



**Statement by H.E. Archbishop Gabriele Caccia**  
**Apostolic Nuncio and Permanent Observer of the Holy See**  
**UNGA 78 – Sixth Committee**  
**Agenda item 109: Measures to eliminate international terrorism**  
New York, 3 October 2023

Mr. Chair,

My delegation congratulates you and the other members of the Bureau on your election. Let me assure you of my delegation's support in undertaking the work of this committee.

"Terrorism is one of the most brutal forms of violence traumatizing the international community today; it sows hatred, death, and an urge for revenge and reprisal."<sup>1</sup> Terrorism merits unequivocal condemnation in all its forms and manifestations, as it is an affront to the dignity of every human being. Therefore, it is indispensable to support the victims of terrorism, providing hope, rather than compounding despair. As Pope Francis has affirmed, "terrorism and death never have the last word".<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Chair,

It is imperative that the international community takes concrete steps to prevent and combat terrorism. Cooperation must be strengthened at the international, regional and subregional levels to enhance the national capacity of States to prevent and effectively suppress terrorism. Perpetrators of terrorist acts must face justice without delay, resorting, where appropriate, to international judicial cooperation. A collective response based upon the commitment to extradite or prosecute perpetrators will ensure that terrorists have no safe haven.

Any effective response to terrorism must be grounded on the rule of law, lest preventative measures further foment the underlying tensions upon which terrorism breeds. States must scrupulously respect their obligations under international law, including human rights treaties, international humanitarian law and international refugee law, especially when enacting counterterrorism measures, to ensure that the fundamental freedoms and the dignity of all persons are upheld.

Mr. Chair,

Although some extremists exploit religious identity to divide societies and encourage the radicalization of the disenfranchised, terrorism cannot and should not be associated with

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<sup>1</sup> Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Catholic Church, 513.

<sup>2</sup> Pope Francis, Address during Visit to the Qaragosh Community, Apostolic Journey to Iraq, 7 M a r c h 2021.

any particular religion, nationality or ethnicity. In response, it is necessary to build a culture of dialogue. In particular, efforts must be redoubled to rediscover our common humanity as the basis for human fraternity.

In addition, any effective response to terrorism must address material injustice, including inequality and deprivation, which can create conditions ripe for exploitation by terrorist groups. Promoting integral human development and building inclusive societies is critical to addressing the conditions that facilitate terrorism's spread. First and foremost, education plants the seeds of peace and provides a foundation for cohesive and tolerant civil societies.

Mr. Chair,

Any response to terrorism must be collective and concerted. In this regard, the Holy See welcomes multilateral efforts aimed at promoting international cooperation in countering terrorism. Therefore, my delegation welcomes the adoption of the eighth UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy this past June. It is only through consensus, with the participation of all States, that measures to eliminate international terrorism will fully bear fruit.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.