



**Statement on behalf of the European Union and its Member States**

**By**

**Thomas Ramopoulos, First Secretary, Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations**

**At the Sixth Committee**

**On the Agenda item 109:**

**“Measures to eliminate international terrorism”**

**United Nations**

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**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 North Macedonia\*, Montenegro\*, Serbia\*, Albania\*, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Bosnia and Herzegovina\*, the potential candidate country Georgia, as well as Monaco and San Marino align themselves with this statement.

Despite international efforts, the threat from terrorism and violent extremism has not diminished but continues to evolve. It presents a major challenge in a geopolitical environment impacted by growing instability and multiple crises. Al-Qaida, Da'esh and their affiliates remain the most prominent threat and the alarming situation in parts of Africa is of particular concern. The threat from politically motivated violent extremism and terrorism, including from the far-right and far-left, as well as the potential exploitation of new technological developments for terrorist purposes amplify this challenge.

Against this backdrop, the European Union and its Member States firmly believe that international cooperation in preventing and countering terrorism, including

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*\* North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.*

its financing, and violent extremism is key. We welcome the consensual adoption of the Eighth Review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in June. And we reiterate our commitment to the balanced implementation of the Strategy across all four pillars.

Allow me to reiterate three key points that are of particular importance for the work of this Committee:

Firstly, the European Union and its Member States strongly believe in the rules-based system and remain committed to achieving progress in the negotiations on the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism that is being discussed in the Working Group. Agreeing on a clear definition of terrorism is crucial in this regard, so we emphasize the importance of the negotiating process in the Council of Europe on a revised pan-European legal definition of “terrorism” for the purposes of the 2005 Warsaw Convention. We deplore the growing politicisation in the fight against terrorism, including through polarisation in international fora. The EU Directive on combatting terrorism, adopted in 2017, includes a comprehensive definition of terrorist offences that could serve as inspiration for the Working Group. Establishing a clear definition has allowed for harmonised criminalisation across the European Union and has strengthened cooperation between EU Member States.

Secondly, efforts to combat terrorism and violent extremism must be consistent with our values and with international law and can never serve as a pretext for human rights violations. On the contrary, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms are complementary and mutually reinforcing with effective counter-terrorism measures. The European Union and its Member States insist that any measures taken to prevent and counter terrorism must be gender responsive and comply with the rule of law and all obligations under international law, including international human rights law, international refugee law and international humanitarian law. Furthermore, it is paramount to safeguard civic space including through the protection of civil society representatives and human rights defenders, thereby allowing for a meaningful partnership with civil society across all of our efforts. In these efforts, the importance of the full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership of women cannot be overstated. We would also like to recognize the importance of protecting and assuring the rehabilitation of all victims of terrorism while approaching them as agents of prevention of further terrorist acts. We must also protect the humanitarian space; we welcomed the adoption of Security Council Resolution 2664, which introduced a carve-out for the provision of humanitarian assistance and support for basic human needs from the scope of UN sanctions, including counter-terrorism sanctions.

Thirdly, non-compliance with the rule of law and human rights has a direct practical impact on international law enforcement cooperation, for example by hindering the exchange of information or preventing extraditions. Therefore, respect for international law, including international human rights law, also underpins our very efforts to hold perpetrators accountable and to bring justice to victims of terrorism and violent extremism.

To conclude, Mr / Madam Chair, the EU and its Member States remain committed to multilateralism and support global efforts to fight terrorism and violent extremism, including through the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), which the EU is co-chairing with Egypt.

Thank you.