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STATEMENT BY

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**DURING THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COUNTER-TERRORISM COMMITTEE
TO COMMEMORATE THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ADOPTION OF SECURITY
COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1373 (2001) AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE
COUNTER-TERRORISM COMMITTEE**

Session II:

International cooperation, including relationships with key international and regional organizations and United Nations bodies, highlighting steps taken and further steps required to facilitate and build Member States' capacity to counter terrorism and violent extremism

4th November 2021
ECOSOC Chamber
New York

Mr. Chair, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

At the outset, I would like to thank the Committee and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) for convening this special meeting to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the adoption of Security Council Resolution 1373 (2001) which also established the Counter-Terrorism Committee. My delegation also thanks the briefers for their insightful presentations.

The adoption of resolution 1373 (2001), 17 days after the horrifying 9/11 terrorist attacks on the United States, marked a significant moment in the international community's resolve to fight the menace of international terrorism and completely eradicate it in all its forms and manifestations. The acceptance of binding obligations to enhance legal, operational, and institutional responses to counter the threat of terrorism at the national, regional, and international levels, was indeed unprecedented, and reflected a clear point of convergence that never again must the world be unprepared or uncoordinated in the fight against terrorism.

While today is a good occasion to remember the cohesion, solidarity and urgency of action that went into the adoption of resolution 1373 (2001), it is also an important moment to ponder on the two-decades history and to ask ourselves whether the international community is as cohesive as we were then; whether we

show the same level of solidarity as we did after 9/11; and in places where we continue to reel from the effects of terrorism, whether we attach the same sense of urgency to the actions that are required.

Undoubtedly, however, 20 years after the adoption of this landmark resolution of the Security Council, we can agree that substantial progress has been made in the counter-terrorism architecture on many fronts. The adoption of more than 20 resolutions on the subject and the establishment of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) as a special political mission, through resolution 1535 (2004), to assist the Committee to monitor the implementation of resolution 1373, are notable achievements.

Mr. Chair,

Despite all these efforts, terrorism has proliferated in many parts of the world and adapted in more ways than one. Terrorist activities have evolved in recent times as evidenced in the phenomenon of the Foreign Terrorist Fighter (FTF), as well as the use of technology for terrorist purposes. Also, COVID-19 pandemic-related economic hardships, manifested by rising unemployment as well as growing poverty and inequality continue to serve as fodder for the radicalisation and recruitment of vulnerable groups, including women and youth. The international community must therefore continue to place emphasis on addressing the root causes of the menace by

implementing social protection measures that bridge inequality as well as empowering and involving women and the youth in decision-making processes. Renewed and concerted action is required

In some parts of Africa, including in parts of West Africa and the Sahel, we continue to witness the destabilising activities of Terrorist Armed Groups whose activities have become more widespread, frequent, and deadly with their underlying dynamics growing increasingly complex and posing high risks to many states.

Mr. Chair,

It is in this context that my delegation welcomes this second interactive session with its focus on **international cooperation**. More, not less of international cooperation is required in strengthening relationships between the United Nations and regional organisations to address this issue.

I would like to highlight a few points of national interest, taking into account the context of West Africa.

- (a) Technical assistance for developing national capacities continues to be critical for many countries. In this regard, I wish to express appreciation to the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC) as well as regional groups

and friendly countries for their close cooperation and support in building capacity to strengthen security and counter-terrorism strategies in Ghana as well as across the ECOWAS region. More is required.

(b) Global support in funding regional initiatives continues to be necessary to make substantial progress in the fight against international terrorism. In this regard, I would like to draw attention to the support required for the implementation of the ECOWAS regional counter-terrorism strategy of 2013 and the ECOWAS Action Plan for 2020-2024 adopted in 2019. While these initiatives demonstrate ECOWAS' commitment in addressing the situation, we are also concerned about the impact of funding gaps. It is in this context that Ghana has contributed \$5million out of a \$10 million pledge to the ECOWAS Regional Security Fund as a demonstration of her commitment to support financing mechanisms for peace and security in the ECOWAS region. We take this opportunity to call for the mobilization of additional funding support from partners for such regional arrangements.

(c) Intra-regional and cross-regional intelligence-sharing must be enhanced to address the reinforcing effects of cross border collaboration by terrorist groups. Even though Ghana has not had any direct terrorist attack, my country has been a major driver for the enhancement of information and intelligence

sharing through the **Accra Initiative** which has become ECOWAS' platform for intelligence and information sharing on questions of terrorism, transnational organised crime, and violent extremism to address the expansionist agenda of the terrorist groups from the Sahelian region. In this regard, and as we see from the emerging phenomenon of FTFs, cross-regional intelligence sharing is also required to better respond to the movements and modus operandi of these fighters.

(d) Enhanced regional action to cut off terrorism financing must be sustained and enhanced. In the ECOWAS region, the Intergovernmental Group of Action Against Money Laundering in West Africa, GIABA has since its establishment in 2000 facilitated the adoption and implementation of Anti-Money Laundering (AML) and Counter-Financing of Terrorism (CFT) laws in West Africa. It is also a FATF-Styled Regional Body (FSRB) working with its member States to ensure compliance with international AML/CFT standards. While GIABA's collaboration with national financial intelligence centers have produced significant outcomes, its actions would continue to require deepening against non-banking transfer systems that terrorist groups are known to use.

(e) Stronger partnerships must be built between the United Nations and counter-insurgency operations against terrorists by regional arrangements. Even

though operations such as the G5 Sahel Force are useful, they can benefit from an enhanced partnership from the United Nations in terms of financing support and greater burden-sharing.

Lastly, Mr. Chair, I wish to note that at the national level, the government of Ghana has put in place several measures to address the issue, including the anti-money laundering laws to check terrorist financing as well as the Anti-Terrorism Act (Act 762) enacted in 2008, which criminalises terrorist financing and material support for terrorists among others. Ghana's experiences in countering terrorism are demonstrated in the Government's efforts to build a resilient and cohesive society at the local level through appropriate education and situational awareness. The Government continues to sustain initiatives aimed at decentralizing development across the country especially in vulnerable communities to address the root causes of terrorism, eliminate the issue of marginalization and address youth unemployment aimed at eliminating the threat of radicalization and recruitment by jihadists.

Before concluding my remarks, I wish to seize this opportunity to introduce the following points into the discussion for consideration:

Firstly, counter-terrorism is a complex, long-term endeavour that requires significant investments of time and money. While welcoming the investment in areas like border management, intelligence sharing to help in early

detection of plots, or the disruption of terrorists' plans, it is our view that these are only rudimentary in the fight against terrorism.

Secondly, there is also the need to channel some investment into addressing the root causes of terrorism, particularly governance and development deficits. This area is particularly important because violent extremist groups exploit these longstanding vulnerabilities, partly by providing services to populations in areas where the state is either absent, resented or too weak to shoulder its responsibilities. Platforms for sharing knowledge and experience in this area are encouraged.

Thirdly, to strengthen targeted measures through cooperation with the UN and regional bodies to empower women and youth who are at the heart of addressing the socio-economic conditions in our societies to enable governments better combat the activities of these terrorists; and

Fourthly, since the outbreak of COVID-19 has led to an unexpected shift in resources by Member States, especially developing countries to provide immediate relief to their citizens coupled with decline in revenue because of slow economic activities we urge renewed responses to address the financial challenges including through debt cancellation and the restructuring of debt

repayment to enable them build back better and adequately tackle the terrorist activities in their countries.

We believe that deeper cooperation and partnerships between the UN, regional and sub-regional organisations, civil society organisation, and the private sector would help in effectively dealing with the menace of terrorism.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.