



Statement

on

behalf of the African Group

by

Ambassador Jerry Matjila

**Permanent Representative of the Republic of
South Africa to the United Nations**

in the Sixth Committee of the General Assembly

under Agenda Item 109

“Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism”

3 October 2016

Mr Chairman

Thank you for affording us the floor. My delegation has the honour to speak on behalf of the African Group. At the outset, let me join others who have spoken before me in congratulating you and the members of the bureau on your deserving election. Allow me to assure you of the African group's fullest cooperation and support throughout the work of the Committee. The African Group associates itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela speaking on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. At the outset, the African Group would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report on measures to eliminate international terrorism.

Mr Chairman

There is no justification for terrorism. African States strongly and unequivocally condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, as well as all acts, methods and practices of terrorism wherever, by whomever, against whomever committed, including State terrorism. For no cause or grievance can terrorism be justified. The African Group appreciates the work done so far by the ad hoc committee in drafting a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. We reiterate the importance of the conclusion of a comprehensive convention for combating international terrorism and the continued effort for that end. We further call upon all states to cooperate in resolving the outstanding issues. The comprehensive convention on international terrorism should, in no way deny people their right to self-determination. The African Group reiterates its willingness to work actively with other delegations to continuously refine the United Nations Global Counter Terrorism Strategy as well as to achieve consensus regarding the draft comprehensive Convention on international terrorism. The proposal to convene a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations to formulate an international response to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations should be given serious consideration. Africa has long recognized the need to embark on concrete measures to counter the phenomenon of terrorism. The Organization of African Unity (OAU), succeeded by the African Union, adopted the Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism in 1999, which came into force in 2002. This was followed up by a Plan of Action by an inter-governmental High Level Meeting in September 2002. In addition, the African Center for Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT) was established in Algiers. This demonstrates the international and regional

commitment by African Member States to address terrorism, in particular given that a number of African States throughout the continent suffer of this scourge.

Mr Chairman

While expressing worry about the increase in incidences of kidnapping and hostage-taking with the aim of raising funds or gaining political concessions, the African Group considers that the financing of terrorism is a matter of grave concern for the international community and equally concerned that the payment of ransoms to terrorist groups constitutes one of the main sources of financing of terrorism. In this regard, the African Group urges the member States to cooperate in addressing the issue of the payment of ransoms claimed by terrorist groups. Apart from implementing concrete measures, more attention in the fight against terrorism needs to be paid to the further strengthening of inter-state cooperation. States should expand the range of assistance available in the apprehension of terrorists and in the investigation and prevention of terrorist acts. In this vein, the African Group welcomes the initiatives to encourage cooperation between the UN and regional organizations in the fight against terrorism. We appreciate the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Initiative (TSCTI) elaborated by the African Center for study and Research on Terrorism and the United States' Africa Center for Strategic Studies. We also welcome the Madrid Declaration and Plan of Action on combating terrorism in West and Central Africa. All these initiatives are important ways of strengthening the capacity of African countries to adopt coordinated approaches on countering terror.

Mr Chairman

Measures aimed at ensuring the more effective implementation of counter-terrorism conventions and related UN resolutions, as well as capacity-building in developing countries are vital for a well-functioning universal international law approach to combating terrorism. Africa always endeavors to live up to its international obligations in the fight against terror and in the implementation of related UN resolutions. However, many of African States are hamstrung by inadequate resources and weak capacity and therefore appeal to the international community for the requisite assistance to enable them to fulfill their obligations and commitments.

I thank you for your attention.