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Agenda item 111:  
Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Statement by  
Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden

Delivered by Ambassador Tore Hattrem  
Permanent Representative, Norway

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Mr. Chair, distinguished delegates,

I have the honor to address the Sixth Committee on behalf of the five Nordic countries: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Sweden and my own country Norway.

Terrorist and violent extremist groups continue to find new ways to carry out attacks, finance their activities, spread propaganda and recruit new fighters to their ranks. Terrorist networks such as ISIL, al-Qaida and “home-grown terrorists” remain a global security threat. Their ideologies of intolerance and violence pose a challenge to our shared values of peace, security, human rights, and the rule of law.

(Check against delivery)

Mr. Chair,

The Global Coalition against Daesh, is one of several international efforts that have helped to reduce the threat posed by Daesh. The Nordic countries are playing an important role in the Global Coalition. Daesh has suffered substantial territorial losses in both Syria and Iraq. However, Daesh still has the determination to carry on its agenda and the capacity to recruit new fighters. Furthermore, the root causes that led to the rise of Daesh are still present and must be dealt with. Inclusive political systems and solutions are critical if we are to avoid resurgence of Daesh or the emergence of a new and similar terrorist threat. We must remain unwavering in our support to efforts to prevent Daesh from resurging and to help people in need.

Mr Chair,

Terrorism and violent extremism, in all their forms and manifestations, represent a truly global threat. This threat affects us all and requires a global response. Any measures aimed at countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism must be in compliance with human rights and the rule of law. It is necessary to address both push and pull factors and we must ensure that the values of tolerance, pluralism and understanding are embedded in our societies.

The review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy earlier this year has made it clear that the Strategy requires us to ensure respect for human rights and international law, to partner with civil society and local communities, to empower our youth and to ensure full and complete gender equality. These are all critical principles that we have a collective responsibility to implement and promote. The UN must play a central role in our collective response to terrorism and in preventing violent extremism.

It is important to keep in mind that youth and children are some of our most important assets in the struggle against terrorism and violent extremism. As the Secretary-General has repeatedly made clear: There is no greater resource than our youth. We should seek to encourage the involvement of young people, because they play a key role in preventing violent radicalisation and we can achieve better results if they are involved.

Furthermore, the different roles of women in the phenomenon must be understood. In the Nordic countries there are research projects going on in this field. The terrorist organizations have different ways to involve women themselves or use them for example as fighters, in recruiting new fighters or as perpetrators of terrorist acts. But women are not only tools for terrorists or victims. Women have a vital role in countering violent extremism and their role in leading counter terrorist narratives in their societies must be supported.

Furthermore, we must promote and protect women's full enjoyment of human rights and recognize the salience of women's voices, experiences and leadership in devising effective policies to prevent violent extremism and terrorism.

Mr. Chair,

The Nordic countries believe that a balanced implementation of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and its four pillars is our best way forward. Terrorism cannot be tackled by military and security means alone. We must also address the root causes and upstream factors of violent extremism, and base all our responses on the rule of law.

For the UN to respond effectively to contemporary challenges, it must streamline and coordinate core activities related to conflict prevention, development, education and other fields considered essential for countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism.

The Nordic countries are all members of the Group of Friends of Preventing Violent Extremism. The purpose of the group is to promote institutionalization of PVE across the UN system. We are grateful that Jordan is co-chairing the group alongside Norway. Furthermore, we appreciate the way in which the Office of Counter-Terrorism has made prevention of violent extremism an integral part of the United Nations counter terrorism efforts. In addition, we welcome the adoption and developing of PVE Action Plans by several Member States and regional organizations with the support of the United Nations. The Secretary General's action plan on PVE remains a key guiding document for Member States and the UN system.

Mr. Chair,

The Nordic countries attach great importance to human rights and international law while countering terrorism. The Security Council has repeatedly underscored that all counter-terrorism measures taken by Member States must comply with their obligations under international law and has made it clear that failure to comply with international obligations is one of the factors contributing to increased radicalization to violence and fosters a sense of impunity. Similarly, the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy clearly places human rights at the center of the fight against terrorism and emphasizes that measures taken to counter terrorism must comply with international human rights law.

The Nordic countries believe that an agreed international definition of terrorism would enhance the international community's ability to combat terrorism, while fully upholding international law.

It would also enable stronger international cooperation in the field of counter-terrorism. We are therefore supportive of the work related to the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism.

I thank you.