dialogue between the European Union and the United Nations to discuss ways to enhance cooperation and collaboration on these pressing issues.

Prevention, including the prevention of terrorism and violent extremism, and the establishment of sustainable peace have emerged as key priorities of the new United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, who has called for a surge in preventive diplomacy as well as a greater emphasis on mediation to address the root causes of protracted conflicts while averting new ones.

While diplomacy and multilateral cooperation are essential, paying attention to victims is also a critical area, said Mr. Khan.

“There is no more urgent imperative than to address the tragedy of the victims of terrorism which also affects Europe”, said Mr. Khan. “We have a moral duty, a humanitarian mission to also help them (victims),” he said, adding that “there is no other way to prevent violent extremism than by strengthening multilateral cooperation” due to the fact that terrorists are transnational actors and are crossing many borders daily.

Mr. Khan said that the the Counter-terrorism Implementation Task Force ([CTITF](#)) and the Centre (UNCCT) had tried to put a human face on the victims of terrorism to remind the world of the people who had suffered as a result of attacks. “They (victims) are often the forgotten footnote of what this battle is all about,” he said.

Although most of the victims of terrorism are Muslims in the Middle East and North Africa, a growing number of victims are now in Europe as well.

Europe and the European countries are very active in supporting our work, they are “champions” and have invested in the UN’s counterterrorism capabilities and capacity building assistance to member states. “That partnership is very important,” Mr. Khan said.

The European Union is a valuable collaborator of the United Nations and has a major contribution to make in the field of counterterrorism, both at the institutional level and the member state level. The United Nations and the European Union collaborate on numerous projects in the field, seeking to address the root causes of terrorism and violent extremism, Mr. Khan said.

“We want to see how we can better collaborate,” said Mr. Khan, stressing the need to find ways to be more relevant and have more impact in addressing the challenges ahead. “The challenge is huge, the means that we have are limited and therefore we need to build very strong strategic partnerships,” he said.

The UN Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force ([CTITF](#)) was established by the United Nations General Assembly to bring coordination and coherence in the implementation of United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The Task Force coordinates the work of 36 UN entities, Interpol and the World Customs Organization related to preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism.