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Statement by the United States
72nd General Assembly Sixth Committee
Agenda Item 109: Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism
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Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The United States reiterates both its firm condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations as well as our commitment to the common fight to end terrorism. All acts of terrorism – by whomever committed – **are criminal, inhumane and unjustifiable, regardless of motivation. The United States will never flinch in using all of our tools to end terrorism, including through our efforts with the Global Coalition to defeat ISIS, but there is no doubt that an unwavering and united effort by the international community is required if we are to succeed in preventing attacks and holding to account** those responsible for planning, facilitating, and perpetrating such heinous acts. In this respect, we recognize the United Nations' critical role in mobilizing the international community, building capacity, and facilitating technical assistance to Member States in implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and relevant resolutions.

We note in particular the Security Council's adoption of a number of resolutions over the past year, including resolution 2370 on preventing terrorists from acquiring weapons; resolution 2368, which updated the UN Security Council 1267/1989/2253 ISIL (Da'esh) and Al Qa'ida Sanctions Regime; resolution 2354 on countering terrorist narratives; resolution 2347 on the protection of cultural heritage in armed conflict; resolution 2341 on protecting critical infrastructure from terrorist attacks; resolution 2331 on human trafficking in areas affected by armed conflict; and resolution 2322 on strengthening international judicial cooperation on counterterrorism. One striking aspect of the Security Council's work is that the 'whole of government' has been mobilized. From ministries of finance, to ministries of justice, to ministries of interior and security, these resolutions underscore the counterterrorism role of all elements of government. UNESCO has also engaged ministers and ministries on its education and preventing violent extremism voluntary policy guidance and teaching handbook; these kinds of efforts support truly long-term goals of building resilience among the rising and future generations.

We are seeing results. Over the last year, for example, the flow of foreign terrorist fighters, or FTFs, has declined substantially. Combined with intense military pressure from the United States alongside D-ISIS coalition partners, Member States' implementation of Security Council resolution 2178 – aimed at stemming the flow of FTFs – has made a tremendous impact on the ground in Syria and Iraq. The United States now has information sharing arrangements with almost 70 international partners to help identify, track, and deter known and suspected

terrorists, and at least 26 partners share financial information that could provide actionable leads to interdict or prosecute FTFs. At least 31 countries use enhanced traveler screening measures today. Furthermore, approximately 60 countries have laws in place to provide the ability to prosecute and penalize FTF activities and at least 65 countries have prosecuted or arrested FTFs or FTF facilitators. We can all stand to learn from each other on these gains, but there is much more work that can be done to fully implement resolution 2178. Moreover, the international community should focus on what the evolving terrorist threat will look like as FTFs seek to return to their home countries or relocate elsewhere, as well as in what new ways they may seek to attack.

From international legal cooperation, to critical infrastructure security, to countering terrorist narratives, these resolutions are strong examples of the meaningful role the UN can play to address new challenges that arise in the fight against terrorism. We express our firm support for these UN efforts, as well as those of the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) and other multilateral bodies, civil society and non-governmental organizations, and regional and subregional organizations, aimed at developing practical tools to further the implementation of the UN counterterrorism framework. We call for continued coordination among UN entities and with external partners, including the GCTF and its related initiatives and platforms such as the International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law in Malta (IIJ), Hedayah, and the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF), which advance practical implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy through training, capacity building and grant-making for community-based preventing and countering violent extremism projects.

We welcome the creation of the new UN Office of Counter Terrorism and the appointment of Mr. Vladimir Ivanovich Voronkov as a new Under-Secretary-General to lead that office to help improve the coordination and raise the profile of UN CT efforts. We also look forward to Michele Coninsx assuming the role of the UN Counter Terrorism Executive Directorate's new Executive Director in November. We encourage close coordination between the Office of Counter-Terrorism and CTED. Efforts to combat terrorism that come at the expense of human rights and the rule of law are ultimately destined to fail. For these reasons, the UNOCT must pursue a balanced approach to implementing the UN Global CT Strategy and the recommendations of the Secretary General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism that recognizes the importance of preventing violent extremism and respecting human rights and the rule of law. UN counterterrorism efforts benefit from engagement with a wide range of actors, including youth; families; women; religious, cultural, and educational leaders; and other elements of civil society.

Domestically, we continue to engage and raise community awareness of violent extremism or radicalization to terrorism and recruitment dynamics, as well as provide community leaders tools and resources to work on prevention efforts. One new area of work is state and local intervention services for individuals headed down a path toward violent extremism or radicalization to terrorism before a crime is committed. We look forward to continued exchanges on these issues with our international partners.

To help achieve this comprehensive vision, we need all member states to better assist and sufficiently resource UN system actors and other relevant implementers in order to deliver

needed technical assistance and generate more effective solutions. To do our part, we are pleased to note that we continue to make voluntary contributions to the UNODC Terrorism Prevention Branch, UNDP, INTERPOL, and UNICRI for development of research, assistance and training. We encourage other interested member states to join us to enable the UN to provide technical and capacity-building assistance to member states across a range of issues addressed in the UN Global CT Strategy. These include preventing and countering violent extremism, and implementing relevant UN Security Council resolutions, including resolution 2178, especially by funding programs included in the UN's Capacity Building Implementation Plan to Counter FTFs. We think that a growing pool of donors to the UN and INTERPOL can also have helpful benefits in coordinating our civilian counterterrorism assistance on shared priorities.

Beyond the UN, we should also partner with local communities and key civil society organizations. They will often be among the most effective in countering terrorist lies.

Focusing now on treaty developments, we recognize the great success of the United Nations, thanks in large part to the work of this Committee, in developing 18 universal instruments that establish a thorough legal framework for countering terrorism. The achievements on this front are noteworthy. We have witnessed a dramatic increase in the number of states that have become party to these important counterterrorism conventions. For example, 170 states have become party to the Terrorist Financing Convention.

The United States recognizes that while the accomplishments of the international community in developing a robust legal counterterrorism regime are significant, there remains much work to be done. The 18 universal counterterrorism instruments are only effective if they are widely ratified and implemented. In this regard, we fully support efforts to promote ratification and implementation of these instruments. We draw particular attention to the six instruments concluded since 2005 – the 2005 International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (Nuclear Terrorism Convention), the 2005 Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM Amendment), the 2005 Protocols to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation (SUA Protocols), the 2010 Convention on the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Relating to International Civil Aviation, and the 2010 Protocol Supplementary to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft. While the work of the international community began with the negotiation and conclusion of those instruments, that work will only be completed when those instruments are widely ratified and fully implemented.

And as we move forward with our collective efforts to ratify and implement these instruments, the United States remains willing to work with other states to build upon and enhance the counterterrorism framework. Concerning the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism, we will listen carefully to the statements of other delegates at this session. We would highlight in this regard that it is critical that the United Nations send united, unambiguous signals when it comes to terrorism, otherwise we risk some of the progress that we have made.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.