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## **Statement by**

**Thembile Joyini, Legal Adviser of the  
Permanent Mission of South Africa to the  
United Nations, in the Sixth Committee of  
General Assembly under Agenda Item  
“Measures to Eliminate International  
Terrorism”**

**New York  
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Mr Chairman

Thank you for affording us the floor. At the outset, let me join other delegations that have spoken before me in congratulating you and the members of the bureau on your deserving election. Let me assure you of my delegation's support. I wish to associate myself with the statement delivered by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran speaking on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. Let me begin by reiterating our condemnation of the recent horrific terrorist attacks in Pakistan, Nigeria and Kenya. A number of civilians, including a South African national, were killed in the attack in Kenya. We express our deepest condolences to the Governments and peoples of the aforementioned countries and to all families who lost their loved ones, and wish the wounded survivors a speedy recovery.

These gruesome attacks once again reinforce the need for the international community to act and to act decisively in rooting out the scourge of terrorism. It reminds us, as did the equally horrific attacks in Uganda, India, London and other places, that while we sit in comfortable UN conference rooms, people continue to lose their lives and limbs because of terrorism. I hope the recent attacks will spur in us a renewed sense of urgency.

Mr Chairman

South Africa condemns, in the strongest terms, terrorist acts wherever they occur and by whomsoever committed. Acts of terrorism constitute fundamental violations of international law and human rights. My delegation wishes, once again, to place on record its abhorrence of all forms of terrorism.

Mr Chairman

To date the Ad Hoc Committee on Measures to Eliminate Terrorism established by General Assembly resolution 51/210 has produced a number of international conventions on terrorism. In particular, the work of the Ad Hoc Committee produced the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, the International Convention for the Suppression of Financing of Terrorism and the International Convention for Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. While the thematic conventions on counter-terrorism were well received by states, many delegations were of the view that a comprehensive convention that would deal with issues of law enforcement in a cross-cutting manner was necessary. The Ad Hoc Committee thus proposed the elaboration of a Comprehensive Convention that would deal with law enforcement issues, including cooperation in the area of countering terrorism. For this reason, as you may recall Mr Chairman, the primary focus of the Ad Hoc Committee has been the elaboration of a Comprehensive Convention on Counter-Terrorism since 1999. Since 2000 negotiations on the draft Comprehensive Convention have been stuck on the question of a definition, in particular, on the question of which acts are to be excluded from a definition of terrorism and which acts are to be included.

Mr Chairman

During the Ad Hoc Committee meeting in April 2013, South Africa expressed concern at the seeming inability to make progress and suggested that after fourteen years the time had come to make a decision and that, from our perspective, there were three possible options. The first and preferable option was that we agree to adopt the Convention on the basis of the 2007 text. The second option was that, in order to preserve whatever progress had been made, we package a consolidated text including all proposals and recommend a pause in the process to the General Assembly. The final option was that we simply concede that there was no consensus and we abandon efforts to elaborate a Convention. The meeting opted for the second option which is a "pause".

Allow me to reiterate the reason for our position. We are of the view that we cannot continue meeting in these various fora, at great expense, if the political will to adopt a Comprehensive Convention on Counter-terrorism is not there. We have reached the point where a decision, one way or the other, must be made. We either adopt a Convention or we don't adopt a Convention. Continuous annual meetings without any substantive discussion or movement can no longer be justified. We hope that member states will use the pause or the interim period to try to come to consensus. If, however, we are not able to find consensus, then difficult choices will have to be made or exercised.

I thank you.