



Statement on behalf of the European Union and its Member States

By

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at the Sixth Committee

on agenda item 108

on

"Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism"

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- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY -

Mr Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

The Candidate Countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Serbia* and Albania*, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia align themselves with this statement.

International terrorism continues to pose an extreme threat to global peace and security. More than ever, the international community must respond jointly by not only condemning but also working to counter terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

As previously stated, the European Union is appalled by, and firmly condemns, the indiscriminate killings, the human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law perpetrated by several terrorist organizations, including Da'esh, Fateh al Sham, Al Qaeda, Boko Haram, Al-Shabaab. It is of outmost urgency to secure forensic evidence for the crimes committed and to allow justice to follow its due course.

Mr. Chairman,

Last year we presented extensively the actions that the EU is pursuing on preventing violent extremism and countering terrorism at home and abroad. I would like to reiterate our engagement with all our partners to eliminate this scourge as we know that strength lies in partnership.

This year we have reviewed and strengthened the 2014 EU counter terrorism/foreign terrorist fighters strategy focusing on Syria and Iraq. On this occasion, the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini stated that: *"Our determination to end the suffering of the people of Syria and Iraq is stronger than ever. We decided to increase our political engagement to facilitate the start of the transition in Syria and renewed our support to the stabilisation of Iraq."* Our short-term and long term policy is aimed at: (1) Stifling and ultimately destroying Da'esh through military and counter-terrorist measures; (2) Tackling the threat of foreign terrorist fighters flowing to Syria and Iraq and back to the EU; (3) Addressing the political, economic and social root causes of instability in Syria and Iraq that allowed the terrorist group to develop and thrive. In order to bring about these objectives, the EU is addressing the specific threat of Da'esh through, *inter alia*: (1) targeted and upgraded security and counter-terrorism dialogues; (2) adoption of assistance packages, including stabilisation measures enhancing the Iraqi government capacity in areas liberated from Da'esh and supporting reconciliation and enabling IDP return; (3) active participation in the Global Coalition to counter Da'esh. The EU support to the Global Coalition goes through participation in the working groups on foreign terrorist fighters, on stabilisation, on strategic communications and on counter terrorist financing, as well as in the working groups of the Global Counter Terrorism Forum.

* The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

In the wider North Africa and the Middle East region, our primary focus in recent months has been on cooperation with Tunisia, Lebanon, Jordan and Egypt where we are pursuing joint efforts in the fight against terrorism by providing counterterrorism assistance in the areas of security sector reform, enhancing border security, prevention of radicalisation and of the recruitment of foreign terrorist fighters and their return, critical infrastructure and soft target protection, including with regard to tourism, industry and transport. We have developed our network of counterterrorism experts in the EU Delegations. We currently manage a network of 11 counterterrorism and security experts posted to EU delegations in Algeria, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia and Turkey. We have just expanded it to Chad and Bosnia-Herzegovina and added civilian CT expertise to Lebanon. Key areas of their capacity building support are in the fields of law enforcement, criminal justice, countering financing of terrorism and combating radicalisation and preventing violent extremism.

We are also increasing the funds (more than 150m Euros) allocated to help our partners who are working on new strategies to Prevent Violent Extremism, most recently in Tunisia and Somalia.

All these external actions complement the measures the EU has adopted internally, such as the Passenger Name Record (PNR) directive, the directive on preventing money laundering and terrorism financing, the Action Plan to reinforce preventive measures tackling terrorist financing, the implementing regulation on firearms deactivation, the ongoing work on border management, counter-radicalisation, information exchange, interoperability of databases, monitoring and analytical capacities, rehabilitation, training of professionals, education and youth outreach, all of which contribute to the fight against terrorism.

Mr. Chairman,

The EU and its Member States remain equally engaged in the multilateral fora, and the UN remains central to our partnerships.

We have demonstrated this year - on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy – that the UNGA spoke with one voice to countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism. The Strategy continues to be central to address the evolving trends of the terrorist phenomena in an integrated and balanced way.

The EU and its Member States very much welcomed the Secretary General's strategic approach to place a strong focus on the prevention and countering of terrorism and violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism. The phenomenon of radicalisation turning into violent extremism and terrorism can be best contained at a level closest to vulnerable individuals and in the most affected communities, through engagement with non-governmental organisations, frontline workers, women, and civil society organisations including victims' groups as well as local authorities, academics, schools, law enforcement and security officials. Education and youth exchanges are areas which provide a unique opportunity to help young people to think critically about extremists' views and discourses and expose the flaws of such propaganda. The UN system can play a significant role in bringing these different actors together.

The EU and its Member States have welcomed the Secretary General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism and supports the efforts to promote its implementation by the relevant UN entities, and to follow through on the General Assembly's call for options to be presented on increasing UN coherence. The joint statement on preventing violent extremism principles for the UN that was circulated recently to the UN membership is one such initiative by an EU member. Several States have already indicated their support and willingness to co-sponsor and we would encourage all States to consider co-sponsoring this statement.

Mr Chairman,

The EU agrees that the work and initiatives of the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) should be better reflected in the UN's CT and PVE agenda. The EU is an active member and we encourage all UN Member States to actively participate to and benefit from the works of this Forum. Let me highlight the recent launch of the Life Cycle Initiative Toolkit for practitioners and decision makers (from prevention, to intervention, to rehabilitation and reintegration) accessible online to all UN Member States. Also, the GCTF good practices documents that have been adopted by the GCTF Ministers guide our policy makers and local practitioners in countering terrorism, preventing violent extremism and secure our border. These good practices have paved the way for several UN resolutions. As such, the EU calls for continued cooperation between the respective UN agencies and this forum to have more impact and to avoid duplication of efforts.

The EU is co-financing three initiatives inspired by this Forum focusing on implementing these good practices documents: (1) Hedayah, the Centre of Excellence on Countering Violent Extremism in Abu Dhabi which focuses on understanding a complex phenomenon; (2) the International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law in Malta with a focus on strengthening judicial capacity through training parliamentarians and magistrates); (3) the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund in Geneva (which focuses on working with local communities). We believe that these initiatives as well as the whole GCTF's work are very valuable and timely in the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the Secretary General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism.

We have long-established cooperation with the UN through the biannual political dialogues, as well as in the field. We will continue to support CTITF, CTED, UNODC with its Terrorism Prevention Branch, and UNICRI. The EU and its Member States have also engaged in co-funding various projects initiated or co-ordinated by the UNCCT. As regards the UN sanctions regimes, we reiterate our full support to 1267 Committee Ombudsperson Ms. Catherine Marchi-Uhel. The EU remains committed to promote the strengthening of due process and fair and clear procedures in the sanctions regimes. The EU has already taken steps to improve its procedures and will continue its dialogue with the UN and UN Member States in this area.

In view of the growing terrorist threat, we reiterate our call for all Member States to ratify and implement all UN legal instruments to counter terrorism and we recognize Member States efforts towards making progress on the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism. We remain committed to its successful conclusion.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me also recall that in our joint efforts, it is of utmost importance to ensure respect for human rights and the rule of law. We firmly believe that the rule of law and the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms are essential components of the fight against terrorism. Member States must ensure that any measures taken to counter terrorism comply with international law, in particular international human rights law, international refugee law, and international humanitarian law. In the face of the challenge of terrorism, democracies should never compromise their values.

As regards the resolution of the 6th Committee under the agenda item on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism, we see certain duplication with the Plenary work during UNGA sessions where a resolution to review the implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy is being negotiated. We therefore advocate for a rationalization of our works during those sessions, for example by including the item on Measures to eliminate international terrorism on the agenda on a biennial basis and alternatively with the review of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. As we learned from the past session, delegations are not willing to duplicate in the 6th Committee's resolution matters that were just discussed in the Plenary.

Thank you.