



## UNITED STATES MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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**Statement of the United States of America**  
**73rd United Nations General Assembly, Sixth Committee (Legal) Session**  
**Agenda Item 84: Consideration of Effective Measures to Enhance the Protection,**  
**Security and Safety of Diplomatic and Consular Missions and Representatives**  
**Julian Simcock, Deputy Legal Adviser**  
**October 18, 2018**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is essential for the normal conduct of relations among states that the rules protecting the sanctity of ambassadors, other diplomats, and consular officials are respected. These rules enable such officials to carry out their vital functions.

It is also crucial to protect diplomats from harmful acts by non-state actors. In recent years, we have seen increasing attacks on diplomatic and consular officials, and more often, such attacks have involved non state armed groups and have become more brazen. In October 2017, a fourteen year old suicide bomber detonated a vest inside Kabul's International zone on a busy public street, approximately 425 meters from the U.S. Embassy. Several people were killed, including a contractor working for the U.S. government. ISIS-K claimed responsibility for the attack. In 2016, U.S. embassy and consulate facilities faced attacks, shots, or blast from improvised explosive devices in Yemen, Turkey, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Haiti, among other places. There have been a number of other attacks on our facilities and personnel around the world. The United States is, of course, not alone in this regard. We must be unequivocal in universally condemning such brutal acts by armed groups.

As the nature and circumstances of attacks on diplomatic and consular personnel have evolved, so too must our preventive and protective measures. Any steps that are necessary and appropriate to protect a mission, and thus that would be required of the receiving state, will depend on the potential threats to a particular mission in that state. The United States seeks to ensure that all U.S. diplomats and consular officials benefit from enhanced security training and good personal security practices to help mitigate the risks our personnel face every day. Moreover, we rely on the collaboration of our partners in the receiving state to facilitate such protection and prevention. Thus, our missions overseas often work with local law enforcement and other authorities to prepare for eventualities, for instance by conducting drills and sharing information when appropriate.

Mr. Chairman, we appreciate the opportunity that this discussion affords to reemphasize the importance of these issues. The international community has a vital stake in the protection of diplomats, because diplomacy is the foundation of international relations. We must stand together, united against those forces in this world that wish harm to our diplomats. This partnership is strengthened by continuing to develop means to prevent violence before it occurs and responding to it as appropriate.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.