



GCTF

GLOBAL COUNTERTERRORISM FORUM

Madrid Declaration on Victims of Terrorism

1. We unequivocally condemn all acts of terrorism and express profound sympathy for victims of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations who have suffered, directly or indirectly, at the hands of terrorists around the globe. The growing number of such victims underscores the terrible toll in human lives.
2. We stand together to renew our commitment to assist and support the victims of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, according to our national laws and international principles. Victims from all parts of the world have raised their voices against terrorism. We honor them for their courage in facing the pressure and possible risks of sharing their stories publicly. We are committed to ensuring that their voices are heard and that the victims are never forgotten.
3. We commit to promoting and strengthening the resilience of victims, their families, and their local communities against terrorism and threats of terrorism and resolve to foster better understanding in the international community of what can be done to support victims of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, how victims' dignity can best be protected, and how to build solidarity with victims.
4. We affirm that victims should be treated with human dignity and afforded respect for their human rights. We urge that appropriate measures be taken to ensure their safety, physical and psychological well-being, and privacy, without any discrimination based on nationality, religion, or sex. This includes access to resources such as professional support services and social services. We encourage the expansion of research into the condition of victims of terrorism to enhance knowledge and understanding of how terrorism impacts its victims in the short and long term, and how best to meet victims' needs.

5. We stress the importance of building the capacity of law enforcement and first responders to address the needs of victims in the immediate aftermath of a terrorist attack consistent with our internal legal systems.
6. As expressed in the GCTF Rabat Memorandum on Good Practices for Effective Counterterrorism Practice in the Criminal Justice Sector, the rights of victims of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations in the criminal justice process should be protected. This includes the right to be considered for witness protection measures and appropriate assistance and support during criminal proceedings. We acknowledge that access to justice and fair treatment are integral and necessary components of support for victims of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.
7. We strongly support efforts to provide information to victims about the criminal justice system and opportunities to participate in criminal justice processes; and to protect victims' privacy and ensure their safety from intimidation and retaliation.
8. We underscore the importance, where necessary, of strengthening mechanisms to protect the rights of victims of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. We urge states to facilitate the participation of victims and/or representatives of victims associations in legal proceedings against perpetrators of terrorist acts, including through the admission of victims' impact statements where appropriate.
9. We stress the importance of fostering solidarity and mobilizing international public opinion against terrorism. International support of victims includes international cooperation and information sharing with regard to counterterrorism measures and the prosecution of perpetrators to bring terrorists to justice.
10. We underscore the need to increase international awareness of the various ways that victims of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations can contribute to the prevention of terrorism, including by serving as credible messengers against the ideology of violence espoused by terrorist groups. We encourage the development of good practices on the role that victims can play to challenge and deglamorize violent extremists' narratives, as well as governments' support for these efforts.

11. We emphasize the critical role the media can play in mobilizing the population in favor of the victims and against the perpetrators of terrorism. The international media has already begun to contribute to our common goal of putting a human face to the tragic consequences of terrorism. We welcome efforts to train victims and victims associations to equip them for safe and dignified interaction with the media and to advocate on behalf of victims. We encourage the continuation of these initiatives in an effort to counter violent extremism and reduce the instances of terrorist activity.
12. We recognize the importance of offering victims of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations more opportunities to share their stories and understand that attention to the human costs of terrorism can help turn a society against those who perpetrate these criminal acts. We thus emphasize the need to give victims of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations a voice and to put a human face on the aftermath of acts of terrorism.
13. We are cognizant of the importance of engaging and involving civil society and local communities in efforts to assist victims of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Local communities can promote trust, community harmony, and intercultural respect to build individual and community resilience against violent extremism and terrorist activity.
14. We seek to promote international collaboration in support of victims of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, as called for by the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and acknowledge the significant cooperation by governments; international and regional organizations; non-governmental organizations; and the media in supporting victims of terrorism. We encourage further strengthening of these efforts.
15. We welcome the draft plan of action for follow-on activities presented at the GCTF High-Level Conference on Victims of Terrorism, look forward to its adoption by the GCTF Coordinating Committee, and underscore the need to increase coordination between victim associations and governments, where appropriate, and to develop good practices on the role that states can play in supporting and assisting victims of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.