

Statement on behalf of the African Group by Mr Thembile Joyini, Charge d’Affaires a.i. at the Permanent Mission of South Africa to the United Nations, in the Sixth Committee of General Assembly under Agenda Item “Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism” on 12 October 2015

Mr Chairman

Thank you for affording us the floor. My delegation has the honour to speak on behalf of the African Group. At the outset, let me join others who have spoken before me in congratulating you and the members of the bureau on your deserving election. I assure you of the African Group’s fullest cooperation and support throughout the work of the Committee. The African Group associates itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. At the outset, the African Group would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report, which has been prepared pursuant to paragraph 8 of the General Assembly resolution 50/53, as read together with Assembly resolution 69/127 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. There is a need for a balanced and holistic approach in addition to the steps that are being taken to prevent and counter terrorism. Be that as it may, there is no justification for terrorism. African States strongly and unequivocally condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, as well as all acts, methods and practices of terrorism wherever, by whomever, against whomever committed. Terrorism knows no boundary and affects every country, including a number of African States throughout the continent. These countries continue to experience the scourge of this despicable act. This calls for strengthened global action to address the menace. Africa has long recognized the need to embark on concrete measures to counter the phenomenon of terrorism. The Organization of African Unity, succeeded by the African Union, adopted the Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism in 1999, which came into force in 2002. This was followed by a Plan of Action by an inter-governmental High Level Meeting in September 2002. In addition, the African Center for Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT) was established in Algiers. The African Group also appreciates the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Initiative (TSCTI) elaborated by the African Center for study and Research on Terrorism and the United States’ Africa Center for Strategic Studies. We also welcome the

Madrid Declaration and Plan of Action on Combating Terrorism in West and Central Africa. These initiatives are important mechanisms for strengthening the capacity of African countries to adopt coordinated approaches on countering terrorism. Measures aimed at ensuring the more effective implementation of counter-terrorism conventions and related UN resolutions, as well as capacity-building in developing countries are vital for an international law approach to combating terrorism. In this regard, we remain committed to cooperating with the United Nations and other international partners to further improve the Continent's capacity to effectively implement its obligations in the fight against terror and in the implementation of related UN resolutions.

Mr Chairman

Kidnapping and hostage-taking are two critical means by which terrorist raise funds for their nefarious acts. The African Group considers that the financing of terrorism is a matter of grave concern for the international community and is equally concerned that the payment of ransoms to terrorist groups constitutes one of the main sources of financing for terrorism. In this regard, the African Group urges Member States to cooperate in addressing the issue of the payment of ransoms to terrorist groups. In the same vein, the African Group also condemns the unilateral formulation of lists accusing States of allegedly supporting terrorism. This is in conflict with international law and constitutes a form of psychological and political terrorism.

In conclusion, Mr Chairman

The African Group appreciates the work done by the Ad Hoc Committee in drafting a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. We reiterate the importance of the early conclusion of a comprehensive convention for combating international terrorism and the continued effort to that end. The African Group expresses its preparedness and willingness to work actively with other delegations to continuously refine the United Nations Global Counter Terrorism Strategy as well as to achieve consensus on the draft Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism. Accordingly, Africa calls upon all states to cooperate in resolving the long-outstanding issues. The proposal to convene a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations to finalise an international response to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations should be given a serious consideration.