



UNITED STATES MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

799 UNITED NATIONS PLAZA
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10017-3505

**Remarks at the 73rd General Assembly Sixth Committee
Agenda Item 109: Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism
Emily R. Pierce, Counsellor
United States Mission to the United Nations
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Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The United States reiterates both its firm condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations as well as our commitment to the common fight to end terrorism. All acts of terrorism – by whomever committed – are criminal, inhumane and unjustifiable, regardless of motivation. The United States is committed to using all of our tools to end terrorism, including through our efforts with the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. Given the often transnational nature of modern terrorist groups, it is clear that an unwavering and united effort by the international community is required if we are to succeed in fully preventing and countering terrorism. In this respect, we recognize the United Nations' critical role in mobilizing the international community, building capacity, and facilitating technical assistance to Member States in implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and relevant resolutions, as well as the UN Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism.

We note the 6th biannual review of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy last June. The Strategy's four pillars – including on addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism and upholding human rights and the rule of law – remain as valid and relevant today as when the Strategy was adopted 12 years ago. The GCTS, and the General Assembly's biennial review resolutions, notwithstanding several serious flaws that the United States hopes will be rectified in future resolutions, have given the Secretariat the guidance it needs to help Member States implement the Strategy. This includes preventing violent extremism (PVE) and supporting the Secretary-General's High Level Action Group to mainstream PVE across the UN system, implementation of the recommendations laid out in the UN's PVE Plan of Action, as well as other efforts to help Member States adopt a whole-of-society approach to countering terrorism and violent extremism.

A major success and addition to the global counterterrorism framework was the Security Council's unanimous adoption of Resolution 2396 in December 2017, which updated Resolution 2178 and provided greater focus on measures to address returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) and transnational terrorist groups. Resolution 2396 built on 2178 by creating

new international obligations and highlighting other actions to strengthen border security and information sharing, strengthen judicial measures and international cooperation, ensure appropriate prosecution, rehabilitation, and reintegration of FTFs and their accompanying family members, and strengthen Member States' cooperation, including with the private sector, to protect public spaces and soft targets. The resolution rightly reiterates the ongoing terrorist threat against soft targets and, in doing so, complements ongoing efforts to better protect critical infrastructure under UN Security Council resolution 2341. Of key importance are 2396's new obligations concerning Passenger Name Record (PNR) data, Advanced Passenger Information (API), biometrics, and watchlists – all vital counterterrorism tools. As part of our efforts to address ISIS operations outside of Iraq and Syria, we must also pursue the goal of UN Security Council resolution 2309 to elevate aviation security standards globally to ensure countries are less susceptible to the threat of terrorism. These efforts must include countering insider threat and deploying next-generation screening technologies.

One important aspect of the Security Council's work in recent years is that Member States are increasingly adopting the 'whole-of-government' approach to countering terrorism. Recent resolutions underscore the importance of having all elements of government, including ministries of finance, justice, interior and security, and information and communications, work together to prevent and counter terrorism and violent extremism.

We are seeing results. Combined with intense military pressure from the United States alongside the Defeat-ISIS coalition, Member States' implementation of Security Council resolution 2178 – aimed at stemming the flow of FTFs – made a tremendous impact on the ground in Syria and Iraq, where 99 percent of the territory ISIS once held, and 7.7 million people once under ISIS' brutal rule, have now been liberated. The United States now has information sharing arrangements with over 70 international partners to help identify, track, and deter known and suspected terrorists. We can all stand to learn from each other on these gains, but there is much more work that can be done to fully implement Resolution 2178 and Resolution 2396 as FTFs seek to return to their home countries and relocate elsewhere.

From international legal cooperation, to critical infrastructure security and resilience, to countering terrorist narratives, the UN can play a meaningful role in addressing new challenges that arise in the fight against terrorism. We express our firm support for these UN efforts, as well as those of the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) and other multilateral bodies, civil society, the private sector and non-governmental organizations, and regional and subregional organizations, that work to develop practical tools to further the implementation of the UN counterterrorism framework. We call for continued coordination among UN entities and with external partners, including the GCTF and its related initiatives and platforms such as the International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law and Hedayah, which advance practical implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy through training, capacity building, and grant-making for community-based preventing and countering violent extremism projects. In this regard, we welcome the close cooperation and partnership between the UN and

the GCTF and the Joint UN-GCTF Ministerial Statement endorsed on September 26th at the GCTF Ministerial.

We also welcome the General Assembly's decision to bring greater coherence to the UN's role in countering terrorism and violent extremism by approving the creation of the UN Office of Counterterrorism. The United States was among the strongest advocates for this overdue reform, and we look forward to UNOCT's leadership in making the UN CT work efficient.

We encourage continued close coordination between the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism and CTED, and welcome their joint report in response to UN Security Council resolution 2395 to improve coordination between the two entities, so that country assessments can serve as the basis for technical assistance and capacity-building. Furthermore, efforts to counter terrorism that come at the expense of human rights and the rule of law are counterproductive and often feed the bankrupt narrative of terrorists. For these reasons, CTED and the UNOCT must pursue a balanced approach to implementing the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the recommendations of the Secretary General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism that recognizes the importance of preventing violent extremism, respecting human rights and the rule of law. UN counterterrorism efforts benefit from engagement with a wide range of actors, including youth; families; women; religious, cultural, and educational leaders; and other elements of civil society—in addition to governments and the private sector.

Domestically, we continue to engage and raise community awareness of violent extremism or radicalization to terrorism and recruitment dynamics, as well as provide community leaders tools and resources to work on prevention efforts. One continuing area of work is state and local intervention services for individuals headed down a path toward violent extremism or radicalization to terrorism before a crime is committed. We look forward to continued exchanges on these issues with our international partners.

We continue to emphasize the importance of countering the use of the internet for terrorist purposes, while respecting human rights such as freedom of expression and recognizing that the Internet is but one tool used by terrorists. While taking appropriate law enforcement action against criminal activities online, we have also worked to strengthen and expand our ongoing voluntary collaboration and partnerships with private technology companies, who counter terrorist content online by enforcing their terms of service. We applaud the efforts being made by the industry-led Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism and UN-affiliated Tech Against Terrorism in this regard. As Member States continue to work together to implement the UN Global Counter Terrorism Strategy and resolutions such as UNSCR 2354 on countering terrorist narratives, we must seek to build long-term resilience to terrorist messages through partnerships with youth to cultivate critical thinking skills and online public safety awareness through education. Yet the problem cannot be solved by governments and private companies alone, and we are seeking ways to involve civil society, academia, and community leaders in developing a long-term comprehensive solution.

To help achieve this long-term and comprehensive vision, we need all Member States to better assist and sufficiently resource UN system actors and other relevant implementers in order to deliver needed technical assistance and generate more effective solutions. To do our part, we are pleased to note that we continue to make voluntary contributions to the UNODC Terrorism Prevention Branch, UNDP, INTERPOL, and UNICRI for development of research, capacity-building assistance, and training. We encourage other interested Member States to help share the burden of helping the UN implement the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, both by helping it improve its own work and its efforts to assist Member States. These include preventing and countering violent extremism, and implementing relevant UN Security Council resolutions, including resolution 2396.

Beyond the UN, we should also continue to partner with local communities and key civil society organizations. They will often be among the most effective in countering terrorist lies. Focusing now on treaty developments, we recognize the great success of the United Nations, thanks in large part to the work of this Committee, in developing 18 universal instruments that establish a thorough legal framework for countering terrorism. The achievements on this front are noteworthy. We have witnessed a dramatic increase in the number of states that have become party to these important counterterrorism conventions. For example, there are 188 parties to the Terrorist Financing Convention.

The United States recognizes that while the accomplishments of the international community in developing a robust legal counterterrorism regime are significant, there remains much work to be done to make this regime fully serve its purpose. The 18 universal counterterrorism instruments are only effective if they are widely ratified and implemented. In this regard, we fully support efforts to promote ratification and implementation of these instruments. We draw particular attention to the six instruments concluded since 2005 – the 2005 International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (Nuclear Terrorism Convention); the 2005 Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM Amendment); the 2005 Protocols to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation (SUA Protocols); the 2010 Convention on the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Relating to International Civil Aviation; and the 2010 Protocol Supplementary to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft. While the work of the international community began with the negotiation and conclusion of those instruments, that work will only be completed when those instruments are widely ratified and fully implemented.

And as we move forward with our collective efforts to ratify and implement these instruments, the United States remains willing to work with other states to build upon and enhance the counterterrorism framework. Concerning the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism, we will listen carefully to the statements of other delegates at this session. We would highlight in this regard that it is critical that the United Nations send united, unambiguous signals when it comes to terrorism, otherwise we risk some of the progress that we have made.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.