

IFAVT Manifesto for the 6th UN International Day of Commemoration and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism

Madrid, 21 August 2023

As we celebrate today the 6th United Nations International Day of Commemoration and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism, we would like to make public some of our fundamental demands, so that both society and the media do not forget the victims of terrorism.

On this sixth day of commemoration, the focus will be on "Legacy: finding hope and building a better future". Today is a day to remember all the victims of terrorism, the wounded and the broken families that the scourge of terrorism has left around the world. They are the force that drives us to continue fighting for the true defeat of terrorism.

That is why today we want to claim that the "legacy" of the victims of terrorism is not only to remember them with occasional tributes and acts of recognition, but also to know first-hand the testimonies and stories of the victims of terrorism in order to be able to build on firm foundations the true history of terrorism. In this way and only in this way, we could guarantee that the past will never be repeated, because the victims' voices and experiences are essential to build a healthy society.

The importance of the legacy of the victims of terrorism is fundamental for future generations to know the truth and to neutralise any attempt to impose a manipulated and false narrative of the history of terrorism. To be able to talk about the future our children must be aware of the reality of the past. More than ever, it is vitally important that the legacy of the victims of terrorism appears in textbooks and that victims offer their direct testimony in classrooms.

For some time now, Europe has been carrying out important work in the fight against radicalisation, which is essential to prevent new attacks from continuing to cause more victims, more bereaved families and more pain and suffering. But undoubtedly, the focus should be on the victims of terrorism, that is why today we ask all citizens to unite with us to keep their voices alive, because our experience and our legacy is a basic pillar to build a future free of fear and terror. We cannot over-emphasize the role of the media, because they are a vital tool to give a voice to the victims of terrorism, otherwise they are absent and vetoed in the public space resulting in marginalisation and social death.

Global terrorism is a major threat to our rights and freedom. Ending global terrorism is extraordinarily complicated. It is an unprecedented challenge to the values of Western civilisation: democracy, human rights, individual freedom, pluralism, open societies. Europe stands for all these and more, and that is what terrorism tries to undermine through their criminal and cowardly acts.

Terrorism, in general, seeks to impose an ideological, fanatical and totalitarian project through the violation of fundamental human rights and by terrorising society. That is why we need to stand strong together to confront those who defend totalitarian political projects based on the physical elimination of those who think differently.

By denouncing terrorism in all its forms, we build bridges between civilisations. From our common suffering, we send messages of peace and justice, of humanity and respect. On this particular day of the 21st of August, we reach out to you and society in general, to unite with the victims to defeat violent extremism and terrorism.

IFAVT - International Federation of Associations of Victims of Terrorism

AVT - Asociación Víctimas del Terrorismo

V-Europe