



**THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN
TO THE UNITED NATION**

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Statement by Mr. Tofiq F. Musayev, Member of the Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan, at the Sixth Committee of the seventy-first session of the United Nations General Assembly under agenda item 108 "Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism"

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Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate the members of the Bureau on their election.

Terrorism and violent extremism are a growing threat to international peace and security, to the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms and to the political independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and the social and economic development of all Member States.

Azerbaijan strongly condemns terrorism and violent extremism in all their forms and manifestations. All terrorist acts are unjustifiable regardless of their motivation, constitute serious crimes and must be condemned and prosecuted. The cases of shielding and glorification of terrorists may not be tolerated.

The sensitive geographic location of Azerbaijan makes it vulnerable to trans-border threats such as international terrorism, illegal migration, transnational organized crime, arms, drugs and human trafficking and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Since the end of the 1980s, my country has repeatedly been a target of terrorist attacks that claimed the lives of over 2,000 of its citizens.

The Government of Azerbaijan has taken comprehensive measures to strengthen its security and defense capabilities, to maintain national border control and management, as well as export control systems. Azerbaijan is a party to all international and regional instruments on combating terrorism and is an active contributor to global counter-terrorism efforts.

Comprehensive and integrative approaches to combating terrorism through concerted and coordinated international actions remain vitally important. We strongly support the international cooperation and enhanced individual and collective efforts to that end, including in particular those aimed at degrading and ultimately defeating terrorist organizations, their affiliates and networks.

We also note the important role and work of the Security Council's Committees with counter-terrorism mandates in the prevention and response to terrorist threats and activities.

While recognizing the significance of addressing all conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, in line with the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, it is critical to intensify conflict resolution efforts in various parts of the world. As the Secretary-General noted in his report on the work of the Organization, "most terrorist activities during the reporting period occurred in countries mired in new or old conflicts" (A/71/1, p. 30, para. 108).

Indeed, areas of armed conflict, especially territories under foreign military occupation, often create conditions conducive to exploitation by terrorists, separatists and other organized criminal groups. The accumulation of a great number of armaments and munitions in areas beyond the reach of legitimate governments and international control and the risk of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction pose a serious threat to international and regional peace and security.

The scrupulous compliance by all States with their international obligations, including the relevant resolutions adopted by the United Nations Security Council, is critical to ensure, *inter alia*, that their respective territories are not used for terrorist, separatist and other related activity, in particular for financing of and providing directly or indirectly any other support to such activity under whatever pretext or disguise.

Despite tangible results achieved by the international community in countering terrorism, including the development of the comprehensive legal framework to that end, the absence of a clear definition of terrorism in international law merely hampers the efforts towards bringing not only individual terrorists and organizations to account, but also States that promote, support or finance terrorist activities. Azerbaijan reiterates its determination to actively contribute to the process of reaching an agreement on a comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

I would also like to commend the support of and contribution to the global counter-terrorism measures by regional organizations, including in particular those of which Azerbaijan is a member, such as the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development – GUAM and the Cooperation Council of Turkic-speaking States.

Last but not least, the war on terrorism cannot and must not be used to target any religion or culture. That principle must be part and parcel of any counter-terrorism strategy. All States should be united in supporting various initiatives on intercultural and interreligious dialogue, such as the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, the culture of peace and multiculturalism. We also commend the initiatives by UNESCO designed to promote the safeguarding of cultural heritage in time of peace and in the event of armed conflicts. Over the recent years, Azerbaijan has consistently promoted respect, dialogue and cooperation among different cultures, civilizations and peoples. The Baku International Multiculturalism Centre was created and a number of high-level international events were organized in my country.

The Declaration of the Seventh Global Forum of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, which was held in Baku this April, has promulgate a set of commitments aimed at overcoming challenges and moving forward towards the goals of living together in inclusive societies for sustainable development. In their outcome Declaration, the participants of another high-profile event that took place last week in Azerbaijan, namely, the V Baku International Humanitarian Forum, condemned escalating conflicts, militant extremism, terrorism and the related humanitarian crises and the forced displacement of people and emphasized the importance of fostering an atmosphere of tolerance and mutual respect.

Strengthening cooperation within such formats will serve to prevent misconceptions, defamatory manifestations and deliberate labeling of religions and will contribute to the efficiency of counter-terrorism efforts.

Thank you.