



New Zealand Permanent Mission to the United Nations

Te Māngai o Aotearoa

70th Session of the Sixth Committee: Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism

New Zealand statement

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Mr Chairman,

I have the honour to speak today on behalf of Canada and Australia, as well as New Zealand, together known as 'CANZ'.

The international community recently marked the ten-year anniversary of UNSC Resolution 1624, addressing the threat posed by incitement to commit terrorist acts.

As the threat posed by Da'esh/ISIL and other terrorist entities continues to expand and evolve, this resolution, and others like it, continues to be valuable in the fight against terrorism: ISIL's appropriation of territory in Syria and Iraq; its growing cadre of foreign terrorist fighters; its increasing number of global affiliates; its use of social media to recruit; and its direction and inspiration of lone terrorist attacks, have made it one of the most serious threats to international peace and security of our time.

CANZ is dedicated to the advancement of international counter-terrorism efforts which requires us to address both the immediate threats facing us, as well as the conditions conducive to the spread of violent extremism and terrorism. We have been working bilaterally, regionally and internationally, including as part of the Counter-ISIL Coalition. We have focused on disrupting the flow of foreign terrorist fighters; disrupting access to financial and economic resources; providing humanitarian and stabilisation support to impacted communities; countering ISIL's messaging, degrading ISIL and restoring security. Inroads have been made, but much more remains to be done.

Mr Chairman,

Ratification and implementation of the United Nations counter-terrorism instruments is an important tool for denying safe havens to terrorist groups and ensuring international unity in condemning and punishing terrorist acts.

CANZ continues to support the conclusion of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism to enhance cooperation in the prevention, investigation, prosecution and extradition of persons who commit terrorist acts. We welcome current efforts by the Chair of the UN Ad-hoc Committee on Measures to Eliminate Terrorism, His Excellency Ambassador Perera, to reinvigorate discussion on this convention. We are however realistic and recognise that differences remain between delegations, and while these differences pertain to a relatively small number of issues, the positions are strongly held. We support efforts, including informal engagement between the most interested delegations, to bridge these differences.

Mr Chairman,

While CANZ acknowledges the importance of legal counter-terrorism instruments, we also value the role of dialogue in relevant fora and the work of international organisations.

CANZ welcomes the high-level focus on counter terrorism during UNGA70. Leaders' week marked the one-year anniversary of the passing of UNSC Resolution 2178, which requires that states prevent radicalisation to terrorism, recruitment and travel of foreign terrorist fighters. While each state must determine, based on its own context, the appropriate balance between these three measures, we would call particular attention to the importance of efforts to prevent radicalisation to terrorism. To be effective these efforts should not be pursued through a narrow security lens, but rather through a whole-of-society approach which addresses local factors which put individuals at risk of radicalisation to violence.

CANZ welcomes the Global Counterterrorism Forum, which recently held its Sixth Ministerial Meeting. The GCTF has contributed significantly to the enhancement of international cooperation on counter-terrorism and is an important forum for sharing best practices and providing practical, fit-for-purpose guidance.

In this regard, CANZ welcomes the recent adoption of two new GCTF framework documents on women and countering violent extremism, and good practices on denying the benefits of kidnapping for ransom by terrorists.

Mr Chairman,

Every State is responsible for prohibiting terrorist attacks in domestic law, and the primary responsibility for investigating and prosecuting acts of terrorism rests with the State in whose territory an attack occurs. States are also responsible for providing robust domestic processes that ensure appropriate safeguards are in place to respect the human rights of accused persons. Where a State does not or cannot exercise its national jurisdiction, the international community is responsible for ensuring that terrorists are held to account. An inactive, or uncooperative international community that is not prepared to prosecute the perpetrators of terrorist attacks, suggests a willingness to allow the perpetrators of terrorist acts to continue with impunity., which cannot be tolerated. CANZ reminds states that Security Council resolutions 1373 and 2178 provide one framework to this end, by requiring every Member State to have serious criminal offences in its domestic law that enable it to prosecute those who participate in international terrorism outside the territory of that State.

Mr Chairman,

The CANZ position on kidnapping for ransom is clear: we do not pay under any circumstances. It remains one of the most significant sources of terrorist financing; it encourages further kidnapping; and it undermines our efforts to degrade terrorist organisations. We therefore urge Member States to cooperate closely to prevent kidnapping and hostage-taking committed by terrorist groups and to secure the safe release of hostages without ransom payments or political concessions, in accordance with applicable international law.

Mr Chairman,

The international community has established the means to suppress the financing of terrorism, including in the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, resolution 1373, the UNSC Al-Qaida sanctions regime, and through the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force. The effectiveness of the implementation of these measures, however, depends on the commitment and capacity of countries to implement them.

We also strongly support international efforts to prevent the illicit trade in cultural property, thereby shutting down one lucrative source of terrorist financing. All member states must play their part in this, including through full implementation of UNSC Resolution 2199, which condemned the destruction of cultural heritage in Iraq and Syria and called on all countries to prevent the trade in cultural property removed illegally from those countries.

Mr Chairman,

The modern manifestation of terrorism is disturbing. It eschews borders and authority, and propagates indiscriminate violence. It is by no means easy to combat, but it can and must be eliminated. The threat it poses, and the complexity of the response required to combat it, requires our individual and collective commitment.

For our part, Canada, Australia and New Zealand remain committed to working together and with others, both in our region and beyond, to reduce the threat posed by terrorism and, ultimately, to eliminate it.