Opening Remarks at the International Conference 'Innovative Policies to Advance Security Governance'

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Excellencies, distinguished delegates, honoured guests, ladies and gentlemen, good morning.

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the ***International Conference 'Innovative Policies to Advance Security Governance'***. UNICRI's Security Governance/Counter Terrorism Laboratory has organized this conference to inform all Member States, International and Regional Organisations and civil society on the action undertaken in different thematic fields.

I thank you all for having so graciously accepted our invitation and truly hope that you will feel encouraged to participate fully, share expertise and exchange ideas during this conference.

This event will be an opportunity to provide an overview of some of the main activities developed by the UNICRI Laboratory, and for this purposes we have invited friends from international, regional and national organisations, as well as from academia and non-governmental organisations whose support and contribution is crucial to implement UNICRI's activities.

UNICRI, with Headquarters in Turin, Italy, is one of the five global Research and Training Institutes of the United Nations that report to the UN Secretary General. According to its mandate, the institute assists intergovernmental, governmental and non-governmental organizations in formulating and implementing improved policies in the field of crime prevention.

UNICRI has been active in the fields of crime prevention and criminal justice for over four decades and has acquired a unique experience in dealing with crime and justice problems within broader policies for security governance, socio-economic change and development, and the protection of human rights. The institute has adapted to an ever-changing environment thanks to its dynamic, fresh and innovative approach in applied research.

Crime is a common concern both for governments and citizens across the globe. As crime becomes increasingly internationalised, new forms emerge and organized crime spreads. National responses and international cooperation in the fields of crime prevention and criminal justice must work alongside one another. UNICRI supports governments and the international community at large in tackling the threats of crime to social peace, development and political stability.

Given crime's increasingly international character and the need to create common plans and strategies to fight it, UNICRI operates in selected niches as a 'laboratory of ideas' and its activities help the integration of national and international efforts to search for good practices and adapt them to different national situations.

Moreover, as a part of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) of the United Nations, UNICRI is contributing to the implementation of the international agenda to ensure coordinated and coherent efforts across the UN system to prevent terrorism.

UNICRI is currently co-leader of two CTITF Working Groups; One on the Strengthening the Protection of Vulnerable Targets and the other on Preventing and Responding to WMD terrorist attacks. UNICRI was also co-leader of a CTITF Working Group on Radicalization and Extremism that Lead to Terrorism and is proud to have supervised the drafting of the "First report of the Working Group on Radicalization and Extremism that Lead to Terrorism", which has been issued in the context of the General Assembly's review of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy on 4 September 2008.

To meet the demands of the international security environment and provide security solutions to deal with the new challenges and emerging threats, UNICRI has launched the Security Governance/Counter-Terrorism Laboratory of the United Nations.

The Laboratory was officially launched in May 2008 and is based on 6 years of experience in the Security Governance and Counter-Terrorism field. It is a UN facility that develops initiatives to counter emerging security threats by directly involving security and law enforcement agencies, as well as a broad cross-section of civil society, local, regional and national governments and the private sector.

The Security Governance/Counter-Terrorism Laboratory develops and implements initiatives with the aim of promoting wider collaboration and participation among different security stakeholders. Its main objective is to make a meaningful contribution in the development of a sustainable platform for information exchange and effective policies in the fields of security and counter terrorism.

UNICRI's Lab works efficiently in the midst of sensitive political issues by maintaining a technical focus on problems such as illicit trafficking of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear materials, radicalisation leading to terrorism, and rebuilding rule of law institutions.

The Laboratory also focuses its activities on non-traditional areas of the international agenda, such as major event security, public-private partnerships and urban security.

In the context of this conference and in conclusion, I would particularly like to highlight that the modus operandi of the Laboratory will continue to promote the optimisation of resources and increased effectiveness through the testing of new ideas, the management of knowledge and the improvement of cooperation at the regional and international levels.

Once again, thank you for your participation and your support for the work of our Institute.