

Statement by the delegation of Ukraine
at the 73rd General Assembly Sixth Committee Session
under a.i. 111 – Measures to eliminate international terrorism
(October 3, 2018, New York)

Mr. Chairman,

Since this is the first time that Ukrainian delegation takes the floor under your Chairmanship, I would like to join the previous speakers in congratulating you on the assumption of this position and wish every success in your work.

Throughout the decades the international community has been exposed to the constantly evolving terrorism threat. ISIL/Da'esh, Al-Qaida, Taliban, Boko Haram, Al-Shabaab and other groups have grown from being regional menace to global threats to international peace and security.

Regrettably, up to date, unceasing terrorist attacks in different parts of the world are still causing huge number of deaths and casualties, increase number of displaced people, wreak havoc and fear in our societies. We are affected by more sophisticated and circumvented methods and tactics by terrorists, their mentors and sponsors are becoming crueler and more ambitious. Let me recall that according to the 2017 Global Terrorism Index, the number of deaths from terrorist attacks in 2016 was 25 673, 106 countries experienced at least one death from acts of terrorism. These figures are alarming. Resolute commitment and mobilized actions of the entire international community are necessary to deal with rampant threats, posed by international terrorism and violent extremism.

This year a number of important developments took place with a view to advance new counter-terrorism standards as well as to further consolidate and amplify international response to these threats. The momentum was taken to focus additionally and to introduce more nuanced approach in the areas of combating financing of terrorism, depriving terrorists of weapons supplies, preventing violent extremism, returning of FTFs from conflict zones, suppressing the terrorist propaganda, protecting critical infrastructure, strengthening aviation security, enhancing coordination and coherence among UN entities to name a few.

Along with the ongoing reform of the UN counterterrorism pillar, including the signing of the Global Coordination Compact, the UN General Assembly resolution 72/284 on the Sixth Review of the GCTS was consensually adopted. We consider this resolution can serve as a road map for strengthening our joint efforts in combatting terrorism as well as tackling the root causes and conditions conducive to the spread of this menace. The first High-level Conference of Heads of CT Agencies took place in June this year, aimed at fostering international counter-terrorism collaboration and breaking down silos.

Ukraine, along with other states, welcomes diplomatic and military efforts by the Global Coalition to ensure durable defeat of ISIL/Da'esh and makes its own contribution to that end. As of today, Ukraine exposed and localized the activity of 6 ISIL transnational logistics networks, which had been engaged in searching for, recruiting, training, financing and transporting fighters. 23 “transfer points” used for the temporary accommodation of FTFs had been dismantled, and over 60 members and supporters of ISIL, some of whom were on INTERPOL lists, had been detained. Furthermore, Ukraine is ready to provide logistic support to back military operation against ISIL.

Mr Chairman,

I wish to reiterate that terrorism and violent extremism continue to threaten our core values and principles, including human rights, the rule of law, democracy, equality and freedom. In this regard we believe more should be done by Member States to address governance deficit, to promote social development and respect for the rule of law, to develop strategic communications and to counter terrorism ideology, to engage civil society, women and youth in counterterrorism efforts.

On the other hand, the UN agencies and bodies can exert additional efforts in assisting states in tackling the FTFs phenomenon, curbing terrorists’ financing and weapons supply, promoting respect for human rights and the rule of law in CT activities, and enhancing international judicial cooperation, so that no terrorist can escape justice.

Mr Chairman,

On August 21st the world marked International Day of Remembrance and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism. Ukraine, as a co-sponsor of the UN General Assembly resolution 72/165, remains in solidarity with victims of terrorism and continues to advocate full and comprehensive respect of their human rights and freedoms as well as their recovery and resilience.

Their voices are heard.

No life fallen to the acts of terrorism is forgotten.

All perpetrators, organizers, mentors and sponsors of reprehensible acts of terrorism, whoever they might be, must be brought to justice.

Regrettably, terrorism and violent extremism remain an existential threat for Ukraine putting its sovereignty and territorial integrity at stake.

It has been almost a decade since the Russian Federation launched extensive cross-domain hybrid war against Ukraine in a blatant violation of fundamental international norms and principles, including human rights and the key CT obligations.

First, the obligation to refrain from providing any form of support to terrorists – Russia failed to comply by creating puppet terrorist organizations of the DPR and LPR, allowing its nationals, left-wing political parties and even state organs to make funds, financial assets and services available for the benefit of terrorists. As a result, being directly supported by Russia, a number of terrorist attacks have been carried out in Mariupol, Volnovaha, Kramatorsk, Donetsk, Avdiivka and many other Ukrainian cities.

Second, obligation to eliminate the supply of weapons to terrorists - blatantly violated by purposefully transferring arms, heavy weaponry and ammunition to the east of Ukraine through the uncontrolled sections of the Ukrainian-Russian state border. These military assets are delivered either openly, or under the guise of the so-called “humanitarian convoys”. Current weapons’ stocks acquired by terrorists often surpass armaments of many European states. Those deadly supplies are used for every day shelling on the residential areas in the Eastern regions in Ukraine. It was the Russian Buk missile system that downed MH17, taking 298 innocent lives.

Third, obligation to suppress recruitment of FTFs and their movement – flagrantly failed by facilitating the process of Russian and foreign citizens’ enrolment into terrorist ranks, their training in various regions of Russia, their unimpeded travel to Ukraine and back. Possessing a powerful law enforcement machine, this country deliberately makes no effort to stop the inflow of terrorist fighters into the temporarily occupied areas of Ukraine. The shocking reality is that FTFs, primarily from Russia, constitute a significant part of the approximately 40,000-strong illegal armed group, fighting against the Government of Ukraine on the Ukrainian territory.

Fourth, obligation to prohibit terrorist incitement – persistently violated by launching a massive media campaign to whitewash the image of terrorists, who, together with the Russian military, continue to intimidate and kill local population in Donbas, and destroy what’s left of its infrastructure. The Russian ideology not only tolerates, but encourages violation of international law and perpetration of the most serious crimes, including terrorist acts. Fierce, deceitful propaganda disseminated by the state-controlled Russian media is one of the key elements of the ongoing hybrid aggression against my country.

A growing proliferation of states-sponsored terrorism throughout the world is detrimental for the global counter-terrorist efforts.

Mr Chairman,

As it was pointed out by many delegations today, one of our most important tasks remains finalizing the draft Comprehensive convention on international terrorism, which would supplement the existing international legal CT framework.

The issue of bringing to account not only individuals and organizations but also those states responsible for organizing, financing, encouraging, providing training or

otherwise directly or indirectly supporting terrorist activities should be duly reflected in the draft Convention.

It has been proved, time and again, that in the absence of a strong and united response to the committed crimes, the situation will further deteriorate, creating new crises, raising the stakes, blackmailing other countries and entire international organizations, irreparably ruining the ruled-based world order. As President of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko stated during the High Level General Assembly debate last week– “It is due to the lack of relevant punishment that after Georgia came Ukraine, that after Lytvinenko came Skrypals, that after Aleppo came Idlib...” This is our reality. And it’s time for the whole international community to defend international law, firmly and uncompromisingly, and to ensure inevitable responsibility for each and every violation of fundamental norms and principles. Nothing can justify nor inaction neither fragmentation of efforts when civil population, including women and children are killed, when crimes against humanity continue unabated.

I thank you.