



Statement on behalf of the European Union and its Member States

at the Sixth Committee

on the Agenda item 114:

" Measures to eliminate international terrorism "

United Nations

New York

6 October 2019

– CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY –

Mr./Madam Chair,

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

The Candidate Countries Turkey, the Republic of North 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.

Let me begin by thanking you chair of the Sixth Committee. We very much appreciate your commitment to its work.

In order to fully respect the time constraints, I will read an abridged version of our statement – the full statement has been submitted in writing.

The EU pursues a comprehensive approach to combating and preventing terrorism and violent extremism, in full compliance with the rule of law and with international law, in particular international human rights law, humanitarian law and international refugee law

Mr/Madam Chair,

Key challenges demand further resolute action, [in particular:

- addressing the increase in home-grown *radicalisation* and anticipating the persistent threat posed by terrorist sleeper cells and lone actors of all forms of terrorism;
- adequately monitoring those individuals released and who, on the basis of a risk assessment, are deemed to pose a continued threat after serving terrorism-related sentences;
- adapting to the developments in *money-laundering and terrorism financing* and strengthening measures to prevent them;
- mitigating the *exploitation of rapid technological developments, including* misuse of the Internet for terrorist purposes;
- tackling emerging and *hybrid threats to aviation, critical infrastructure and public spaces*; and
- restricting access to *dangerous materials and substances*, such as chemical and explosives precursors'
- addressing the *spread of violent extremist ideologies* including the growing threat from politically motivated violent extremism and terrorism, such as left-wing and right-wing violent extremism and terrorism.
- bringing *foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs)* to justice and preventing their movement, especially undetected crossings of borders;

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

- addressing the need to rehabilitate and reintegrate FTFs and their family members;]

Furthermore, as the impact of the **COVID-19 pandemic** represents an unprecedented challenge with wide-ranging effects which will only fully unfold in the long term, a specific effort should be made to assess its potential influence on terrorist activities, as well as on the prevention and countering of violent extremism and terrorism, and to identify possible targeted action.

In all our efforts, recall the need for a strong **human rights based approach** to prevent and counter violent extremism and terrorism, including on the internet, and reiterate that CT must never serve as a pretext for human rights violations.

We support a "**whole-of-society**" approach to counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism and call on strengthened collaboration and cooperation between governments, the private sector and civil society; one which takes a **gender responsive approach** and provides **opportunities for young people** to strengthen resilience against radicalisation. We must address **underlying conditions of terrorism and violent extremism** and foster non-violent means for addressing various political, social and other grievances. Additionally we should pay specific attention to victims in the fight against terrorism and ensure that their rights are protected and promoted.

The European Union and its Member States call for the avoidance of any potential negative impact of counter-terrorism measures on exclusively humanitarian activities. To that end, we reconfirm our continued commitment to **preserving the humanitarian space**, including inter alia through the development of best practices and the adoption of appropriate mitigating measures.

Moreover, CT measures – due to unintended consequences or due to arbitrary, unnecessary or disproportionate application, can contribute to the shrinking of the civic space – we must work together to tackle this concern.

Mr/Madam Chair,

The European Union and its Member states are working on new ways to tackle both the **internal and the international dimension** of the threat.

[At home, we are strengthening law enforcement, improving information exchange, preventing the exploitation of the Internet for terrorist purposes and cutting off resources of terrorism financing, while respecting human rights and making all efforts to protect the humanitarian space. Assistance to victims of terrorism and their families as well as their contribution to building resilience of our society is an integral part of EU counter-terrorism efforts. This is the reason for the establishment of the Centre for Victims of Terrorism.

Outside our borders, we know that the strength of our partners is our own strength. So we are working with countries in the Western Balkans, in the Middle East, North Africa, in the Sahel and the Horn of Africa, and also increasing our efforts in Central, South, and Southeast Asia to help build capacity, encourage mutual learning and find common areas of cooperation, including judicial cooperation. We hold regular Counter Terrorism Dialogues with key partners and have established a network of CT/Security experts in EU Delegations to support political dialogue and capacity building efforts as well as to provide for stronger links to strategically important partner countries and regions].

We will fight radicalisation leading to violent extremism and terrorism within a strengthened multilateral framework. The European Union and its Member States will steadfastly continue to build and strengthen its strategic partnership with **the United Nations**. The EU and its Member States want a strong and efficient UN that drives the important global agenda on preventing and countering violent extremism and terrorism, taking a balanced approach across the four pillars of the UN Global CT Strategy.

The EU and its Member States are encouraged by the UN's commitment to strengthen coordination towards an "**All-of-UN Approach**" in countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism. [We welcome the work of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (OCT) and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) in this respect. A strong coordination and cooperation between CTED and OCT is essential, as they work within their mandates and in their distinct roles to ensure effective alignment of United Nations technical and capacity building assistance with gaps in implementation and capacity as identified by CTED].

In addition, there is an urgent need to put in place for human rights checks and balances within the UN counter-terrorism institutional structures, involving important actors such as the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms while Countering-Terrorism.

[In support of global efforts, we continue to work very closely with our international partners such as the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), NATO, the OSCE and the Financial Action Task Force (FATF)].

As regards the **UN sanctions regime** against terrorist groups and individuals, we reiterate our full support to the Office of the Ombudsperson to the 1267 Committee and to Daniel Kipfer Fasciati as Ombudsperson. The EU remains committed to strengthening due process and fair and clear procedures in all sanctions regimes.

[Finally, we remain committed to the finalisation of the draft **Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism**, as an important endeavour of the international community to strengthen the international legal framework aimed at combatting terrorism. The EU and its Member States remain committed to its successful conclusion].

Mr/Madam Chair,

[As regards the resolution of the 6th Committee under the agenda item on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism, we stated in our Explanation of Position on agreeing on the postponement of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy that postponement cannot and should not lead to parallel the negotiations in the General Assembly on substantive counter-terrorism issues before the actual review takes place. We therefore consider that a **technical roll-over** of the resolution in Sixth Committee is the best way forward].

Thank you.