



Statement
on behalf of the Republic of South Africa
by

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the UN**

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Under Agenda Item No 111
**“MEASURES TO ELIMINATE INTERNATIONAL
TERRORISM”**

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Madam Chair

Thank you for affording my delegation the floor. At the outset, I would like to congratulate you and the members of the bureau on your deserving election. Allow me to assure you of my delegation's cooperation and support throughout the work of the Committee. South Africa associates itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Representative of Ghana on behalf of the African Group.

Madam Chair

We also thank the Secretary General for his comprehensive report on measures to eliminate international terrorism. The upsurge in acts of terrorism globally, reaffirms that terrorism continues to be a threat, not only to international peace and security but also to human rights. My delegation supports the role of the United Nations at the centre of multilateral efforts to counter terrorism. We remain firm in our belief that no country can address this challenging and complex threat on its own and that terrorism will not and cannot be defeated by military means. The Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy remains the most credible and relevant international counter-terrorism mechanism, which continues to enjoy the political support of all Member States. Its strength lies in the fact that it is the product of the collective efforts of the Member States of the United Nations to counter this scourge in a holistic manner.

Madam Chair

South Africa supports the implementation of the four pillars of the Strategy in a balanced and integrated manner. A balanced approach would imply that in addition to the steps that are being taken to prevent and counter terrorism, the international community maintains its commitment to ensure the timely and full realization of the development goals and objectives to eradicate poverty, promote sustained economic growth as well

as sustainable development and prosperity for all. The strengthening of the international legal architecture, the rule of law and the criminal justice system comprises the basis of our common approach to counter terrorism. In this context the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all is essential to all components of the Strategy and this approach is complementary and reinforcing.

Madam Chair

The interaction of international counter-terrorism laws with International Humanitarian Law is an area of renewed focus, amid widespread concern that the former are being (mis)applied to criminalise the provision of humanitarian assistance envisaged under the latter. It is encouraging to see that the Security Council has begun to consider this issue in resolutions adopted in March and July 2019, but difficult questions of law and fact remain. These questions have significant practical consequences—for humanitarian agencies and those they seek to assist, as well as for States that must weigh different, and possibly conflicting, legal obligations. Much of the analysis to date and the solutions proposed, pay insufficient attention to the specifics of each legal regime.

Madam Chair

One of the outstanding matters in the normative framework of the United Nations remains the adoption of a Comprehensive Convention on Terrorism. In the action plan adopted in 2006, Member States undertook to make every effort to conclude this convention, which would also address gaps in the current international legal arena, while encouraging Member States to become parties to existing international conventions and protocols. South Africa believes that the adoption of the convention would enhance the implementation of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Every effort should be made by Member States to break the current deadlock.

Madam Chair

At the national level, we have put in place awareness raising programs to familiarize government and civil society with the UN Strategy and has continued to work on the implementation of the four pillars. South Africa has adopted its own National Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Our National Strategy provides a comprehensive and proportionate response to the threat of international terrorism and extremism, taking into account both local and international best practice, while upholding human rights and the rule of law. The South African counter-terrorism strategy consists of the following five pillars that are expressed as objectives with each containing a set of key priorities to be addressed: (1) to understand the phenomenon of international terrorism and domestic extremism; (2) to prevent new recruits from joining terrorist groups and perpetrating terrorist attacks; (3) to mitigate against such threats and better protect potential targets; (4) to pursue and investigate members of existing networks (combat); (5) to improve South Africa's capability to respond to and manage the consequences of terrorist attacks.

I thank you for your attention.